



Draft V1 16.06.16  
Draft V2 21.07.16  
V3 16.08.16

## Bovey Tracey Town Council

### Community Hub Design Brief

#### 1.0 Background and Context

Bovey Tracey is a beautiful and welcoming market town where the winding streets and picturesque parks provide a rich environment for residents and visitors alike. The town has a strong creative culture, both historic and contemporary, which can be seen in numerous shops, attractions and events across the town, including the internationally renowned Devon Guild of Craftsmen, based in the 19th century water mill on the western edge of the town center. It is a pretty cob and Dartmoor granite built town with over 100 listed buildings and a plethora of architectural features which are indicative of its rich built heritage. Bovey Tracey is one of the main gateway towns to Dartmoor National Park providing a perfect location from which to enjoy the stunning landscape and range of outdoor recreational opportunities.

In terms of demographic profile the 2011 Census reports a population of about 7200 people living in 3220 households. The number of children under 16 is slightly lower than the national average, but notably the percentage of older people over 65 is 28% of the population compared to the Devon average of 23% and the national average of 16%. There are also a significantly higher (18%) number of single pensioner households than the national average (12%). Also of interest is the fact that there is a higher than average level of self-employment and twice the national average of people working from home.

#### 1.1 The Site & its Surroundings

**NGR: SX81387815, Site of the former Thatched Inn, Station Rd, Bovey Tracey.**

The overall size of the site is approx. 800 sq.m. or 0.15 acre.

Until early 2014, the site was occupied by the burnt out shell of the former Old Thatched Inn public house which was Grade II listed. An application for de-listing was confirmed in July 2013 as it was considered the remains did not have any special architectural or historic interest. The site now provides an ideal opportunity for development for the benefit of the local community and visitors to



the area. The site is accessed by pedestrians and vehicles from Station Road. The site is bordered by a public car park to the east and residential dwellings to the north and west. It is located around 400m to

the east of the town centre and forms part of the Bovey Tracey Conservation Area which is mainly 'mid to late' 19<sup>th</sup> century in character, interspaced in this area with new residential units.

The site is located at the main western entry point to Bovey Tracey; the view along Station Road will introduce the building and lead into the adjacent car park. The project is therefore an opportunity to improve the local built environment and enhance first impressions for visitors to the town. Please see attached site and location plan on page 13.

## **1.2 The Proposed Community Hub**

The Hub will accommodate four key services under one roof which are currently located elsewhere in inadequate buildings, these are:

- The Town Council - currently in the old Town Hall at the top of the town centre.
- The Library - currently in a building "out on a limb" from the centre.
- The Tourist (and community) Information Centre - currently in a wooden pavilion in the Station Rd car park.
- The Public Toilets - currently in an outdated building in the Station Rd car park due for demolition to allow enhancements to the flood relief scheme and cycle/pedestrian routes in the vicinity.

We seek your recommendation on the most appropriate design to accommodate the four key services above along with a range of functions suggested by the local community (listed in sections 4.5 and 4.6). The Hub should aim to cater for as many of these expressed needs as possible and to become a busy hub of community life and visitor hospitality.

The building will need to relate in scale to the adjacent domestic structures, but will also establish a building of merit on this corner site opposite the historic Mill building and at the western "gateway" to the town and Dartmoor national Park beyond.

There are many aspects which we expect to discuss with you during the consultation process and this document is by no means an exhaustive inventory of all the details we require. Please do not hesitate to come back to us at any point if you wish for clarification of any this document's contents.

## **1.3 Design development to date**

In 2013 early designs and plans were presented to the District Council/Conservation officer, but were not well received. Consequently an independent design panel was consulted to review those early designs. The ideas and recommendation that the design panel generated are available on request.

In the spring of 2015 the Town Council issued an outline design brief to a number of architectural practices, with an invitation to submit their initial response. Two

companies were shortlisted and interviewed. However at this stage the need to incorporate the library had not arisen nor had a process of stakeholder consultation taken place. Hence the process was put on hold whilst these additional elements were addressed.

