



Axbridge Action Group

Streets of Axbridge

Traffic Management Study and Proposals

June 2022

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This study has been sponsored by Sedgemoor District Council and Avon & Somerset Police Community Trust



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Axbridge Action Group

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Summary

This report sets out the findings of a study commissioned by the Axbridge Action Group to build upon their work of the last 19 years considering opportunities to enhance the environment around Axbridge for pedestrians and to make it a more pleasant place to live, to work and to visit.

There is widespread support for initiatives to introduce traffic management measures and measures to improve pedestrian amenity, which has been demonstrated through numerous surveys and through the development of the Town's Neighbourhood Plan.

PJA have prepared a town wide plan of initiatives which can be used to support funding bids and to support discussions with the town council and local authority around potential routes to delivery.

While the proposals are presented as a town-wide scheme, it is envisaged that these measures will be delivered in a piecemeal fashion as and when funding opportunities arise.

The focus for early interventions should be directed to the schemes around the periphery of the town (West Street / High Street, Houlgate Way, Cheddar Road) with subsequent schemes working in towards The Square.

Measures within The Square are likely to require significant investment in the public realm, and opportunities such as the recent funding stream through Historic England for Heritage Action Zones would be an ideal way of funding the interventions proposed.

The proposals do not seek to reduced parking in the town, but the delivery of alternative parking on the edge of town, such as near the station may make the reduction of parking in The Square a more acceptable proposition, allowing a better public space to be created here.



Overview

The impact of traffic on smaller rural communities is a significant source of concern for many Town and Parish Councils, and community groups across the country. The erosion of pedestrian space (both in terms of space and quality), and the consequent reduction in pedestrian movement and informal activity within rural settlements has serious implications for the social viability of smaller communities. Without informal connections and public places for gathering, communities can retreat indoors and turn away from streets and public spaces. This in turn erodes the distinctive qualities of place and sense of community on which long term investment and confidence in Somerset town communities depends.

These concerns are especially significant for the town of Axbridge in the Sedgemoor District of Somerset, where the Axbridge Action Group has been working since 2003 to address these concerns on behalf of the wider community.

The historic market town of Axbridge is structured around several key streets (West St, High St, Houlgate Way, Old Church Rd, Meadow St, St Mary's St, Jubilee Rd, and Cheddar Rd), all of which lead toward the Town's central market square (The Square). The streets radiating off The Square are largely medieval in character with narrow street sections winding their way out of town, before joining roads which have been built in more recent times to accommodate the significant flow of traffic passing through the town prior to the construction of the A371 Axbridge bypass in the late 1960s.

Although the Town's traffic demands were substantially diminished by the opening of the bypass, the level of population and traffic growth over the intervening years, coupled with increases in vehicle sizes has increasingly impacted upon the quality of the Town's streets and eroded the quality of life and quiet enjoyment of the town by the people of Axbridge.

The period of relative quiet observed during the pandemic highlighted to many the influence that vehicles had on their experience of their town, and how reducing traffic volumes to essential trips only, made walking and cycling more pleasant and (as permitted) allowed the community to congregate in the streets and interact with one another in ways not commonly experienced by the last few generations of Axbridge residents.

The future success of Axbridge partly depends on its unique qualities as a historic neighbourhood and strong local community, both of which are negatively impacted by current traffic patterns.

Since its formation, the Axbridge Action Group has commissioned a number of traffic related studies. Taken together with the Groups extensive local discussions, these confirm traffic as a key issue, which exacerbates more general issues around poor permeability of the residential street network, lack of continuity of footways, excessive speed of traffic and distribution between pedestrian and carriageway spaces.

Axbridge is also under pressure from development for some housing growth and other development. In this context, the Town Council has sensibly put in place a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) to guide and influence its future. The plan was officially made in January 2022.

The NP rightly identifies the importance of car travel to the residents of Axbridge given its rural location and limited public transport options, but also sets out objectives around transport to maintain and improve pedestrian and cycle access between Axbridge and neighbouring communities and to review the provision of parking within The Square. The Town Council also states that they will oversee a town wide study to review integrated transport needs including road safety.

In Autumn 2021, the Axbridge Action Group commissioned PJA to provide independent transport planning and traffic engineering advice in relation to the town's transport issues which was funded by Sedgemoor District Council and Avon & Somerset Police Community Trust. Since our appointment PJA have worked with the Action Group and the wider community to explore ways to ameliorate the impact of vehicles, and to retain and enhance the coherence and quality of the Town.

This report sets out a summary of the work undertaken, which builds upon previous studies to develop a comprehensive strategy for the Town and concept designs for a range of small and larger scale measures, capable of implementation over time as resources permit, that will together influence traffic speeds and change driver expectations, enhance walkability, improve safety, minimise noise and physical damage, and maintain the distinctive qualities and coherence that underpins the attractive character of the Town.

Traditional traffic engineering measures, such as signage, road markings and speed limits, have had limited effect in addressing the impact of growing traffic pressures in places like Axbridge.

The widescale introduction of further conventional traffic engineering responses are also unlikely to address the fragile balance between traffic and the historic rural town context.

Therefore, a more locally responsive strategy, drawing on the distinctive characteristics of the community and the different parts of the town has been developed. This strategy and the concept designs draw on a growing understanding of safety and driver psychology, as well as on practical experience gained in other rural towns, building on recent best practice and policy advice in this field, tempered by the reality of increasingly limited budgets available to highway authorities.

The strategy and the design proposals have been shaped by the local community who joined the design team at a workshop event to learn about current thinking around sympathetic traffic calming, including an introduction to the principles and design interventions suggested in the 'Traffic in Villages' toolkit. The community shared their experiences of the town and their ideas for how and where interventions should be made to meet the studies objectives.

As a result of this engagement this study sets out a series of interventions, guided by the community, which will significantly enhance pedestrian amenity and deliver local and regional objectives around road safety, public health, and climate change.

The delivery of the measures across the town could require funding of between £2.5m and £3.4m, although the works could be undertaken in stages so that significant change can be delivered through a series of smaller funding pots.

Once endorsed by the Town Council, this document and the plans contained within it can form the basis of future discussions with Somerset Council as the highway authority and can be used as a catalyst to increase the opportunities to attract funding for further design development and implementation. The proposals are designed to allow delivery in a piecemeal fashion, or on a street-by-street basis, although a logical phased approach is suggested.

I Introduction

PJA are appointed by Axbridge Action Group to provide professional transport planning and traffic engineering advice in relation to their aspirations for improved active travel connectivity throughout Axbridge with a focus on improving pedestrian amenity.

I.1 Axbridge, Sedgemoor, Somerset

Axbridge is a small town sitting near the northern edge of the Sedgemoor District of Somerset, below the Mendip Hills. The town has a resident population of around 2,100 people.

The town sits largely to the south of the A371 Axbridge Bypass which was built to allow strategic traffic to bypass the Town's historic narrow streets. The A371 connects the A38 west of the town with Shepton Mallet and Wincanton via Cheddar and Wells.

The historic streets of Axbridge, West Street, High Street, Moorland Street and St. Mary's Street meet at The Square in the centre of the town. The town has developed in a ribbon formation running east-west with more recent homes built in small estates which take access from the main east-west streets running through the town.

Most modern development is served via cul-de-sacs which limit permeability between neighbourhoods for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists, meaning that travel between areas of the town largely requires people to use the main east-west spine streets.

The town has a primary school, a town hall and church. It also benefits from a medical centre, a small supermarket, a post office, a pharmacy, a pub, a hotel, a tearoom, a cinema and some non-food retail and professional service businesses.

Tourism is an important part of the Axbridge economy, with visitors travelling to see the picturesque town and historic features including King John's Hunting Lodge run by the National Trust. Axbridge sits on the route of The Strawberry Line, a traffic free multi-user path linking Yatton with Cheddar via Sandford, Winscombe and Axbridge, which is a popular leisure route for walkers and cyclists in Somerset.



1.2 Axbridge Action Group

Axbridge Action Group was founded in 2003 and is an established independent community group which has successfully secured funding for a range of community projects throughout Axbridge. The Action Group works in collaboration with partner organisations including Axbridge Town Council, the Town Trust, and the Chamber of Commerce.

In 2008, following community consultation, the Action Group commissioned an appraisal of the streetscape and parking in Axbridge called Streets and Parking Improvement Plan for Axbridge which highlighted that residents were concerned for their safety from traffic in and around the Town.

The report set out a series of proposals to help address the situation which although positively received by the Action Group and many residents, did not come to fruition at this stage. Some extracts from the study can be seen adjacent and overleaf.

In 2013 the Action Group invited the UK charity, Living Streets, to carry out a Streets audit which concluded that Axbridge Streets invite drivers to drive fast, and a series of similar proposals were also made to make the streets more inviting and accessible to active travel.

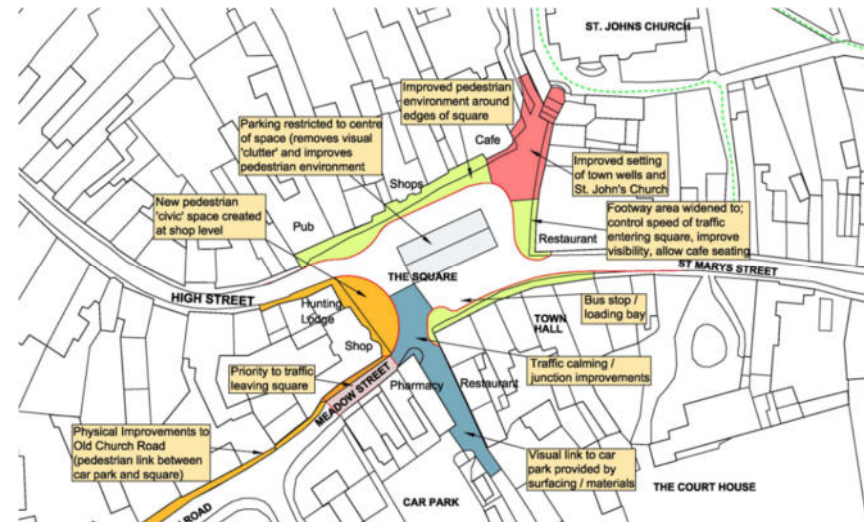


Figure 1.1: 2008 proposals for The Square set out within the Haire Report

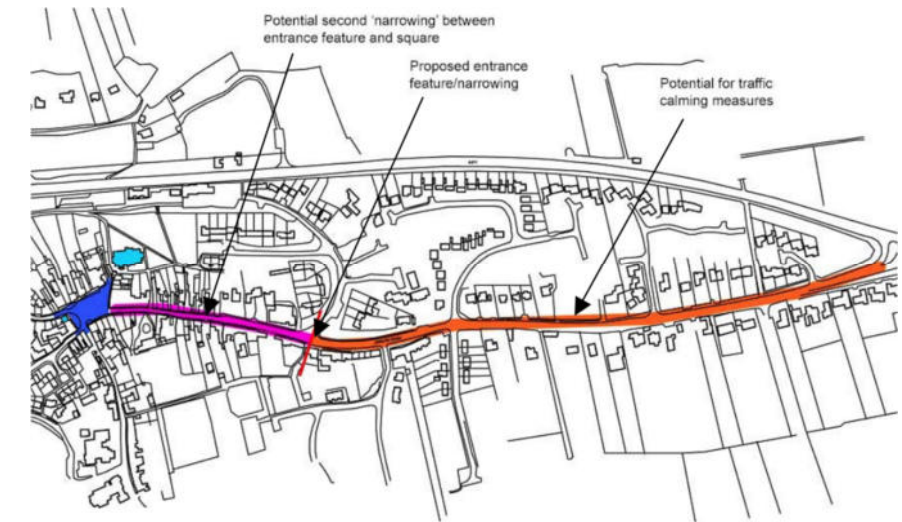


Figure 1.2: High level proposals for the streets on the east side of The Square



Figure 1.3: Visualisation of potential civic space outside King John's Hunting Lodge in The Square - Haire 2008



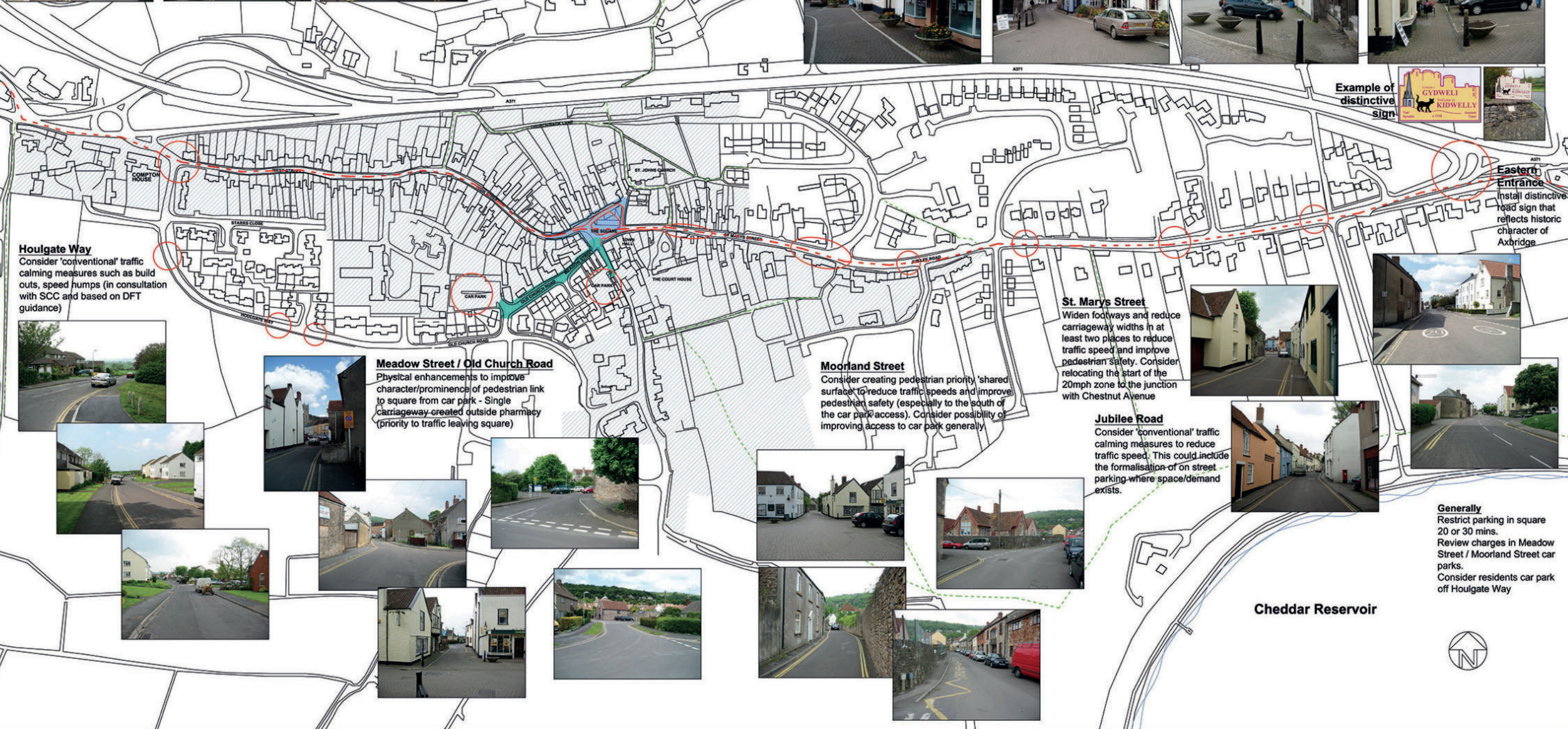
West Street / High Street
 Reduce width at west end (junction with Houlgate Way).
 Consider reversing priority at junction with Houlgate Way.
 Consider re-alignment of iron kerbs in places to widen footways and reduce traffic speeds.
 Signage to mark entrance to town and direct traffic to car parks (via Houlgate Way)



Church / back lane
 Improve lighting.



The Square
 Restrict parking area to centre of square creating high quality pedestrian-dominated spaces around the perimeter.
 Create 'pedestrian priority' space at western edge of square at 'shop' level, that encompasses the three access points at this end.
 Create high quality, distinctive space at 'Church' corner of square.
 Maintain free of obstruction so that space can be used for Markets etc.



Houlgate Way
 Consider 'conventional' traffic calming measures such as build outs, speed humps (in consultation with SCC and based on DfT guidance)



Meadow Street / Old Church Road
 Physical enhancements to improve character/prominence of pedestrian link to square from car park - Single carriageway created outside pharmacy (priority to traffic leaving square)



Moorland Street
 Consider creating pedestrian priority 'shared surface' to reduce traffic speeds and improve pedestrian safety (especially to the south of the car park access). Consider possibility of improving access to car park generally



St. Marys Street
 Widen footways and reduce carriageway widths in at least two places to reduce traffic speed and improve pedestrian safety. Consider relocating the start of the 20mph zone to the junction with Chestnut Avenue



Jubilee Road
 Consider 'conventional' traffic calming measures to reduce traffic speed. This could include the formalisation of on street parking where space/demand exists.



Generally
 Restrict parking in square 20 or 30 mins.
 Review charges in Meadow Street / Moorland Street car parks.
 Consider residents car park off Houlgate Way

Example of distinctive sign



Eastern Entrance
 Install distinctive road sign that reflects historic character of Axbridge

KEY:

- Conservation area
- Footpaths
- Cycle route

- Physical improvements of streetscape to promote use car parks by emphasising link to square
- Physical improvements to The Square

Examples of squares in small rural towns



Magor



Magor Homezone



Magor



Langport



Ruthin

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AXBRIDGE ACTION GROUP
 A STREETS AND PARKING OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR AXBRIDGE
 LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS
 Drawing No: 351/01
 Date: April 08
 Scale: 1:5000 (Approx)
 Drawn by: KH
 Checked by: B



1.3 The Streets of Axbridge

In 2014 the Action Group, in collaboration with its partners, established the Streets of Axbridge project with a Mission Statement:

‘To improve Axbridge by making its Streets more pedestrian friendly and slowing the transit of vehicles through it’.

A successful bid by the Action Group to the National Lottery Fund in 2015 led to The Streets of Axbridge Project Phase 1. This resulted in a reconfiguration of parking spaces, planters, cycle racks and street furniture in the Town Square, along with an extensive process of community consultation and engagement. The revised arrangement can be seen adjacent.

In 2016 the process for the Axbridge Neighbourhood Plan was started and the Action Group postponed development of The Streets of Axbridge Project Phase 2 - a town wide study on creating an enhanced pedestrian experience - whilst awaiting the roll out of The Plan. The plan was approved by referendum in December 2021 and was formally made by Sedgemoor District Council on the 31st January 2022.

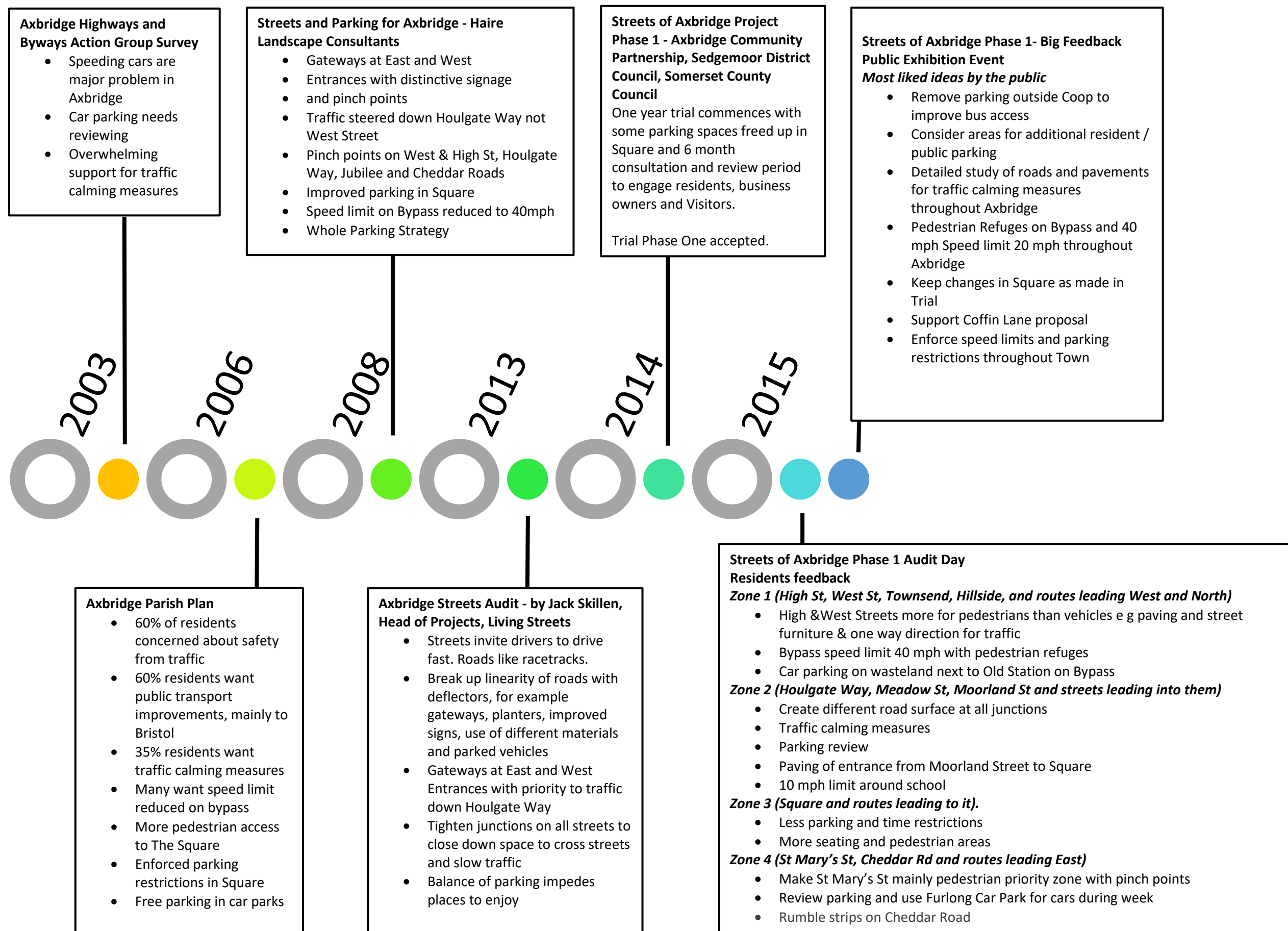
In 2020 Axbridge Town Council commissioned a report to examine safety issues around the Townsend Interchange at the West end of Axbridge as a result of near misses and accidents in this area. This study produced a series of options which are being considered for improvements for the Townsend junction along with proposals for pedestrian facilities on the Axbridge Bypass.

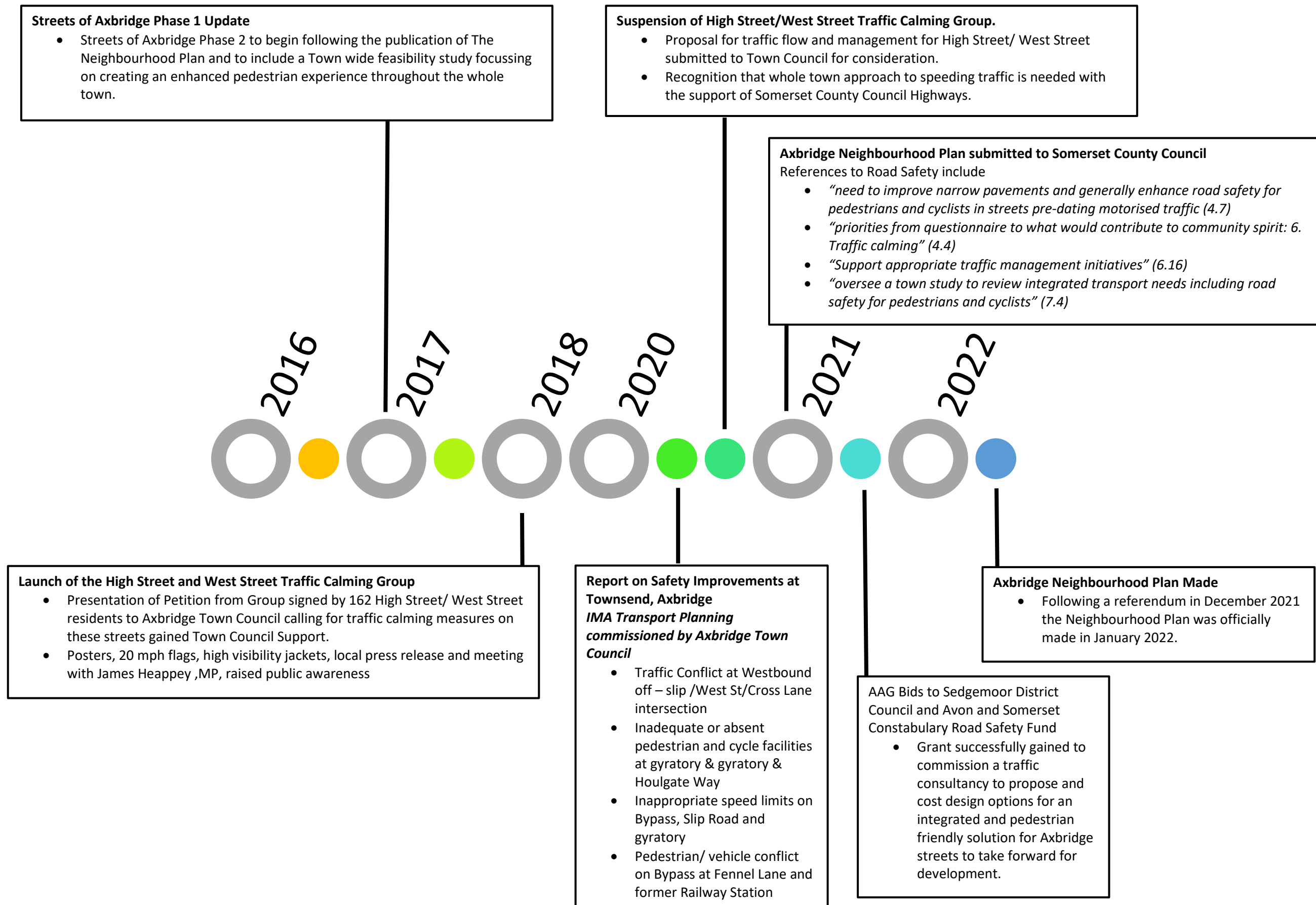
However, since 2016 little progress has been made in making the main thoroughfares through the town safer and more pedestrian friendly. Vehicles continue to take priority. The key streets are: West St, High St, Houlgate Way, Old Church Rd, Meadow St, The Square, St Mary’s St, Jubilee Rd, and Cheddar Rd. The importance of addressing this situation is exacerbated by new housing development plans which have commenced around the town.

A timeline showing highlights of the groups work is presented overleaf.



