

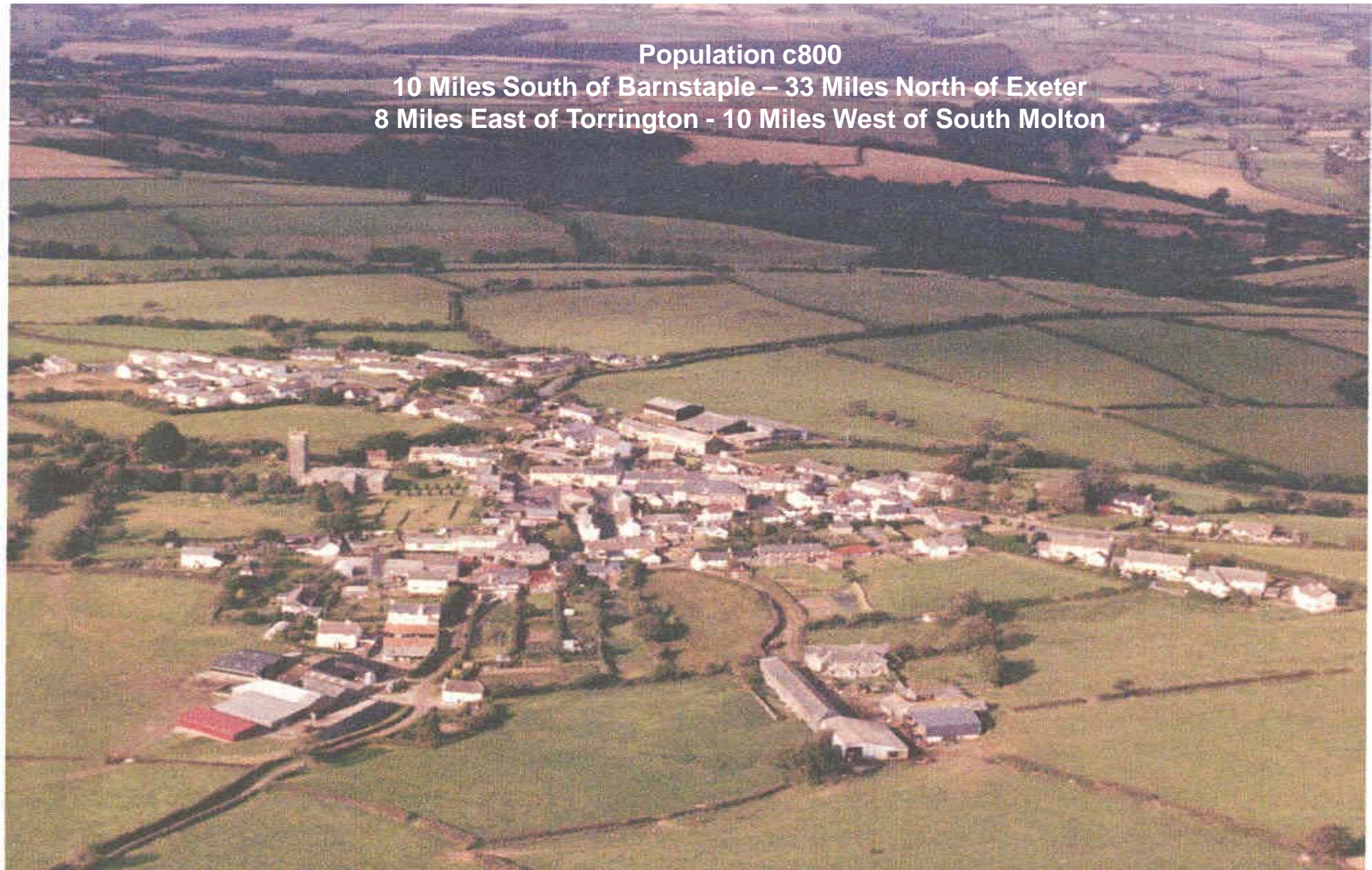
“Neighbourhood Plans & Community Development”

High Bickington: A Community Led Journey: Local Solutions to Local Need

Ian Hobbs: Devon County Council

The Village

Population c800
10 Miles South of Barnstaple – 33 Miles North of Exeter
8 Miles East of Torrington - 10 Miles West of South Molton



Little Bickington Farm Master Plan



CONTEXT



HIGH BICKINGTON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

A Financial Partnership:

