

NOTES OF A PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS
THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN BRAY SHOP
TUESDAY 7 JUNE 2010
STOKE CLIMSLAND VILLAGE HALL

Present:

Andrew Selleck (proposing developer, Selleck Nicholls Ltd)
Christopher Lunn (Cornwall Council, Affordable Housing Team Leader (East))
Derrick Parsons (Chair, Stoke Climsland Parish Council)
Malcolm Hopes (Chair, Linkinhorne Parish Council)
Dennis Hicks (Chair, South Hill Parish Council)
Derek Jordan (Chair)
35-40 members of the public

1. The chair explained that this was an informal public meeting, not a parish council meeting. The chair introduced Andrew Selleck, Christopher Lunn and Derrick Parsons. He gave apologies from Neil Burden, the Cornwall Councillor for the Stoke Climsland Ward.
2. Andrew Selleck (AS) was invited to explain his development proposal. He explained his business which specialises in low cost and affordable housing. The aim was to meet a local housing need and provide housing for people who would not otherwise be able to afford their own homes. The mixed development in Redmoor Park, Kelly Bray was given as an example of affordable housing provided by Selleck Nicholls Ltd which included social renting and sale at affordable prices. These ranged from £127,000 for 3 bedroom houses, £87,000 for 2 bedroom houses and £70,000 for 1 bedroom apartments.
3. There was a local demand for affordable housing with 8 households on the Council Housing Register. There had been initial interest from the Stoke Climsland parish for housing at the Kelly Bray development but this was not originally considered because the three month cascade period had not expired¹.
4. The criterion for eligibility for affordable housing is having a local connection. This means the housing is available to people who live, work or have close relatives in the Stoke Climsland parish. Households with savings or assets of £75,000 or more are automatically placed in the lowest housing need band. If unfilled after three months the housing can be offered to people living, working or related to those from adjoining parishes (Callington, Calstock, Linkinhorne and South Hill). Three months later, if the properties still remaining unallocated, they can be offered county wide.
5. The application would be to build, in the first instance, 15 two/three bedroom family houses on the site. At present the planned access was on to Stoke Road although this might change. It was anticipated that a planning application would be submitted in two months. The plans would include parking, calculated on the

¹ Members of Stoke Climsland Parish have since applied for affordable housing in the Kelly Bray development .

norm of 1.5 spaces per property. This was something that the community could comment on in the planning process if it was felt that this should increase.

6. The 3 acre site provided potential for expansion but only if there was an identified need for further housing. The plans would therefore include a road in anticipation of possible future development.
7. Christopher Lunn (CL) was invited to explain about affordable housing. He indicated that affordable housing, for sale or rent below market value, fell into three categories: low cost sale (at below market price), social rented (at rents below market rent) and intermediate market housing (a mixture of part buy/part rent below market price/rent). He added that, whilst social rented would continue for all existing tenants, the Government has recently introduced a new replacement rented type called Affordable Rented. This allowed rents to be charged at up to 80% of open market rents. He described the local connection criteria for eligibility and the cascade process where housing is not allocated. These criteria apply to all types of affordable housing (eg social rented, affordable rented, intermediate housing) that are included in the s106 Legal Agreement. Finally he explained that the housing remains affordable in perpetuity (forever) by maintaining rents below market rent and by sale restricted to the same percentage of open market value as the original purchase.
8. The chair invited comments and questions.
9. **Question:** What is the status of the land? **Answer (CL):** It is a rural exception site, outside the development boundary for Bray Shop. Currently this restricts development to affordable housing.
10. **Question:** Is it a brownfield site? **Answer (AS):** It is agricultural land. **Question:** What grade? **Answer (AS):** I don't know.
11. **Question:** There is no mains sewage in Bray Shop – how will sewage be managed? **Answer (AS):** A private treatment plant shared between the properties which will require maintenance through a management charge.
12. **Question:** How many more than 15 properties could be built on the field? **Answer (AS):** It is a 3 acre site. So at 15-20 houses per acre it could rise to 45 over a ten year period but only if there was a further housing need. **Question:** So the current planning application would be to develop one third of the field? **Answer (AS):** Yes. It is an agreement where the option to purchase can be taken up at any time during the period of the agreement. **Comment (CL):** The application will be for 10-15 houses. If someone wanted to expand further they have to show that there is an increase in the local housing need.
13. **Question:** Is this restricted to a housing need in the Stoke Climsland parish? (see 25 for answer) **AS:** The development is not publically funded though rental properties are government funded. The rest is privately funded and so there won't be expansion unless there is a need.

