

**Redacted version 21 March 2011**

**Rural Community Recreation Project**

*Our proposal for the future of the 17 acres of land  
in the centre of Churston Village  
adjacent to Bridge Road*

**Residents for Churston**

January 2011

## **1. Overview**

Residents For Churston is an organisation representing a significant proportion of the residents across Churston, Galmpton and Broadsands. We have joined together to help determine the future of a large and environmentally important part of our area.

We believe there is a tremendous opportunity to use the 17 acres of land in the centre of Churston Village adjacent Bridge Road for the benefit of the local community.

Our **Rural Community Recreation Project** will create an important geographic focal point for Churston. Our village does not have a village green and this site, being right in the centre of the village, is a perfect place to create one. We propose what we have called a **modern village green**. This will cater for our area's recreation and leisure needs and provide a place suitable for a range of uses ranging from informal games of football to family barbeques by the side of the lake.

At the same time we will be improving access across the village, an important issue that has not been properly addressed since the original invention of the motor car. A **network of bridleways** will connect the different parts of the village and substantially improve the safety of all road users. At the same time a new Dartmouth Road **bus pull in and turning circle** will improve the traffic flow into the whole of the Brixham peninsula.

There will be no cost (neither capital nor operating) to Torbay Council to provide these improvements. Funding will come from the creation of an enabling development in the form of an **animal farm visitor attraction**. This will work alongside the three adjacent local attractions (the Go-Karts, Cayman Golf and Farm Shop) and make a valuable contribution to the local area's tourist offer. All three traders support our project because of the positive impact it will have to their businesses (and likewise object to the Sports Hub project because of the negative impact this will have).

Residents For Churston will formalise itself as a legal entity operating for charitable purposes and set up and run the project. We see ourselves operating as an advanced form of a 'friends of group', the establishment and promotion of which is a Local Authority target.

Computer Graphic showing the different aspects of the project:



Key:

- (1.) New Modern Village Green
- (2.) New Animal Farm Visitor Attraction
- (3.) Most but not all Agricultural Land retained for cultivation
- (4.) New Bridleway Network providing safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists
- (5.) New Bus Pull-in and Turning Circle

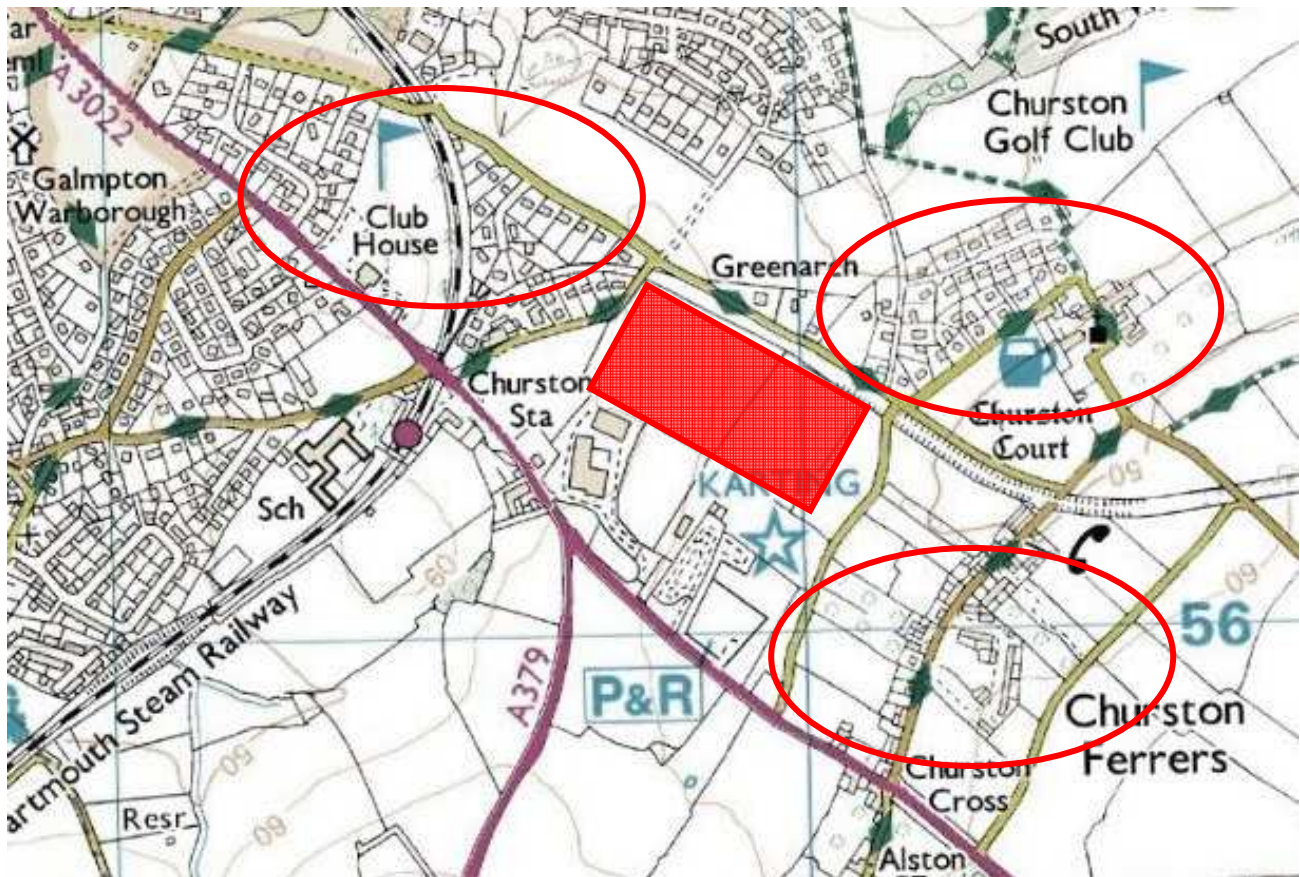
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## 2. Background and Site Constraints

