

ST AUSTELL TOWN CENTRE REVITALISATION

REVITALISATION PARTNERSHIP - Summary Masterplan Document and Investment Plan

Autumn 2022



PORTICO
HERITAGE

Advance
Consulting Engineers Ltd

situ8
planning consultancy

Le Page Architects

MEI LOCI

 **Kovia**
CONSULTING

 ECA

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01. Foreword.

During 2022, the St Austell Revitalisation Partnership supported by St Austell Town Council and Cornwall Council reviewed the economic, environmental, social and cultural wellbeing of the town centre. This Masterplan and Investment Document sets out our vision for the future of St Austell town centre.

St Austell sits in the centre of Cornwall and is the county's largest town by population. It is served by good transport links through its bus and mainline rail stations and improvements to the main A30. It is surrounded by key tourist and leisure attractions including the Eden Project, Lost Gardens of Heligan, Fowey, Charlestown and Mevagissey harbours. However, in recent years it has fallen behind comparable destinations and suffered from a lack of investment and declining economic performance. Covid, the lockdowns and the increase of online shopping has impacted on all aspects of St Austell town centre's ability to compete in the environment it faces in the years ahead.

This Masterplan sets out a range of projects which tackle the economic, social, community and cultural challenges we have identified. These projects will revitalise St Austell town centre through a series of short, medium and long term initiatives which improve access, develop buildings/places and create an exciting, green, safe environment.

St Austell's heritage, culture and community make it a special place to live, work and visit and I commend this Summary Masterplan to you.

Sandra Heyward

Chair - St Austell Revitalisation Partnership

Biodiversity, Natural Capital, Sustainability and Environment.



The Character of St Austell.

Identity, Brand and Offer; History, Culture, Landscape and Townscape.



Health and Wellbeing.



ST AUSTELL

St Austell
The very heart of Cornwall

 **St Austell BID**
Business Improvement District
www.staustellbid.co.uk



02. Introduction

Mei Loci were appointed in May 2022 alongside a team of consultants; Kovia Consulting, Le Page Architects, Advance Consulting Engineers, Situ8, Portico Heritage and ECA Quantity Surveyors, to deliver the St Austell Town Centre Revitalisation Masterplan.

The Masterplan builds on the work of St Austell Business Improvement District (BID) and follows on from enhancement carried out as part of the Green and White Gold project delivered between 2018 and 2021 by St Austell Bay Economic Forum (SABEF) as a means of enhancing the town centre and creating greater physical and virtual connectivity between communities and a Townscape Heritage Scheme completed by Cornwall Council.

This document seeks to present proposals that have been influenced and tested by the community and stakeholders, have been developed based on national guidance and professional expertise and are unique and specific to St Austell. The purpose of this work is to define a single vision proposal/document that details a number of key projects which, in part or as a whole would facilitate the revitalisation and re-activation of St Austell Town Centre.

The Partnership ethos is for the revitalisation of St Austell Town Centre to be built on:

- Emphasising the town's rich history and geography
- Arts, culture and ceramics with people at the core
- A thriving retail, leisure and food offering
- A greener, safer and more environmentally friendly town
- Consultation/engagement with the community and stakeholders
- Creating a vibrant economy with the creation of better paid jobs, improved education, quality housing and ease of access to the town centre
- Where possible, local individuals and organisations being involved in the delivery of our desired outcomes.

Like towns and cities nationally, St Austell town centre has experienced significant decline. There are numerous contributory factors which have influenced the decline in high streets which have been accentuated by the global pandemic and the rise in popularity of online shopping. This has led to greater ambition and urgency to address the decline by positive planning and development of strategies for the enhancement of town and city centres.

To address these issues there must be a balance between wider, long term, urban planning and 'quick wins', to address current and identifiable issues.

Small steps can be taken to provide short term enhancement and activation as a contribution to the longer term goal of economic and social sustainability of St Austell town centre.

“In 2030 St Austell aims to be an inspiring town that reflects its historic past but has adapted and embraced the future... It will have a lively, vibrant town centre with a range of facilities making it a welcoming, engaging destination for visitors and local residents.”

(Cornwall Council - St Austell and surrounding Parishes Town Framework – March 2017)



03. The Vision.

To Create a New Future for St Austell.

- To understand the current demographic and how St Austell and in particular the town centre is used, accessed and functions
- To understand vehicular and pedestrian access both physical and visual.
- To capitalise on existing assets; buildings, artwork, key attractions and spaces to re-activate the streets, creating a range of new/revitalised public spaces for people to gather, rest and socialize, with space for events and markets.
- To restore and enhance the quality and materials of the streets, restoring and repairing where possible alongside refreshed and new finishes and spaces.
- To create greener, more biodiverse, interesting and vibrant spaces.
- To improve signage and access alongside a strategy of lighting and animation.
- To address the need to improve health and wellbeing
- To capture the character and quality of St Austell to create a unique and high quality place for people to live, work and visit.

And.....

It has got to be exciting!

We must create a DESIRE to dwell, to stay and to enjoy spaces and places that people understand and can be proud of.

‘People’

‘Place’

‘Planet’

Visualisation of the proposed rooftop garden



04. St Austell Town Centre Improvement Projects.

The development of projects has been undertaken in a number of phases to ensure that the outcomes are of greatest value to St Austell and align with the overarching vision. These have emerged based on: the analytical work undertaken throughout the initial stages of the project, analysis of needs and priorities and the original requirements of the brief to create a series of 'sub-projects'.

Sites have been chosen and developed as projects to address specific goals as identified within the brief and also to meet specific targeted funding, and support the revitalisation of the town centre.

These projects have been developed to deliver the greatest positive impact and effect which has allowed the identification of key deliverables against which the benefit can be reviewed and established.

The purpose of this approach is that it identifies key components which relate to national guidance and policy and address key local issues. It is important that we are identifying individual 'standalone' projects and when combined they contribute to real and achievable improvements for St Austell.

Equally, these need to be scaleable. The projects as a whole are aspirational and exciting and will give St Austell a positive boost that small scale, superficial, refurbishment cannot achieve as effectively.

The projects have been illustrated in two sections.

- **In deliverable 'packages' 01 - 10 To develop key sections of the town, covering multiple aspects of the principles of revitalisation as demonstrated in the associated analysis.**
- **Sub-Projects 01 - 25 based on sites identified and developed to align with specific goals, aspirations and aims associated with the regeneration and revitalisation of St Austell. Identification of these has allowed us to establish: ownership, constraints, planning requirements and costs which then informs the viability of the schemes.**



05. Development of the Masterplan & Deliverable Improvements Packages 01 - 10.



Figure 01. Vision masterplan

01. **Western Gateway - Trinity Street, Truro Road and Bodmin Road with The General Wolfe.**
Capturing the quality of St Austell through the creation of an attractive, safe and unique 'Western Gateway'. Redeveloping the vacant General Wolfe into an attractive and active 'hub' whilst regenerating the public realm. Restoring the heritage setting of the town centre and activating the frontages to create a destination and arrival to the town.
02. **Priory Car Park and Biddicks Court with connection to Fore Street through a new public gateway.**
Create a new public gateway by rationalising the layout of Priory Car Park to maximise commercial value while enhancing public experience, interpretation, access and safety. Provide inclusive and active transition from the car park as a destination point, enhance Biddicks Court to fulfil its potential as an active public realm and improve visual and physical access to Fore Street and the Town Centre.
03. **Poundland building (23 Fore Street) including the creation of a 'Town Square' and connection to Old Vicarage Place.**
Transform the existing building into a more effective and viable offer for business establishment and growth. Create a dynamic and flexible public town square that links Aylmer Square, Fore Street, Old Vicarage Place and the historic quarter. This will provide opportunity for new, diverse business and encourage increase in footfall in the short and long term through phased development.
04. **Town Square, Aylmer Square public realm refurbishment and canopy structure.**
Working alongside White River Place to align town wide proposals with the privately owned town centre open space. Short term, dynamic change through activation and refurbishment of streetscape and building facades (Poundland), lighting and projection alongside event generation and management. Options for canopy/cover to Aylmer Square and/or adjoining streets.
05. **Old Vicarage Place Rooftop Gardens.**
Capitalise on the qualities of the vacant asset to provide managed public access to the roof space. Create an accessible, flexible, town centre green space and covered garden to facilitate all year/all weather use and recreation. Potential for community growing/community group use, social prescribing, private commercial use (conference/wedding/event). Simple regeneration also facilitates significant biodiversity net gain and sustainable water management etc.
06. **'Historic Quarter', create a one way system, including East Hill and High Cross Street.**
Refurbish the streetscapes to remove the conflict between vehicular and pedestrian users. Capitalise on the heritage character to enhance the historic setting and maximise the potential for existing and new business, (Market House, Hop & Vine, Holy Trinity Church, Cafe Tengo etc). Enhance physical and visual connection to East Hill as a key gateway and links to sustainable transport and potential creation of an active transport 'Hub'.
07. **High Cross Street Car Park Student accommodation (including The Station and Old Post Office).**
Develop the currently vacant High Cross Street Car Park (Old Police Station site) into accommodation for higher education students. This will address current demand and facilitate opportunities for growth and change within existing education facilities. Increased footfall and varied demographic will aid the activation of St Austell Town Centre. Potential for future growth and development in collaboration with adjacent landowners at the Station and Old Post Office.
08. **Refurbishment and extension of 19 - 21 Fore Street.**
Consider the extension and refurbishment of 19 - 21 Fore Street to bring the architectural form back to the historic scale and aesthetic of Fore Street. Cladding to improve thermal efficiencies as well as improving aesthetic will help existing tenants running costs and help to bring the building to current standards.
09. **Train station public realm upgrade.**
Improve the aesthetic and setting of the vehicular and pedestrian arrival at the train station, capitalising on the dramatic views. Provide inclusive information, interpretation and signage to aid navigation from the station into the town centre. Improve the sense of arrival to encourage visitors and to maximise promotion and legibility of the town's offer.
10. **The Old Fire Station redevelopment.**
In collaboration with the existing owner, redevelop the existing parking area as either an attractive public realm/information point as part of the western gateway development OR for the provision of mixed use accommodation, retail and hospitality as part of the activation of the western fringe of St Austell.

