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# THE ARCHER


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*A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.*

## Gaudi too gaudy for Muswell Hill?

By John Dearing

In July, Chris Ostwald, a former film special effects designer, took over the shop between Halifax and Oddbins, on Muswell Hill Broadway, with the intention of opening a gallery and arts supply shop. Chris is an admirer of Antonio Gaudi, the architect whose buildings, such as the Casa Batlló, a celebrated building constructed in 1905 in the Art Nouveau style,



adorn Barcelona. So he decided to dispense with the anonymous modern shop front and rebuild it in the style of Gaudi, by placing sand and cement on a lattice work of steel to make it look a bit like a cave.

**No to nouveau**

However, he omitted to apply for planning permission and has now had an enforcement notice served on him to reinstate the shop-front and to abide by the planning permis-

sion granted in 1999. The notice will come into effect on 15 November. Haringey council is adamant that he must either seek retrospective planning permission, or tear down the Gaudi shop-front.

Chris Ostwald vows he will not observe the order: "It's different from the pseudo Edwardian-ness of almost every shop in this area. It stands out for its originality. The council want everything standard and uniform."

Lynne Featherstone, a Liberal Democrat councillor,

insisted that the law was the law: "There is no question the owner should have asked for planning permission ... This is a conservation area, and there is no way the shop-front ... is part of the norm."

The controversy has made it to the television news. Public opinion is divided – some say it's an eyesore, others that it's fantastic.

Next time you are in Muswell Hill, keep a look out for this phenomenon, and if you feel strongly either way, write to *THE ARCHER* and tell us.

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## Funding for Stanley Road playing field?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Philip King, from The Walks Residents' Association, has asked Barnet about the future of Stanley Road playing field. Has the Council consulted Sport England about restoring the neglected field? The Government's Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell announced in April that grants are available under the Community Club Development Programme, and Mr King wants to know whether Barnet have made any moves in this direction.

Speaking last month at the Finchley Forum, he cited persistent local rumours about the possible sale of the field and the adjacent Herbert

Wilmot Centre, which houses some of its facilities. (As *THE ARCHER* reported last month, the Finchley Children's Music Group – the final remaining ten-

ants of the Centre – had to find alternative accommodation.)

Mr King said that the Football Foundation had told him that money to restore the field and develop the Wilmot Centre could be available.

Forum Chair Leslie Sussman referred him to a Council officer, undertaking that he would be kept informed about Barnet's plans. *THE ARCHER* will keep an eye on this.

For other topics at the Forum, see our report 'Finchley Forum' on page 3.

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