In May 2016 Devon County Council's Historic Environment team produced guidance for a staged programme of archaeological investigation and mitigation. Our intention is to commission an approved archaeological consultant to undertake the site excavations needed simultaneous to the ground works phase of construction.

Consultation has already been undertaken over previous tentative plans with the Architectural Liaison Team Leader for Devon and Cornwall Police - their report is available on request.

The Town Council now wish to choose a respected local architectural practice that will support the Council's client team to achieve the Community Hub project. The District Planners are receptive to a contemporary or traditional design and are very keen to work with the town Council's chosen architect from an early stage to ensure that a high quality scheme is produced within the Town Council's budget.

## 2.0 Vision and Aims for the Community Hub

### Vision Statement:

***To create a community building to act as a hub in the community: providing wide-ranging facilities accessible to all, where multiple services, the hosting of public events and activities, and the provision of meeting spaces will contribute to community life and well-being.***

### Strategic Aims:

1. To provide a sustainable base for community activities, visitor support and key services that reflects Bovey Tracey's role as a historic market town and gateway to Dartmoor National Park
2. To provide a modern, welcoming and comfortable environment with a focus on optimising the customer experience.
3. To optimise collaboration and partnership working between agencies that all work for the well-being of Bovey Tracey's residents.
4. To offer opportunities for enhancing the well-being of the community and for increasing community integration bringing residents together to improve the quality of life for all, particularly the most vulnerable.
5. To adopt a 'socially enterprising' model for the management of the asset, whilst prioritising its social purposes, to ensure that the asset can be managed in a flexibly, enterprising and opportunistic way to respond to changing social needs and to optimise the income generation potential.

### 3.0 Meeting Local Need

A range of research has been carried out that has helped to provide an indication of the unmet needs and aspirations of the community that the Hub could help to address, this includes:

- In 2012 a community consultation event was held at the old Town hall to gather the public's views on the option of redeveloping and modernising the old listed Town hall or whether to develop a new building on an alternative site. The outcome of this options appraisal was that the Town Council adopted the latter option. Consequently the Town Hall was put on the market and the Community Hub plans were focussed on the Old Thatched Inn site which the Council had recently purchased.
- Between 2012 and the present the broader community have been kept informed of project progress through regular updates in the parish newsletter and website.
- In late 2015 the Town Council was awarded an Awards For All grant to enable them to commission Devon Communities Together (DCT) to undertake a pre-investment process of stakeholder consultations. The aim of this process was to ensure community "buy-in" and to inform the design and business plan for the proposed Hub. A project steering group comprising of key stakeholders and Town Councillors was set up in January 2016 to oversee the process and drive the project forward.
- The Steering group recognised that the views of young people (ages 11-18) have been notable by their absence in previous consultations. Consequently a bespoke engagement process for young people was designed and delivered in March 2016.
- In April 2016 a broader Community Survey was developed by DCT with input from the Community Hub Steering Group. The survey was designed to capture the needs, views and aspirations of residents, local organisations and businesses to inform the design and function of the future community hub. The survey went live between April 28<sup>th</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup> 2016. 1000 paper copies of the survey were distributed to community venues, shops, cafes and businesses in Bovey Tracey and surrounds. An online version of the survey was also available for completion via the Towns website. A total of 303 surveys were completed which provides a good representative sample of the whole community and the age profile of respondents aligns relatively well with the demographics of the parish. Of the responses the majority 89% were from residents, 8% were from local organisations and 3% from businesses.
- DCT also undertook an assessment of existing local facilities which hire spaces and facilities to the public to ascertain how the Hub could complement and provide for any over-demand.
- In February and May interviews were held with key stakeholders (the Town Council, the Library service and the TIC trustees) to ascertain their essential and desirable requirements for the Hub.

