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# Cambridge

# Independent

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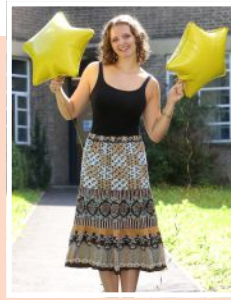
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Inside Culture



## Green belt is under attack, warns charity

### CPRE says developments are eroding it

By **Gemma Gardner**  
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Cambridge's green belt is "under attack as never before", a charity has claimed.

A new report from the countryside campaign group CPRE argues the green belt should become greener, wetter and more biodiverse.

The charity says the green belt can represent a key weapon in the battles against climate change and the decline of nature, especially amid food security challenges.

Dr Alan James, chairman of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CPRE, said: "It was established 30 years ago. Its job was to protect the historic city from urban sprawl and to encourage the redevelopment of brownfield sites. In theory the green belt is protected by national planning policy. In practice, in recent years land has been released to allow a number of developments."

There are 23,230ha of green belt land within South Cambridgeshire and 970ha within Cambridge city, extending around three to five miles from its edge. This incorporates a number of inset villages lying within the district of South Cambridgeshire.

Dr James said University of Cambridge colleges are behind many of these incursions, with more pending.

CPRE noted that:

■ Trinity College has applied to double the Cambridge Science Park on green belt land north of the A14;

■ Queens' College has appealed the refusal of the accommodation blocks bordering the Paradise Nature Reserve;

■ The South Barton Road Consortium of colleges wants to add development to the green belt between the M11 and the city south of the Barton Road to the Local Plan;

■ The North Barton Road Consortium of colleges wants to do the same north of the Barton Road;

■ Eddington will eventually be made up of 3,000 homes, accommodation for 2,000

**Mill Road bridge  
closure latest**

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**North Cambridge residents give  
feedback on their neighbourhoods**

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postgraduate students and 100,000 square metres of research facilities; and

■ Cambridge Biomedical Campus is planned to expand on farmland within and outside the green belt.

"These are just a handful of examples," said Dr James. "Cambridge University needs to work out whether it exists to develop young minds or develop the countryside surrounding this historic city."

"It's not just about causing irreversible damage. It's about heeding the reality of climate change and acknowledging the role of the green belt in biodiversity and food security. We won't get a second chance."

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### Flying high with James Bond's Little Nellie

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Picture: Keith Heppell