

2 Chester Rd – background information

What's happening on the 2 Chester Rd site?

New temporary accommodation for homeless families will be built on the site. The new building will replace the previous hostel which was provided rooms for single homeless men.

Why has the site been empty for so long?

The previous contractor, ESS, unfortunately had to pull off the project due to a significant failure in their supply chain. This meant Camden had to go through the procurement process again.

Camden's project team is in pre-contract discussions with Morgan Sindall.

Who currently operates from the site?

At the moment Farrans, the contractors building the development at the bottom of Bertram Street, are using the site on licence from Camden. Farrans will be leaving the site at the end of October 2023.

Where are the designs? How can I view them?

The designs for the building were given consent in May 2021.

You can find them here: <https://planningrecords.camden.gov.uk/>

Use the search to look for the application number: 2020/3461/P

When the listing for the application comes up, click on the linked application number in the left-hand column and look for 'related documents'. There are 143 related documents: larger documents have been split into sections. All relevant drawings and surveys are available.

Can the design of the building be changed?

Once the designs have received planning consent, and a contractor has been signed up to deliver what is set out in the planning application, there is very little chance of any major changes to the design.

Any amendments to the design would have to go back to the planners to be agreed. This inevitably causes extra delay and expense and happens only where necessary.

For example, if building regulations have changed and the design needed to be adjusted to comply with the updated regulations, or additional works were found to be needed which forced the project to re-visit the costs and 'value engineer' the buildings.

What can I influence?

Morgan Sindall will shortly be consulting on their construction management plan (CMP). This document sets out many important aspects of the build that impact residents, such as the routes taken by vehicles to the site, how air quality, noise and vibration will be monitored.

The CMP needs to be approved by Camden's planners before any work starts on site.

- Throughout the build regular meetings will be held with the contractor and community to address any issues arising as a result of the construction.
- All Camden's contractors must have Considerate Contractor accreditation and provide details for 24/7 contact with the site management. This needs to be visible on the site hoardings before work starts.

The aim is to allow residents to quickly resolve issues directly with the contractor where possible.

How do I find updates about what's happening now?

You can find updates on the project webpage by going to <https://consultations.wearecamden.org/> and putting Chester Rd into the search.

Or scan the QR code:



Queries and issues from 21 September 2023 meeting with residents

I'm unhappy about the design of the new building – what can be done?

The design received planning consent in May 2021. The contractor is appointed to construct the building as designed, so no further change to the design is expected. Only those changes required by an update to Building Regulations are likely to be made at this point.

Construction costs have spiralled. Can Camden still afford to build this hostel?

The hostel will provide temporary accommodation for homeless families that would otherwise have to be placed in expensive and unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation – often a long way outside Camden.

Over time, the savings that will be made by avoiding these B&B expenses will cover the cost of the new family hostel buildings at Chester Rd and Camden Rd. Camden's councillors agreed this method of funding as part of a Mid-Term Financial Strategy.

An increase in costs will mean the pay-back period is longer than previously expected.

Along with the units at the Highgate Newtown development, a lot of new accommodation for families is being provided in this location. Has the impact on schools and health services been considered?

Yes. The families being moved into the accommodation are existing Camden residents. They will already have Camden school places for their children and will already be accessing Camden GP services.

The Camden & Islington NHS commissioning service was consulted about the provision as part of the planning application process and did not anticipate any problems of over-demand.

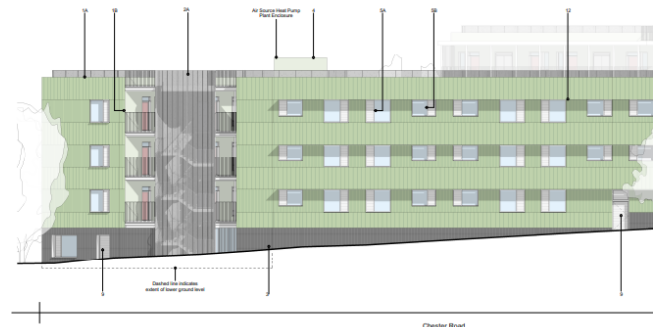
In addition, both Camden and Islington have experienced a drop in birth rates and many schools in the area have actually been struggling to maintain adequate pupil numbers.

The staircase on the outside of the building Chester Rd side will overlook the entrance to Bramshill Gardens. Was this design shown in the planning application?

The external staircases were shown in the original designs in the planning application, May 2021. You can find the drawings online.

Drawing 0614-BPA-06262-PROPOSED SOUTH WEST ELEVATION is shown opposite. >>>

This shows the Chester Rd side of the building facing the junction of Bramshill Gardens. The staircase is shown enclosed with a mesh finish which partially obscures views in and out.



