



The Archer

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Vacant plot: The land on the corner of the High Road and Church Lane is still empty and fenced off eight years after the former Esso petrol station was demolished.

BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted

Compiled by Lynn Winton

East Finchley Festival Special

The famous East Finchley Festival is happening on **Sunday 23 June** and this month we are devoting our volunteer column exclusively to signing up volunteers who want to 'Be Part of It'. Have a look at the listings and see what takes your fancy. It's 'Just for One Day' and a fantastic way to support your community and get to know more about it.

East Finchley Festival is run entirely by volunteers, and needs dozens of helpers on the day. If you can spare an hour to help out on the afternoon it would be hugely appreciated!

- Selling raffle tickets (1 hour shifts)
- Set up and/or take down (no heavy lifting required)
- General stewarding (shifts available)
- Supervision of activity areas (sports, crafts, lego and laser tag). This can be done in shifts.
- Parade marshalls (1 hour)

We'd also love to hear from anyone who has a van who may be able to help us transport equipment to or from Cherry Tree Wood. Please visit eastfinchleyfestival.org/volunteer for more details or to sign up.

If you'd like your organisation to be included in this column and listed on the East Finchley community website, please complete the form at www.ILoveN2.co.uk/be-part-of-it.



PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council 238 High Road, N2

Details of conditions pursuant to planning permission.

55 Park Hall Road, N2

Roof extension, with one rear dormer window over main roof and one rear dormer over out-rigger roof. Three front facing roof lights

46 Abbots Gardens, N2

Roof extension with rear dormer window and new side gable window.

115 Abbots Gardens, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Depth 4.7m. Maximum height 3m and eaves height 3m, **Fairacres, 164 East End Road, N2**

Demolition of units in central and southern parts of existing building, and construction of new replacement self-contained dwellings to provide 36 residential units (Class C3). Altera-

tions to existing and retained front part of the building to provide three reconfigured self-contained residential units and the retention of one existing self-contained residential unit (Class C3). With other general refurbishment and alterations works, new landscaping, refuse store, car and cycle parking, sub-station and retaining existing accesses on East End Road and Pulham Avenue. Retention of St Anne's House (2 units) and general refurbishment and improvement works

37 Bancroft Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension following demolition of the existing conservatory.

Land adjacent to 290 Long Lane, N2

Erection of two-storey dwelling with rooms in the roof space. Associated refuse/recycling store.

Land worth millions is still a desolate wasteland eyesore

By Janet Maitland

There is still no sign of building work beginning on the vacant plot of land on the corner of the High Road and Church Lane, N2, despite planning permission being granted more than four years ago.

The land, formerly the site of an Esso petrol station, was purchased by Leopold Properties for just over £5million pounds in 2016 and, as previously reported in *The Archer*, plans were submitted for the construction of 20 flats in two blocks.

Barnet Council approved the plans in November 2019 with the statutory condition that building work should start within three years or permission would be rescinded. A few days before that deadline in November 2022, some rubbish was cleared away and a hole dug in one corner.

Legal criteria

Shortly after that, we contacted the council to check on progress and a spokesperson told us that all that was needed to retain permission was to "dig a trench or the like". After that it was "down to developers as to the speed at which the development is completed".

When the permission did not expire it seemed that some action taken by the developers had been defined as construction work and had therefore met the legal criteria. But when by last month not a single brick had been laid, we asked the council if the site had been inspected to check that construction work had started. It hadn't.

No implementation

We were told that the "council's Enforcement Team has not received any claims that works relating to the development have commenced or any correspondence from the applicant stating that they have implemented the permission. As such, there is no need for the Enforcement Team to inspect the site".

The council spokesperson

added that, "If a trench was located where the proposed foundations or service runs would subsequently go this could indeed be implementation but if a random hole is dug in the ground then the view would most likely be that this does not

this is a "relatively subjective assessment and a matter of fact and degree depending on circumstances".

The last time we contacted the agent for Leopold Properties was three years ago when he told us the company



Proposals: Designs approved in 2019 would have seen the construction of 20 flats in two blocks.

constitute implementation".

We were informed that a local planning authority does have the power to require landowners to "carry out works to improve land which is adversely affecting the amenity of an area" although

intended to implement the planning permission before it expired and he had no further comments. We will continue to check on the status of the development and report what we learn in future editions.

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