

THE YARE VALLEY SOCIETY

The Society aims to protect the Yare valley south of Norwich, principally between Harford and Colney, against any development which will detract from its natural beauty, and to encourage any development which will preserve its outstanding landscape value for the benefit of all.

YARE VALLEY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER; APRIL 1996: ISSUE 33

OUR AGM IS ARRANGED FOR 20th MAY 1996, 7.30pm, AT CRINGLEFORD

PLAYING FIELDS PAVILION. Please contact Elaine Tucker (458657) with nominations for the committee.

At that meeting, we are fortunate to have Mr George Ishmael, Landscape Architect with the Norwich City Council, coming to speak on "THE YARE VALLEY - A SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE?"

MAY WE ALSO REMIND YOU THAT YOUR SUBS. FOR 1996 ARE NOW DUE. STILL AN INCREDIBLE BARGAIN AT JUST £1 PER FAMILY!

Other news

Colney hospital proposals - please see attached sheet.

New secretary - We are delighted that Mrs Alison Ward has joined our committee. We look forward to working with her.

Bowthorpe Link Road - This road linking Bowthorpe with the Watton road (B1108) near the BUPA hospital received planning permission about three years ago. Now, it could soon be built as a result of the Private Finance Initiative. It is estimated that it would generate 8000-9000 vehicle movements per day on the Watton road - this in addition to all the extra traffic pouring out on to this road from an expanding Research Park and the proposed hospital. If you are concerned, please write to the City as soon as possible.

Earlham Marsh - Millenium Green - You may have read about this in the local press. Briefly, the Countryside Commission are hoping to develop 1000 village greens throughout the country with a grant from the Millenium fund. Earlham Marsh, just below UEA village, has been selected as a pilot scheme.

Please turnover.....

The intention on the part of the City, who have submitted a plan, is not to alter the character of the area but to manage it with benefits to wildlife, landscape and informal recreation. The Yare Valley Society supports the proposal.

Bartram excavations on the marshes - The City has decided not to take enforcement action subject to Bartram undertaking works to assist nature conservation and access.

UEA farm on Strawberry Field - This will be the new site of the Development Studies farm which is moving from alongside the Watton road because UEA has sold the land. About 20 acres of the strawberry field is involved together with some marsh. The siting and construction of a farm building (for which no planning permission is required) is being discussed with City planners.

Cringleford (Horseshoe) Wood - The Gurney Estate intend thinning and tidying this woodland in accordance with a new policy to improve the estate generally whilst maximising wildlife interest.

River bank alongside Waitrose car park - Both the City and our Society are encouraging a "natural" approach to the use of this area.

Car-parking on Eaton Street - The City planning committee has recently agreed to advertise that double yellow lines be placed along the entire length of Eaton Street below the traffic lights. If these are acceptable, it would mean that parking on the green verge (which is being severely eroded) as well as on the street itself would become illegal.

Marston Marshes - Pam Ford represents our Society at the meetings with the City that take place from time to time to care for the Marshes. There are moves to designate a right of way alongside the railway to join two parts of an existing walk.

The City of Norwich Local Plan and the Norfolk Minerals Plan have now been adopted.

Area Planning Committees: Right to Speak - From April 1st., interested local parties will be allowed the right to speak at South Norfolk Council planning committees at which planning decisions are made. You may be sure that we shall seek to use this facility whenever necessary.

PS We are sorry that the format of this newsletter lacks the professionalism of the past! We are at present without an editor. But we do hope to improve in due course.

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**APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION FOR PROPOSED NHS DISTRICT
GENERAL HOSPITAL AT COLNEY**

The planning application for the new hospital was submitted on April 3rd and will be decided on Wednesday 29th May (subject to confirmation) by South Norfolk planning committee at a public meeting commencing at 9.30 a.m., at Long Stratton Leisure Centre. This committee will decide whether or not the proposal goes ahead.

As you know, letters from individuals form a vital part of decision-making. So, if you have any objections or comments, we urge you to **write before 13th May (a deadline)**, quoting **reference 07/96/0455/F**, to Michael Haslam, Chief Planning Officer, South Norfolk Council, Long Stratton NR15 2XE.

