



# Chagford Masterplan Architectural Narrative

Prepared on Behalf of C G Fry and Blue Cedar Homes

SUBMISSION ISSUE  
17<sup>th</sup> March 2014



## Contents

1.0	Introduction	02
2.0	Consultation Process	03
3.0	Site Location	07
4.0	Site Constraints and Opportunities	08
5.0	The Vision	10
6.0	Design Principles	11
7.0	Detail and Character	13
8.0	Landscape	14
9.0	Appearance	15
10.0	Access, Highways and Connectivity	16
11.0	Ecology	17
12.0	Site Levels	20
13.0	Sustainability	22
14.0	Drainage	23
15.0	Delivery	24
Appendix A	Consultation Responses	25

# 1.0 Introduction

**1.1** This Masterplan has been prepared on behalf of Blue Cedar Homes and C G Fry, and builds upon the outputs / design considerations previously identified within the Chagford Vision Report, the series of meetings held with both Chagford Parish Council & the DNPA, the community consultation event held in Chagford in September 2013 & the outputs of the various consultants employed by the prospective developers

**1.2** It is anticipated that the Masterplan will ultimately be delivered on site by these two developers, with a history of delivering similar, characterful developments that respect the contextual identity of their locations. That said, the Masterplan is intended as a framework for the development regardless of who takes it forward. The following introductory words summarise their approaches to development.

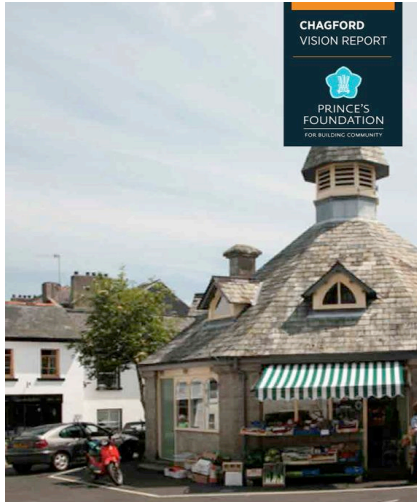
**1.3** C G Fry & Son Limited is a family owned contracting and house building company with a history of building individual homes throughout the West Country since 1920 - properties with immense character, built not just for today, but for future generations to enjoy.

From the outset, craftsmanship and quality have been the hallmarks of C G Fry & Son's work, marrying traditional workmanship with modern materials and techniques. The company has always set out to build homes in harmony with existing local architecture and, where possible, featuring local materials. Fry's major part in the building of Prince Charles's Poundbury development at Dorchester created a world showcase for the company's design and excellence of finish. The focus, however, remains firmly on the quality of each new home and the needs of each individual customer.

C G Fry prides itself on building close relationships with local communities to create active places rather than just another housing estate development. This enables each development to respond to its context and the community's needs. While each development is designed to sit comfortably alongside an area's older buildings, modern thinking and new techniques bring 21st century standards of energy-efficiency, comfort and security."

**1.4** Blue Cedar Homes are developers of specialist elderly housing, offering high quality, adaptable housing for the over 55s. Blue Cedar Homes schemes are typically modest in size, are of a low density and are focused around a communal garden incorporating highly landscaped grounds. Each Blue Cedar scheme is managed by the Blue Cedar Homes management company, that provides a variety of management services for residents within the schemes.

**1.5** The scheme set out in the Masterplan will ultimately be delivered in part by Blue Cedar Homes, with the majority of the site being delivered by C G Fry. Due to the nature of the land ownerships and size of the respective landholdings, the land under control of C G Fry is to deliver a significant proportion of the on site S106 gain (planning obligation under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990), primarily in the form of the public car park and public open space. It is however the intention for the elderly housing development (as provided by Blue Cedar Homes) to pay a proportionate contribution towards the cost of delivering these facilities. The elderly housing will make provision in respect of affordable housing within a S106, by way of a financial contribution. This approach has been agreed upon as part of the consultation process for the master plan.



## CHAGFORD DESIGN STATEMENT



Fig. 01  
**Chagford Vision Report**  
Prepared by the Prince's Foundation

Fig. 02  
**Chagford Design Statement**

### 2.1 Background

The specific community engagement process leading to the current Masterplan has its roots in the Chagford Design Statement May 2009. It was this community-driven document that first identified some of the key issues and infrastructure and development needs for the town and identified the site for development comprising, inter alia, open space, a car park, a road linking Lower Street with Westcott Lane and affordable and open market housing.