Will this over-looking cause problems with ASB or privacy issues?

The overlooking of a public street is not generally regarded as a privacy issue. Conversely, over-looking of public streets enables them to feel safer for residents to walk through if they are actively used and overlooked by residential buildings.

Families using a stairway to access their accommodation are unlikely to provoke or encourage anti-social behaviour or a loss of privacy at the road junction. There will also be lift access to the floors, so the staircase is likely to be a secondary means of access.

Were the police consulted about whether the hostel would cause ASB?

The Metropolitan Police were consulted about the design and the possibility of any resulting increase in ASB. The advice received indicated that the police consider a family hostel to present a lower risk of ASB in the locality than the previous homeless hostel for single men.

Tackling wider anti-social behaviour issues and challenges:

The area around the Chester Rd site (including Bramshill Gardens) has changed for the worse with an increase in ASB, mostly from drug users. What can be done?

There's no simple answer to this. A multi-agency approach is required which involves the council's Community Safety team, the police (Safer Neighbourhoods Team), estate management colleagues, NHS health services and voluntary groups. All have a role to play. The CIP team is committed to listening to issues raised by residents and involving the appropriate colleagues – those who either have powers or responsibilities for the issues – where we can. We also discuss any local issues and challenges with your ward councillors. The ward councillors are active on your behalf to get the right resources for the area.

Can we discourage ASB around the 2 Chester Rd site specifically? For example - Can the hoarding line along the passage to Colva Walk be changed and widened? Can the vegetation be cut back?

We've heard the requests from residents. Arrangements are being made to commission the necessary works.

How can we avoid the problems caused by contractors that Chester Rd and Bertram Street residents have experienced during the Highgate Newtown development build?

- Comment on the Construction Management Plan so that the expectations of residents are reflected from the outset.
- Make direct contact with the contractors to complain if they are disturbing you or behaving unreasonably. For example, parking their vehicles in the streets around the development, dirt left in the street from vehicles leaving the site, excessive noise and vibration, lights left on after hours, work being carried out beyond the agreed times, vehicles using the wrong route to site, damage being caused to roads and pavements.
- Speak to Camden's project team about your concerns – by email or phone.
- Raise your issues at the Construction Working Group meetings
- Speak to Camden's planning enforcement officers if the contractors are continuing to ignore the concerns raised.

How much longer will Farrans be on the Chester Rd site?

The licence agreement with Farrans is being terminated and they have been asked to leave the site by the end of October.

Residents are advised to report any issues (such as dirt spread onto the road from the site, or vehicles travelling the wrong way up Chester Rd) to the Farrans site manager Ruari on **07702 137 526**

What's the timeline for this build? When will it start and finish?

November 2023: Morgan Sindall will be carrying out some ground (geotechnical) surveys

December 2023 and January 2024: The construction management plan is being produced and consulted on. Sign-off for the CMP is a pre-condition for the work starting.

All being well, we expect the build to take around 18 months. Morgan Sindall should be able to confirm their programme of works shortly, and it's an item that is regularly discussed with the community in the CWG meetings.

At the current moment in time, officers anticipate that the building work should be complete by Autumn 2025. Once the landscaping works, the fit-out of the accommodation and handover to the temporary accommodation is complete, the hostel should be open from early 2026.

Reporting issues to Camden services – latest contacts

If you wish to report Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

or follow up a previously submitted report, please fill in our online form at:

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/community-safety1>

or call 0207 974 4444 go through all options till you have to hold, then on a submenu, option 6 will be Community Safety.

To report any noise issues or nuisance please use the form on

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/report-an-issue>

If you would like to report a crime,

please contact the police on 999 for emergencies, 101 for non-emergencies or

<https://www.met.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

If you are making a referral to Community Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) please contact: communitymarac@Camden.gov.uk

If you have a query regarding Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's)

please contact educationandenforcement@camden.gov.uk

If you have a query regarding CCTV please go to <https://www.camden.gov.uk/cctv>

If you would like to report any safeguarding concerns

relating to an adult or child, please go to

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/safeguarding-adults-and-children>

If you would like to report any issues in Camden's Parks or Open Spaces,
please go to

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/parks-open-spaces>

If you wish to report concerns regarding any rough sleeping or street activity,
please go to <https://camdenrts.co.uk/>

To forward a report to your Neighbourhood Housing Team (if you are a council tenant or a leaseholders) please use

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/your-neighbourhood-housing-officer>

To report any street cleaning issues in Camden,

please use <https://www.camden.gov.uk/love-clean-street>

or <https://www.camden.gov.uk/contact-veolia>