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THE ARCHER




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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Local Cafe staff are waiting to feed you! Photo by John Dearing

Shop revamp plan threatens café

Hundreds of customers have signed a petition to safeguard a much-loved High Road café that is coming under threat from a property redevelopment plan.

Almost 300 people have put their names to the protest to protect the Local Café on the corner of Lincoln Road, which is being told it may have to lose its current kitchen and toilet.

Run by Celal Ince and Niyazi Ozturk since 1991, the Local Café is a popular establishment that employs nine people and is a focal point for the community.

However, plans to redevelop the adjoining properties in Lincoln Parade mean the café may have to move its kitchen and toilet facilities in order to make the neighbouring property more viable. The managing agents Christo & Co have already been granted permission to change the use of that part of the café.

Mr Ince's sister-in-law Janice Ince said the renewal of the café's lease is in doubt while the discussions about the kitchen facilities are taking place.

She said: "We asked for the lease to be renewed five months ago but have had no reply to date. Maybe the landlords want to turn the kitchen and toilet area into office space but that will drastically affect the way the café is today and will mean we might have to pay to move our facilities."

Christo & Co, based in Kentish Town, have offered the café owners an alternative space at the back of their property and said they are prepared to assist with the costs of moving the kitchen.

Spokesman Mark Forrester said: "The landlord does not want the café to go. The planning application for change of use relates to a small part of the property at the back that the landlord would like to use as part of an adjacent property."

Mr Forrester said the Local Café's lease expired in January and an offer to renew was on

the table.

Of the neighbouring properties in Lincoln Parade, Thirlwell & Co, property agents, is occupied but had a To Let sign above it at the time of going to press; G Loizou and Co, accountants, is occupied; the gents' hairdressers is occupied; and there is one vacant property with a To Let sign attached.

Garden centre land for sale

By Diana Cormack

The site of Finchley Manor Garden Centre, which closed last year, is for sale at an asking price of £3,000,000.



The garden centre site is up for sale. Photo by Erini Rodis

Before the garden centre, off East End Road, opened in the mid-1990s, the land was owned by Westminster City Council, which used it as a nursery for growing their own plants.

It covers an area of 2.2 acres and has a mixture of permanent and semi-permanent structures including brick buildings and greenhouses.

Situated next to the

Marylebone Cemetery and crematorium, it is designated as Metropolitan Open Land, which is equivalent to Green Belt. It is surrounded by conservation land, which should mean that it is unlikely to get permission to be built on.

Reflecting this, it is being marketed as a commercial property but (subject to planning) for uses such as agriculture, horticulture, nature conservation, outdoor sport and recreation, all of which would preserve the open nature of the site.

Alternative uses could be for light industrial or business purposes, again subject to planning and with possible refurbishment of the existing buildings.

Do you have any ideas about how this site could be used? Let THE ARCHER know what you would like to see there. Our contact details are on page 2.

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