### 2.1 Central positioning within Churston

The 17 acre site adjacent Brokenbury Quarry is right in the centre of Churston Village. Its development has the potential to make a significant impact on the future character of our community and the area's legibility. Hence, although there is the potential to significantly benefit the local neighbourhood with the right proposal, there is also the potential to cause significant harm.

Residents for Churston identify three main parts to Churston: the Bascombe Road side; Green Lane side and Churston village itself. This site sits centrally amongst all three.



The site should also be seen as a gateway site from the perspective of the area's tourism offer. The main attractions of the Go-Karts and Cayman Golf are currently not linked into the coastal footpath network leading to Broadsands Beach and Elbury Cove. Given the likelihood of a marina development at Broadsands in the near future, improved interconnectedness could become more important.



## **2.2 Land Ownership**

Although development of the site offers the opportunity to improve transport, in its current state the site is largely landlocked, as regards access to adopted public highways suitable for increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

An access onto Bridge Road, a single track rural lane with some passing places, is not suitable for any increase in traffic volumes. It is already subject to traffic in excess of its design capacity, same being used as a back road into the North Boundary Road area of Brixham. The junction between the Dartmouth Road and Bridge Road is difficult and has previously resulted in a fatal accident. Despite this, improvements to this junction have historically been prevented by the widely held covenants which originate from the historic Churston Cattle Market estate.

An access onto Bascombe Road would present similar problems. Bascombe Road has a significant pinch point and several blind corners adjacent the current Churston Golf Course crossing point and railway bridge. As such it is not suitable for any increase in traffic volumes. Furthermore, all junctions between Bascombe Road and the Dartmouth Road are difficult and none of the proposed Windy Corner junction improvements will improve this.

The most appropriate access to the site would be directly from the Dartmouth Road, but this would require crossing land controlled by either South West Water, Mr Richard Haddock or Mr Stuart Bridge. The South West Water land is either in use as a Water Treatment Facility or subject to Section 106 agreements requiring it to be retained as a public amenity space and local nature site (to offset the loss of habitat resulting from the original development of the Water Treatment facility inside Brokenbury Quarry).

We believe the only practical vehicular access to the site is through the farm shop access over land controlled (both as freehold owner and as long leaseholder with no break clause) by Mr Haddock. This is the access the Sports Hub originally proposed. Mr Haddock has agreed to provide the Community Project with access over his land and has confirmed that he will not be providing the same offer for the Sports Hub as he objects to that proposal.

We also believe it is necessary to use Park-and-Ride land to provide adequate parking provision and transport sustainability. Torbay Council leases this land from the freehold owner Mr Bridge and is in the process of negotiating an extension to their lease which is shortly due to expire.

The Park-and-Ride itself is separated from the site by land controlled by Mr Bridge. We believe that if this parking provision is to become part of any proposal, then a direct access across this land needs to be negotiated. Mr Bridge has agreed to provide the Community Project with access over his land and has confirmed that he will not be providing the same offer for the Sports Hub as he objects to that proposal.

## **2.3 Local and National Planning Policy**

The site has been designated in the Adopted Local Plan for *Recreation and Leisure* as R3 *New Playing Fields*:

*“The proposal for playing fields at Bridge Road Churston will include changing facilities and a car park... Careful consideration of Cirl Bunting habitat will be required at this location. Where*

*practicable, the pitch and facilities may also be available to serve the local community on a dual use basis.*

*In view of the physical characteristics of some pitches (including high fencing, floodlighting and associated development such as changing and parking facilities) careful consideration of siting and hours of operation will be required.”*

The intensity of the intended use as a playing field is clearly quite limited. Of the four sites identified in the Local Plan for playing fields, the site at Bridge Road is the only one where the site’s constraints are specifically highlighted. The Local Plan also makes specific reference to the creation of a single pitch at Bridge Road, and this must be seen in the light of similar references to the creation of four pitches at Barton Valley South.

