



The Archer

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Published by

East Finchley Newspapers

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Sharman & Co Ltd

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Copy deadlines – August: 15 July September: 12 August
October: 16 September



Change of plan: The Brownswell green space that has been saved and the three homes behind that will no longer be demolished. Photo Mike Coles

Grange U-turn: Demolitions halted and green spaces saved

By Janet Maitland

Barnet Council will not be going ahead with controversial plans to demolish three houses and build over green spaces on Brownswell Road and Tarling Road, N2, it has been announced.

"This is amazing news, not just for me and my family but for all the community," said Rebecca Weston, who is chair of the Grange and Brownswell Road Residents Association, set up to challenge the proposals, and who lives in one of the houses earmarked for demolition. "The stress has been awful for us and now we can breathe a sigh of relief."

"The new Labour Council is delivering on a manifesto pledge not to build on green fields," said East Finchley Councillor Arjun Mittra. "We felt it was important to rebuild trust in the council and demonstrate that our new administration listens to residents."

As we have reported in previous editions, Barnet Homes announced its intention to tackle a shortage of council housing in late 2020, describing the building of 100 homes on the Grange estate as "mild interventions to increase density".

However, the plan that emerged included a five-storey block of 38 flats on Brownswell Road green space, three houses on Tarling Road green space and the demolition of three homes, seen by residents as anything but mild.

Petition for improved consultation

Barnet Homes thought their consultation was thorough

despite face-to-face contact being limited by the pandemic, but residents felt their concerns were being ignored. The residents associations never managed to meet with Barnet Homes, who described them as "not formal Residents Associations".

A petition signed by 700 residents, asking for clear principles to underpin the consultation, such as new developments not destroying green space was submitted to a council Residents Forum last July who sent it to Barnet Homes. Their response pointed out the thoroughness of the consultation and, paradoxically, that a key aim of the project was to "add more high-quality green space".

New blocks on Grange but green spaces saved

By February 2022, Barnet Homes had revised their plans,

substantially reducing the number of flats they planned to build. However, residents still felt they had not been heard as the green spaces would still be built on and homes would still be demolished. This threat has now been lifted. Plans for two new blocks on the Grange estate will be going ahead, after some revisions to the design.

"The fight paid off," said Sachin Patel, one of five resident representatives on a consultation group. "But development on the Grange is still on the table while many of my neighbours are dealing with faulty entry systems and damp."

"This is heartening news and shows the council is listening," said Morgan Saunders, who constituted the Tarling Road Residents Association to save their green space.

How the Grange plans changed

By Janet Maitland

In its first Grange estate redevelopment plan unveiled in April 2021, Barnet Homes proposed building a new five-storey block of 38 flats on Brownswell Green, three houses on Tarling Road green space, a block of seven flats on the Grange by the High Road, a block of eight flats on Central Avenue, a block of eight flats on Red Lion Hill and approximately 36 more flats in upward extensions to Garden House and Oak House.

By the second redevelopment plan in February 2022, this had been scaled back to two blocks of flats on Brownswell Green with a total of 24 flats, one with four storeys, the other between two and four storeys, with a block of seven flats on the Grange by the High Road

and a block of eight flats on Central Avenue.

Green spaces saved

Under the latest plans, all that remains of the redevelopment are the block of seven flats on the Grange by the High Road and the block of eight flats on Central Avenue.

Café to apply for alcohol licence

The two owners of the café in Cherry Tree Wood are applying for a premises licence to serve alcohol during regular opening hours and for special events. Sharon Hall and Sharon Harding are planning a calendar of attractions like jazz afternoons and supper clubs in the height of summer.

Sharon Harding said: "We are hugely responsible and respectful of our neighbours and will at all times keep our events tasteful and in line with what the community wants." The café's regular weekday opening hours are 8am to 5pm in summer and 9am to 5pm on weekends.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

230 Creighton Avenue, N2

Conversion of garage into habitable room. Window to replace garage door.

Carmelite Friars, 63 East End Road, N2

Non-material amendment to planning permission for single-storey rear extension. Replacement and enlargement of existing patio door.

188 East End Road, N2

Roof extension, involving hip to gable, rear dormer window, three front rooflights and new side gable window. New front porch. Rear outbuilding. Replacement of windows to match existing ones.

33 Elmfield Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear infill extensions following demolition of existing garage. Removal of side chimney stack. Replacement of existing windows.

First Floor Flat, 42 Fortis

Green, N2

Details of materials pursuant to planning permission.

66-68 High Road, N2

Details of hard and soft landscaping pursuant to planning permission.

401 High Road, N2

New antenna on existing pole, plus further ancillary kit.

56 Huntingdon Road, N2

Single-storey side/rear infill extension.

First Floor Flat, 98 Huntingdon Road, N2

Roof extension, involving one rear dormer window, two outrigger dormers and new rear window.

379 Long Lane, N2

Single-storey rear infill extension.

North Circular Road, N2

Upgrade to existing Phase 4 SW Monopole. 8m high EE/H3G Phase 8 street pole on concrete base, and associated ancillary works.

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