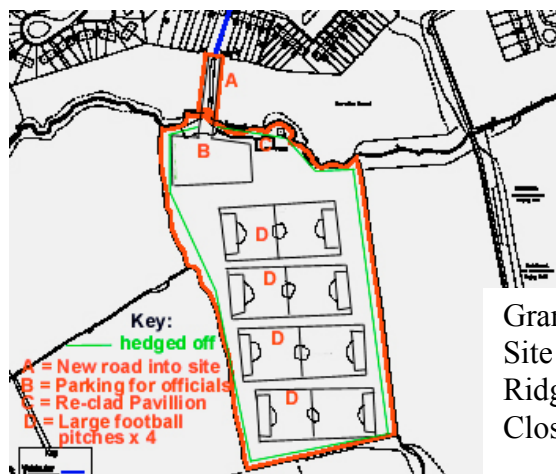


Reduced property values, noisy football matches & evening functions, eyesore car parks, fenced off football pitches and no more access to land!



Quinta
Site on
Mays
Lane



Grange
Site on
Ridgeview
Close

All of this to take place on Quinta & Grange sites unless we reject planning application.

AC Finchley Football Club Chairman admits if residents don't agree with his plans he will not take on site & risk investing £50,000 per pitch to drain it for nothing.

A brief history

On 19 February, the Council met to re-discuss the leasing of the Quinta and Grange playing fields sites to AC Finchley football club. This was a direct result of a large number of complaints from neighbours about both the proposal and not being informed about the leasing until after it took place. The Council leader, Mike Freer, totally ignored their failure to consult us and reiterated his support for leasing these two sites (all in the space of 2 minutes!). At this meeting we were told by the Council's solicitor that any planning application must take place under more stringent consultation procedures than the leasing consultation and we will all be individually approached by letter for our opinions. Our opinions hold more weight in planning issues and we have legal rights to oppose any change to this site.

What we can do by acting together – three actions we can take:

1. The Council & AC Finchley Football Club have called a meeting with residents (except they haven't bothered to contact most of **you** about it, so we have instead) to discuss our concerns at **Chipping Barnet Library, Stapylton Road at 6.30pm on 15 March 2007**. If you want to see their preliminary plans (see diagrams above & summary of these overleaf) or just want your opinions to be heard & accounted for, please attend this meeting. The AC Finchley Chairman has admitted that he will drop his plans if he sees a lot of opposition as it will cost him £50k per pitch to drain the site & he doesn't want to invest this money only to find out afterwards that his planning application has been refused.
2. Let Councillor Mike Freer know how you feel about the Council's complete lack of interest in consulting us about this site by emailing him at cllr.m.freer@barnet.gov.uk calling on **020 8349 2540** or writing to him: **Cllr Mike Freer, 23 Claverley Grove, Finchley, London, N3 2DG**.
3. If you don't want to suffer any of the negative effects listed below please **look out for the planning application when it comes & reject it** on all the grounds that you think will affect you & your community (see below for a list of some of these); I'm sure there are many more that you can think of too.

Some of the negative effects this will have on our community:

- Reduction in the value of our properties!
- Noise during day from matches/training practice.
- Players (home and away) causing problems to residents or properties – hooliganism.
- Noise some nights during evening functions in the community hall to be built if planning application is accepted (AC Finchley Chairman admits he must hold some functions to re-coup the £50k per pitch he will spend to drain them). A liquor licence may be applied for.
- Noise during day from day functions and classes in community hall (to re-coup the £50k per pitch spent to drain them).
- Eyesore of fenced off football pitches on the site.
- Eyesore of over 6 large pitches between the two sites.

- No access to this land anymore. In fact some pitches will be fenced off and hedges placed around the rest of the site to remove external access (that's you and me!).
- Possibly (if planning permission is accepted), floodlights on during evenings for practice/matches.
- Headlights shining into some properties on Mays Lane when cars exit (entrance to car-park to be moved to centre of top of field, opposite many houses – see plans).
- Traffic problems during matches, functions and classes.
- Over-spill parking onto our road, taking our parking spaces.
- Eyesore of car park to be built around club-house and to the left of the top of the field (see plans) if planning application is accepted.

But what are the positive advantages this will have to the local community? When we questioned the Chairman of AC Finchley, Frank Sidoli, about this after the meeting of the 19 February, he was unable to provide us with any evidence of community advantage. There are already 300 players, 34 coaches, 18 teams and by the Chairman's own admittance "no plans to increase this number in the immediate future as we don't have enough coaches for any more players (according to football league rules)" – so which children will be benefiting from this? None of our children will be able to join and if or when they eventually can, the annual joining costs are prohibitive for most at £190! Also not all of us or our children want to play *just* football – with an open field we can play any sport we like. Surely this is more beneficial to the community as a whole or does the Council believe the word Community means footballers only? We suggest we ask the council to remove the derelict building to prevent further vandalism and leave the land open to us all, not just Finchley's football players. The Council is gaining nothing as there will be no rent paid on the 125 yr lease.

What the plans involve

As we talked with AC Finchley Football Club we got the distinct impression that they were much more interested in being able to play football on their own site (instead of renting sites as they do now) than how we would benefit from their football club. Although Mr Sidoli seemed to be on a charm offensive to talk and spin up the club, we saw straight through his spin about how great the club was and all we saw was his lack of intention in providing OUR local community with anything. In fact he spent nearly all of this time explaining to us what his proposals were and they include (also see picture of plans overleaf):

- Four large football pitches on the Grange site at Ridgeview close.
- Re-cladding the pavilion at Grange site and re-installing services (plumbing, electricity) & toilets.
- Lockable drop bollard (or similar) at Grange site to prevent unauthorised access.
- Parking facilities at Grange site for Managers, Chairmen and other officials.
- Two large pitches on the Quinta site. Official match pitch (fenced off) to be located here.
- Two 'baby' pitches on the Quinta site
- Re-building of Quinta building to include:
 - Changing rooms
 - Community Hall for external functions and revenue raising
 - Possible care taker accommodation for live-in care-taker and security
- Car park surrounding Quinta building to provide several spaces.
- Additional car park to be built to the left of the Quinta building.
- New entrance to be built at the middle of the top of the field, directly in front of several houses.
- Fenced off pitches on both sites.
- Entire sites to be hedged off to remove external access (that's you and me) to the field.

Keep our land free for all to use

We were also told on several occasions by both Council and Football club chairmen that if we didn't go for AC Finchley Football Club's plans, then it was quite likely that another much worse option would take its place. This is pure bribery and legally has no leg to stand on beyond scaring residents into accepting the planning application. We are warning you that this is the tactic they will use at the meeting to scare us into agreeing to AC Football Clubs plans. The Council and football club are scared enough to call a meeting with us to try to convince us this football club is good for the community. If they cannot provide evidence that the problems outweigh the benefit to the Community (how on earth is this possible in light of all the disadvantages this will bring us) then we can refuse the planning application and stop this going ahead. And in relation to their loose threats to put something worse in its place, we are also legally entitled to refuse planning application for that too! This is Greenbelt land – there is strict governance over what can be built on community land and who MUST be consulted about any building on land that has always been shared by the community. Don't let the Council fool you into thinking they can get away with building whatever they like – this does not apply to Greenbelt. **This is Community land.**