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Local News is our Aim

THE ARCHER



A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Campaigners gather outside the Post Office. Photo Mike Coles

Tennis club comes to site of former garden centre

By Diana Cormack

The Chandos Lawn Tennis Club, which dates from 1934, is to relocate from its Golders Green home to East Finchley.

Plans for their redevelopment of the Finchley Manor Garden Centre site on East End

Road were shown to the public two years ago (see *THE ARCHER*, Jan 2012).

Barnet Borough Council's planning and environmental committee approved its plans in February. These include four full-sized open clay courts, four

full-sized covered courts and one open mini court and a single storey clubhouse with a restaurant. There will also be parking facilities for cars and bikes.

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Last ditch effort to save Post Office

By Gerard Sagar

The future of East Finchley Post Office was still in doubt as *THE ARCHER* went to press, amid a flurry of last minute efforts to keep the Post Office open at its current location on Viceroy Parade.

Campaigners launched a new petition against closing the Crown Post Office after it emerged that customers would have to climb three steps or use a lift to get to the counters at the new location. They would be 100ft from the entrance to the UOE stationery shop, which has applied to take over the service as a franchise.

Post Office Ltd was forced to reopen its original residents' consultation about the move because the wheelchair lift and steps were not mentioned in the first consultation, which closed on 6 January.

Disability groups not consulted

On the closing date for the second consultation, 13 March, disability rights campaigner Sippy Azizollah handed in the Save East Finchley Post office petition, joined by East Finchley's councillors, traders and residents. Sippy said: "It will be rather like an obstacle course

to get to the post office via a lift to pick up my pension."

The petition was signed by 934 residents and business owners in just under two weeks, including 22 residents of the Jewish Blind and Disabled Society flats at Fairacres, East End Road.

Disability rights groups in Barnet confirmed that they had not been consulted about the move, as required by the Post Office Code of Practice on consultations. These include Disability action in the Borough of Barnet (DabB), Barnet Centre for Independent Living, Barnet Independent Living Agency and the Jewish Blind and Disabled Society.

Petition remains open

The petition was organised by Sarah Sackman, Labour Parliamentary candidate for Finchley & Golders Green, who said: "East Finchley Post Office must stay open. The alternative is too small and will be a severe downgrade in terms of access for wheelchairs and buggies. The consultation should be started again because they have broken their own rules on informing the public."

The petition has been kept open for signing at: http://betterbarnet.nationbuilder.com/save_east_finchley_post_office

A Post Office spokesman said the purpose of the consultation process was to gather the thoughts of the community before making a decision. He added that no decisions would be made until all issues raised had been seriously considered.

Building work on UOE seems to have begun in early March. It is expected that the earliest the Post Office could move is late April.

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