The site was not designated either for R1 *Major indoor leisure and recreation* or R2 *Outdoor recreation developments*. G3 pitches did not exist 15 years ago when the local plan was written. However, it is our view they would clearly fall under the heading of an R2 proposal. Firstly, the closest equivalent that did exist, namely a synthetic athletics’ track, is specifically referenced as being an R2 development. Secondly, it is clear that an R2 site will be developed and / or used to a greater intensity than an R3 site, as with such a development the Local Plan specifically states that highways issues must now start to be considered more carefully. Clearly, it would therefore be consistent to describe an artificial surface pitch as an R2 proposal as the whole purpose behind a synthetic surface is to allow a much greater intensity of use (potentially 24 hours a day) over that possible with a natural grass surface.

The site has also been designated as L3 *Countryside Zone* which sets limits on the form of development on the site:

*“Development will not be permitted within the Countryside Zone where this would lead to the loss of open countryside and creation of urban sprawl, and where this would encourage the merging of urban areas and surrounding settlements to the detriment of their special character and setting”.*

Although there are several exceptions where development will be permitted, the Local Plan makes it clear that the rural character, wildlife habitats and historic features should not be adversely affected.

Taking these policies in conjunction, it is clear that the local plan envisaged one single grass playing field to be developed on the site. This and any other proposal would need to be sympathetic to the area’s central village location, semi-rural character and wildlife importance.

We have also considered the *Greenspace Strategy - Adopted Supplementary Planning Document* (July 2007). We note that Torbay Council sets out in this document at GS2 that it should implement improvements in the way in which it works with ‘Friends of groups’ and work towards the establishment of a Torbay wide ‘Friends of’ network. As a result, we believe Torbay Council should in principle welcome submissions from Residents For Churston and find ways in which their continuing involvement in the area can be promoted.

Considering the semi-rural nature of the land as demonstrated by its designation as L3 *Countryside Zone*, Residents For Churston believes PPS 7 is relevant to the consideration of any proposal. We believe PPS 7

directly supports our proposal as the objectives that HM Government have set out have substantial similarity with our own as a group. With direct relevance to this proposal, PPS 7 attempts to:

*(i) raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas through... sustainable development that respects and, where possible, enhances local distinctiveness and the intrinsic qualities of the countryside.*

*(ii) promote more sustainable patterns of development... discouraging the development of 'greenfield' land... providing appropriate leisure opportunities to enjoy the wider countryside.*

PPS7 therefore suggests that in a semi-rural area it may be appropriate to provide recreation and leisure opportunities other than formalised sports.

## **2.4 Need for sports provision**

The Pengelly Consulting Report of May 2009 identifies two main problems, namely a shortage of specific pitches and the poor quality of many of the existing facilities.

The shortage of specific pitches relates to: floodlit all weather courts; junior football; and junior rugby pitches. This deficiency in junior pitch provision contrasts with the position for the senior game where across Paignton and Brixham there is an oversupply of one pitch for each of rugby and football. After adjusting for this oversupply there is a net shortfall of 9 rugby pitches and 12 football pitches across both the junior and senior games.

The perceived poor quality of the existing facilities reflects dissatisfaction both with their size and quality. This applied especially to changing facilities and also to social facilities, car parking, drainage and quality of surface of pitches. The report highlights how this problem has been caused by problems funding the ongoing maintenance and repair costs of the respective facilities. The Council has, in part, tried to address this by passing responsibility for changing pavilions over to the clubs using the ground. Mixed success has resulted, with the report equally identifying some very successful outcomes and others where a lack of financial resources has resulted in severe deterioration to the facilities.

The report refers to a proposed sports hub at Churston, which is the first reference to the project in a public Council document. Such a proposal is a departure from the Local Plan and is a much more intensive form of development than has been democratically consulted on. The report envisages the hub providing some new football and rugby pitches for Paignton and Brixham (to make up part of the provision shortfall only) and specifically references the creation of two new G3 pitches. Pengelly also recommends that the hub could address the needs of Brixham Archers, the Paignton Archery Club and the Paignton Rifle Club.

Progress since the date of the report means the Paignton Archery Club's needs have already been met and the needs of Brixham Archers could also have similarly been met had they not decided to decline the use of a new facility. Specifically, the Paignton Archery Club and the Torquay Archery Club have now jointly leased a new facility adjacent South Devon College and this provides for all of their indoor archery needs as well as for substantial spare capacity. Brixham Archery Club have been invited to use spare capacity at this facility but declined. It is also unclear whether the development of a health centre at Clennon Valley will actually happen and thus whether the Paignton Rifle Club need to relocate from their existing facilities.

