



The Archer

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Speed signs 'irresponsible'

Continued from page 1.

"I have been lobbying the Cabinet member for a speedy decision, but the Prime Minister's recent announcement about blocking councils from installing 20 zones may be problematic." Meanwhile he has asked Barnet to remove or cover the new 30mph signs.

Advice: slow down

Cllr Alan Schneiderman, Chair of the Environment & Climate Change Committee, told us: "We want drivers to slow down on the County roads and definitely not to speed up. Speed signs are a legal requirement and not an encouragement to drive at the maximum permitted speed. We want to make our roads safer and therefore make it easier and quicker to introduce 20mph zones where they are needed, and residents want them. That includes reviewing speeds in the County roads in East Finchley."

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

48 Church Lane, N2

Roof extension with rear dormer window.

95 East End Road, N2

Roof extension involving outrigger dormer and three front-facing roof lights.

Flat 2, 101 East End Road, N2

Part single-storey, part two-storey rear extension. Insertion of two side-facing conservation roof lights.

East Finchley Station Car Park, N2

Six electric vehicle charging bays (including one accessible bay), three electric vehicle charging upstands (2.1m in height), UK Power Networks substation (height 3m, length/width 3m), switch room enclosure (height 2m, length 3.4m, width 2.45m) and 2.45m in width). Fencing (height 2m).

27 Elmshurst Crescent, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Roof extension involving rear dormer window and one front roof light.

121 High Road, N2

Rear extensions at lower ground and ground-floor level to create two self-contained units, following demolition of existing steps, landing and storage buildings. Associated amenity space.

3 Huntingdon Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Conversion of garage into habitable space, including insertion of side access door, two roof lights to flat roof, and raising of garage parapet wall. One roof light to flat section of main roof. Replace-

ment front door. New front porch. Enlargement of ground-floor front window. Removal of ground-floor rear window, first-floor window, and ground-floor door to west elevation. Replacement of existing windows. Replacement of rainwater goods, soffit and fascia. Installation of CCTV cameras and extraction vents. Resurfacing of driveway and rear patio. Replacement of metal pedestrian gates with timber. New shed and installation of heat pumps with associated acoustic screening in rear garden. Roof extension including addition of rear dormer window. Alterations to windows and doors on side elevation. Replacement of front and rear paving with new stone paving. Addition of EV charging point to side elevation. Installation of air conditioning unit and associated enclosure in rear garden.

46 Leicester Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

43 Leopold Road, N2

Two-storey rear extension, following demolition of existing extension. Roof extension involving raising ridge height, rear dormer window and one front roof light.

430 Long Lane, N2

Use as four-bedroom HMO.

30 Manor Park Road, N2

New rear oriel window at first-floor level. New rear structural glass at first-floor level.

26 Park Hall Road, N2

Roof extension involving rear dormer and outrigger dormer and three front roof lights. Single-storey side/rear extension.

Avenue blaze marks sad end to a tale of two Towers

By Alison Roberts

On the morning of Friday 21 July, residents of East Finchley, Highgate and beyond awoke to the smell of smoke lingering in the air. The Bishops Avenue was shut for several hours whilst fire crews dealt with the aftermath of an enormous blaze which had destroyed the road's largest residence.

Known as 'The Towers', it had stood empty for years. The blaze came only weeks after one of the derelict mansions in nearby White Lodge Close was badly damaged by fire and a year after a large derelict mansion on the opposite side of The Bishops Avenue met the same fate.

A 28-bedroom mansion called 'Tower' owned by singer and actress Gracie Fields, the world's highest paid film star in 1937, originally occupied the neighbouring plot. When Gracie and her husband Archie separated in the early 1930s, she donated the house and grounds to the NHS. By 1936, the grounds had been divided up, and another house built on a large plot at the far end of Tower's garden.



Former glory: The original Tower mansion built for Gracie Fields in the late 1920s. Photo courtesy The Original Gracie Fields

price, and the building was demolished and replaced with an enormous house, named 'The Towers'.

Valued at £25million, The Towers became the most expensive new house in Britain. It

dance floor, but alas it was never lived in, and the house stood empty and unloved for two decades. As the house fell into decay, it became a favourite destination of urban explorers.

In 2013, The Towers was purchased by Isle of Man-based developers Birch Ventures Ltd. The Towers was still the subject of a planning application to Barnet Council to demolish the building and replace it with an eight-storey block of 65 flats, when fire tore through the building last month damaging the ground and first floors and destroying the roof.

Since the 1980s, The Bishop's Avenue, dubbed Billionaire's Row, has become famous for its rotting derelict mansions, with an estimated two thirds of properties on the road standing empty. Yet it still seems sad to see a building which was once filled with hopes and dreams go to waste.

Read the full article and more at www.ILoveN2.co.uk/history



Derelict: The Towers had stood empty since it was built in the 1990s waiting for a new lease of life

Gracie's former home was initially used as an isolation ward and in the Second World War became the maternity wing of North Middlesex Hospital. When the war ended, the new building at the end of the garden was eventually completed and this became the Tower Maternity Annex - North Middlesex Hospital. This newer building remained a maternity hospital right through to the 1970s.

In 1962, the original Tower became a Jewish care home named Heinrich Stahl House. However, by 1999, the nature of care for the elderly was changing, and the home's managers decided to close it. The two-acre site was sold for £16.25million and Tower was demolished and replaced with three apartment blocks.

Meanwhile, in 1992, the former maternity hospital, which had been built at the far end of the original plot, was purchased by the Saudi royal family for £10million, reportedly less than half its asking

included a banqueting hall, indoor squash court, swimming complex, gym and sunken



Destroyed: Both floors and the roof of The Towers are engulfed in the blaze. Photo London Fire Brigade

Chargers at the station

A planning application has been submitted to install six electric vehicle charging bays, including one accessible bay, in East Finchley tube station's car park.

There would be three charging stands, each serving two vehicles, plus a small substation and switch-room run by UK Power Networks with some fencing. The application was put before Barnet Council last month and a decision is awaited.