# Abandoned Calstock housing estate highlights struggles between developer and council



An abandoned housing estate consisting of 33 newly built homes in Calstock, Cornwall, has remained derelict since its completion in 2018, with the site now drawing attention as a "ghost" estate after seven years of desertion. The project, known as Bridge View, has been mired in a protracted dispute between the developer, Construction Partners, based in Exmouth, Devon, and Cornwall Council over planning and financial issues.

Construction Partners initially secured planning permission in 2018 and began building the homes, allocating a budget of £2.8 million for the project. Despite many properties being completed, the developer has been unable to continue or sell the homes due to delays, additional planning requirements from the local authority, and legal disputes.

Michael Wight, director of Construction Partners, told the Daily Mail that the council had introduced "weaponising" legal agreements and added costly stipulations that severely impacted the project’s finances. These included demands for a second road, a more complex drainage system, and a £750,000 retaining wall. These requirements led to escalating costs and delays that eroded the developer’s budget, accumulating an additional £1.2 million in interest payments while awaiting council approval.

Wight claimed that the local authority blocked the sale of the finished homes and that the affordable housing providers initially involved had withdrawn last November due to concerns over the potential long-term maintenance requirements of the retaining wall.

The estate’s 33 homes were divided between market-rate and affordable housing, with 15 homes allocated as affordable units. However, local parish councillors have criticised the affordability of these units, suggesting that even the designated affordable homes remain too costly for many local residents. The market-price homes were reportedly valued between £500,000 and £800,000, a price point considered out of reach for much of the local population.

Adele Fulner, fellow director of Construction Partners, spoke to the BBC about the situation, acknowledging the complexity of the issue. She expressed regret, stating, "I feel like we could have fought harder to make it happen and for that I apologise." The company has described having to put the Calstock development on hold as "soul-destroying," particularly given that it was their largest project to date.

Local voices have expressed concern about the impact of the stalled development on the community. Calstock Parish Councillor Dorothy Kirk called the situation "a tragic situation where everybody loses," emphasising the need to find a solution. "I don’t want Calstock to be deprived of homes, I don’t want to see the developer lose everything," she said. Councillor Alistair Tinto echoed these concerns, highlighting the importance of the 15 affordable homes for the area: "What would be left is market houses which Calstock doesn’t need at prices around £500,000 to £800,000. That is not affordable. That price is way out of the pockets of the people."

The dispute encapsulates the challenges of balancing development costs, planning regulations, and local housing needs. The estate remains unused and neglected, a physical reminder of the ongoing legal and financial impasse between the developer and Cornwall Council.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bridgeviewcalstock.co.uk> - This URL provides information about new homes and building plots in Calstock, Cornwall, which relates to the Bridge View development project. However, it does not specifically address the current disputes or the estate's status.
2. <https://www.daily.co.uk> - This URL is hypothetical since the exact Daily Mail article link isn't listed, but it would corroborate the claims by Michael Wight regarding legal disputes with Cornwall Council.
3. <https://www.bbc.co.uk> - Like the Daily Mail link, a specific BBC article isn't provided, but it would support Adele Fulner's statements on the complexity and regret surrounding the situation.
4. <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk> - Cornwall Council's official website might provide information on planning regulations and disputes that affected the Bridge View project. However, specific details on this case may not be available.
5. <https://www.local.gov.uk> - The Local Government Association's website could offer insights into the challenges of balancing development costs and local housing needs, though specific details about Calstock might not be available.
6. <https://www.calstockparishcouncil.co.uk> - Calstock Parish Council's website may provide local perspectives or statements from councillors like Dorothy Kirk and Alistair Tinto regarding the impact of the stalled development on the community.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14656209/new-build-ghost-estate-deserted-planning-row.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data