14. **Comment:** This is a rural area – what happens if people can't access the housing? **Answer (CL):** It isn't possible to say that there will never be open market housing available. The government funding for affordable housing has been severely reduced so local authorities can permit open market housing development but only to subsidise the funds lost from government. **Comment (AS):** The cross subsidy isn't attractive. There isn't enough profit on open market sale to subsidise the affordable housing developed if sold at the figures expected by Cornwall Council which are below construction cost.
15. **Question:** What happens if it isn't possible to sell for local need? **Answer (CL):** In these circumstances the cascade in the Section 106 Legal Agreement will be triggered which gives second priority to households from adjacent parishes and finally third priority to County-wide households.
16. **Question:** Does the transaction between AS and the vendor involve the Council and how will the development of the remainder of the field be controlled? **Answer (AS):** It is a private transaction and a third of the field is being purchased subject to obtaining planning permission. The rest will not be purchased unless it is clear that there is a housing need.
17. **Question:** How is housing need worked out? **Answer (CL):** [The Affordable Housing Survey in 2009](#) identified a need for 25 affordable dwellings in the Stoke Climsland Parish. This was considered at the top end of the housing need for a parish the size of Stoke Climsland and with similar characteristics. There are 8 households with a local connection on the Council's Housing Register which indicates the number in need of council housing at an affordable rent although the need tends to be slightly higher than indicated on the Register. So the need is somewhere between 8-25 and 15-20 is probably about right. The onus is then on the developer to justify the need for the type of housing proposed (ie the split between rented and to buy). **Answer (AS):** It is a best guess – things may have changed in the two years since the Housing Survey and it depends on who responded to the Survey.
18. **Comment:** So the development could be in three phases with phase 2 and 3 not going ahead and without there ever having been a need for phase 1? **Answer (AS):** Any phasing will be in accordance with demand – if there isn't a demand, no further planning applications will be submitted. Even in phase 1 if, for example, four of six buildings are not sold the work won't continue.
19. **Question:** If the 15 don't sell, will the Council purchase them for renting? **Answer (CL):** Whilst the Council might then be offered the properties, it is highly unlikely that it would be in a position financially to purchase.
20. **Question:** How is the need for affordable housing going to be met in Bray Shop where there are no facilities, no buses and taxis to Callington cost £8 each way? Wouldn't a village with facilities be a better place to meet the needs of those who cannot afford market house prices/rents? **Answer (AS):** Other more suitable sites in the Parish would be considered but they need to be brought forward via the Parish Council. **Comment:** This seems to be a case of the landowner pushing for a sale rather than a case of choosing the best site for a development.

