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## Secret garden under threat

By *Victoria Birch*

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*The secret garden facing development*

A SECRET garden hidden just yards from High Wycombe's town centre has been earmarked for homes, despite angry protests from neighbours who say the land is a haven for wildlife.

The 0.48 hectares of land, off Priory Avenue, was once home to Joan Perkins before her death ten years ago. The 87-year-old owned a number of businesses in the area including the old petrol station at Temple End and a furniture factory by her home.

But plans by developers Henry Homes have now been revealed. They involve building eight three-bedroom houses, five two-bedroom apartments and 23 parking spaces. There is also a land swap agreement with nearby Hamilton School by taking a piece of their playground to build a road. In return the school gets an area of land from the site and money for new projects.

The bungalow at Fairacre has been left derelict, and residents say the house should be pulled down and the land turned into a nature reserve as it is home to badgers and a number of plant species.

Lorna Cassidy, 72, an artist who lives in nearby Hampden Road and makes etchings of the site, called it a secret garden which she remembers as being spectacular in its former glory.

However she said there were not many places left like it in Wycombe and called for the council to protect it from development.

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The grandmother, and mum of three, said: "The garden is so magnificent now."

Another neighbour, who didn't want to be named, added: "There are about five or six badger setts. There are so many animals living there at the moment. There is a World War Two air raid shelter there. It's a piece of history."

"Next month it is the tenth anniversary of her death. She would be turning in her grave."

**Neighbour**

"Next month it is the tenth anniversary of her death. She would be turning in her grave."

anniversary of her death. She would be turning in her grave."

He added: "It used to be a real middle class leafy avenue but it has been eroded by flat developments."

Wycombe District Council received the application and it is currently under consultation.

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Phil Perkins, Joan's son, did not want to comment on the application.

Stephen Britnell, managing director at Henry Homes, said: "The proposals put forward by Henry Homes for the Fairacre site seek to respond to local housing needs in the area and the scheme's design has been produced to respect and respond to the surrounding area.

"Henry Homes has approached the proposed redevelopment of this site with sensitivity and recognises its constraints and opportunities.

"In respect of ecological matters relating to the site, an independent and specialist consultant has been appointed and Henry Homes recognises the need to manage such issues appropriately and with due care and consideration. In light of such matters, appropriate mitigation measures will be produced and discussed with council officers.

"We will continue to work with council officers in respect of the scheme and look forward to holding further discussions."

8:00am today

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Posted by: Sally on [8:19am today](#)

well who agreed planning permission on this land?  
its the sodding council again isnt it? people should  
camp out in the garden and stop the bulldozers  
coming in we have to make a stand against this kind  
of bullying!

**Quote | Report this post**

Posted by: Hungry Badger, high wycombe on  
[9:37am today](#)

There are laws protecting badger sets so they may  
find a lot of problems trying to get this done.

**Quote | Report this post**

Posted by: JD, High Wycombe on [9:52am today](#)

**Sally** wrote:  
well who agreed planning permission  
on this land? its the sodding council  
again isnt it? people should camp out  
in the garden and stop the bulldozers  
coming in we have to make a stand  
against this kind of bullying!

gon on then - who is stopping you? Like most BFP  
readers - whinge whinge whinge - but do nothing  
about it. Pathetic.

**Quote | Report this post**

Posted by: MarkD on [10:16am today](#)

You are the pathetic one JARseD she is right people  
do need to stop this "nice" areas being built on willy  
nilly the Council do have a lot to answer for here.

**Quote | Report this post**

Posted by: John Prescott, Westminster, SW1 on  
[10:47am today](#)

This WILL go through, or I'll make it subject to a  
Compulsory Purchase Order. I want 280,000 Homes  
built across the Thames Valley before 2010 to  
accomodate all my Immigrant friends...so b0llox to  
the lot of you!!

**Quote | Report this post**

Posted by: Ivor Bigun on [12:05pm today](#)

Of course this garden should be saved from developers, it is just the type of development proposed here that has ruined this town, sadly the council have let most of them go through.

Let's hope the protected status of the badger sets will help to stop this unnecessary and unwanted development.

**Have you seen Ivor's blog? Click on the "Opinion" link on the menu on the left then click on "Bucks Blog".**

**Quote | Report this post**

Posted by: WattT, Wycombe on [12:39pm today](#)

The usual conspiracy of freemasons, architects, surveyors and other assorted tories will push it through. Jobs for the boys, payoff for the school and more concrete over our open spaces.

**Quote | Report this post**

Posted by: A. Hall, Terriers on [2:48pm today](#)

**WattT** wrote:

The usual conspiracy of freemasons, architects, surveyors and other assorted tories will push it through. Jobs for the boys, payoff for the school and more concrete over our open spaces.

Absolutely true. One of the school governors has a big job at the architects who did the plans for the developers. Typical sleaze and greed and not caring for the environment or locals. They are destroying Wycombe.

**Quote | Report this post**

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