The Dartmoor National Park Authority (the NPA) then carried through these aspirations into its Core Strategy and Development Management and Delivery Development Plan Document (DMD DPD), both of which were subject to extensive public consultation and stakeholder engagement and subject to independent examinations by Government Inspectors. The latter (the DMD DPD) was adopted in July 2013 and it allocated the site under Policy CHG2 for mixed use including a public car and coach park, housing for the elderly to meet identified local needs, other housing, to include affordable housing to meet identified local needs and an area of recreational open space for community use. Policy CHG2 also requires that proposals for the site should accord with a comprehensive Masterplan for the entire site prepared in association with the local community, relevant stakeholders and the NPA. The development of the Masterplan, and subsequent detailed planning application, should make reference to the NPA 'Design Guide' SPD.

The two developers (Blue Cedar Homes and C G Fry & Son Limited) have been working collaboratively in developing proposals for the site that accord with the aspirations in the 2009 Chagford Design Statement translated, in turn, into Policy CHG2 of the adopted DMD DPD. It has been important for both developers to carry the local community, relevant stakeholders and the NPA with them in moving towards an approved comprehensive Masterplan that can then guide and shape detailed planning applications.

### 2.2 The Enquiry by Design

In recognition of the importance of the site in both Chagford and the wider National Park and to provide confidence to the community that the developers wanted to work collaboratively, the Prince's Foundation for Building Community was engaged to carry out its "Enquiry by Design" community engagement model in early 2013. In summary, this comprised a "Scoping Workshop" held in the Globe Inn in February 2013 to which key stakeholders were invited to explore key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints relating to the site and its wider context. The outcomes from this Scoping Workshop were used as a basis for developing design proposals during the Enquiry by Design itself, which took place over four days in April 2013 (including public meetings at the start and end of the process). More information on the process and its outcomes can be found in the Prince's Foundation's Chagford Vision Report which is available on the NPA's website in the section dealing with Masterplans and Development Briefs under Forward Planning ([www.dartmoor.gov.uk/chagfordmasterplan](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/chagfordmasterplan)).



### 2.3 The Masterplan Consultation September 2013

Following the Enquiry by Design, the developers continued to informally engage with the NPA, Chagford Parish Council and other key stakeholders to draft a Masterplan for the site. This involved building on the ideas and outcomes of the Enquiry by Design whilst acknowledging the growing evidence base about the site (matters such as ecology, archaeology, trees and hedgerows, traffic and transport and so forth) and acknowledging that a scheme needs to be deliverable. The culmination of the first part of this work was a consultation event to present a Draft Masterplan on Thursday 5th September 2013 between 11.00am and 7.30pm in Endecott House, High Street, Chagford. The major landowner and representatives of both developers and their consultant team were present to describe the evolution of the proposed Draft Masterplan, introduce the Draft Masterplan and answer questions. The event was widely publicised and all interested parties were invited to attend. The choice of times (the event being open for a significant part of the day) and the venue (central and well known to the community) were designed to maximise attendance.

The event was very well attended indeed with the exhibition busy all day. A total of 257 people signed the attendance sheets although it must be concluded that the number of attendees was significantly higher as facilitators weren't always on hand to guide people to sign the sheets. An educated estimate is that closer to 350 people came through the door. Feedback forms and developer e-mail and address contact details were available to attendees and feedback and responses on the proposals were invited by 3rd October 2013.

In total, some 87 individual responses were received which is an excellent response and demonstrates the success of the engagement process and the willingness of the Chagford community to get involved. These responses are summarised in **Appendix A – Consultation Responses** as it is not possible to put every single comment in this overview and nor is it possible to respond to or go through every single comment or remark about the scheme. The NPA will be provided with full copies of all responses received in an unredacted format along with copies of the attendance sheet so that these can be maintained as an impartial record. These responses and comments were analysed to identify the key themes and key issues, which were subsequently taken into account when revising the Draft Masterplan to get it to its current final version. The evolution of the Masterplan in response to these comments is outlined in **Section 2.6 – Masterplan Evolution**.

