



New Ship of the Fens? A Titanic Eyesore

Last year Cambridgeshire County Council refused planning permission for AmeyCespa's energy-from-waste incinerator facility, burning 'residual waste' from households and business, on the outskirts of Waterbeach on the grounds of its landscape and heritage impacts. AmeyCespa's appeal has resulted in a planning inquiry which opened on 5th November. We are making the case that the incinerator will impact on landscape, light and soil pollution, the setting of Denny Abbey, the climate emergency and the health and well-being of the local community.

We say energy from waste is an out-dated technology which no longer has a place in a "zero-waste" or "circular" economy. We formally objected to the planning application on the grounds that the visual impact on the surrounding countryside of such an enormous structure would be unacceptable.

The main building will have a floor area more than two and a half times that of Ely Cathedral. At 80 metres high, the chimney will be 20% higher than its South Tower and nearly four times as high as its main roof.

In a letter to the Planning Inspectorate earlier this year, we reiterated our objections and questioned how polluting emissions from an energy-from-waste facility would be consistent with a responsible approach to climate change or health effects.

We have challenged AmeyCespa not to use outdated technology to waste valuable materials by burning but instead to expand their existing education facilities into a Waste Management Science Park where new technologies can be researched, developed, piloted and scaled up to production, all on the one site.

Alconbury Weald

To date, CPRE has supported the development proposals by Urban & Civic for Alconbury Weald - we have seen it as making good use of a large brownfield site - so **we were disappointed when Urban and Civic lodged two further planning applications for an additional 1500 homes and a near 50% reduction in the size of the planned Country Park.** We have objected to both applications. In our view, the proposal to accommodate an additional 1500 homes would result in significant urbanisation and a loss of separation between Huntingdon and the new settlement at Alconbury Weald. We have also objected to the change of location and reduction in size of the Country Park.

We also believe that Alconbury Weald should remain as a free-standing new settlement which, although well connected by sustainable transport, is separated from Huntingdon by a stretch of open land as are Godmanchester and Brampton. Like these two other settlements, it should have a separate identity although, again like them, it needs ready access to Huntingdon for higher level services.

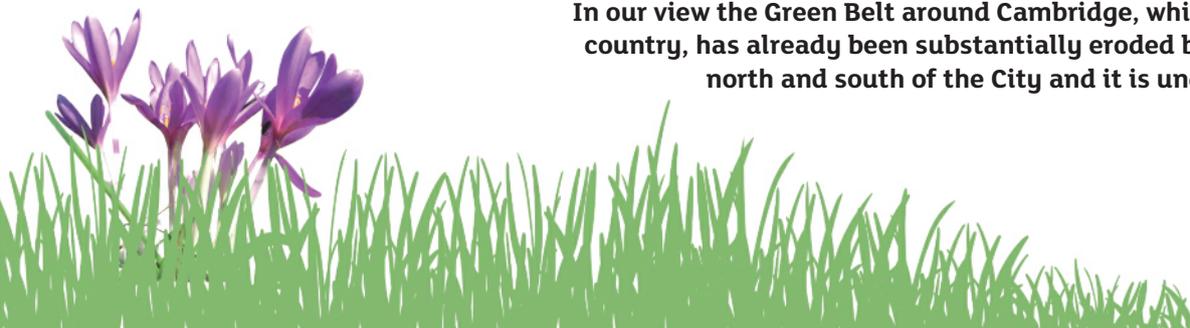
Hardwick and the Green Belt

We were approached by a Hardwick resident for advice on how a small local group could campaign to protect the Green Belt. We offered and continue to offer advice and the group, "Stop Hardwick Green Belt Development", has already set up a Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/433652384022467/>.

In our view the Green Belt around Cambridge, which is the smallest in the country, has already been substantially eroded by developments in the north and south of the City and it is under further threat.

continued overleaf



The Climate Emergency and Parish Councils

Some of these projects are commendable if carried out carefully and sympathetically. Others are necessary. However, they all use land either within or close to the Green Belt. CPRE's approach is to monitor and comment on Local Plans, to examine and, if necessary, oppose unacceptable developments and to encourage a healthy and vibrant countryside within and beyond the Green Belt.

CPRE believes that the Climate Emergency is the greatest threat facing our countryside and rural communities. International agreements and national governments have failed to stop global warming. It is already threatening our natural environment and way of life and has to be addressed now. Communities can lead the way: Parish Councils can - and are - playing a key role in leading the Climate Emergency response. By declaring a Climate Emergency, Parish Councils can support a call for immediate action in their communities to reverse global warming and avoid the coming climate catastrophe. Please ask your Parish Council to add its voice to many others that have already agreed to encourage and support their local community to become Carbon Neutral by 2030.

Parish Councils can play an important part by:

- lobbying local and national governments to adopt and fund a full Climate Emergency response in their community;
- encouraging other Parish Councils to implement a Climate Emergency declaration;
- setting up a Community Climate Emergency Working Party to audit the impact of their community on the climate, suggest costed actions to reduce emissions and plan for the effects that climate change will have on their community.

See: Council and Community Action in the Climate Emergency - CACE:
<https://www.caceonline.org/>

Fens Biosphere

A multi-sector partnership, co-ordinated by Cambridgeshire ACRE is working together to achieve UNESCO Biosphere status for the Fens. CPRE locally and nationally recognises that the Fens face an uncertain future – the need to deal with changes associated with climate change – sea level rise, peat loss, water scarcity – and population growth; the fragility of some of our more vulnerable wildlife areas and the increasing need to find sustainable solutions to feeding and housing us all. We must find joint solutions which deliver the best possible environmental outcomes coupled with a good quality of life, which is why we support this project. For more information see:

<https://fenlandbiosphere.wordpress.com/>

East-West Rail Central section route decision delayed

The announcement of the General Election on 12th December means that the announcement of the preferred route for the central section of East-West Rail has been put on hold. There was a 'One CPRE' response to the consultation earlier this year and we are keeping a close eye on developments. In and around Cambridge,

CPRE wants to see the East-West Rail project not as a standalone project but rather as part of an integrated transport plan for the county.

This ambition was included in the national response. The transport plan needs to take into account the effects of climate change on the county, how to minimise it and how to protect strategic routes and maintain the economy when sea levels rise.

AGM 2019

Despite the various road closures, our AGM in September saw a good turn out and an excellent talk by Professor Ian Hodge on "The Place of Housing in the Countryside". If you'd like to see the slides from Ian's talk, please contact our office (office@cprecamb.org.uk). We were pleased to return to Madingley Village Hall - a perfect venue for us and a great example of a village hall serving the local community.

Finally...

If you have enjoyed reading this update, please forward it to anyone else you feel may be interested. **We would really appreciate your support**, whether as a volunteer or a donor - there are always ways in which you can help. If you'd like to know more about getting involved please contact our Chairman, Alan James, (chairman@cprecamb.org.uk) or our Branch Administrator, Tracey Hipson (office@cprecamb.org.uk).