Figure 1.4: Plan showing the 2015 National Lottery Funded reorganisation of The Square





1.4 Townsend Study

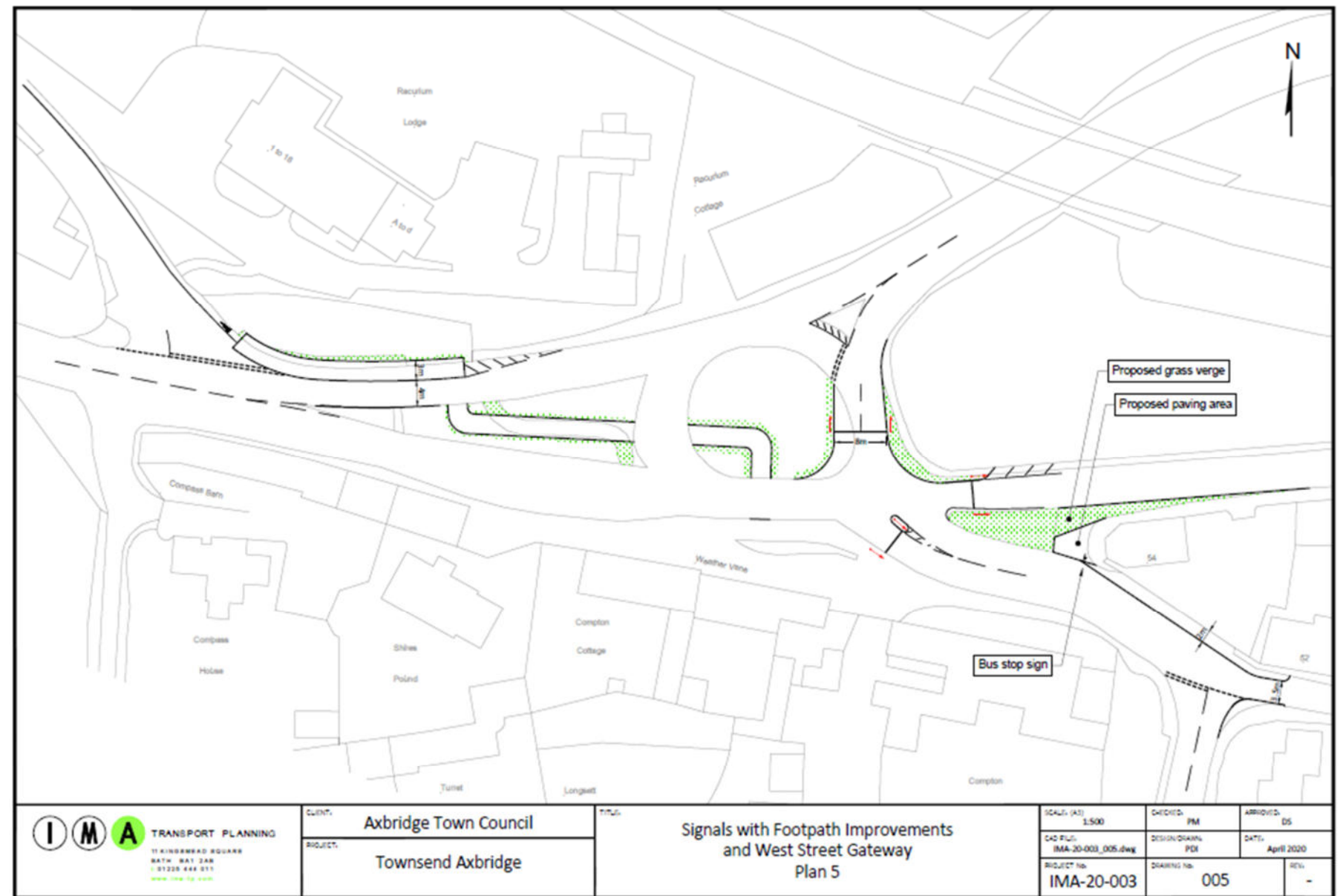
In 2020 Axbridge Town Council commissioned IMA Transport Planning to undertake a study to examine safety issues around the Townsend Interchange on the A371.

The study considered the form of the junction, highway safety and pedestrian and cycle movements through it.

To address highway safety issues and the challenges faced by non-motorised users passing through this junction IMA developed a number of interventions. The preferred intervention being the introduction of traffic signal control on three approaches.

IMA also recommended that the left turn from the A371 westbound slip road to West Street was stopped up.

The IMA study also considered the introduction of pedestrian crossing facilities on the A371. The proposals included two informal crossings, with the introduction of pedestrian refuges. The report recommended that the speed limit on the A371 was reduced to 40mph.



1.5 Streets of Axbridge 2021/2022

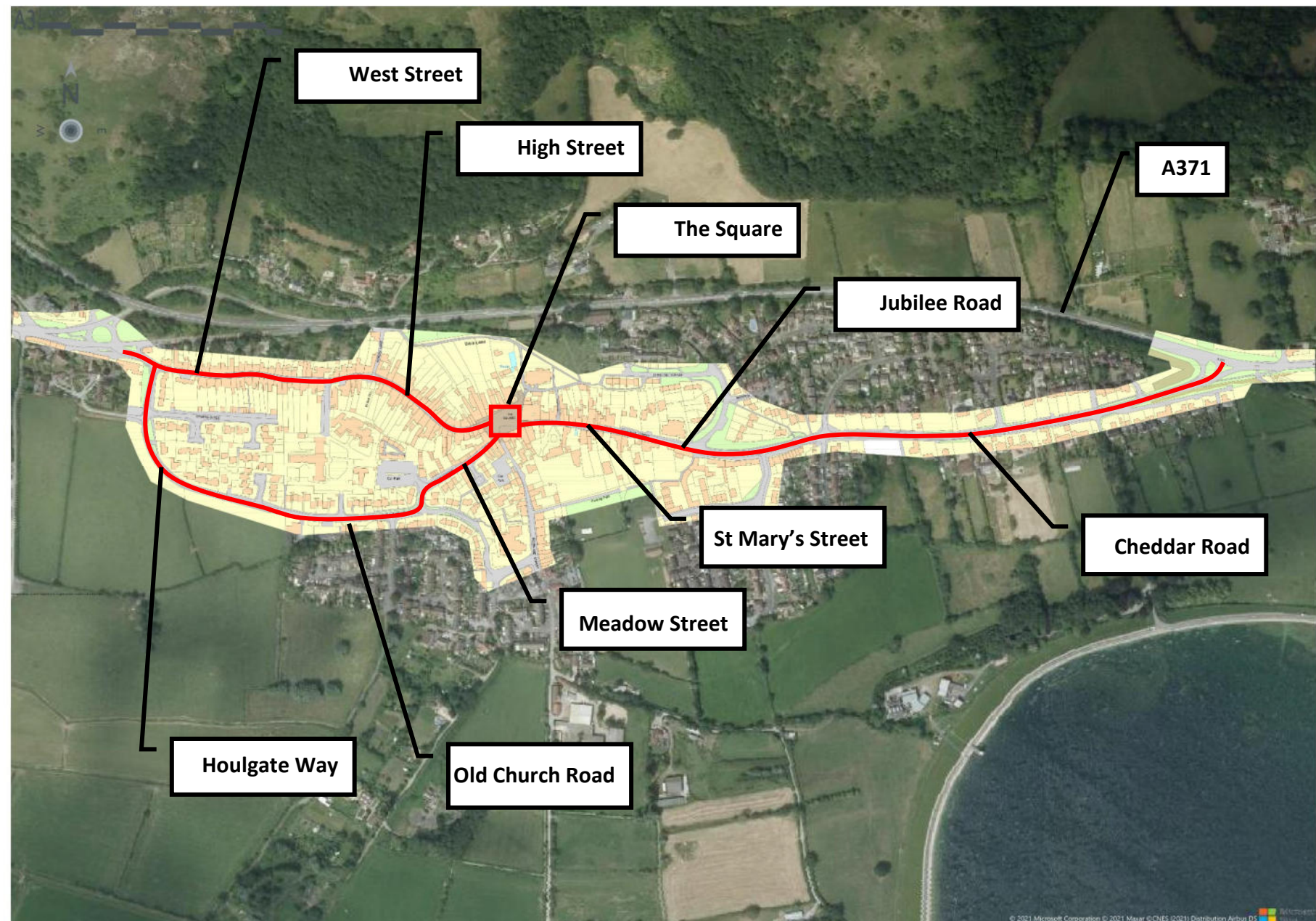
In the Summer of 2021, the Action Group were successful in securing grant funding allowing them to commission this study which builds upon previous work to develop design options for core streets within Axbridge to make them safer, more inviting and more accessible.

The studies key objectives are to:

1. Provide a strategic review of the survey information, current information and community engagement feedback that has been previously undertaken.
2. Analyse the main east-west thoroughfares through Axbridge (as highlighted on the map adjacent) identifying constraints and opportunities. Moorland Street was not considered as part of this study.
3. Formulate the overall strategy and design proposals to inform short, medium, and long-term goals and liaise with Somerset County Council Highways.
4. Present two or three specific preliminary designs with cost options for the main thoroughfares described above.

In Autumn 2021 PJA were appointed by the Axbridge Action Group to undertake the study. This report sets out a summary of the work undertaken and outlines a series of traffic management and public realm interventions which could be delivered across the town in order to meet the project aims.

This report continues with a summary of relevant local planning policy and a summary of the baseline analysis undertaken to inform this study. The report then discusses a workshop which was held in Axbridge with members of the community and finally sets out a strategy of interventions which can be developed and delivered across the town in order to make the streets of Axbridge safer, more inviting and more accessible.



2 Policy

2.1 Overview

This section provides a summary of the relevant local transport and planning policy in relation to the town. Axbridge is located within the Sedgemoor District Council boundary in Somerset.



2.2 Somerset County Council Future Transport Plan (2011-2026)

Somerset's Future Transport Plan came into force on 1st April 2011 and sets out the long-term strategy for getting the best from transport.

Policy SUS 1 – Climate Change commits Somerset County Council (SCC) to publish an annual action plan explaining its response, and the role of transport in its response to climate change. Adaptation and mitigation measures will be highlighted and implemented to respond to the effects of climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Mitigation measures include the following:

- Promoting sustainable transport choices by providing people with the information on the transport opportunities available to them and their benefits;
- Helping to improve the infrastructure and facilities available to encourage sustainable transport choices;
- Travel Plans in education, business and residential developments;
- Encouraging Alternative Fuels, such as electric vehicles, hybrid and biofuels;
- Reducing the need to travel by making it easier to access services virtually; and
- Encouraging shorter journeys (under 5 miles) to be made by cycle or on foot.

Policy SUS 4 – Cycling relates to encouraging people to cycle more by helping them to make smarter travel choices and get better cycling skills. SCC will examine gaps and barriers in the cycling network and support the provision of cycle infrastructure and well-connected facilities. The policy also states that SCC will promote the use of the National Cycle Network and support Sustrans' efforts to involve communities in maintaining it.

Policy SUS 5 – Walking encourages people to make more trips on foot and help people see the benefits of walking. SCC state that to do this they will raise the level of priority given to pedestrians in the urban environment; identify, improve, and upgrade crossing facilities; encourage people to walk when accessing the countryside and green spaces; and ensure that all pedestrians, including those with reduced mobility and sensory impairments, are taken into account when designing pedestrian networks and facilities.

Policy ECN 2 – Sustainable Development states that SCC will work with developers to ensure they take into account the way people travel to access services. This largely focuses on requiring new developments to submit travel plans in accordance with the guidelines set out in the SCC-developed Manual for Travel Plans.

Policy ECN 3 – Parking supports improvements to parking facilities and more sustainable means of travel. The policy recognises that there is a high dependency on the private car, particularly in rural areas, and commits to improving the management of parking and planning new developments appropriately. Somerset's Parking Strategy (2013) sets out policies for parking through the county. It explains parking standards for new developments and how this should be designed and managed.

Policy SAF 1 – Road Safety focuses on improving the skills of drivers and riders on the road. This can be read in connection with the Road Safety Strategy 2017-2026 which seeks to adopt a safe system approach to reduce serious or fatal road incidents.

2.3 Sedgemoor Local Plan

The Sedgemoor Local Plan (2011-2032) was formally adopted on the 20th February 2019 and sets out the policy framework for future development in the District, including provision of housing, employment, retail and other facilities and infrastructure.

Policy C5 – Transport outlines the following transport infrastructure schemes to be prioritised:

- Improvements to the junction of A371/B3135/Shiphham Road
- Improvements to pedestrian footpaths and crossings on A371 Upper New Road
- Improvements and extension to the Strawberry Line
- Improvements and extension to existing pedestrian links
- Improvements to the junction of A38/371 and Cross Lane

The existing Strawberry Line long distance Sustrans cycle path is recognised as an important local link as well as a wider tourist attraction. There are aspirations to extend this route to the southeast and opportunities to deliver extensions as well as enhancement to the existing route will be supported. The land north of Holwell Lane, west of Upper New Road to the east of Axbridge effectively forms a second phase of development, permission for 90 dwellings having been granted consent to the south. The site is adjacent to the “Strawberry Line” and development will be required to enhance the existing cycle path and to retain a substantial landscaped buffer along its route.

Policy D13 – Sustainable Transport & Movement relates to the proposals required to encourage modal shift. The policy focuses on promoting sustainable growth and states the following objectives for travel management schemes and development proposals:

Proposals will:

- Support the travel improvements identified in the Somerset Future Transport Plan (transport policies, implementation plan and modal strategies), Infrastructure and Delivery Study and Sedgemoor Transport Strategy (when published);
- Be compatible with the existing transport infrastructure or, if not, provision shall be made where necessary for improvements to infrastructure to enable development to proceed;
- Contribute to reducing adverse environmental issues, including air, light and noise pollution, vibration and surface water run-off, through appropriate mitigation measures, including tree planting along road corridors for shade, amenity and air quality;
- Enhance road and personal safety;
- Enhance the facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, those with reduced mobility and other users;
- Develop innovative and adaptable approaches that deliver higher quality and accessible public transport options;
- Encourage efficient, safe, and sustainable freight transport; and
- Be resilient to climate change.

The requirement for proposals to enhance road safety is included in Policy D13. Policy D14 elaborates on the issue of highway safety by stating that, “Development proposals should ensure that the expected nature and volume of traffic and parked vehicles generated by the development would not compromise the safety and/or function of the local or strategic road networks in terms of both volume and type of traffic generated.”

Sedgemoor District Council has previously signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, a commitment to work in a way that counteracts climate change. The Council will continue to work with partners such as the Local Enterprise Partnership and neighbourhood planning groups to address the issues and opportunities offered in the low carbon sector and in addition the Council will be seeking to engage and sign into ‘Climate Local’, promoted by the Local Government Association as the replacement vehicle for the Nottingham Declaration.

The spatial strategy for the district will have the most significant impact on climate change locally through directing the majority of new development to the most sustainable locations and therefore helping to reduce the need to travel and provide opportunities for alternatives to the car.

Policy S5 – Mitigating the Causes & Adapting to the Effects of Climate Change seeks to provide an approach for developments to seek to ensure the delivery of sustainable growth within environmental limits, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase resource efficiency. In relation to transport, the following objectives are provided:

- Encouraging modes of transport other than the car; and
- Providing increased opportunities to walk and cycle.

2.4 Sedgemoor Climate Emergency Strategy & Action Plan

Sedgemoor District Council released its Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan in 2021 with the documents being approved by Full Council on 22nd February 2021.

The Climate Emergency Strategy lays out the six key areas of action which will lead the council towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030, outlines the overarching goals and explains the scope and background to this project. It is followed by the Climate Emergency Action Plan, which details the activities involved to reach carbon neutrality and the co-benefits of these changes.

Some of the key actions include:

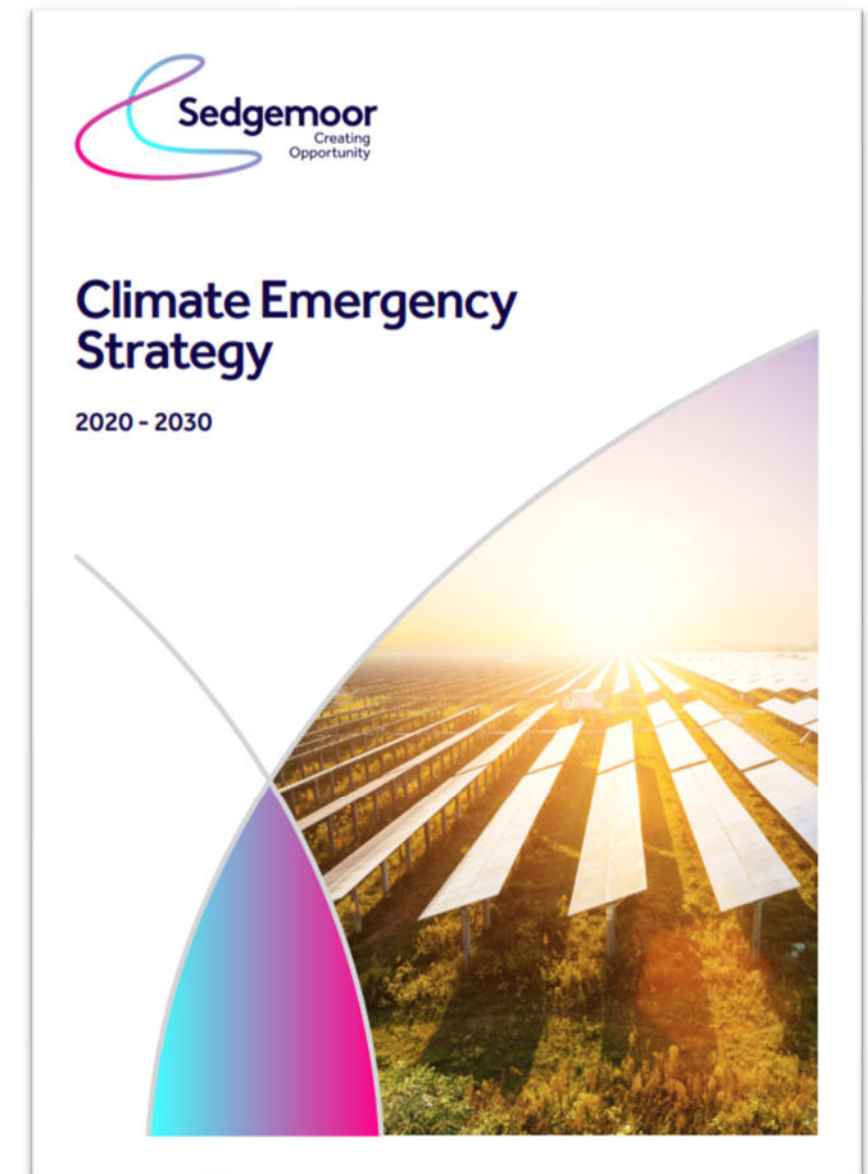
- Increasing number of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points throughout Sedgemoor
- Supporting schools, businesses, and council employees to help educate the population on the importance and possibilities of reducing, reusing, and recycling
- Delivering climate-change-ready, carbon neutral affordable housing in Sedgemoor
- Promoting climate change awareness among Sedgemoor residents, communities, and businesses, and providing education on the key issues and ways to reduce carbon emissions
- Integrating climate change priorities and targets into all key corporate projects, programmes, and strategies

The six key areas of action which will reduce and offset carbon emissions by 100% by 2030 are:

- Business & Economy
- Travel
- Waste
- Energy & Buildings
- Food & Agriculture
- Nature & Adaptation

The Action Plan will provide guidance addressing climate change from the six key areas and is designed to be 'living and breathing' as new challenges are faced and new solutions come to light. The Action Plan outlines actions alongside deadlines and the level of influence of the local council.

The 'Travel' action area focusses on promoting active travel, encouraging the adoption of travel plans, increasing electric vehicle charging points, encouraging working from home, and supporting the improvement of the public transport network.



2.5 Axbridge Neighbourhood Plan

The Axbridge Neighbourhood Plan was officially made in January 2022.

The Plan will be used in conjunction with the Local Plan to determine planning applications that are submitted for the area of Axbridge Parish.

The Neighbourhood Plan outlines a vision for Axbridge and includes policies covering housing & development, community & infrastructure, historic & natural environment, and transport.

With regards to transport, the Neighbourhood Plan outlines its aims and objectives.

Aims

To promote and support safe travel for all, by promoting integration of public transport, cycle paths, footpaths, and rights of way; support appropriate traffic management initiatives and the provision of additional parking to ease the strain on local roads.

Objectives

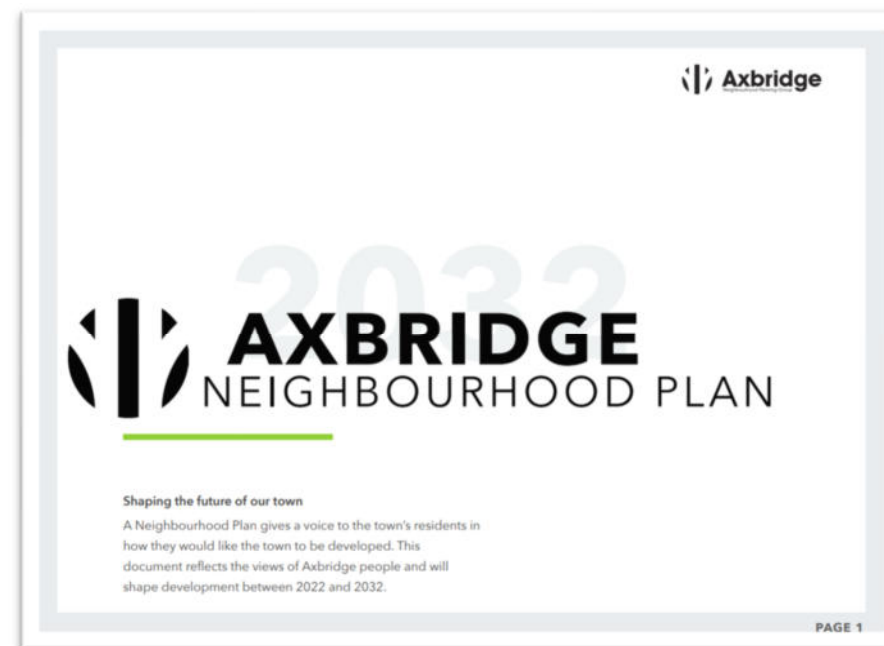
- Ensure that any new development provides appropriate off-street parking.
- Support services providing public and community transport.
- Preserve existing car parks and support appropriate new parking initiatives.
- Oversee a town wide study to review integrated transport needs including road safety.
- Review parking in The Square in the light of its importance to the town.
- Maintain and improve pedestrian and cycle access to neighbouring communities.
- Support initiatives to unite the town through improving access across the bypass.

Policy T-1 Development proposals which seek to provide off-street parking will be encouraged and supported where the development accords with other relevant Development Plan policies. Development proposals that seek to reduce existing parking provision will be resisted unless appropriate replacements are provided.

Policy T-2 Development proposals for residential use will be supported if they provide parking in line with the Somerset County Council Transport Policies Parking Strategy 2013 and accord with other relevant Development Plan policies

Policy T-3 All new housing developments should provide safe pedestrian access to link with existing or proposed footpaths ensuring that residents can walk safely to bus stops, schools, and other facilities.

Policy T-4 For residential development proposals, any required traffic calming and road safety initiatives should be in place prior to first occupation of the dwellings. Proposals that rebalance the use and safety of streets in favour of pedestrians throughout the town to improve residents' well-being will be supported.



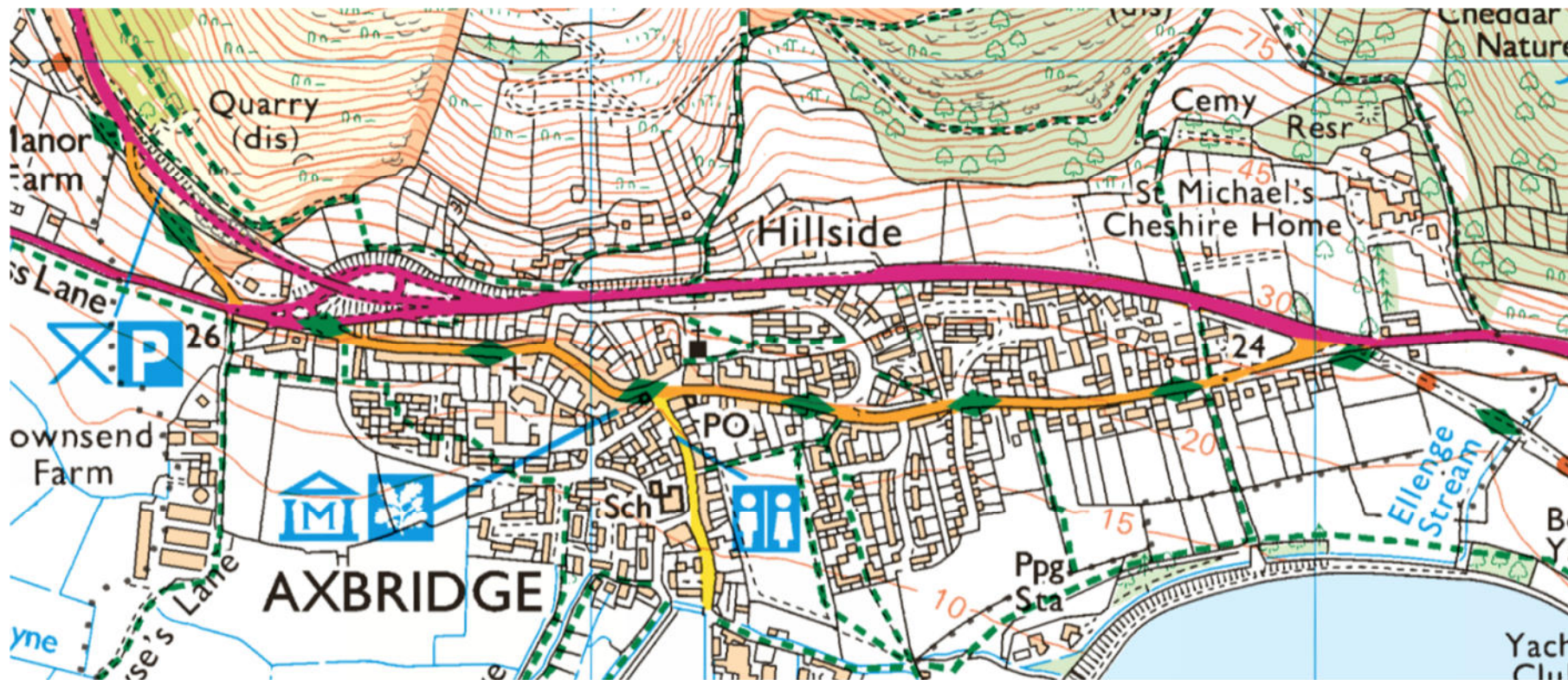
The community aspirations for transport are as follows and are confirmed by local consultation and survey results:

- Improvement of footways and footpaths. Respondents from the Community questionnaire survey were concerned about the width and upkeep of pavements and footpaths within Axbridge. Footpaths and cycle paths are highly valued with 77% of respondents seeking improvements to footpaths generally, with a similar level of support for the establishment of safe access to Cross. The need for improved crossing to the Hillside and better pedestrian access to Cross were also seen as important as well as access to countryside walks.
- Services providing public and community transport should be supported.
- Oversee a town wide study to review integrated transport needs including road safety for pedestrians and cyclists in streets pre-dating motorised traffic. Joint work with Somerset Highways would seem to command high support with over 76% of survey respondents favouring traffic calming.
- Prioritise initiatives to unite the town through improving access across the bypass. More than 57% of survey respondents supported improved access across the A371.

Appendix 2 – Sustainability in Axbridge emphasises the need for:

- Planning support for building (new-build or alteration) and activities that increase self-containment and enhance local employment;
- Radical reassessment of public transport options; and
- Early provision for the local recharging of electric vehicles.

3 Existing Movement Networks



3.1 Walking

Axbridge is around 1.4km long and 500m wide, meaning that a walking journey between any two points in the town should take no more than 20 – 30 minutes.

However, the form of the town limits opportunities for people to move around on foot, with most journeys requiring at least some use of the narrow footways alongside the main east-west corridor along West Street, High Street, St. Mary's Street and Cheddar Road. The Cul-de-Sac developments in the east and west of the town provide little opportunity for pedestrians to follow parallel routes away from trafficked streets.

The town does benefit from a 20mph speed limit, and the bypass takes most of the strategic east – west traffic demand, but there is still a considerable level of traffic using these streets. There are no formal crossing facilities within the town.

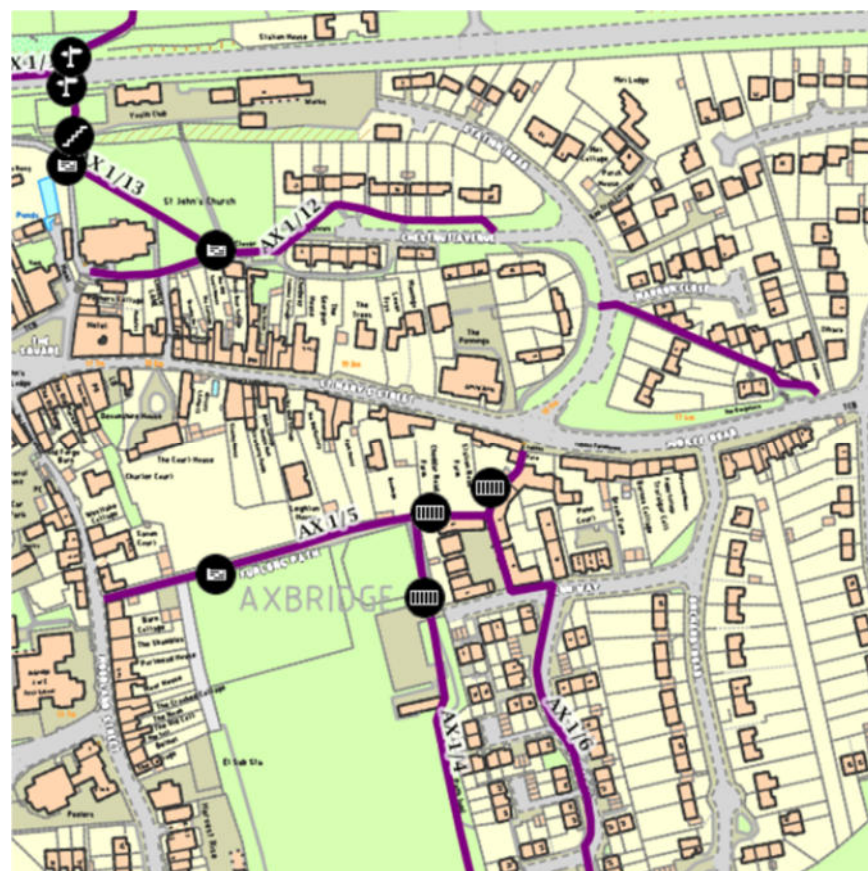
Key traffic free pedestrian routes within the town include Public Right of Way (PRoW) AX1/5 known locally as the Furlong Path which provides an all-weather pedestrian connection between Penn Way, Jubilee Road, and Moorland Street, emerging near the primary school on the latter street.