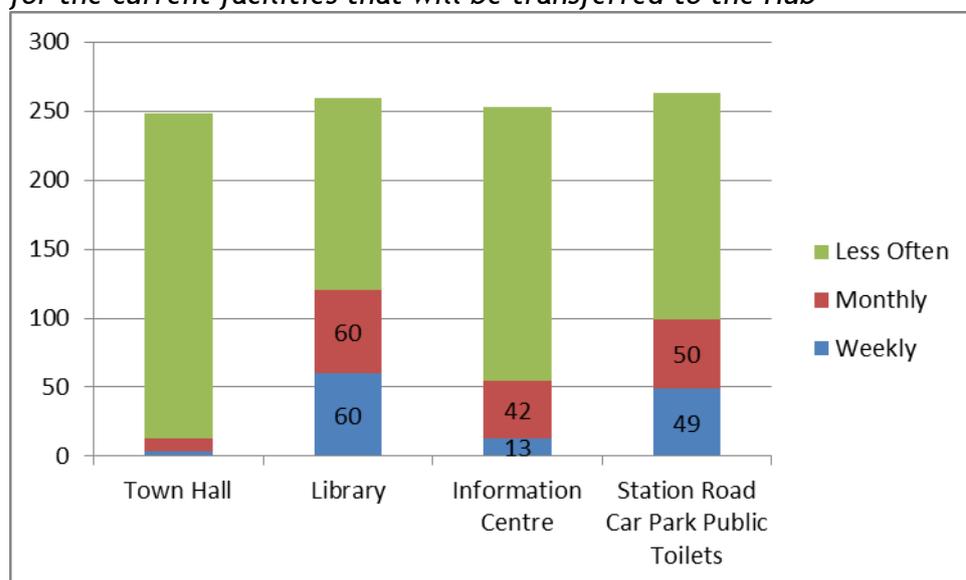
The pertinent findings from all this research has been used to inform sections 4 - 6 below.

A common theme that has emerged is that the public feel that they have not been consulted enough in the past but have appreciated the recent opportunities they have had: They are keen to be kept better informed and involved as the Hub proposal develops.

In responding to this brief we would expect design professionals to set out in detail how they will consult extensively with users - the library, the TIC, the Town Council, the Hub Steering Group and the broader community in the evolution of designs for the building. It is an essential requirement that you demonstrate formal consultation at key stages in the development of the design and that you meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in this process.

## 4.0 Range of Anticipated uses, timing and frequency

Figure 2: Results from the community survey give an indication of frequency of use for the current facilities that will be transferred to the Hub



We expect that by moving these services under one roof and to a more accessible location both total number of users and frequency of use will be able to grow considerably.

### 4.1 The Town Councils requirements:

- Town Clerk's Office & Administrative Area:
- Open to the public during all office hours: 8.30am - 5pm five days per week.
- Computers will be used in this room
- Office space for 3 desks with a separate confidential work-space for 1 desk (Town Clerk)
- Suitable space for large safe, 6 filing cabinets, large photocopier, CCTV hardware and shelving
- Large meeting room, regularly used as Council Chamber.

### 4.2 The Library Service requirements and aspirations:

- Staffing levels will be retained; one full time manager and 3 p/t assistant librarians, small volunteer team with potential to develop new roles.
- Staffed opening hours will be retained: Fridays and Saturdays 10am - 1pm, Tuesdays 10am - 6pm, Thursdays 10am - 5pm, closed weds. and Sundays.

