



## A design brief for a new building at **2-6 Ford Street, Moretonhampstead**

Prepared for Dartmoor National Park Authority by LHC



Ford Street

2 - 6  
Ford Street

The Square

Fore Street

New Street

George Street

Cross Street

Left: Site plan in context

LHC has been commissioned by the Dartmoor National Park Authority to prepare guidance to inform the design of new buildings on the site of 2 - 6 Ford Street Moretonhampstead.

*“The focus of Moretonhampstead plan today is The Square, where most of its commercial premises are centred and where all the roads entering the town converge”.*

Moretonhampstead Conservation Area Appraisal DNPA 2005.

**Background**



Left: View along George Street to the centre of town.

The site is at the heart of the town. It is in the middle of a conservation area which was designated originally in 1973 in recognition of the historic and architectural importance of the settlement.





The site was formerly occupied by two Grade II\* thatched buildings which made a very positive contribution to the life and appearance of the town centre. Quintessentially Moretonhampstead.

Originally a house or an inn and once known as the New Inn. Deeds of 1869 show No.6 as an inn known as the "Punchbowl" and Nos.2 and 4 as "Three Dwelling Houses".

Circa late C15 to early C16, hall floored, heightened and extended in C17 and remodelled again circa mid C19.

Probably mainly granite rubble, possibly with some light scantling timber framing, all stuccoed, No.6 to left has roughcast front. Thatched roof with gabled ends and gabled rear wings. Gable end stacks, left hand with later brick shaft, right hand granite with moulded cap. Another granite lateral stack on side wall of rear right hand wing.

This late medieval building was possibly an inn at the height of Moretonhampstead's prosperity in the C16. As well as the surviving Medieval fabric its external appearance has changed little since C19 and with its large thatched roof the building is an extremely important feature in the centre of the town. It is one of only 4 or 5 buildings with Medieval smoke-blackened roof timbers to have survived in Moretonhampstead town.

Extract from listing description

*....these fires were made all the more devastating by the tightly packed nature of the settlement and the preponderance of buildings roofed in combustible thatch. They explain too why such a relatively small number of medieval buildings survive today....*

Extract from the Moretonhampstead Conservation Area Appraisal.

Regrettably for the people affected and for the appearance and historic and architectural integrity of the town centre both houses were tragically lost to a fire on 09/11/2007.



Left: The site today

The buildings have been subsequently delisted. The site is in two ownerships with a flying freehold. Each property had a cellar. The challenge now is how to design and construct new buildings befitting the location of the site at the heart of the town.

*'Voted Village of the Year 2002, Moretonhampstead sits in the shelter of hills on three sides and the beautiful Wray Valley on the Fourth. Central Dartmoor is only four miles away, and no matter which road you take you cannot fail to be impressed by the breathtaking views'.*

Extract from the Moretonhampstead Development Trust.

LHC was commissioned in October 2010 to assist in this challenge. Stratton Creber provided commercial knowledge to inform this work.





Moretonhampstead is a very special Dartmoor town forged by centuries of change and adaptation. Part of the character of place is the variety of architecture representing different periods and styles. Much is designed honestly, with confidence and integrity.

*“The distinctive feature of the town centre is the way in which seven narrow streets converge from all directions on to the irregular space called THE SQUARE, confusingly filled by a central group of shops and houses.”*

The Buildings of England. Devon

Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner



Whilst many fires throughout the centuries and regular adaptation to buildings and roads has changed the face of Moretonhampstead since medieval times, the quality and texture of the buildings and spaces that remain today come together in a wonderful townscape composition.



In the later decades of the Twentieth Century the quality of new buildings and changes to historic buildings have often been poor this has undermined historic and quality in the town. Changes repeatedly fail to capture the spirit of Moretonhampstead or of the architectural qualities within which it was built.