To the north of Jubilee Road PRoW AX 1/12 connects the bus stops on Jubilee Road to Chestnut Avenue and on through the Church Yard to the town square. This meets PRoW AX 1/13 which crosses the Church Yard and heads north across the bypass (although no pedestrian crossing facilities) and on towards the Mendip Hills.

At the western end of the town the primary PRoW AX 1/23 connects Cross Moor Road with Starrs Close via a network of narrow alleyways through this estate.

Away from the main east-west spine, there is a network of largely unsurfaced rural footpaths which provide connections primarily used for leisure purposes linked to the reservoir, the Mendip Hills and along the Strawberry Line.

The Somerset County Council Rights of Way plan shows the existing network of footpaths. There are no bridleways, restricted byways, byways open to all traffic or cycle paths shown in and around the two settlements. Nor are there any permissive routes recorded on the plan.

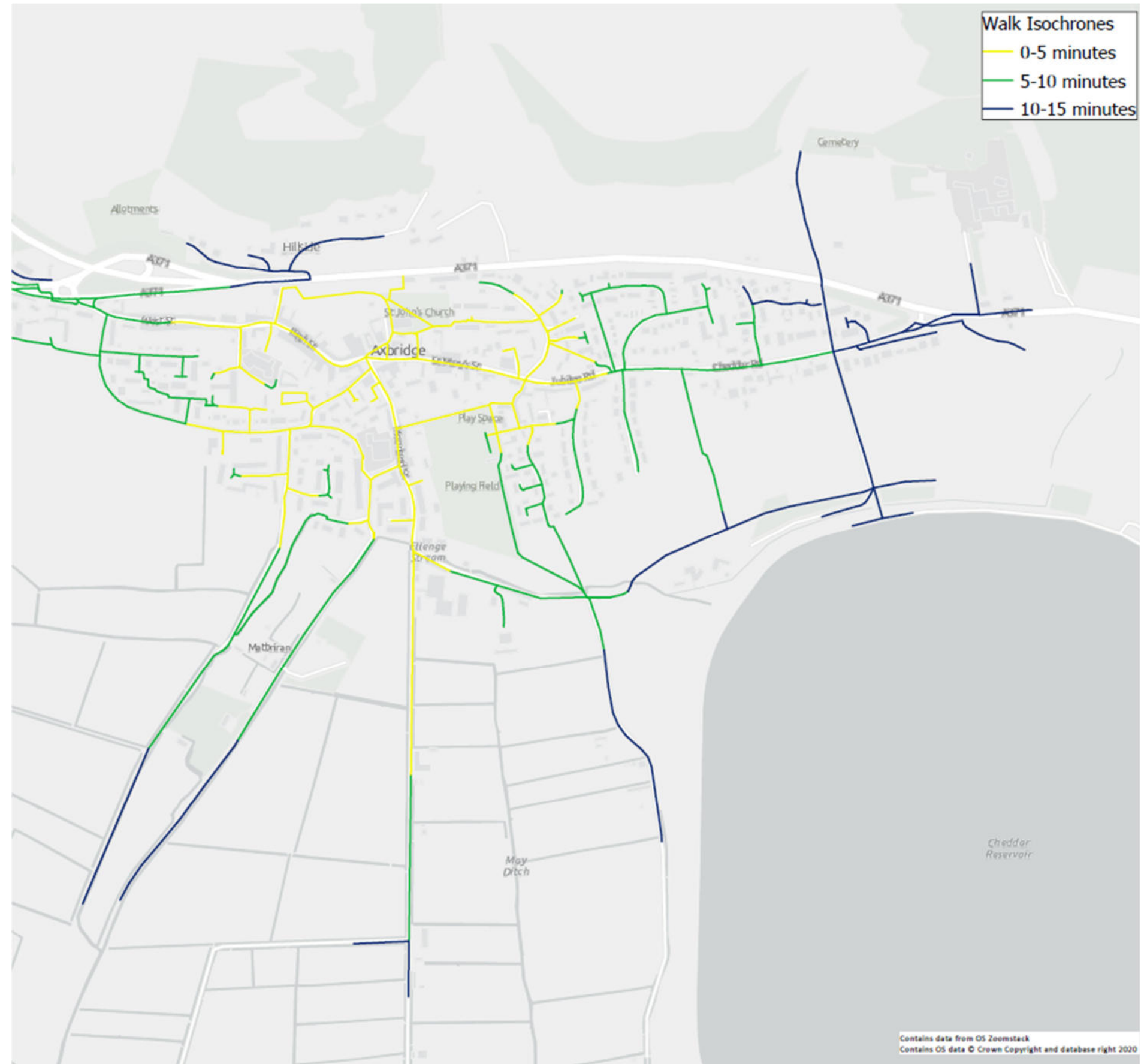




The adjacent analysis shows walking isochrones for Axbridge, which demonstrate how much of Axbridge is within a 5-, 10- and 15-minute walk of the centre of town.

As discussed previously most places can be reached within 10 minutes' walk of The Square meaning that a walk between any two points in the town is unlikely to be significantly more than 20 minutes.

The plan also highlights the network of Cul-de-Sacs in the east of the town which significantly reduce pedestrian amenity and increase walking journey times to the centre of town.





3.2 Cycling

Other than 10 Sheffield stands within The Square there is no cycle infrastructure within Axbridge. Cyclists following the Strawberry Line (National Cycle Route NCR 26) through town share the carriageway with vehicles.

Given the 20mph speed limit and low traffic flows through town there is no need for separated or protected infrastructure and the provision largely complies with current national guidance.

However, at the entrances to Axbridge, where Cheddar Road and West Street meet the A371, the provision for cycling is confusing and potentially brings cycles into conflict with higher volumes of higher speed traffic.

For utility cycling journeys around Axbridge the existing provision is likely to make short journeys by bike to destinations away from The Square challenging.

The school has recently constructed a bike shelter which provides 6 Sheffield stands with parking for around 12 bikes or scooters, and the medical centre has a small planter which allows two bikes to be locked up, but elsewhere in town there is little opportunity to secure bikes to enable people to visit other people's houses. This is particularly an issue along the historic streets where front doors open out onto the streets and rear access to the properties is limited.

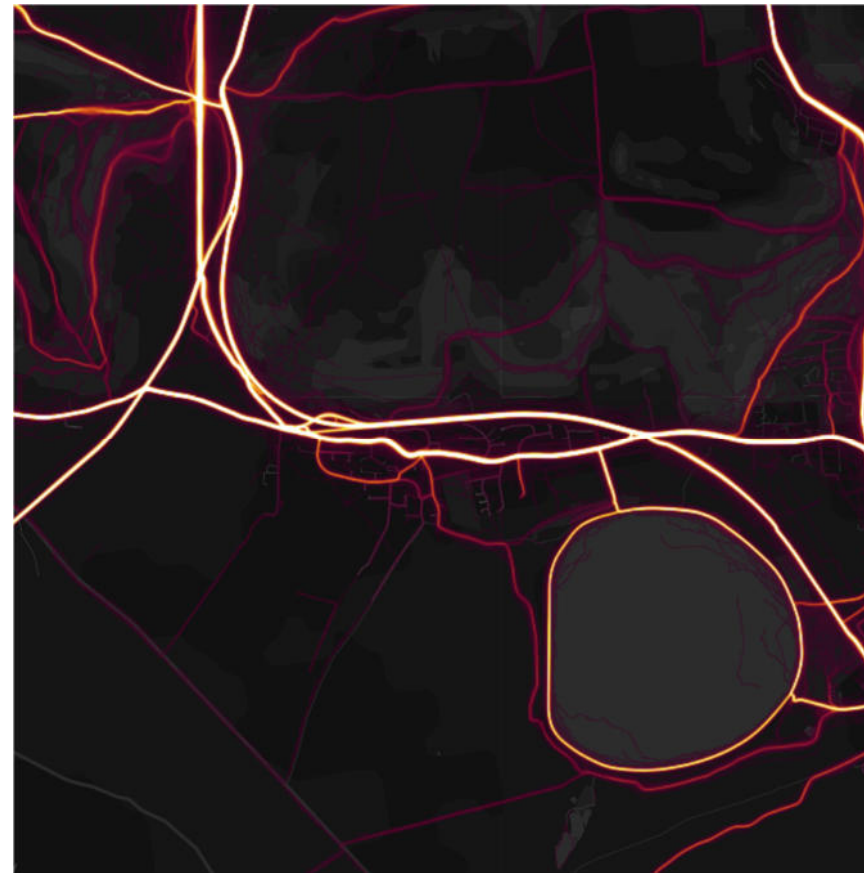


Figure 3.1: Usage heatmaps shows that both the route through Axbridge and along the A371 are popular cycling routes

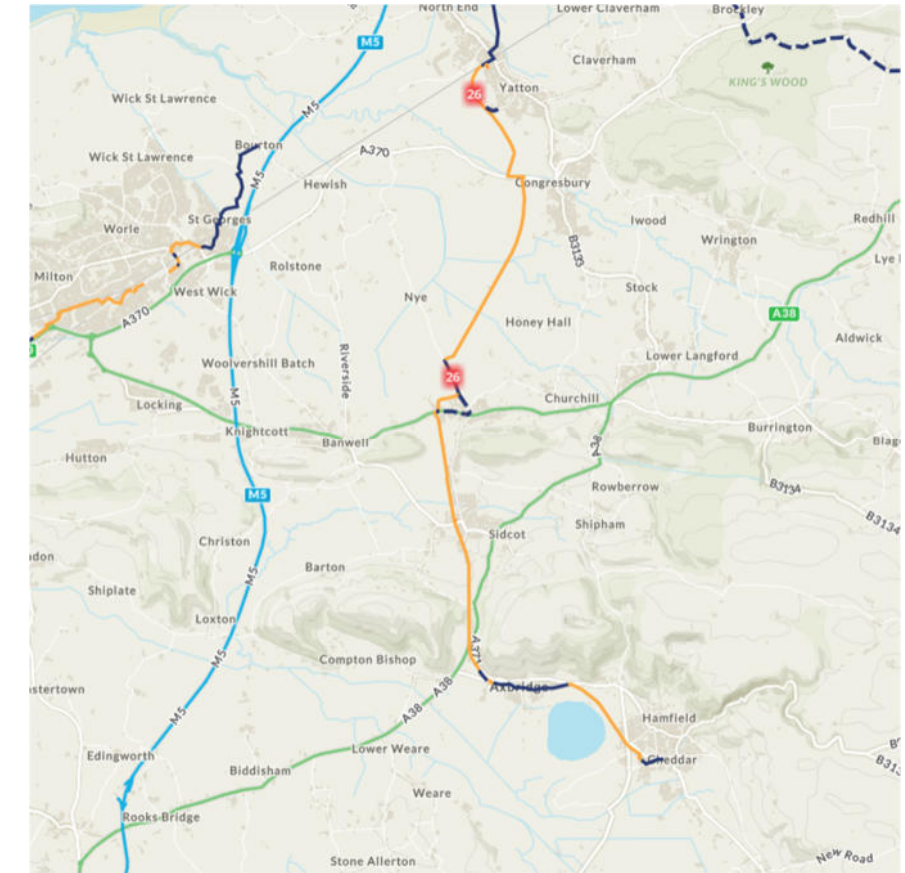


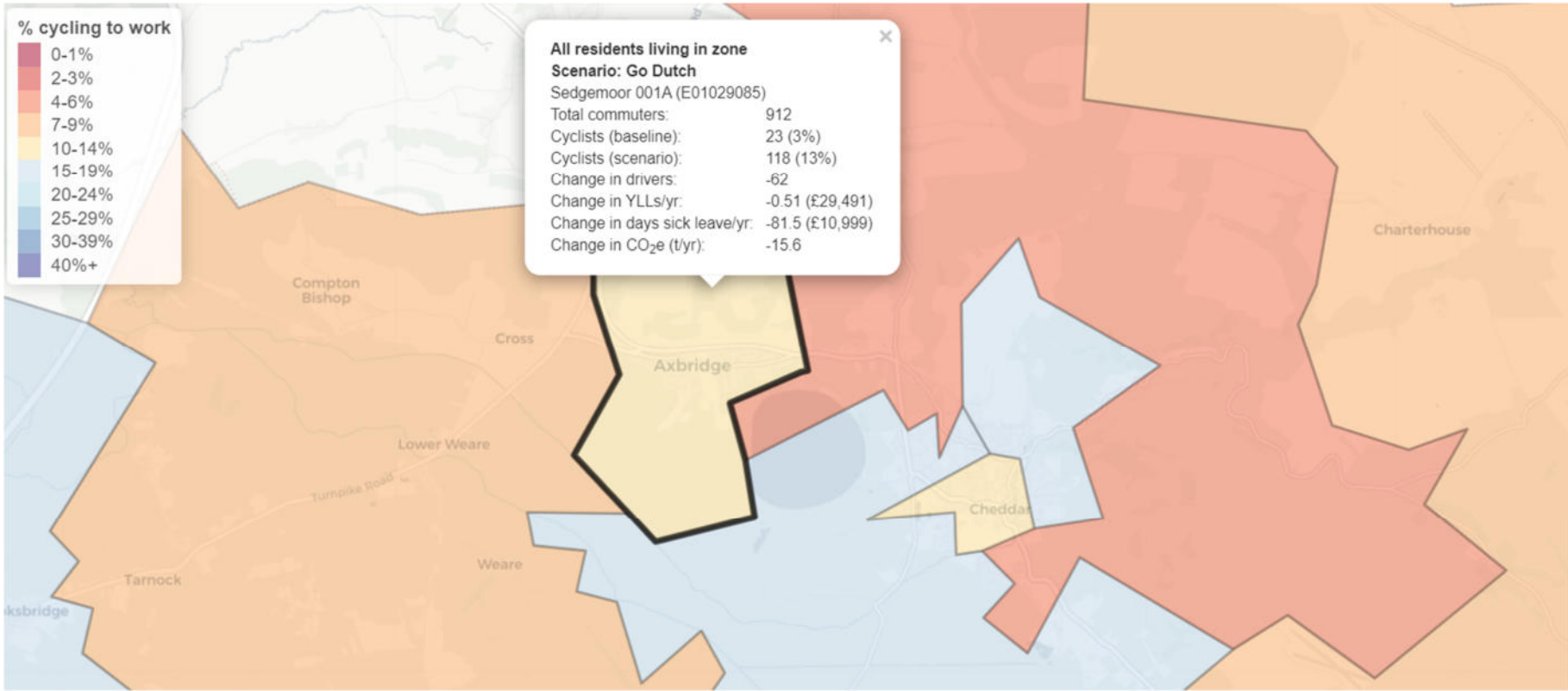
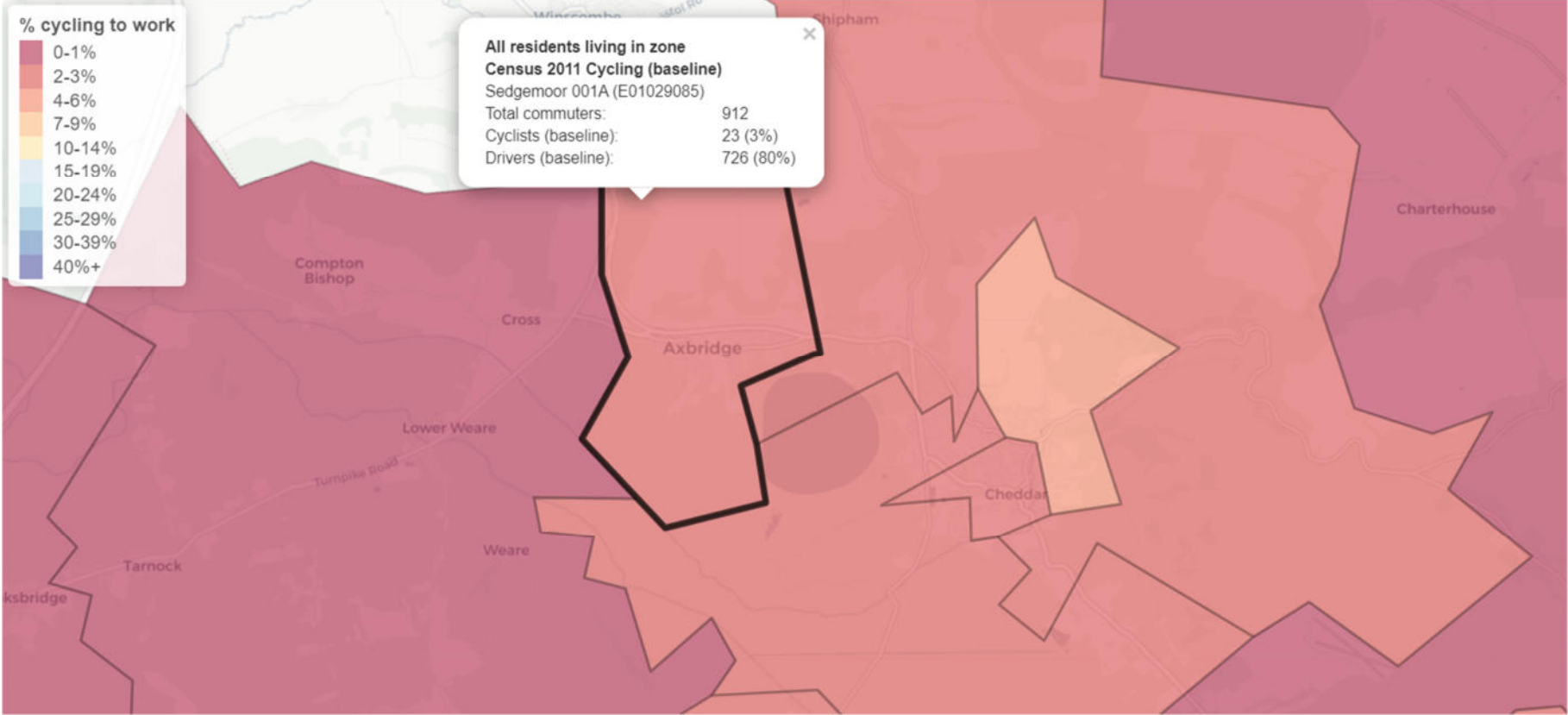
Figure 3.2: National Cycle Network Map showing the Strawberry Line (National Cycle Route 26) between Yatton and Cheddar along former railway lines

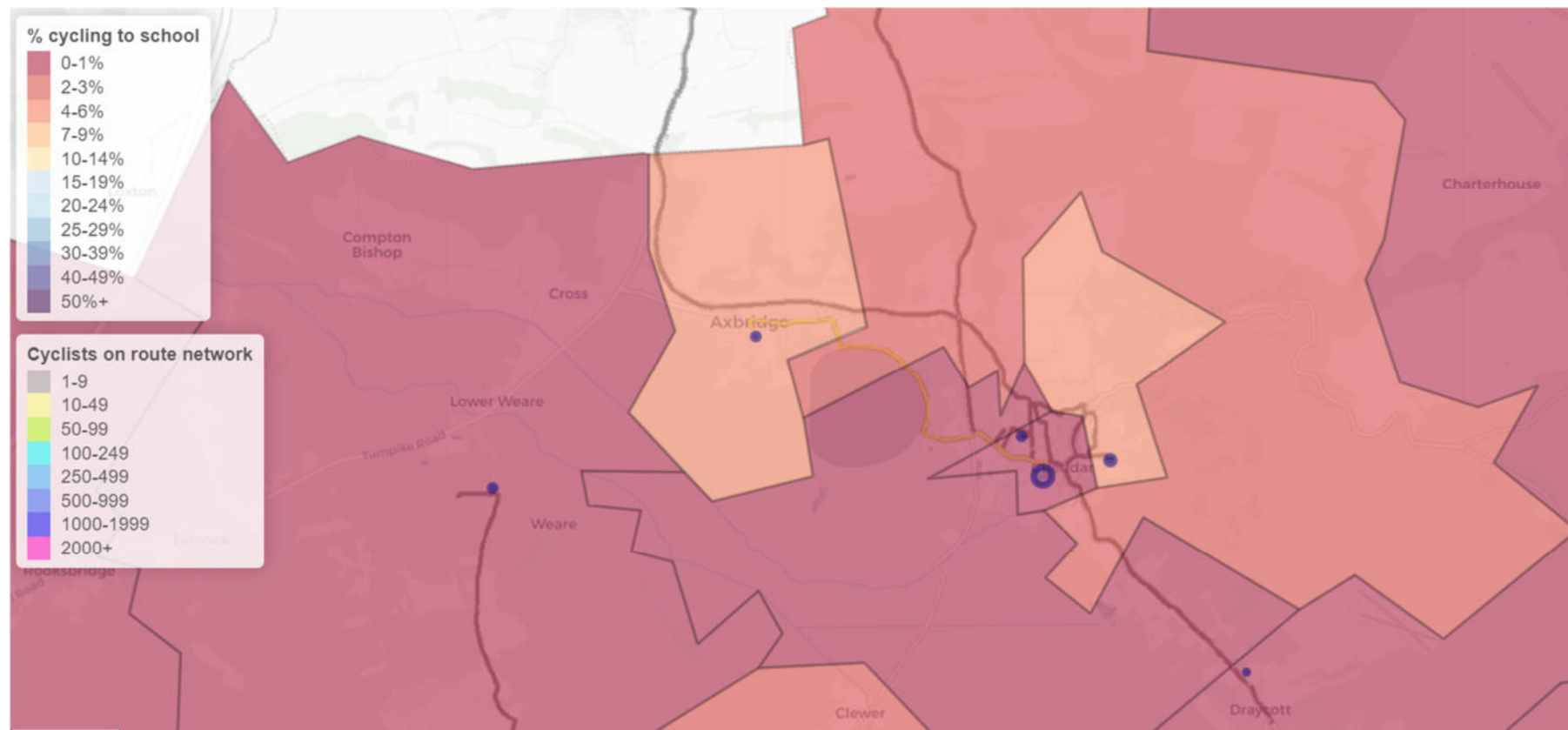
Barriers to cycling

The lack of cycle infrastructure in the area is likely to be suppressing the use of bikes particularly for frequent utility and commuting journeys.

The 2011 Census recorded low levels of commuter cycling in Lower Output Area Sedgemoor 001A (3%) which includes Axbridge. This is typical for the more populated areas of Somerset, contrasting with the predominantly rural areas to the west where only 1% of commuting journeys were by bike.

Extracts from the Department for Transport (DfT) Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT) show the levels of commuter cycling as per the 2011 Census in the top image. In the bottom image the tool has forecast the potential level of cycling that might be achieved if Dutch levels of cycle infrastructure were provided in the local area. This shows the potential for around 13% of commuters living in these areas to cycle to work if the correct infrastructure were provided. Given that the town sits on the Strawberry Line there is a good potential to exploit this opportunity, but this would require the quality of longer distance routes to be improved in order to allow all-season all-experience cyclists to ride to work.



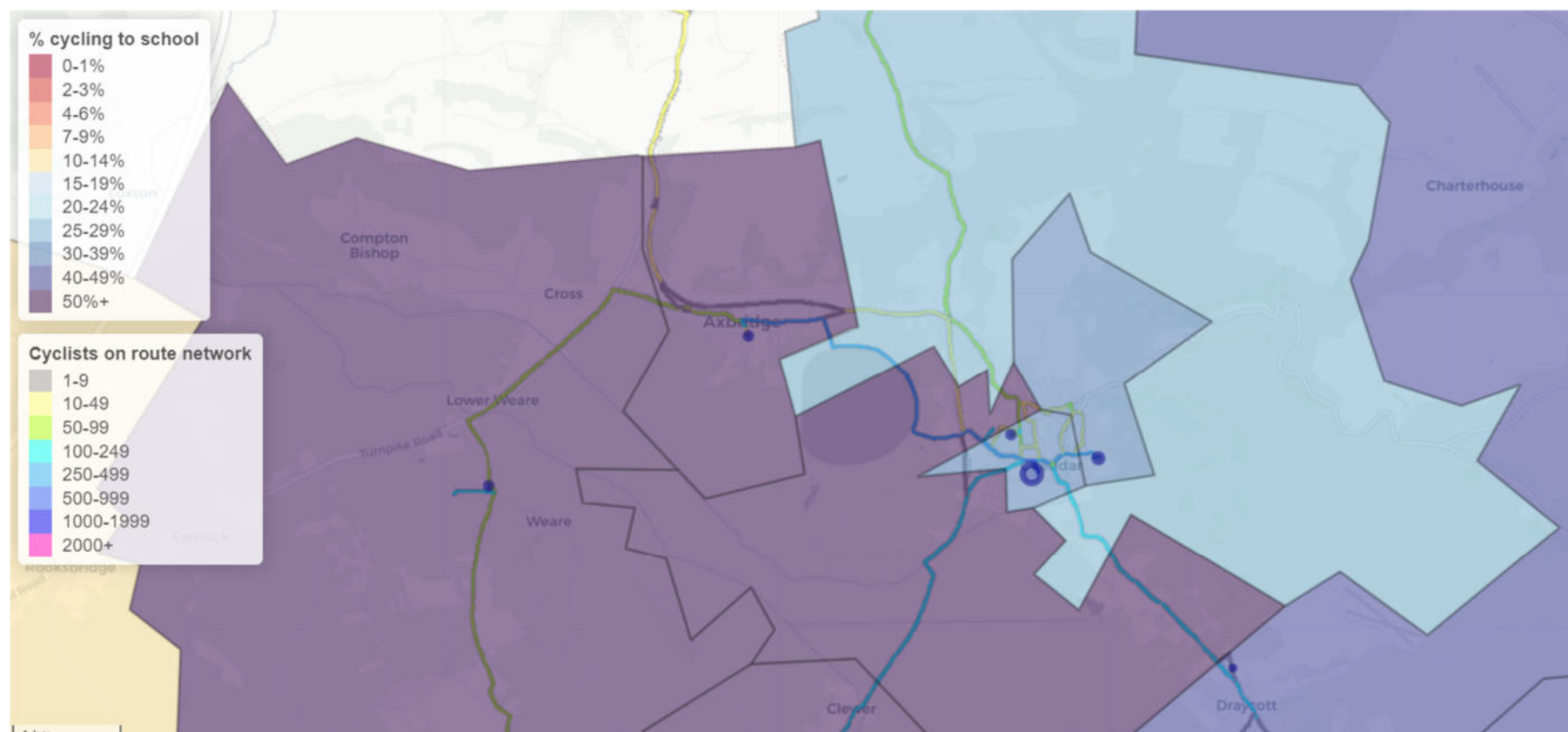


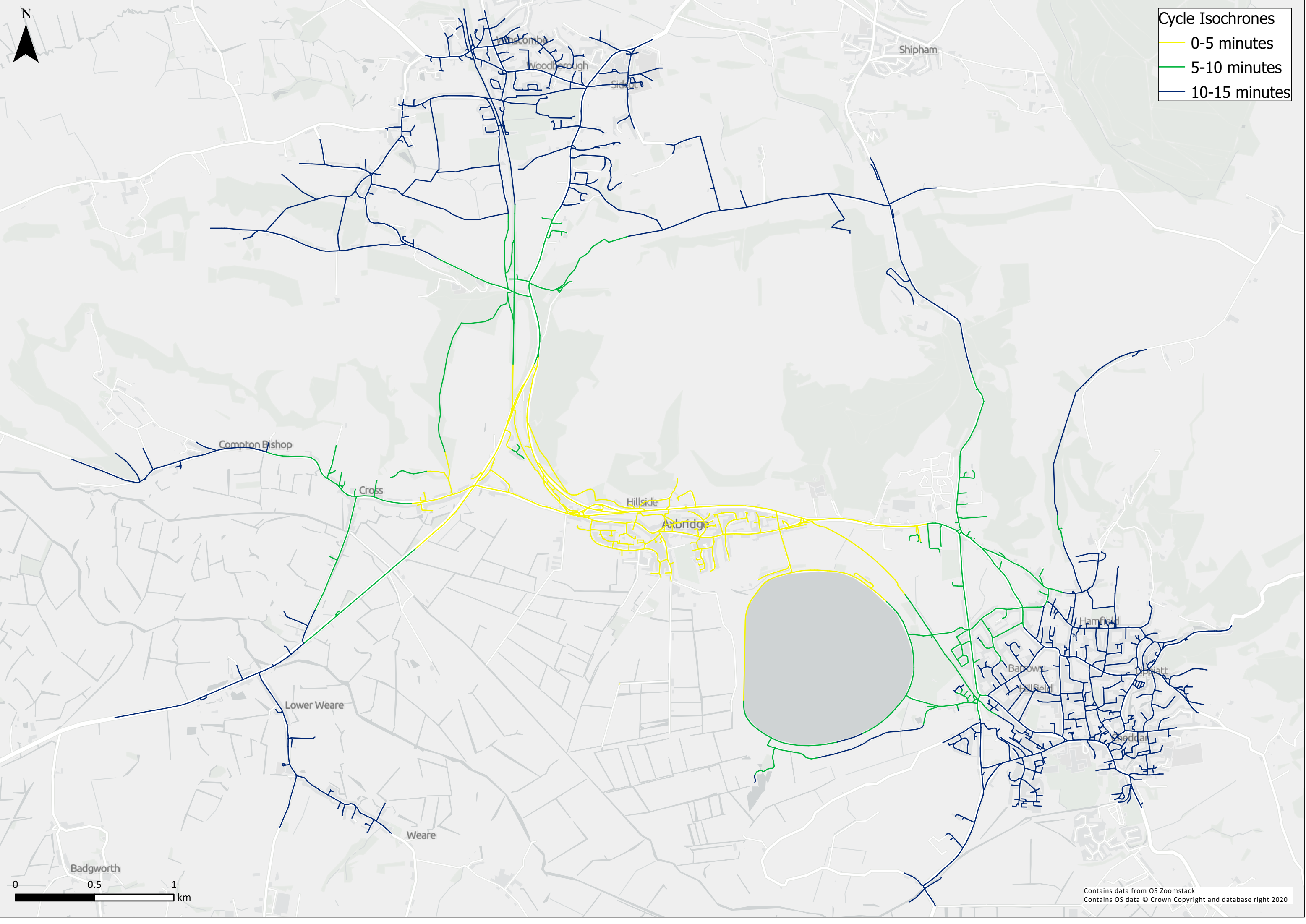
The PCT tool also considers cycle trips to schools. The top image showing the results from the 2011 Schools Travel Census where only one or two children from each lower output area cycled to school, with those travelling between Axbridge and Cheddar following the Strawberry Line.