- Shelved book space to house approx. 9350 books and DVDs for loan, plus an extra bay to accommodate reading group books and reservations.
- Good fast WIF and plenty of power points for people to plug in devices
- Back Office space for a staff work station
- Better secure storage and despatch space for stock deliveries and book club lots etc
- Continue public access to four PC work stations with bookable and drop-in charged slots. Access to printer. (in foyer?)
- Welcome, reception and admin. desk, staffed with two Galaxy PCs (Library have their own IT service) and till needed
- Children's area - dedicated area in safe part of library with suitable furniture and decoration
- The potential to extend opening hours to the library by trialling new technology - self-service kiosks. This would mean that when the library was closed but the Hub was open borrowers could use the service without needing staff support
- They aim to extend opening hours but this would need to be on an unstaffed basis - they aspire to the use of an "Open Plus" system giving 24 hour access to the library. This will be an important consideration when planning the design of the building. Further discussion with the Steering Group will be needed to explore how Open+ works and its implications for the building development. A useful existing pilot can be found at the Hayridge Centre, Cullompton Library: <http://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/about-public-libraries-news/unstaffed-libraries/open-case-study-cullompton-devon>
- Increasing sales income would need merchandise shelves/display area - currently there no book shop in BT, so this is a facility to be considered.
- Providing an information gateway to the area and Dartmoor - for locals and visitors; notice boards and leaflet racks
- Make more of local heritage collection: Dartmoor theme, crafts strength with display space and exhibition panels
- A Base to host more talk and workshops (up to 60 people), and as space to hire out, and space for meeting and launching guided walks; sufficient moveable and storable tables and chairs (shared with other users). At present, the lack of furniture and inflexible space restricts the library from running more activities and events. Extending use into the foyer area could perhaps accommodate these.
- To have access to a kitchen and toilets for staff and volunteers and catering for events
- Secure cupboard to keep money, confidential information, documents etc. Staff lockers (in office?)
- Aspirations: sharing of reception and welcome foyer with comfy informal meeting and sitting space for public to access WiFi and newspaper/magazine racks, vending machines; public access PCs, local info, merchandise, all functions shared with TIC, then blending into dedicated library space - allowing easy flow between different functional zones.

#### **4.3 The TIC Trusts requirements and aspirations:**

The TIC is run by an independent trust entirely staffed by a team of volunteers. They have the dual aim of providing information to both tourists and to the local community.

- The current opening times are: from the end of Oct. to Easter the centre is only open on Saturdays except from Mid December to end of January when it is closed entirely. This lack of opening in winter leads to a loss of continuity and use by the local community. The Trust hopes that the new hub will be able to provide tourist and community information services all year round.
- There current building is a single long rectangle of some 33m.sq. However, in the new hub consideration for a new delivery model and integrating their shop-floor space into the shared foyer, with perhaps zones for tourist information, community information, merchandise and comfortable seating with WiFi and charging/power points has been well received.
- Current facilities that need to transfer to the Hub include: wall-mounted and table-top leaflet racks, merchandise display shelves with secure storage cupboards below, wall mounted information boards promoting local hospitality businesses, 'window posters' to provide out of hours information and to draw people in from the car park.
- The provision of improved AV and IT access to provision of information and promotions.
- One volunteer is on duty during opening hours and they have a welcome/reception desk near the door. From this position they can keep an eye on most of the shop-floor, but valuable merchandise for sale is kept close to reception - this is an important consideration for lay-out within the Hub.
- They need a PC and till on reception.
- Needs visible, attractive "shop window" to draw visitors in.
- Security/access arrangements will be needed for volunteers 7 days a week in summer.
- They need access to kitchen, toilets and secure lockers/changing room for volunteers.
- They suggest the new Town Website is developed to support the work of the Hub.

