



Sylvan setting. The corner of Northway and North Square

1 North Square
NW11 7AA

18 September 1995

Sir,

Residents will no doubt feel somewhat happier now that the Trust has been persuaded to give a public undertaking (at its September AGM) not to build the proposed new house on the North Square/Northway corner site, not to sell it with the current planning permission, nor to build anything else there without Suburb-wide consultation,

However, the Trust's earlier actions in the matter have been quite deplorable. There are wide implications for the Suburb and dangerous precedents have been set. In 1990, despite the fact that there was an obvious conflict of interest - the regulator was the developer - and that the plan allows for open space to be filled in, four mature trees to be destroyed and eight others (all with tree preservation orders) to be endangered and the unique composition of listed buildings spoiled by a modern house, the Trust applied for and received permission for this scheme without any meaningful discussion with Suburb residents, and in the face of RA objections. Additionally, Barnet did not post a notice at the site and consulted only six of the local residents (whose objections were overridden).

At the recent application renewal, strength of feeling against this plan was amply demonstrated by the response to Barnet's wider consultation: 32 written objections, citing 24 reasons, including letters from every North Square resident and as many again from a wider area as well as a letter from the RA. This opposition was, however, ineffective in getting the renewal turned down since the Barnet Planning Committee held that even if permission had been granted wrongly in the first place, a renewal was automatic if the application was unchanged.

Should the Trust wish to present new proposals regarding this site, residents might wish to bear the following in mind:

(1) The Trust has recently maintained that development profits would only be used in aid of a community centre. What exactly will this be and what is the need?

(2) The Trust has hitherto refused to put a cost on the

site or a guess at the net development value. There are some thoughts that it might take a six figure number to move the electricity sub-station and some sort of profit share might be demanded by the electricity company. The resulting net proceeds might be more appropriately raised in another way. For example, the suggestion of a direct levy per household would determine the popularity or otherwise of a community centre.

(3) A private house, which is the only building currently allowed under the current detailed planning permission, is probably the only possibility for the site. Barnet has been against a public building, and the Trust in their 1990 submission to Barnet also stated this was unsuitable.

(4) Assertions by the Trust that the site is a building plot should be rejected as nonsense. This argument, presented to Barnet in the 1990 application, is that since a 1909 Lutyens plan for Central Square shows the site covered by a planned building, it's OK to build on it now. This of course is grossly misleading. Lutyens' grand design for the whole of the east side was not realised, nor could it be now, since the Tea House has shrunk the plot and at the other end, available space is now a private garden (no. 24 South Square).

In addition to creating some additional awareness, the foregoing hopefully demonstrates the need for vigilance should the Trust again seek to fill in more of our open spaces or promote unsuitable architecture. Trust Council members would do well to remember that it is the residents who cover, one way or another, the bulk of the Trust's £1.4m operating budget and secondly that its overriding objective, as expressed in the first lines of the Trust's Memorandum of Association is: 'to do all things possible in order to maintain and preserve the present character and amenities of . . . Hampstead Garden Suburb'.

Yours,
Andrew Botterill

LETTERS

140 Willifield Way
NW11

Sir,

I feel obliged to reply to Fay Naylor's letter in the last Suburb News. I begin to fear that she sees enemies everywhere and I would like to state yet again that the RA has always considered that the Institute and Henrietta Barnett School are essential to the life of the Suburb and that we have always worked toward that end.

In all organisations there are differences of opinion and the RA is no exception, but I do not think that the Council can be accused of exhibiting "bitter and vociferous hostility" towards the

Institute. Nor, to my knowledge, have any members "indulged in defamatory remarks about its directors and employees."

My predecessors strove for good relations and I have tried to carry these initiatives forward. I was therefore delighted when our suggestion that there should be regular meetings between three Council members and three members of the Institute Council was accepted. These meetings were suggested in order that we could put an end to this conflict and move forward together in a greater spirit of harmony to the benefit of all our residents.

Yours,
Léonie Stephen

Fosse Cottage
46 Church Street
Fontmell Magna
Dorset SP7 0NY

28 August 1995

Sir,

The letter in the summer issue from Fay Naylor, Principal of the Institute, on the subject of the relationship between the Institute and the Henrietta Barnett School, in which she alleged that some of the RA Council indulged in defamatory remarks and was generally unsupportive of the Institute, saddened me greatly. The fault, if the happy relationship which was such a joy and encouragement to me over thirty years that I was Principal has broken down, cannot surely be laid at the door of the RA!