Residents for Churston does not believe that the creation of the Sports Hub to serve a very wide range of sports is necessarily the logical response to the two specific problems of a shortage of junior playing pitches and questionable standard of existing pitch facilities. However, to the extent that a hub is considered to be the best solution we believe it is important to consider all the available site options. Residents for Churston have identified a number of alternative sites for sports provision within the Brixham area and are involved in negotiations with Brixham Town Council about taking these sites forward. At this stage it would not be commercially appropriate to provide further details.

Furthermore, In relation to junior pitch provision, Residents for Churston note that Sport England state that “if the users are predominantly juniors... then only a playing field very close by could be said to be in an appropriate location” (*A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England*). Accordingly, we believe several separate playing pitches in different locations could better meet this need.

## **2.5 HM Government’s Localism Policy**

Through attendance at two public meetings only, Residents for Churston has obtained the support of a significant proportion of the residents across the Churston, Galmpton and Broadsands areas. This reflects the substantial support our proposal has within our local neighbourhood. To the extent there is support for the Sports Hub, other than for a handful of residents, this comes from outside of the Churston, Galmpton and Broadsands area.

HM Government’s localism agenda, as set out in the Open Source Planning Green Paper published in February 2010 as a Conservative Party manifesto commitment gives guidance on how to balance this conflict:

*The creation of an Open Source planning system means that local people in each neighbourhood – a term we use to include villages, towns, estates, wards or other relevant local areas – will be able to specify what kind of development and use of land they want to see in their area... giving local people the power to engage in genuine local planning through collaborative democracy – designing a local plan from the “bottom up”, starting with the aspirations of neighbourhoods*

We specifically highlight the use of the word *neighbourhood* and accordingly note that HM Government considers the relevant consultees to be those actually living within the area. This differs from a previous concept of stakeholders who might potentially include parties from outside of the area who were interested in developing it for their own purposes.

In the interests of completeness, we acknowledge the Localism Bill which was laid before Parliament on 13 December 2010 is still to be enacted into law. However, the direction of HM Government policy is very clear and should be taken account of, particularly as it may well be law in the very near future.

The concept of localism extends the existing obligation of Local Authorities to consult. On the subject of consultation, we have specifically considered the Sedley requirements (*R v Brent London Borough Council, ex parte Gunning* (1986) 84 LGR 168) and believe it is very necessary that further consultation is undertaken with the Community Partnership. Specifically, we do not feel that all the relevant and rightful consultees within the neighbourhood have properly been given the opportunity to be consulted on the proposals.



### **3.0 Proposal**

Our proposal sets out to provide a cohesive Rural Community Recreation Project which will include both non-for-profit and commercially run business components.

#### **3.1 Modern Village Green**

Part of the land is to be developed as what we have called a Modern Village Green; a multi-purpose area for community recreation and leisure within a semi-rural setting. This will be a high quality flat and level grassed area suitable as an informal sports playing pitch but also serve the community on a dual use basis for a wide range of other activities (as originally envisaged in the Local Plan). Our ethos is to include the whole community by providing recreation and leisure opportunities for people of all ages which do not require any charge on the user or require any pre-arranged access arrangements.

Towards its periphery, the flat and level grassed area will incorporate parkland style features such as trees and dense planting. There will also be a series of separate ponds which together will provide the appearance of a small lake. Such features will blend the area with its semi-rural setting and provide an important wildlife habitat.

We believe that the area's demographic needs to be considered, given the Authority's obligation to provide opportunities for both old and young alike. Accordingly, the area will incorporate a fitness 'trim-trail' and exercise circuit similar to the hugely popular facilities now available in other European countries. It will also feature a modest children's playground.

There is need for such a facility given there are no playgrounds within the Churston, Galmpton and Broadsands Community Partnership area. This deficiency in provision is not properly identified in the Adopted Greenspace Strategy. That document lists three Playgrounds for Churston and Galmpton ward, but these are all in the Whiterock and Hookhills Community Partnership area.

In addition to informal games of football and other sports, we anticipate the area will be used for community 'fun days' incorporating a community sports day and village fair set-up (as happens in Hele); activities involving the local Beaver, Cub and Scout groups (the 13<sup>th</sup> Sea Scouts based in the Galmpton Village Hall serving Kingswear, Churston, Brixham and Galmpton have expressed an interest) in using the area for scout camps and nature observations; family picnics; barbeques; firework displays; etc.

The need for such an area is best demonstrated by some of the frustrated aspirations of the Churston, Galmpton and Broadsands Community Partnership. Specifically, the Partnership had identified a need to increase community spirit and cohesion and devised a range of their activities and events to improve this. However, there has been a difficulty in actually holding such events due to access restrictions and byelaws on the local greenspace areas.

It may be that this area could include a single grassed playing pitch set out for formalised games of sport. This has not been included in our proposals or put to the membership of Residents for Churston on the basis

that the sports groups proposing the Sports Hub have stated such a pitch does not meet their needs and they would not use it.