This contrast strongly with the PCT forecast based on Dutch levels of cycle infrastructure, which shows that around 50% of children might expect to cycle to school if correctly supported.

Although the measures which are likely to be introduced as a result of this project, will not singlehandedly enable Dutch levels of cycling, the tool does show that there is a significant latent demand within the existing community.

The cycle isochrone plan provided overleaf shows that key destinations of Cheddar and Winscombe are within a 15-minute cycle of Axbridge at a modest pace. This also demonstrate the opportunity for people living in smaller settlements nearby to access the towns facilities by bike.





Cycle Isochrones

- 0-5 minutes
- 5-10 minutes
- 10-15 minutes

0 0.5 1 km



3.3 Public Transport

Axbridge is served by limited public transport services which pass through the town centre via Houlgate Way and Cheddar Road.

Bus service 126 is operated by First Bus and provides a regular service linking Axbridge with the towns of Weston-Super-Mare, Cheddar and Wells. The service operates Monday to Saturday, with a reduced service on Saturday. During the week the service is hourly, but this reduces on a Saturday to once every hour and 40 minutes approximately. The times of operation provide for commuting, school travel and shopping/personal business type trips, but with no services during the evenings it does not support leisure or social trips very well.

Bus service 66 is a school/college bus service running between Axbridge and Bridgwater bus station and back once per day during college term time. This provides a school bus connection to Cheddar and a range of other towns and villages in Somerset. The journey takes just over an hour.

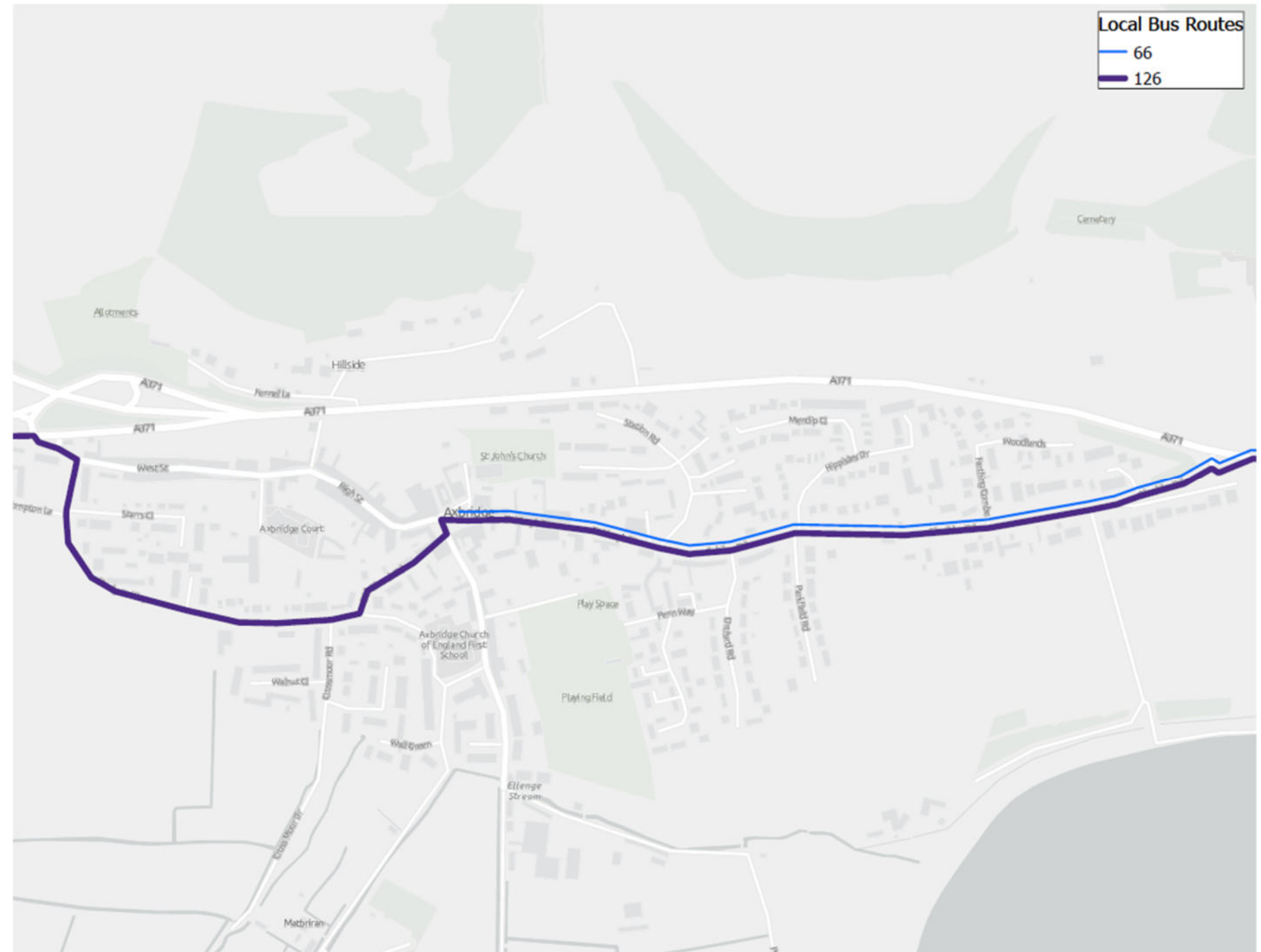
The 126 bus service stops in five locations within the town (West Street, Houlgate Way, The Square, Jubilee Road and Cheddar Road).

The Houlgate Way stop benefits from shelters on both sides of the road, while the Jubilee Road stop only has a shelter for eastbound services. Most other stops are noted by simple flags.

The stop in The Square does not have a flag, but a timetable is provided on a fingerpost sign near benches in the centre of The Square. The stop on eastbound stop on West Street does not have a footway.

There is no real-time information provided at any of the stops.

The 126 service is currently being served by a double deck bus which was introduced to better enable passengers to socially distance themselves. It is not known whether or when the service might revert to a single deck vehicle.



4 Understanding Axbridge

In considering potential opportunities to improve the environment for people travelling through Axbridge on foot a review of baseline information related to the movement network has been undertaken, building upon the range of data collected by various stakeholders such as Somerset County Council and collated into the various Action Group studies undertaken over the years.

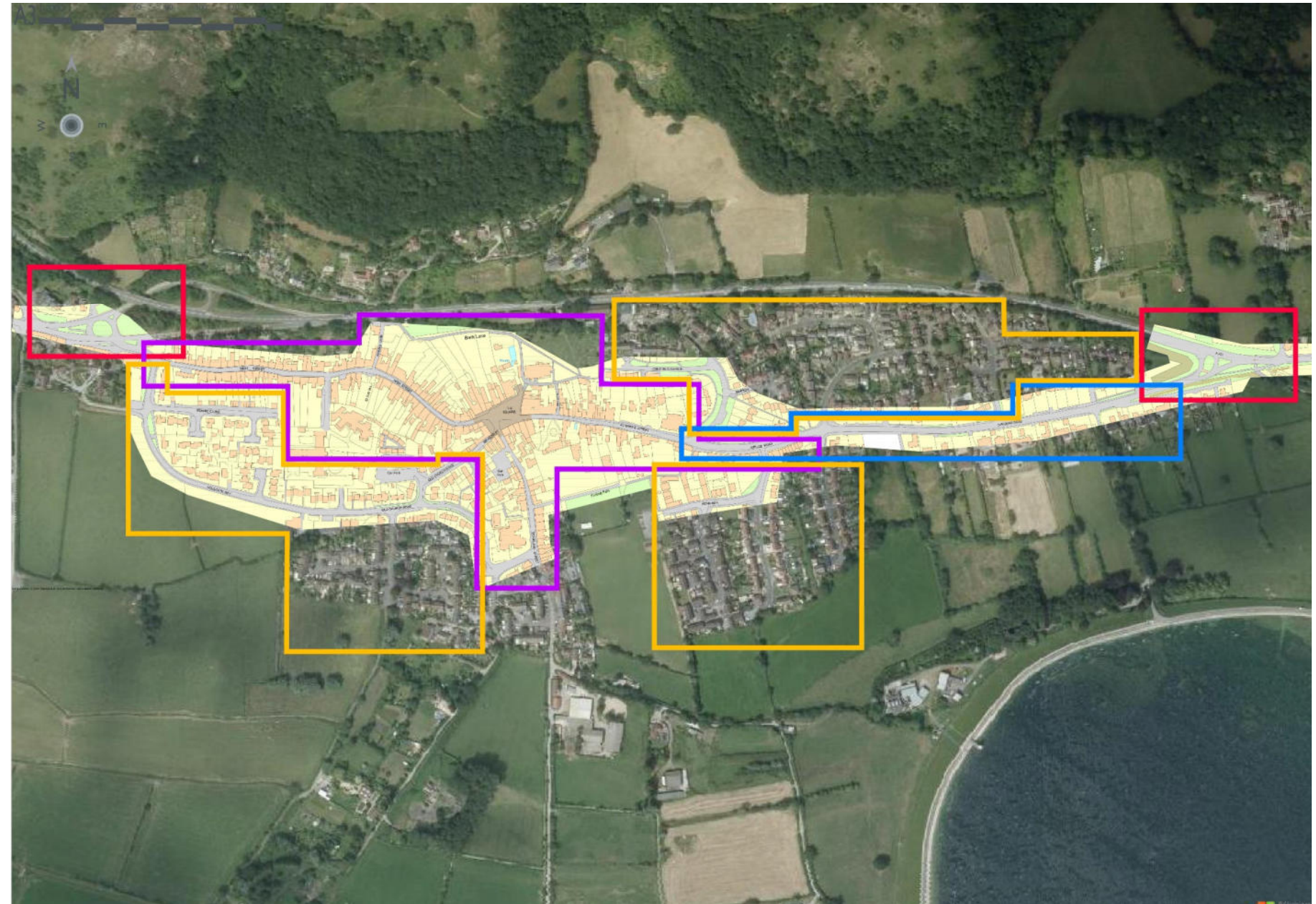
4.1 Movement Network Characteristics

The roads and streets within Axbridge can be grouped into a series of movement character areas which have common elements reflecting historical movement context and the current design standards at the time of design.

It is important to understand these different contexts as different interventions will be need and will be appropriate for different character areas, and for the transition spaces between these characters.

The streets within Axbridge have been characterised into four different types which are listed below and illustrated in the adjacent plan:

- DMRB Roads and junctions (Red)
- Conservation Area Streets (Purple)
- Cheddar Road/Jubilee Road (Blue)
- Somerset Estate Roads (Yellow)



DMRB Road Junctions

These junctions have been designed and constructed as part of the bypass which was built in the late 1960s, and the layout is generally in line with the national trunk road design guidance which is set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

These junctions will have been designed for mainline (A371) speeds of up to 60 mph, and they look to maximise capacity by providing high levels of visibility and generous junction geometry which enables high speed vehicle movements onto and off the A371.

The junction at the western end of the town is an unusual grade separated junction, which terminates at a complex intersection between the slip roads and the roads to Axbridge and Cross. This junction was the subject of the IMA Study in 2020 and has therefore not been considered as part of this study.

The junction at the eastern end of town is more typical of the type of junction which would be found at a major/minor priority junction on a single carriageway main road. The key features of the junction are that it allows westbound vehicles to turn left into Axbridge at relatively high speed via a slip lane, and provides an acceleration lane for traffic turning from Cheddar Road onto the A371.

While the junction provides a high-capacity intersection on a relatively fast road, it provides little benefit for pedestrians and cyclists, and does not form a suitable gateway for vehicles entering Axbridge in that it provides little information to drivers about the place served by the junction and does not adequately communicate a change in the nature of the highway along Cheddar Road.

Given the proximity of the junction to the start of the eastern leg of the traffic free Strawberry Line, the junction arrangement does not provide sufficient facilities to connect cyclists and pedestrians travelling through Axbridge with the Strawberry Line route.

While the speed limit on the A371 is 40mph at the junction, this increases to the national speed limit of 60mph just beyond the junction. There have been local calls to reduce the speed limit to 40mph along the A371 to help pedestrians to cross.

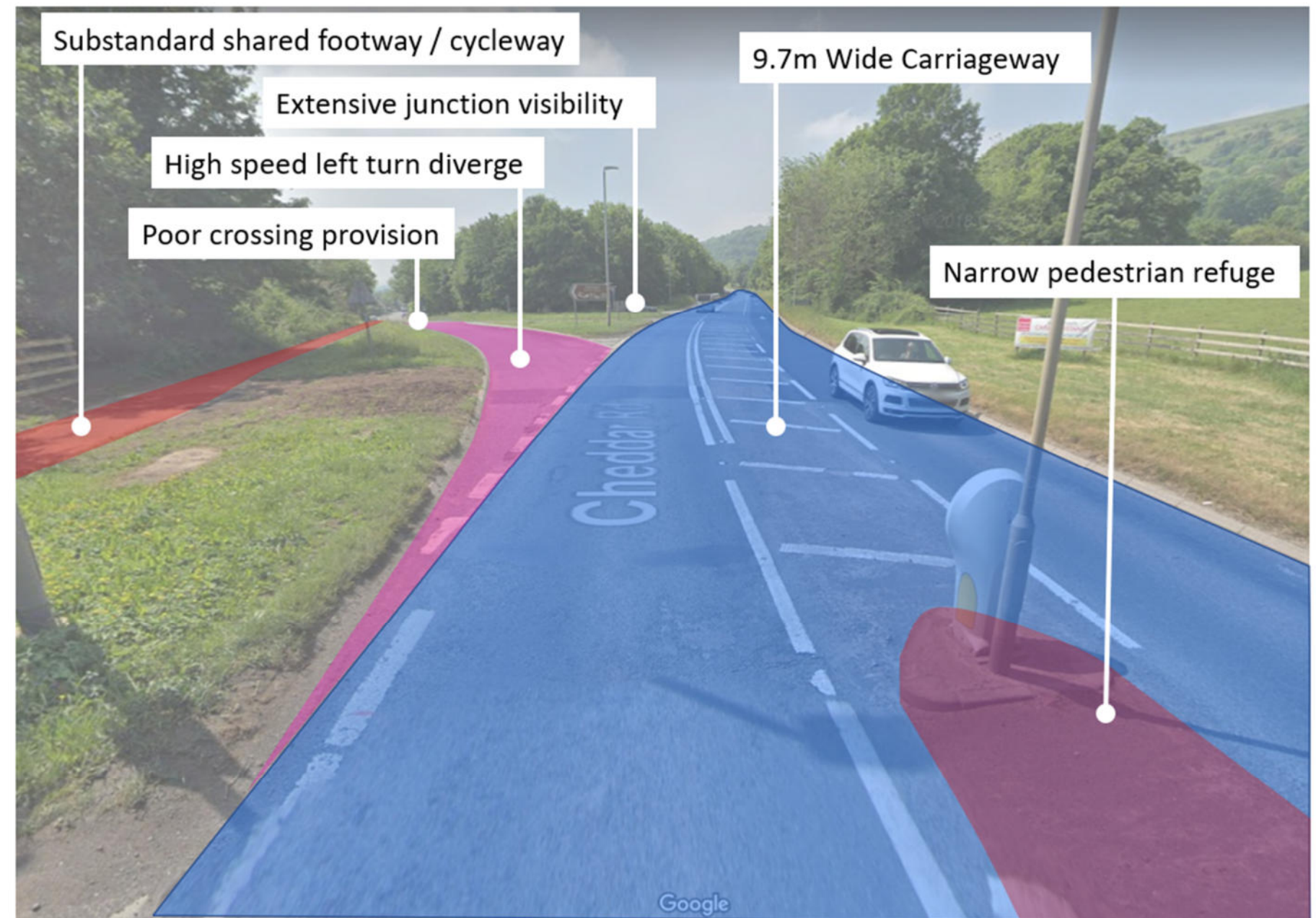


Figure 4.1: A371 Cheddar Road looking west along the Axbridge Bypass

Conservation Area Streets

The historic streets are found at the heart of the medieval town and primarily consist of West Street, High Street, St. Mary's Street, Moorland Street and The Square.

These streets significantly pre-date the invention of motor vehicles and the narrow street sections struggle to cope with any significant volume of modern motor traffic.

Along these streets, buildings typically open out directly onto a narrow footway, providing little protection or privacy to occupants. These narrow footways are generally less than 1 metre wide, and in some areas less than 0.5m and are largely insufficient for use by pedestrians, particularly for parents walking with children, people pushing a buggy or those using a wheelchair to move around the town.

The narrow footways are raised up above the carriageway making it difficult for people to straddle the footway and carriageway in an attempt to walk side by side.

The streets typically feature iron edging rather than stone or concrete kerbs, with the edging likely to have been installed in the late 19th or early 20th Century to protect against damage from metal-rigged wheels which began to be commonly used on horse drawn carts and wagons. The advent of motor vehicles and pneumatic tyres largely removed the need for such robust street edging. This is a rare feature, although widely seen in the centre of Bristol

Between the footways the carriageway varies in width between 4.0m and around 6.0m at its widest point. Along these streets parking is largely prohibited, except for in localised areas where the width and alignment of the street allows for some on-street parking outside peak hours. Most homes along these streets do not have on or off-street parking(on plot), with only a small number of residents able to park at the rear of their property.

A weight limit (7.5t) and height restriction (13' 0") is signed on the eastbound approach to West Street, but not on the westbound approach to High Street, possibly due to the impact this signage might have on the heritage assets here.

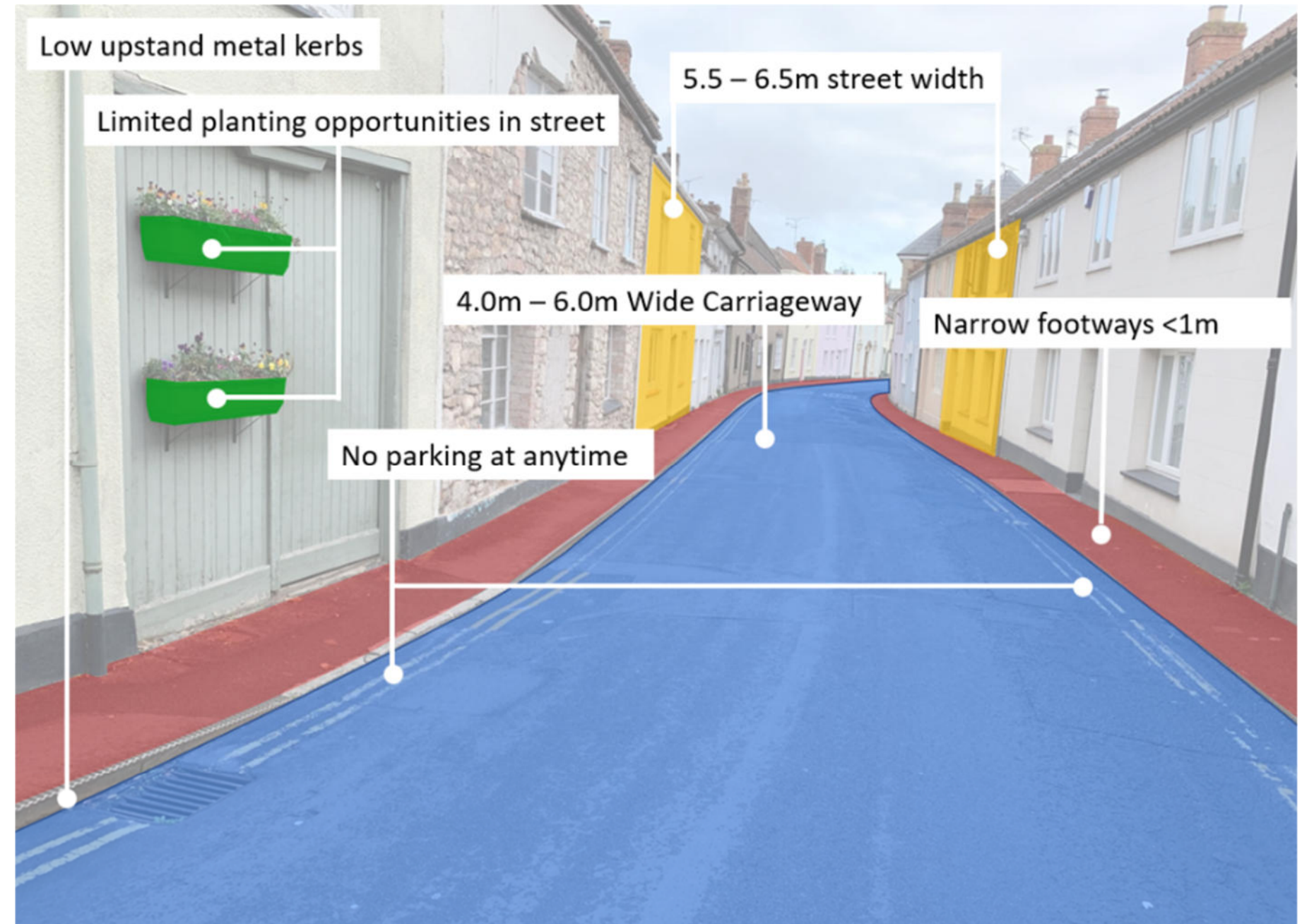


Figure 4.2: Analysis of view looking east along West Street

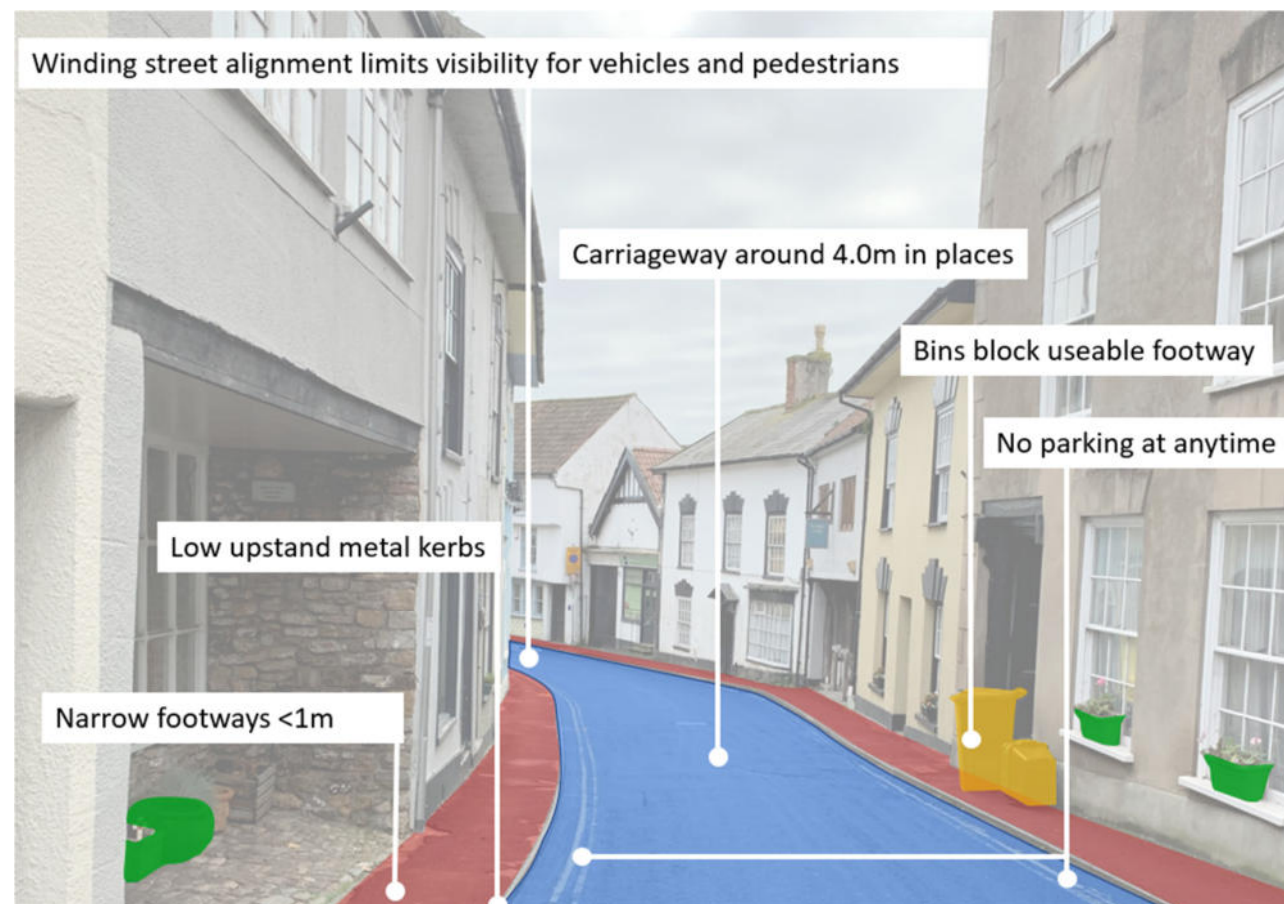


Figure 4.3: Analysis of High Street looking west towards The Square

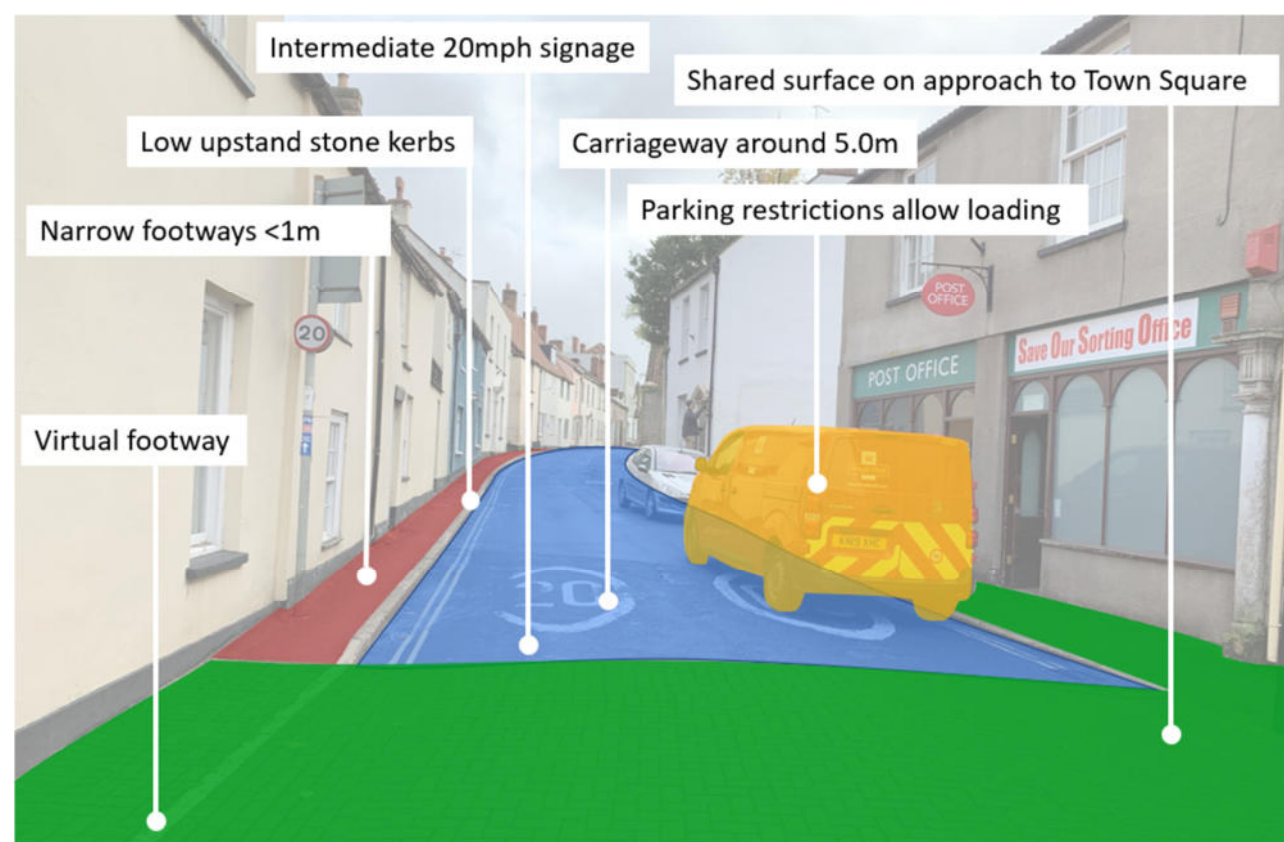


Figure 4.4: Analysis of St. Mary's Street looking west away from The Square

The narrowest street sections are found at the eastern end of High Street where a combination of a narrow carriageway, narrow footways and limited forward visibility due to the highway alignment causes particular issues for safe two-way vehicle movements which impacts on pedestrian amenity.

