



Planning and Transport Committee

Petition for Amendment to National Planning Policy Framework.

1. A request has been received from Congleton Civic Society - Protect Congleton, to support a petition on the Government petitions website for amendment of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). A copy form Appendix 1 to this report.
2. Members of this committee will recall the lengthy debate about the form and content of the NPPF, which resulted in a significantly improved, but still slender, document becoming law. A problem for many local planning authorities is that, until their Local Development Framework Core Strategy has been approved, the only planning policies which can be considered in determining individual planning applications are those contained in the NPPF. The petition seeks to address that issue.
3. It is **recommended that:-**
 - a) this committee considers whether the parish council should support the petition;
 - b) councillors consider whether to give their personal support to the petition.

Cllr. Geof Butterwick,
Chairman of Planning & Transport Committee
24th June 2013

From: Protect Congleton [<mailto:protectcongleton@gmail.com>]
Sent: 28 May 2013 17:34
To: Protect Congleton
Subject: Petition for Amendment of the National Planning Policy Framework

Petition for Amendment of the National Planning Policy Framework

Dear Clerk to the Council,

As you will be aware, the effects of the NPPF are now beginning to filter down into the community and are having an effect on planning decisions and, in particular, on the shape and destiny of market towns, villages and the open countryside. In our area of Cheshire East we are very concerned by the rash of unwanted development which is starting to disfigure our settlements and our landscape.

Nationally, a large proportion of major development schemes which fail to gain approval from local councils are granted permission at appeal. In our area, as in more than 50% of the country, we are aware that this situation is exacerbated by the tardiness of our Local Plan, but we also recognise that even where a Local Plan is in place the provisions of the NPPF, in particular the supremacy of "sustainability," overrides all other considerations. The definition of this concept is vague and local people, including planning committees, are having grave difficulties countering the claims of developers in respect of this. In Cheshire East there is a feeding-frenzy with developers stockpiling permissions and the end result will be unsightly over-development. This is in spite of the fact that Cheshire East has not been ungenerous in the allocation of land for development in the Local Plan. We know that this experience is not at all uncommon throughout the country.

Many areas of our towns, our villages, and the adjoining countryside are not places of national importance in the strict legal sense, but they are cherished by local people for their beauty and their recreational value. The incursion of some of this aggressive and insensitive development is very much resented by many in our communities but local voices do not appear to carry much weight in this situation. We are particularly concerned by recent comments from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government which seems to imply that planning regulations may now be relaxed even further in the countryside and the green belt.

We believe that the true impact of the NPPF has not been understood by the people responsible for this legislation and that it is important to persuade the Government to amend it before the damage has gone too far. We have, therefore, joined with other groups in our area to set up a petition to this effect, the details of which are given below. This is a David and Goliath battle but we hope very much that, as the defects of this law become more obvious, awareness will be raised and people will support our efforts. We should like to solicit the support of those who agree with our assessment and should be grateful, therefore if you would pass this on to all the members of your council and, if possible, to the wider community.

<http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/49495>

Yours faithfully

Nick Light (Chairman) and Steve Jackson (Secretary)

Protect Congleton - Civic Society

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Facebook: Protect Congleton

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