



Last bid to save East Finchley's oldest building from demolition

By Daphne Chamberlain

Residents have made a final effort to save Valona House, the historic building opposite East Finchley tube station, from demolition by applying for it to be made a listed building.

At the time of writing, we don't know the outcome of this bid. We understand, though, that Barnet Council is very close to granting Safeland developers formal approval to go ahead with their plans to build flats on the site and therefore to raze Valona House.

into the Bishops Park, which opened the way to London, next to a mail coach proprietor, and hayfields providing trade with the City. Today, its Georgian façade and its position provide a pleasant and distinguished introduction to East Finchley.

Grade 1 and 2 listed buildings

The case for listing

Following an inspection of the house, Historic England have made a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. What they recommended is not known, but The Finchley Society has written supporting the application.

Supporters of listing the building set out its age, position, historic importance, and the way it complements its surroundings. Built around 1826, it is one of the two oldest houses in East Finchley. The other, about the same age, is the listed Hawthorn Dene in Strawberry Vale. Former large houses like Fairlawn, Cranleigh, Park Hall and Summerlee, live on only as road names.

Distinguished

Valona once stood at the strategically important tollgate



Valona House pictured in November

have legal protection. Probably the most well known in East Finchley are the Phoenix Cinema, the tube station itself and the library. Local authorities, supported by Historic England, also have local listings. This doesn't carry legal weight, but does offer some protection to buildings which are of historical or architectural interest and/or enhance their surroundings, giving a distinctive 'feel' to the area. East Finchley Methodist Church, the Bald-Faced Stag and the Old White Lion are all on Barnet's local list. Visit www.barnet.gov.uk to see the lists.

Man jailed for money laundering

By Janet Maitland

An East Finchley man has been jailed for five years and three months for money laundering. Steven Mardon, pictured, of Cherry Tree Road, was sentenced along with seven other members of a family crime syndicate.



When Mardon's home was raided by police in February 2014, they found ledgers itemising cash transactions and £110,000 in a floor safe. Mardon acted as financier for gang leader Thomas 'Tommy' Adams, helping him to obtain goods and to launder money.

"Thomas Adams is responsible for a large scale criminal business, laundering the profits from crime," said Detective Chief Superintendent Mick Gallagher. Adams was jailed for seven years.



Goal mouth action: The First XI defend. Photo Derek Beech

No need to up sticks to find a hockey club

By Caroline Hunt

East Finchley may not come across as a hotbed of hockey (though during the Rio Olympic Games, the heroics of Maddie Hinch, Kate Richardson-Walsh et al did briefly take over the screens at Madden's in place of the normal sporting fare). But one of London's longest-established hockey clubs does have a number of connections with the area.

Hendon & Mill Hill Hockey Club, which began life as Hendon HC way back in 1885, attracts players from all over north London, and currently has two first-team players, including the skipper, from East Finchley.

For several years the club's headquarters was Finchley Cricket Club on East End Road, while 'home' pitches have included the all-weather courts at North Finchley's Woodhouse College and Compton School.

These days the club plays at Ashmole Academy in Southgate and uses the clubhouse at the nearby Walker Ground, the home of Southgate Adelaide HC, with the two clubs recently teaming up to form

North London Hockey, a junior coaching initiative to bolster the younger ranks at both clubs.

Seasoned players

That said, Hendon & Mill Hill are seemingly making light of a slight lack of younger players. Last season the 1st XI celebrated promotion back into the top tier of the Middlesex League, having scored a remarkable 114 goals in 22 matches; this season, with a

professional coach on board, 16 points had been taken from a possible 21 after the first seven league games; and all achieved by a team with an average age well into the mid-40s. Well, they do say "Life begins..."

Are you interested in playing hockey? Hendon & Mill Hill HC is always on the lookout for new members of all ages. Find out more at hendonandmillhill-hockey.org.

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