All these streets within Axbridge are subject to a 20mph speed limit, and the survey information suggests that compliance is reasonably good, although the average speed is still above the limit.

The narrow streets are challenging for servicing, with vehicles loading / unloading largely blocking traffic in either direction and often leading to frustrated drivers mounting the narrow footways to avoid delays. This exacerbates the issues of having doors opening straight onto the back of these narrow footways and make occupiers feel unsafe when venturing out of their homes.

Additionally, activities such as refuse collection require bins to be left obstructing the narrow footways, with many home owners needing to bring bins through their homes on collection day.

There is limited greening along these streets, although some occupiers have introduced window boxes and planters in places. The lack of safe frontage space is likely to discourage many people from attempting this due to concern about damage or the danger that they might face when maintaining such features.

Some of the potential mitigations for these narrow streets, such as the introduction of virtual footways have already been used in places around the town. These are spaces marked for pedestrians which generally sit flush with the carriageway.

St. Mary's Street is slightly wider than the streets to the west of The Square, and benefits from better visibility distances giving drivers more opportunity to pass along here on an informal give-take basis, stopping at wider points in the street to allow on-coming vehicles to pass.

The section of Meadow Street approaching The Square is one of the narrowest highways within the town centre, however it is used by the double deck bus services and is not subject to a vehicle height and weight restriction like High Street and West Street.

The shared surface treatment within The Square extends someway along Meadow Street to mitigate the narrow street section, although some upstand kerbs are retained presumably to help protect adjacent buildings.

Vehicles approaching The Square from the west have very limited visibility to eastbound traffic passing through The Square due to the carriageway alignment within The Square and the location of parking and seating areas.

From Meadow Street looking into The Square parked vehicles dominate the view.

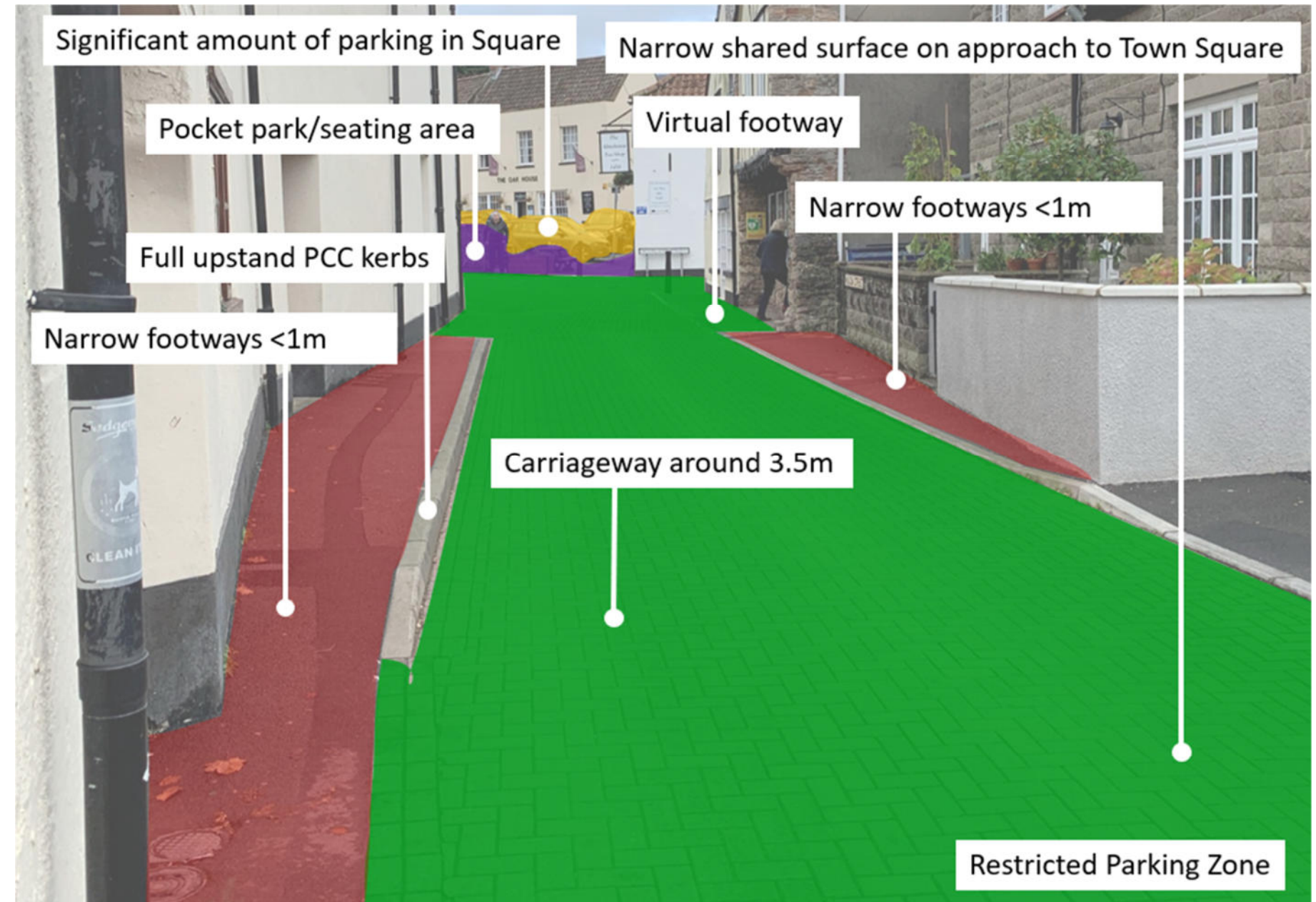


Figure 4.5: Analysis of Meadow Street approaching The Square

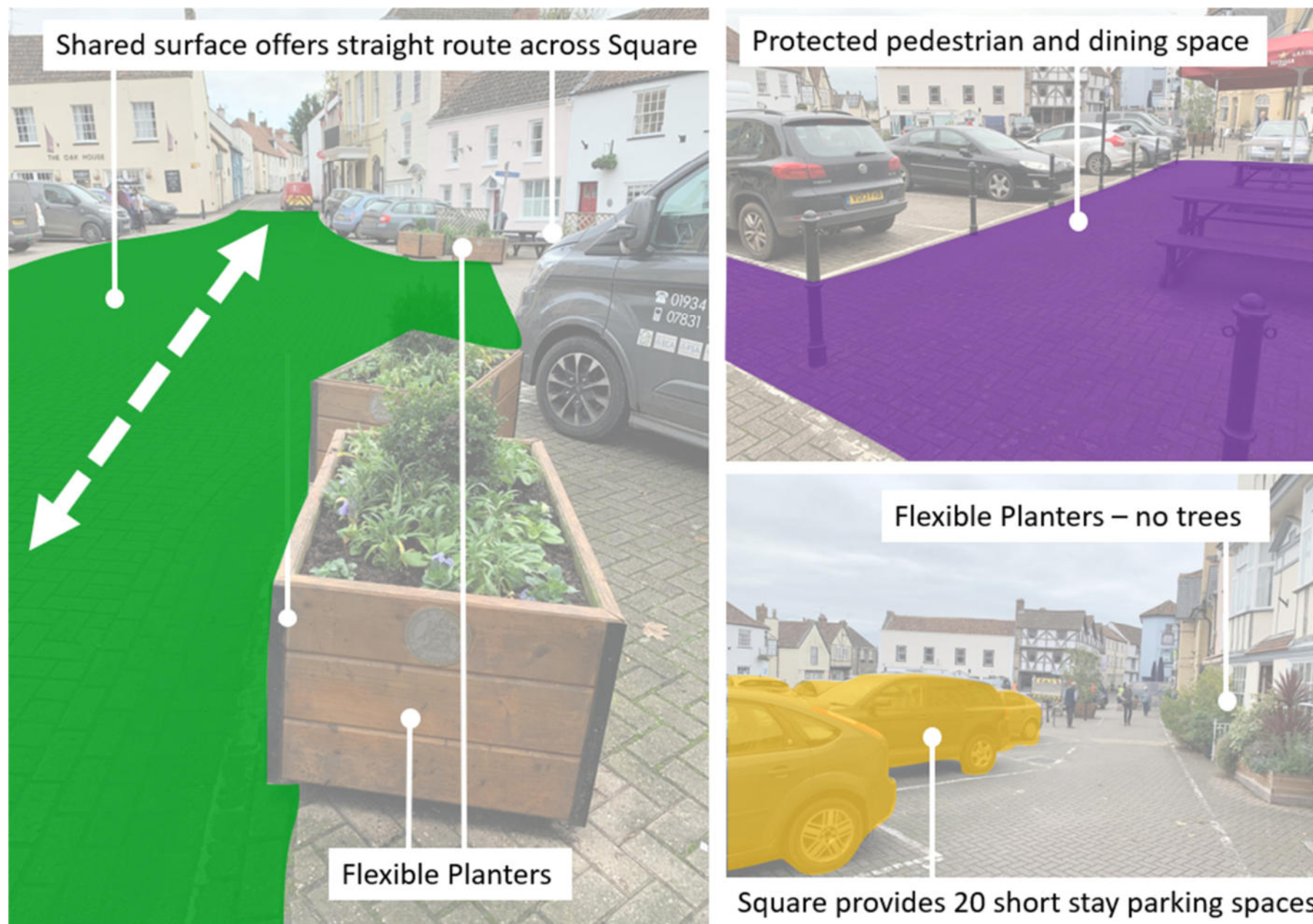


Figure 4.6: Analysis of various aspects of The Square

Within The Square the public realm improvement scheme championed by the Axbridge Action Group has gone some way to control and mitigate the impact of parked vehicles within the space.

However, the arrangement has resulted in a strong east-west link across The Square which suggests that the route for through traffic is between High Street and St. Mary's Street. This visual logic is likely to result in a higher number of vehicles (eastbound in particular) using the narrow High Street to access the A371 and western areas of the town rather than the more appropriately dimensioned Houlgate Way.

The vehicle route through the centre of The Square is also very wide in comparison to the surrounding streets which could lead to vehicles increasing speed at a location where there is the greatest opportunity for conflict with pedestrians.

This arrangement also limits visibility for vehicles looking to turn to and from Meadow Street increasing the likelihood of vehicle conflicts in the space outside the supermarket.

The scheme has delivered significant public realm benefits providing a significant amount of space for outdoor seating and introducing some greening into the hard landscaping.

The highway here provides 20 parking spaces including a disabled parking space. Parking is limited to 1 hour during the day.

Cheddar Road / Jubilee Road

To the east of the town the character of the highway along Jubilee Road and Cheddar Road is significantly different to the streets within the conservation area. These are more modern roads, built to accommodate the strategic movement of cars before later development sprang up alongside it.

These roads would have been part of the A371 linking Axbridge to Cheddar before the introduction of the bypass and have been constructed to maximise capacity and minimise delays for vehicles.

These roads have been constructed with 1.8m – 2.0m wide footways along either side which provide comparative comfort for pedestrians compared to the historic streets. However, this benefit is offset by the higher speed of vehicles travelling along the street, and the lack of provision for people looking to cross the street.

On-street parking is permitted along both sides of the street along the length of Cheddar Road, and when vehicles are parked they can positively act to narrow the road and slow speeds. However, all the homes along here benefit from generous off-street parking meaning that on-street parking is used by visitors, often focused around the access to the reservoir. This means that demand for on-street parking is fleeting and for much of the time the entire carriageway is available for use by drivers.

On Jubilee Road, which transitions between the old and the new, there are some restrictions on parking around the junctions with Parkfield Road, Orchard Road and Chestnut Avenue. There is also a greater requirement for residential on-street parking as some homes fronting the road here do not have off-street parking.

The speed limit for westbound traffic varies between 40mph at the eastern end of Cheddar Road, to 30mph east of Barnabas Close, and 20mph east of Parkfield Road. However, there is little change in the character of the highway across each section meaning that the limit changes could easily be missed.

The straight alignment of the road (providing significant forward visibility), the centreline road markings and the buildings set back from the highway all provide signals to drivers which are likely to encourage higher speeds, particularly for those having travelled along the higher speed A371 which has many of the same features.

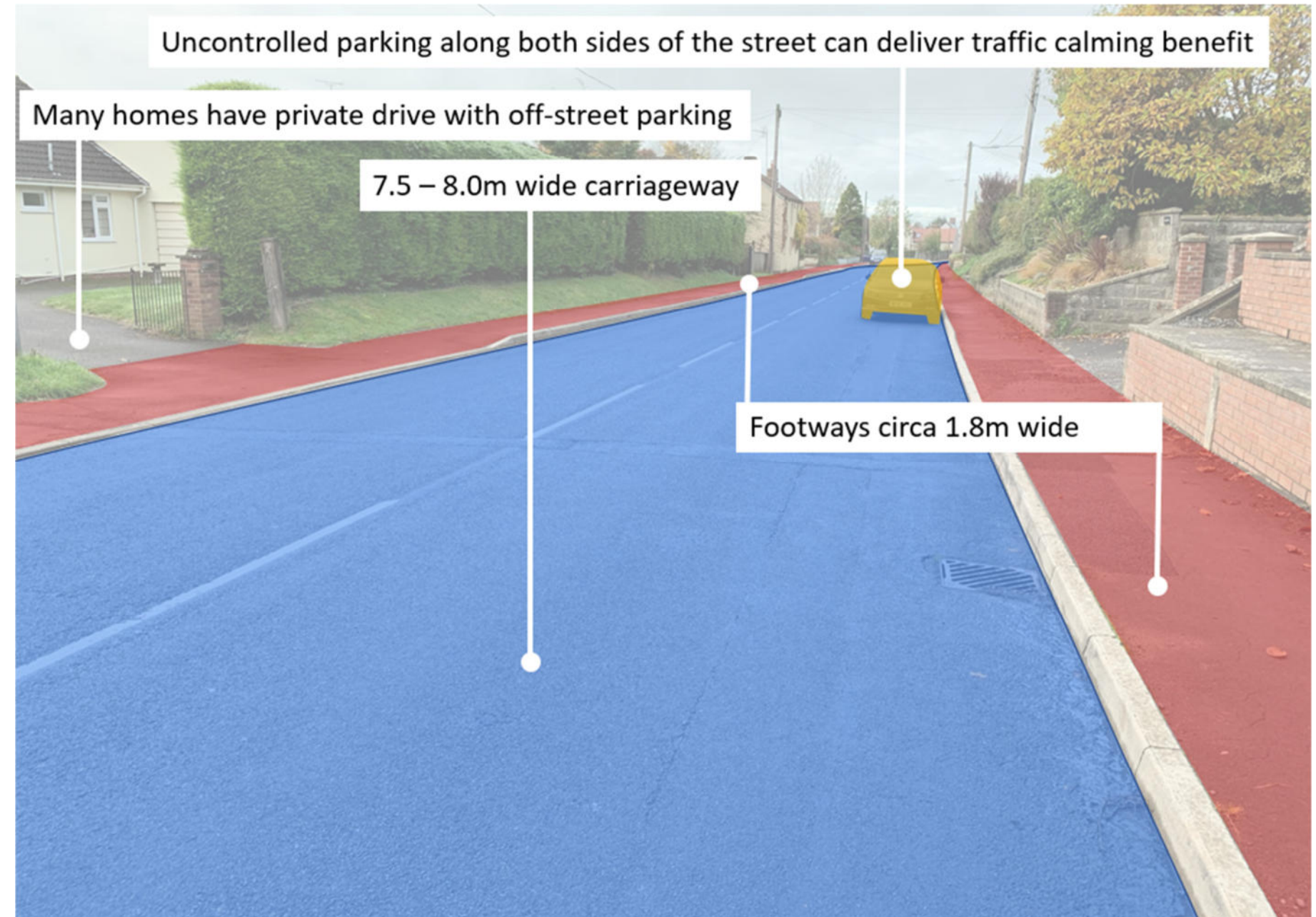


Figure 4.7: Analysis of Cheddar Road looking west towards the town centre

Somerset Estate Roads

There are a number of examples of Somerset Estate Roads within Axbridge, but within the study area the only example is Houlgate Way.

These are streets which are designed in accordance with the Somerset Street design guidance which is currently called “Streets in Residential Developments”.

Houlgate Way has been constructed broadly in line with the guidance for a Collector Street. These feature 5.5m wide carriageways, 30mph speed limits and 2m footways and can serve up to 400 dwellings if linked to higher order roads at either end.

The current Somerset guidance suggests that this type of street should provide a separate cycleway 3.0m wide and that there should be traffic calming features every 60 – 100m to achieve an average speed of 20mph.

The speed limit along Houlgate way is 20mph, but there are no traffic calming features other than 20mph roundels and parked cars to help reduce vehicle speeds. The omission of a centre line marking is likely to help slow traffic.

Outline consent for development accessed from Houlgate Way in the west of the town proposes a reduction in the provision of on-street parking and this is likely to result in increased vehicle speeds along this street.

The character of the street is very different to the other street types, with significant verges and borderless front gardens sitting adjacent to the back edge of the footway. There is more opportunity to increase biodiversity and planting along this street than anywhere else within the study area.

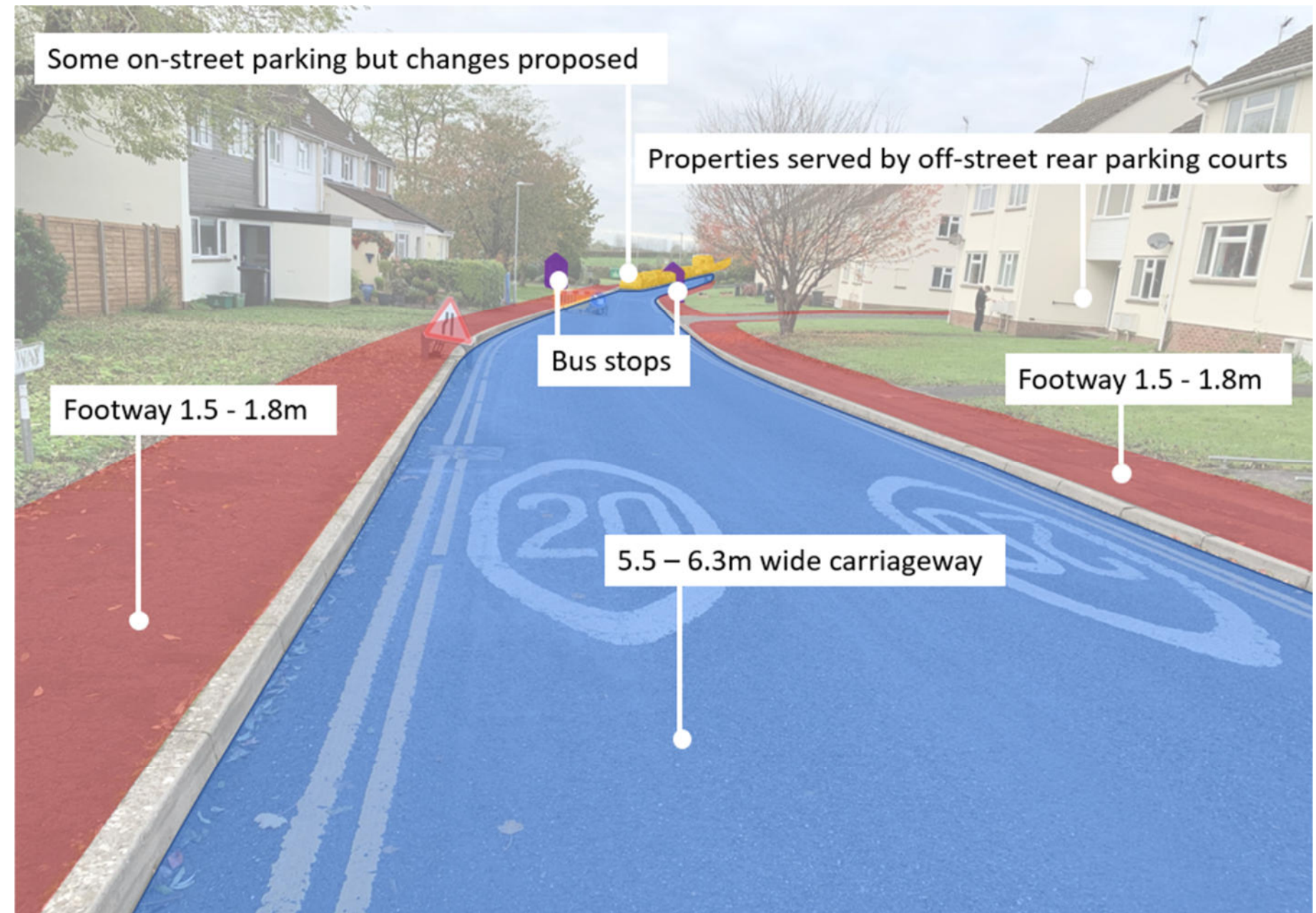


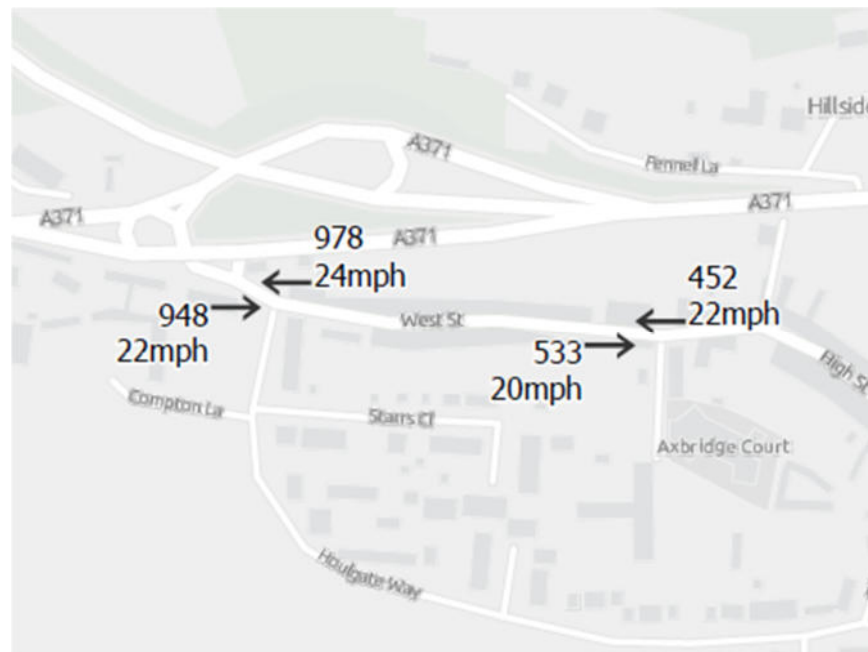
Figure 4.8: Analysis of Houlgate Way looking west

4.2 Traffic Characteristics

Traffic flow and speed surveys were undertaken in April 2018 to help inform the development of Axbridge Neighbourhood Plan. The traffic volume and speed surveys were undertaken by residents and Somerset County Council respectively.

The surveys were undertaken on Cheddar Road, Houlgate Way, West Street and at Townsend at the western end of the town.

The surveys on West Street were undertaken to the east and west of Houlgate Way providing an indication of the volume of traffic using each route to and from The Square.



The daily surveys recorded just under a thousand vehicles per day (VPD) entering and leaving the town to the west, with around half of this traffic travelling via the narrow High Street.

The Department for Transport hold traffic survey information for the A371 northwest of Axbridge, which shows daily two-way flows of around 6,300 VPD, and the Department for Transport figures for Cross Lane show flows of around 7,000 VPD.

The surveys undertaken at other locations in the town focused on the morning, afternoon and midday periods and do not have comparative figures for daily flows.



However, by comparing the figures for Cheddar Road with West Street and Houlgate Way in the peak periods, it can be seen that a similar volume of traffic is using each of the approaches to the town from the A371 with only slightly more traffic using Cheddar Road.

On Cheddar Road, eastbound and westbound flows of 124 and 156 vehicles per hour were recorded in the morning peak hour, with West Street recording 47 (eb) and 54 (wb) vehicles respectively and Houlgate Way recording 64 (eb) and 104 (wb) vehicles in this hour.

During the afternoon peak hour Cheddar Road recorded eastbound and westbound flows of 108 and 137 vehicles per hour, with West Street recording 81 (eb) and 51 (wb) vehicles respectively and Houlgate Way recording 79 (eb) and 63 (wb) vehicles in this hour.

Generally, flows through the town are low, and it is likely that these are linked to journeys made by residents living in the town, or by people visiting the town for work, education, shopping or leisure.

It is unlikely that there is any significant level of through traffic (originating outside the town) passing through The Square. However, it is possible that people living in the east and the west of the town are choosing to pass through the town, for westbound and eastbound journeys respectively rather than using the bypass.