01-02. Western Gateway - Trinity Street, Priory car park, Biddicks Court and connection to Fore Street. (A)



Figure 02. Proposals key plan

- Rv.01. Create a one way system through Priory car park, entering to the north and exiting through the existing access. Bus parking is retained, a more attractive access being created that includes information, electric charging points and cycle hire.
- Rv.02. Create a wide, clear physical and visual access between the two car parks encouraging a more efficient use of the car park.
- Rv.03. Enhanced and safe pedestrian access through the existing pedestrian access to Biddicks Court. There is potential to remove the small existing building, the existing business to be relocated, to create an open and safer interface between the parking area and the town centre.
- Rv.04. Redesign Biddicks court to create a better balance between pedestrian use and the vehicular access requirements. The intent is to raise levels to the rear of the space to enable simpler use by the existing businesses and a clear public realm.
- Rv.05. The existing vehicular access to the rear of Fore Street is retained with improved paving, provision of bin stores and clearly defined parking. A larger loading/turning area is provided to encourage manual unloading of deliveries where possible without restricting access.
- Rv.06. The existing border between Priory Car Park and Grants Walk is proposed to be enhanced, creating a strong, biodiverse buffer and potential for additional pedestrian access. (more applicable if the demolition of 24-26 is not possible as it aligns well with desire lines through 36 Fore Street)
- Rv.07. The removal of 24 - 26 Fore Street provides opportunity for a clear visual and physical access between Biddicks Court and Fore Street, through to Chandos Place and a new town square. This will unify the spaces, making them more effective and attractive as a 'whole' and increase passive surveillance.
- Rv.08. Two options existing for the site of the Old Fire Station. 1: to develop the site to create 5+ residential apartments with shop/hospitality, creating an active streetscape that works alongside the existing shops to the south. 2: Create a public realm within the space that allows for positive realignment of the road and the provision of an information kiosk or similar.
- Rv.09. General streetscape enhancement in line with highways proposals. The creation of a 20mph zone, enhanced surfacing (granite/setts or similar) to define the extent of the town centre as part of a traffic calming exercise.
- Rv.10. Safe, defined, pedestrian links to the refurbished General Wolfe and Globe Yard and from the GW to the corner of Trinity Street
- Rv.11. Reduced road width at the junction of Trinity Street and Truro Road, providing traffic calming (20 mph zone) and a greatly increased public realm and access to Fore Street.

Notes:

Any buildings identified for change/removal are indicative of intent only subject to liaison with tenants and owners. There is no intention to remove businesses without offering alternative locations to continue trading.

The renewal of Globe Yard as part of the works at The General Wolfe is important though has not yet been examined as part of this 'vision'.

01-02. Western Gateway - Trinity Street, Priory car park, Biddicks Court and connection to Fore Street. (B)



Figure 03. Western Gateway, Biddicks Court and Fore Street. Illustrative drawing.



Figure 04. Sketch . Biddicks Court

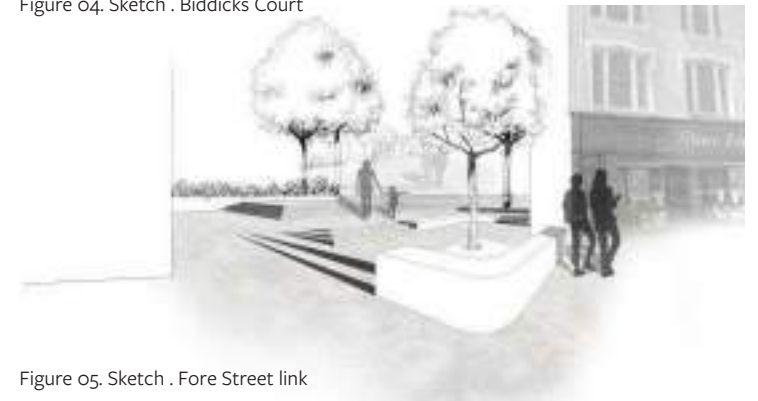


Figure 05. Sketch . Fore Street link

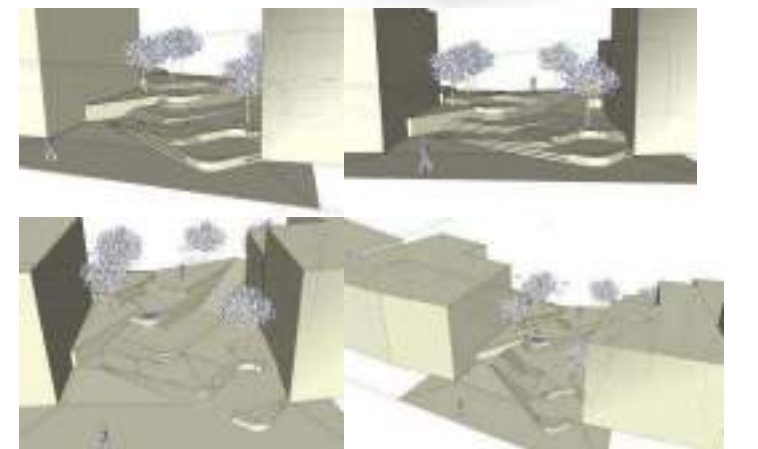


Figure 06. 3d analysis . Fore Street link

01-02. Connection to Fore Street.



Figure 07. Architectural Proposals _ 24-26 Fore Street

03. Poundland / 23 Fore Street. Architectural Proposals. (A)

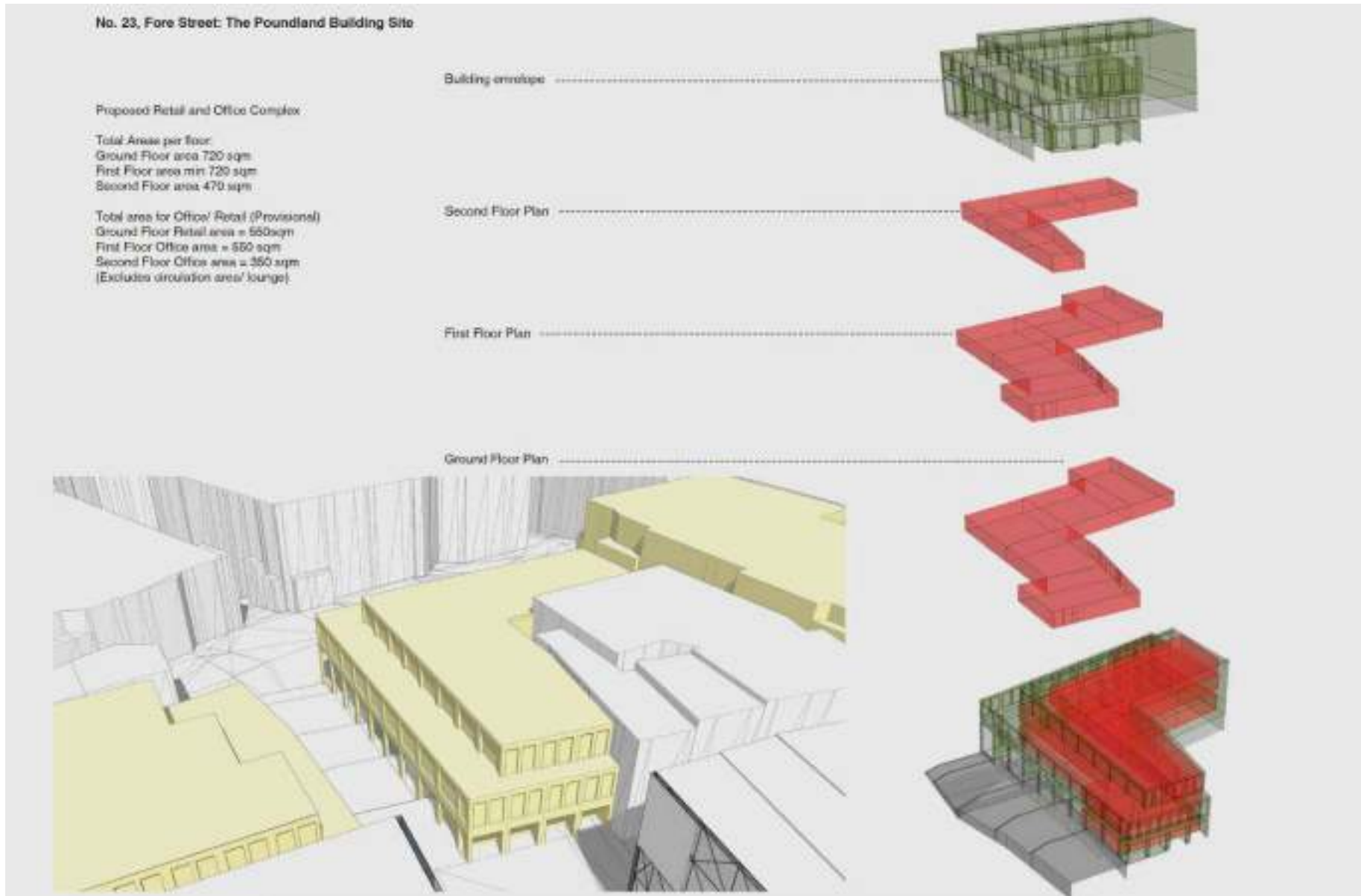


Figure o8.. Architectural Proposals _ 'Poundland' Building

03. Poundland / 23 Fore Street. Architectural Proposals. (B)

A primary aim of this vision is to ensure that options are considered for various scenarios. The acquisition, design, demolition and reinstatement of 'The Poundland Building' is a major project and likely to, if achievable, be a mid - long term project. It is important therefore to present solutions that address the existing problems and work with the existing condition. This is a project that can be delivered in the short term to improve an eyesore in the town centre which has been highlighted many times during consultation.