- Total cost : c£12.5 million including school
- Non Grant Income:
 - Receipt on Land Value deferred by DCC until scheme completion
 - plus financial share of up to £850k for total scheme infrastructure including the proposed primary school
 - £300,000 Section 106 contributions from a local development site
 - £2m Triodos Bank Development Finance
- Grants Income: £2.823m
 - Devon CC £200K - Planning and Finance costs
 - Parish Council - c£100K + from sale of existing development site for Community Building towards cost of new building
 - LEADER 4 - £193K Workspace and Renewables
 - RE4D -£30K Renewables
 - HCA - £360K Gap Funding Agreement
 - Esmee Fairbairn Foundation - £50,430 Core funding 2008 to 2011
 - Communitybuilders Fund - £1.79m (40% grant, 60% loan)



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audit commission

Current Position

Phase 1:

- On site since December 2010 and due for handover on 23rd December 2011
- 16 'affordable' homes - 9 x Equity Mortgage (40 to 80%) and 7 x Tenancy Plus)
- 2 x 3 bedroom market sale homes
- 2 x workshops for rental
- 1 x boiler room and district heating plant fired by woodchip
- Access roads, foul drainage and sustainable surface water drainage
- **Phase 2:** stand-alone Community Building and sportsfield commenced September 2011 for completion June 2012



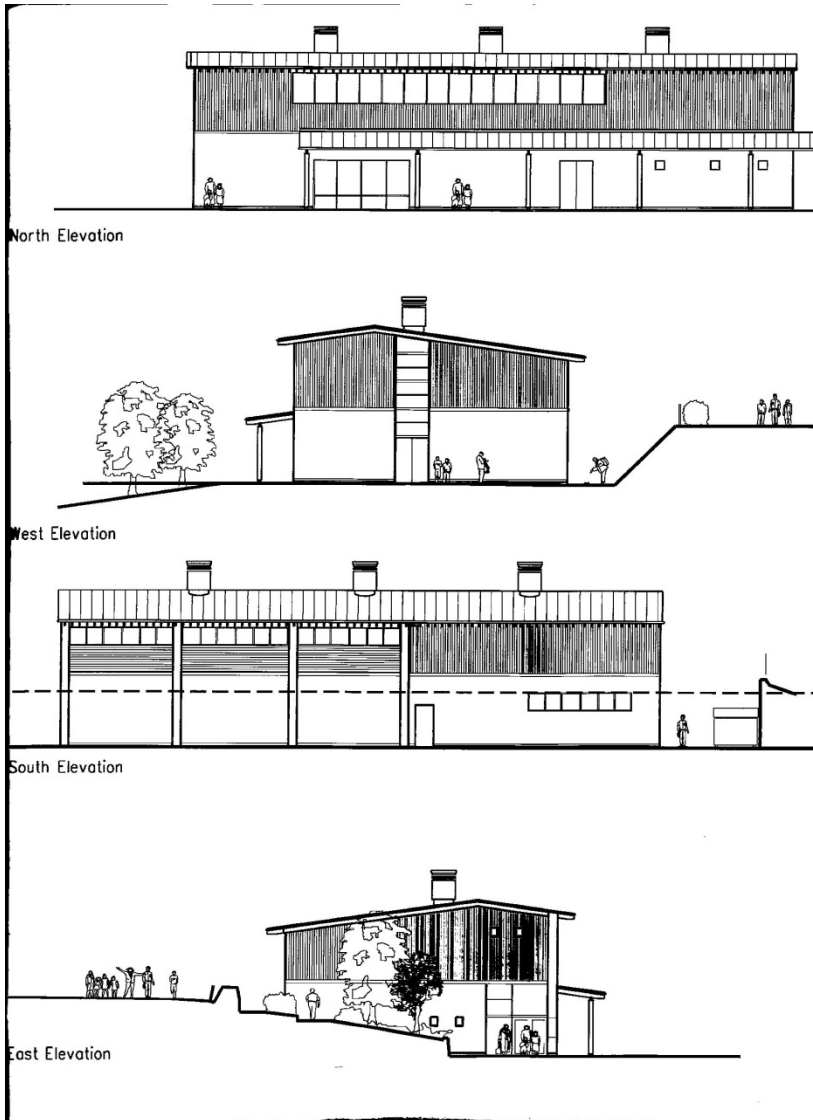


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Workshops



Community Building Elevations



North elevation

West elevation

South elevation

East elevation

Where next?