#### **4.4 Replacement of Public Toilets:**

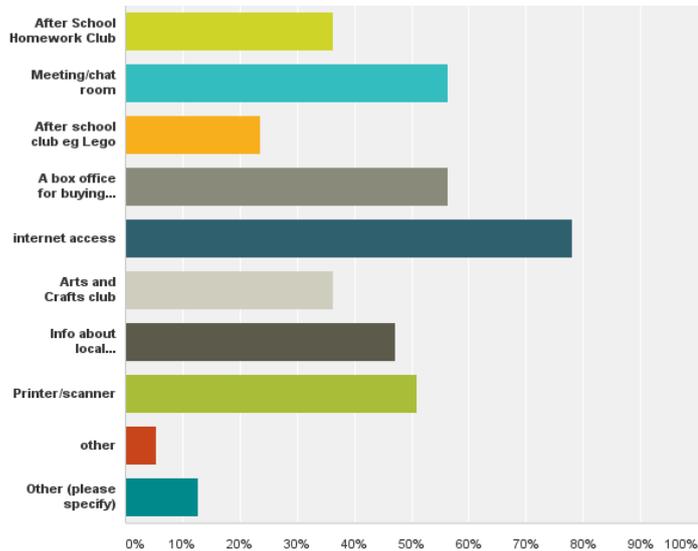
The old toilet block is well used by residents and visitors alike and helps to attract the latter to the locality. Young people have told us that they particularly value this facility especially in the evenings and at weekends. It is currently open seven days a week and locked shut between approx. 9pm and 8am. It will be important for the new hub to provide an equivalent facility. It would help to increase footfall into the hub if the public toilets had to be accessed via the foyer during opening hours, with the provision of alternative independent door-way outside of opening hours.

#### **4.5 Young People's Engagement: essential elements to accommodate in the Hub:**

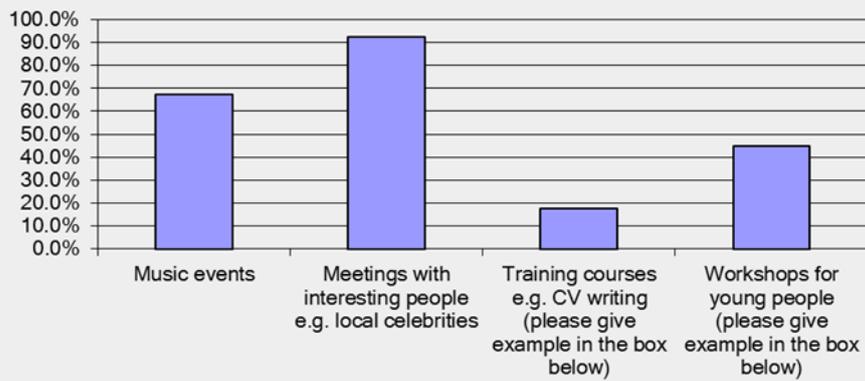
A detailed report on the findings of the engagement with young people is available on request. Some pertinent findings are illustrated below:

**Q1 Which of the following would you like to see provided in the Community Hub?  
Please tick as many boxes as you would like**

Answered: 55 Skipped: 0



**Which of the following events would you like to see organised in the Hub?**



**4.6 Community Survey: essential elements to accommodate in the Hub:**

- 70% of respondents said they would benefit from access to public printers/ photocopiers and public WIFI throughout is essential. The larger spaces must be equipped with PA and AV infrastructure.
- Transport/ access - Bicycle parking (racks and rain shelter) was considered important to over 60% of respondents, as was retaining station road car park spaces particularly those for disabled access. Mobility scooter and pushchair access to and parking for within the building. A community transport drop off point had significant support from over 40% of people.
- Services - 69% of respondents said that kitchen and catering facilities would be useful to them as hirers.
- There was also good support for a large meeting room and events space for hire (for 60+ people) from nearly 60% of respondents. This reflects the findings of DCTs local facilities audit.
- There was over 70% interest from businesses and organisations for the use of small meeting/ interview rooms.
- Around 50% of respondents supported the provision of a bar licence and entertainments licence for events.
- There was significant support for the following additional services:
  - Local information boards - 78% respondents
  - Public talks and lectures - 69%
  - Community events - 68%
  - Box office for local events - 58%
- Building design: 80% of respondents would prefer the building to include 'eco technology' and use 'local materials'. 60% of respondents would like to see the design to incorporate traditional features.

#### **Desirable Features to incorporate in design:**

- Technologies - Over 40% of people said they would benefit from public access computers and scanner
- Other suggestions: home-workers/enterprise zone, Meeting space to use for 30+; wildlife web-cam to observe nesting or riverbank; Public post box; Computer classes for total beginners; Multi-media projection equipment within large meeting space; On-line journal and heritage data access - more than at present and available 6 days a week; Laminator for posters; Charging facilities for phones etc.; Video screen showing a 'slide show' of photographs of old Bovey and visitor attractions; Public pay phones & public toilets; Passport photo booth; a performing arts space; Downloadable OS maps of area; PA for bands , talks etc.

