

LODDON

Low alcohol prices are 'alarming' says coroner

Supermarkets should be stopped from selling cut-price alcohol after a Norfolk man was found to have "drunk himself to death", a coroner has said.

Roger Prosser, from Leman Grove in Loddon, died in September with a blood alcohol level more than six times higher than the drink-drive limit.

Speaking at the inquest into his death earlier this week, coroner William Armstrong said these levels were "exceptionally high" and blamed the low cost and high availability of alcohol.

Speaking after the hearing he said it was likely that the drink that killed Mr Prosser "would have been purchased at the cost of a few pounds".

He added: "There's a relationship between the cost of alcohol and the damage caused by alcohol abuse.

"Doing something to tackle this issue is something that should be considered."

Mr Prosser, 64, had long suffered with alcohol addiction and made daily visits to friend Lee Woodard to begin drinking at 11am.

The day he died Mr Prosser had been his "usual self," according to Mr Woodard, but that afternoon he collapsed and passed away from acute alcohol intoxication.

Speaking at the inquest Mr Armstrong said: "The plain fact of his case is that Roger drank himself to death.

"It's alarming that alcohol can be purchased at a price less than bottled water. A substantial number of deaths are linked to alcohol abuse."

This week the government unveiled new measures to cut down on irresponsible drinking, including banning all-you-can-drink promotions and forcing pubs and bars to offer small glasses of wine.

However, no steps were taken to tackle highly-discounted supermarket alcohol, a step that Mr Armstrong said was "worth pursuing".

In Scotland plans to introduce a minimum price for a unit of alcohol are under way, which would stop the sale of extremely affordable and often high-strength drinks.

Mr Armstrong ruled that Mr Prosser died of acute alcohol intoxication, in the context of an underlying heart condition.

GORLESTON

Treatment aims to increase lung disease patients' independence

A unique new service to provide treatment and support to people with lung disease has been launched by the James Paget University Hospital. Nearly 900,000 people in the UK have been diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which can leave

people breathless. The non-drug therapy service can improve physical performance, breathing, eases symptoms, reduces fatigue and gives patients a better quality of life. It incorporates physical training, disease education, nutrition assessment and advice, and

psychological, social and behavioural intervention. Carol Nicholls, a respiratory nurse specialist at the Gorleston hospital, said: "The majority of patients who have had the therapy have reported that it has helped them cope with the condition - both

physically and mentally. It helps to restore their independence - such as being able to do household tasks and socialise - and increases their understanding of the condition." ■ More information about the service is on www.jpaget.nhs.uk

COLTISHALL

Tall turbine could ground commercial aircraft plan

Picture: MIKE PAGE

By ED FOSS

A multi-million pound plan to decommission and store civilian aircraft at the former RAF Coltishall airbase could be grounded by a planned wind turbine serving the neighbouring prison site.

As reported in yesterday's EDP, an aviation business wants to use the 600 remaining acres of the old base to fly in civilian aircraft, mainly Boeing 737s, and take them apart carefully and sell the spare parts and scrap.

The project, which is in its very early stages, has been roundly welcomed by locals and politicians for its economic and jobs boost, its retention of heritage and its minimal impact on infrastructure.

But a plan announced in December to build a 130m-tall turbine on the old base to help satisfy renewable energy rules which were drawn up when 30-acre HMP Bure was given planning permission by North Norfolk District Council could scupper the decommissioning project.

"It is a potential problem. A wind turbine and an airfield don't fit together," said Andrew Verdon, spokesman for TAG Aviation (Stansted), the business behind the new plans.

"A 400 foot tall turbine is a potential navigational hazard and we would need to discuss the detail with the Civil Aviation Authority."

If the Ministry of Justice can renegotiate the need for a wind turbine on the site, either placing it elsewhere or using alternative renewable technologies to meet the planning rules, then the TAG Aviation (Stansted) project could still go ahead.

The other side of the argument is that the decommissioning project



CHANGE OF USE: The former RAF Coltishall site is now home to HMP Bure.

could put paid to the turbine plans, which would be welcomed by those who have been against the turbine since it was first suggested.

"It would seem that if the windmill, which many people don't want, goes up, then this major plan which seems to be an excellent use of the site could go out of the window," said Marilyn Farrington, Coltishall resident and

member of the Coltishall Eco Town Action Group (Cetag).

"We have been very much buoyed and excited about the proposal Mr Verdon has presented to us as a group and what he says rings true in so many different ways.

"Obviously it would be a real shame if this apparently excellent project suffered because of a construction we

don't want to see anyway."

Council spokesman Peter Battrick said the legal agreement with the Ministry of Justice involving the wind turbine could be "open to renegotiation" if a request was made.

A public meeting to introduce the wind turbine proposal and project team to local residents is due to be held in February.

NEATISHEAD

Buyers put former RAF land back on market

A former RAF station which for decades played a key role as the eyes and ears of the nation's defence has been put back on sale for £4m by its original buyers. The land at former RAF Neatishead was sold on to an unidentified buyer late in 2006 with an unknown price tag. That buyer has now put the land and buildings back on the market, with a guide price of £4m, through chartered surveyors Barlow Associates. The station, closer to Horning than Neatishead, has watched the skies over the UK and further afield for 60 years and although the large scale radar operations ceased in 2004, it

continues to operate on a much smaller scale. Of around 13 hectares of former base, 2.6 have been retained by the Ministry of Defence and the slimmed down operation renamed a remote radar head. Nick Barlow, of Barlow Associates, based in Warwickshire, said the site could be suitable for a range of uses. "North Norfolk District Council is favouring a more leisure-based use because of its proximity to the Broads," he said. "The buildings on the site also offer the opportunity for offices, small workshops and secure storage of almost anything." North Norfolk MP Norman Lamb

said any purchaser had to be aware of the sensitivity of the rural area involved and the inadequacies of the surrounding road network. The land and buildings required for the remote radar head and also the area where the RAF air defence radar museum continues to operate are not included in the sale. The buildings on the site include an underground bunker, whose access is disguised inside an innocent-looking bungalow. There are also offices, the former officers' mess, a hangar and stores. The unit first became operational as an RAF radar station in 1941.



2006(06) BMW 330D M Sport

Silver with black leather & iDrive

This 330 diesel automatic is in superb condition inside and out. Silver with full black leather; iDrive inc sat nav; climate control; multi CD and lots more. 47.9 mpg (extra urban). Fabulous to drive. A real sports saloon. 49,210 miles, full service history, 12 months guarantee.

an outstanding example at £18,799

Part-exchange | Finance | Easy Parking

Richard Nash Rouen Road
Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1QZ
Tel 01603 498000
www.richardnash.co.uk



BEST BAA NONE!



Our breeds, your choices - pay a visit to Norfolk's new digital museum

EDP2 Thursday