Informal recreation



Lesiure



Informal sports



Nature habitat

### **3.2 Bridleways providing safe pedestrian and cycle routes**

New bridleways will be constructed within the field boundaries. These will provide separate safe foot, cycle and horse traffic routes away from our area's unavoidably narrow rural roads.

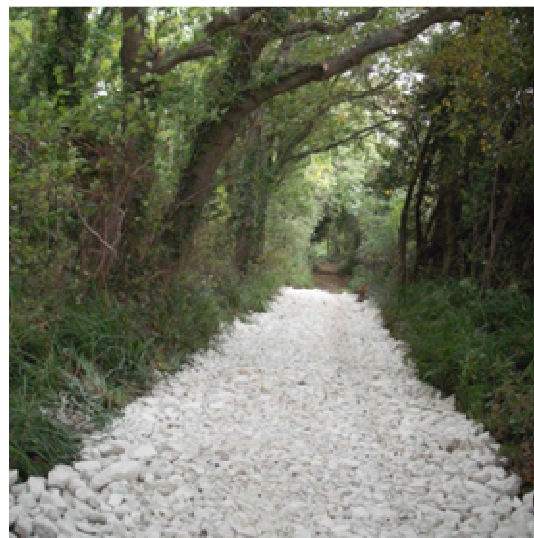
There will be an access from Galampton running parallel to Bridge Road and an access to Churston via Elberry Lane. This would create a safe off-road link between the Green Lane end of Churston and the main Dartmouth Road.

The bridleway will run parallel to Bascombe Road between Elbury Lane and Bridge Road. It will be set within the field boundaries such that it is adjacent to the copse that is now the disused railway line. We believe it is important that this copse is retained in its current form so far as possible as it provides a valuable wildlife habit and the screening it provides adds significantly to the rural character of the area.

The bridleway will also run parallel to Bridge Road from Bascombe Road to the Dartmouth Road. It will need to cross the field owned by South West Water, and as this land is currently provided for community access by the company they have confirmed they have no objections in principle and are open to discussions subject to further details being provided. The bridleway will also need to cross the grass verge owned by Torbay Council and the highways department have confirmed they support the idea of the project and are open to discussions subject to further details being provided.

It is noted that access for agricultural machinery into the fields that are being retained as agricultural will need to be retained and it is proposed that such access will continue to take place across the bridleway at the point of the existing Bridge Road farm gate.

As indicated on the computer graphic, a further section of bridleway will also wrap fully around the field so as to connect into the Modern Village Green, animal farm visitor attraction and the Park-and-Ride. This creates a circuit that will allow recreational equestrian riding. Although this would be a free to use area, it is envisaged that commercially run riding opportunities will be one of the attractions that will be provided by the animal farm visitor attraction. On this point, with the aim of including the whole community, we specifically want to provide riding opportunities for disabled people.



### **3.3 Bus Pull-In and Turning Circle**

The entrance to the Park-and-Ride will be improved to allow busses to stop without impeding the traffic flow on the A3022 (Dartmouth Road / New Road). This would be an important improvement which would avoid the main carriageway into the Brixham peninsular being totally blocked whenever a bus stops. This is currently a significant problem during peak summer months and accordingly this improvement would bring benefits to our local Churston, Galmpton and Broadsands neighbourhood as well as to the whole of Brixham.

We will create a bus pull in and turning circle at the entrance to the Park-and-Ride with a surface finish to an adoptable highway standard. Buses would then be able to pull into this area using the existing traffic lights which already serve the Park-and-Ride entrance. In some respects this would be similar to the bus pull in and turning circle at the entrance to the Torquay Boys' Grammar School. However, unlike that Grammar School, we would envisage that this turning circle would be designed in such a way that passengers waiting at the bus stop would be visible from the Dartmouth Road so that the bus would only pull in when passengers were wanting to board or alight.

Currently, there is no dedicated service bus for the Park-and-Ride, with transport being provided by the buses on the Number 12 route from Paignton to Brixham only. Brixham Town Council are keen to see an expansion of the Park-and-Ride facility by the introduction of a dedicated service bus. If this is to be provided the bus will need to be able to turn round at the Park-and-Ride end of the route. This pull-in and turning circle would provide for this.

Expansion of the areas covered by the Park-and-Ride facility is possible with the introduction of a dedicated service bus. Specifically, we are in negotiations to see how this service could extend to cover peak traffic events in Kingswear and Dartmouth. These include the Regatta week and the Fireworks and Red-Arrows displays in particular. During such events both the A3079 (Kennels Road) and B305 (Brixham Road) can become gridlocked. Although there is already a train service provided from both Paignton and Churston Station by the Dartmouth Steam Railway, this pricing point, restricted late evening running times, and limited parking capacity at the two stations, means this service is aimed at those wishing to enjoy a steam train ride rather than make use of public transport provision.





