

Mr John Willis
Moretonhampstead Development Trust
Green Hill
Fore Street
Moretonhampstead
Devon
TQ13 8LL

26th April 2021

Dear Mr Willis,

Land adjacent Hingston View, Moretonhampstead

As a further response to your letter of 19th February, we have become aware that Devon County Council may be looking to dispose of the land between our site and the Wray Valley trail in their ownership.

We have noted your aspirations for an array of solar panels on that land. We obviously support sustainability measures but this still has to be viewed in the context of a National Park with the responsibilities to conserve and enhance landscapes. Policies 1.8 and 2.1 of the emerging local plan relate to protecting amenity and conserving and enhancing landscapes. A solar array in this location clearly is in contradiction of these and other policies with the glare from such solar panels being an overriding problem if this idea was entertained. In addition, this land is flood plain. Solar panels and flood plain is not a good combination. In short, this would be the wrong location for such a proposal.

Baker Estates would like to acquire this land to support the residential amenities for our new residents. This would have a number of potential benefits to include:

- A link from our site to the Wray Valley trail which would have wider benefits.
- An enhancement to residential amenities.
- As part of the residential amenity proposals there will be inevitable wider benefits to the appearance of the land as well as ecological benefits. Presently it is barren flood zone land which has little benefit in any respect. This can be enhanced.

We understand that Devon County Council has to go through a process of allowing community groups to make an offer for assets being disposed of. There is still an obligation to get best value however. For the reasons given above we believe that the best outcome would be a disposal to Baker Estates so we can do as we have indicated. The Development Trust and Town Council would probably be better advised to identify an alternative more suitable site for its solar array aspirations rather than to competitively bid for unsuitable land using public money.

Our interest in acquiring this land will only remain if the disposal process is completed quickly. There is a significant benefit to BE acquiring as it would lead to a connection to the Wray trail which will not happen otherwise.

I have copied this letter to the Town Council clerk so that they are also aware of what we would try to achieve.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Ayre
Land & Planning Director