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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.

## Future of Stanley Field in the balance

By Daphne Chamberlain

A decision to demolish the Herbert Wilmot Centre in East Finchley has thrown doubt on plans to turn the nearby Stanley Road Playing Field into a community multi-sports centre and raised fears that the disused site will be sold to developers.

The sum of £27,000 is to be taken from Barnet Council's New Deal for Schools budget to finance the demolition of the Herbert Wilmot Centre in Eagans Close.

The week after this decision was confirmed in the face of opposition from local councillors, a council spokesperson told the sports project committee that demolishing the centre "might have a bearing" on whether the council would support their proposals.

Councillor John Marshall said that the building would be demolished for safety rea-

sons, but local people fear that its removal will open up the opportunity to build a through road to Stanley Field behind, and open the way for sale of the land to developers. A well-known builder is already known to be interested.

### Setback

The move is a setback for the sports project committee headed by Philip King, of The Walks Residents Association, representatives from the East Finchley Community Development Trust and Holy Trinity School, and Roger Reed from the Football Foundation.

Their proposals for a sports facility and community centre on the site were revealed in *THE ARCHER* in March.

At the East Finchley Festival in June, more than 100 people completing questionnaires about the proposals showed virtually unanimous support, with comments including: "The area needs sports facilities such as these."

Mr King told *THE ARCHER*: "We met council representatives at the end of May, but two months later we still do not know whether Barnet is interested. We have been told they are still considering the future of the field."

"A lot of effort is being made on the community side. We are compiling a database of interested organisations, and Roger Reed has indicated that the Football Foundation would provide about half the development costs. I'm just worried that all these efforts might be cancelled out."

Councillors who opposed the demolition of the Herbert Wilmot Centre said that New Deal for Schools money was intended to be for repairs and maintenance of schools, and would have been better spent dealing with those specific needs.

Councillor Alison Moore told us that schools had been surveyed progressively over the last few years to assess those needs.



Now this is the sort of service we expect from our MP! Rudi Vis at the launch of Open House. Photo by Erini Rodis

**Open House:** Sixteen different venues around East Finchley, including 11 private homes, were recently turned into art galleries for a weekend to showcase the work of local artists. See page 10 for details.

## Suspect car closes High Road

By John Dearing

Police closed the High Road for more than four hours on Tuesday 26 July as they investigated a car believed to have been used by the suspects in the failed bomb attacks in London five days earlier.

The white VW Golf was parked in Strawberry Vale near the road bridge and had been previously under surveillance following the attempted bombings on the tube network

and a bus on July 21.

The High Road was closed from the junction with Church Lane down to Oak Lane from 1pm until after 5pm. The North Circular was closed from Henleys Corner to Colney Hatch Lane.

Traffic quickly became gridlocked around the junction of the High Road with East End Road and Fortis Green.

Residents of Strawberry Vale and neighbouring houses were temporarily evacuated to Martin School where Barnet Council provided refreshments.

Police examined the suspect car at the scene and then took it away for further forensic analysis before reopening the High Road.

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