## **5.0 Draft Schedule of Accommodation and Lay-out**

The building should include the following:

- **An entrance foyer/ lobby area** which allows collaborative use of reception/welcome desk, meeting zones, tourist and community information zones, merchandise display shelves with secure storage below, enterprise zone with public access PCs and equipment hire facilities. Separate access to each of the main user areas enabling simultaneous use of the various rooms, chamber and service areas. It would be good to be able to use the foyer for occasional exhibitions and out-of-hours events - to

enable this we anticipate that the dedicated library room and merchandise zone would need to be secured. Currently the TIC poster holders are set up so that local event information can be seen from outside when the Centre is closed, so we are keen to maintain a similar facility that is viewable from inside and out. The TIC also have outside noticeboards. One is particularly important as it displays accommodation information when the centre is closed. Local accommodation providers expect 24/7 promotion, so a facility with this function will need to be provided at the new Hub.

- **A large meeting and events room**, which will also be regularly used as the Council Chamber. With perhaps, the ability to partition into 2 or 3 smaller rooms or open into a larger space accommodating up to approximately 100 people.
- **Dedicated Library space** with traditional book zone grading into more open plan use of collaborative foyer and reception. The Library is run by a separate organisation and will need its dedicated space to be flexible to allow for shelving to be moved, seating to be added and events such as talks, presentations and training courses to be held. This will contribute to their own income generation plans.
- **Office suite** for Town Council and Library staff
- **Small meeting/interview room/study**, at least one, for up to 4 people in comfort
- **A good level and range of storage** for equipment and furniture for all users including stage equipment, and for secure archived files and documents for the Town Council
- **Kitchen with bar/servery**
- **Public toilets** including facilities for disabled people and baby changing (unisex) With the requirement that they not only cater for users and staff of the Hub during opening hours but also provide a public convenience facility with out of hours access option.
- **Cloakroom**, wheelchair/pushchair/mobility scooter storage close to the entrance
- **Plant room** - as needed
- **Cleaner/care-takers storage room**

## 6.0 Key Design Issues

### General:

The impact and ambiance of the Hub must be that of a human scale and welcoming building, we are building a town legacy fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The building must comply with all planning requirements and comply with all current Building Regulations as a minimum. The building must be compliant with DDA and all other statutory requirements for a public building. It must be a durable building and easily cleaned and maintained. A good level of sound

insulation between the various rooms should be incorporated. The open foyer will require particular attention for internal acoustics design to allow for performances, presentation or multi use by large numbers of people.

**Security:**

It must be a secure building with access through one main entrance and with lockable rooms, storage areas and windows. An exception to this single entrance route is that the public toilets will need to have out of hour's access for the public as well as serving the Hub users during opening hours. Consultancy with the local Crime Prevention Officer may be required.

**Energy, Environment and Maintenance:**

It is essential to create an easily maintained and environmentally friendly building to the current standards expected of public buildings. Sustainable measures and design principles should be considered to incorporate to a standard of BREEAM 'excellent', or 'outstanding' and should exceed Building Regulation requirements. We realise that these standards have cost implications. Cost-effective use should be made of renewable energy sources in eco-friendly heating and lighting systems. Consider an air-sourced heat pump along with underfloor heating. PV tiles or panels should be incorporated. Good use of daytime natural light and solar gain is expected. A high standard of insulation is required. Consider high performance, argon filled, soft low 'E' coated glazing units. Consider the provision of re-cycled rainwater for lavatories. A low cost of maintenance is a high priority. Use should be made of roof lights (where appropriate) which are easily opened and closed and cleanable.

**Landscaping:**

The surrounding outside areas to be a quality hard landscaped design, with low maintenance soft landscape features if included.