### **3.4 Animal farm visitor attraction**

Part of the land is to be developed into a small scale commercial animal farm visitor attraction. This would be in keeping with the area's semi-rural character and would work alongside adjacent tourist attractions that have existed here for many years and provide jobs for local people.

Such an attraction could include displays of rare livestock breeds and other wildlife species, a petting barn where visitors can get very close to the animals by holding or feeding them, an opportunity to milk cows or goats, tractor rides out from the site around the adjacent Churston Farm, donkey or pony rides around a small area of the land and horse riding around the bridleway circuit.

It is considered that 4 acres is needed for such an attraction and that 2 single storey timber stable buildings sited adjacent to existing Garden Centre and Cafe building and polytunnels of the Farm Shop would need to be constructed. The land will be developed in line with limited intensity given its status as L3 *Countryside Zone* in the Adopted Local Plan.

The main access would be through Churston Traditional Farm Shop and we anticipate there would be both full time and part time seasonal jobs created for local people. If the successful operator is Mr Haddock as we believe it will be, we identify that such a development will not only provide an attraction in its own right, but reinforce the Farm Shop's stated philosophy of creating a connection between the field and the plate.

The Farm shop currently records a seasonal adjusted average of 1,000 visitors per week. This is predicted to rise on completion of the current building works to create the cafe and garden centre. It is anticipated that a substantial component of the revenue from the animal farm visitor attraction will come from an increased spend from existing visitors both to the Farm Shop as well as those to the adjacent attractions of the Go-Karts, Cayman Golf, and War Games attractions.

The Farm shop has also identified its future strategy as incorporating internet retailing and there is the potential to use the animal farm visitor attraction to strengthen any online branding.



Close encounters with farm animals



Animal petting barns



Animal petting barns



Outdoor play area



### **3.5 Land retained in Agricultural cultivation**

We believe retaining this land in a non-developed state is an essential component in providing the appropriate setting and context for the development of the farming attraction and consistent with the development of the Modern Village Green.

This will also cause minimum disruption to wildlife.

The continued use of the agricultural land complements the Farm Shop and the animal park attraction in terms of providing an agricultural setting within which these activities are carried out.

As we intend to have disabled equestrian facilities which make use of the bridleways, it is also important that good visibility of the bridleways is maintained for participant safety.

#### **4.0 Market Assessment (Animal farm visitor attraction)**

##### **Market Size**

Residents for Churston have evaluated the market opportunity that exists to create the animal farm visitor attraction. We believe such an attraction could be a strong success.

Such a facility is not currently offered within Torbay. The closest equivalent is Occombe Farm, but this does not offer the close animal interaction which characterises such attractions. Instead, it's market positioning is more as that of a working farm that can be viewed by the public. This is accentuated by the relatively large geographic area over which the points of interest at Occombe are spread. Furthermore the strategy of pushing expensive organic food ranges at the farm shop has limited the businesses wider appeal.

The closest comparable nearby attraction is The Totnes Rare Breeds Farm. Set on a site less than 2 acres in size it has gradually expanded since its foundation in 2002 and now regularly receives around 200 visitors on peak summer days. Pennywell Farm at Buckfastleigh is another similar attraction. Both attractions require visitors to travel outside of Torbay, and given the significant number of visitors staying within the bay during the summer months a local attraction would likely be visited by them in preference.

The largest and longest established animal farm visitor attraction in the UK is the Cotswold Farm Park run by the BBC Countryfile TV personality Adam Henson. Established in 1971, it currently receives 72,000 visitors per year on its 17 acre site. This compares to, for example, 90,000 visitors per year at the National Trust Colaton Fishacre house and gardens which sits on a 24 acre site. Paignton Zoo receives approximately 500,000 visitors per year.

Residents for Churston estimate that a modest four acre attraction would receive 20,000 visitors per year and that the majority of these visitors would have already travelled to the site to visit one of the adjacent attractions or be en-route to the attractions of Brixham. As such, the number of associated traffic movements would be considerably lower.

##### **Market Size**

We believe such an attraction, on this particular site, would complement the adjacent Go-Karts, Cayman Golf and War Games attractions as well as the Churston Farm Shop. An agreement has already been reached between the three traders to offer a single ticket which would allow entry to all three attractions. Hence, this development would contribute to the critical mass of the area as a whole and provide a more rounded offer for the family market as both the Go-Kart and War Games attractions are oriented more towards boys rather than girls.

Similar negotiations are taking place between the traders to combine their marketing expenditure. The discrete attractions could be combined under a single brand and their internet presence could be substantially increased. At the moment the Go-Karts does not have a web site and none of the operators are engaged in social media marketing.

## 5.0 Finance

This proposal combines both profit making and not-for-profit components. The purpose behind this mixed approach is to finance (i) the capital cost of creating and (ii) the operating cost of maintaining, the not-for-profit aspects at no cost to the Local Council or end user by an 'enabling' profit making development. This is particularly relevant when significant funding cuts are now being made across departments. Indeed, the financial position of Torbay Council would improve as a result of this proposal.

