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THE ARCHER



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Waitrose Loses the Plot

By Diana Cormack

Barnet Council Cabinet has decided that its Park House site, which might have formed part of a Waitrose and library development, is to be sold on the open market. This follows on from the results of the library consultation, which scotched any possibility that developers might build a new library there as part of a financial deal.

People Power

It was exactly a year ago that a group of concerned locals calling themselves Warning On Waitrose called a well-attended meeting for local residents to air their views. Since then, residents opposed to the Waitrose scheme have campaigned energetically. The number of local people who would have welcomed such a scheme remains unknown.

Next stage

A spokesperson for WOW has said, "Although a significant battle has been

won, the war is not yet over." WOW will still be "on the case, pressing to ensure a suitable development of the Park House site that is of an appropriate size and scale for East Finchley."

In seeking the maximum price for Park House, Barnet Council says any proposals will be considered but that any sale will go through only when the applicant has obtained planning permission. Any planning application would be subject to traffic and environmental studies and residents would be able

to voice their concerns.

What do you think this prime site should be used for?

THE ARCHER would like to know, so send your views, however optimistic or imaginative, to: THE ARCHER, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA.



A Taste of Things to Come?

As scientists warn that our winters could be getting colder, January's cold spell brought things to a halt in Durham Road. Photo by Tony Roberts

Library Warning from MP

By Daphne Chamberlain

The consultation is over, and East Finchley has voted overwhelmingly to retain and refurbish the existing library. The question now is, for how long will it be retained, and how much refurbishment will there be?

At a Council Cabinet meeting on 19 January, assurances were given that Barnet would abide by the result. Questioned by Council Leader Victor Lyons, Councillor Peter Davis said, "Of course we will. That was the purpose of the consultation."

However, in a letter to *THE ARCHER*, local MP Rudi

Vis writes, "We will have to ensure that the library is retained. Already the Tories are proposing library closures in their budget proposals."

The proposal to close Totteridge and South Friern libraries is disturbing. Like East Finchley, both are libraries primarily serving their local community. South

Friern (between Muswell Hill and the North Circular) has a catchment area quite similar to East Finchley. They are both in comfortable walking distance from homes and schools, which is what the recent consultation shows people want.

At the Cabinet meeting of 19 January, it was emphasised that the East Finchley building is old, refurbishment costs are likely to be substantial, and "any decision to refurbish will be considered alongside other priorities for capital investment." The cost of the consultation will be taken from the libraries budget.

Many people would echo the wish of Finchley Society President Bill Tyler, who welcomed the consultation result, and hoped that the sale of Park House would "provide funds for the refurbishment and enlargement of the existing Grade 2 library". However, it seems that revenue from Park House will be absorbed into the general kitty, and East Finchley Library will have to fight its corner.

Consultation results on p3.

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