Excluding the refurbishment of the facade beneath the existing banner, the cost of removal and reinstatement of a new banner is between £60,000 - £70,000. This is for a direct replacement, i.e. 2 no sides.

This gives an opportunity for projection and lighting which will contribute to the greater use of the town in the winter and the evenings through Spring and Autumn, potentially Summer.

The proposal is therefore to refine the layout of Aylmer Square to maintain a high quality and flexible space, to refurbish/clean the existing facades and provide fixed, flexible seating to define space whilst allowing for events and functions.

The proposals work both with and without existing vertical elements however the efficacy and function of the space will need to be considered at detailed design stage.



Figure 09. Aylmer Square. Existing condition



Figure 10. Town Square/Aylmer Square. Refurbished existing condition



Figure 11. Aylmer Square. Animated/activated.



Figure 12. Town Square. Visualisation 01.

04. The 'Town Square' - Spatial studies. (A)



Figure 13. Town Square. Version 01 Technical.



Figure 14. Town Square. Version 02 Technical.

Figure 15. Town Square. Version 03 Technical.

04. The 'Town Square' - Spatial studies. (B)



Figure 16. Town Square. Version 01 Illustrative.

The following provides an assessment of the three options'.

- Demolish and rebuild partial with large public realm
- Retain and refurbish
- Demolish completely without 'built' replacement.

This has been considered in two ways:

- A. how well the proposals meet strategically defined needs; and,
B. in terms of the overall balance of economic costs and benefits to society. This reflects the way that projects are assessed for public funding in an outline business case.

This appraisal again supports “do something” options – a “business as usual” option with refurbished Poundland structure will still incur costs with a limited range of benefits in comparison. The replacement of the whole of the structure with a large area of public realm just edges the partial redevelopment proposal in this assessment mainly as it anticipates slightly lower costs to develop the site and wider benefits – the greater area of high quality public realm is adjudged to have wider benefits to the Town as a whole and its revitalisation given the significant asset it will create. The partial rebuild scheme may provide much needed higher quality commercial space, create residual value, but will only be of benefit if local businesses can benefit and that there is little displacement – additionally there are plenty of other vacant spaces and property that could be redeveloped / refurbished elsewhere across the town.

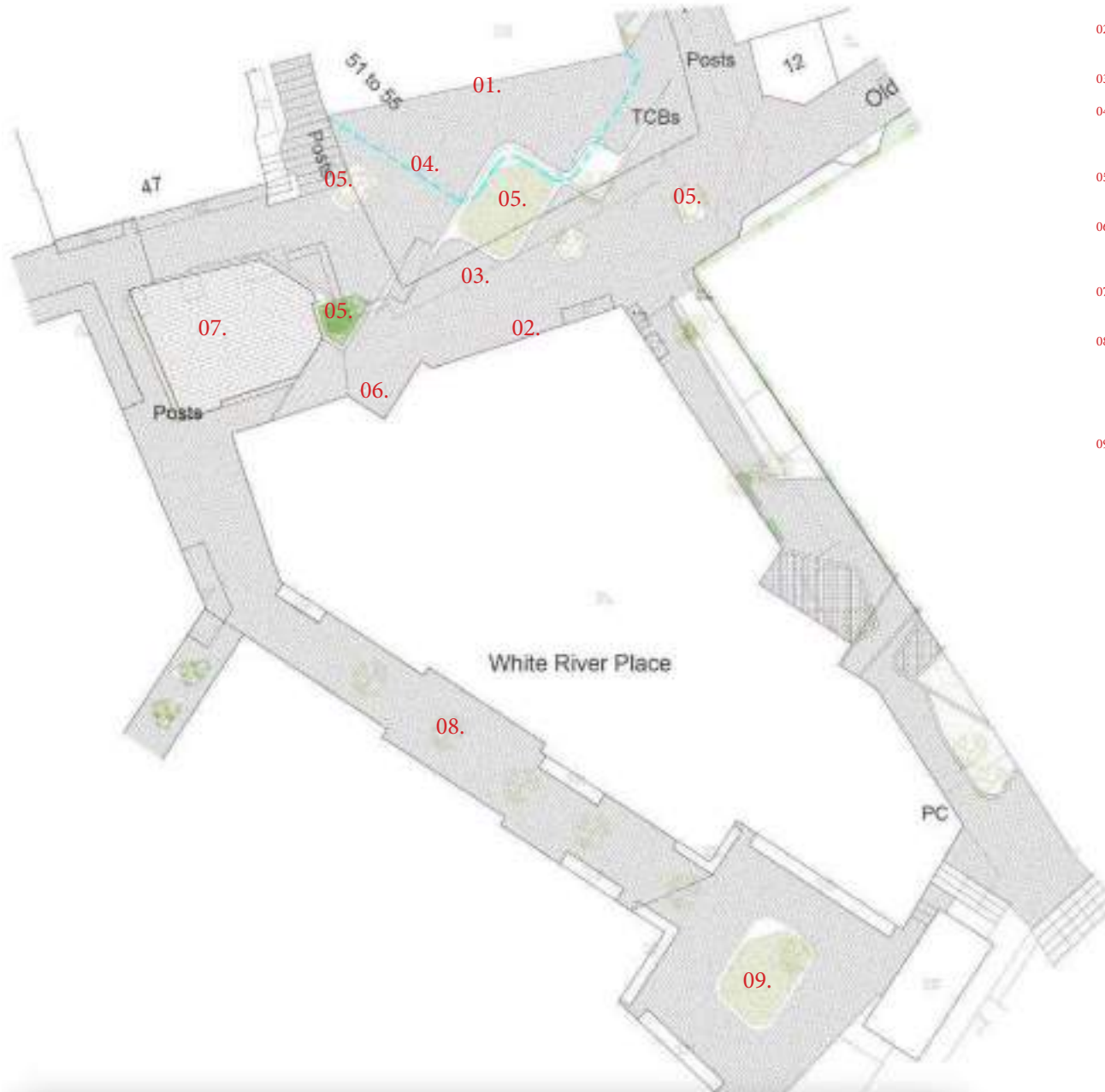


Figure 17. Town Square. Version 02 Illustrative.



Figure 18. Town Square. Version 03 Illustrative.

04. The 'Town Square' & Aylmer Square. (C)



01. 'Active' frontage to new form of the building. Proposals for a colonnade style frontage to provide shelter as part of the building fabric.
02. Provide opportunity for film/moving image through the use of blank facade/screen.
03. Large, flexible public realm, giving opportunity for activities, events, markets, performance etc.
04. Water jets or similar engaging feature to provide a 'draw' to the town centre and activating public realm.
05. Greening (grass and shrubs) and tree planting to provide variety and focal /gathering spaces within the public realm
06. Ensure a designed interface with the existing architectural form of White River Place. The townscape needs to have a unified character and quality.
07. Rationalise the landscape within Aylmer Square to provide flexibility and to facilitate the installation of a canopy structure in collaboration with WRP.
08. Simplify the soft landscape/planting to create a more striking and ecologically valuable biodiversity asset. Height of trees aids the creation of space and, in combination with up lighting, enhances the streetscape. (coordination with CCTV and security will be required to ensure security is not compromised.
09. Formalise a green/focal space within the existing paved area to the south of WRP.

Notes:

The vision for the New Town Centre Square is to create a highlight space within the Town Centre. One that has a positive and active frontage that encourages use and the population with business, retail and hospitality.

As demonstrated in the supporting technical information, there is little financial gain from the development itself, ie. no profit is likely from the short term development of individual buildings. The benefit comes from creating positive, high quality spaces and facilities that encourage footfall and accordingly the population of buildings.

There has been significant demand for covered shopping space. Discussions with White River Place have confirmed an intent to cover Aylmer Square and potentially some of the peripheral access points to the square. This has been accommodated within the proposals. For the purposes of this exercise the efficacy of the space to fulfill function has taken precedence over existing elements.

Figure 19. Town Square including Aylmer Square and White River Place.