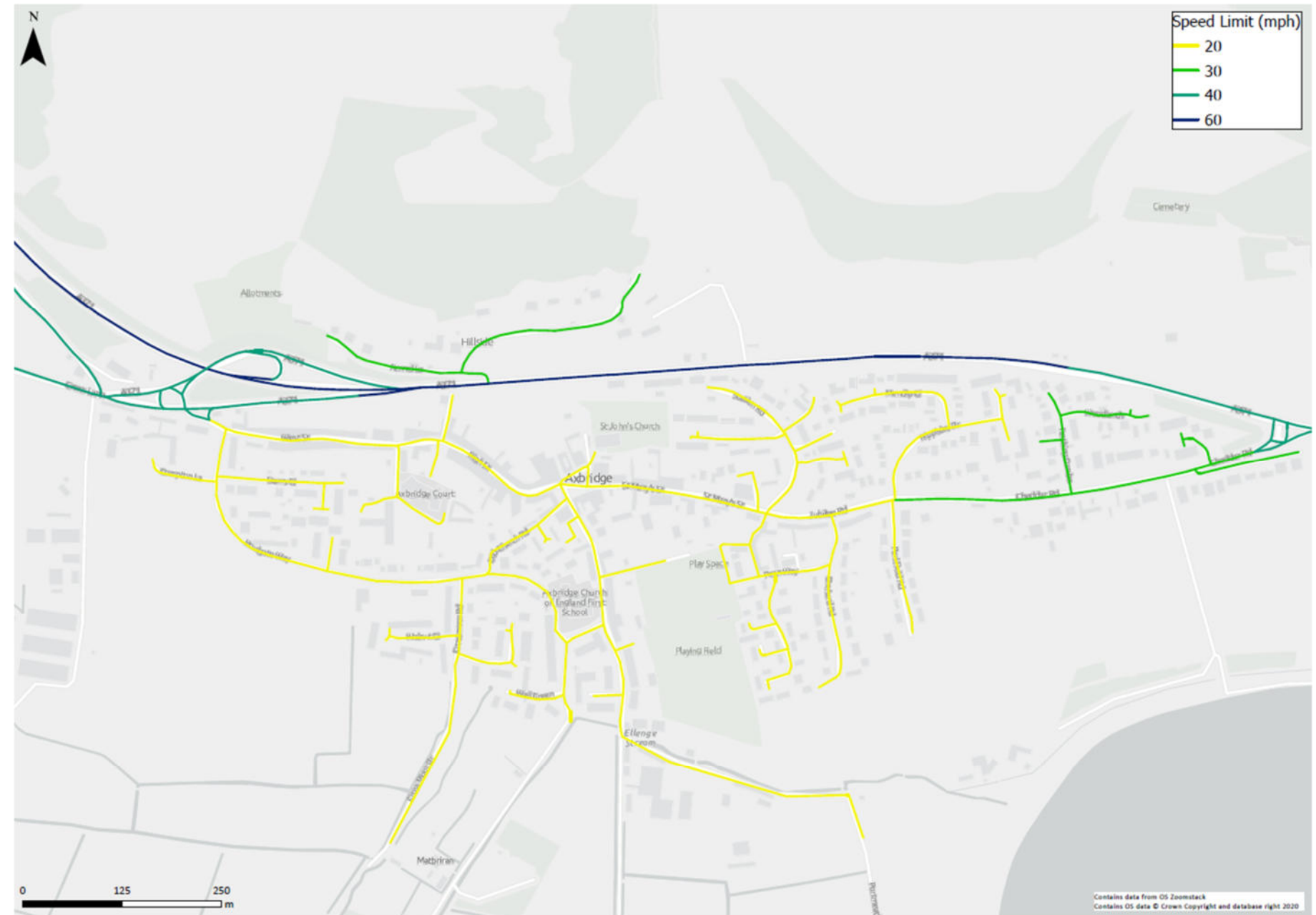
Across the town, HGVs account for less than 1% of traffic, but around 12% is made up of vans. This is not surprising given the opportunity for HGVs to bypass the town, and the ability of smaller vans to better serve the narrow streets of Axbridge.

Buses make up a small proportion of the vehicles passing through the town, which reflects the level of service.

4.3 Speed Limits

Most of the town is covered by a 20mph speed limit, although the roads at the eastern end of town are subject to a 30mph speed limit. A plan of the town showing the speed limits can be seen overleaf.

There is limited information available on the actual speed of vehicles passing through the town. However, the traffic surveys undertaken by Somerset County Council in 2018 provided an indication that the average speed of traffic on West Street was around 20mph (20 – 22mph) to the east of Houlgate Way and slightly higher (22 – 24mph) to the west of Houlgate Way.



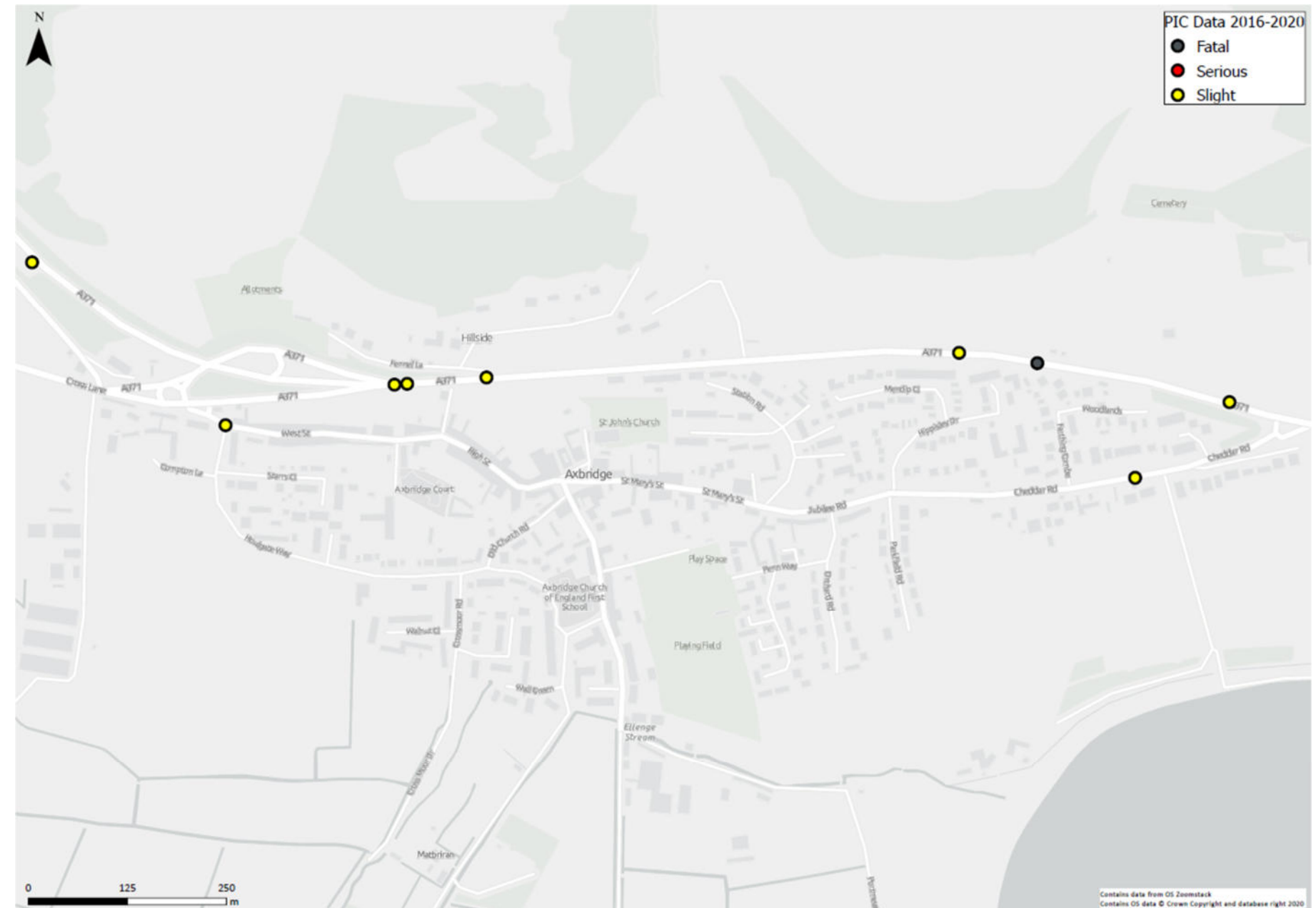
4.4 Highway Safety

Department for Transport Personal Injury Accident data has been reviewed for the local highway network in and around Axbridge. The data includes only collisions which result in injury to one or more persons, damage only collisions are not recorded.

During the past 5 years there have been two personal injury accidents recorded in Axbridge. One at the junction of Houlgate Way with West Street in July 2019 and one on Cheddar Road to the east of the reservoir access road in July 2018. Both collisions resulted in slight injury. The one on West Street involved a collision between a car and bicycle resulting in injury to the rider. The collision on Cheddar Road was between a car and a pedestrian resulting in injury to the pedestrian.

During the same period seven collisions were recorded on the A371, including one resulting in a fatality.

It is understood that a further collision occurred by Compton House, West Street in 2021 which resulted in injury. This does not appear in the official records as the official records typically update annually nine months after the end of the year.



The Strategic Approach

The strategic aim of this study is to improve pedestrian amenity across the town. In doing so it is likely that benefits will be derived by the entire community as well as by people who cycle or ride horses within the town.

Improvements to pedestrian amenity align with the Neighbourhood Plan objectives, and local and national policy around public health, road safety and climate change.

As already set out, the issues and opportunities presented by the movement network in Axbridge have been considered and documented through numerous studies, but with the exception of the changes within The Square, the recommendations of past studies have not delivered significant changes in the operation of the road network, or significant improvements in pedestrian amenity.

This study considers these issues and opportunities in order to develop a series of concept design options which can be used to attract funding and deliver physical changes to the town.

The strategy for improvement follows the well establish hierarchy of road users, reproduced below from the Department for Transport Manual for Streets, which clearly requires that the needs of the most vulnerable road users are considered above motorised traffic, with the private car taking the lowest priority in decisions around the use of the limited street space within the town.

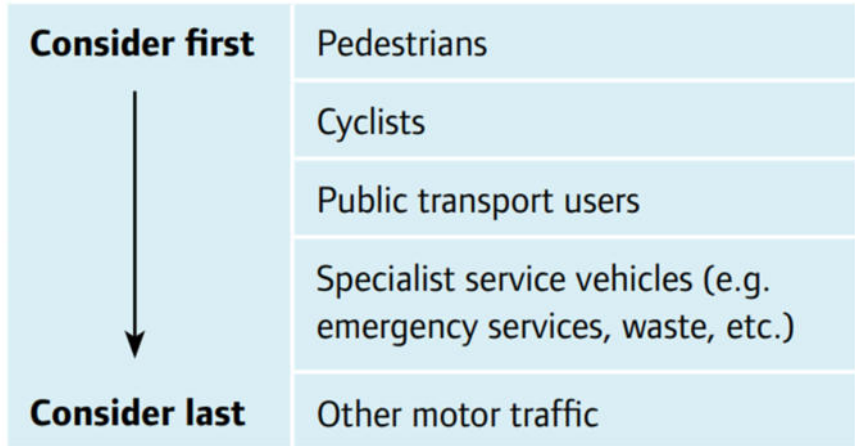


Figure 0.3: Manual for Streets Hierarchy of road users

This approach is further supported by the recent changes to the Highway Code which was updated in 2021 to incorporate a similar hierarchy of road users which gives greater priority to pedestrians and cyclists over motor vehicles and requires drivers to modify their previous behaviour, particularly at side roads.

This study considers the various street typologies found in Axbridge, and the importance of its heritage assets, to identify a range of measures which may be appropriate for different locations within each context.

The design of these measures draws on best practice guidance and precedent examples to ensure that the proposals are suitable and deliverable where suggested, subject to further detailed design.

The application of these measures across the town is guided by input from the Axbridge Action Group and the wide community, with concept design proposals following on from engagement with the community.

Finally, a phasing strategy for the delivery of these concepts is set out, along with high level costings and an overview of potential funding options.

Once the study and its outputs have been agreed by the Action Group, the work will be presented to the Town Council and to Somerset County Council. It is hoped that this will be the start of a discussion which will see the initial phases delivered.

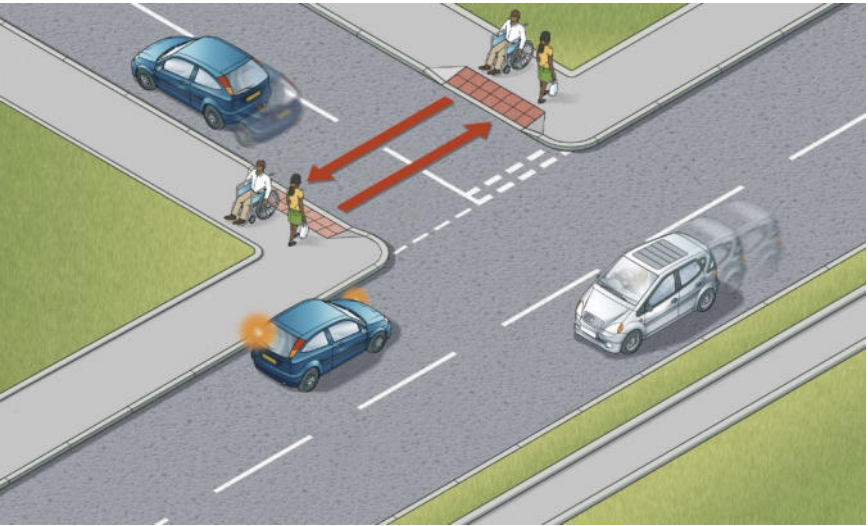


Figure 0.2: DfT Illustration supporting Rule H2 which requires turning drivers to give way to pedestrians crossing side roads

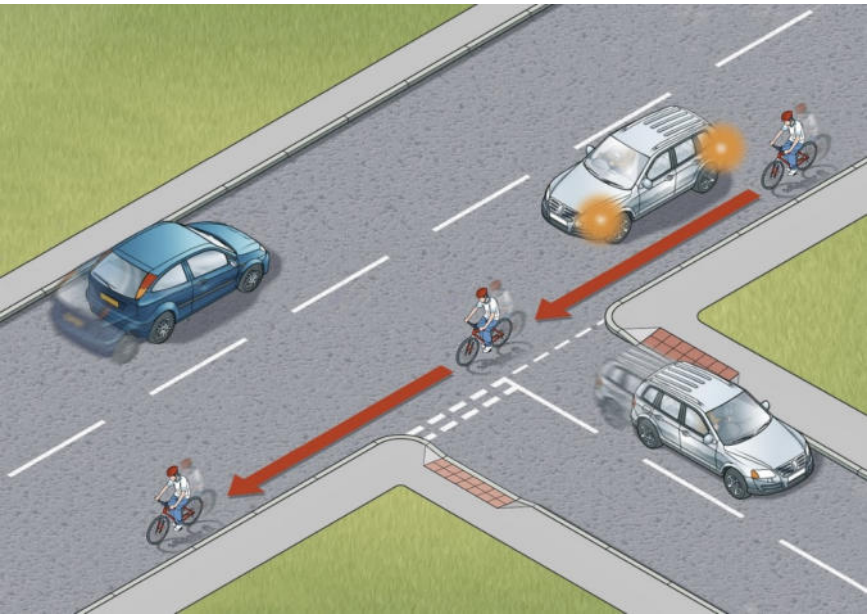


Figure 4.1: DfT Illustration supporting Rule H3 which requires turning drivers to give way to cyclists proceeding ahead before turning

5 Interventions

5.1 The right intervention in the right place

Based upon the character analysis of the streets within the study area there are a range of interventions which could be considered to deliver the Action Group aspirations and the Neighbourhood Plan objectives around improving pedestrian amenity.

This section of the report provides an overview of the approaches which have been considered, with different types of interventions being determined by the character of the street.

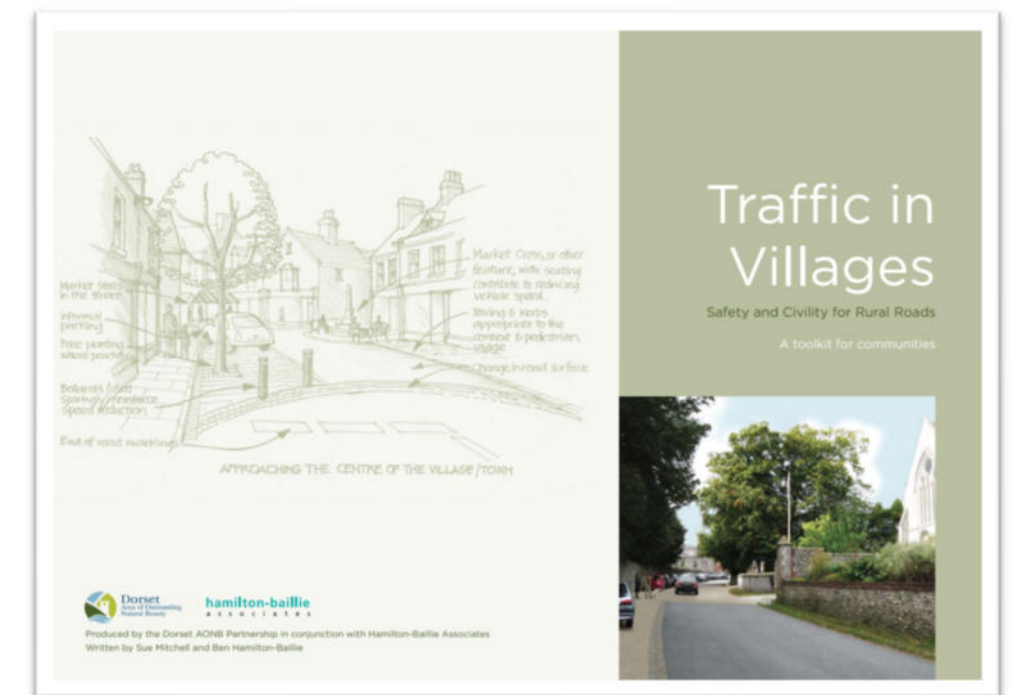
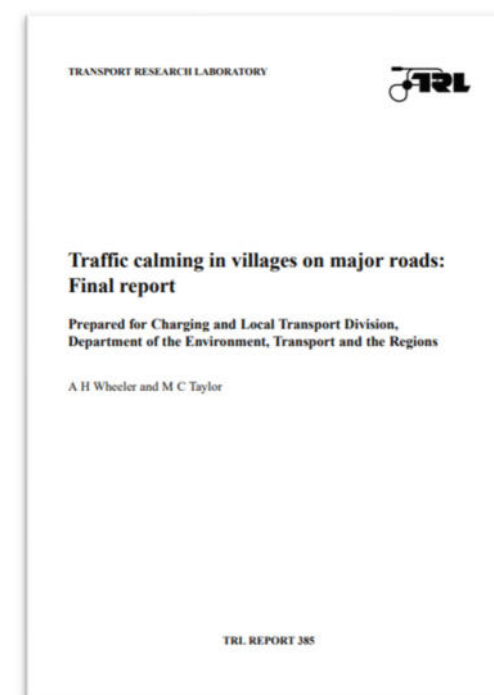
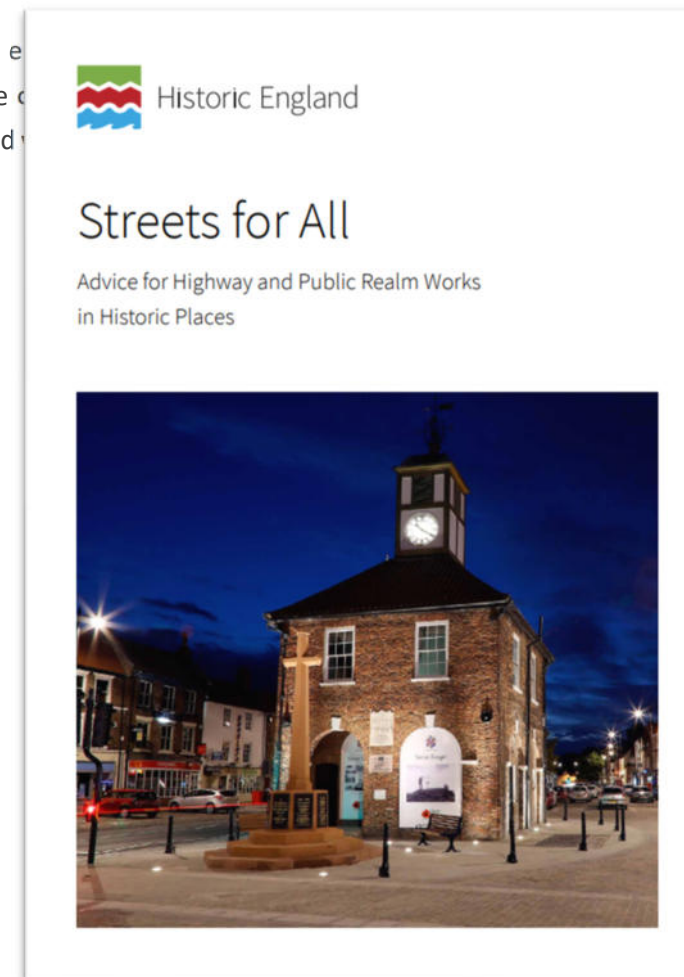
These measures build upon best practice guidance set out in Manual for Streets 1 and 2 which is primarily focused on the design of new streets and places, and which specifically consider the impact of carriageway widths, junction geometry and visibility on the way in which people move around these places and the way in which drivers behave.

Additionally, the approach towards traffic management in rural settlements which is set out within the Traffic in Villages toolkit is also very relevant to many of the contexts found in Axbridge. The toolkit was produced by the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership to help town and parish councils in considering how the harmful effects of traffic could be mitigated without resorting to typical traffic calming techniques which rely upon traffic islands, bollards, white paint, and retroreflective signs. The toolkit sets out an approach where an understanding of a place and carefully considered public realm interventions can deliver similar benefits for calming traffic while enhancing a places local distinctiveness.

The 2018 Streets for all document published by Historic England, also supports a sympathetic approach to traffic management stating, *“A successful public realm is one in which the differing needs of all road users, including people on foot, in cars or using bicycles and others, are served without the need for excessive signs, road markings or physical barriers.”*

These documents build on research by the Transport Research Laboratory and others which show that in many cases the omission of the typical cues and guidance provided by road markings and signage can help to improve driver behaviour and slow traffic.

At the community level, the report provides an overview of a range of interventions and their thinking around them.



5.2 Conservation Area Streets

Within the Conservation Area measures should be introduced which require minimal signage and road markings so as not to detract from the historic street scene.

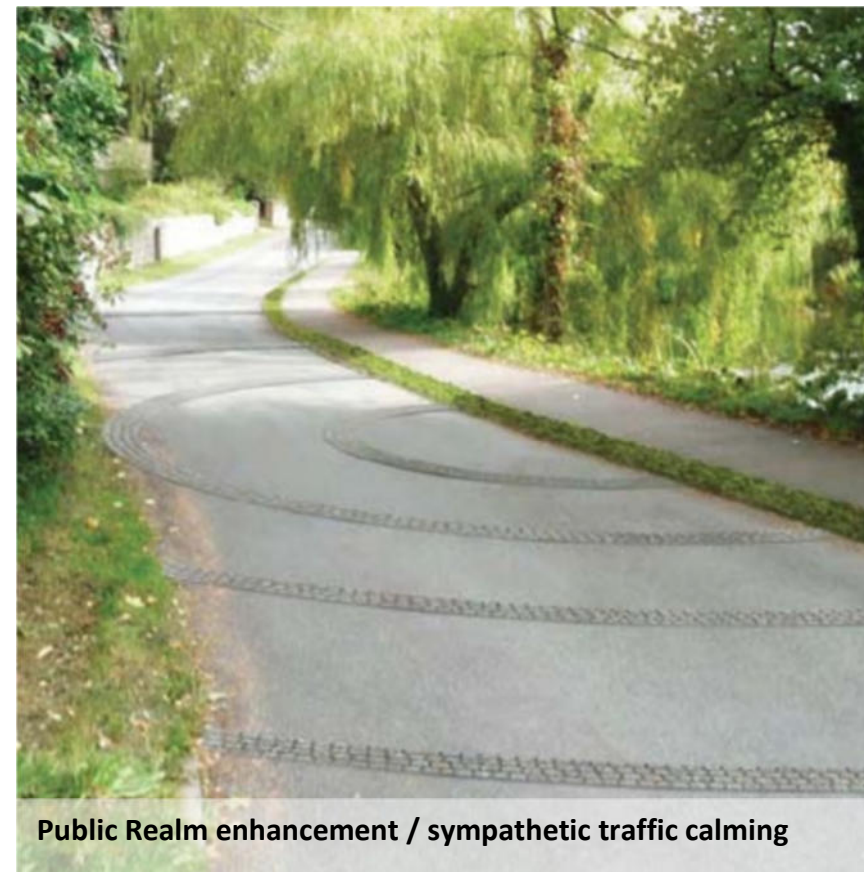
The challenges in these areas are typically related to the width of the street which can make it difficult for two-way vehicles to pass one another and provides pedestrians and cyclists with little comfort room if this interaction occurs in their vicinity.

In these areas it will be necessary to compromise on the functionality of the street and given the hierarchy of modes these compromises should largely be made by motorised vehicles.

The guidance and examples set out in Traffic in Villages, and Streets for All are particularly relevant in these areas.

The measures suggested in these areas included:

- One-way working to provide more space for people to walk
- One-way working with contra-flow cycling
- Gateway features to reinforce the change in character signalled through the build environment
- Virtual (painted) Footways
- Planting opportunities / SUDs
- Increase on-street parking provision
- Low impact public realm enhancements such as the introduction of contrasting materials within the carriageway.



Public Realm enhancement / sympathetic traffic calming



Virtual Footways



Give-take arrangements



Level Surfaces and heritage materials

5.3 DMRB Junctions

At the larger junctions it is more difficult to justify the use of sympathetic / low impact traffic calming techniques due to the higher speeds and traffic volumes. However, with 30 – 40mph speed limits many of the aspects of Manual for Streets guidance will be appropriate in considering how the highway can be changed through the control of junction geometry and forward visibility.

As noted previously these junctions form key gateways into the town and it is important that measures at these gateways signal to drivers that they are transitioning from a road with a predominantly movement function to a street which is part of a places.

The focus for change is at the eastern end of the town given that a scheme has already been proposed for the junction at the western end of town. Measures introduced in these locations need to consider the volume and speed of traffic passing this junction and the need to maintain safe operation of the A371 as a main road.

The key interventions suggested here are:

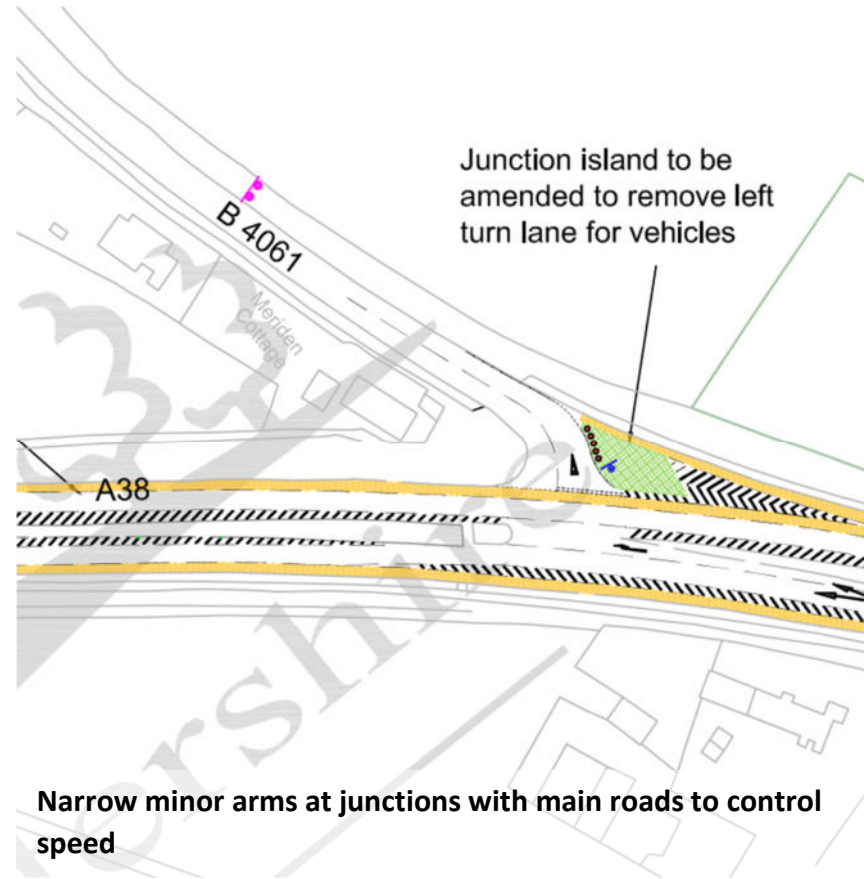
- Narrow junctions and reduce speed of turning vehicles
- Provide a sense of arrival into the town
- Focus on providing appropriate provision for walking and cycling reflecting the importance of the Strawberry Line



Provide suitable facilities for walking and cycling



Use gateways to slow traffic and create a sense of arrival



Narrow minor arms at junctions with main roads to control speed



Introduce green infrastructure to soften vehicle dominated spaces and increase biodiversity

5.4 Cheddar Road and Somerset Estate Roads

These streets perhaps offer the greatest potential for change without requiring significant compromises in their movement function as they generally have a carriageway width which is suitable for two-way traffic flows and on-street parking. Generally, it is this width which results in driver behaviour which negatively impacts upon pedestrian amenity and the safe use of streets by cyclists.

