



Safety in your building

22 May 2023

Peppermint Heights,
Northwick Road,
Alperton,
HA0

Dear residents,

New external building design to be sent to Brent Council planning department

Since the start of the year, we have been speaking with Brent Council planning department about the external wall remediation proposals and how this will change the visual appearance of the building. This is a consultation process before we submit a formal planning application.

The new design

The feature fins that are on the ends of the building need to be removed from the building as the way they are designed and constructed would aid a fire in spreading. Removing the fins will significantly change the appearance of the building, therefore Brent asked us to consider alternative visual features.

After reviewing various options, we proposed to Brent that we could create intricate coloured render designs at both ends of the building and darker shade to the low rise wings and central core. We presented a variety of designs to Brent and the preferred design (shown below) is based on a weave pattern which will bring visual interest to Peppermint Heights rather than a single colour render design.

The render system is similar to what is currently on the building however non-combustible rockwool insulation will be used instead of polystyrene insulation which is the currently on the building. This will address the fire safety concerns with the external walls. We will shortly be submitting a formal planning application to Brent. As part of this process, they will notify residents and other interested parties as per their consultation process.



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A summary of this letter

The 'fins' on the side of the building will have to be removed to stop fire spread in the event of an incident.

Brent Council asked that we presented some options so that the building was still visually interesting.

The preferred design is a 'weave' pattern to keep some visual interest, rather than just using the same colour.

The new system will include non-combustible insulation, fixing the current problems with the insulation at Peppermint Heights.

We've agreed that work to remediate spandrel panels in between windows can take place from the outside, which will be less disruptive for residents.

Work will no longer take place to the playground/ground floor due to costs.

If everything goes to plan, we hope we can start putting up scaffolding in January 2024.

A reminder

Your building's fire strategy is **simultaneous evacuation**, which means you must evacuate if you hear the fire alarm, even if you think it is a false alarm.



Spandrel panels work to take place from the outside

Residents will be aware from our earlier letters that we have been considering the best way to remediate spandrel panels. Spandrel panels are the cladding panels in between windows on the building, which have combustible insulation in the core. We conducted two trials in March to help decide how best to remediate the panels.

The first trial involved fully removing a window to replace the spandrel panels and the second trial involved cutting the spandrel panel from outside and then re-fixing a new spandrel panel. Both these have helped our design team to agree a remediation approach which will mean all the works can take place from outside. The alternative was to remove windows from flats and then carry out the work which would have been much more disruptive for residents.

Rooftop playground and landscaping

In December, we wrote to you about the second floor roof playground/amenity and landscaping on the ground floor. We have undertaken some initial design work on this so far. Due to the extent and potential cost of this redesign, we regret to inform you that we do not intend on taking this forward as part of the external wall remediation project. The situation will remain as it is now.

Next steps and timeline

The next steps are to secure planning permission followed by obtaining Building Control consent and tendering the works. We expect this process to take approximately six months. If this process goes to plan, then we think it may be possible to start scaffolding from January 2024. Separately we are also continuing discussions with the original contractor about returning to complete the necessary work. If these discussions are successful, then we may not need to tender the works.

You can see our letters here: www.networkhomes.org.uk/peppermintbuildingsafety/. Or get in touch on customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk if you have any questions.

Kind regards

Raj Gandecha
Head of Resident Management (Building Safety)