# Sarah Hadland and Jude Law lead community fight against Blackheath housing plan



Actress Sarah Hadland, renowned for her role in "Miranda" and as a recent finalist on "Strictly Come Dancing," has taken a vocal stand against a controversial housing development proposed in Blackheath, a cherished village in south-east London. Known for its strong community spirit and historical charm, Blackheath became London's first conservation area jointly with Greenwich in 1968. Hadland has joined hundreds of residents and a cadre of celebrities—including Jude Law, fashion icon Jeff Banks, and humanitarian Sir Terry Waite—in opposing plans by the north London developer Acorn to build 45 new homes on the Blackheath Station car park, the site that hosts a valued weekly farmers’ market.

The development plans include 20 terraced houses and 25 flats arranged within two towering blocks, which critics say are ill-suited both in scale and style for the area. Locals argue that these modern structures would drastically alter the village’s Victorian character, dwarf the adjacent terraces on Collins Street, and impose on nearby primary schools. Hadland condemns the scheme as "ugly" and "completely incongruous," warning that such projects reflect a broader trend where developers, motivated by profit, override community interests and planning norms. "They don't have to live here," Hadland lamented in an exclusive interview, highlighting the stark contrast between strict enforcement of planning rules on residents and the apparent leniency toward developers.

A key point of contention lies in the drastic reduction of parking spaces—from 162 down to just 17—raising fears of increased congestion, unsafe traffic conditions, and pollution in a village not designed for substantial lorry or car traffic. Hadland underscored concerns about child safety, given the high number of schools and nurseries in the area, and the broader impact on local amenities, notably the farmers' market, which is central to Blackheath's community life. She described the council’s support for the development as "mystifying" and symptomatic of authorities' readiness to bend rules to favour developers, with little tangible benefit returning to the community.

This opposition is not limited to Hadland. Jude Law, who grew up in Blackheath and attended a junior school near the proposed site, has voiced strong objections, arguing that the plans fail to meet actual housing needs and instead threaten the village's character. Musician Chris Difford of Squeeze lamented the potential loss of the village’s skyline and freedom, while Mark Knopfler described Blackheath as one of London’s last intact villages that must be preserved. Sir Terry Waite and Jeff Banks also contributed to a public letter emphasizing Blackheath's unique community fabric and urging for planning decisions to prioritize heritage over profit.

The developer Acorn, however, insists that they have engaged extensively with residents, businesses, and stakeholders—including the Blackheath Society—throughout the pre-application process. The company claims the scheme will deliver 45 "high-quality sustainable homes," including much-needed social-rented, family-sized affordable housing. They also pledge to enhance and re-provide the farmers' market and claim the project offers public benefits aligned with social, environmental, and economic sustainability.

This clash in perspectives epitomises a broader national debate on balancing housing development with heritage preservation and community wellbeing. Hadland’s rallying cry serves as a call to action for communities across the UK to assert their rights and resist developments perceived as exploitative or harmful. As she told the Daily Mail, "If people aren’t able to do this, if they don’t have the time or the resources to complain, they will be running roughshod over various parts of the country just to make money."

Such disputes are not isolated. Similar controversies have emerged elsewhere, including large-scale housing proposals in Kent, highlighting growing unease about the pace and nature of development in historically and ecologically sensitive areas. The Blackheath campaign underscores the complex tensions that local authorities, developers, and residents navigate as they seek to reconcile growth with community protection.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15133025/Miranda-star-Sarah-Hadland-issues-rallying-cry-joins-Jude-Law.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.the-independent.com/voices/blackheath-housing-developers-sarah-hadland-strictly-b2831321.html), [[4]](https://rejectblackheathstation.co.uk/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15133025/Miranda-star-Sarah-Hadland-issues-rallying-cry-joins-Jude-Law.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://greenwichwire.co.uk/2025/09/12/blackheath-car-park-farmers-market-housing-jude-law/), [[5]](https://sayart.net/news/view/1065651006789501)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15133025/Miranda-star-Sarah-Hadland-issues-rallying-cry-joins-Jude-Law.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.the-independent.com/voices/blackheath-housing-developers-sarah-hadland-strictly-b2831321.html), [[4]](https://rejectblackheathstation.co.uk/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15133025/Miranda-star-Sarah-Hadland-issues-rallying-cry-joins-Jude-Law.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://greenwichwire.co.uk/2025/09/12/blackheath-car-park-farmers-market-housing-jude-law/), [[4]](https://rejectblackheathstation.co.uk/)
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* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15133025/Miranda-star-Sarah-Hadland-issues-rallying-cry-joins-Jude-Law.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.the-independent.com/voices/blackheath-housing-developers-sarah-hadland-strictly-b2831321.html), [[4]](https://rejectblackheathstation.co.uk/)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15133025/Miranda-star-Sarah-Hadland-issues-rallying-cry-joins-Jude-Law.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5ye4rp2dvxo)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15133025/Miranda-star-Sarah-Hadland-issues-rallying-cry-joins-Jude-Law.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.the-independent.com/voices/blackheath-housing-developers-sarah-hadland-strictly-b2831321.html> - In this opinion piece, Sarah Hadland, best known for her role in 'Miranda' and as a former 'Strictly Come Dancing' finalist, expresses her concerns over a proposed housing development in Blackheath, London. She describes Blackheath as a charming village with a strong community spirit and highlights the potential negative impacts of the development, including increased traffic, loss of green spaces, and threats to local businesses. Hadland calls for the preservation of the village's character and urges residents to oppose the development to protect their community.
3. <https://greenwichwire.co.uk/2025/09/12/blackheath-car-park-farmers-market-housing-jude-law/> - This article discusses the controversy surrounding a proposed housing development on the Blackheath station car park. The plan includes building 20 houses and 25 flats, along with a new facility for the Blackheath Farmers’ Market. The development has faced significant opposition from local residents and celebrities, including Jude Law, who argue that the project is out of character for the area and could negatively impact the community. The article also presents the developer's perspective, highlighting the potential benefits of the project.
4. <https://rejectblackheathstation.co.uk/> - The 'Reject Blackheath Station' campaign website provides information and updates on the opposition to the proposed housing development at Blackheath station. The site includes details about the planning application, community objections, and support from public figures. It also offers resources for residents to get involved and express their concerns to local authorities. The campaign emphasizes the importance of preserving the village's character and heritage in the face of the proposed development.
5. <https://sayart.net/news/view/1065651006789501> - This news article reports on the defense of a controversial housing project at Blackheath station by the project's architect, John Pardey. Despite facing strong opposition from a celebrity-backed campaign, including actor Jude Law, Pardey argues that the development will enhance Blackheath Village by replacing a car-centric environment with a thoughtfully designed residential area. The article provides insights into the developer's perspective and the ongoing debate between preserving the village's character and accommodating new housing.
6. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5ye4rp2dvxo> - This BBC News article covers the support of a newly-elected county councillor, Sarah Emberson, for opponents of a proposed housing development in Kent. The development plans include 5,000 new homes on Lenham Heath, a project that has sparked controversy. Emberson's backing highlights the ongoing debates and community concerns regarding large-scale housing projects and their impact on local environments and communities.
7. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/jude-law-s-charm-offensive-sees-highgate-basement-approved-without-a-hitch-8112726.html> - This article from the London Evening Standard reports on actor Jude Law's successful efforts to gain approval for extensive renovations to his Georgian home in Highgate. Despite initial concerns from neighbours about the impact of the basement extension, Law engaged with the community to address their fears, leading to unanimous support for the project. The article highlights Law's proactive approach to community relations and the importance of neighbourly engagement in planning applications.