Here the approach will be to restrict the carriageway width to the minimum requirements for the volume of traffic using the road, while maintaining the on-street parking and access to private driveways. To enhance this width reduction visual clues such as centreline markings can also be removed.

The footway provision in these areas is generally adequate, but frequent informal crossing opportunities need to be introduced. Where additional space is taken away from the carriageway it can be used to introduce street trees, pocket parks, seating and Sustainable Urban Drainage features which can improve pedestrian amenity and draw in a range of additional benefits.

Interventions along the more modern street types within Axbridge could be applicable on both the east and west side of the town, although they will need to respond to the different speed limits

- Introduce buildouts to lock in the benefits of informal parking
- Consider priority working to slow traffic and provide space for wider footway, planting, and seating
- Centreline removal
- Improve sense of place



Removal of centre line markings and traditional traffic management measures such as signs and painted marks



Use buildouts to protect parking spaces, calm traffic, improve pedestrian crossings or increase biodiversity



Raised tables help to signal changes in the street environment and make it easier for pedestrians to cross informally



Side road treatments along wider roads help to reinforce recent changes to the highway code

6 Community Engagement

6.1 Workshop Event

In November 2021, as part of this study, PJA and the Axbridge Action Group held a workshop to present the initial analysis findings and to draw out local thoughts about the issues and opportunities to make Axbridge more pleasant to move around on foot.

The workshop was held in St. John's Church, where approximately 25 people from across Axbridge including members of the Axbridge Action Group came together to share their views and local understanding, and to help draw up a range of measures which might address the emerging issues.

The event consisted of a presentation of PJAs analysis of Axbridge streets and discussion around the type of interventions (as discussed in section 5) which might be suitable within the town.

Following the presentation, the attendees were split into three groups for a facilitated workshop where they were asked to draw and write on plans of the town as they discussed their experience and views on various aspects of the town, a summary of which is presented in section 6.2.

To start the discussions attendees were given a range of prompt questions including

- Where do you want to see changes made to the streets of Axbridge?
- Would you support the introduction of one-way working on High Street?
- What would make journeys on foot within the town more pleasant?
- Where might gateway features be introduced?
- Should parking in The Square be reduced or reorganised to make more space for public life?
- Where else should we be looking to address vehicle dominance?

The attendees discussed a wide range of issues including those which lie outside of the scope or study area for this study. Their thoughts were captured on plans which are reproduced in appendix A and summarised overleaf.



6.2 Summary of workshop outputs

West Street / High Street

Suggested measures primarily focused on the delivery of a narrower carriageway and wider footways or virtual footways to make walking along the street more pleasant and to reduce the dominance of vehicles.

Vehicle speeds rather than volume seemed to be a key concern in several groups with a range of suggestions to mitigate including the introduction of width restrictions and speed tables.

There was general support for the introduction of one-way working along this stretch of road in order to make space for improved pedestrian facilities. Although it was suggested that this should remain two-way for cyclists.

It was highlighted that the impact of traffic is exacerbated by the proximity of front doors to the carriageway edge.

Some groups discussed whether there were opportunities to provide a greater level of on-street parking or loading bays in this area.

At the junction of West Street and Houlgate Way there was strong support for changing the junction priority to direct more traffic along Houlgate Way which is wider and better able to accommodate the flow.

There was also a suggestion to look at the re-opening of a historic pedestrian route between High Street and the town car park via the Care Home site.

Houlgate Way

The proposed development to the southwest of Houlgate Way was discussed by all groups with a range of concerns identified around increases in traffic and the potential loss of on-street parking.

Comments were also raised about traffic on the road exceeding the speed limit and consideration of measures to help slow traffic.

Some of the workshop attendees asked whether there was an opportunity to increase on-street parking here and there was support for a residents parking scheme.

Meadow Street / Old Church Road

There focus of discussion in this area was around the extension of the shared space area and the introduction of a level surface which removed the narrow footways on either side of the street to create more usable space.

The Square

There was a mix of views around the retention of parking in The Square, with some groups seeking the removal of most parking and others asking that it was all retained. There was no call for increasing provision here however.

The alignment of the traffic route through The Square was discussed by all groups, with the current arrangement raising concerns around vehicle conflict at the corner of Meadow Street and Moorland Road, and the way in which the road direct westbound traffic to the High Street.

Vehicle speeds in The Square were raised as a concern.

St. Mary's Street

St. Mary's Street is an important link in the town's pedestrian network, but the volume of traffic and narrow footways make it unpleasant to walk along.

It was noted that St. Mary's is an important part of the step free route between The Square and the Church.

It was suggested that the proposals look to raise the carriageway to footway level to form a shared surface with priority given to pedestrian and with a single lane width for vehicles.

Jubilee Road

The issues on this stretch of road were almost all focused on parking and its impact upon traffic flow.

Recommendations from the groups included the removal of parking opposite Orchard Road and either side of the junction to improve the safe operation of the junction.

However, the positive aspect of parked cars slowing traffic was also noted, and any changes here must not result in higher vehicle speeds.

Cheddar Road

The speed of traffic was a common theme in discussions around Cheddar Road and a range of measures suggested to mitigate against this including the introduction of chicanes and gateway features to control speed.

It was noted that the junction of Cheddar Road with the A371 felt unsafe for people on-foot or cycling, and that the layout resulted in higher speed turning movements.

The use of Cheddar Road for on-street parking was also discussed. In areas, particularly around the reservoir access it was felt that the parking demand had a negative impact upon local residents and on people cycling along Cheddar Road.

The use of Cheddar Road by cyclists was noted as an important part of the Strawberry Line route, and measures were suggested to make it easier for people to connect between the on and off-road sections of this route.

Beyond the Study Scope

A range of topics were also discussed which lie beyond the scope of this study. These included discussions around the delivery of a safety improvement scheme at the Townsend junction, improvements to pedestrian crossing facilities over the bypass and the construction of a new car park for the town accessed directly from the bypass.

7 Proposed interventions

Based upon ideas provided by the workshop attendees and informed by the wider study as series of interventions were drawn up covering all the streets within the study area. The plans are appended to this report (Appendix B), and a brief description of each drawing is set out below.

7.1 West Street and Houlgate Way

At the western end of town, the main change to the movement network is found at the junction of West Street with Houlgate Way where it is proposed that priorities are changes to encourage a greater amount of town centre traffic to turn right along Houlgate Way.

West of Houlgate Street a gateway feature is proposed to highlight the change in speed limit, and to mark the start of the urban area of the town.

Along West Street it is proposed that two-way working is maintained as far as Horn's Lane, but the carriageway is visually narrowed with the introduction of a virtual footway along the south side of the street. When two vehicles pass it will require the vehicles to drive across the virtual footway, but this will happen far less frequently than currently experienced due to the reduced level of westbound traffic using West Street due to the proposed introduction of one-way working on High Street.

Opportunities to introduce planters along the edge of the virtual footway should be considered at the detailed design stage, although it is likely that there will be limited opportunities to introduce anything substantial due to the restrictive carriageway widths.

On Houlgate Way a series of buildouts with give-take working are proposed to mitigate the removal of on-street parking as part of the development proposals. The proposals have been designed to be compliment the consented development access proposals.

At side roads tactile paving is already provided, but it is proposed that these crossing places are highlighted through surface dressing to indicate pedestrian causeways.



Figure 7.1: Drawing 05818-SK-001-P1 - Refer to Appendix B for larger scale version showing intervention proposals

7.2 High Street, Meadow Street, St. Mary's Street

It is proposed that one-way working eastbound is introduced on High Street except for cycles who would retain the ability to travel in both directions along this section of road.

The one-way working will be complimented by a virtual footway on the south side of the street. This could also provide space to allow eastbound vehicles and westbound cycles to pass more easily.

A raised carriageway on the approach to The Square minimises conflict between pedestrians and eastbound vehicles by allowing better use of the carriageway edges.

On Old Church Road and Meadow Street is proposed that the existing priority junctions are revised in order to remove any notion of priority and to enhance the public realm on this key approach to the town centre.

The measures proposed include the introduction of simple roundels which could be constructed by inlaying setts or through the use of surface dressing. The proposals also improve opportunities for pedestrians to cross all arms of the junction.

There is good potential on this approach to increase the quality of the landscaped verges through the introduction of enhanced planting and trees or by converting some into functions Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) features.

Formal priority working is introduced on Meadow Street giving priority to traffic travelling westbound away from The Square.

On St. Mary's Street the carriageway is raised to maximise the spaces usable by pedestrians, and a priority working arrangement is introduced giving priority to eastbound traffic leaving The Square.

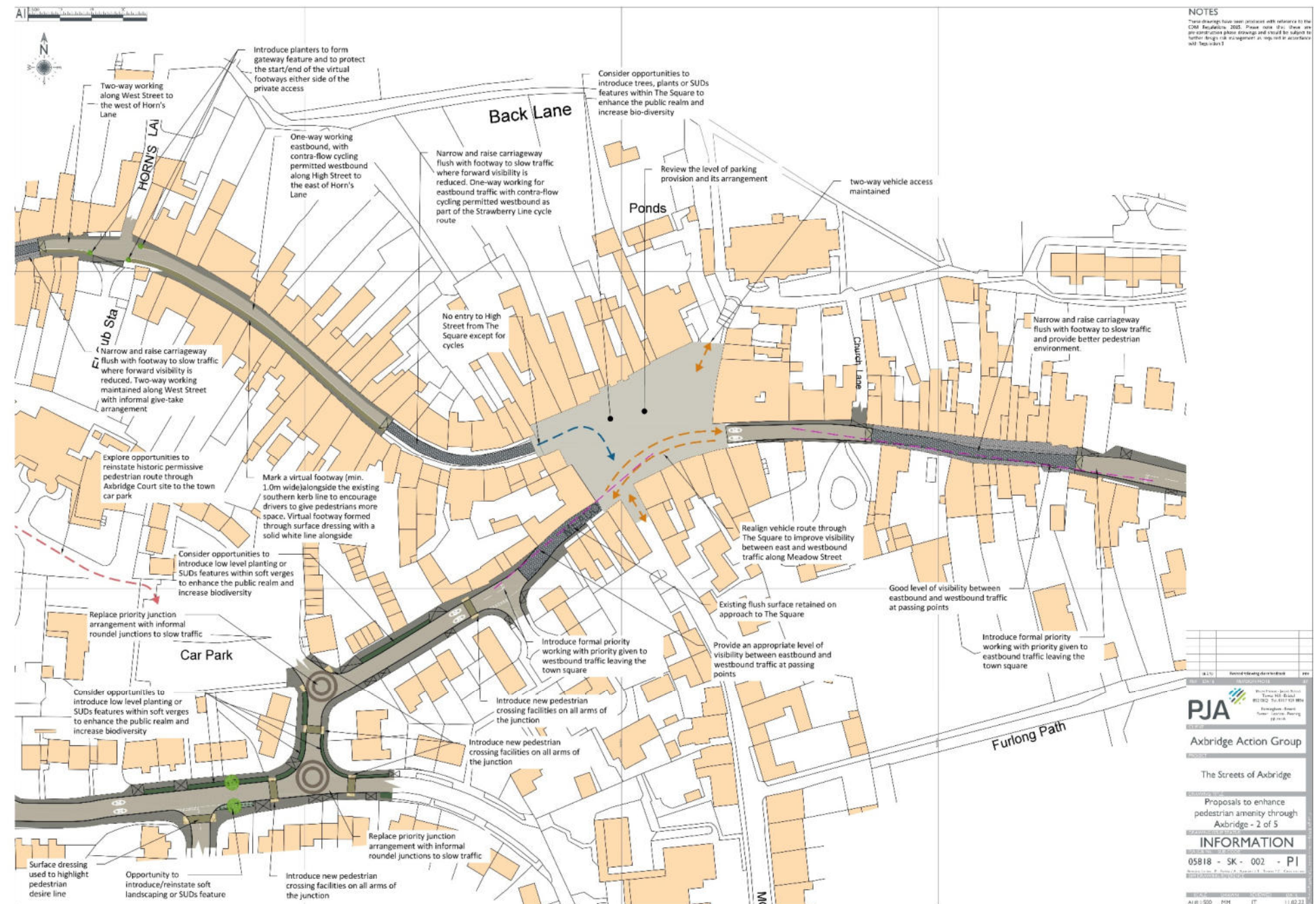


Figure 7.2: Drawing 05818-SK-002-P1 - Refer to Appendix B for larger scale version showing intervention proposals

7.3 The Square

No detailed proposals are shown in The Square as any changes to this key space needs to be developed with input from urban designers, landscape architect and heritage experts alongside traffic engineers.

However, this study has identified a series of changes which should be incorporated within any future design proposals.

The Square is dominated by traffic, both moving through it and parking within it, and any proposals for change here should seek to reduce this dominance in order to make space for people on foot to enjoy the spaces.

It is recommended that the alignment of the road through The Square is moved south to clearly signal a priority route between Meadow Street and St. Mary's Street. This will reduce traffic movements in the northern part of The Square and aligns with the change of High Street to one-way working. This will also provide better visibility between eastbound and westbound traffic to remove conflicts between vehicles outside the supermarket.

The amount of space given over to parking here needs to be considered in line with the Neighbourhood Plan objectives.

The introduction of trees within the square could be achieved within large planters, although the aspiration should be to plant within tree pits in the ground. This is subject to further investigation as part of the detailed design.

The route through The Square remains a bus route, and the introduction of priority working on either side of The Square should minimise delays to buses as they pass through this space.

No entry signs will be required at the eastern end of High Street, and these will require careful design and placement to minimise the impact upon the setting of the museum.



Figure 7.3: Drawing 05818-SK-002-P1 - Refer to Appendix B for larger scale version showing intervention proposals

7.4 St. Mary's Road and Jubilee Road

To the east of the priority working on St. Mary's Road it is proposed that the mouth of the junction between Station Road and St. Mary's Road is narrowed to improve pedestrian amenity and to slow the speed of traffic turning into and out of Station Road.

In the vicinity of the Orchard Road junction with Jubilee Road most of the on-street parking is shown to be retained, with a passing place opposite the junction. More ambitious parking reduction in this area would unlock opportunities to enhance the public realm in this area and smooth traffic flows.

The arrangement with two facing priority working schemes is not common, but there are good examples of this working in rural villages such as in Barrow Gurney in North Somerset.

The proposals include informal crossing facilities over Jubilee Road at a number of locations.

The buildouts and generous footway widths along the south of the street present opportunities to introduce planting and SUDs features.

The existing layby adjacent to the eastbound bus stops is proposed to be reclaimed as public realm, providing an enhanced environment for passengers to wait. The low frequency of bus services significantly limits the likelihood that buses will used both stops at the same time, but the design allows for this occurrence.

At the crossroad junction of Jubilee Road, Cheddar Road, Parkfield Road and Hippisley Drive a significant gateway feature is proposed with the introduction of a raised table and an enhanced material palette which should reflect the materials used in The Square.

This intervention will help to reinforce the change in speed limits and will make the junction much easier to navigate as a pedestrian. With buildings set back from the carriageway it is unlikely that there will be noise/vibration issues related to the introduction of a vertical deflection. The table is proposed to be longer than a typical bus to minimise the impact upon ride comfort.

Again, there is an opportunity to introduce street trees and planting around the junction. This could also be a location for public art.

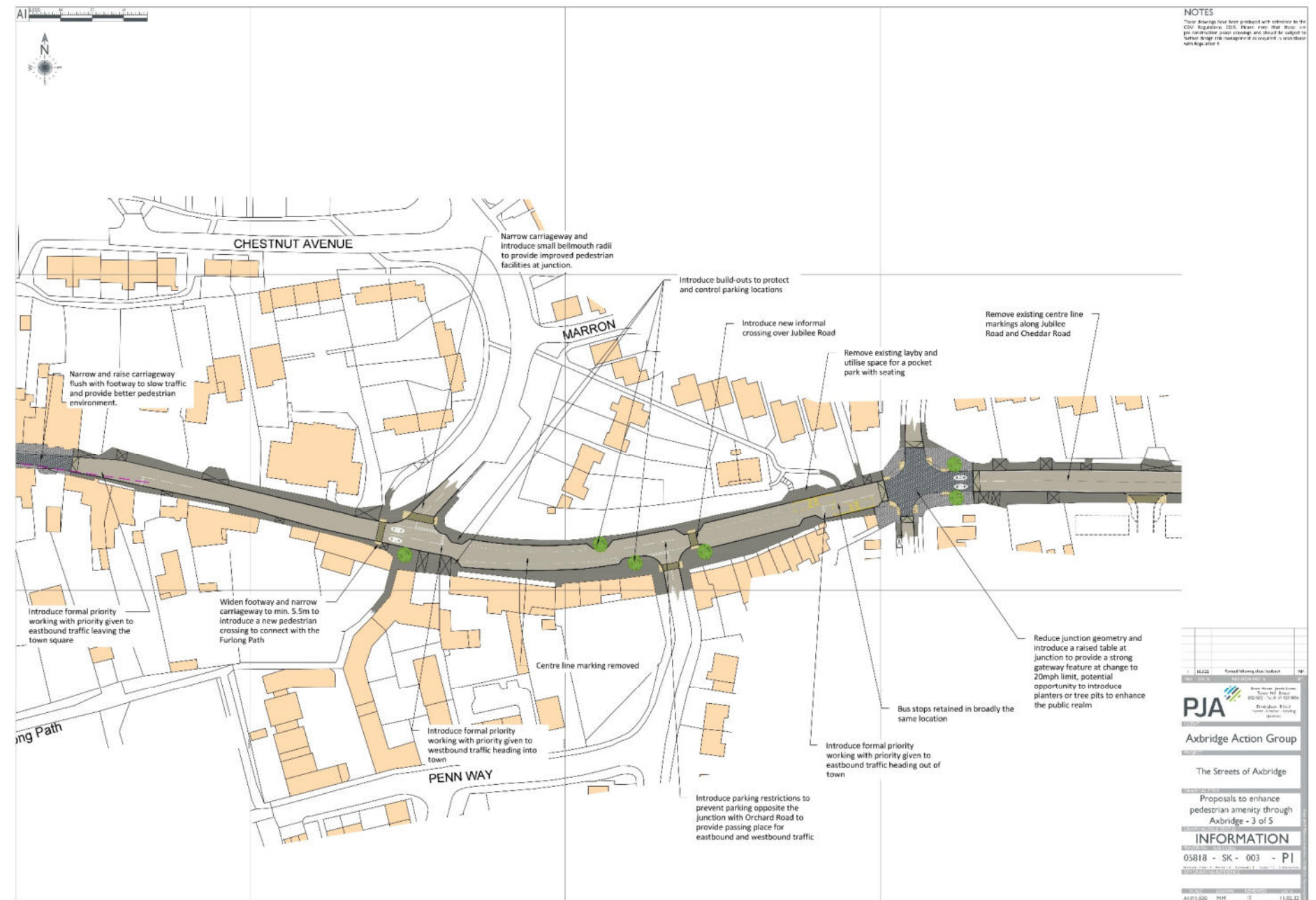


Figure 7.4: Drawing 05818-SK-003-P1 - Refer to Appendix B for larger scale version showing intervention proposals

7.5 Cheddar Road

It is suggested that Cheddar Road remains as a 30mph road, but a range of interventions are proposed to encourage people to travel at or below this speed limit.

The main intervention is the removal of the centre line marking along the length of Cheddar Road and the introduction of edge strips. This is a traffic calming technique which has been proven to reduce vehicle speeds on similar long straight roads.

Additionally, buildouts are proposed at frequent intervals. The help people to cross the street and narrow the street both physically and visually. These have been located on or close to desire lines for people approaching along local PRowS.

There are no parking restrictions proposed, but buildouts either side of junctions and the reservoir access are designed to push parked cars further away from the junctions to improve visibility for drivers turning on to Cheddar Road.



Figure 7.5: Drawing 05818-SK-004-P1 - Refer to Appendix B for larger scale version showing intervention proposals

8 Scheme Delivery

8.1 Phasing

The delivery of the wide-ranging schemes proposed across Axbridge is unlikely to be undertaken in a coordinated fashion as part of a single project due to the breadth of the proposals and the challenges around securing funding for the wholesale delivery.

With this in mind a proposed strategy for phasing the delivery of measures has been set out focusing upon the areas which require urgent attention or where relatively low-cost schemes can deliver significant quick wins.

The phasing strategy sets out whether the proposals are likely to be delivered in the short, medium, or long term. However, if a funding opportunity were to arise there is no reason why some more significant elements could not be brought forward.

Short term delivery (1 – 2 years)

In the short term the focus should be on reinforcing the gateways on the approach to the town centre and measures which can improve pedestrian amenity on the narrowest streets.

Gateways

At the western end of the town the IMA scheme for the Townsend junction should be implemented and funding should be secured to extend this scheme through to the junction of West Street with Houlgate Way including the introduction of a footway to improve access to the bus stop here.

At the eastern end of the town initial changes to the junction of Cheddar Road with the A371 could be taken forward with the use of bollards or simple kerb-buildouts used to remove the slip lanes to slow traffic and provide an improved crossing route for pedestrians and cyclists. However, the aspiration should be for the whole scheme to be delivered within this initial timeframe.

Experimental Changes

An experimental Traffic Regulation Order could be used to introduce one-way working on High Street for eastbound traffic. Experimental orders last for 18 months, with a review required after the first 6 months of operation. The experimental scheme would include the erection of appropriate signage and could also include the painting of a virtual footway on the existing carriageway.

Houlgate Way

The proposals for Houlgate Way, from West Street to Cross Moor Road, should be delivered at the same time as changes to the highway are delivered as part of the consented housing development in the southwest corner of town.

In the first instance some of the schemes proposed could be delivered in a meanwhile fashion in order to realise the benefits or to test the feasibility of making longer term permanent changes.

Cheddar Road

The interventions on Cheddar Road between Barnabas Close and Parkfield Road (excluding the tabletop gateway) should be relatively low cost to deliver and should not be particularly contentious.

Medium Term (2 – 5 years)

Beyond the short term the proposals have been grouped into schemes which should logically be delivered together.

High Street / West Street

Following on from the experimental traffic order the proposals for West Street and High Street can be refined and a permanent scheme delivered incorporating a virtual footway, raised tables, planters, and the necessary signage.

Jubilee Lane

Delivery of the proposals from the gateway at Hippisley Drive/Parkfield Road through to Chestnut Avenue will build upon the initial phase of work along Cheddar Road and will address a key bottleneck caused by parked cars.

Old Church Road and Meadow Street west

The introduction of informal roundels at the junctions of Old Church Road with Houlgate Way and Meadow Street plus the introduction of informal pedestrian crossing points and landscape features will significantly enhance the public realm and encourage more people to walk through this area to the school or to the centre of town. This scheme should be delivered to coincide with occupation of the new houses along Houlgate Way as this will form a primary route to town for these new residents.

Long Term (5 – 10 years)

The Square / Meadow Street / St. Mary's Street

Any significant changes in The Square are likely to require significant funding and strong local support to deliver, and it is likely that these will take a much longer time to achieve compared with the other proposals in the town.

The proposals on Meadow Street and St. Mary's Street cannot be delivered without some change to the Square and these therefore also sit as longer-term projects.

8.2 Scheme Costs

An indication of costs has been provided for the interventions along each of the streets within the study area.

These costs are high level costs for information only and it will be necessary to commission the production of more detailed cost plans prior to submitting funding bids.

It should also be noted that there is currently significant cost inflation around materials and labour which adds further uncertainty around these figures.

The proposals are estimated to cost between £2.5 and £3.4 million across the whole town.

8.3 Funding

Funding for the scheme can come from a variety of sources with different stakeholders able to access different funds.

For the Axbridge scheme the funding is likely to come from a combination of sources including:

- Hinckley Point Community Impact Mitigation Fund
- Batts Quarry Community Funding
- Somerset County Council (SCC) Active Travel Funding
- Highway maintenance and renewals budgets
- Small Improvement scheme funding SCC
- Developer contributions / Section 106 Monies
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- Parking Revenues
- Levelling Up Fund (Phase 2 -Infrastructure). Requires backing from local authority and local MP.
- English Heritage or similar grant funding such as Heritage Action Zone funding.

Street	Interventions	Cost Range
West Street	Virtual Footway, Carriageway narrowing and raised table crossings x 2, planters	£75,000 - £95,000
Houlgate Street	Give-take arrangement x 2, Informal crossings (dropped kerbs, tactile paving, and surface dressing), Junction priority change, roundels, signage, and road markings	£150,000 - £200,000
High Street	Virtual Footway, Carriageway narrowing and raised table crossing, planters	£85,000 - £110,000
Old Church Road	Roundel junctions, informal crossings, landscape features, tree planting	£90,000 - £125,000
Meadow Street	Priority working, shared surface extension, informal crossings	£50,000 - £65,000
St. Mary's Street	Priority working, raised table and carriageway narrowing	£110,000 - £135,000
Jubilee Road	Footway widening, kerb buildouts, roundels, road markings, priority working, table-top gateway feature, parking restrictions, tree planting and landscaping	£225,000 - £265,000
Cheddar Road	Centreline removal, kerb buildouts, informal crossings, gateway feature, roundels and road markings.	£75,000 - £95,000
A371 / Cheddar Road Junction	Kerb buildouts, soft verge widening, footway and cycleway construction, tree planting, road marking and signage	£200,000 - £250,000
The Square	Significant public realm enhancement and traffic management within a heritage context	£1.5m - £2.0m

9 Summary

This report sets out the findings of a study commissioned by the Axbridge Action Group to build upon their work of the last 19 years considering opportunities to enhance the environment around Axbridge for pedestrians and to make it a more pleasant place to live, to work and to visit.

There is widespread support for initiatives to introduce traffic management measures and measures to improve pedestrian amenity, which has been demonstrated through numerous surveys and through the development of the Town's Neighbourhood Plan.

PJA have prepared a town wide plan of initiatives which can be used to support funding bids and to support discussions with the town council and local authority around potential routes to delivery.

While the proposals are presented as a town-wide scheme, it is envisaged that these measures will be delivered in a piecemeal fashion as and when funding opportunities arise.

The focus for early interventions should be directed to the schemes around the periphery of the town (West Street / High Street, Houlgate Way, Cheddar Road) with subsequent schemes working in towards The Square.

Measures within The Square are likely to require significant investment in the public realm, and opportunities such as the recent funding stream through Historic England for Heritage Action Zones would be an ideal way of funding the interventions proposed.

The proposals do not seek to reduced parking in the town, but the delivery of alternative parking on the edge of town, such as near the station may make the reduction of parking in The Square a more acceptable proposition, allowing a better public space to be created here.





Appendix A Workshop Notes & Plan Mark Ups



Group 1 - Outputs

West Street / High Street

- Highlighted concerns around vehicle speeds particularly at the entrances to West Street from the west and High Street from the East.
- Asked that parking and loading space was provided at points along both streets
- The area of High Street (near The Lamb) was particularly dangerous for pedestrians as this is often where vehicle met, requiring vehicles to reverse.

Houlgate Way

- Noted that vehicles were felt to be travelling too fast, particularly those heading south/east bound down the hill
- Raised concerns about the prospect of 50 – 80 homes being access from Houlgate Way and the impact of this upon parking provision
- Suggested that the parking was broken up to provide more frequent passing places.
- Highlighted the opportunity to introduce more planting along the street

The Square

- Noted that the junction of Meadow Street and Moorland Road was difficult to use as a driver, also challenging for pedestrians
- Identified the need to incorporate electric vehicle charging into The Square parking provision
- Highlighted the need to slow traffic down in The Square as it was a shared surface
- Asked that parking be moved to the centre of the Square.

