

Manor Farm Development, Catcott

Introduction

Welcome to our public exhibition to express our vision for the delivery of a high-quality, village housing scheme at Wickfield Farm, Manor Road, Catcott.

Colbolt Consultancy is a privately owned company which specialises in creating niche schemes in the South West. Their ethos is to work with the local authorities and local residents to create a well considered and a high quality designed housing development.

We are proposing to bring forward an application for a residential development in the centre of the village comprising 5 private sale homes including the sensitive conversion of the existing Wickfield Farm Barn.

Having previously met with a number of the local residents at the Parsh Council meeting on the 8th November 2022, Colbolt agreed to take away the initial comments registered during the general Q&A.

As part of our ongoing commitment to consult with the local community, this public consultation exhibition is being held to demonstrate how initial feedback has shaped our early concept design and to provide you the opportunity to consider the proposals and provide us with your feedback. Members of Colbolt Consultancy and their planning and architectural team will be on hand to answer any questions.

Thank you for your time to attend this event to consider these proposals. We would greatly appreciate your feedback.



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Aerial and Site Photographs



The aerial image above and photographs to the right show the existing site boundary and existing buildings on and around the site.

It is evident that there are buildings and spaces on the site which are in major disrepair and require attention before further damage is caused.

It is intended that the existing (private) open green space at the eastern part of the site is largely retained as an established feature of the village. Consideration for enhanced biodiversity and / or community use might be further explored with the Council and community.

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Planning Position

A broad summary of the current planning position is as follows:

- The application site contains a traditional farmhouse, farm buildings and undeveloped yards, all of which are within the Catcott village settlement boundary.
- The site is within the village boundary of a Tier 4 settlement land as such, proposals for redevelopment, infill, and conversion will be generally supported.
- The enclosed Eastern part of the site contains an unused but designated private 'Open Area' in the Local Plan.
- The scheme is capable of making a positive contribution towards the housing and community need in the area.
- The site adjoins the Listed St Peter's Church, but it is not in a Conservation Area.
- The proposed development will look to protect, preserve and enhance the setting of the Church.
- In accordance with the NPPF and Local Plan / Design Policies the detailed scheme will adopt a sympathetic design which relates to the village and local vernacular architecture and materials.
- The proposed scheme does not involve the loss of, or unacceptable harm to open space and offers changes that might positively contribute to the character and role of the settlement.
- It will not unacceptably harm the character or amenity of any nearby property.
- Affordable housing (or payment) is only required for sites where 6 to 10 units are created. This scheme proposes 5 new residential dwellings so payment in lieu will be sought by the Council.
- The site is outside of the phosphates area and so no mitigation is required.

The intention is for a pre-planning application and subsequent full planning application to be made, subject to the feedback from the public consultation.

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Site Constraints and Opportunities

The existing site plan:

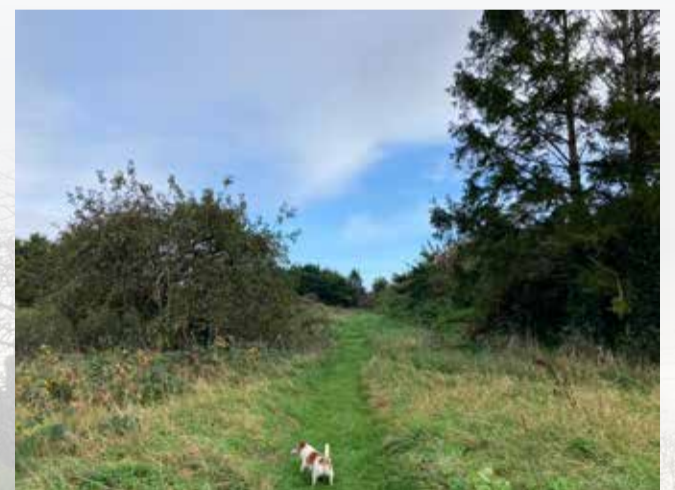


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Local Landscape Character

Catcott is a traditional, rural Somerset village surrounded by open countryside.

As is typical for most villages, it has evolved over time and been added to with a range of architectural styles and materials including brick, timber and white render. However, most dominant are two storey farmhouse style dwellings, constructed from Somerset stone and with clay roof tiles. This architectural characteristic has clearly influenced recently constructed new houses in the village and sets a strong precedent for any future development.



