



# An open and shut case

By Diana Cormack

On 7 February passengers using The Causeway end exit of East Finchley tube station found their way barred. The ticket gates had been closed off and alongside a warning sign was a notice explaining the reason for the closure.

Station staff told *THE ARCHER* that it had been written because of adverse comments they had been receiving from members of the public about the closure.

The notice read: "A new working roster implemented on 5 February has resulted in the number of station staff at East Finchley being reduced by two. It is now no longer possible to man this gateline. Therefore these gates will remain out of service. We apologise for the inconvenience this will cause. Station supervisor."

Staff seemed certain that this situation would continue, meaning that tube travellers would have to walk down to the exit at the High Road end, then double back along the passage to reach The Causeway.

People were not pleased about this particularly because, as one *ARCHER* reader commented, "It was only once in a blue moon that these gates were

manned anyway!"

### Back to normal?

On 10 February, however, the gates were in operation again. The situation could have arisen because London Underground use "roaming" staff. They are not based at a single station but are allocated to provide cover as and where necessary. East Finchley station had been using two of these workers.

A spokesperson for London Underground said: "The operation of this entry is entirely unrelated to staffing issues. The number of staff at East Finchley station has remained exactly the same as before the change in rosters on February 5.

"With the introduction of new rosters there will be no reduction in staffing levels across the tube network. Station staffing levels will remain as they currently are and no station staff will be made redundant."

# Tube and water work hampers parking

By Diana Cormack

Repair work on part of the Northern Line embankment was scheduled to begin on 13 February and estimated to last 12-16 weeks. A stretch running alongside Cherry Tree Wood, from the High Road to where the tube line goes underground, will be subject to reinforcement. Although safe at present, the embankment is reported to be crumbling slowly, so the work is essential. It will be carried out from 8am-6pm on weekdays, and on Saturday mornings.

Temporary entry for deliveries and access will be made from the High Road into a compound at the end of Brompton Grove (the unadopted road running beside the park to its Summerlee Avenue entrance).

Relocation of the bus stop and pedestrian thoroughfare has been approved but drivers will not be able to park at the High Road end of Brompton Grove, an area favoured by commuters as well as by users of Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute.

Another part of Brompton Grove has been designated a no parking area due to work being carried out by Three Valleys Water company. Because of low

water pressure, a booster is to be installed inside the park next to the electricity sub-station. At the time of writing this work had not been completed.

In addition, the whole of Ingram Road, which runs into Brompton Grove, will be subject to water works also due to start on 13 February. Ingram Road parking bays will all be suspended until the work, estimated to take two weeks, is completed.

For further details phone London Underground Customer Service on 0845 330 9880 or George Grey Cheape at Dalcour Maclaren on 01869 355 740.



Photo by Paul Dearing

# Red Lion roars no more

Our photograph captures another landmark East Finchley building falling prey to the unstoppable onslaught of redevelopment.

The Red Lion public house once stood proudly on the corner of Elmfield Road and Red Lion Hill but is now in the final stages of demolition. The pub has been closed and boarded up for more than 18 months. Any hopes that its frontage could be preserved

were dashed when the demolishers moved in at the beginning of February.

Planning records show that an early plan to build a town

house on the site has been replaced by an application for flats, which at the time of going to press was still being considered.

# Shorter hours for station ticket office

By Paul Chapman

The opening hours of the ticket office at East Finchley tube station have been cut. London Transport say there is a falling demand to buy tickets over the counter as more travellers are using new technology, such as the pre-pay Oyster Card and automated ticket machines.

Since 5 February, the ticket office has opened a little later in the mornings: 6.30am on weekdays, 7.30am on Saturdays and 8.30am on Sundays. It is closing earlier in the evenings: at 8.30pm on weekdays, 9.30pm on Saturdays, and 9pm on Sundays.

London Transport says it will continue to seek economies but has no plans to close the ticket office.

A spokesman said: "We will bring more staff out from ticket offices so there is a visible presence on the platforms to help passengers. We are able to do this because of the success of Oyster card, which means that one million fewer paper tickets are sold every week."

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