04. The 'Town Square' & Aylmer Square. (D)



Figure 20. Town Square. Preferred version, including Aylmer Square and WRP. Illustrative



Figure 21. Town Square. Axo View



Figure 22. Town Square. Preferred version, including Aylmer Square and WRP - Potential extent of covered/canopy area. Illustrative

04. The 'Town Square' & Aylmer Square. (E)

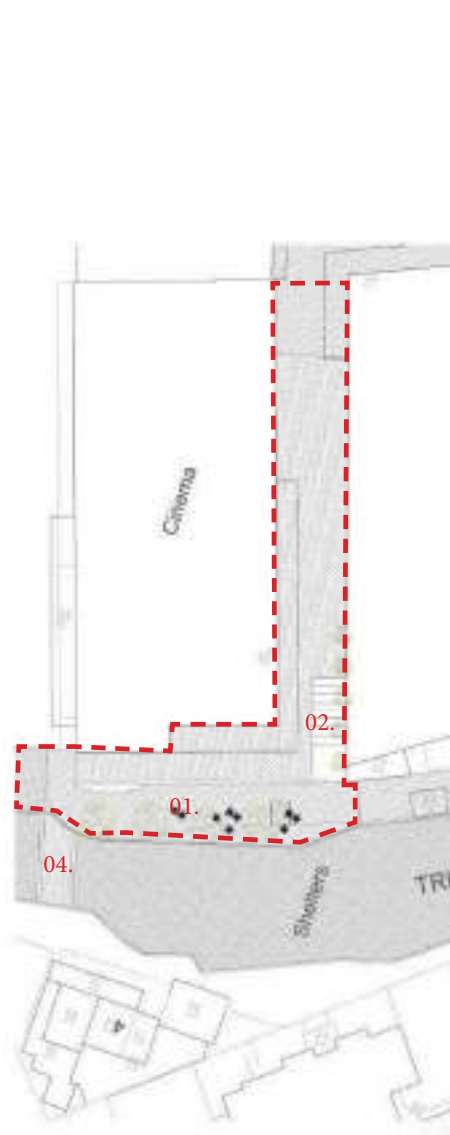


Figure 23. Cinema Link - Technical drawing

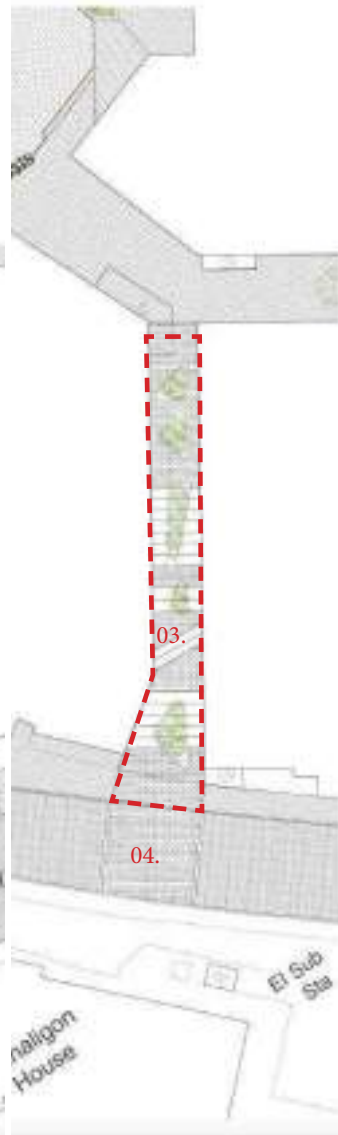


Figure 24. WRP Link - Technical drawing

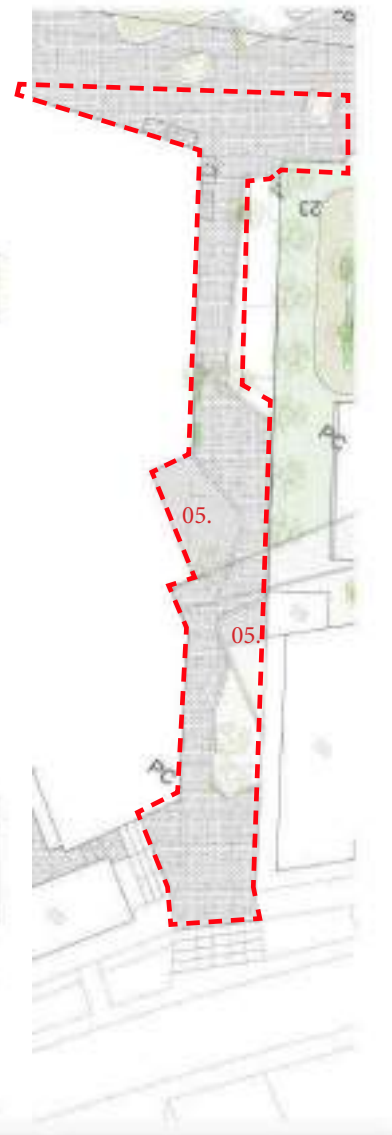


Figure 25. Old Vicarage Place Link - Technical drawing

01. Slightly increase the width of the footpath to Trinity Street to create an attractive arrival at the Cinema steps. Include tree planting to help soften the imposing scale of the retaining walls.
02. Light and paint /clad the steps, including potential for tree planting to the facade of the WRP building.
03. Rationalise the scale of the step link with planters and seating to create rest points. Create a visually enticing and safe, well lit, route into WRP and the Town Centre.
04. Highlight crossing points across Trinity Street to ensure a safer pedestrian access across the new 20mph zone.
05. Create level, useable and/or planted sections within the Old Vicarage Place link. This provides opportunity for existing business to use the space more effectively, activates the space and provides shelter.

Notes:

The principle of these proposals is to create a more attractive, safe and enhanced series of access points into the town centre.

This begins with making safe pedestrian access across and along Trinity Street, then making the steep step links less imposing whilst addressing safety issues and increasing biodiversity.

Where possible the intent is to try to create useable areas for the existing and potential new business.

04. The 'Town Square' & Aylmer Square. (F)



Figure 26. Cinema Link - Illustrative Plan



Figure 27. WRP Link - Illustrative Plan



Figure 28. Old Vicarage Place Link - Illustrative Plan



Figure 29. Old Vicarage Place Link - Visualisation 01

04. The 'Town Square' & Aylmer Square. (E)

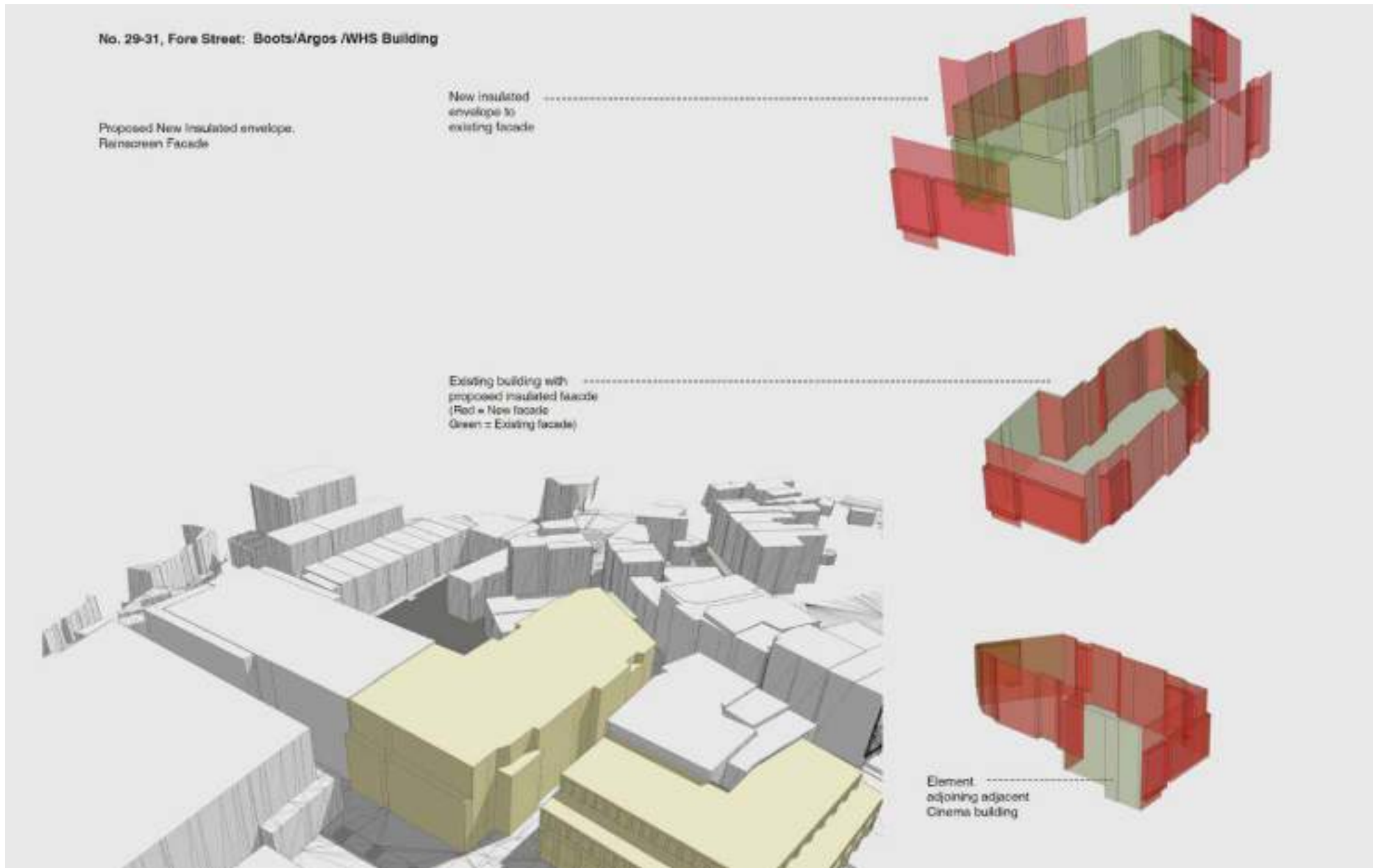


Figure 30. Architectural Proposals _ 29-31 Fore Street

05. The Old Vicarage Place Rooftop Gardens. (A)



Figure 31. Rooftop Garden . Visualisation 03.