The other key characteristic is the large green arable grazing field at the heart of the village. This provides wide open views from the public footpath adjacent to the church and also from Lippetts Way, looking north towards the church and countryside beyond, as seen in the photograph below. Whilst the 'new' bungalow development in the foreground of the Church is clearly visible, the change in levels beyond and existing and proposed greenery will largely obscure any development on the development site.



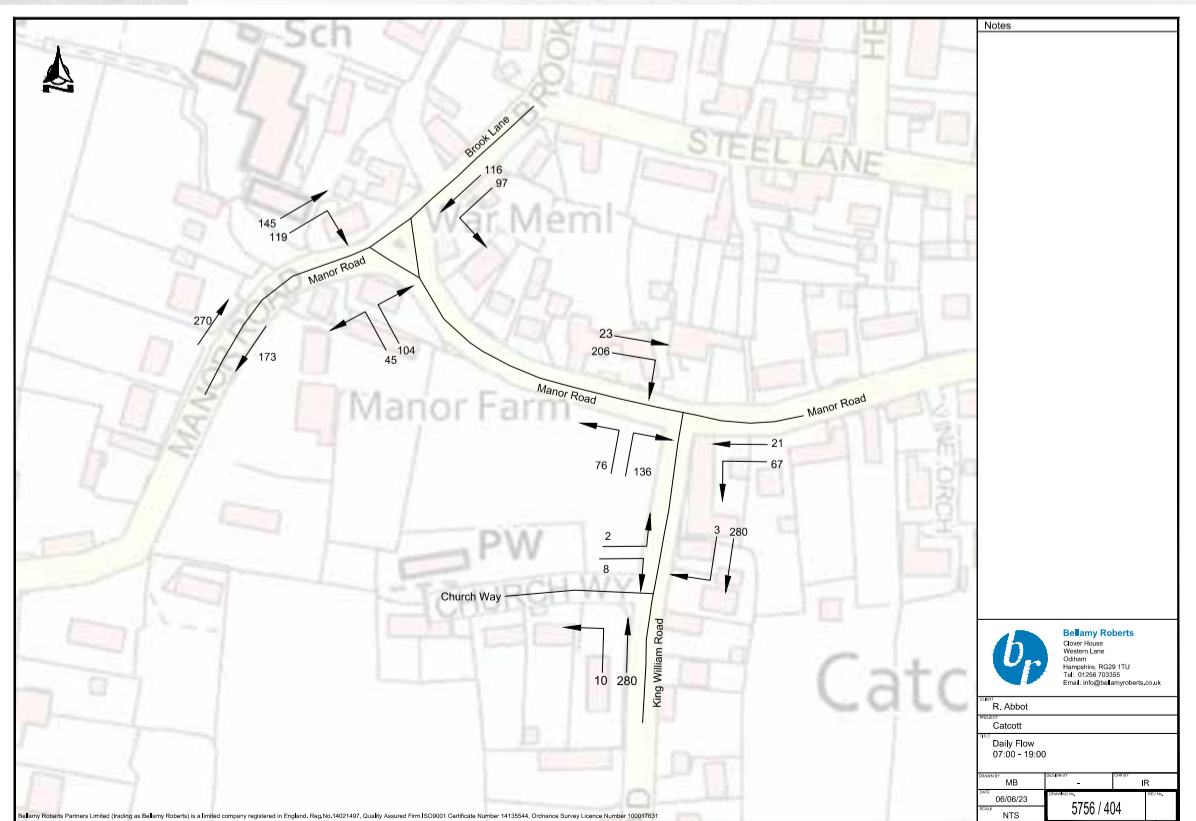
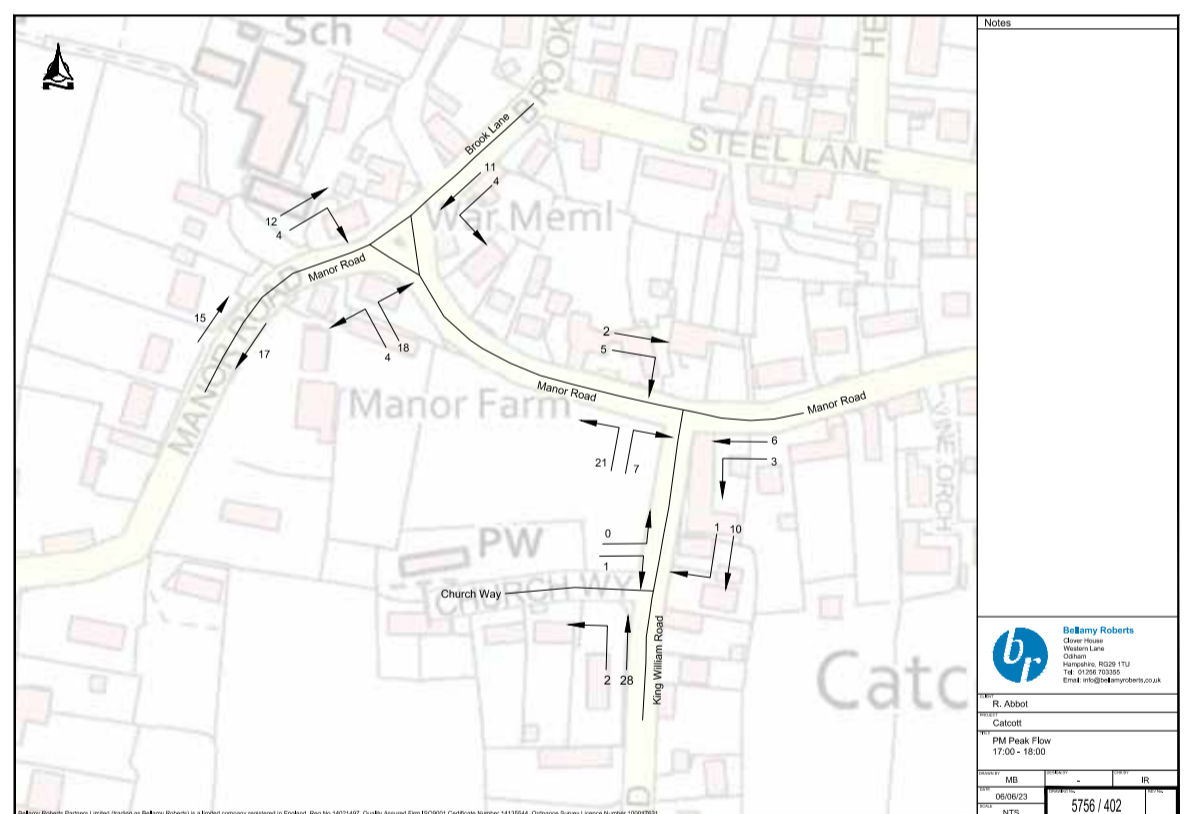
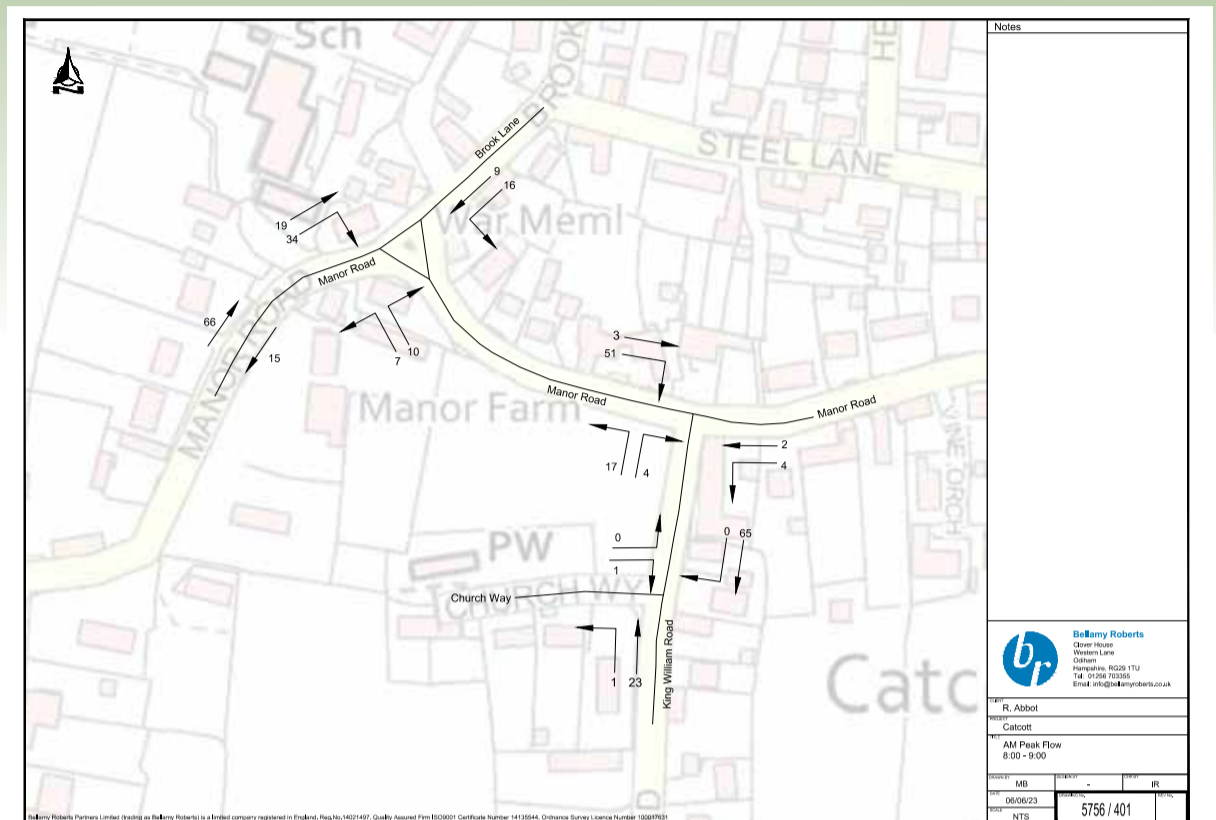
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Transport and Parking

