



years. Photo by Toni Morgan

Viceroy Close Car Park Development

By John Dearing

The Viceroy Close car park behind Budgens' supermarket is a shambles. Household, garden and builder's rubbish is strewn all over the place by casual visitors. Pallets, piles of rotting cardboard, bent metal trolleys and other shop rubbish litter the edges. Dumped cars block the place up, currently at least six of them. There are massive, ankle-twisting potholes everywhere.

With no control exercised, casual visitors and all-day commuters park where they like with no regard for the shops and garage owners who need access for their vehicles. Despite being private property, it is *de facto* a public car park, an important part of the East Finchley Village community centre, but the cost of this is paid by the Viceroy Close residents, on behalf of the whole community!

Anyway, last summer the freehold was sold. It then appears that the car park was further sold off to developers, who now seek outline planning permission to build 18 one-bedroom flats, with 22 parking spaces provided for the new residents, with a control gate on the entrance. Their plan is to build a four storey structure over half of the site, plus a two storey structure in the space, presently fenced off, at the end of the existing rows of garages. The main building will be on stilts, with parking and access to garages and Iceland under the building.

Close encounters

Residents of Viceroy Close feel that this is a serious over-development, that the four storey building will be intrusive, cutting down on light to their properties, depriving them of parking facilities, and causing increased disturbance. No doubt local house owners

and the Islamic centre will not be pleased about this development looming over them. Equally, the shops will be concerned about the loss of trade and the restrictions on access for deliveries.

On the other hand, the whole sub-structure of the car park is likely to be renewed, and the control gate may end the parking problems and the fly tipping.

Overall, it seems likely that some kind of development will happen, eventually. Hopefully the planning process will cause it to be scaled down as much as possible.

Thoughtful?

By Sippy Azizollah

To all those car drivers out there who unwittingly park on kerb drops on the corner of the streets of East Finchley, please spare a thought for those of us in wheelchairs, and people pushing children in buggies.

The kerb drops are there for a purpose, which is to help us cross the road.

And finally, I'd like to thank the gentleman who asked me to wait at the kerb drop on the corner of Kitchener Road and the High Road while he went to drop his dry cleaning off at the cleaners. Thoughtful? I think not.



Soon to be transformed - the Texaco/Victory Motors site.

Photo by Sippy Azizollah

In the Eye of the Beholder

By Diana Cormack

"Señor, señor, do you know where we're headin'?"

Lincoln County Road or Armageddon?" - Bob Dylan (1978).

"Some rather tatty kiosks set on a corner site," is a description heard recently about the parade of shops near the junction of Lincoln Road and the High Road. At first glance they don't look very inspiring, but if you take a closer look you will find that there is more to them than meets the eye, and developers have done just that. Immediately behind the shops is an empty property which was used for various commercial purposes in the past, including carpentry, dressmaking, and mattress making.

The proposal is for "construction of second floor to existing commercial building together with the conversion of ground and first floors to provide six self-contained residential units and one shop unit and alterations to elevations at 5 Lincoln Parade."



Under threat - Lincoln Parade. Photo by Toni Morgan

Number 5 is the part of the building that faces on to Lincoln Road and is at present being used by the builders of a new house and studio opposite. This house site includes a parking area, but there is no room for such provision on the Lincoln Parade site.

In addition, there would not be much room between the back of the shops and the front of the residential units, raising

the question of unhindered access and storage of rubbish bins as well as a lack of light to the lower floors.

"Everything Electrical" has recently moved from Lincoln Parade to the High Road and the shop is still vacant at the time of writing, raising concerns about the future of the remaining properties. How much more valuable would the site be were they all to become empty?

Going, Going, Gone!

By Sippy Azizollah

The George, which was situated in The Market Place East Finchley, is sadly no longer. It is said to have a history that dates it back to the 1700s, when Finchley was the selling point for the pigs of five counties.

The George was said to cater for the pig dealers and pork butchers, and the pigs were penned in a field at the rear of the pub until market day on a Monday.

In 1836 a fire destroyed the slaughterhouse, the stables and badly damaged The George, but luckily the property was well insured. The old inn was demolished around 1890, and the newly renovated pub stood more off the beaten track. It catered for more local trade than in the early days.

Just before its demolition, the pub was said to have suffered a great loss of custom due to its position in the area and consistent road restrictions being enforced around the pub.

As it was being pulled down, I watched day by day as The George disappeared from view behind the fencing, which kept it from the public view.

The George will be sadly missed, like so many of our historical sites which have had their day in East Finchley.

Half a Million

Seventy-five of Barnet's small businesses are to benefit from funding of £500,000 dedicated to training managers and employees of small retail and distribution firms. The initiative, called 'Upbeat 2' has been funded by combining a £230,000 award from the European Social Fund with £280,000 pledged by Barnet council, and starts this spring for a period of two years.

The scheme will focus on computers, customer services, marketing and sales and will be tailored to each individual businesses need. Delivered either at the workplace or at local training centres, Upbeat 2 has been developed by Barnet College, North London TEC, North London Chamber of Commerce, Prevista, North London Business Link and the Retail Distributive Learning Network.

Endorsing *The Archer's* various campaigns supporting East Finchley traders, Councillor Monroe Palmer, Barnet's Cabinet Member for Development and Regeneration said:

"Town centre businesses are the backbone of the local economy and we are very keen to see smaller firms develop and grow. This is a brilliant initiative, which will not only

enhance the skills of staff, but also the competitiveness of these firms. This can only be good for business."

The Archer has calculated that this scheme equates to just under £7,000 per participating business, and would like to see local traders benefit from this scheme. Commenting on the funding, Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Danish Chopra, said:

"This is great news for businesses in the borough. We will continue to working with partner organisations to attract funding for programmes like this one"

If you wish to find out more, please contact David Sklair at Barnet Council on 020 8359 2403. *The Archer* would like to know how you got on with your application, what you got, and what value you placed on it.