



Devon Countryside Access Forum
c/o Public Rights of Way team
Great Moor House
Bittern Road
Sowton
EXETER EX2 7NL

Tel: 07837 171000
01392 382771

devoncaf@devon.gov.uk

www.devon.gov.uk/dcaf

Mr M Gibbons
Case Officer
The Planning Inspectorate
Room 3 O/P
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
BRISTOL
BS1 6PN

23 January 2024

Dear Mr Gibbons

Woodbury Common - Proposal to deregister and exchange common land

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). Its statutory remit is to give independent advice “as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area...” Section 94(4) of the Act specifies bodies to whom the Forum has a statutory function to give advice, and this includes the Planning Inspectorate.

The DCAF currently has seventeen members, appointed by Devon County Council, who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.

A member of the Devon Countryside Access Forum attended a pre-application site meeting at Blackhill Quarry on 8 November 2023 to discuss the above application. A report was compiled and subsequently brought to the next full meeting of the Forum held on 22 January 2024.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum would like to make the following comments.

- The proposal represents a sensible rationalisation of the status of small pockets of land owned by Clinton Devon Estates in order to meet associated CDE objectives. In essence, the proposal represents a benefit to the public in

terms of formalising access to parts of the Common. In practice there is no corresponding loss of access.

- The proposal will provide formalised common land status to six small parcels of land situated close to the quarry and covering 3.4 ha for which there is currently only permissive access.
- The public have not had access for many decades to the 1.7 ha of industrial site which, it is proposed, will be deregistered as common land and is primarily hard standing ground with no particular conservation value.
- No public rights of way are affected by the process of deregistering and exchanging this common land. This is with the minor exception of short-term work concerned with underground cabling along a stretch of approximately 500m of public bridleway running roughly north-south along the eastern side of the Blackhill Quarry site. It is understood this cabling work may take in the order of a week to complete and the surface will be re-instated. Although short term, DCAF welcomes the intention to provide a suitable alternative route during this short period.

Overall, the Devon Countryside Access Forum supports the application to deregister Blackhill Quarry as common land and exchange this land for some small nearby parcels.

It would be appreciated if you could advise the Forum of the outcome of this application.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Winter
Forum Officer

Letter sent on behalf of the Devon Countryside Access Forum

*Chair: Sarah Slade
Vice Chair: Chris Cole*