An initial transport assessment has been carried out to identify vehicular movements around the site. The plans adjacent show traffic movement at peak times in the morning and afternoon along with the general daily flow.

In summary:

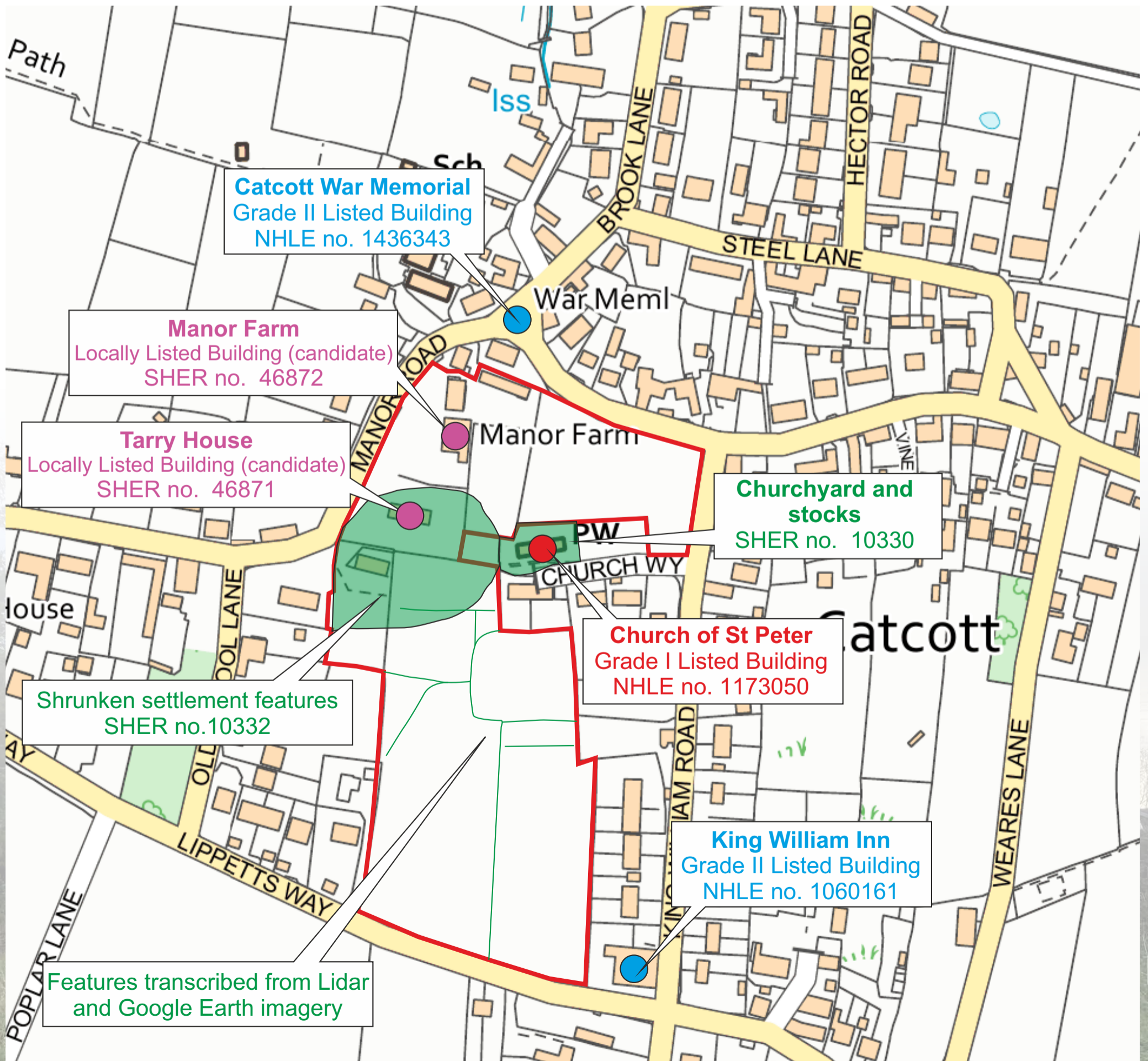
- The existing traffic flows along the local highway network are very light. The peak periods (0800-0900) and (1500-1600) associated with the school run generate less than 75 two-way movements along Manor Road
- The development of 5 dwellings would likely generate 3 or 4 traffic movements during the network peak hours. Such movements would be imperceptible and would be less than the likely daily variation in flows experienced.
- The proposal would accommodate on-site parking for cars and cycles in accordance with the local council's standards. As such, there would be no extraneous on-street parking generated by the scheme.
- Provision of a further 9 car parking spaces for Church and Community use is proposed. Such provision would relieve the surrounding lane of parked cars.



