



Yare Valley Society Newsletter

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Bartram Mowers appeal dismissed

The Inspector's Report on the public inquiry has now been published. Bartram Mowers was appealing against the refusal by the City Council to grant planning permission for 60 residential units, surgery/community building and open space in the Yare valley next to the southern end of Bluebell Road. The Inspector considered that it was fundamental to the appellant's case that the design scheme for the landscaped development attempted to meet previous objections to building in the valley and to integrate the buildings as much as possible into the surrounding valley landscape. The appeal proposals involved the construction of three semi-circular crescents each comprising a terrace of 20 single storey units, along with substantial landscaping, including earthmoulding works and strategic native planting to screen the site.

The Inspector noted, however, that the proposed development would cover a much greater area than the present buildings on the site, and be visible, especially in winter, from the valley walk, from connecting footpaths and from higher ground to the west. He further noted that there would be pressure from residents to limit or remove the proposed screening in order to increase light to their dwellings and maximise views of the valley and so undermine the effectiveness of the design.

He concluded that the proposed development would be an unwanted extension of the built-up suburban edge of Eaton and an arbitrary intrusion into the valley landscape. As such it would be contrary to local planning policy and its underlying aims in protecting the valley from inappropriate development and the prevention of the coalescence of Eaton and Cringleford.

The appellant's undertaking as part of the present proposals to manage the public access land in the valley lacked a reliable future management strategy. The potential public benefit was therefore limited. The existing planning permission for garden centre development would need further permissions from the City Council that would be determined in line with current planning policies. The Inspector considered that the proposed housing development would

have a greater harmful visual impact than a likely garden centre development.

The Inspector acknowledged that the site was within walking distance of shopping facilities and served by bus and cycle routes but these benefits did not outweigh the serious environmental objections to the proposals. He therefore dismissed the appeal.

If you wish to see the Inspector's letter, please contact Elaine on 458657 or Alison on 452330.

Graham Hussey

A very big 'Thank you' to all who helped the Inspector reach this important decision - by writing, attending the Inquiry and generally making your views known.

Elaine Tucker

Farm Visit

On 17 April, 20 members of the Society spent a fascinating (but wet!) morning visiting the UEA farm on Bluebell Road, where we were guided by Willie Buhler, the farm Director. Willie explained the history and purpose of the farm as part of the School of Development Studies, and showed us some of the experimental work, for example, the use of controlled flooding to improve the productivity of grazing meadows. We also saw some of the conservation work being carried out on the neighbouring marsh and reed beds which, with the control of water levels using dykes and sluices, will bring about some real improvements. The farm seems also to have become something of a refuge for an unwanted pony and those delightful donkeys!

John Thurman

Changes to to the committee

Steve Dawson, our treasurer, who resigned last year but kindly stayed on to see us through to another AGM, has now been able to relinquish the post to Liz Varge. We are grateful to him for his faithfulness in spite of many other pressures. We welcome Liz who has been standing in for Steve for the last few months so that we already know what a great contribution she makes to the working of the committee.

Another change is the resignation, due to family commitments, of **Pam Ford** our membership secretary for the last eight years. During that time she has not only efficiently tackled our growing numbers and been responsible for the distribution of newsletters but has taken a special interest in the Marston Marshes and generally provided much common sense and wisdom. We shall miss Pam's commitment and friendliness but are glad to know that she will continue to keep us in touch with issues concerning the Marshes. Thank you, Pam, for all you have done.

The vacant place on the committee has been filled by **Ron Bocking**, who has been a co-opted member for the last two years representing interests in the Earlham-Bowthorpe area, as well as providing us with much information, and inspiration, on other aspects of our work. We welcome him.

Elaine Tucker

Someone left a collapsible navy umbrella at the Pavilion after the AGM. Please telephone 458657 if it is yours.

Walk on Earlham-Bowthorpe Marshes

This was mentioned at the AGM and has now been arranged for **Tuesday 20 July, 7.00 pm**, meeting in the lay-by adjacent to St Mary's church, Earlham on the Watton Road. It will be led by Matthew Davies of the Norwich Fringe Project.

Colney Borrow Pit and Bowthorpe Southern Park Landscape Brief

These two issues are linked in that one incorporates the other, both plans being submitted by Norwich City Council. We have responded to both by objecting to the proposal for an additional gravel working in an area protected by statutory policies from such development. We have pointed out the existing large area of open water in this part of the valley and the need to retain the natural wetland there in order to maintain wildlife that would otherwise be lost. We have also questioned the need for an extra pit and registered our concern about the diversion of an ancient right of way because of it.

Walking in Colney Wood

At the kind invitation of our member, Mrs Korn, members may now use the private footpath along the top of the scarp slope linking land belonging to Colney Hall, where we already have had permission to walk. We are most grateful to be able to walk in these lovely grounds.

Elaine Tucker

Social Evening - Date for your diary

We are planning to hold a social evening for members on **Monday 18 October 1999, 7.30 pm** in the Cringleford Playing Field Pavilion (off Oakfields Road). It will be an opportunity to meet informally and to discuss any issues of current interest. The cost will be £2 per person. Please telephone Alison Ward on 452330 if you are able to come, so that we will have an indication of the number for catering purposes. The date seems a long way ahead but *tempus fugit*. Please put it in your diary now. We hope that many members will attend.



Norwich River Valleys Strategy meetings

These meetings in April, sponsored by the Countryside Commission and involving a number of authorities and organisations, were sounding the public out about the use of the river valleys. Members who attended were able, with others, to make the point that the valley in our area should be generally conserved as it is. A report is due out later in the summer which will be further discussed in a group to which a representative of our Society will be invited.

Norwich Local Plan

This is soon to be reviewed and we have been able to submit comments on issues that concern us. As you can guess, these involve the continuing and increasing protection of the Yare valley, such as identifying particular pressure-points and further Conservation Areas, protecting adjacent areas from development that would adversely affect the valley and making sure that safe public access does not damage the quality and character of the valley in any way.

Elaine Tucker

New Hospital at Colney

As you may have seen in the press, the hospital trust is now seeking planning permission from South Norfolk for 144 more bed spaces and a clinical research ward. These would be accommodated in two additional three storey blocks on the Colney Lane side of the site. Together with recently approved residential and other buildings, this would inevitably affect the landscape setting of the hospital on this side. According to the trust's traffic consultant, the effect on the approved road network would be broadly neutral.

Articles, comments and letters for possible publication in future newsletters can be sent to: Alison Ward, 20 Brettingham Avenue, Cringleford, Norwich NR4 6XG