The logo on the envelopes now sent out by the Institute clearly

states that the Institute is the 'Centre of the Community'. If this is so, how can the Institute be said to function as a community centre if the support of the most vital and opinion-forming organisation within it - the RA - is lacking? Unhappily of late, the Institute can hardly be said to have earned the respect of the RA or, indeed, the community it should be serving.

One can only hope that the stated wish of Fay Naylor to work with the RA Council creatively for the benefit of the Suburb residents' is not mere rhetoric but a firmly held belief which will bear fruit in ultimately recognising that the School and the Institute can co-exist happily to the continued benefit of all on the Suburb.

Yours,
John Enderby

30 Coleridge Walk
London NW11 6AT

Sir,

Hurrah for the letter by Dr Highman regarding petrol-motor hedge-clippers, which are an abomination. I suspect, however, that the reason they are used by contractors, rather than electric ones, is because contractors need an independent source of energy. More and more residents use contractors because they are away from home and can afford to pay others to do the work

residents used to do and enjoy themselves. The house is empty when the contractors work, and the residents who employ them are blissfully unaware of the noise their contractors are causing.

Cars that produced so much noise would not be tolerated. Surely the answer is in legislation to limit the noise hedge-cutters can produce; then manufacturers would be forced to improve the silencers on their machines, if they have any.

Yours,
Roger
Swynnerton

62 Corringham Road
NW11 7BX

22 September

On reading Fay Naylor's letter in your last issue

Sir,

To criticise Institute management is deemed defamatory.

To attack its policies must be sheer profanity!

Sir, such an attitude lacks urbanity
And shows intolerance and lack of amity.

Yours,
Carol Boulter

90 Hampstead Way
NW11 7XY

Sir,

Lisa and Audrey Wesch would like to express their heartfelt thanks for all the loving support and kindness shown to them by friends and neighbours in and around the Suburb during this tragic time.



At a tea party held at the Trust on the occasion of Stuart Gray's 90th Birthday, 1 to r, Dr Mervyn Miller, Julia Kellerman, Dawn Orr and Wilfred Court with Stuart Gray, an architect, whose knowledge of Suburb architecture is unrivalled. His massive work 'Edwardian Architecture' has recently been republished in paperback at £19.95

32 Byng Road
Barnet EN5 4NR

19 September 1995

Sir,

Readers of the Suburb News who know that I moved to High Barnet in the 1980s have told me that my demise was reported in your summer issue. In the Appreciation of Dennis Pinder's enduring service to the welfare of the Suburb, there was a picture showing him with other residents who totally opposed the plan to drive a six-lane highway through Falloolen Way and the Market Place. John Betjeman came on a walk through the Suburb to help publicise our plight. I remember

how time seemed to stand still as we all tucked in to cucumber sandwiches at Fellowship House. It was a sunny day and Terry Rand is to be complimented for capturing such a memorable glimpse of the resistance activities.

If decisions can be forestalled such as this road widening scheme that dismayed us on the Suburb - there was a Public Enquiry at Hornsey Town Hall in 1969 - then second thoughts very often bring fresh solutions far more acceptable to the local people.

Yours,
Josephine Cashmore

3 Maurice Walk
London N11 6JX

3 September 1995

Sir,

Now that the shorter days of winter will soon be upon us, perhaps it is time to draw attention to those Suburb residents whose houses are either not clearly numbered, not numbered at all or, or for perhaps presumptuous reasons, only have a name clearly emblazoned on their homes! Ambulances and fire engines etc have difficulty finding addresses during the day - let alone at night!

A case in point was my neighbour's metal number the same colour as the door. I offered to paint it white; she had not

realised that her number should be clearly seen as she always knew where she lived!

One example that sticks out like a sore thumb is a house in Hilltop, NW11 where, incredibly, the whole frontage and entrance is actually in Maurice Walk so it is continually confused with our address. The owner (after 20 years) has put a tiny address under the blue rain gutter above the front door, hardly visible in daylight and not seen at all in darkness, although the name of the house is clearly marked on their front gate. This is not very helpful to anyone unfamiliar with the area and trying to locate an address.


Yours,
Edna Weiss (Mrs)

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