

## **CEDC Core Strategy Examination in Public**

### **Matters and Issues number 7**

#### **Housing**

##### Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

The two questions set under this heading are dealt with under LN5 of the Core Strategy and Colehill Parish Council take the view that the 'Amended Text' does indeed set out a clear strategy and with appropriate criteria for location. What is not present and indeed is the stumbling block throughout the process of seeking sites is the ability in the County of Dorset to meet all the strategy and the criteria within any specific area. The combination of all the needs detailed within LN5 is so prescriptive that it makes finding such sites almost impossible. It is the council's view that there needs to be a relaxation, particularly of some of the criteria, to make it possible.

There is already a groundswell of opinion amongst residents where a search for a site has taken place that adversely reacts to the possibility within areas. If some of the criteria could be relaxed so that local impact can be reduced it should be possible to find sites.

Defined permanent and/or transit sites are needed and would reduce the confrontations that take place regularly within the County, particularly if local authorities could enforce the use of only such designated sites.

##### Affordable Housing

It is the view of Colehill Parish Council that an overall required percentage is to be encouraged. The question of whether LN3 as a format is justified by viable evidence will be to some extent determined by the developer. The policy itself has provided an escape clause by saying that on financial viability grounds a lower level of affordable housing must be accompanied by robust evidence. Developers, in relation to financial viability, can always present robust evidence.

The Council is not convinced that a greenfield/brownfield site differential is the right way to go in respect of percentages. Perhaps the property market areas would be a better yardstick and could then be linked to measured target percentages site by site. Overall the District Council must seek to have developers deliver affordable housing in the percentages needed otherwise the delivery will once again fall back to the dire levels that presently exist.

It is therefore essential that the Core Strategy does not create an over complicated formula for affordable housing to be delivered. There will be the danger of targets not being met and unnecessary argument between developers and the Planning Department possibly leading to lack of delivery or unjustified compromise.

The District Council will need to approach all potential site developments with a **minimum** affordable homes delivery in mind for that site after due consideration of the site itself based upon a property market formula.

It is also our view that developers should not be given an option to make the percentage delivery conditional upon the Planning Department acceding to the developers desires on the issue of size and boundary of any given site. This can easily happen if developers, over time, present plans on a piecemeal basis.