

Housing Working Group: Understanding Needs of Builders and Developers

Note: This set of topics is intended for face-to-face discussions with spokespersons for firms who are involved in home building in the Bridport Neighbourhood Plan area.

The list of questions is not intended to be exhaustive; the interviewee may well provide additional information which will be useful to the study.

Note the company name, number of employees, and their connection to the Bridport NP Area.

1. How do you identify and obtain building land?
2. Viability: What factors make a viable development (or what factors will put you off)? Is there a maximum or minimum size of development for your business? How is building a new development financed? What particular constraints do you work under from Local Authorities and financiers which can become difficult?
3. Profitability: how do you decide what types/sizes of open market houses to offer, and how does that link to the “affordable” quota imposed by the Local Authority? What is your consultative process? Is it customary to make adjustments as the job progresses, for example to the type or number of dwellings or the services and amenities in a development?
4. Climate Change considerations: to what extent will you try and make houses low-carbon both in construction and in ongoing energy consumption? What technologies of energy reduction do you consider practical?
5. Technical: How are technical construction standards changing and are there any which should be actively promoted by the NP? Where do you place yourselves on a scale between conservative and innovative?
6. “Starter Homes” and “Right To Buy”: how has the recent change in government emphasis affected your business? For these homes do you decide what sizes of homes are to be built by examining local wages, unemployment levels etc., do you work to a formula, or are the numbers imposed on you?
7. Social: What steps do you take to liaise with the community before building a new development? What measures are taken to ensure that the development is ‘compatible with’ the local natural and built environment, and the community’s housing needs? Are there ways in which the local community could help the developer in a proactive way?
8. Housing Association contracts: How much of your business involves building properties which will become social rented housing? Do you welcome this business, or is it a burden?
9. Local labour: Do you have a policy regarding use of local tradesmen during construction?