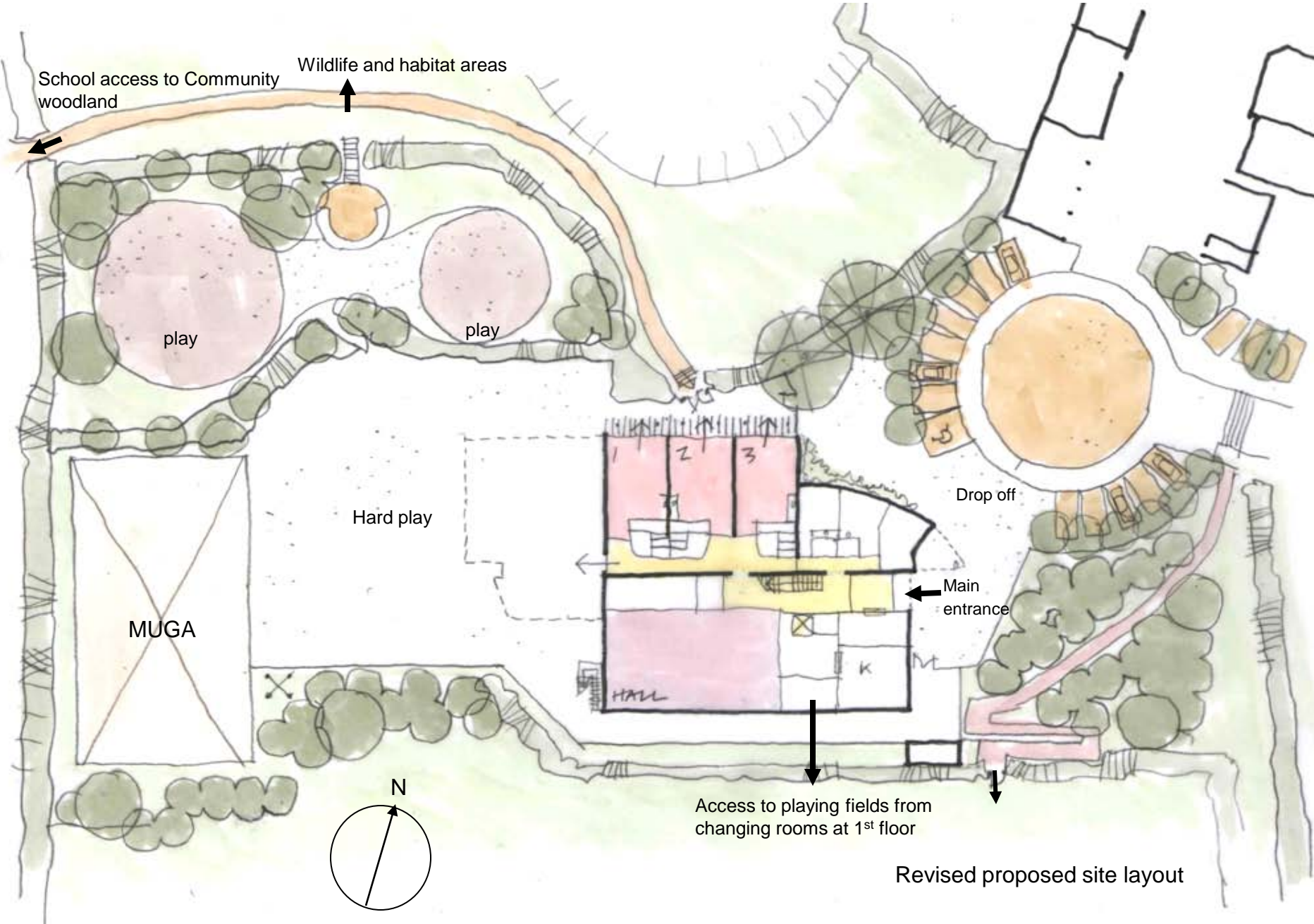
Phase 3 - Open Market Housing and 4 Workshops

- Development Funding now being discussed with Triodos Bank **but** falling house values may bring delay
- Phase 3a: Three Units – construction commenced September 2011
- Phase 3b: Four Units
- Phase 3c: Five Units
- Phase 3d: Four Units
- Phase 3e: Five x Barn Conversions

Workshops will be added to sub-phases as demand occurs.

Phase 4 - New Primary School??

