



## ***Respecting the past, shaping the future***

Press release from  
Suffolk Preservation Society  
Date: 19/01/09

### **Growth levels “frightening”**

#### **County at “watershed”, warns environmental group**

Countryside campaigners have today warned that “frightening and unnecessary” plans for thousands of new homes across Suffolk would cause irreversible damage to the environment.

Suffolk Preservation Society, the county branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), said new homes planned for Bury St Edmunds and Ipswich did not reflect local need and would have an “extremely damaging” impact on quality of life.

The warning comes following the publication of a study commissioned by East of England Regional Assembly into future growth in the eastern region. In addition to the expansion of Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds, the study is recommending that up to six new settlements should be created across East Anglia.

The proposals have been drawn up to meet government targets which state that more than three quarters of a million new homes should be built in the Eastern region by 2031.

“These recommendations would have a far reaching and extremely damaging impact on the quality of life for those who live and work in Suffolk,” said Richard Ward, society director.

“What evidence is there that this enormous growth rate could be delivered without damage to the environment? We feel that this proposal does nothing for the local population, and has instead been drafted solely to meet artificially-imposed Government targets. We can see no justification whatsoever for progressing with this plan.

“The county must fight these proposals. Combined with the figures for additional housing in the Regional Plan review, Suffolk is at a watershed for the survival of its very essence and character. If these combined proposals go forward, the county we all cherish will be lost – and once lost, it is gone forever.

## **County at “watershed”, warns environmental group 2**

“Bury St Edmunds has already expanded vastly over the past few years, so much so that it is now in danger of swallowing up its neighbouring villages. Ipswich has also started spreading outwards into the adjacent countryside, leaving less and less green space for future generations to enjoy. This cannot be allowed to continue if the character of our county is to be preserved.”

SPS said the location of some of the planned homes suggested the region would eventually become a giant dormitory for London commuters, bringing only benefits for the new residents and not those who already live in the region.

In addition, the new homes would also need extra services, such as roads, water, schools and hospitals, which would contribute to even greater loss and damage to the countryside.

“Piling growth upon growth upon growth simply isn’t sustainable and would have a major impact on quality of life currently enjoyed by those in Suffolk,” added Mr Ward.

“It is also inevitable that the report’s recommendations would also lead to more pollution, more noise and more congestion and the consequences of this are both frightening and unnecessary.

“The society has always said that future housing should be built to meet local needs, within the environmental limits and capacities of the area and with the support of local communities. At the moment, these proposals come nowhere near delivering those objectives.”

### **Ends**

**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.

### **For more information please contact:**

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