05. The Old Vicarage Place Rooftop Gardens. (B)



Figure 32. Roof Gardens . Technical drawing

01. Capitalise on the currently unused space to create a valuable asset for the town centre through the creation of an elevated roof garden, including:
02. A community 'productive' garden. An accessible and inclusive garden space of raised beds, fruiting trees, herbs and ornamental plants. This could be coordinated with Edible St Austell, local community groups and potentially feed into social prescribing in collaboration with St Austell Healthcare.
03. Access to the garden is achievable via external and internal staircases as well as an extension to the ramp access from the ground level. A wide, linear path provides access through the space and provides an opportunity for activity/markets, external events etc.
04. Inclusive activity in the form of climbing and more imaginative play provides opportunity for a variety of ages. The proposal in this case is a climbing 'boulder' or similar as a representation of the surrounding landscape.
05. There is potential for a bridge connection to the adjacent White River Place. The level and alignment of the bridge fits well with an existing roof terrace. This could, in collaboration with WRP incentivise the population of the, currently vacant, spaces in WRP.
06. There is space for a large structure/multi purpose building on the rooftop. The suggestion is for this to be a unique glazed form to facilitate access to green space in inclement weather, winter, nighttime etc. The form could include further uses such as cafe kiosk, bar, etc, also with the potential for small lettable office units or similar.

Notes:

The roof structure is robust due to its previous use as a car park. Certainly the inclusion of a 'garden landscape' is achievable through the use of currently available lightweight structures and drainage methods. The installation of built form will need to be considered carefully in order to determine the additional structural requirements.

The space presents a unique and high value view through the rooftops of St Austell, to the church and the landscape beyond. This has the opportunity to be a unique and popular multi purpose space.

Due to its location, with the exception of access requirements, the project can be implemented with limited disruption to the general function of the town centre.

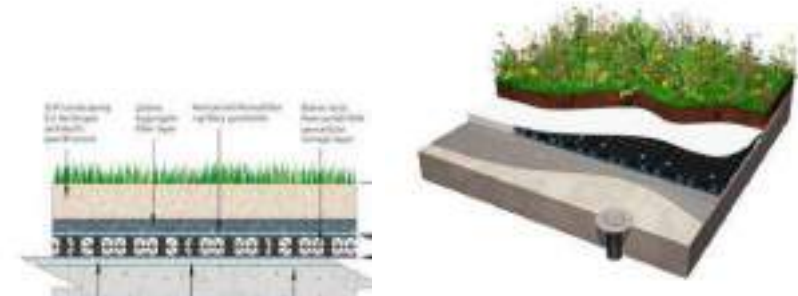


Figure 33. Example roof build-ups

05. The Old Vicarage Place Rooftop Gardens. (C)



Figure 34. Roof Garden . Illustrative plan



Figure 35. Roof Garden . Visualisation 01.



Figure 36. Roof Garden . Visualisation 02.

06. The 'Historic Quarter', East Hill and High Cross Street.



Figure 37. The Historic Quarter. technical drawing

01. Rationalise the existing highway to reflect a new one-way system around Holy Trinity Church, providing safer, wider footpaths, accessible routes into and around existing offers and access into a new public realm landscape within the grounds of the church.
02. increase the amount of lighting, both to highlight the historic architectural form and to provide a safe and well lit environment.
03. Create a positive interface with High Cross Street, ensuring transition between the pedestrian and vehicular areas are safe and detailed to be respectful to the heritage value of the area.
04. Change the one way system through Fore Street so that, if required, larger vehicles can access the street and to improve the interface with Truro/Bodmin Road to the west.
05. Reduce the road width at both Duke Street and South Street to give opportunity for businesses to benefit from the increased pedestrian zone. Taxi zone and drop off is retained.
06. Enhanced planting and rain gardens to highlight the two access points as gateways into St Austell.
07. Improve the condition and aesthetic of the East Hill interface/ access, capitalising on the existing cycle infrastructure and introducing a positive public realm and information point/kiosk.

Notes:

The intent for the area is to retain all vehicular access but to re-work the flow to fit the existing reduced road width. This will become a safer and more accessible 'quarter' and give the existing businesses the opportunity to use the streetscapes as an asset.

The area has been identified as one of the least well lit areas of the Town Centre which contributes to limited footfall and increased antisocial behaviour. A positive and effective lighting strategy will both make the area more desirable at night and also highlight the quality of the very attractive historic buildings.

The future development of the Old Post Office has a great impact on the efficacy of these proposals. There is an extant permission for residential development which would make a positive contribution to both aspects of the plot. This 'Vision' also identifies the opportunity and need for higher education accommodation which can be pursued as an opportunity for development of this and the adjacent sites.

07. High Cross Street. Architectural Proposals.

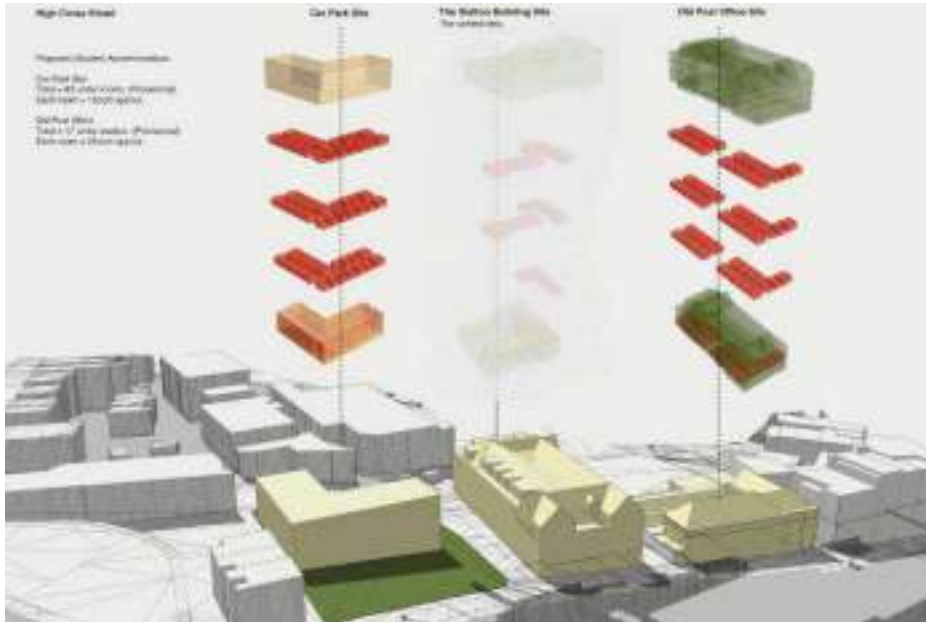


Figure 38. Architectural Proposals _ High Cross Street (All)

The development of options for the creation of Higher Education Halls of Residence/accomodation.

