

OP-INQ-78

Dear Joanna,

After closure of the Inquiry tonight, Tuesday, I was approached by Michael Jeffreys of Forest Heath District Council who requested I include in my evidence tomorrow, Wednesday, Newmarket's efforts to retain what they call "The Yellow Brick Road", a mostly footway which starts from near the A14, passes near Tesco, proceeds parallel to Fordham Road along a riverside, with garden land each side, passes over the High Street, over WEATHERBY Crossing and ends at the junction of New Cheveley Road and The Drift/Southern-most point of Cricket Field Road.

This "Connectivity Route" is important for Newmarket's growing cohesion and is under-pinned by **The Princes Foundation for Building Community**. It is feared that closure of S22 Weatherby will destroy efforts to increase connectivity between the part of Newmarket South of the railway from the rest of the town.

It seems this project has not been previously presented to the Inquiry.

My ask is whether the Inspector will allow me to mention this project as part of my evidence tomorrow on Wednesday.

The words I propose to use are:-

The Yellow Brick Road

This has existed in Newmarket since at least the 1960s and has always been known locally as the Yellow Brick Road, because of the colour of the bricks, which formed the original path.

The Yellow Brick Road Linear Park is now included in The Forest Heath District Council Local Plan and a management plan was drawn up in January 2016.

It is an important wildlife corridor and accessible green route linking Newmarket town centre (in the south) to the northern residential extremities of the town (approximately 2.7 km/1.7 miles in length). The Linear Park follows the route of Newmarket Brook (formerly known as Number One Drain). The Linear Park, including the associated neighbouring public owned green space, covers approximately 21 hectares.

The Yellow Brick Road is the crucial north – south spine of the connecting footpaths and cycle ways in Newmarket. The southern most point of the route connects with a route along the Watercourse to the Market Square and from there continues along Wellington Street, Sun Lane and Park Lane to the Weatherby Crossing.

The Prince's Foundation

In 2012, the **Prince's Foundation for Building Community** was invited by Suffolk County Council, Forest Heath District Council and Newmarket Town Council "to create a sustainable and holistic vision for Newmarket in collaboration with local residents and other key stakeholders". The Prince's Foundation was initially asked to collate and analyse the opinion of a variety of community groups in Newmarket in order to identify how people felt the area should develop over the coming years. The resulting vision for Newmarket and the action plan can be seen in the report *Newmarket: Enquiry by Design Workshop Report* (2013).

A key recommendation of the report was to make the town connected and states “The Yellow Brick Road establishes a good starting point for the development of a connected network of attractive walking and cycle routes”. (p. 32)

A map of a proposed movement strategy (p.32) shows the Yellow Brick Road extended through the town centre, across the Weatherby Crossing and continuing to the Drift in the very south of the town.

The report defined ‘interconnected’ as “neighbourhoods with linked walkable streets allowing access to public spaces and transportation, e.g. develop logical routes where all daily needs are within a five-minute walk”. (p.17)

The Neighbourhood Plan

This is currently being prepared after public consultation and has adopted the principles outlined in the Prince’s Foundation report, particularly with respect to connectivity within the town.

The following link describes more fully the Princes Foundation for Building:-

https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/Council/Policies_Strategies_and_Plans/upload/Newmarket-Vision-EbD-Report-Final_VLR_17-06-13-LOW-RES.pdf

I thank you for your assistance,

Philip Hodson.