



Respecting the past, shaping the future

*Press release from
Suffolk Preservation Society
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Plans for housing growth will damage Suffolk's environment, campaigners warn

Campaigners have warned that plans to build thousands of new homes in one Suffolk borough could cause real damage to the area's environment.

The Suffolk Preservation Society (SPS) says proposals to build 530 extra homes every year in the St Edmundsbury borough has "no justification", and has called on the figure to be decreased.

In response to a consultation carried out by St Edmundsbury Borough Council on its Local Development Framework (LDF) document, the society has also called for steeper targets on the use of renewable energies to be introduced and greater thought to be given to ensuring any new development is sustainable.

Richard Ward, society director, said: "What evidence is there to support a build rate of 530 homes per year without damage to the environment? We can see no justification at this time to continue throughout the plan period with this build rate. To do so would, in our opinion, harm the environment of the borough.

"The build rate should be decreased to a figure reflecting local need and the environmental capacity of the area, commensurate with the delivery of true sustainable development. And it should not add to climate change."

In the document, the council has asked for opinions on five different options on future housing growth, ranging from extra development in the borough's rural and urban areas to creating an entire new settlement of at least 3,000 homes along with jobs and services.

But the society feels one single option is not appropriate, and says a combination of smaller developments spread across the borough would be

more sustainable while better suiting the character of the area and the needs of its residents.

Mr Ward added: "It is not the case that one option fits. In our view, delivering what local communities need is likely to require a mix of all the options. This includes, subject to the provision of all necessary infrastructures, a new settlement to remove the pressure for development on existing settlements. It is unfortunate that a sixth option of mixing the other options was not a part of this consultation process."

The society has also called on the council to put a greater focus on the needs and wants of local people when deciding how the borough will develop over the next 20 years.

In addition, the SPS feels the consultation document does not truly reflect the diversity of the borough and the differing needs of its urban and rural communities or the distinct issues these communities face.

Note to editors:

SPS, founded in 1929, originally worked to protect the county's buildings and landscape. Today, the society has broadened its focus to help shape Suffolk's future, largely campaigning for sensitive and appropriate development, more and better quality affordable homes and to ensure sustainable infrastructures are in place to support the county's communities.

A copy of the society's full response to the council's consultation is attached.

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