



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Church Lane**Dear Editor**

With regard to Ms Chamberlain's comments about Church Lane in November's edition, she may have opened a huge can of worms...

Firstly, she is mistaken, as many are, that Church Lane is one way. The entrance at the East End Road junction is two way (in fact, so is the bridge - no, really, it is!), but most drivers entering into Church Lane from this junction turn in ON THE WRONG SIDE of the road - there is an accident waiting to happen - actually, plenty have happened, but a major one is inevitable due to the increasing speed at which many drivers approach.

Secondly, since the North Circular Road changes have been completed, there has been a notable increase of traffic using this residential, narrow lane as a cut-through. The stationary traffic that sits on the North Circular Road heading east between Henley's Corner and the slip road with the High Road gives rise to cars coming off at Henley's Corner, up Regents Park Road, onto East End Road and down Church Lane to rejoin the North Circular Road - it's quicker!

The only possible option to stop the rat runners (which will no doubt help other areas such as Deansway, Ossulton Way, Long Lane, Leopold Road, Leslie Road and Hampstead Garden Suburb) is to close the road at the bridge which will direct traffic back onto the main 'A' roads. Maybe then, residents/pedestrians/children in the vicinity will feel better protected and more able to use "The Walks" for example.

I hope Barnet Council are aware of other, more centrally located, councils' actions to combat the increasing problems of car travel and act now to prevent the situation getting any worse.

I know a road closure may inconvenience some locals (myself included), but surely, an extra few minutes to reach our homes, far outweighs the disruption and continuous traffic flow in such an unsuitable environment caused by a major road "improvement".

A trip to the council's website, with regard to car ownership/traffic management, in particular points 15.6 and 15.8, is well worth a visit.

Yours sincerely

**P Brown
Church Lane, N2**

PS. Your paper is truly appreciated.

Danger on two bridges**Dear Editor**

We used to live in The Causeway and the prospect of crossing the bridge in East End Road was terrifying - no two people could pass safely especially if one was pushing a wheelchair, pram or basket on wheels.

In February 1995 I wrote to Mr Khamisa (I think our councillor then) complaining of this dangerous pathway and also the turning of the heavy lorries into Fortis Green, saying that the majority had to mount the paving stones to get around the corner - the number of times the traffic lights had been knocked over. Your paper printed a picture of this frequent happening at that time.

I, too, pointed out that near Forty Hall at Enfield there was a similar bridge where the council had put traffic lights on either side of the roadway leading to this narrow area which controlled the traffic.

Unfortunately, I have not got the reply, but I do remember them saying as the bridge was over a railway nothing could be done, but the question of heavy lorries turning into Fortis Green was improved.

We suppose the council will wait until there is a bad accident over the bridge or the lorries turning into Fortis Green before they will do anything. Then there will be long debates about safety measures etc!

**Yours sincerely
Phyllis Kennedy (Mrs)
Diploma Avenue, N2.**

Money for schools**Dear Editor**

Your November issue carries on the front page coverage of the recent Finchley Forum meeting and the problem currently being experienced by a number of parents who are unable to find a suitable local secondary school for their children.

Your article reports Councillor McGuirk as saying "...The Department of Health has promised £1 million towards the building of a school - either on the site or elsewhere - but so far this has not been received."

At the time of writing this letter that is factually true...the Department have not yet paid the monies, but it was only in recent weeks that

the council actually asked for the money.

The implication of her reported words were that there is still scope for a new school to help meet the needs of the children who are expected to be living on the former Friern Barnet Hospital site. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The £1 million to which she referred (and more) has been allocated to Holly Park primary school to enable that school to expand so that it takes two forms of entry each year rather than just in some years. This is much welcomed but will not solve the problems of the growing population that is moving in to the new homes on the site. Not a penny has been allocated to any secondary school to alleviate any of the increasing pressures that exist for places in our local schools.

Further the council under its Labour/Liberal leadership has also given up the right to have any of the land on the site for a school and I believe accepted the paltry sum of £50,000 for that land.

Councillor McGuirk who is a member of the Inner Cabinet within the Council should have been well aware of all of the above. If your report of her comments is accurate then you'll see the way that she was trying to pull the wool over the eyes of those present. If she was not aware of the facts...well I will leave your readers to draw their own conclusions about my views on her competency.

Elsewhere in your paper you also cover comments made at the same Forum meeting with regard

to the perceived dangers for cyclists using the cycle lane in Church Lane. I raised this matter over two years ago at a meeting of the then Public Works Committee. I was supported in my assessment of the danger by the then Labour councillor Jo Salisbury who lived in the road. Sadly nothing has happened since and we should just be grateful that no accidents have happened yet. Maybe now we will see the additional warning signs for motorists that cyclists could be just over the brow or for the lane to be taken out altogether.

**Yours sincerely
Cllr Brian Salinger
Conservative
Friern Barnet Ward**

Noise control**Dear Editor**

Today I had a pleasant surprise. I went to complain about the door chimes on the Northern line trains. My pleasant surprise, was that I was very cordially received by some of the staff members at East Finchley station.

So I suggest that any readers of *THE ARCHER* who are not particularly fond of being screamed at by a female robot (twice per station) or do not enjoy, as I did not enjoy, listening to continual door chimes between Euston and East Finchley, mount the spiral staircase at the station and complain complain complain.

