PRESS RELEASE

Fears Over Britain's Shrinking Green Belt

Images released today by the UK's leading supplier of aerial photography, Getmapping.com, dramatically illustrate the extent to which Britain's green belts are under threat from spiralling urban sprawl.

In the wake of a MORI poll, revealing 84% of people are opposed to building on undeveloped land, the high resolution shots expose how miles of countryside have disappeared under the current house-building burden.

Providing a modern perspective of the UK, Getmapping.com became the first ever company to capture a seamless aerial map of England, Wales and Lowland Scotland in 1999. Known as the 'Millennium Map', the company is now using the very latest digital camera technology to re-fly the entire length and breadth of the country– revealing a whole new picture of man-made Britain.

More than just a picture, aerial photography has become an unrivalled tool to monitor and evaluate changing trends in the evolving landscape. The visualisations not only highlight how our countryside is being replaced with concrete jungles, but also that nearly 400 miles of coastline is being affected by rising sea levels and the erosion of habitable land.

Tristram Cary, Getmapping's Managing Director, said: "Such information-rich photographs provide valuable intelligence to environmentalists, planning authorities and developers, replacing traditional maps, with an accurate visualisation of each and every site feature – from individual houses to field walls."

Mr Cary added: "The ultra-detailed images illustrate an unmistakable shift from conservation to development, capturing the essence of our evolving rural and urban landscape over the past five years."

While England's green belts marked their 50th anniversary this year, more than 35,000 acres of countryside have fallen beneath the bulldozer's path, with government plans for massive housing growth raising fears for what's left of rural Britain.

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