

We understand that the open land on Deans Drove has been put forward as a possible site for a Rural Exception Scheme. This is not the first time that the owner of this site has endeavoured to gain planning permission. The previous attempt was for housing that could have been sold on the open market, had it been successful it would have generated a considerable financial gain for the title holder. However a major drawback was that the land forms part of the green belt and this, along with other planning considerations contributed to the failure of the scheme.

It is fully understood that the current proposal is only at the stage of pre planning discussion. However for a Rural Exception Scheme to come to fruition much work needs to be done prior to the stage of drawing up plans. This is therefore the reason that we, the local community would like to voice an opinion on how we would view a Rural Exception Scheme. i.e. a move to impose social housing in the road on which we live.

We understand that in this case the land owner need do nothing, apart from showing a willingness to put land forward for consideration. It is Purbeck District Council's responsibility to find a Registered Social Landlord who would then develop the scheme through grants from the Housing Corporation.

On the open market a building plot could command a price of maybe £100,000 upwards. However owners that offer land for a R.E.S. accept that they are extremely unlikely to realise abundant revenue on their asset. In contrast to open market rates they will only be offered £5,000 per plot.

In clause 11.1 of P.D.C.s R.E.S. It states that planning policy is strict, ensuring that all new housing is sympathetic to its location. The properties that are adjacent and opposite this site have a market value of approximately £500,000. It is difficult therefore to see how social housing would be sympathetic to the location, or welcomed by the current residents.

Apart from a few houses whose owners were away, everyone in Deans Drove has now been told that this site has been put forward for social housing and is at the stage of pre planning discussions. Without exception everyone pointed out that they had recently filled in a questionnaire from P.D.C. asking them where they would prefer to see development in the village, it was felt then that this site was not appropriate. Most people stated that they were shocked and appalled that housing need could be met by building on this area of the green belt. They assumed the questionnaire meant that they were being involved as a community in decision making, and queried how many times their views needed to be expressed. I explained that a person with the title of Rural Housing Enabler would be assisting the Parish Council to consult with the community about the decision to build a possible Rural Exception scheme in their road. People felt strongly that to justify building on this area of the green belt, it must be demonstrated that housing need cannot be met in any other way for example through developing a site within the village confines.

It is understood that an area on Huntick Road is being considered for 50 houses. Although this is also green belt. The line – I believe is to be redefined or redrawn to allow this building to take place, this is being done nationally not just in this area. This scheme would attract 106 money from the developers and it is hoped that a new doctor's surgery may be built as a result. Would it not make sense to include a R.E.S. within this scheme. There will already be some social housing within this scheme, it would not require separate infrastructure, and would benefit from being nearer the centre of the village.

On further discussion with Deans Drove residents, many pointed out that our local bus service only runs for an hour a day and finishes at 5 .pm in the afternoon , therefore workers need to have their own transport. If 12 houses were build on the proposed R.E.S. site that could generate 24 extra cars. Residents already felt they had the thin edge of the wedge because twice a day for 42 weeks a year Deans Drove is congested by cars that are parked on both sides of the road by parents picking up and dropping off. This already impacts badly on their right to enjoy their property and restricts movements at certain times of the day. They said nothing had ever been done to sort out this problem. At one end of Deans Drove there is situation of total gridlock and the only other exit road is a single track country lane which requires one car to stop while the oncoming one manoeuvres around it. The very last thing Deans Drove needs is extra traffic.

Finally it is somewhat galling that a document posted on the internet and available to download by the public – which is entitled Purbeck District Council - Rural Exemption Scheme and Checklist, contains out of date information which is misleading. It took myself as a member of the public to point this out and request that it be removed or corrected. Anyone believing this information would think that Lytchett was exempt from a R.E.S. because we have a population of over 3,000 people. I was informed that removal or correction would not happen any time soon; this is because it will take several meetings to complete the administrative process.