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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.

On The Move?

By Daphne Chamberlain

If the Waitrose development goes ahead the current East Finchley library will close and be replaced by a new one as part of that development. According to Tricia Little, Deputy Head of Barnet Cultural Services, the present library will not be viable after 2004, when the Disability Discrimination Act comes into force. Not only is there no disabled access to the upstairs hall, but other features - including the bookshelves - do not meet requirements.

Although Ms Little agreed that the present library is more central, and said she regretted that northern East Finchley would be further away from the service, she insisted that the plans are for something bigger and better. She said that the new library would be open-plan, with a separate study area, meeting hall, and community hall with kitchen and would be all on the first floor above Waitrose, with access by stairs and a lift.

Although the initial plans appear to suggest that the new library would be smaller than the current one, Ms Little claimed that the bookstock would be slightly larger, and there would be more facilities for different users of the library. An innovation would

be a screened-off IT training section, similar IT sections having proved successful in other areas. In addition, users would have access to Waitrose car park, though the staff might not be so lucky.

What about the schools?

Ms Little insisted that the introduction of more computers in the library would not be at the expense of existing services. "We would retain a dedicated children's librarian,



Real character - the existing library building in East Finchley High Road. Photo by Erini Rodis



An artists impression of how the new library might look.

and we would still be offering class visits. Unfortunately Martin School would no longer be next door, but the new site is only 10 minutes walk away. As long as the school could arrange adequate supervision we should not lose contact, and we might develop new links with other schools too. We regard work with children as very important."

At present, Ms Little said, there are no plans for the existing library building. Plans for the new library, though, will be displayed in the present building as soon as they are available. The project is expected to be brought

to Committee by January.

If you have any comments, the people to contact are: -

- Dave Stephens, Regeneration Unit, Barnet House, 1255, High Road, London N20. Tel: 020 8359 4684. (Mr Stephens is writing the Committee Report.)
- Cllr Peter Davis, Barnet Cabinet Minister for Children and Community Development, Town Hall, The Burroughs, London NW4.
- Miss M. Harris, Secretary to Friends of Barnet Libraries, 17 Finchley Lodge, Gainsborough Road, London N12 8AL. Tel: 020 8445 4175.



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Fatal Accident

By Erini Rodis

Police are appealing for witnesses to a fatal incident, which occurred on the North Circular Road at around midday on 30 November.

A pedestrian, 72-year-old Paolo Avanzato of Palmers Green, tried to cross the dual carriageway, from south to north near the A1000 (High Road) turn-off, when he collided with traffic in the outside lane and was killed on impact.

Subsequent police investi-

gations cordoned off a section of the A406 for several hours, causing gridlock throughout the afternoon as westbound A406 traffic was diverted through Muswell Hill.

Witnesses are urged to call the Collision Investigation Unit on 020 8246 9810.

Whisky Warning

Be very careful about buying any cheap bottles of so-called Johnny Walker whisky with Spanish writing on the label.

The Food Standards Agency has warned that these "bargains" could cause blindness, brain damage, coma or breathing difficulties. Bottles answering to this description have been found to contain methanol.

Symptoms often do not manifest until about 12 hours after drinking. If you suspect that you have drunk any, contact a doctor immediately.

The bottles were discovered in Hackney, but could obviously be in other areas too.

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