

Sandra Hutchings

From: Nigel Cant Planning <
Sent: 24 March 2014 15:31
To: DPD
Subject: LOCAL PLAN REVIEW OPTIONS CONSULTATION - 24 MARCH 2014



Dear Sir

I suggest that consideration is given to formulating a policy which would encourage strictly limited housing development adjoining defined settlement boundaries and in smaller villages.

Such a policy would afford an opportunity to meet a strong demand for small development opportunities where houses would be built by local builders and by self-builders, thus making a significant contribution to the rural economy.

I appreciate it has long been argued that further housing development outside village development boundaries and in smaller settlements is unsustainable, the principal argument being that such development would have to rely on the use of a private motor car as its primary mode of transportation. That policy dictate has been in force across the UK for some 30 years now and was introduced at a time when the average family car used fuel at the rate of around 20 miles per gallon. The situation today is vastly different, the average family car now has a consumption of 60 miles per gallon.

Furthermore, as a result of recent building control legislation, installation values of new build houses have materially increased.

Smaller settlements and many larger settlements are struggling to maintain their viability in terms of community services and facilities. A limited amount of new housing in the areas that I am suggesting will assist the sustainability of such settlements.

Small developments of up to two houses are appropriate because, under current policy provisions, that would avoid the requirement to provide affordable housing units, in turn encouraging small local developers and self-builders.

Small developments of the type I am suggesting would be individually architecturally designed and high quality design and use of local materials can be controlled through existing development management policies. Such developments would, I suggest, enhance the character around the fringe of larger villages and in smaller villages through a wide variety of architectural style and built form, which is infinitely preferable to the current situation where large developments are carried out by major house-builders who use standardised house designs across the UK, with sometimes minor modifications to suit the local area. Put simply, a Bovis house is a Bovis house, whether it is in Tiverton, Essex or Leicestershire.

I have drafted what might be a suitable policy to consider incorporating in the next stage of the Local Plan process as follows:

“Outside but adjoining existing settlement boundaries and within smaller villages residential development of up to two dwellings will be permitted where it is well integrated with the surroundings and is of appropriate scale, design and materials so as not to harm the character and landscape of the rural area. Encouragement will be given to the use of natural local materials. Isolated development in open countryside will not be permitted.”

Such a policy would materially increase the choice of available housing stock for those who wish to live in a rural area and assist the long-term viability of rural communities and the rural economy. To avoid the

possibility of mansions being built, the draft policy could include an upper limit on net internal residential floor area of say 200m². Permitted development rights for extensions, buildings, etc. could be removed by condition.

Yours faithfully

NIGEL CANT