



Something else behind the High Road scaffolding

By Janet Maitland

When the shroud of protective plastic is finally removed from 127-133 High Road, on the corner of Kitchener Road, it may not be just a new roof that is unveiled. A proposal for four one-bedroom flats in the roof space has been submitted.

July: first concerns

We contacted Barnet Council in July following speculation on social media about what was being built there and whether it had planning permission. It did. Approval was given in October 2015 for a new roof. There had also been plans for an extra, fourth storey, but these were not approved (*The Archer*, August 2017).

We'd picked up concerns that a new roof might be also a loft extension or additional flats, so we asked the council if the building work going on complied with what had been approved. They said enforcement officers had investigated and the work was "in accordance with the permission in place".

August: further questions

When the application to build the flats was submitted in August, we contacted the council again. As there'd been suggestions on social media that the flats were already under construction without permission, we asked if they had made a site visit. They had, and "no evidence was found to suggest that an additional four flats were being constructed". They plan to visit again to assess the new proposal.

"We're just building a new roof," said a spokesperson for the construction company Atkins Developments. "There is space in the roof for flats, but we haven't started them as they're subject to planning permission and that may take months."

One Kitchener Road resident claimed the new flats would be a blight on the low-rise nature of the surrounding buildings and will block light to neighbours' gardens. Another told us: "There's been constant disruption without the owner or contractor communicating in any form."

September: deadline for objections

Local residents were given until 21 September to raise any objections to the new application. The council informed us that applications are only heard by a planning committee if they are recommended for approval by officers and five or more objections are received. At the time of going to press, five had been received.



Let us prey: The kestrel on the hunt in Long Lane Pasture.
Photo Donald Lyven.

Kestrel keeps keen eye on pasture prey

Many thanks to photographer Donald Lyven for this fabulous picture of a majestic kestrel on the hunt in Long Lane Pasture at the top end of East Finchley.

The presence of the bird of prey is testament to the regeneration of nature and wildlife in this 2.6-acre green oasis since it was put under the loving care

of volunteers 12 years ago. The pasture, opposite the fire station on Long Lane, is open every day from 10am to dusk and you can find special events at www.longlanepasture.org.



The proposed redevelopment of 127 - 133 High Rd viewed from above and from Kitchener Road



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