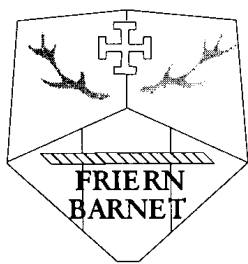


Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents' Association



June 2010

Friern Barnet and Whetstone Residents' Association

- We are non-political
- We work for all residents in the area
- We discuss issues with Local Councillors and Council Officials
- Associated with the following bodies
 - The Federation of Residents' Association of Barnet
 - The Finchley Society
 - Friends of Friary Park
 - North Finchley Local Agenda 21
 - The Friern Barnet & District Local History Society
 - Coppetts Wood Conservationists
 - The London Green Belt Council

New Public Inquiry for Princess Park Manor

A new Public Inquiry has opened into developments at Princess Park Manor (the old mental hospital as developed by Comer Homes) was scheduled for the end of May 2010 and due to last one day. It is not clear when its findings will be made public.

The Inquiry essentially came about through Barnet Council objecting to the apartments that were created in the roof space of the East Wing, with the use of dormer windows, as well as the conversion of office space to apartments. Although the East Wing is not part of the original listed building, it was built in the same style with careful attention to harmonious detail and materials.

In formal terms, the Inquiry was set up because appeals were made by Luke Comer and six others "Against the enforcement notice served by London Borough of Barnet. The notice alleges:

"Without planning permission, the reinstating and extension of the east wing of the former hospital building and the provision of 83 self contained dwelling units.

Relating to the planning application and listed building consent application to the above local planning authority for retention of extended east wing as built comprising 83 self contained flats created by converting previously approved management offices in the basement and converting roof space including construction of dormer windows together with retention of 145 parking spaces. Alterations to the development as built in respect of proposed extension to light wells outside flat 321 and 323."

There are two issues with the development of the East Wing. The first issue is to do with obeying the formal planning application. Compliance is necessary if we are not to have planning chaos.



The new East Wing is built in period style but has many dormer windows

A developer cannot request planning permission for one thing and then produce something different or much bigger. In this case there may be a genuine misunderstanding or lack of clarity in the planning permission. The second issue is to do with retaining the architectural value of the whole site, since the East Wing was built to be completely in keeping with the rest of the building.

A stranger to the site might at first surmise that the East Wing was built at the same time. However, that stranger taking a closer look, will quickly realize that something is "wrong", Victorian buildings did not have dormer windows in the roof space.

When the developers put forward their plans for the building of the East Wing, your Residents' Association put forward objections. One of the principal objections was that the new East Wing would unbalance the building as a whole; and that the building would lose its setting, being far from Friern Barnet Road and Regal Drive. The East Wing extension projects out close to Friern Barnet Road and even closer to Regal Drive.

As part of the planning permission for the new East Wing, the developers said that they would demolish the old cricket pavilion and remove the sales office. The cricket pavilion has gone but the sales office remains in place.

Critical shortage of office space in North Finchley and Whetstone? No, a glut more likely!

Travelling the High Road from North Finchley to north Whetstone, it is clear that there is a large amount of office space available. Sometimes a whole building is available to let, but more often part of the building is vacant. Of course, the letting agents are slow to remove their signs, and the space that is displayed as being vacant may have found new occupants. But, if you (or one of your friends or neighbours or relatives) want some office space, there is plenty to choose from. There is office space in the very large block in north Whetstone, known as Northway House. This block must have the longest advertising display in North London. The sign on the north side of the building reaches from the 3rd floor to the 10th floor (one wonders on what basis the Council gave planning permission for that). There is plenty

of vacant office space in and around the triangular block which contains the Tally Ho public house. As part of one of its reorganization plans, Barnet Council are slowly decamping from Barnet House in Whetstone to the North London Business Park in Oakleigh Road South, and this will release a lot more space. A better looking building, with its red brick frontage, than either Barnet House or Northway House is Solar House - opposite the old Furnitureland site—this building has had its vacant office sign on display for years. Despite the fact that there is at present plenty of spare office space available in the area, there are planning requests in the pipeline for offices in the old Furnitureland site, as well as, at the back of the North Finchley old Woolworths site. .



The large and unlovely Barnet House dominates the Whetstone town centre. In the near future Barnet Council will move most of its staff



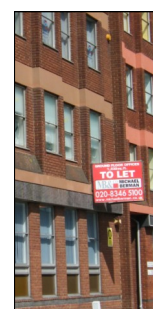
Northway House, 1379 High Road has an advertising sign 70 foot long—this building ruins the view from the nearby park, Brook Farm Open Space



One of many places where there is spare office space in the Tally Ho triangle



Solar House, 915 High Road—opposite the old Furnitureland site



Parking difficulties for visitors to Friary Park

Summer is coming—it's time to gather up the kids, the dogs, bats and balls, and head for the park. Time for some fresh air and healthy outdoor running around. Let's go to Friary Park, the best park around. It's a long way to walk, so we had better take the car. But wait a minute, if we go to Friary Park, where will we park? We don't like to park on the winding road that is Friern Barnet Lane—far too busy. We don't want to try parking on the road called Torrington Park—it's always choc-a-bloc with parked cars. Why can't we park on the road called Friary Park?

There is a problem with parking in Friary Road. For most of its length, the road is reserved for residents parking. In fact, the only part of the Friary Road where there is fairly unrestricted parking is alongside Friary Park.

