

Miss Claire Rodway
East Devon District Council
The Knowle
Sidmouth
Devon
EX10 8HL

Our ref: DC/2006/000243/AP-
08/PO3-L01
Your ref:
Date: 24 January 2020

Dear Miss Rodway

Otterton Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 consultation

We write in response to the Regulation 16 consultation in respect of the Otterton Neighbourhood Plan.

We are pleased to see that the submission version of the plan acknowledges many of the pertinent environmental issues within the parish. We support the plan's adoption of the East Devon and Blackdown Hills landscape character assessment planning guidelines (section 4.4.1), especially those relating to protecting the river valley and allowing the river to regain its natural floodplain function (3), improving recreational access without harm to biodiversity (4), and relocating inappropriate development away from the coast (6).

Section 4.4.4 acknowledges the risks from flooding in the parish and states that there should be no development that might exacerbate flooding. We welcome this statement, however, it appears that this objective is not explicitly supported by a specific policy within the plan. We also welcome the text provided with regard to the Lower Otter Restoration Project (section 4.4.6) and beavers (section 4.4.7).

We support the Neighbourhood Plan's planning objectives, in particular PO.2 in respect of the built environment and PO.3 in respect of the natural environment. Both objectives commit to ensuring development is sustainable and does not increase flooding, whilst the latter also includes Local Green Spaces, which provide multiple benefits for communities and the environment.

A number of the plan's policies include requirements which we support. Policy ONP1 regarding sustainable development includes requirements for development to incorporate sustainable drainage so as to not increase flood risk (b) and to minimise environmental impact (d). Policy ONP4 seeks to protect and enhance the natural landscape in accordance with the landscape character assessment referred to above.

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We support the principles set out in policy ONP5 regarding protecting and enhancing wildlife in the natural environment. However, we recommend that to be consistent with national policy the policy should also include a commitment for development to achieve biodiversity net gain.

We welcome the requirements relating to flood risk and wildlife set out in policy ONP6 regarding small-scale economic development.

Yours sincerely

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