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Local News Is Our Aim

THE ARCHER



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Library gets Grade 2 Listing

By Daphne Chamberlain

East Finchley library was given Grade 2 listed status on 18 August, following a request from a local resident. This means that any alteration to the building must preserve its character and be approved by English Heritage. The building now has legal protection, but can still be refurbished. (Hendon Central Library, already listed, is currently being adapted by Barnet Council.)

Missing our Opportunity?

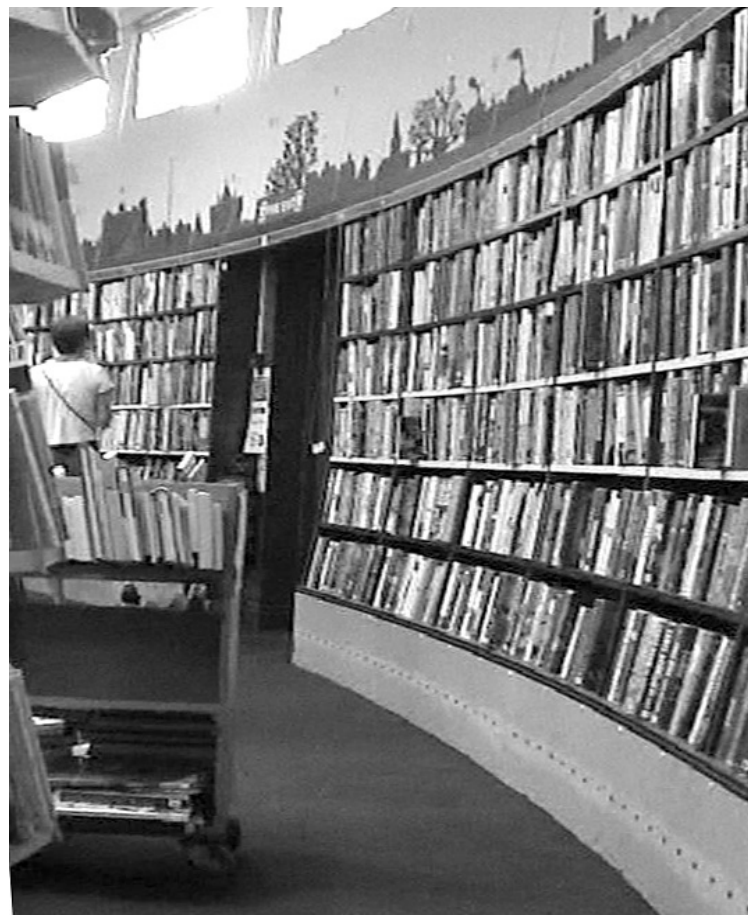
Consultation on the future of the library is starting this month, but several local architects and designers believe that we are not being given a proper choice. They support the option of refurbishing the existing library, but believe that the

Council's proposals do not go far enough. Although they have offered to meet Barnet Council representatives, and have asked that their proposals should be exhibited along with those from the Council, their requests have been refused.

James Elliott, an architectural design director, told *THE*

ARCHER, "My job is converting buildings, and the existing library has great potential. We have an opportunity to refurbish a building we can take pride in, as opposed to building a new one, of mediocre quality, on a low budget. We were reassured by the Council's report that the building is structurally sound. This means we could actually enlarge the library, at a cost which would be covered by the sale of Park House."

Speaking to *THE ARCHER*, Tricia Little, Lead Officer for Libraries confirmed that Barnet Council was not offering the option of extending the building. When told that selling Park House would cover the cost of implementing local architects' plans, she said she could not possibly comment. See page 6 for the alternative plans.



Here to stay? East Finchley Library. Photo by Erini Rodis

Development Threat for Stanley Road Fields

By Diana Cormack

The fears of many local people have come to fruition with the news that Barnet Council is casting its money-hungry eyes on the Stanley Road Playing Fields. Depressingly out of condition through lack of upkeep, the word 'field' bears little relation to the area where play has long since stopped, except if you happen to be a dog out for exercise, and even then only if you want to risk catching mange.

Youth centre to close

Also threatened is the Herbert Wilmot Youth Centre, whose imminent closure is understood to have caused the borough "to look at what

opportunities may be available to make best use of the property assets in this locality".

This news came as a shock to Linda Clark, who runs an After School Club there, which is attended by primary school children from all over East Finchley. When she learned about it from a council official, Linda argued that these children were part of the youth of the area. But it appears that they come under the "early years" category, not "youth". Linda was doubly upset as she was told just before the summer holidays, leaving her no time to inform the parents who really need this service and to involve them in some form of protest. However, meetings are being organised for September, though Linda is still uncertain as to whether she can continue to use the Wilmot Centre.

Continued on page 2

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