



There's Many a Slip

By Diana Cormack

Exactly a year ago *THE ARCHER* published details of the plans which Local Agenda 21 Partnership had prepared for the refurbishment of the area around Budgens and Iceland stores. Readers could send in a voting form and comments or make their choice after looking at public displays in the Finchley Youth Theatre and East Finchley library.

There was a very good return and, in a close finish, the results were for a serpentine bench at the corner near Budgens, better quality in the current flower beds along the High Road and the addition of trees along the East End Road side. LA21 were pleased with what appeared to have been a successful example of the Council and the community working in partnership. Meetings were anticipated on how to take things forward and use the £35,000 allocated to the project.

Short changed

However, you don't need to be eagle-eyed to notice that nothing has changed so far. LA 21, who are extremely disappointed that it is not going ahead, have been told that the project has been deferred. Many local people feel annoyed that their views have been disregarded, especially as they saw this as a way of improving the look of the shopping area. If our High Road needs regenerating, as Barnet Council maintains in its reasoning for allowing a Waitrose supermarket, why has this improvement to the area not taken place?

We Told You So!

By Diana Cormack

Drivers may be pleased to learn that Barnet are to consider plans put forward to deal with the daily congestion and long traffic tail-backs which occur on the High Road. If introduced they will be reviewed after six months, but whether the proposed Waitrose plans will have any effect on this is not yet known. The council's traffic policy includes seeking to reduce congestion on the borough's major road network and thereby to reduce the demand for rat-running.

Bus Lane Blues

There have been great problems with the present bus lane that runs northbound from near The Bishops Avenue up to the bus stop just below the junction of the High Road and East End Road. This was introduced in February 2000 "to ensure that the banned entry into Baronsmere Road did not cause unnecessary delays to buses travelling northbound along the A1000 (bus 263) and East End Road (bus 143)."

It has been found that the volume of traffic waiting to turn right at the traffic lights into Fortis Green forces queuing back past the end of the bus lane, preventing traffic wishing to continue straight ahead up the High Road or to turn left into East End Road from making use of the nearside lane. The 102 and 234 buses, which turn right into Fortis Green, are delayed and the use of traffic lights on green is not fully utilised, so northbound queues result. There are also frustrated drivers using the bus lane illegally to avoid delays thereby obstructing the movement of those wishing to return to the nearside lane at the end of the bus lane.

What took you so long?

The proposal is for the bus lane to be shortened and to finish before the 143/263 bus



Northbound gridlock. Photo by Erini Rodis

stop just short of the junction between the High Road and the Diploma Avenue cul de sac. There is also a suggestion that there should be consultation on the scope for introducing an evening peak filter for traffic turning right into Fortis Green. Both these problems, and their solutions, were highlighted by *THE ARCHER*'s front-page article *Avoiding the Issue* in October

2000. Why has it taken Barnet Council so long to come to the same conclusions?

Before and After

The Old Barn pre-school playgroup

Children from 2 years of age can be accommodated from Monday to Friday between 9.30 and 12.30 during term time. Based in the Old Barn Community Centre on Tarling Road, it has a large playing area with plenty of activities such as climbing frames and the like for adventurous youngsters. The group is self-funding, so children and adults get involved in many sponsored events. At present the cost is £7 per session.

Any donations, large toys, bikes, plastic tableware, etc. would be welcome. Phone 8349 4613 for details.

Phone 8444 6212 for further details.

East Finchley After School Club

This club is for all primary school children between the ages of five and eleven. It runs from 3.30 to 6.00 pm on weekdays in term time at the Herbert Wilmot Centre, Eagan's Close (next to Holy Trinity School).

Pupils from both Holy Trinity and Martin Schools are collected and taken to the centre. However, the club is open to everyone, providing that someone can bring them along. There youngsters can have a cooked tea with a pudding and drinks and share special occasions like birthdays and picnics. There are computer games, videos and TV to watch as well as activities involving sport and art and craft.

Anger over Fortismere Floodlights

Liberal Democrat Councillors joined with local residents to secure a promise from Jarvis to "start over" with controversial proposals for floodlights for a new all weather football pitch at Fortismere School. In a rowdy public meeting on a Tuesday night in mid May, organised by Haringey Council to explain the proposals for six 15-metre high floodlights, representatives of Jarvis plc (who are the contractors for the Private Finance Initiative scheme) conceded that public consultation had been inadequate and promised to do better.

Around 60 residents attended the meeting to voice their objection to the scheme and many condemned Jarvis for their failure to consult. As angry residents stormed out of the meeting, local Liberal Demo-

crat Councillor Stephen Gilbert challenged the representative of Jarvis, David Evans, to act in an honourable way. Jarvis has now agreed to freeze the application until further public consultation has been conducted.

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