Fig. 03  
Illustrative Masterplan  
Developed during Enquiry by Design process

## 2.4 Masterplan Development Process

Following the consultation in September 2013, the Design Team went through a rigorous process of reviewing the Draft Masterplan to see where and how the Draft could be amended to suit the weight of responses and those of the NPA (and its specialist advisers) and Chagford Parish Council (as the elected mouthpiece for the town). There have been various informal meetings with NPA Officers to ensure that the Draft Masterplan reflects the technical evidence base and does not fall foul of any significant constraints and the Parish Council has also been involved informally and without prejudice to the final version of the Masterplan to “test” different choices and options arising out of the consultation exercise.

A final Draft Masterplan was presented to a formal meeting of Chagford Parish Council on Monday 27th January 2014 at Endecott House where, after a lively debate and “question and answer” session, the Parish Council resolved to endorse the final Draft Masterplan.

This triggers the final stage of the masterplanning process, which is the submission of the Masterplan to the NPA where a final decision will be made by the Dartmoor National Park Authority on whether the Masterplan should be approved.

The developer team takes the view that the overall consultation and stakeholder engagement process from the Enquiry by Design through to the Masterplan consultation has been thorough and robust and the resultant Masterplan has regard to the considerable backdrop of consultation and the constraints on the site and represents the most appropriate design response in all the circumstances.

## 2.5 Key Areas for Consideration

The key areas that needed to be considered in order to inform the design response, as previously identified within the Vision Report, included the following:

- Built Form, Land Use, Massing & Density Parameters
- Landscape & Open Space Parameters
- Consideration of Neighbourhood Centres
- Movement Hierarchy & Linkage Parameters
- Urban & Architectural Design Parameters

## 2.6 Masterplan Evolution

A number of key amendments were undertaken in response to these comments, including the following:

### Layout

- *Open space too small/should have a play area/should have a larger kickabout area*
- *The Blue Cedar parcel should be linked to or through the CGF/Amery parcel*
- *There should only be the one BCH exit onto Bretteville*
- *Houses should not front on to Westcott Lane to avoid spoiling its rural character*

The BCH area has been integrated more successfully into the overall plan, by responding more directly to the initial concept of a number of cul-de-sacs off a main spine road and blurring the edges along the boundary, so that they run seamlessly from one development into the other. Ultimately the vehicular access to the BCH scheme will be from the C.G. Fry parcel, with the temporary works access from Bretteville Close becoming a footpath link when construction is complete. Highways access to the frontages of the dwellings overlooking the landscaped area from the south has been replaced by a footpath allowing the open space to be enlarged, and reducing the urban impact on this area. The orientation of the dwellings along Westcott Lane have been reversed, so as to protect the character of this route, and also to create a stronger mews character to this courtyard.

### Linkages

- *The car park needs more direct access to town*
- *A pavement is needed along Westcott Lane*
- *There should be a through link to Bretteville Close*

Further linkages and footpaths have been incorporated into the design to address these concerns

### Infrastructure

- *Car park too small (where a figure was mentioned, it was around 50 to 70 spaces required)*
- *Coaches should not be accommodated in the car park; should be on Lower Street*
- *There should be a crossing at Lower Street for schoolchildren*
- *Parking should be maintained outside the site along Lower Street*

The engineers have proposed a number of alterations to Lower Street to incorporate a new pavement, on street parking bays, coach parking and drop off, and informal crossing points. The narrowing of the road here will perform natural traffic calming, alleviating other concerns about perceived vehicle speed. The relocation of coach parking has allowed the capacity of the car park to be increased.

### Amenity

- *The car park needs a toilet facility*

A public toilet facility has been incorporated into the car park area.





Fig., 04, 05, 06  
Views of Existing Site

Fig. 07  
Site Location Plan  
Scale 1:2500



## 3.1 Site Location

The CHG2 allocation site is an area of open pasture land to the north east of Chagford town centre of approx 3.7Ha. The Masterplan area comprises this site and additional surrounding areas where local amenities can be enhanced as part of any development, including Lower Street and the adjacent agricultural land to the East. The allocation site is bounded by Lower Street to the north, existing residential development to the west, Biera Wood to the south, and opens out to the surrounding countryside to the East.

The area also includes the sites of the existing fire station and petrol filling station adjacent to Lower Street. The site comprises two parcels of land with purchase options for the two respective developers: an approx. 0.5Ha parcel to the north of the site under the control of BCH, with the remaining 3.2Ha under the control of C G Fry.





