# Seven-year planning dispute leaves Calstock housing estate empty and developer £1.2m in debt



In Cornwall, a newly constructed housing estate in Calstock remains uninhabited and boarded up, caught in a protracted seven-year planning dispute that has left the 33-home project, including 15 affordable properties, stagnant. This “ghost” estate received planning permission in 2018, but subsequent delays, attributed to Cornwall Council, have led to significant financial repercussions for the development firm involved.

The firm, under the leadership of director Michael Wight, has claimed that the delays have resulted in £1.2 million in interest payments, which have rendered it financially unable to proceed with the project. In an interview with the BBC, Wight accused Cornwall Council of "weaponising" legal agreements, alleging that the council imposed additional requirements on their plans, such as the construction of a second road and a £750,000 retaining wall. He argued that these demands have "eroded" the project’s budget.

Cornwall Council has publicly stated its commitment to collaborating with developers who have received planning permission, ensuring that housing projects, particularly those including affordable housing, are completed in accordance with agreed-upon guidelines. The council acknowledged ongoing issues with this development and affirmed its dedication to working with the developer to find a solution.

Parish councillor Dorothy Kirk expressed concern over the situation, describing it as "a tragic situation where everybody loses." Speaking to the BBC, she emphasised, "I hope somehow we can rescue it. We have to find a solution, end of. I don't want Calstock to be deprived of homes, I don't want to see the developer lose everything. It's been a long, expensive and difficult journey. We have to have houses for local people."

In a recent statement, Cornwall Council revealed that it is currently reviewing a revised planning application for the site, signalling a potential pathway forward in a situation that has left the local community in uncertainty and the development in limbo. The council remains actively engaged in discussions with stakeholders to address the challenges and resolve the long-standing issues surrounding the completion of the housing estate.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.tavistock-today.co.uk/news/appeal-dismissed-over-controversial-calstock-housing-development-582867> - This article reports on the developer's appeal being dismissed, requiring them to build the 33 homes as originally permitted, including the 15 affordable units.
2. <https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-68546662> - The BBC article details the developer's claims of £1.2 million in interest payments due to council delays and additional requirements, such as a second road and a £750,000 retaining wall.
3. <https://www.showhouse.co.uk/cornish-developer-boards-up-new-homes-in-stalemate-with-council/> - This piece discusses the developer's financial challenges, including £1.2 million in interest payments, and the council's commitment to collaborating with developers to complete housing projects.
4. <https://news.tdpelmedia.com/the-new-build-ghost-town-more-than-30-brand-new-properties-are-left-abandoned-and-boarded-up-amid-planning-row-after-developer-ran-out-of-money-to-complete-work-because-of-council-delays/> - The article highlights the developer's decision to halt construction, leaving over 30 properties abandoned, and the financial strain caused by council delays and additional requirements.
5. <https://www.tavistock-today.co.uk/news/community-vows-to-fight-on-as-homes-appeal-is-thrown-out-583853> - This report covers the community's determination to ensure affordable housing is built, despite the developer's appeal being dismissed and the ongoing planning disputes.
6. <https://property-investor-news.com/news/uk_news/2024/04/12/new_homes_boarded_up_in_cornish_village_in_planning_row.html> - The article discusses the developer's claims of £1.2 million in interest payments due to council delays and additional requirements, such as a second road and a £750,000 retaining wall.
7. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMipwFBVV95cUxObWRYa250dmxDZ1N0ZDE4RUpueXBEc1RxcDlzeE5MNXhpWTRrVFVENjlPNjlkYkc2bVpmN3Ztb3JGa0lOMzBXMmR3SUFaX1JIeDlSRllyTExmaXNkZjVUbHR4YmdWeHpPQUp6Y3VPZ2g2bVFac21MYzEwUkhDUVhURDZ4V0ZPYkJPMGdMd0QtYktMZGdJT0ZZZUxuNlNmYVlZWkU1TkpoNNIBrAFBVV95cUxQTU5GMzVmSnVwWi1uUUJ0bE9mdUZta0Q0VVQ5aVlIYmJUZGt4LVlpcm1FV1MzQl9xWDVmTUUtUUxLV3ZaVGZqbk93SG83T1JidE9qLTAxODBySzVjdE1zY0hHbWFBX2I0WWh6eUdVRGR1YkxDWkFrQzdHUHAwTXVMU3R4V0R3RG9TVDE3UDlHX1d2dXVzU0NUM1NXOE5pcWZHdGRwZFNuT0NmVmxq?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data