**end of Building Schools for the Future
changing policy context**



School access to Community woodland

Wildlife and habitat areas

play

play

Hard play

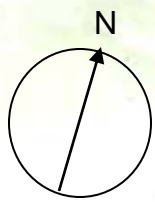
MUGA

HALL

Drop off

Main entrance

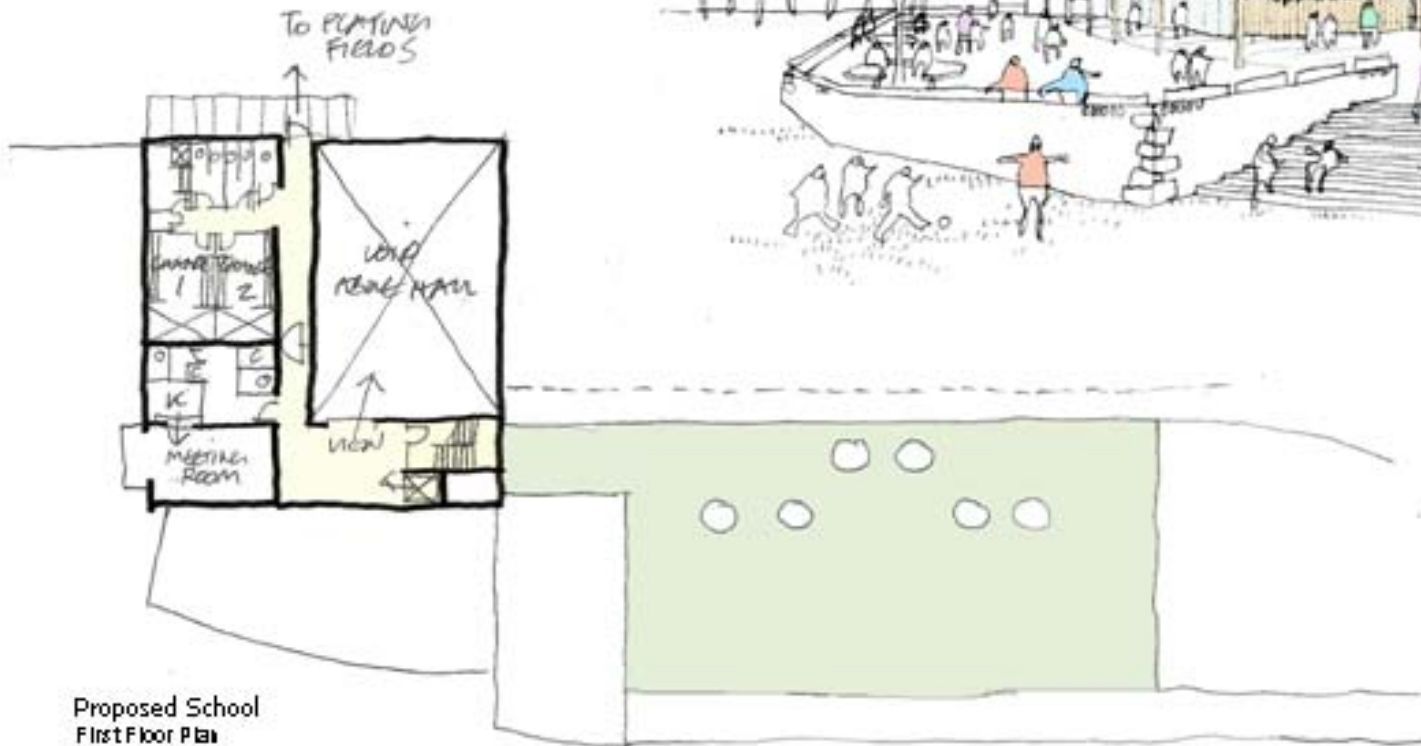
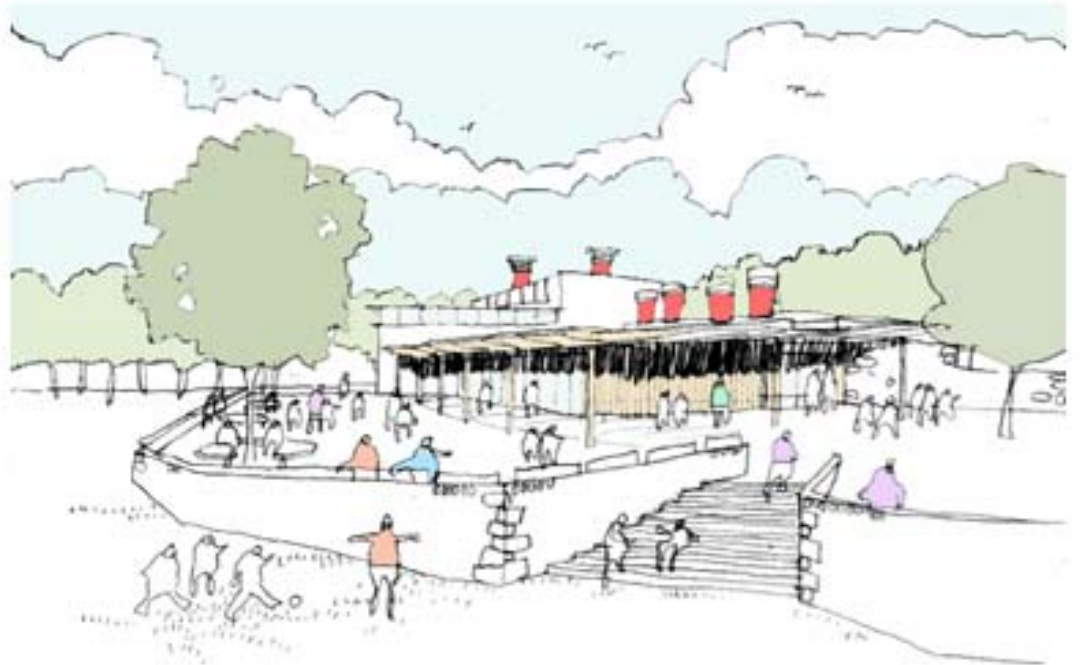
Access to playing fields from changing rooms at 1st floor



