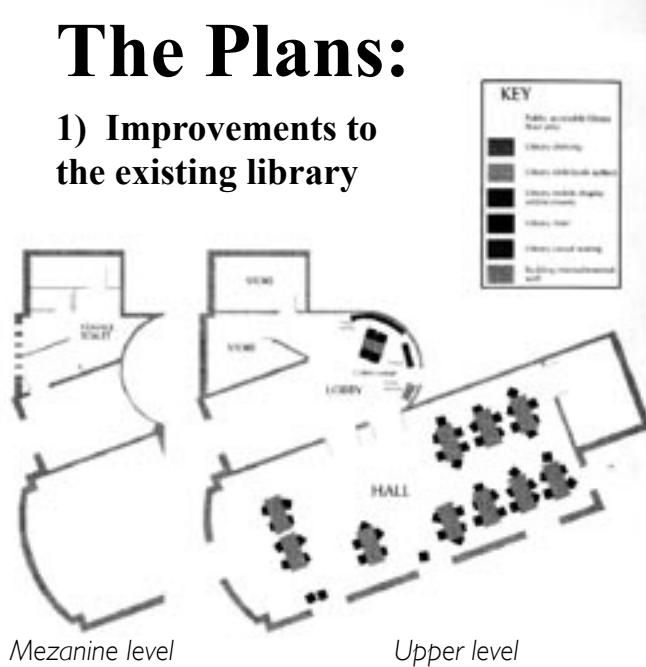




Ground level



Mezzanine level

Upper level

The Plans:

1) Improvements to the existing library

Current Library Facilities:

Adult lending & reference areas
Children's library
IT access
Coffee lounge
Audio visual room
Public toilets
Community hall

Improved Facilities to include:

Lift access
Unisex disabled toilet facilities
IT facilities and number of computers increased
More accessible shelving & layout

Limitations:

No increase in space
Limited study space
Limited parking space
Limited IT & computer access
Decrease in stock due to shelving requirements



Ground floor



Upper floor

2) Plans for a new library

Improved Facilities for new library to include:

Adult lending and reference areas
Children's & teenage section
IT access including computer taster sessions and basic training

Refreshment area
Music listening posts
Public toilets
Community hall & additional meeting room
Lift access

The Facts:

60% larger
30% Increase in adult fiction book stock
Improved children's area
Improved parking space
Easily accessible by tube & bus

Barnet Council's consultation also includes a proposal to leave the existing library as it is. However, this option does not satisfy the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and is therefore not a legally acceptable alternative.

A Question of Tactics

By Daphne Chamberlain

Last month we reported that only one vote per household would be allowed on the library questionnaire. However, some people have acquired additional copies by contacting the researchers direct.

One resident said, "I rang Quality Fieldwork, explaining that five unrelated individuals

live in this house – of different ages, different ethnic groups, and with different interests. How could one person fill in the form for everyone? They immediately sent four more forms to the house."

When I heard this account, I rang Quality Fieldwork myself, explaining that I also needed more than one form. "No problem," I was told, and

another form arrived.

However, a spokesperson from Barnet Council told me, "That was not the arrangement. Extra forms should be stamped "duplicate", so that only one vote is recorded per household."

I have four questions: How can Barnet say that their consultation is the opportunity for everyone to give their opinion? Why didn't they send a form to everyone on the electoral roll? How many other people have acquired additional forms? How does this affect the survey?

Alternative Library Plans Launched

By Daphne Chamberlain

"Let's be straight about Barnet's consultation. A new library would be part of the Waitrose development plan. The present library is our heritage, and the easiest thing to do is to extend it."

That was the message when local architects and designers James Elliott and Chris Hampson launched their alternative library refurbishment plans at Maddens on 2 September.

Chris Hampson felt that the library's new Grade 2 listing meant that the building was here to stay. "An application to de-list would effectively be an application to demolish it. Why would English Heritage agree to that? It would be hard to find another use for it without destroying significant features."

He said that Barnet has an obligation to provide a 21st century library, but the Council's refurbishment suggestions would amount to little more than adding a lift and some facilities for the disabled. The obvious way was to enlarge by building upward at the back. Barnet was selling off enough land around East Finchley to finance this.

Look after our library

When someone in the audience remarked that it would still cost "a hell of a lot", James Elli-

ott replied that Barnet would be giving up £1.6 million by gifting Park House to developers. What we would get from that would be library space over a supermarket. "This is our library," he said, "and we should look after it."

The meeting agreed that the present library is in exactly the right position. There was incredulity at Barnet's assertion that opposite the station is the centre of East Finchley, and concern over the area for the consultation questionnaire.

James Elliott said it was vital that people in East Finchley replied to the questionnaire (which, at the time of the meeting, nobody had seen). "All we want is parity for our plans," he said. "We asked Barnet whether they could be exhibited alongside the Council exhibition, but the shutters just came down."

Chris Hampson asked for volunteers to man the exhibitions and provide information. The alternative library plans are displayed in Chorak in the High Road.

Listing Lowdown

By Daphne Chamberlain

How do you get a building listed? We asked Tony Hunt of Park Hall Road, and Polly Napper of Elmhurst Court, whose separate efforts secured Grade 2 listing for the library.

Tony, a 'buildings person' who used to work for English Heritage, applied last January. He wrote to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. They ask English Heritage to inspect the building, and must be convinced of its architectural or historical interest.

Get the picture

"Send photos – exterior and interior, if possible," Tony says. "That interests them." He also sent an area map, marked with a cross, and a comprehensive description of the building. This included when it was built, and who designed it. That information came from the board in the library.

Tony used three or four lines from Pevsner's Buildings of England in support, mentioned its central location, proximity to schools, etc., and added that despite being the best historical building of its period in Finchley, it was under threat. He

sent copies of all this to the 20th Century Society, who promised their support. (There are Victorian and Georgian Societies for buildings of those periods.)

In April, Polly applied. A designer whose father taught architecture, she considers the building the most attractive in Finchley. As the mother of a child at Martin School, she knows that many children would lose their links with the library if it was moved, and believes that it should remain centrally sited for all the community.

Act before it's threatened

Polly found a 1938 booklet in Barnet Archives, commemorating its opening and showing that the building was virtually unaltered. She sent this along with photos, maps, a description and the Pevsner quote, opening hours and contact telephone numbers.

In August they both received the letter that they wanted.

Tony has already secured listings for other buildings and Polly is now planning her next project. A word of warning from Tony – it's better not to wait until buildings are under threat. Be aware that local authorities can apply for five-year exemptions from listing – but thankfully not after it has been granted.

Holy Trinity Church

Church Lane N2

Sundays: The Parish Communion 10 a.m.

Children including toddlers & babies are very welcome at all services in this multi-ethnic church.

Contact: The Revd. Laurence Hill

Telephone: 020 8883 8720

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Tele: 020 8446 1725 ~ Web: www.stjohnsfinchley.co.uk

Services

Sunday 6.30 p.m.

Thursday 7.30 p.m.

Holy Communion 1st Sunday of the month 6.30 p.m.

Healing every Tuesday between 1 p.m. & 3 p.m.

Weddings ~ Christenings ~ Funerals (at the church or cemetery)

by arrangement with the Minister

All are welcome