**Cheers
Frank Gordon
fg@gordonf.free-
online.co.uk**

Baronsmere Road: unacceptable delays?**Dear Editor**

We were very surprised to see an anonymous article in the last edition apparently opposing the proposed restriction on through traffic along Baronsmere Road. Is this your editorial line?

The rat running along Southern Road and Baronsmere Road is a blight on the whole residential area. Baronsmere Road is often gridlocked in the morning. The road is not wide enough for the amount of traffic it carries. The speeding cars and lorries are a danger to all.

Your article misrepresents the new restricted access arrangements. There will be no incentive for non-resident cars to turn right off Fortis Green. As for Fairlawn Avenue - that could easily be made an access only road from Fortis Green.

The whole point is that this residential area cannot cope with exponential growth of car use. If these restrictions lead to longer journey times then car users will be forced to reconsider their travel arrangements.

Restricted car access is an increasingly common approach in London for tackling environmental problems - look at the right turn roads off Fortis Green from Midhurst Avenue onwards towards Muswell Hill.

We very much hope *THE ARCHER* is fully behind the common sense improvements that have been proposed. After all you are supposed to be a community newspaper.

**Yours sincerely
Michael Hanley
Baronsmere Road, N2**

Dear Editor

We were very happy to see *THE ARCHER* come off the fence on an issue important to East Finchley. However, we were amazed at your bad judgement.

Are we to believe that *THE ARCHER* would prefer the wholly residential area south of Fortis Green to be a vehicular filter for commuters?

Surely, a few more minutes spent by driver only cars on roads designated for commuter traffic is a small price to pay to maintain the environment and provide the safety that our elderly and children deserve. People who cut through these roads are already in a determined mood to save time, their speed is very often in excess of the 30mph limit and their tolerance to residents is short and abusive. We have lived in the area for five years, and we have seen the situation worsen.

Let us prevent any further deterioration and pull together to make the residential areas of East Finchley a safer, cleaner place to live!

Incidentally, this headstrong article was not attributed to anyone, but we would hazard a guess that they use these roads to cut through, just as they use *THE ARCHER* for their own purpose's. "To put it politely", perhaps *THE ARCHER* should get back on the fence and be objective.

**Yours Sincerely
Jane & James Elliott
Baronsmere Rd, N2.**

Dear Editor

...The network of roads between Fortis Green and Cherry Tree Woods is currently blighted by the huge volume of cars, taxis, vans and even lorries "rat-running" through the area in order to join or exit the High Road and avoid the Fortis Green traffic lights...

...The vast majority of this traffic is not from residents of the roads themselves but people on longer journeys seeking to knock a few minutes off their journey time. Many of these vehicle users have little or no regard for local people or for the narrowness of the residential streets through which they pass...

Obviously, in order to reduce the through traffic, residents of the affected network of roads may face slightly longer journey times as they too have to queue at the lights. I would argue that this is a small price to pay compared to the environmental and health and safety costs of the present situation. I would also suggest that the inference in your article that roads running north-to-south will not benefit from the scheme, because local residents' cars will use those roads to join/exit Fortis Green, is erroneous...

...I would urge *THE ARCHER*, therefore, to rethink its stance in relation to East Finchley's proposed environmental improvements, and ask its readers to support this much needed scheme.

**Yours faithfully
Sarah Cameron
Baronsmere Road, N2.**

Editor's reply:

We are not advocating the use of any residential road as a rat run for commuters and believe that the banning of left turns out onto the High Road and right turns from the High Road will make a major difference to residents of Baronsmere Road.

There are, however, certain factors that seem to have been overlooked by the residents of Baronsmere Road and which we did wish to bring to the readership's attention concerning the impact on the wider area.

Aside from the inconvenience to local residents, if stopping commuters cutting through Baronsmere leads to long queues at the traffic lights then we expect the rat runners to try to find other short cuts. Perhaps they will turn down Eastern Road, race along Southern Road and then charge up Park Hall Road to cut into the queue nearer the lights. They may decide that it is quicker to turn right up Durham Road and race down the County roads, something they will probably do in both directions. The point we wish to make is that, whilst the residents of Baronsmere Road should not have to put up with commuter rat runners, the current scheme seems unlikely to solve the real problem of too many cars in too small a space, but will merely shift the problem somewhere else.

East Finchley has a large number of traffic related problems that are only likely to be solved if and when the council takes a long hard look at the overall situation and produces a plan that satisfies all interested parties.

The plan to limit access to and from the High Road via Baronsmere Road will only work if it is part of such a plan. In such circumstances few local residents will overly object to the inconvenience of being forced to negotiate the lights at the junction between Fortis Green and the High Road in order to reach their homes in roads like Cherry Tree Road or Summerlee Avenue. However, what is currently planned is merely tinkering around the edges of the problem and we fear will do no more than shift it elsewhere.

In a perfect world a system of control gates would be installed to stop all through traffic using residential roads as rat runs. As it is, whilst we are delighted that the residents of Baronsmere Road will hopefully be spared the daily torment of commuters taking short cuts, we do feel that more needs to be done to return East Finchley to its residents.

**David Hobbs,
Editor.**