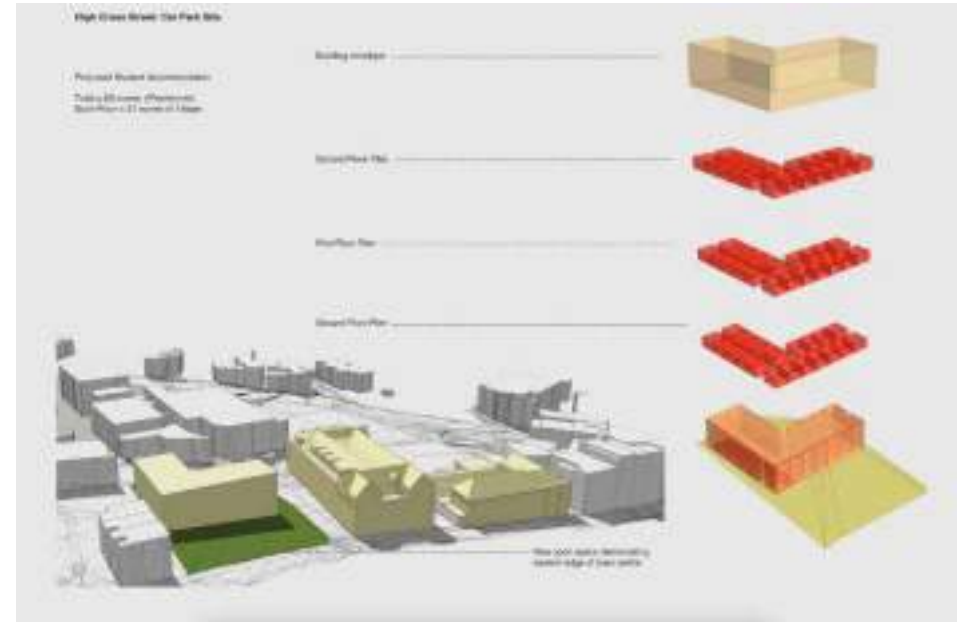


Figure 39. Architectural Proposals _High Cross Car Park

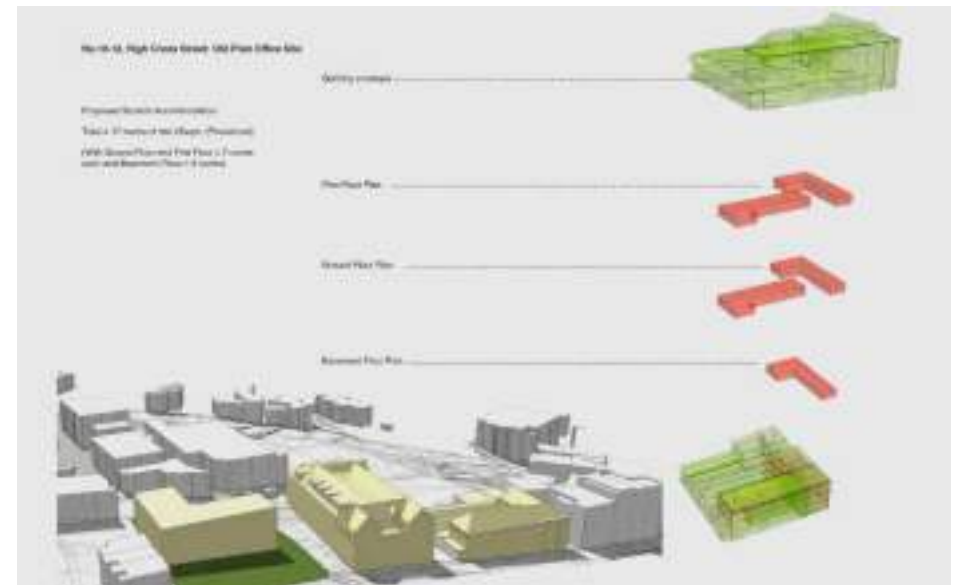


Figure 40. Architectural Proposals _Old Post Office

08. Refurbishment and extension of 19 - 21 Fore Street.

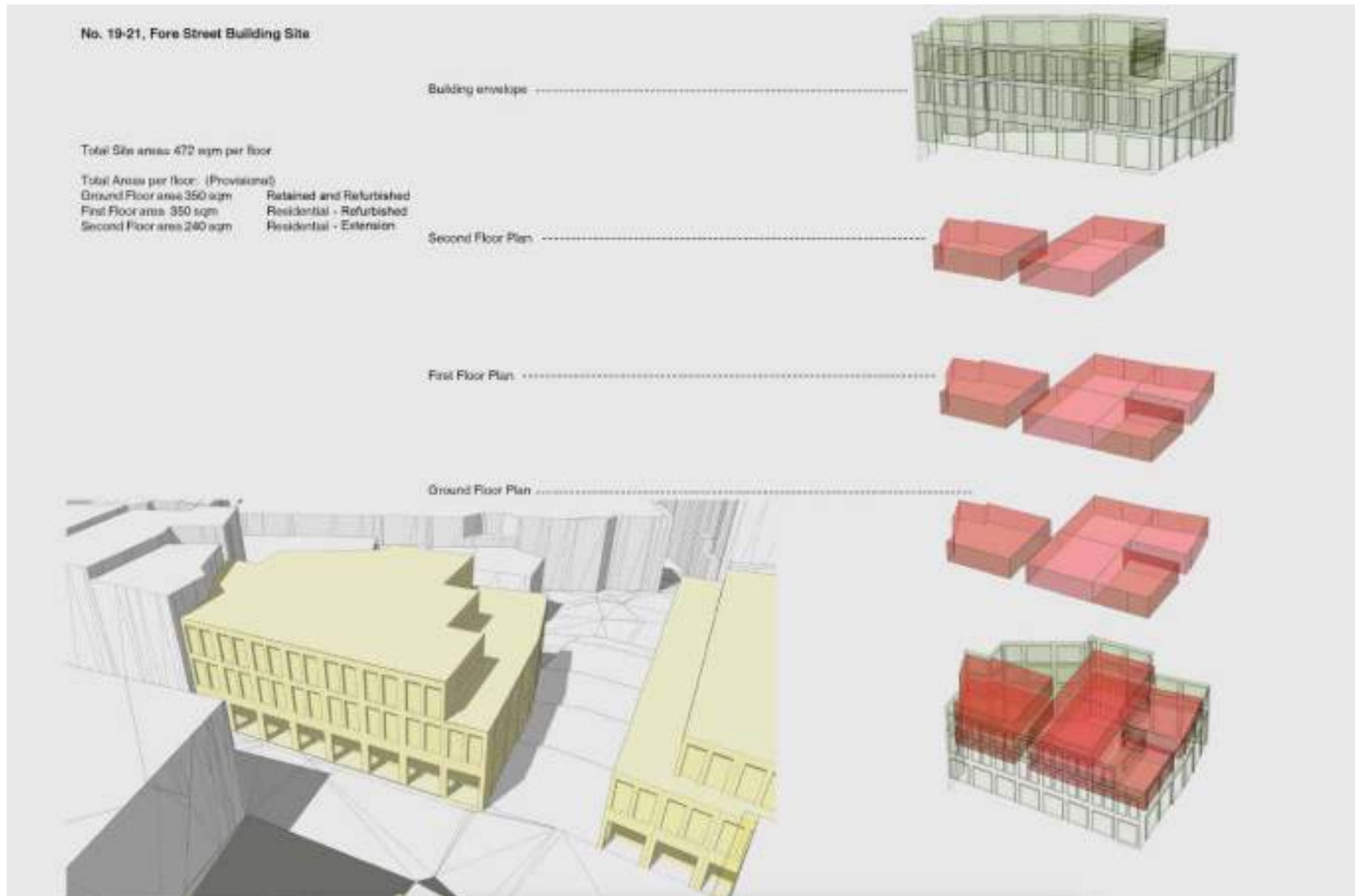


Figure 41. Architectural Proposals _ 19 - 21 Fore Street

09. St Austell Train Station Public Realm Upgrade.



Figure 42. Station public realm enhancement. 01



Figure 43. Station public realm enhancement. 02



Figure 44. Station public realm enhancement. 03



Figure 45. Station public realm enhancement. 04

10. The Old Fire Station Redevelopment.

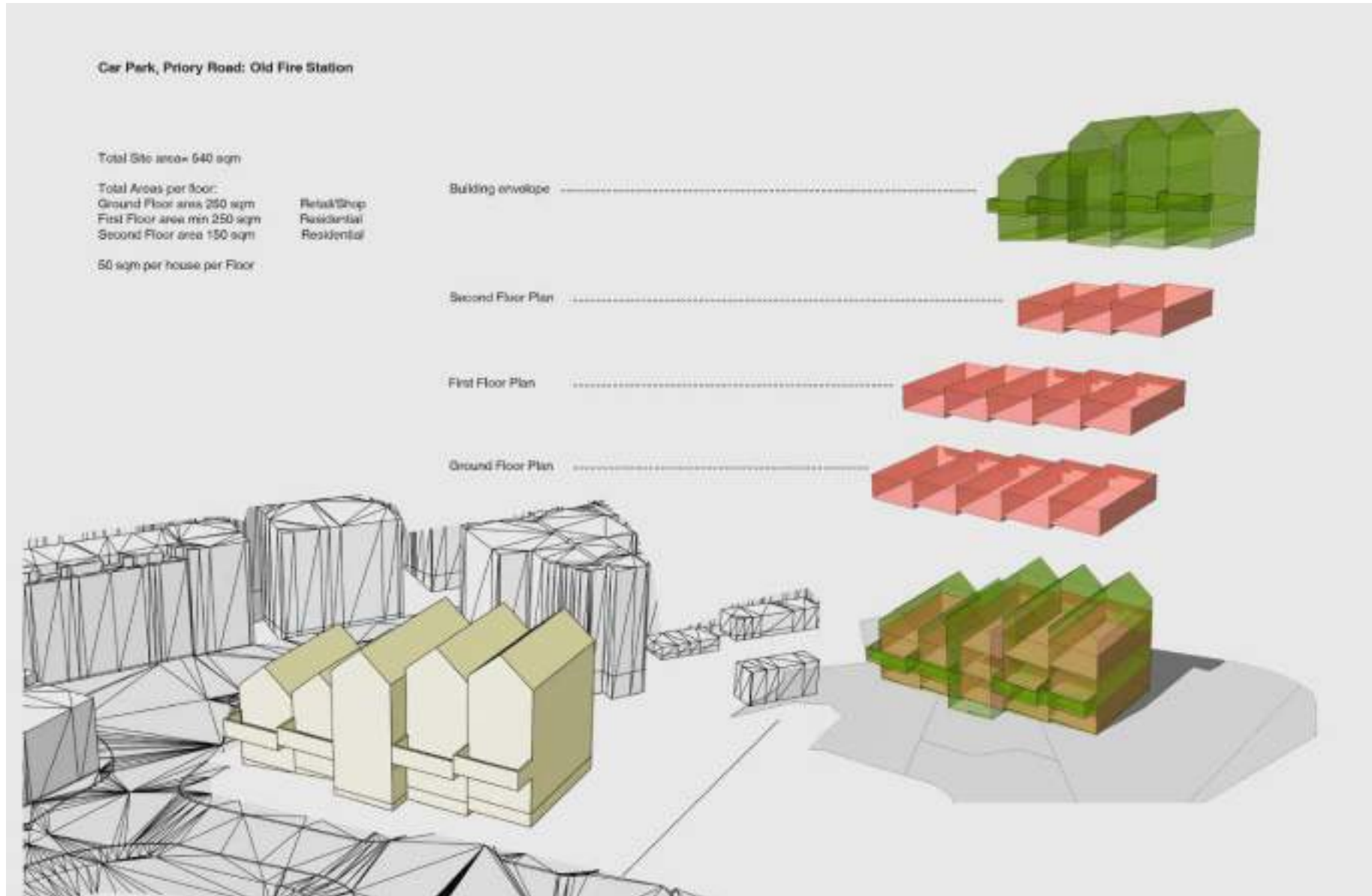


Figure 46. Architectural Proposals _Old Fire Station

Signage, Waymarking, Activation and Interpretation.

