

# Campaign to Protect Rural England



Campaign to Protect  
Rural England

## DORSET

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

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## ***COUNCIL TO RENEGE ON GREEN BELT PROTECTION ? EAST DORSET HOUSES IN GREEN BELT ?***

It has just been learned that under a blanket of apparent secrecy, East Dorset Council spent upwards of £150,000 with consultants in the last year on detailed plans for Green Belt housing. Nothing has appeared about it on the Council's website or in their newsletters, and even now the public is not allowed access to this work.

Residents in Wimborne, Corfe Mullen, West Parley and Verwood – all threatened by these plans – will be shocked at the news. A Consortium of 7 Action Groups organised demonstrations in Bournemouth Square, County Hall and finally a Rally at Parliament, addressed by MPs. These expressions of democratic outrage forced the East Dorset and County Councils to change their development policies. In August 2006, the Council voted unanimously to oppose building in the S.E. Dorset Green Belt, and Council statements have stuck robustly to this line ever since.

The Council plans a major meeting on September 29 to authorise these new plans to be put to the public for their views in October. CPRE is told that, under an unusual procedure that is being invoked for the occasion, the public will be gagged from speaking at this vital meeting, and will only be allowed to see the agenda 7 days in advance.

The new Government's Big Society policies encourage Councils to involve communities and residents from the beginning of large scale planning, rather than keeping plans quiet – and only later putting them out for public consultation. "Councillors have got themselves a problem. They state they are firmly against Green Belt housing, then it is found that the Officers have been planning it," said Terry Stewart, President Dorset CPRE, "now they want to gag the public at the meeting where it will be reviewed. We are horrified that our Green Belt will not be protected."

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### ***For further information call :***

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The Campaign to Protect Rural England exists to promote the beauty, tranquility and diversity of rural England by encouraging the sustainable use of land and other natural resources in town and country

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