



Mistake forces Post Office to extend consultation

By John Lawrence

The public consultation over the move of East Finchley's Crown Post Office to a High Road shop has been extended into March after postal bosses admitted they got it wrong.

People have been given an extra four weeks until 11 March to have their say after the first consultation ending on 6 January omitted vital information about how the new Post Office would function at office equipment store UOE.

Access to raised platform

The Post Office said: "Our previous letter did not explain that the new Post Office would be located on a raised platform to the rear of the premises in 120 High Road, N29ED, where it will utilise existing storage space.

"Access to this area would be via two steps with a handrail and a customer platform lift. The customer platform lift is widely used in retail outlets and is designed to be fully accessible for wheelchairs, prams and pushchairs."

The missing information would seem to be important as one of the declared aims of the consultation was to gather people's views on the accessibility and layout of the new premises.

Residents can give their view by going online at www.postofficeviews.co.uk, by post to FREEPOST Your Comments, Post Office Ltd, by email to comments@postoffice.co.uk, via the Customer Helpline on 08457 223344. Quote branch code 003004 on all submissions.

Union response

Meanwhile, the Communication Workers Union is keeping up its opposition to the move, which will see UOE operate the Post Office on a franchise basis, with the existing premises in Viceroy

Parade being sold off.

The branch manager and seven staff who currently work at the Post Office will be redeployed or leave the company on voluntary redundancy terms.

As we reported in our January issue, the union has handed a petition containing over 1,350 signatures to the Post Office, claiming the loss of East Finchley's Crown Post Office as part of a programme of closing 18 branches across London will have a detrimental effect on local communities.

Huw Davies, a C.W.U. representative for Crown Office counter staff in the Greater London area, said: "It is most regrettable that the Post Office failed to get its original consultation right. We are asking all residents of East Finchley to voice their opposition to the Post Office's plans before the further consultation ends on 11 March."

Track works

The East Finchley branch of the Northern line will be closed again for track maintenance over the weekend of Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 April.



Adam Hills opens the new charity shop in Muswell Hill.

Charity shop declared open

International stand-up comic and TV presenter Adam Hills, star of Channel 4's *The Last Leg*, was in Muswell Hill Broadway on Monday 10 February.

Surrounded by young pupils from The London Centre for Children with Cerebral Palsy, Adam cut a ribbon and officially declared the charity's fifth shop open.

Adam spent time chatting

with the children, their parents and staff before donating a tie and an autographed pair of trainers for sale in the shop. He then accompanied pupils back to the centre for a guided tour.

"It was really exciting to have Adam come and meet the

kids and witness all the fantastic work that takes place here," said Natasha Byrne, mum of Flynn, 8, a pupil at the school. "Adam's support is invaluable."

The shop at 112 Muswell Hill Broadway is now open for business.

Storm trees to be replaced

Hundreds of trees that line the borough's streets were damaged during recent storms and are to be replaced. Barnet Council aims to plant 750 trees of different species over the next few months, including Chinese privet, flowering cherry and birch. The project will cost around £150,000 and is being funded by the council's Priority Projects Fund.



Closed: The Alexandra in Fortis Green. Photo by Mike Coles

Alexandra shuts down

The Alexandra pub on Fortis Green, opposite the Clissold Arms, is changing hands. Readers reported at the start of February that the pumps had gone and the pub had been cleared out, and it currently stands empty. Others were passing on the night of the closing party.

The Alexandra was put on the market and sold almost immediately. The guide price was £950,000. Property consultants James A Baker, who

handled the sale, were unable to say if the Alexandra would continue as a pub under the new owners.



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