

Cambridge Charity Petitions Government

Representatives from Cambridge Past, Present & Future (CambridgePPF) – the charity that campaigns to keep Cambridge special – travelled to London on Monday 17th October to hand a petition in to Government, signed by over thousand local residents (i.e. 1,036 signatories). The petition reflected the concerns felt by ordinary people to changes to the planning system proposed in the new National Planning Policy Framework.

The petition called on the Government to amend the new policy to give equal recognition in the planning decision making process to social and environmental considerations, as opposed to the proposed presumption in favour of economic growth. The document also asked Government to give an explicit commitment that the overall effect of the proposed changes will not in any way reduce the level of protection afforded to urban green spaces, heritage sites, and areas of Green Belt.

Robin Pellew, Chairman of CambridgePPF, said: “It is essential that the planning system continues to protect the cultural heritage and green open spaces of historic places such as Cambridge. Locally people are concerned that the speed and scale of new development proposed will swamp the capacity of the city and its surrounding villages, generating more crowding, pollution, and congestion – which in turn would make Cambridge less attractive for inward investment.

“Of course people, especially the younger generation, need affordable housing to support the growth of both the city and local universities. But growth must be planned in a way that does not threaten the very essence of what makes Cambridge so attractive.”

The Government’s new planning policies have created widespread concern among both local authorities and countryside organisations, leading the Prime Minister to accuse objectors of being NIMBYs.

Continuing, Robin Pellew said: “Accusations of NIMBYism merely demonstrate a misunderstanding of the strength of feeling shown by people when the places and landscapes they cherish are wilfully put at risk. Economic growth may be essential now for the country but future generations will have to live with the consequences of decisions taken today. I’d like to thank everyone that took the time to sign our petition.”

The response of CambridgePPF to the new proposals is available publicly on the website: www.cambridgeppf.org

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About Cambridge Past, Present and Future (CambridgePPF)

Founded as Cambridge Preservation Society in 1928, CambridgePPF is a registered charity campaigning to keep Cambridge and its surroundings special by positively influencing planning developments, delivering environmental education and managing the green spaces and historic buildings in its care. Its diverse property portfolio includes Wandlebury Country Park and its Iron Age Ring; Coton Countryside Reserve; Barnwell Leper Chapel; Bourn Windmill plus various wildlife sites and historic buildings. Key achievements include protecting sites such as Grantchester Meadows, the Gog Magog Hills and Wandlebury Estate from development and helping to establish the Cambridge Green Belt in the 1960s. CambridgePPF has a growing membership, which makes a vital contribution to the cost of conserving, managing and developing its sites. With its HQ at Wandlebury, CambridgePPF has a mix of busy full and part-time staff and is run by a Board of Trustees together with Advisory Committees staffed by dedicated volunteers. For more information about CambridgePPF and benefits of membership: www.cambridgeppf.org

For more information about CambridgePPF:

Carolin Gohler, CEO, tel: 01223 243830 / ceo@cambridgeppf.org

Mary Nealon, Head of Development, tel: 01223 243830 / development@cambridgeppf.org

Web: www.cambridgeppf.org