Residents for Churston propose that the operator of the animal farm visitor attraction will finance the capital cost of creating and the operating cost of maintaining the modern village green, bridleway network, and bus pull in lieu of paying a commercial rent on the animal farm visitor attraction. We anticipate the likely operator will be Mr Haddock, and he has agreed to this proposal.

### Certainty of Funding Position

The table below sets out the anticipated investment in the project. Residents for Churston has sought information on budget costings from three separate large firms of contractors who are regularly involved in Local Authority and Housing Association works. As a result, we anticipate there could be an investment of £260,500 in off-site improvements and a further investment of £600,000 in creating the animal farm visitor attraction:

	£s
<b>Modern Village Green</b>	
Grassed area (4 acres)	80,000
Feature Planting (0.25 acres)	17,500
Creation of earth bunding	2,500
Creation of lake (1.5 acres)	50,000
<b>Total Budgeted Cost</b>	<b>150,000</b>
<b>Bridleway Network</b>	
Section Parallel to Bridge Road	320
Section Parallel to Bascombe Road	390
Section Return along edge of Cayman Golf	100
Section Return along edge of Farm Shop / Go-Karts	365
<b>Total Distance</b>	<b>1175 m</b>
<b>Total Material Content at 4.8m width and 250mm depth</b>	<b>1410 m<sup>3</sup></b>
<b>Total Budgeted Cost at £50 per cube</b>	<b>70,500</b>
<b>Bus pull-in</b>	
<b>Total Budgeted Cost</b>	<b>40,000</b>
<b>Animal Farm Visitor Attraction</b>	
<b>Total Budgeted Cost</b>	<b>600,000</b>
<b>Total project investment</b>	<b>860,500</b>

On the basis of the land ownership issues previously identified, and what is in effect a ransom strip, Residents for Churston believe the operator of the animal farm visitor attraction needs to be Mr Haddock. There is no reason in principle why an alternative operator could not run the attraction having agreed payments for access rights to Mr Haddock, however, in view of the synergies of combining such an attraction with the farm shop it is unlikely such an operator would deliver better value.

Residents for Churston has sought comfort both from Mr Haddock's Auditors and Bankers and we have concluded he has sufficient funds to participate in the project. We also note he is variously quoted as having invested £1 million in the original Farm Shop and more recently a further £1 million to create the additional Garden Centre and Cafe facilities. As a result a further £860,500 investment would appear plausible.

As an experienced farmer who also runs a soil recycling business, Mr Haddock already possesses many of the necessary skills, labour and capital equipment required to undertake all of the construction and maintenance works. For example, the significant majority of the construction works to create the Churston Farm Shop and the recent Cafe and Garden Centre expansion were undertaken in house. In our view, this gives further support to his ability to finance the project.

### **Financial Viability**

Residents for Churston has considered whether the scale of the proposed animal farm visitor attraction supports the proposed off-site improvements. We believe it does and set this out in an illustrative Profit and Loss Account below.

Visitors	20,000
Average Spend (pounds)	6.00
	£
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>120,000</b>
Operating costs (staff, heat, light, etc)	30,000
Interest cost (assuming 60:40 debt:equity financing with debt at 6% rate)	30,978
Business Rates	15,000
Total cost	75,978
Profit before Tax	44,022
<b>Profit after tax</b>	<b>35,218</b>
<b>Return on Equity</b>	<b>10.2%</b>

The return on equity is reasonable at 10% and this would increase if our conservative spend assumption of £6 per visitor was increased. There would likely also be sales generation in the Farm Shop business, but this is not considered in the above analysis to illustrate the point that such a business could be run by more than just one operator.

### **Delivery of Best Value**

Residents for Churston have considered the annual implied leasehold rent that would be paid by the operator of the animal farm visitor attraction. This is comprised of both the value of the commitment to fund the ongoing maintenance costs of the Modern Village Green, Bridleways and Bus Pull-In and Turning Circle, as well as the value of the up- front capital investment required to initially construct these areas.

We have obtained information from a variety of ground maintenance contractors to assess the likely costs of the ongoing maintenance. We are advised this is largely a function of the level of maintenance standard required and accordingly the frequency and finish of grass cuts. We are advised that £7,500 would be a reasonable estimate.

As regards the implied annual cost of the off-site improvements, this can be calculated when the term of any lease is known and an appropriate discount rate is applied.

We have assessed the implied annual leasehold rental payment to be approximately £33,000 per year. Based on the advice we have from received from commercial agents this appears either above or in line with market rates for such a site, particularly when it is considered that the operator still has to construct the attraction.

