

## **Viability Submissions Response – Paul Smith**

Contrary to High Court directive, EDDC are using a 'work around' initiative to avoid public meetings, instead using the medium of Zoom , which for 'legality' requires councillors to defer policy decision making, after discussion, to Council Officers.

I gather that the issue of 'Viability' has become front and centre to the inspectors deliberations.

The indications are that the consortium of builders are to progress independently, and 5-6 developers are now in the mix.

From the minutes of the July 2021 meetings of EDDC Strategic Planning meeting and the subsequent Cabinet meeting later in the month it is apparent that Planners are seeking to provide assurances of viability by progression of a £40 million finance initiative to pay for the provision up front, of all necessary infrastructure, so removing immediate cash flow pressures currently faced by developers.

The initiative involves a 'roof tax' of approx £10 thousand per each new build dwelling to be paid to EDDC by the developers upon sale of housing.

The idea seems attractive until you take into consideration 'housing affordability'. Clearly the 'roof tax' will be applied to the price of each house... and not born by the developers! This in addition to a 10% rise in housing prices resultant from the Covid Pandemic.

Many locals are all but priced out of the market.

Recent research conducted by EDDC and RD&E/NHS indicates that up to 40% of new homes at Cranbrook have been sold or are occupied by people migrating to the area.

EDDC has adopted policy for Cranbrook which limits developer requirement to provide affordable homes to approx 10%.

A Council initiative in 2017 led to the creation of an arms length building company to build affordable and social housing for indigenous East Devon people needing housing. To date NO homes have been built!

The vision behind the Creation of Cranbrook was to provide for a shortfall in housing for the people of Exeter & East Devon.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the opportunity for migration to East Devon from other parts of the country must be accommodated within a councils housing policy , it is my belief that this should not be at the expense of provision of affordable and social housing for indigenous people.

I appreciate that the time for public contribution to the Master Plan consultation is closed, but the inspector maybe interested to verify the terms and implications of EDDC's new funding proposal, via the official website .

Kind Regards

Paul Smith