Friary Road runs from Friern Barnet Lane to Torrington Park. From the Friern Barnet Lane end the road dips downhill and at the bottom of the dip, along the pavement, are park gates—from there the road goes steeply uphill and then winds slowly uphill to Torrington Park. If you travel along this road during the daytime you will note that there are only 3 or 4 vehicles parked between the park gates at the bottom of the dip all the way to Torrington Park—a distance of about 800 yards. This lack of parked cars is in sharp contrast to Torrington Park where there are many parked cars.

The situation along Friary Road is all the more peculiar in that although there are driveways and garages at the front of nearly all the houses, there are yellow lines preventing you from parking during the daytime. What is more, you will notice there are one or two cars parked in the driveways of a great many of these houses. It is not known why these houses need restricted residents parking, when many of the rest of us do not have this luxury.

On the one hand, we all want to park our cars as near as possible to where we want to get to; on the other hand most of us don't really like other people parking outside our own house. Reason and fairness tells us that there is a shortage of parking places and that they need to be fairly shared out. In the modern world it is unreasonable to prevent parking outside one's own home, if one has a garage and drive, and so plenty of parking space as part of one's home.

Of course, some residents of Friary Road would object, but these would be few. They may threaten to change their voting preference but in the world of the new politics, most residents would see that making parking for people accessing Friary Park with children and bicycles and bats and balls, is to the greater benefit to the community at large.

Not only are there unwanted parking restrictions in front of the houses in Friary Road, there is also parking restriction on the north side of the road, which run along the golf course. There is no reason why this part of the road should have restricted parking, so the restriction should be removed.

As part of the old traffic calming measures, on Friary Road, some flower beds that jut into the road were established. These flower beds take up valuable parking spaces (3 to 4 cars per flower bed). The traffic calming measures have been removed and the flower beds, being next to Friary Park, could be removed without being noticed.



There is unused residents parking all along Friary Road



Outside Friary Park itself all parking space can be occupied by



Flower beds outside Friary Park serve no good purpose and take

2010 Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM was held on Wednesday 14th April in St. John the Evangelist church hall on Friern Barnet Road. A good turn-out of over forty people came – less than usual, but the Spurs/Arsenal match was on TV at the same time!



As usual, Barry Rawlings (Lab) attended the AGM

Following the Treasurer's Report on the state of the Association's finances and the election of the officers for the coming year, the Deputy Chairman, Len Bull, gave a report on what the Association has been doing these last twelve months. Len has been standing in for the Chairman, Harry Gluck, who has been indisposed for a few months.

Good wishes were also forwarded to Karl Ruge (our President) who has been ill lately and Lizi Gray who is just returning to full fitness following a number of operations on her knee.

Topics covered included the permission granted for a new Travelodge to be built on the old site of the Black Bull; the refusal of the latest building plans for the old Furnitureland site and the commencement of building work in Friary House – in readiness for the Woodhouse and West Finchley local Safer Neighbourhood Teams to move in in October. Also mentioned were the Residents Against Development group who are opposing the proposals to build on the land enclosed by Chandos, Langton and Buckingham Avenues; the plans to

have wild flowers planted and a children's play area (currently near to completion) on the site of the old pitch and putt in Bethune Park; the huge North London Waste Plan which could be imposed in the Borough right next to the North Circular Road near the Friern Retail Park and the forthcoming centenary of Friary Park being incorporated with the Summer Show on 21st and 22nd August this year.

Following a question and answer session, a few words of encouragement came from Theresa Villiers, MP, who spoke about gardens, green spaces and the Association's good work.

The guest speaker this year was Mr. David Howard, chairman of the Federation of Residents Associations of Barnet (FORAB) and he gave a very entertaining and informative talk about the changes in shops and shopping practices in the High Street over the last fifty years. He claimed that Barnet Council Officers are favouring Tesco, because "only they have the money to give us what we want". The big four supermarkets control 75% of the food market, and continue to buy up suitable sites when they become available.

The meeting ended at just gone 9 p.m. and thanks went to all who attended.



..... and as usual so did Kate Salinger (Con) - a number of other local Councillors attended the AGM.

Helpful hands and feet needed

Would you deliver the Newsletter to those members who are your neighbours? Firs Avenue (opposite Tesco) in particular needs a local deliverer, as do the N20 9xx and N20 0xx areas. Telephone Yvonne on 020 8445 4967 if you think you can help, and join the noble team of Bruce, Helen, Marion, Michael, Gillian, Gillian II, Bon, John, David and Yvonne. Or e-mail yvonneruge@live.co.uk

Forthcoming Events

Friern Barnet Library: **Wednesday 16 June**
"350 Years of Church Farm" by Gerrard Roots
 All coffee mornings are from 10.30 – 11.30

Friern Barnet and District Local History Society: **Wednesday 23 June**
"Freeman of the City of London & Liverymen of the Stationers Company"
 by **Andrea Cameron:** All meetings take place at St John's Church Hall, next to Whetstone Police Station, Friern Barnet Lane. Starts 7:45 p.m.; cost £2 to non-members.

Barnet Choral Society: **Saturday 26 June 7:30 pm**
 David Fanshawe's **"African Sanctus"** St John the Evangelist Church, Friern Barnet Road. Price £11 / £7 Box Office 075 75 639 576

Incognito Theatre: **Sun 11th July - Sat 17th July**
"New England" by Richard Nelson; Sunday performance starts at **6pm**, all other performances start at **8pm**. Ticket Prices : **£9** non-members, **£8** members, **£5** students.

Barnet Walks with Paul Baker **Saturday 31 July 2:30 pm**
"The Battle of Barnet" Meet at the junction of the Great North Road and Hadley Green Road. Price £7 (under 12s £3)

Friern Barnet Summer Show **Sat 21 & Sun 22 August**
Celebrating 100 years of Friary Park

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