YARE VALLEY SOCIETY

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The objects of the society are to protect the natural landscape and wildlife habitats of the Yare Valley south and west of Norwich. The society supports projects which would enhance the valley but opposes developments that would detract from its natural qualities.

To: Norwich City Planning Application Committee

Yare Valley Society consultee response to

Planning Application 26/00652/F

Demolition of existing building and erection of a three storey 66no. bed care home for the elderly (Use class C2) including associated access, parking, landscaping and ancillary buildings.

Introduction

The proposed development is located immediately adjacent to the Yare River Valley Character Area. The Valley is a designated Key Green Infrastructure Corridor to the west and south of Norwich, linking woodland, meadows and wetlands in the valley. It forms a major part of the local ecological network to which the development site contributes. The corridor is much valued by the local and wider community for its wildlife habitats and the well-being opportunities it provides for informal recreation in a green setting.

Appearance

The design has the appearance of being from a standard pattern book, and more suited to an inner urban area than to the semi-rural setting in the Yare Valley. There is little evidence that the size, design or materials are in keeping with local styles or fit into the local setting adjacent to the Yare Valley Green Space. Its proposed scale and design is significantly detrimental to the enjoyment of the adjacent landscaped public green space and out of keeping with the existing adjacent single storey properties. The building viewed from the green landscaped area to the south would be particularly stark.

The proposed scale and design would be significantly detrimental to the amenity of the adjacent green space much used by the local community for their well-being and recreation.

Setting

The large three storey building is out of scale with the tightly drawn development site boundary. The tightness of the site denies the opportunity to secure the substantial screening and softening landscaping so necessary visually and ecologically in this environmentally

sensitive location. The tight site boundary excludes almost all the existing mature trees, and would seem to necessitate the removal of two maturing copper beech trees within the site.

Almost all the trees and shrubs that would screen or soften this development from the nearby public green space and neighbouring properties lie outside the development site. The removal of some or all of these trees and shrubs could have a devastating impact on the views from the surrounding Yare Valley area, and negate any Biological Net Gain from within the development site. Ideally the site boundary should have been drawn more widely so that the proposal can include guarantees that the existing trees and shrubs that help to screen the structure would be protected.

A degree of protection is provided by the Tree Protection Area 589, but it is to be noted that an application was made to remove many of these screening trees on 2nd March 2026. This application was refused, but a future application might be successful.

Firm undertakings need to be in place to ensure the screening trees and shrubs immediately adjacent to the site are safeguarded for the lifetime of the building together with a management scheme for their maintenance and/or replacement as may be appropriate from time to time.

Light Pollution

Light pollution could have a significant adverse effect on a wide range of wildlife including mammals (e.g. bats), birds and insects making use of the Yare Valley wildlife corridor for habitat, foraging and migration. It is essential that disruption to the corridor is minimised by having a detailed lighting strategy. The strategy should aim to minimise wildlife disturbance by addressing such issues as colour temperature, shielding and directing the light, avoiding glare, and reducing intensity and duration.

A detailed lighting strategy should be drawn up for the site with the aim of minimising disturbance to wildlife.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The possibility of a net gain in excess of 10% for the development site is claimed. This is welcome, but for this to occur, the BNG report states:

“A Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) must be produced for the site. This should include recommendations for the implementation, management and monitoring of the site for at least 30 years to ensure that biodiversity net gain is delivered.”

For the above reasons the committee of the Yare Valley Society opposes the development in its present form.

On behalf of the committee,

John Elbro,

Chair.

1st September 2026