# Yare Valley Society

Enhancing the Valley
for Wildlife and Informal Recreation

**Newsletter 130 October 2026**

## Keswick Data Centre – the present position

The Planning Application for a Data Centre at Keswick is on the South Norfolk District Planning portal and is open for consultation. The closing date is the 5th of November 2026. The reference number is **2026/2957.**

The proposed150 MW Keswick Data Centre on the fringe of Norwich, is huge and in the "hyperscale" category. It is sited in the Yare Valley green corridor less than 500m from a nature reserve, and even closer to some residences and Tesco's and less than 600m from Norwich residential properties. It could have disastrous effects on human health and wildlife.

## What are these effects?

Experience of existing Data Centres in the UK and elsewhere is that their most striking adverse effects are to create **noise, heat, and air pollution** extending over distances of up to 2 miles (3.2 km) or more into the surrounding area. **That's all the way to Eaton Park!**

**Noise:** The massive cooling fans generate a **continuous low frequency audible hum** or drone 24/7 capable of bypassing standard sound barriers. More intense sound will be created by a multitude of **emergency backup diesel generators** during their regular monthly testing, or when they are run continuously in the event of a power failure. Exposure to environmental noise is known to increase the risk of mental health disorders, including depression, chronic anxiety, and psychological distress.

**Heat**: The Data Centre will be effectively a **giant space heater** ejecting most of its up to 150 MW into the air creating a **"heat island" effect** adding to the elevated temperatures already being experienced by **climate change**. Increased environmental temperatures are not only uncomfortable, but they increase mortality and can aggravate certain medical conditions.

**Air:** The emergency backup diesel generators will release **fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and nitrogen oxides ($NO_x$)** during testing and during grid outages. This will degrade the local air quality dependent on wind direction. These pollutants are linked to respiratory disease, heart disease, asthma and other serious health risks.

Other effects include those produced by lighting, electromagnetic radiation, and hydrological disturbance, but the above gives a taste of what might be to come.

**Danby Wood, Marston Marsh, and Eaton Common could cease as places of peace, tranquillity and seeming remoteness, where people can go to recharge their well-being.**

## So much for humans, what about the wildlife?

The effects on wildlife living in the Valley could be even more serious than that on humans. affecting **habitat, foraging and migration along the Valley corridor.**

**Noise:** Sensitive species in **Danby Wood, Marston Marsh, Keswick Marsh, and Eaton Common**, including swans, waterfowl, bats, and amphibians, are vulnerable to chronic noise disturbance

**Heat:** Increased temperatures could change the local ecosystem, affecting vegetation, composition of populations, and breeding.

**Air:** Fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) can cause respiratory damage, poison habitats, and reduce biodiversity.

**The Yare Valley, a Strategic Green Infrastructure Corridor essential to combating declining biodiversity, could be irreversibly damaged.**

## What are the actions of Yare Valley Society?

### Created a Data Centre database

The Data Centre Team assembled by the Yare Valley Society has now had a chance to examine some of the detail of the Planning Application. It has identified deficiencies in the application with potential serious consequences if not put right. The database the team prepared in preparation for the Application is being tailored to the Application and put into a format for easy public access. This is a work in progress.

### Conducting a 2500 leaflet drop

The building of hyperscale Data Centres has only recently been getting underway, and they are distinctly different from anything we have seen before. The general public - and the government it seems - are unaware of the possible consequences such developments can have for the wildlife and people living in the surrounding area. The siting of Data Centres must be appropriate and stringent enforceable planning conditions in place if the problems already being experienced at Data Centres elsewhere are to be avoided or at least effectively mitigated.

A 2500 leaflet drop is already underway to as many as possible of the household's that might be affected by the development. The aim is to raise awareness of the threat and to call upon people to object to the planning application in its present form.

### Preparing an objection

The Society Data Centre Team is working through the Application Details with the aim of submitting an effective objection to the Applications's approval.

## What can I do?

Object to the Planning Application for a Data Centre at Keswick on the South Norfolk District Planning portal. The closing date is the 5th of November 2026. The reference number is **2026/2957.**

We urge you to use the Society's Data Centre Team's public database to help you with your response to the application. It is available in its current form on the Planning Page of the YVS website: https://yarevalleysociety.org.uk/about/planning/

**It is important that we all as individuals write in to make our voice heard.**

Any response YVS makes is limited to the Data Centre's impact on the wildlife of the Valley and its use for informal recreation. Your response will almost certainly have a wider brief and include the well-being of people living in their own homes and going about their daily lives.

**Tell your friends and neighbours**

**A big response can safeguard**

**the well-being of Valley wildlife, you and your family!**

## Websites and Media

The developer's view: https://www.apexnorwichdatacentre.co.uk/

Other views:

https://stopnorwichmegadatacentre.co.uk/

https://norwichfoe.co.uk/proposed-norwich-data-centre/

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5n49x09e3l9o

**Stories, pictures and news of activities for possible publication in the Newsletter and/or on the YVS website, Facebook and Instagram are always welcome at yvs@yarevalleysociety.org.uk**