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Heritage Appraisal

An initial heritage appraisal has been carried out for the site and Catcott village as per the plan below. There are no designated heritage assets with the proposed development site, but within a 30m radius of the site there is the Grade I Listed St. Peter's Church and the Grade II Listed war memorial and the King William Inn. Within the site, Tarry House and Manor Farm are described as being of historic importance and currently candidates to become Locally Listed Buildings. It is not considered that the proposed development will compromise or affect any of the heritage assets, however further analysis is required as the design for the new houses evolves.



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Ecology

A detailed ecological survey has been undertaken including a preliminary ecological appraisal and protected species surveys for bats and reptiles. Habitats on site include managed grassland, hedgerows, trees, and areas of unmanaged grassland and scrub.

Reptiles

A reptile survey confirmed a population of slow worms on site. The slow worms are inhabiting areas of unmanaged grassland and scrub in land around Manor Farm.

Reptiles will be protected within the proposals and will be moved away from the development area into areas of new public open space – new habitat for reptiles will be created with new planting of hedgerows, trees and scrub and special refuges will be made for reptiles using piles of rocks and wood.

Bats

The bat survey identified at least nine species of bat using the site, which is typical of a rural village site with areas of unmanaged vegetation. Bat surveys also identified a small bat roost within one of the buildings on site.

Some bat habitat will be lost to development but this will be offset by new planting of hedgerows, trees and scrub and new bat roosting features will be installed on new buildings and trees. The development will provide a net gain in bat habitat and will increase the number of bat roosting opportunities within the site.

Birds

The site also provides lots of nesting and feeding opportunities for birds, particularly in scrub and hedgerow vegetation. The development will increase overall nesting opportunities for birds by implementing a regime of new hedgerow, tree and scrub planting and there will be specialist long-lasting bird boxes installed on new dwellings and retained trees.

Other wildlife

The proposed development will also be planned and designed to provide improved habitat for local wildlife – this will be achieved by increasing the diversity of plants on site, including a range of new trees, scrub planting and species-rich native hedgerows. The new planting will provide a longer overall period of flowering, seeding and fruiting and therefore providing food for wildlife throughout the year.