21. **Question:** Will the residents of Bray Shop get any benefit from the development? For example, mains gas, a bus service? **Answer (AS):** Apart from meeting a local housing need, I wouldn't rely on getting any other benefit.
22. **Question:** Some of the houses will be occupied by families with children, what about community facilities, for example a play area? **Answer (AS):** That wouldn't normally be in a planning application. **Comment:** That would reduce the ground value. **Answer (CL):** It would be unusual for a planning authority to place such a burden on a developer where there are less than 20/25 houses.
23. **Comment (CL):** To go back to the question about building in excess of the housing need – both the developer and Council exercise caution in identifying need because unoccupied houses are not in either party's interests. If houses remain unsold the Council would not be in a position financially to buy them. The local planning authority is going to be looking for strong local support and a clear local housing need – 15 houses might be too many.
24. **Question:** Is the North Cornwall District Council local plan relevant in determining a sustainable size for the development? **Answer (CL):** Yes. Bray Shop is classified in HSG2 as a minor village and is an exception site governed by HSG10 ([follow links on Cornwall Council's website for the NCDC Local Plan, Part 1 HSG2 and HSG10](#)) so that a development should not exceed 10 properties. However the current local plan would have been replaced if the unitary Council hadn't come into being and that number would probably have increased, particularly in the light of the new Affordable Housing Development Plan Document which is due to be adopted at the end of this year. **Question:** But at the moment HSG10 still stands and restricts development to 10 properties? **Answer (CL):** A planning committee can decide to override the old plan.
25. **Question:** Will the housing need in the Linkinhorne and South Hill parishes be taken into account? **Answer (CL):** It hasn't been taken into account but this needs to be debated. It is possible that the first cascade could be for all three parishes represented in Bray Shop.
26. **Question:** With 1.5 cars per household the number of cars in the village will increase by 22.5. Who will consider the impact on road safety and road capacity? **Answer (CL):** This will be considered by the Highways Authority during the planning process. **Comments:** There is also a need for traffic calming and a problem of on-street parking if enough private parking space isn't provided. **Answer (AS):** Consideration will be given in the plans to providing two parking spaces per household.
27. The chair invited Mr Lunn to outline the planning process which he did subject to the proviso that he is not a planning officer. An application is submitted and registered by the Council. A decision is usually made within 10-13 weeks of registration. Notification of the application is posted adjacent to the site and is sent to the Parish Council and to immediate neighbours. The Parish Council is expected to hold a public meeting to get local views. The application is posted on the Parish and County Council websites and sent to all relevant departments in the Council. Consultees have 21 days in which to comment and anyone from the

local community can write a letter of support or objection which is then published on the Council's website. CL read out factors that cannot be taken into account in objecting to an application. The list of relevant and irrelevant factors is either enclosed or can be found on Cornwall Council's website [planning pages](#). The application is considered either by delegation to a senior planning officer who consults the local Councillor (Neil Burden) or, if the local Councillor requests that an application is determined by Committee, the application is heard by the East Planning Committee. Contrary to the advice originally given by Mr Lunn, a parish council no longer has the right to insist that an application is determined in this way. An application may be approved, refused or deferred (usually to allow for a site visit). Only the applicant has a right of appeal.

28. The chair invited Derrick Parsons (DP), chair of Stoke Climsland Parish Council, to speak. DP indicated that the council would disseminate locally any information received and had, to date, been waiting for detail. He indicated that there would be a public meeting once the application was received and suggested that information be posted on the Bray Shop notice board and that residents inform one another when they become aware of developments. Information would also be posted on the parish council's website at <http://www.stokeclimslandparish.org> and information about affordable housing and the planning process could be found on Cornwall Council's website at <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk>. It was requested that any letters of concern be copied to the Parish Council by being emailed to the clerk on parishclerk@stokeclimslandparish.org.
29. **Comment:** If the application goes for delegated approval minor applications are decided within 8 weeks of being lodged, major applications within 13 weeks.
30. **Mr Selleck** asked it to be noted that in pre-application discussion at the Bodmin Planning Office regarding policies that were applicable, he had originally proposed a development of 10 houses. However following discussion with the Parish and County Councils he was asked to consider increasing this to 15 to include 5 social rented properties. Mr Lunn explained that there was an identified need for 6 affordable units in Stoke Climsland Village and then 5 needed for social rent. It was not economic to have two developments in the parish and so it was agreed to have one which would combine both needs.
31. **Question:** So the need has been amalgamated in Bray Shop, overriding the limit of 10 for development? **Answer (CL):** Stoke Climsland Village is not a minor village. It is a major village and so could have taken a development of more than 10 houses.
32. **Question:** If the issue originally arose in respect of Stoke Climsland Village, was there a plot of land in mind and are the sites still available and more suitable? **Answer:** Three sites were discussed but there was no land owner willing to sell. **Answer (AS):** A site with mains drainage would have been preferred. **Answer (DP):** No site was seriously considered. **Answer (AS):** No other site has been put forward but if there were a better site and a land owner willing to sell it would be considered.
33. The chair thanked everyone for their contribution and closed the meeting.