

Stapleford Parish Council's Position Statement on Green Belt

Stapleford Parish Council considers it appropriate to capture its position on the Green Belt to assist those interested in, or dealing with, the village of Stapleford, especially from a planning and development perspective.

1 Background

Stapleford is a village situated in the Green Belt, South East of the City of Cambridge. Specific points of note include:

- certain parts of Stapleford are designated as Conservation area;
- the Gog Magog hills and The Magog Down, an area for restoration, conservation and informal recreation including areas of rare chalk grassland and designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, all sit within Stapleford;
- Stapleford also encompasses Wandlebury Country Park, 110 acres (40 ha) of woods and chalk grassland, with the remains of a 5th Century BC Iron Age Hill Fort (a Scheduled Ancient Monument);
- Stapleford Parish Council's Parish Pit; and
- a Grade 2 Listed Church dating back to c. 955.

2 Reasons why people choose to live in Stapleford

Stapleford Parish Council recognises that many parishioners have elected to reside in Stapleford due to factors including its:

- location in the Green Belt;
- proximity to the above amenities;
- largely uninterrupted views of the Magog Down, Linton Hills and neighbouring Counties;
- green space and countryside including fields and farmland;
- largely uninterrupted views of Cambridge and its landmarks;
- respite from the increasing high density and encroachment of Cambridge development;
- its demarcated position from and separate identity to the City of Cambridge;
- its demarcated position from and separate identity to The Shelfords, Sawston, Babraham and Pampisford.

3 Comment

Significant development on the fringes, especially to the South is likely to impede the enjoyment of the above. Such development would also create linkage of settlements which is something Stapleford is keen to avoid in order to preserve its privileged position and identity.

3.1 Infrastructure

Whilst Stapleford is well served by public transport, Stapleford Parish Council notes that there are issues (including congestion and delay) experienced by car users especially at peak times and especially on Stapleford's major routes into Cambridge. This causes drivers to use roads such as London Road, Church Street, Mingle Lane Gog Magog Way and Bury Road to seek to avoid adverse traffic issues. This adversely impacts on Stapleford residents as these roads were never intended to have such a volume of traffic. Increased development, without measures to address these adverse traffic issues, will only serve to exacerbate these problems and Stapleford Parish Council is keen to avoid this.

3.2 Campaign for the Protection of Rural England's (CPRE) new campaign

Stapleford Parish Council notes and endorses the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England's (CPRE) new campaign, *Our Green Belt* <http://www.cpre.org.uk/media-centre/latest-news-releases/item/4033-60th-anniversary-poll-shows-clear-support-for-green-belt> and further detail and media comment can be found here:

CPRE 60TH Anniversary Poll on the Green Belt: <http://www.cpre.org.uk/media-centre/latest-news-releases/item/4033-60th-anniversary-poll-shows-clear-support-for-green-belt>

Daily Telegraph coverage including comments from Sir Andrew Motion, CPRE President: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/environment/11777184/Green-Belt-faces-unprecedented-threat-of-destruction-Sir-Andrew-Motion-warns.html>

4 Stapleford Parish Council's Legal Obligations

Stapleford Parish Council, when considering planning and planning applications, is obliged to take into account Government policy, law and case law. In terms of the Green Belt these specifically include the following:

4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- Paragraph 81 "*Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.*"
- Paragraph 87 "*As with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.*"

Conclusion

Accordingly, the Parish Council is tasked with preserving Stapleford's Green Belt for the pleasure and benefit of its current residents and as a custodian for future residents.

The Parish Council, as is its duty, will consider afresh any Planning applications and the above includes factors that will be taken into account in its objective consideration of the application and its merits.

**Stapleford Parish Council
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