#### 4.1 Description

The site is predominantly of open pasture land known as Bellacouch Meadow, on the outskirts of the town, which opens out to the wider Devon countryside to the east.

The north boundary is defined by a stone wall along Lower Street, which reflects the typical Dartmoor character of the town. The retention of this wall, and its incorporation into proposals would help to integrate a new development into the existing fabric of the town. Elsewhere the site is bounded by Devon hedge banks and established vegetation, including a number of mature trees. There are distant views both to and from the east, especially to the higher surrounding ground. The site is also prominent on the approach to the town along Lower Street.

#### 4.2 Landscape

The key to successful developments in rural areas is the appropriate integration of existing landscape assets. As described, the site features a large amount of planting along its boundaries, the principle of which should be maintained in order to minimise the impact of any development. Similarly existing feature trees should be retained and incorporated into the design, where judged to be of value.

An existing stream runs through the middle of the site from west to east. As an existing watercourse, this would need to be retained, and could therefore be incorporated into areas of landscaped, green public open space.

Although the site is essentially quite flat, there are notable areas of undulating local topography. These are visible remains of medieval and later tin streamworks, together with associated water courses, now dry, and are rare evidence for the importance of Chagford as a former Stannary town (where tin was assayed and sold). These are therefore an important reference to the archaeological heritage of the site. These features have been surveyed and recorded, and where possible it would be important to incorporate them into the design, but some areas will need to be re-modeled to accommodate development.

#### 4.3 Ecology

Given the rural context of the site, opportunities to promote diverse local ecology within the scheme should be explored. Survey findings do not suggest any significant constraints exist, and additional opportunities have been identified to enhance ecology & biodiversity, and some mitigation measures will need to be introduced at the detail design stage.

#### 4.4 Environmental Constraints

No significant flood risk has been identified, as the site is not within a flood plain. geo-technical contamination investigations suggest that the site is fit for its residential and open space end use, and no other environmental constraints have been identified.

Fig. 08

Walled boundary along Lower Street

Fig. 09

Existing Stream and Tin Workings

Fig. 10

Existing Natural Landscape Assets



#### 4.5 Rural Context

The town is nestled in area of comparatively low ground, and is therefore an area of conspicuous settlement in the tapestry of agricultural fields, woods and hedgerows of the Devon countryside. As the site is located on the edge of the town and its development represents a substantial growth of the urban environment, its impact on the views into the town need to be carefully considered. The transition from urban to rural must be explored to help to minimise this impact, with particular attention required along the east of the site, which represents the new edge to the development boundary.

Chagford's rich and intricate landscape, including prominent hedgebanks and stone walls offers a number of reference features, whose inclusion would add character and integrity to ensure the appropriateness of a development in the heart of the Dartmoor National Park.

#### 4.6 Urban Context

Chagford has a very strong character, and clear architectural vernacular which help to define its identity as a historic Dartmoor town. These characteristics must be reflected in any proposals to ensure a successful response to the site and its context.

The boundary along Lower Street represents an important opportunity to integrate the development with the existing town, as this is the primary route into the town from the east. The dense, linear built environment with narrow, enclosed streets that defines the character of Chagford appears immediately to the west of this site, but existing development along this route up to this point is loose, with little relationship with the public realm. Therefore this area of the site represents an opportunity for development that introduces the strong character of the town and, as the public edge of the site, reflects the character of the new neighbourhood itself.

#### 4.7 Heritage

Much of the town has been designated a Conservation Area, thus protecting its character and identity. This area extends to the junction of Lower Street and Bretteville Close, adjacent to the Masterplan site, to include the Monte Rosa building on this corner. This has been identified as a '*Historic Building and High Quality*' within the Conservation Area Appraisal, and as such the relationship of any new development on this corner must respect this. A number of key views from within the Conservation Area have been identified in the Appraisal document, including the view east from the churchyard, which includes the Masterplan site. Therefore the quality of the proposals will be important so as not to have a detrimental effect on this vista.

#### 4.8 Services

Existing utilities will be utilised or upgraded where appropriate to allow development

Fig. 11  
Distant views of the Site and the Town

Fig 12  
Typical Chagford Streetscene