**Flood Risk:**

The site lays adjacent to, but outside, flood zone 3b and there is a risk of flooding. The new proposed ground floor level has been discussed with the Environment Agency and should be set at 29.20m AOD, approximately 400mm above the adjacent car park, as a precautionary measure. Ground water table is located at a depth of approximately 784 mm. The Environment Agency is due to undertake flood relief works around the adjacent car park area in 2016. A topographical survey was undertaken by Teignbridge District Council in October 2012. A copy of the survey is available on request.

**Access and Parking:**

Access to the Hub will be from Station Road pavements and the car-park/cycle path.

There should be designated parking for the regulation provision of disabled spaces. Consider automatic outside lighting for disabled and older persons' access. Easy pedestrian access from the car park and also directly from the village is required. Easy parking and access is required for the movement of events equipment, also PSVs and emergency vehicles.

**Aspect of Building:**

In general the main public areas should have good southerly aspects but with sufficient overhang of the building to reduce glare or overheating in summer.

## **7.0 Anticipated Funding arrangements and cost limit**

The Steering group and DCT have investigated sources of capital investment. They found that unfortunately they were not eligible for large Lottery grants and the local Landfill Tax Credit awards scheme has recently closed. Despite this set back the Town Council has been able to identify an investment plan based primarily upon them using loan finance from the Public Works Loan Board, along with receipts from sale of assets and partner contributions.

The Town Council have agreed a maximum budget for the project of £915,000, this figures includes all professional/technical fees and permissions and allows a contingency of 5%.

The Town Council is mindful that its funds are limited and largely come from the precept paid by local residents. The implementation of this project will be accountable to and scrutinised by the local community to ensure that it is achieved on budget. The Council is looking for cost savings on this budget if feasible and are seeking assurance that the appointed building professional can keep costs under close control and keep within the budget agreed.

They consider this budget to be realistic and sufficient to achieve a good quality and durable building for the growing population of the parish. The budget has been informed by the following intelligence: In 2015 the Steering Group invited initial ideas and costed schemes from a number of architects; the Steering Group has a building professional on board with a long track record of assessing value for money schemes, and DCT have insight into the total costs of a number of recent community building construction projects.

## **8.0 Project Steering Group**

### **Lead Contact:**

Town Clerk and Principle Finance Officer - Mark Wells

Info@boveytracey.gov.uk

Tel: 01626 834217

The Town Council's client team will be led by the Town Clerk who will be supported by a qualified local cost consultant to ensure that the chosen architect, builders and the client team work together to achieve this project.

### **Members:**

Cllr Eoghan Kelly (Chair)

Cllr Anna Klinkenberg

Cllr Rob Bray

Cllr Tony Allen (Town Mayor)

Cllr Robert Ashby

Mr Peter Hall (construction professional)

Ms Dawn Eckhart – Devon Communities Together

Mrs Jackie Paxman – Bovey Tracey Library

Miss Erica Steer – Bovey Tracey Information Centre Trust

Mr Mark Wells – Town Clerk

## **9.0 Procurement Considerations**

Previous advice to the Council has indicated the possible advantages of Design & Build and this approach should be seriously considered for the procurement process.

It was recommended that a first step should be to appoint a professional Project Manager who would advise on various procurement methods, including appointment of consultants, tendering procedures, budget costings, Health & Safety legislation etc. Because of the limited funding available, strict price control and adherence to agreed budgets will be of prime importance at all stages of the process.

For this reason, the Design & Build course is of great interest; the advice being that the Architect would be employed by the Council until the Building Contractor was chosen and would then be novated to the Contractor.

The Project Manager would administer the building contract on behalf of the Council.

All the above was given as independent advice and is yet to be considered by the Council. During the selection process for an Architect, these proposals will be discussed and Architects are invited to advise and comment openly upon them in order to assist the Council in making the wisest decision.