Annual Maintenance Spend	£ 7,500
Total investment in off-site improvements	260,500
Discount rate	10%
Lease Duration (years)	100
Implied annual cost of offsite improvements	25,817
Implied annual leasehold rent for 100 year lease	<u><u>33,317</u></u>

Residents for Churston will also seek a financial guarantee to provide for 3 years of ongoing maintenance costs in the event the operator of the animal farm visitor attraction were to cease trading. This would secure the future of the project during the time required to find an alternative operator.

### **Financial Impact on Torbay Council**

Our proposal would improve the financial position of Torbay Council on an ongoing basis due to the business rates that would be levied on animal farm visitor attraction. This is set out below:

	£
New Business Rates levied on project	15,000
Loss of income from Agricultural lease	(1,000)
<b>Total Positive Impact on Torbay Council Finances</b>	<b><u>14,000</u></b>

The site was previously leased for agriculture at an annual rent of c. £1,000 per annum. It currently lies vacant as notice was served on the previous tenant Michael Tooze at the apparent request of Torbay Sports Council.

Residents for Churston propose that agriculture will continue on the site and the rent from the continuing agricultural will be ploughed back into the maintenance costs of the site.



## **6.0 Key Personnel**

Residents for Churston now represent a significant proportion of the residents across the Churston, Galmpton and Broadsands areas. This has been achieved as a result of signing up members at two community engagement events only. Our strategy of obtaining membership is important to us: it means only the people who support our project and who felt strongly enough to take time out of their schedule to attend a public meeting and engage with our committee, learn about our proposal and declare their support for it are members of our group. As a result we have captured the support of precisely those residents who are more likely to play an active role in the project going forward.

Assuming our project goes forward we would like to involve as much of the community as possible in our democratic decision making processes. For the time being, much of the work is being led by a steering group committee, all of whom are local residents with significant relevant business experience. They have committed their time to the project going forward.

## **7.0 Implementation**

### **Formalisation of Residents For Churston**

Assuming this project is supported by Torbay Council heads of terms would need to be agreed setting out the terms of a lease in principle. Following this, the group Residents for Churston will formalise itself as a recognised legal entity with a not-for-profit objective.

Residents for Churston would actively promote membership so as to ensure the project was not only accountable too, but also directed by, the local neighbourhood. Members would have voting rights at general meetings on all key decisions and would provide a guarantee of a very small nominal amount, which we submit should be £5 per member. All of the committee of Residents for Churston have confirmed they would like to become members and we have to date received a large number of requests from other people across our community with whom we have discussed our proposals who similarly want to become members.

### **Proposed Leasehold structure**

Residents for Churston would seek a lease over the full 17 acres of land at a nominal rent commensurate with the non-for-profit company's charitable objective. We submit this lease should be for 100 years. This is to allow more competitive finance to be sought on the commercially delivered parts of the scheme and recognise Residents for Churston's lack of security of tenure as a non-business within the provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

The implementation of this lease would be conditional on subsequent planning permission. Residents for Churston would then enter into two sub leases and implementation of both of these would be also be conditional on planning permission.

The first sub-lease would be to the operator of the animal farm visitor attraction for the parcel of land on which the attraction would be located. As the main access to this attraction would be through the Churston Traditional Farm Shop (as is also the case with the Sports Hub proposal) we submit there would be a strategic benefit to any operator if these operations were to be combined and that this would allow a higher rent (or in this case rent in lieu) to be charged. The operator of the Churston Traditional Farm Shop is Mr Haddock and he has confirmed his interest in being part of the proposals. This lease would be on full commercial terms.

However, instead of rent in the form of cash Residents For Churston would look to the operator of the animal farm visitor attraction to deliver on a non-chargeable basis off-site improvements (the community recreation and leisure area, the bridleways and the bus lay-by) which would benefit the community. These works would be detailed in the Section 106 agreement which would form part of the operator's planning permission. It would be a condition of the sub-lease that completion of these works would be required before any works could commence to the animal farm attraction.

The second sub-lease would be to the farmer working the land which is retained in agricultural cultivation. The previous tenant Michael Tooze of Elbury Farm has confirmed his interest in farming the land again. This lease would be on full commercial terms and Residents for Churston would put the land out to tender. This rent would be used to fund the operating costs of the non-for-profit company limited by guarantee with any surplus being either returned to the freehold owner or invested in developing the project as decided at a general meeting.

### **Ongoing maintenance and governance**

As set out, the formalised group Residents for Churston would manage the project on an ongoing basis. There would be a general meeting of a minimum once per year.

There is further consultation necessary on whether the Local Authority wish to be involved with any maintenance on the not-for-profit aspects of the project. This may deliver better value by facilitating more up-front cash investment on the basis there would be a reduced requirement to provide for ongoing maintenance costs.

To the extent that there was a necessity to look towards the animal farm attraction to fund the ongoing maintenance costs, this would be set out in the respective lease documentation and any appropriate guarantees would be sought.