Remember, you may also come to the above public meeting, at which you may have a chance to speak.

Observations of your committee

**WATCH PRESS FOR
PUBLIC MEETING, EARLY MAY.**

The committee of the Yare Valley Society considers that, in principle, hospital development on this site is in keeping with the current statutory Local Plan.

Regarding the **appearance of the proposed development**, the applicant has endeavoured to fit it into the landscape, with special reference to the Yare Valley. The predominantly three-storey buildings are cut into the sloping site; and abundant trees, both existing and proposed, form a vital feature both on the site itself and in relation to the proposed changes to the northern end of Colney Lane between the hospital and the Watton road. The access on to Colney Lane would be via a roundabout actually on the hospital site, in order to preserve a row of mature oaks at present on the highway frontage.

We are nevertheless concerned that **no indication is given of the placing or height of any chimney stack, or stacks**, that would be necessary on the site.

However, **the issue that concerns us most is a threat to the Yare Valley** - in that the application (whilst not including it) foresees the **possible need for a bus link across the valley between UEA and the hospital**. This we would vigorously resist. It would be based on the line of an existing narrow track (see map overleaf), at present restricted in use. For this track to accommodate the proposed 40-seater buses at 10-minute intervals each way, it would have to be widened, strengthened and better lit, totally changing it's character and seriously damaging the valuable landscape, wildlife and amenity value of the valley - all of which are at present protected, for the public good, by statutory policies in the Norfolk Structure Plan and South Norfolk and City of Norwich Local Plans.

PTO

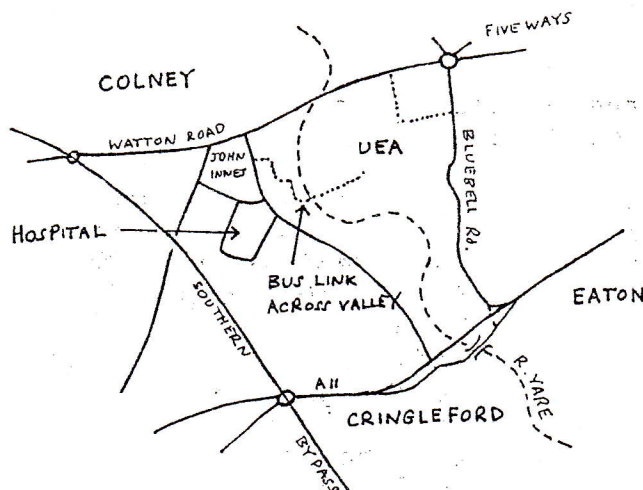
We need to encourage what the application, if permitted, actually proposes; that is, the use of the Watton road for buses serving the hospital. We also need to suggest that **specific provision is made for bus (together with ambulance) priority on that road** (even if it means widening it), with bus lanes in appropriate places - a feature not included in the application.

We also believe that the single access to the proposed hospital from Colney Lane is basically inadequate and inappropriate. We have, therefore, with others pressed strongly (and will press) for the hospital's access to be on to Hethersett Lane or directly on to the Southern Bypass. Not only would this make more sense as far as the overall present and future traffic needs of this increasingly important employment area are concerned, but it could lessen the likelihood of environmental damage to the Yare Valley.

We believe, therefore, that **permission to develop the new hospital would be wrong before a comprehensive road system is sorted out** by South Norfolk in the forthcoming update of the Local Plan when consideration is likely to be given to the wider highway and access requirements of the area between the Southern Bypass and Colney Lane.

We believe, also, that **permission would be premature before a decision is made about the closure of Colney Lane between the proposed hospital and Cringleford**. In its current Local Plan, South Norfolk clearly sees this part of Colney Lane as being unable to cope with any significant increase in traffic associated with the hospital and makes a policy statement pressing for its closure by the County Council before such development takes place. Although a survey is currently being conducted, this situation clearly needs to be resolved before South Norfolk Council, who made the statement, considers giving permission for the new development.

Finally, if you wish to see the planning application in greater detail, you are welcome to contact Elaine Tucker on 458657 or to visit the South Norfolk Council offices at Long Stratton.



AGAIN, WE URGE YOU TO WRITE WITH YOUR COMMENTS.