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Otterton Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group
Otterton Parish Council

Our ref: 7001

16 July 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

Draft Otterton Neighbourhood Plan – Observations on Behalf of Clinton Devon Estates

Bell Cornwell LLP act as town planning consultants on behalf of Clinton Devon Estates. Clinton Devon Estates own a substantial amount of land throughout Otterton Parish, with their interests including farms and farmland, forestry, commercial and residential property. The Estate therefore has considerable interests in the area.

In our capacity as the Estate's planning advisors, we have reviewed the draft Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and we have set out below some observations on the document. We note that the draft NP outlines a number of policy objectives and that amongst these are a desire to address traffic related issues (notably congestion and parking problems) and a wish to prevent any significant further new housing development.

Housing

The draft NP seeks to prevent significant amounts of new housing development from coming forward in the parish and it does not therefore propose to allocate any land for this purpose. However, the plan does recognise that there is a particular need to provide more affordable housing in the area along with warden assisted housing. Despite this recognition, it is considered that reliance can be placed on the existing planning permission at the North Star site to meet



future affordable housing needs. We note that this site benefits from a technical commencement but that no houses have yet been built. Given the identified need for affordable housing, the Parish Council will no doubt monitor progress of the North Star development in order to understand whether its potential contribution towards affordable housing in the area will, in reality, be fulfilled. It is worth noting that in the event that the North Star site fails to come forward for whatever reason, it is unclear how the identified need, as expressed in both the previous Housing Needs Survey and in the surveys used to support the draft NP, will be met. In our view, it may be prudent for the parish council to consider the possibility of identifying contingency sites capable of providing an alternative source of affordable housing.

Traffic and Transport

It is clear from the draft NP that the community has major concerns about the impact of traffic and the resulting congestion on the area, particularly within Otterton village. Much of the impact is attributed to traffic arising from Ladram Bay. We note that as part of the concerns highlighted, a desire has been expressed to reduce the level of parking congestion within the village.

Observations and Response

In relation to the issues highlighted above, the Estate has asked us to highlight that it owns a number of plots of land, both within and directly adjoining the existing village. These plots, all of which are very modest in size, have the ability to be developed in a form which would not only be discreet in character but could also help the community address the concerns raised in the draft NP for example by the provision of space for car parking, the provision of affordable housing or for other uses which are felt to be required to meet the needs of the local community. Whilst recognizing the community's understandable desire to protect the character of the area and to prevent harmful over-development, it is the Estate's view that the neighbourhood plan's failure to identify any sites for development in order to provide a mechanism for meeting its objectives is likely to represent a missed opportunity. We would therefore urge the parish council to reconsider its position in this regard. The Estate would welcome any opportunity to discuss the



possibility for bringing forward proposals on its land in a way which might allow the community to meet the objectives set out in its neighbourhood plan.

We trust that you will take these observations into full account as part of the next stage of your plan preparation. If you have any queries in the meantime, then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

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cc C James