Site Context Elements - scale 1:500 @ A3

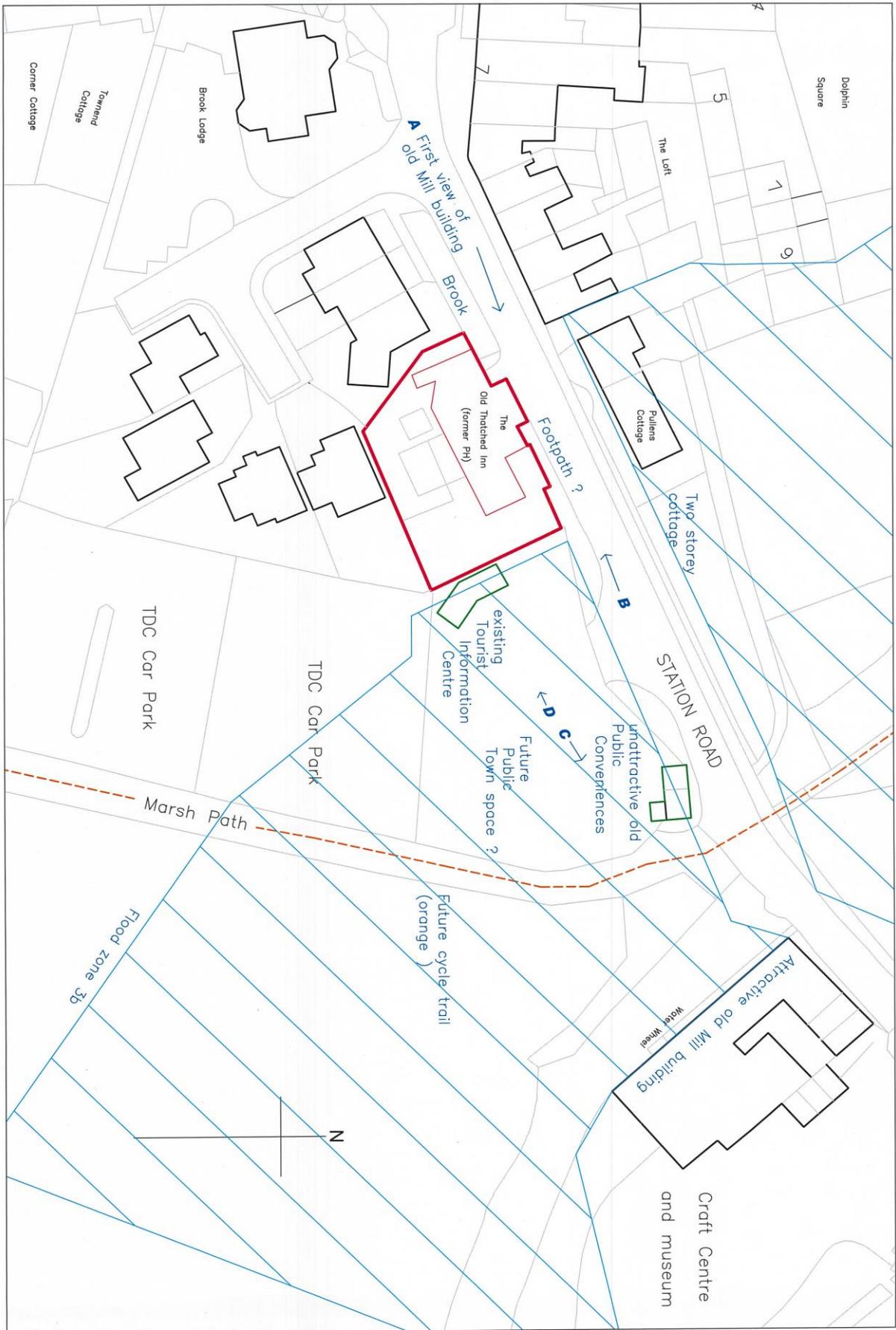


Diagram showing the location of the Old Thatched Inn site and the existing Public Conveniences and Tourist Information Centre.