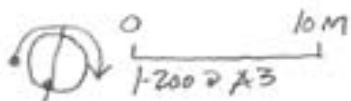
Revised proposed site layout

Sketch proposals
Sketch proposals

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Biddulph Architects Ltd
Biddulph Architects Ltd



Proposed School
First Floor Plan



The Journey (1)

- **2000 – an offer from Devon County Council re 20 acres of farmland**
- November 2000 formation of High Bickington 2000
- 2001 – Foot and Mouth outbreak
- **2003 - Parish Plan 80%+ response rate**
- **November 03 - Outline Planning Application**
- January 2004 – Application approved by Torridge DC but referred to GOSW as major departure
- 2005 - 3,000 broad-leaf trees planted by 53 adult volunteers and 63 primary school children
- **May 2006 – Local Public Inquiry led to refusal of the scheme** – deemed scale and location not in keeping with the Local Plan

The Journey (2)

- March 2008 – Local Needs Housing Report
- **August 2008 – new full planning application** for 16 ‘affordable’ homes (9 for Equity Share and 7 for rental); 18 homes for market sale; 5 ‘Barn Conversion’ homes; 6 workshops for local businesses; a new 120 place primary school; community and sporting facilities fit for the 21st Century. (Permission granted in October 2009)
- Feb 2009 – Secretary of State decided not to intervene
- **December 2010 – Work starts on site**
- 23rd December 2011 – Phase 1 will be complete
- **First tenants being selected now! – 106 agreement = “Housing Need” plus “Local Requirement”**

The High Bickington CPT

- a not-for-profit organisation owned and managed by local people. Any 'surplus' finance raised through its operations cannot be shared out between the members and is re-invested in the services provided.
- Registered under the Industrial & Provident Societies Act 1965, in July 2004
- Over 200 local people are members
- Core staff – Finance, Company Secretary, Community Enterprise Manager
- The objects of the CPT include the provision of:
 - houses for people in need, on terms appropriate to their means
 - workspace to meet training and employment needs
 - health facilities and child care
 - facilities for recreation
 - woodland and other environmental improvements

The Lessons - Localism

- Localism:
 - To be meaningful there needs to be recognition of local leadership and a light touch from the centre
 - Durability and commitment of local people – but need for technical support “what you start with is not necessarily what you get”
 - Communities will work with Planners on holistic plans that lead to true sustainability improvements across the community
 - Critical importance of High quality Parish Plan (Neighbourhood Plans) or similar – community leadership essential to engage, be credible and to maintain commitment and attract wider support
 - Local action has energised the local Parish Council and led to change

The Lessons (2)

- Long term commitment and support of Local Government and other partners crucial but:
 - Statutory bodies often too slow, too rigid, too bureaucratic and not sufficiently mindful of the impact of their actions on community leaders and volunteers
 - need for coherent interdepartmental co-operation (e.g. the need for rural workshops agreed with Planners but Noise Conditions (40 decibels) placed on their use by Environmental Health risks viability
 - More use needs to be made of model Section 106 Agreements? National Model or local variability
 - Mortgagee in Possession Clauses are particularly important to achieving holistic developments with Equity Share or Shared Ownership housing

The Lessons – Replicability

- The chemistry: opportunity and viability + relationships + skill + business acumen
- Constant review of viability
- A number of other local CPT schemes are already complete or under way in Devon (and nationally) but, on the scale of HBCPT needs the right people, the right support and opportunity. DCC currently working on 10 schemes that could provide up to 100 homes
- Somerset, Devon and Dorset CLT Project – brokering partnerships between CLTs and suitable Housing Associations (typically CLT owns land; HA leads on funding and building) www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk
- Government announcement re: grants for community based schemes this Autumn