The project team undertook an accessibility audit for the town centre which has defined a number of proposals as they have been emerging through the individual project development. Further to this, and supported through the consultation process, a requirement and form of townscape legibility has been defined.

Whilst there are current signs and waymarkers through the town, the styles and condition are varied and in many cases they do not provide sufficient and/or legible resource for users of the town. This was further investigated as part of the supporting report, St Austell Town Centre, ACCESSIBILITY SURVEY, 2022, prepared by Go Shop Mobility.

The proposals present a town wide strategy of de-cluttering, removal of hazardous interventions and identification of obstacles to accessibility and inclusiveness. These are addressed in more detail within the strategic proposals shown in Appendix 3.

In addition to removing and improving existing form and interventions, there is a strategy for the establishment of a hierarchy of elements which contribute to accessibility, inclusiveness and legibility of the town. These include; information points, wayfinding and signage that link to the existing town centre offer, tie into the Sustrans LCWIP to promote the sustainable and active transport links and provide valuable community resource. (Appendix 06), present some examples of the hierarchy of forms that are proposed and their function.

At key destination/hub points, there is scope to include more significant 'kiosk' style facilities. This can include, for example, WC, bike storage, information, refreshments, bike and wheelchair hire and maintenance and to act as meeting points. In combination with the LCWIP, the electric bike scheme and through promotion of the significant existing cycle and walking routes providing connectivity to the surrounding landscape and communities.

All signage, interpretation and waymarking etc will include means of communication and accessibility to suit varied ability, e.g. video of signing, icons and imagery to define key routes and facilities and the use of 'Navilens' and QR codes to maximise access to inclusive information and websites/apps.



Figure 47. Bus Stop/Shelter /Secondary information kiosk. Concept model.

Low key form, scalable in size to fit the context, green roof/solar panels/interpretative form. Reference to St Austell and to Landscapes.



Figure 48. Indicative proposals for kiosks/shelters. Key Plan ref 01

(Refer to Appendix 06 for the details of interpretation strategy).

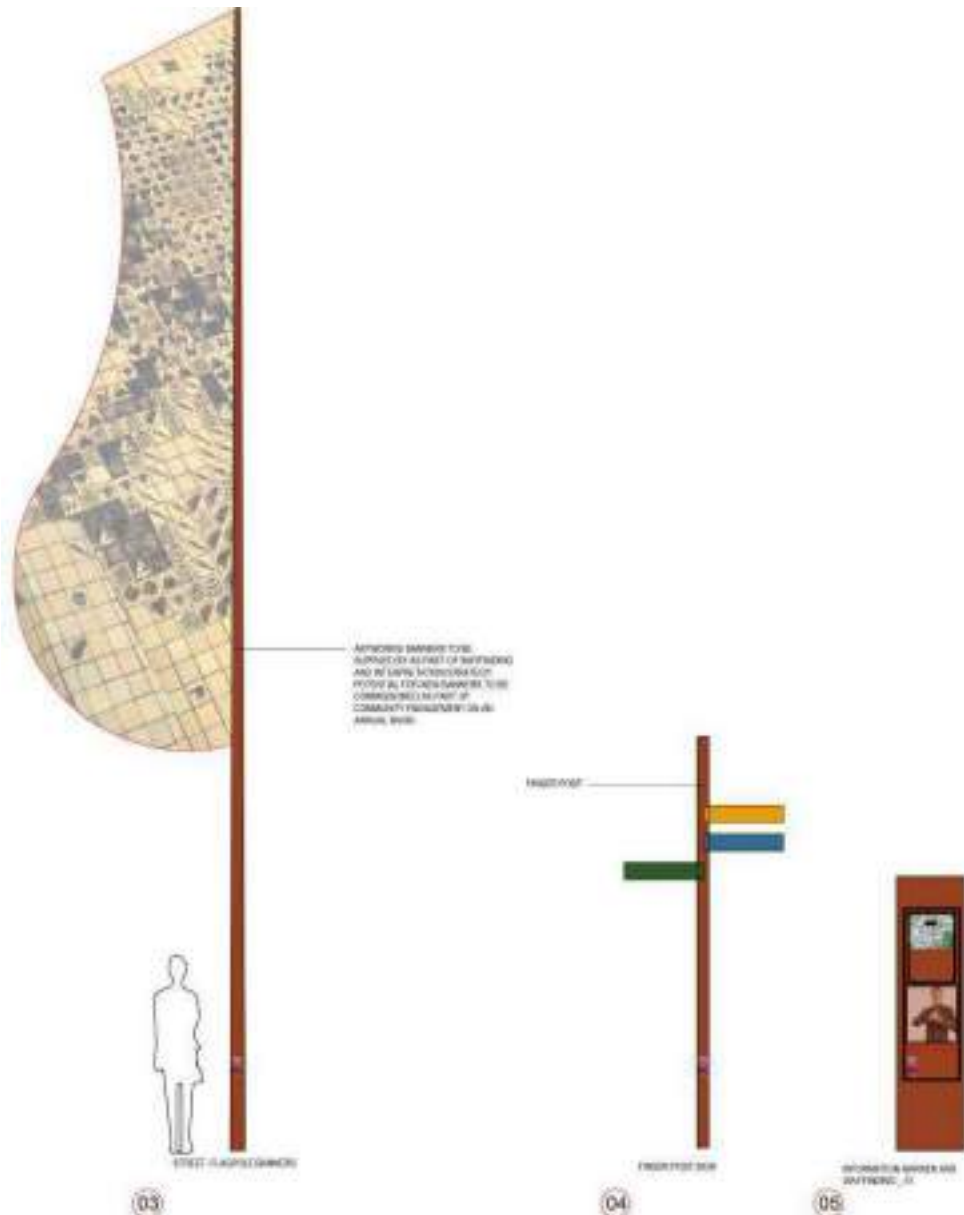


Figure 49. Illustrative proposals for signage, wayfinding and interpretation.

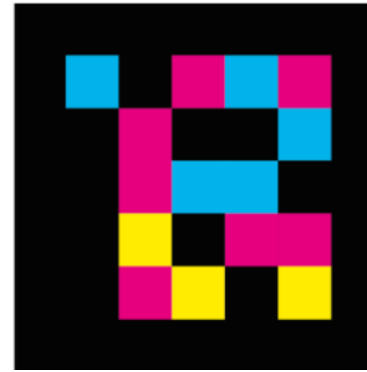


Figure 50. Navilens. For visually impaired.



Figure 51. QR Codes, link to apps and websites

An interpretation and waymarking strategy has been produced for the town that identifies key locations for an hierarchy of signage and information points.

The interpretation and signage 01 - 09 below present a typology and 'family' of elements which can be distributed throughout St Austell as part of a means of creating a dynamic and legible townscape.

