



Your Waitrose Letters

Voting plans

Having heard about the proposal of a new Waitrose in East Finchley, I was wondering if members of the London Borough of Barnet Planning Committee ever have to stand for re-election. If so, would this be their manifesto regarding the future of East Finchley?

1. Kill off local businesses and community services by encouraging unnecessary new supermarkets to be built.

2. Promote extreme traffic congestion on local roads that were never

designed to cope.

3. Refuse to invest in the local library to promote access for disabled people and maintain access for primary school children.

4. Consider selling off playing fields that are the only green space for many local children.

5. Do their best to destroy a vibrant community and leave a legacy of factors causing significant harm to the health of local people for years to come. Would you vote for them?

Dr Mike Solomon
Bedford Road N2

Firmly in favour

I have considered the various opinions expressed within the pages of your excellent newspaper and they have helped me come to a decision in favour of the new development.

The concept of a reasonable-sized supermarket, modern library and community room at the centre of all East Finchley's public transport links is nothing short of brilliant and may even encourage people out of their cars.

Being totally dependent on public transport, it will be of enormous benefit to me (and others) to have a good local supermarket on a direct bus route and to be able to combine this with use of the library (the present one being out on a limb). Who knows, maybe I might even combine this with some shopping on the High Road, something I have no reason to do at present.

I have no hesitation in suggesting the development will be in the long-term interests of the East Finchley community: socially, economically and environmentally.

One reservation though; I should like to think that an accommodation can be reached with GLH so that access to their minicabs can be maintained on the site, which is opposite the station.

Tony Roberts
Sedgemere Avenue N2

My favourite store

There are plenty of supporters of Waitrose and the new library. I and friends/acquaintances would like to have an upmarket large supermarket which would give us more choice of good foods than is now offered by the smaller food stores. We would also use the library, it being larger and with a car park.

At present I have to travel to North Finchley or Brent Cross for Waitrose, my favourite store, with parking. The buses aren't much good!

It would be an improving addition to East Finchley Village and encourage locals to come to our own local shops.

Michael Brown
Howard Walk N2

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Don't Stop the Music

Welcome to the sound of silence, welcome to the revenge of the anally retentive, welcome to the end of music. Explanation time? Well, yes, what has slipped through unnoticed in all the excitement about 24-hour pub openings is the threat to live music.

The new licensing act means that anywhere that anyone plays or sings or dances is going to have to have a licence and pay a fee. No longer will a pub be able to bypass the law by limiting the number of players to two, or the local folk club be able to book the back room of the Rat and Cat for their monthly meeting and the bloke in the pub who plays the piano will be banned too unless he's licensed. The only exception will be church services.

At the moment, licensing is down to the local magistrates who dish them out for pubs, concert halls, bars and anywhere else that wants to put on music. It's not just music that's licensed by the local bench, it's also pubs, bars, restaurants and anywhere else that booze is sold. This is about to change and it is 'goodbye' to the bench and 'hello' to the local council and that's the problem.

Licensed to kill

Magistrates enforce the law; local councils enforce the will of politicians and pressure groups. If the local residents do their usual thing under the 'my wife and I are trying to get some sleep/we never go to the pub' Act (2003) then the pubs will shut and those that are open will be silent. It will be the last hurrah for the petty minded with their 'I don't know much about music, but I know I don't like it' and the end of music in pubs and most other places. Why? Because councils worry about votes. If the local council thinks there are votes in refusing licences to any pub with live music then there will be no live music; or if it decides that it is a money-spinner then only the wealthy venues will have any music.

The new licensing act is about control; about money, not music, and will be used to stop anything that the complaining classes dislike. These are the people who would have taken the Cavern's licence away because they didn't like the Beatles and ensured that the Stones never got rolling and make sure that the next big thing will not come up from the gutter with attitude but will be marketed and manufactured to be as antiseptic as possible. Keep music live, kill the bill.

Clear the Site... and Stack those Shelves

By Neil Parkin, Huntingdon Associates

Loyal readers of THE ARCHER will by now be fully engaged - on both sides - in the titanic struggle for or against the advent of a Waitrose outlet on the sunny uplands of East Finchley. Tempers clearly run high at this prospect, but as ever with matters of planning and environment, much can be gained from a closer study of the proverbial nuts and bolts of the development process which, to hitch up to a second metaphor, are my daily ciabatta and dressing.

Compulsory Purchase Orders (or 'CPOs'), for example. To British town planners with sufficiently long memories, these are familiar tools in hands of local authorities and development agencies and the government itself as a means of ensuring that several, in themselves laudable, things can happen. A CPO can be used to remove obstacles in the way of realising approved and duly adopted parts of a Development Plan, such as an Action Area, as they used to be called. It can expedite site assembly, obtain a route for a new highway, help to regenerate outworn housing or acquire a site for community use. Where some form of public/partnership has been established as a means of implementing a comprehensive redevelopment of some kind, then the CPO is the usual mechanism to speed site assembly. So far so good.

CPO Enigma

What is rather puzzling to me about the CPO(s) currently being inked by LB Barnet for what is now being called the "Waitrose" site is that, to my knowledge, their status is fragile indeed, specifically:

CPOs are intended to be used as a means of progressing an approved element of

the adopted Development Plan (the Barnet UDP, for example). Not much evidence that Waitrose - or its clones - has ever formed part of any long-held, published Grand Design for the regeneration of East Finchley;

Under the terms of a typical CPO, existing residents displaced by the development need to be re-housed in suitable accommodation, not necessarily on site but re-housed nevertheless. This presumably applies to any current residents on site above the High Road shops, but I have so far seen no mention of this provision being made;

What of the existing businesses on site? In confirming any CPO, the Secretary of State always needs to be satisfied that due weight has been given to objections made on the grounds that it would be difficult for the current occupiers to find alternative accommodation.

Not to forget the Trojan Horse of a "Library" dragged unconvincingly on stage as the justification for the CPO. Pretty sad stuff.

This is only a start. I can see our best planning lawyers already contemplating the rich harvest of fees to be garnered, as Waitrose gets serious.

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