



Respecting the past, shaping the future

Press release from
Suffolk Preservation Society
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New homes plan could “engulf” villages, society warns

The unique character of some of Suffolk’s smallest and most picturesque villages could be lost forever if plans for large quantities of new housing are approved, leading environmental campaigners have warned.

Suffolk Preservation Society has labelled proposals for hundreds of new homes on land surrounding the Trimley villages and Felixstowe as “hugely inappropriate”, and has urged Suffolk Coastal District Council to look again at the plans.

The call comes after the council highlighted the land as a potential area for growth as part of its Local Development Framework (LDF). Should the development go ahead, 1,660 new homes would be built – which the society says would engulf the villages and erode the valuable open countryside which lies between them.

“Although a lot of the policies raised in the council’s LDF are welcomed and appropriate, we feel very strongly that the housing targets set for the area are far too large,” said Richard Ward, society director. “As a result, the council is now looking to build in areas which simply are not suitable to accommodate huge numbers of new homes.

“Our major concern comes around plans to build 1,660 new houses around Trimley St Martin, Trimley St Mary, Walton and Felixstowe. The Trimley villages are extremely small with little, if any, significant facilities and simply do not have the capacity, either physically or socially, to accommodate these large numbers of new homes.

“While modest development designed to meet the needs of the local community may be appropriate in the future, identifying these villages as a strategic growth area really is a nonsense.

“The result of this building work would be the gradual erosion of the countryside and expansion of the villages, so much so that we fear they may eventually combine and lose their separate identities altogether.”

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The society applauded the council's commitment to securing “organic and evolutionary growth” and preserving prime agricultural land for food production, also outlined in its LDF.

However, it said these pledges were worthless unless the housing plans took more account of the need to protect the district's special environment.

“The Suffolk coastal region has both a rich historic built heritage and a unique landscape,” added Mr Ward. “They must be given sufficient protection in the future and any new development must be carefully planned and fully integrated.

“This is a fine balance which must be struck when planning for the future. Unfortunately we are yet to be convinced that this balance has, in this case, been achieved.”

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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