



Heads up: How the advertising screen will look will look to westbound drivers on the North Circular, taken from the council's planning statement

# 'No say' on NCR advert screens

By Cathy Young  
How do the residents of East Finchley feel about a planning application bringing "...a sense of modernity and commercial innovation which, in many ways, enhances the area...?"

Put like that, it could well be a popular proposal but, as things stand, Barnet Council will never know. A planning application to erect large digital display screens over the east and west carriageways of the North Circular Road has been made with a "No Public Consultation Applicable" status.

A local resident contacted THE ARCHER after spotting the application (ref 15/04829//ADV), concerned that this "horrendous advertising proposal" will be imposed on the area with no consultation.

## Drivers face huge ads

The proposed site for the back-lit advertising boards is the bridge connecting East and North Finchley, straddling the A406 North Circular. The current railings will be replaced by stainless steel cladding spanning the whole length of the bridge at a height of three and a half metres.

The 3.5m x 1.4m screens will be placed to face drivers on the road, with images changing instantaneously every 10 seconds.

Local councillors have now been advised about these plans but our reader is concerned that in the absence of public consultation they will not address the issue, adding: "Locally, we have all worked hard to soften the environment of the A406 charging through our midst but this sort of development is akin to a totally industrialised neighbourhood."

So, environmental abuse or a positive contribution to the street scene with no harmful impact on local amenities? In this case, there will be no public consultation to help decide.

# Dedication in a difficult field

East Finchley resident Leonor Stjepic, CEO at leading British medical research charity RAFT, won a silver award in the Female Executive of the Year category at the 12th annual Stevie Awards for Women in Business. The judges praised Leonor for her "dedication, professional and forward thinking attitude" and for "generating success in highly complex environments."

Leonor commented: "It's a great honour. This award is not only for me, but for everything that RAFT stands for, and I hope that this will bring further awareness for the life-changing research that RAFT is undertaking."

RAFT (Restoration of Appearance and Function Trust) carries out medical research that helps children and adults rebuild their lives and regain independence and dignity after

major trauma like cancer, serious injuries and lost limbs.

Among many achievements under Leonor's direction over the last eight years, RAFT has launched the Life After Breast Cancer campaign, which raises funds for vital research into breast reconstructive surgery for women post mastectomy. She has also spearheaded an enterprise scheme to take groundbreaking treatments from development to manufacture.



She means business: Leonor Stjepic. Photo Emily Sidoti



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# New chapter in campaign to save the library

By Daphne Chamberlain

Funding for the first step in a legal challenge against Barnet Council's proposals for its library service has flooded in. The target of £24,000 was reached in under 12 hours and local campaigners (EFLUG) have posted "massive thanks" to all contributors.

This first step is a Letter Before Action to Barnet Council, demanding that they rethink their proposals which include making 40% of staff redundant, hugely reducing library size and study facilities, dependence on volunteers, and installing Open Library technology. Letters before Action require a formal response.

Open Library technology is designed for use when libraries are unstaffed, which actually would mean for most of the day. Access would be restricted by age, the libraries would be opened and closed by computer, there would be no toilet access, and the only security would be unmonitored CCTV. Campaigners claim this amounts to unlawful discrimination against protected groups.

## Petition

In spite of the weather, 270 signatures were added to a petition against the library proposal during the East Finchley Festival alone. Over £214 were raised

for the campaign. To keep up with developments, see https://www.facebook.com/groups/EFLUG. You can sign the petition on https://you.38degrees.org.uk/no-to-volunteer-and-unstaffed-libraries.

## Carols with attitude

EFLUG say "a big thank you" to everyone involved in the fund-raising carol service generously hosted by East Finchley Methodist Church. The sell-out concert raised nearly £1,000, to be shared with the Bobath Centre. Alternative lyrics to some favourite carols were aired during the evening, making clear what so many people think of the council's proposals.

## YouTube

See cartoons from illustrator Tim Sanders, and hear East Finchley residents, including children, parents and grandparents on YouTube. It's a Save Barnet Libraries Animation from Film Yard.

# Man arrested over 'shooting'

A man has been arrested after an alleged shooting in Simms Gardens, N2. Armed officers searched the area round this quiet cul-de-sac after residents reported hearing gunshots at about 4.30pm on 9 November (THE ARCHER, December 2015). They were unable to find a victim but a witness reported seeing a man with a shoulder injury.

The following day, police handed out leaflets and appealed for information. A few days later police arrested a 24-year-old man who has been bailed and will appear in court this month. The injured man has come forward.

The Trident and Area Crime Command is investigating and anyone with information is

asked to call 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 if you wish to remain anonymous.

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