



YOUR WAITROSE LETTERS

Off balance?

Dear Editor

Front page report - November Archer - on Waitrose Development. At last, as your headline puts it, "Waitrose shows its hand" - and your paper has been able to outline the proposals under discussion. Once again, however, I noticed the highly biased reporting (in favour rather than against) of the proposed Waitrose development opposite East Finchley tube station.

Although you go some way towards balance, by noting the "mixed" views of local residents, the report is skewed in favour of the representations of those apparently in favour of the scheme. For example Rudi Vis, who is on record as broadly supportive to the idea of a Waitrose on the site, is reported as commenting on the "50-50" scores of local residents for and against the proposal. However, you include no direct quotes from people against the scheme, particularly those living near the site. The majority of truly local residents to the site are, of course, opposed to the idea. Furthermore, Rudi Vis's claim that small local shops would still be supported has no evidence to back it up. All evidence points to the way in which large stores and supermarkets put small local shops out of business.

Cynical

You also include references to two "sops" to the scheme with, again, no comments from those opposed to it. Firstly we are given the sop of a new "small library" to replace the existing one - and the reason for this is given that the existing one is "too expensive to update with adequate disabled access". The existing library could easily be fitted with a lift. If such improvements are deemed too expensive, can the needs of East Finchley's disabled people really justify the demolition of several

period houses and local shops, a supermarket and an underground car park - thus changing the whole face and character of East Finchley and eating up valuable lawned space and light? It seems more that council collusion with big business is cynically exploiting appeals to "political correctness" in order to mask their aims of further development projects.

You also include a reference to Councillor Alison Moore on "traffic calming" to be paid for by Waitrose. This is clearly a diversion: the proposed Waitrose plan will only increase the amount of traffic and highly polluting traffic movements in the area. You go no way, however, to solicit comments from people with more impartial views on this, or from those opposed to the scheme.

Looking forward to more balanced reporting.

Yours sincerely
K. Goaman
(address supplied)

Editors Reply.

Thank you for your comment. We are particularly keen to ensure that *The Archer* reports issues in a balanced manner, and to ensure that 'opinion' is clearly identified as such. That said, I can understand your impression of a certain imbalance in last month's coverage of the Waitrose development plans.

Unfortunately, *THE ARCHER* only received the information on the evening prior to our deadline. Whilst strenuous attempts were made to canvass opinion on all sides, time, alas, was against us.

I hope you will agree that this month's more in-depth coverage explores the issues more comprehensively. This coupled, we hope, with feedback from our readers in future issues, will ensure that people will be able to make a judgment based on information, rather than rumour.

Thanks again for your letter, *THE ARCHER* is, after all, your community newspaper, and feedback from readers is both welcome and invaluable.

Disbelief

Dear Editor

I have watched with disbelief the progress of an unsubstantiated rumour to a seemingly 'done deal' for the proposed Waitrose scheme in East Finchley.

The whole enterprise seems cloaked in secrecy at local authority level, while quite detailed plans are available in local shops. Without any apparent public consultation, statistics on local opinion are being bandied about. I've certainly never been asked, though I willingly express my objections to anyone who will listen (that, alas, doesn't seem to include our councillors).

Aside from the loss of specialist local traders, the biggest objection is on the grounds of pollution and traffic congestion. I was amused by the suggestion that Waitrose should pay for 'traffic calming' measures. Even without their estimated 200 cars an hour, huge delivery lorries, and home delivery vans, we have near stand-still up to Fortis Green junction, with tail-backs sometimes right up to North Hill during peak times. The only calming needed will be counselling for the drivers, who may be tempted to make risk manoeuvres.

Jacky Wood

Changing places

Dear Sirs

From reading *THE ARCHER* over the last year or so, it seems East Finchley is split about 50-50 with regards to Waitrose opposite the station.

However from my knowledge of the area - one thing nearly all East Finchley residents seem to have in common is a general lack of satisfaction with Budgens. Be it, they are too expensive, too slow, poor selection, etc., etc.

Can we not get to a point which seems eminently sensible for all?

Can Waitrose not replace Budgens, in the same position that Budgens currently occupies?

Thus, we should not have more traffic, or worry about losing small businesses, but just replace one big company with another one which is more to the liking of the community.

Jon Belinfante
65 Leslie Road

Think local

Dear Sir

I am absolutely horrified at the thought of Waitrose in East Finchley.

I wish someone would give a thought to the plight of the small shopkeepers who give a very good service and to the people who live in the flats above.

What about the local mini-cabs?

Della Dagers
Twyford Avenue

GARDENING

Cherish Your Trees

By Zena Robson

I can't believe we're coming up to the end of another year - scary, eh? And I do hope you were not too clobbered by the autumn storms. I've heard of flying greenhouses, mulch-matting taking off across the sky like great black galleons and beloved trees standing with jagged limbs. I'm a bit of a tree-hugger (literally!) and I really get upset when I see the big old trees being unceremoniously uprooted or mauled. I suppose it's a lesson in looking after them. If you have large trees in your garden, it might be a good idea to get them cut back and thinned out in order to give less resistance to the winds.

You've collected, bagged and stacked all your leaves, know to stay off the lawn, and are just hanging on for the snowdrops

Horticulture

So what is there to write about? Well, I thought you might be up to handling a bit of Latin! It's very helpful if you have some inkling of what plant names tell you - usually the second part of the name, the *species* bit. For instance, *quercifolia* as in *Hydrangea quercifolia*...mmm, I hear you think, that sounds like the Latin for oak - *Quercus* and you'd be right. So what does *quercifolia* tell you? Put the *querc* with the *folia* and you have it - OAK-LEAVED! Amazing, isn't it?!

So, on to others: *nitida* as in *Lonicera nitida* means shining leaves; *nana* as in *Lavandula nana* means dwarf; *reticulata* as in *Iris reticulata*, those little darlings that pop up in spring, meaning net-veined and if you study the flowers close-up you'll see why. On the other hand *Lonicera reticulata* refers to the yellow veining on the leaves. Then there's the ones that tell you about colour: *niger* as in black. 'Pardon?' I hear you say, 'But we all know that *Helleborus niger* has white flowers!' True, but look at the stems! Then there's *lutea* meaning yellow, *sanguineum* meaning blood-red, *argentea* meaning silver and *aurea* meaning gold.

Don't forget place and people names - *sinensis* as in China and *darwinii* - no prizes for that one!! The great thing is that once you've got the hang of it, it can really help you in understanding where a plant originated and so what growing conditions it will require. Have a great Christmas and New Year, and you could always ask for a book that explains plant names in your stocking!

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