Jubilee Road

- Noted that on-street parking near Orchard Road formed a pinch-point where inbound and outbound vehicles had conflict
- Also noted that the parking in this location helps to slow traffic

Cheddar Road

- Highlighted concern around vehicle speeds on Cheddar Road, and the need to slow vehicles down along the length of the road.
- Thought there was too much on-street parking around reservoir access
- Concern about conflict between pedestrians, cyclists, and cars at the reservoir access
- Suggested the introduction of a gateway feature including rumble strips (but quiet) or a change of surfacing at the 30mph speed limit change in order to reinforce the limit.
- Noted that the junction of Cheddar Road with the A371 felt dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists travelling to/from the Strawberry Line
- The traffic island on the A371 east of Cheddar Road forms a pinch-point which creates conflicts between bikes and cars

Beyond the Study Scope

- Would like to see a reduction in the bypass speed limit to 40mph.
- Noted that there were opportunities for town centre parking accessed from the A371 near the tennis courts.
- Need to consider improved facilities to help connect town with the hillside by introducing a crossing on the A317.
- Change road markings on the bypass to prevent overtaking where there are wide central hatch markings.
- A371 junction at Townsend is dangerous.



Figure 9.1: Workshop Plan marked up by Group 1



Group 2 Outputs

West Street / High Street

- Raise the carriageway to remove the level difference between footway and road.
- Paint a wide virtual footway along both sides of the street
- Mark a roadway which is only a single vehicle wide
- People don't want to be run over leaving their front door.
- Change junction priority between West Street and Houlgate Way.

Houlgate Way

- Noted the prospect of new homes being accessed from Houlgate Way and the impact of this upon parking
- Asked that give/take arrangement was introduced in place of parking to calm traffic

Meadow Street / Old Church Road

- Raise carriageway to footway level to form a shared surface with priority given to pedestrian around the primary school and near the car parks.
- Remove raised footway on narrow section near Co-op

The Square

- Remove all parking from The Square except for some blue badge provision
- Revise the highway arrangement within The Square so that it is clear that the route between St. Mary's Street and High Street is not the priority movement

St. Mary's Street

- Raise carriageway to footway level to form a shared surface with priority given to pedestrian and with a single lane width for vehicles

Jubilee Road

- Parking either side of Orchard Road limits visibility for vehicles turning out.
- Restrict parking so that people can only park on one side of the street
- Introduce a give-take arrangement to slow traffic

Cheddar Road

- Introduce chicanes along Cheddar Road to slow vehicles.
- Provide a signal-controlled crossing close to the junction with the A371 to improve pedestrian and cycle connection to the Strawberry line.
- Improve cycle path surface.
- Reduce the speed of traffic turning left from the A371 into Cheddar Road.

Beyond the Study Scope

- Introduce traffic lights at the A371 junction at Townsend
- Improve access between Axbridge and Strawberry Line to the west of the town.
- Moorland Road has no footways despite being a main road to school.
- Promote the use of the car park by the recreation ground for school parking and encourage parents to walk children in along the Furlong Path.

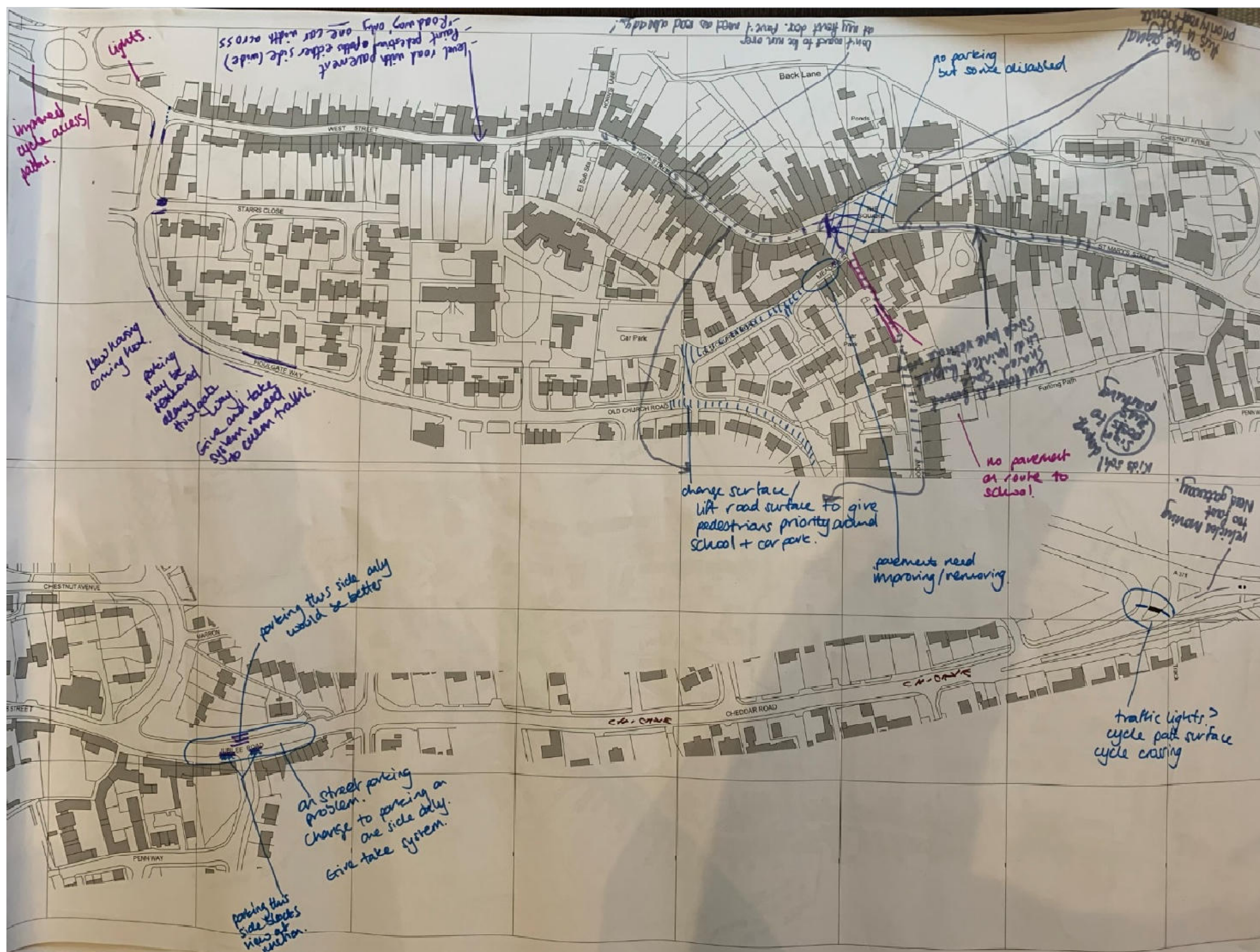


Figure 9.2: Workshop Plan marked up by Group 2



Group 3 Outputs

West Street / High Street

- Noted that houses along these streets have very little parking
- Open up a pedestrian route through the Care Home site along the former route through the site, would connect Old Church Road / High Street and town car park
- Introduce a pinch-point on West Street and change priority at junction with Houlgate Way
- One-way working eastbound along West Street and High Street. But allow cycles to travel in the opposite direction.
- Traffic entering square from High Street should give-way

Houlgate Way

- Noted the prospect of 57 new homes being accessed from Houlgate Way (up to 80) and the impact of this upon parking
- Introduce more on-street parking and have a residents parking scheme

The Square

- Retain parking and leave the Square largely untouched.

St. Mary's Street

- Road forms an important route to the Church from The Square avoiding steps

Jubilee Road

- On-street parking slows traffic but....
- ...parking either side of Orchard Road limits visibility for vehicles turning out.

Cheddar Road

- Likely to be an increase in traffic over the next few years due to development and potential allocations as noted within the neighbourhood plan.
- Introduce different type of signage
- Introduce 3D signs

Beyond the Study Scope

- Improve safety at A371 Townsend junction
- Consider access to parking spaces on Back Lane
- Encourage people to park on their drives if they have them
- Introduce a park and ride scheme connecting Cheddar and Axbridge
- Consider connections to walks and public rights of way.
- Introduce a poster campaign with maps to encourage people to walk more.
- Connect Station Road to a car park near the A371
- Parking on Station Road used by people who do not live there.

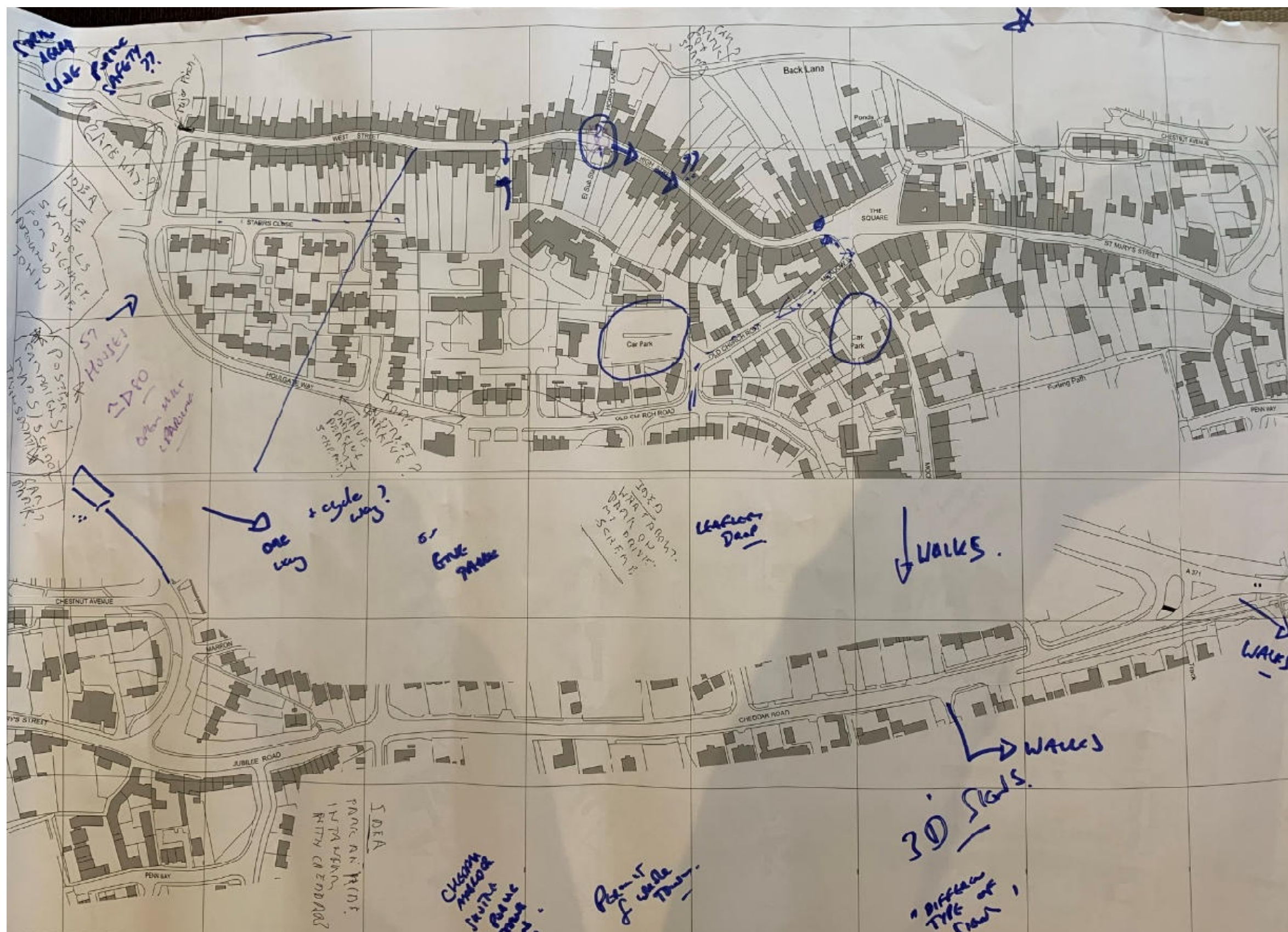


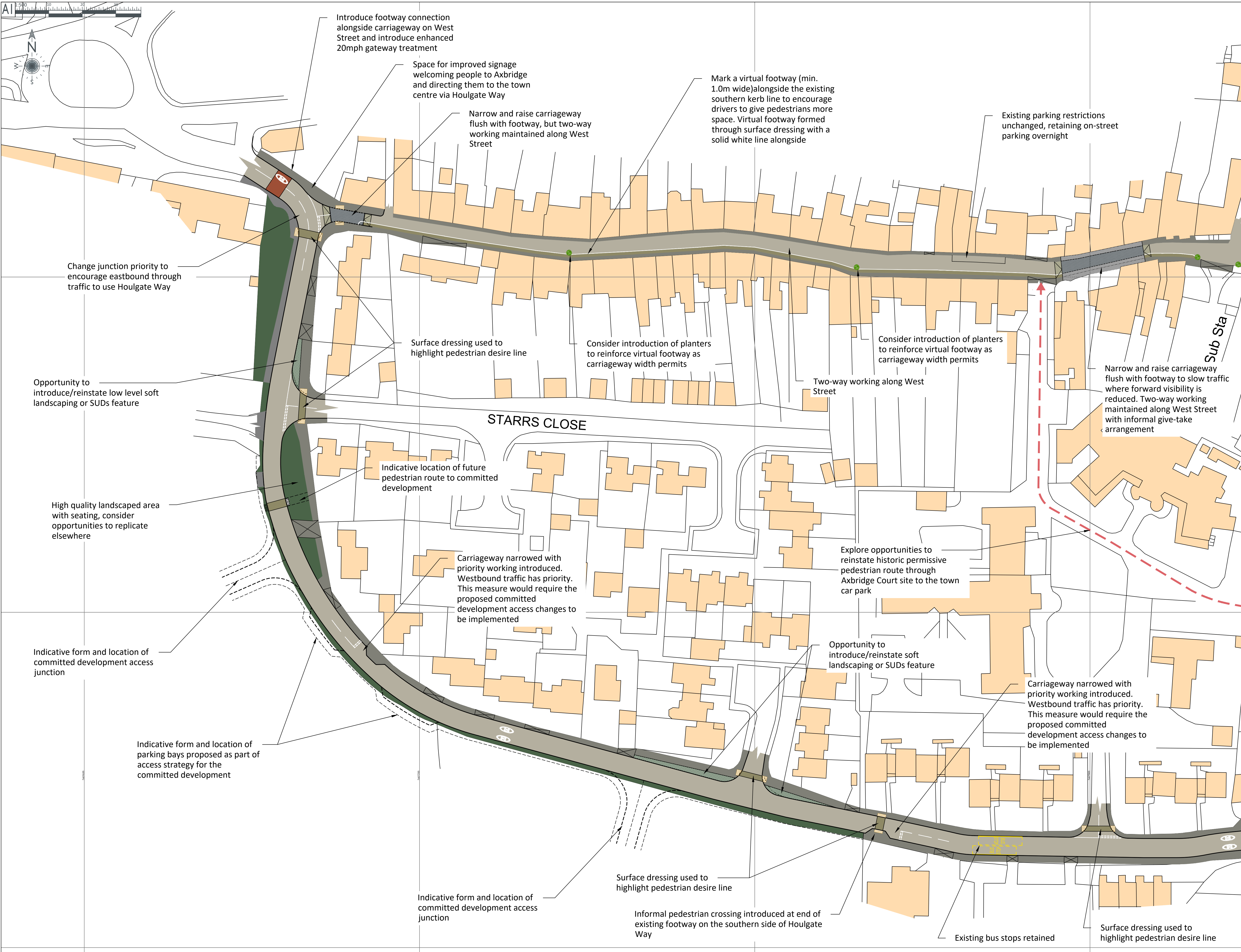
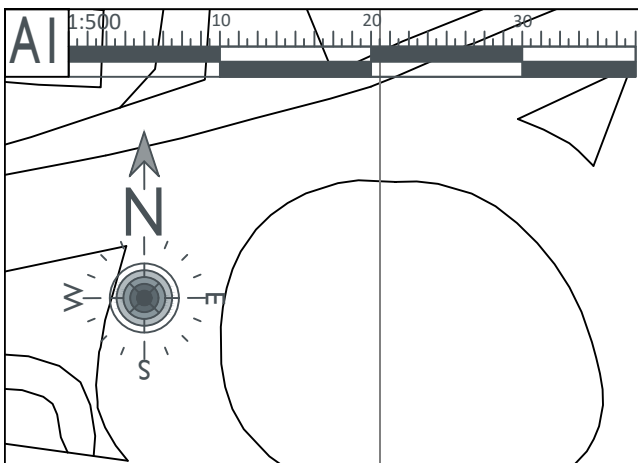
Figure 9.3: Workshop Plan 1 marked up by Group 3





Appendix B Proposed Intervention Plans

Figure 9.4: Workshop Plan 2 marked up by Group 3



NOTES
These drawings have been produced with reference to the CDM Regulations 2015. Please note that these are pre-construction phase drawings and should be subject to further design risk management as required in accordance with Regulation 9

REV	DATE	REVISION NOTE	BY
I	18.5.22	Revised following client feedback	MM

PJA
CLIENT

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Birmingham - Bristol
Exeter - London - Reading
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Axbridge Action Group
PROJECT

The Streets of Axbridge
PROJECT

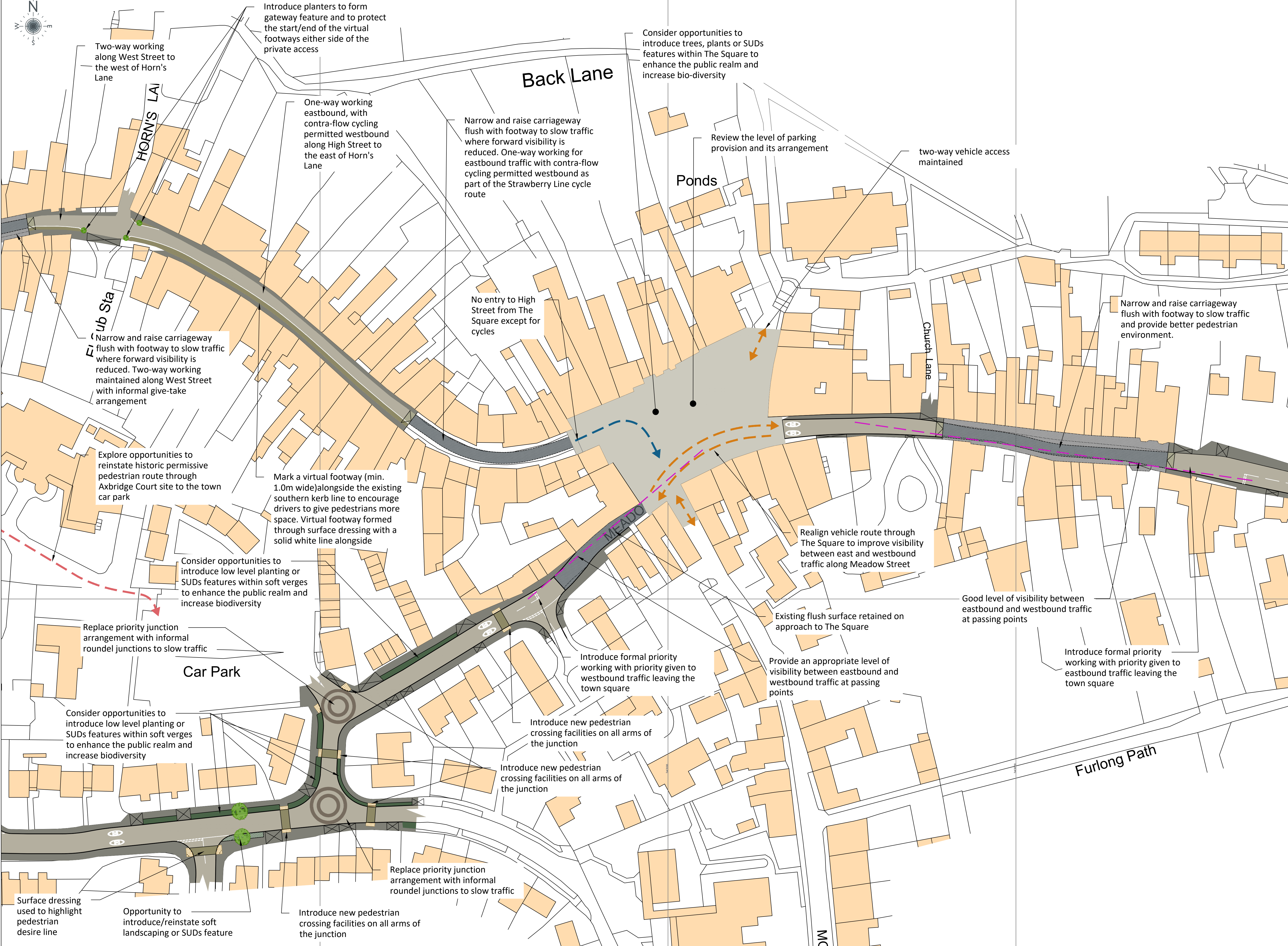
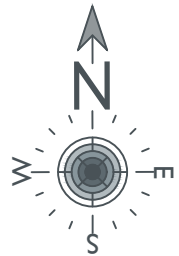
Proposals to enhance pedestrian amenity through Axbridge - 1 of 5
DRAWING TITLE

INFORMATION
DRAWING ISSUE STATUS

PJA JOB No. SUB-CODE
05818 - SK - 001 - PI

Revision Letter: P - Prelim / A - Approval / T - Tender / C - Construction
BIM DRAWING REFERENCE

SCALE	DRAWN	REVIEWED	DATE
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NOTES
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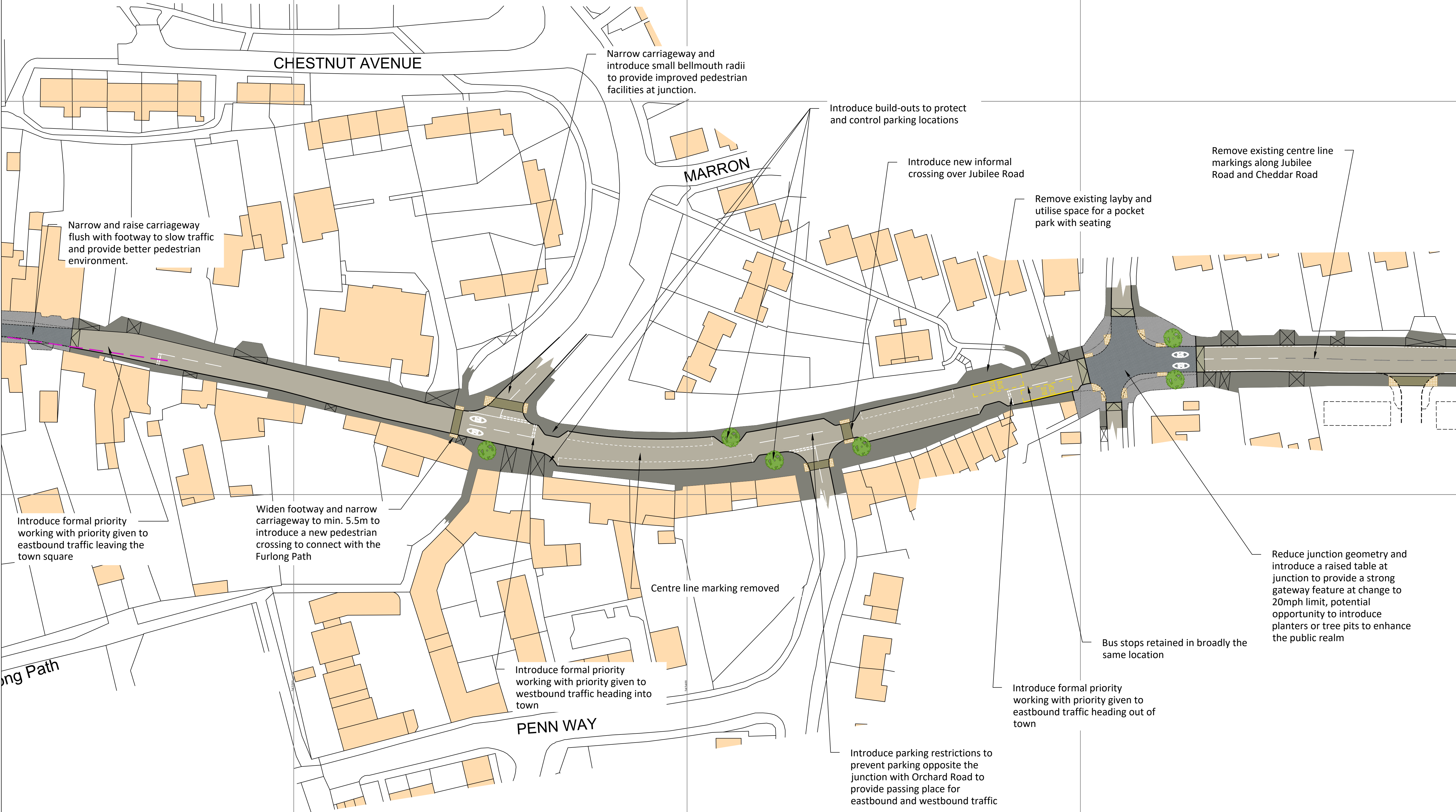
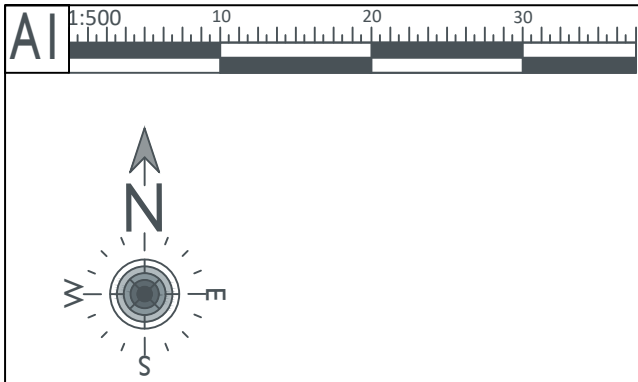
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Proposals to enhance pedestrian amenity through Axbridge - 2 of 5

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INFORMATION

PJA JOB No. SUB-CODE
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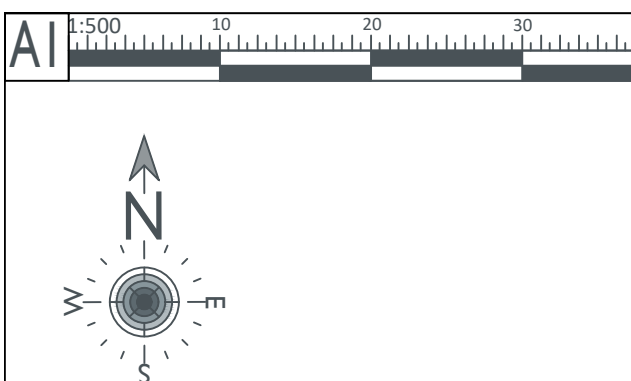
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Proposals to enhance pedestrian amenity through Axbridge - 3 of 5

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NOTES

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Remove existing centre line markings along Jubilee Road and Cheddar Road, add edge of carriageway markings

Remove existing centre line markings along Jubilee Road and Cheddar Road, add edge of carriageway markings

Reduce junction bellmouth radii to min. 6.0m and widen footways

Remove existing centre line markings along Jubilee Road and Cheddar Road
add edge of carriageway markings

Surface dressing
used to highlight
pedestrian
desire line

Reduce junction geometry and introduce a raised table at junction to provide a strong gateway feature at change to 20mph limit, potential opportunity to introduce planters or tree pits to enhance the public realm

Reduce carriageway width to min. 5.0m and introduce new informal crossing over Cheddar Road

Indicative junction location
of new development under
construction

Reduce carriageway width to min. 5.5m and introduce new informal crossing over Cheddar Road

Introduce build-outs either side of the reservoir access to control on-street parking locations, Cheddar Road narrowed to min. 6.0m

Reduce carriageway width to min. 5.0m and introduce new informal crossing over Cheddar Road

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Axbridge Action Group

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The Streets of Axbridge

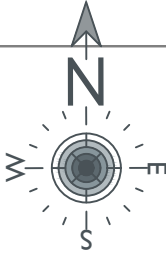
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Proposals to enhance
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Reduce carriageway width to min. 5.0m and introduce new informal crossing over Cheddar Road

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