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Conservation and Heritage

Catcott is not within a conservation area, however there are a number of listed buildings in the village, including the war memorial and St Peter's Church. All the listed buildings are constructed with the local Somerset stone and with pitched clay tile roofs. The significance of the heritage asset and their setting will be fully assessed as part of the detailed proposals to ensure that the proposals preserve (and enhance) the Church and those elements that positively contribute to its setting.

On the site itself is a traditional, but dilapidated barn, also constructed with the Somerset stone and a clay tile roof, as seen in the photograph below. Whilst this building is not listed, it has obvious character and charm and is therefore worthy of retention, repair and conversion.



Photographs of the Listed buildings in the village..... and the local bus stop!

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Previously Proposed Scheme

An initial scheme as shown below was presented to local residents at the Parish Council meeting on 8th November 2022. The feedback received at this meeting was as follows:

- The scheme was considered to be overdevelopment and so the number of proposed houses should be reduced.
- Keep frontage area off Manor Road free of housing
- Move proposed house no.s 4 and 5 away from the northern boundary
- There is no need for a formal children's play area
- Remove the trees and repair the wall abutting the Church
- Introduce a Church / Village car parking area



*Proposed site plan as presented
on 8th November 2022.*

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Design Principles and Approach

In order to provide suitable new housing with sufficient access and garden space and in turn, offer space to the Catcott village community, the following land swap and designations are proposed.

Area highlighted below shows land already identified as suitable for new development.



Area highlighted below shows additional land required for the new housing development.



Area highlighted below shows land to be given to St. Peter's Church for a new burial ground



Existing private open space and potentially new green space, that might meet biodiversity and wider community needs i.e amenity space, open space or car parking



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Design Principles and Approach

The proposed wider site plan:



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Design Principles and Approach

The proposed site plan showing the new development:



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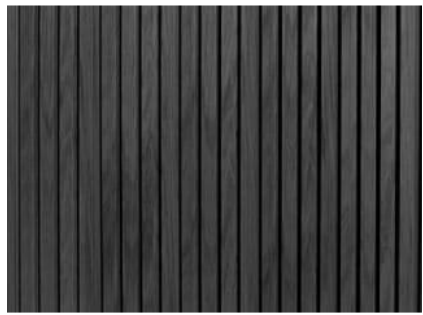
Initial Design Ideas

With reference to the local vernacular architecture and materials, some initial design ideas have been considered. The 4 new dwellings are a contemporary reinterpretation of the traditional barn buildings, all constructed with local materials, in particular the Somerset stone and clay roof tiles.

Somerset Stone



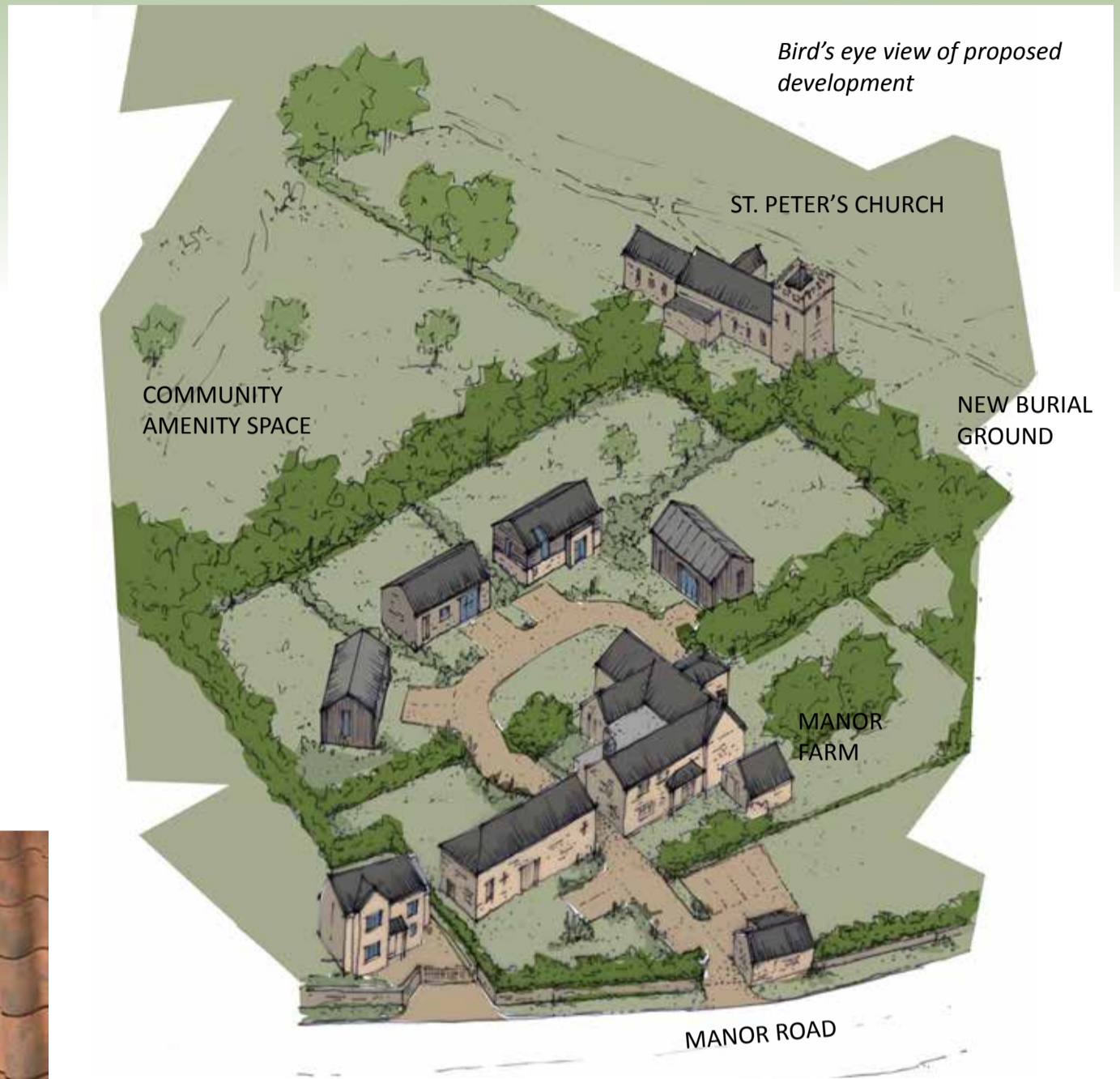
Natural Timber



Black Stained Timber



Clay Roof Tiles



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Design Development

Since the first proposals were created, the team has received some initial feedback and has subsequently amended and developed the scheme as follows:

- The proposed new development area has been reduced, thus providing less houses and more green amenity space for Catcott village.
- A new community space and / or biodiversity area is proposed adjacent to the public footpath
- A new burial ground extension area for St. Peter's Church is proposed with new trees surrounding it for privacy.
- Existing Leylandii trees to be removed from the Church boundary and the existing stone wall is to be repaired.
- Potential village car parking area proposed adjacent to the Church entrance.
- A number of existing trees to the north of the church along Manor Road and King William Road are to be removed, providing a much improved outlook for local residents and much improved views of the church. Lost trees will be replaced with select native species which will be positioned to provide screening where appropriate.
- The new houses have been repositioned away from the northern boundary, thus providing a much improved outlook for existing residents on Manor Road.
- There are no longer any new houses to the front of Manor Farm, thus retaining the existing streetscape along Manor Road.
- The design for the new houses has been developed. They are all a contemporary reinterpretation of a traditional Somerset barn, using the same materials seen on many of the surrounding houses. All new dwellings will be different in appearance, but follow the same design philosophy.
- Off street car parking spaces to be provided for each new dwelling.
- 8no. off street visitor car parking spaces to be provided to ensure no additional parking pressure on the adjoining roads.
- Existing building adjacent to the site entrance to be converted to a communal cycle and refuse store.

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Summary

In summary, the development proposals will:

- Improve the amenity space for local residents to enjoy, including the proposed green and biodiversity spaces.
- Provide much needed additional burial space for St. Peter's Church.
- Enhance views of St Peter's Church and the surrounding open green spaces.
- Provide new trees and planting appropriate for the area.
- Position new buildings such that they cannot be seen or will be screened from existing and surrounding dwellings.
- Ensure there is no additional on street car parking or local road congestion
- Be sympathetic to the immediate and wider context, that will enhance the village.
- Be sustainable with strong environmental credentials.
- Be of high quality design that directly responds to local materials and architecture.

The design team very much welcome the feedback from residents on these proposals before the scheme is developed any further.