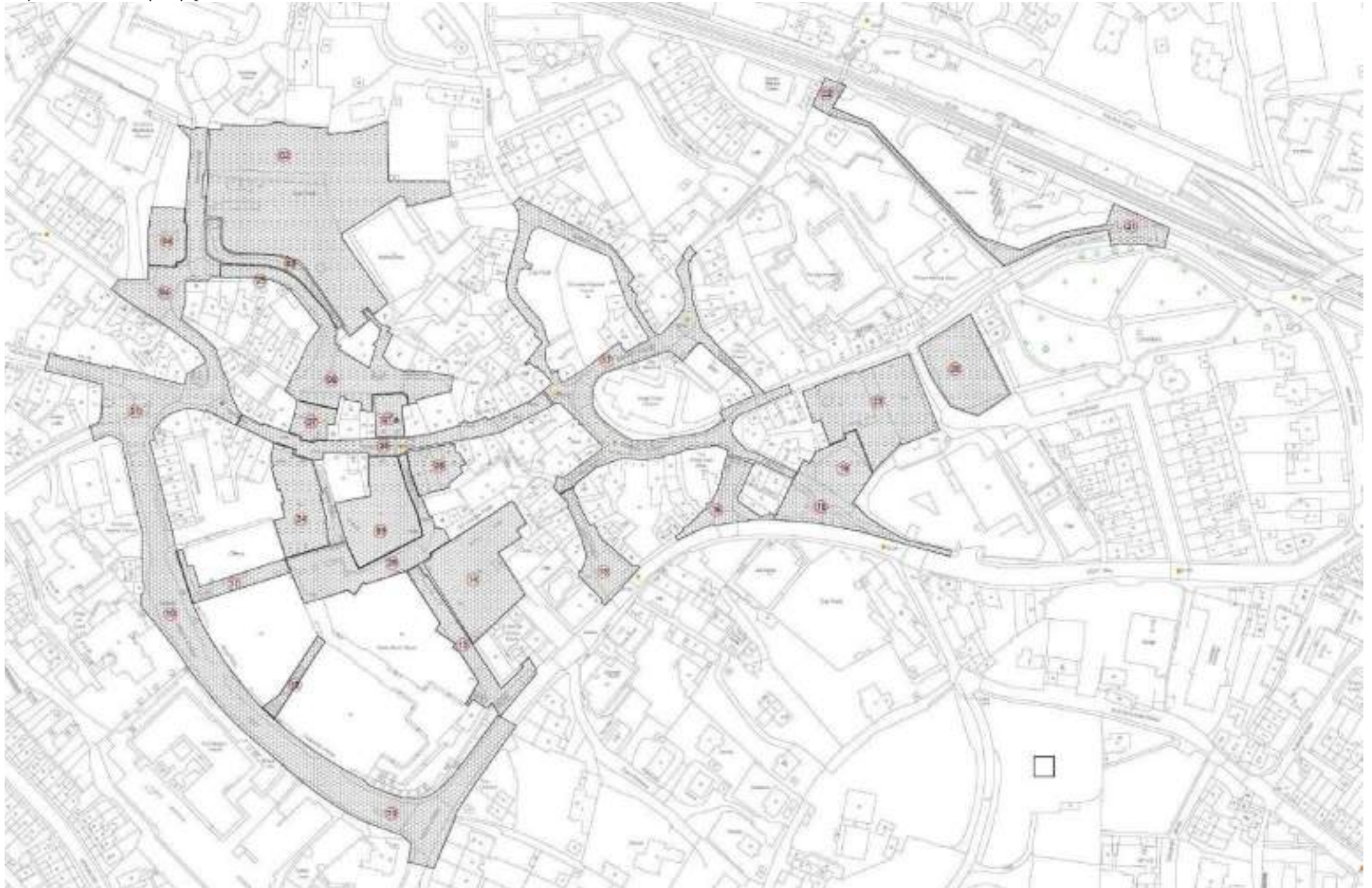


Figure 52. Preliminary identification of sites/ sub-project areas)

06. Project Site Summaries.

Site 01:

Roads at the interface between Trinity Street, Bodmin Road and Truro Road including the General Wolfe. (The Western Gateway)

Site 02.

Priory Car Park, Interfaces with adjacent landscape, buildings and infrastructure.

Site 03.

The interface between Priory Road, Grants Walk and Priory Car Park. Planted area, access and walls,

Site 04.

The car park spaces (old fire station)

Site 05.

Priory Road and Grants Walk.

Site 06.

Biddicks Court (BC)

Site 07.

Enhanced Access through to Fore Street/ Adjustment of 24-26 Fore Street.

Site 08.

19 - 23 Fore Street

Site 09.

Fore Street / Poundland, Aylmer Place and Chandos Place

Site 10.

Trinity Street.

Sites 11, 12 & 13.

Cinema pedestrian link, WRP pedestrian link & Old Vicarage Place pedestrian link.

Site 14.

Vicarage Place Rooftop car park.

Sites 15, 16 & 17.

Highways, Footpath and public realm around the Church.

Site 18.

East Hill

Site 19.

The rear of the old post office

Sites 20 & 23.

High Cross Car Park (Potentially plus station building and PO).

Sites 21 & 22.

Railway Station public realm and access

Site 24.

Boots, Argos, WH Smith, Fore street/Aylmer Square cladding.

Site 25.

General Townscape Enhancement.

Note:

The following Pages also show a preliminary analysis of 'Value'. This is a high level review to test the projects value against key elements of change. The preliminary appraisal was further developed as the projects progressed to inform the cost/benefit analysis.



Site 01.

The Western Gateway.

Project Description:

To create a safe, attractive and accessible Western Gateway into St Austell town centre from key destinations/arrival points around St Austell

This proposal will reduce a current and notable conflict in this location between pedestrians and vehicles travelling from the junction at Priory Road, along Bodmin Road to the south and the interface with Fore Street and Trinity Street. This is presenting a health and safety risk and also limits the accessibility (visual and physical) into Fore Street. There is a further conflict with the parking of delivery vehicles at the entrance to Fore Street.

Transform the highway from a tarmac thorough fare to an attractive 'Low Speed Zone' that accommodates safer pedestrian crossings and re-unites the General Wolfe with the Town Centre as a community resource whilst re-establishing the historic connection and setting of the conservation area.

The plan is to re-shape the vacant, General Wolfe back to its original 'listed' form, creating a manageable and high value building as a potential workshop/education arts and cultural hub. This will provide an accessible and visually attractive resource which activates the arrival to the Western Gateway to St Austell.

The proposal would narrow the junctions, increase the width of the public realm and maintain safe access and visual continuity across pedestrian and vehicular routes at this town centre interface. This will act as a traffic calming measure and allow the creation of a wider, defined pedestrian crossings that afford greater visibility and safety whilst increasing safe access to the General Wolfe and maximising potential for its use as a town asset.

This project creates a 'Gateway' landscape at the junction between Bodmin Road and Priory Road and around the General Wolfe. This increases useable space for business and pedestrians and forms a visible and physical transition from the main road to define a Town Centre landscape.

What are the benefits?

- Provides an attractive, welcoming, gateway to the town centre.
- Greater 'presence' for the Town Centre in terms of physical and visual access.
- Safer pedestrian access & Traffic Calming
- Visible and manageable use of the General Wolfe as an asset for St Austell.
- Location for 'POP-UP' and small scale market which is visually prominent.
- Positive passive surveillance.
- Retains the historically important building whilst maintaining a possible revenue stream for owners.

Associated Projects: 04, 10 & 05

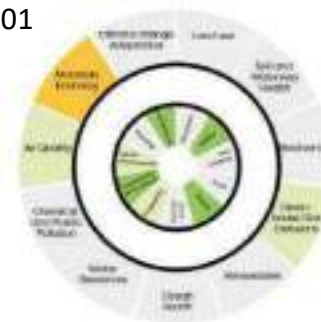


Figure 53. The General Wolfe, Truro Road and Bodmin Road



Figure 54. Footpath at Bodmin Road and Grants Walk

01



Project Description:

To improve the functionality and visual appearance of a key arrival point to stimulate interest and effectively direct people to the town and its offerings.

The existing car park is of value to the Town Council in terms of income. It is a popular car park though does not have a clear and positive interface with the town centre. The access is not clearly evident and the boundaries are unattractive and partially degraded.

The car park presents a valuable arrival point into the Town Centre. This proposal would rationalise the parking spaces to maximise efficiency of space, change the flow and create a one way system of traffic to encourage efficient use of the whole parking area. This allows greater flexibility of space within the car park for improved access, opportunities for increased planting, seating and interpretation alongside 'Hub' locations for cycle hire, information resource and inclusive interpretation and potential renewable solar energies.

Part of this work aims to improve the interface with the town. There is currently a wide planted verge and tall retaining wall forming the southern boundary of the car park, (Project 03). Whilst the planted area has some value in terms of its biodiversity, it is degraded and would benefit from renewal. The wall forms a visual barrier from Biddicks Court and its removal would improve the interface between the car park and the town centre facilities.

By re-defining this boundary and by pulling the parking areas back from the edge it presents greater width to achieve a further accessible route to the western side of Biddicks Court, and greater space presenting opportunities for an information 'hub' seating and increased passive surveillance.

What are the Benefits?

- Improved access into the town.
- To increase biodiversity,
- To facilitate inclusive interpretation and way marking, (aligned to the roll out of electric bikes & the LCWIP)
- To emphasise the positive interface between the car park/arrival and the town centre.
- Activate Biddicks Court as a valuable asset as a public space/square.
- Improve the interface between the car park and Biddicks Court.
- Increasing opportunity for activation of space and repurposing of inactive space.

Associated Projects: 03, 04, 05, 06.



Figure 55. Priority Car Park



Figure 56. Priority Car Park Access to Biddicks Court

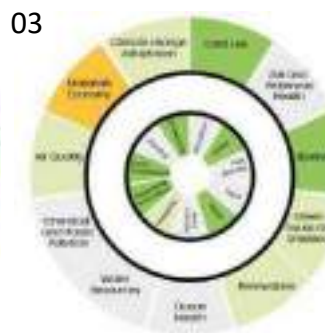


Figure 57. Priority Car Park southern boundary

02



03



Site 04.

The Old Fire Station and Public Realm

Project Description:

To assist with the activation of the Western Gateway by providing either a mixed use building or improved public realm.

This location, forming part of the Western Gateway and an arrival point into St Austell, is key to the activation and enhancement of the north western corner of St Austell as an attractive gateway and useable public realm.

The old fire station site presents opportunities for both redevelopment as a mix of accommodation and retail/hospitality or alternatively as an area of public space/realms that could accommodate pop-ups, information or activation. The proposals at Project 01 to enhance the Western Gateway seek to maximise opportunities for activation of the public realm for existing businesses, to improve accessibility and to provide aesthetic enhancement. The development will contribute significantly to the benefits of project 01.

The footprint of the demolished fire station has set a precedent for the potential building size that can be accommodated adjacent to the nearby listed buildings.

We have calculated the potential scale for the creation of retail, food groceries/ refill store/ farm-shop and café to the ground floor/active landscape. Then 5 dwellings over, 3 no. 2 storey of approx. 100m². There is opportunity for a further 2 no. single storey first floor flats, 2 beds measuring 61m² in accordance with Technical Housing Standards – national described space standard document.

The proposals would work well with the strategy for Project 01 as it presents active frontage onto accessible public realm and shared surface. It also links well with projects 2, 3 and 5. There is a direct pedestrian link along Priory Road towards Grants Walk/Biddicks Court and it would form a ‘square’ with the existing businesses on the corner of Priory Road and Bodmin Road.

What Are the Benefits:

- Enhanced public realm presenting improved inclusive accessibility.
- More attractive access for users of the car park.
- Accommodation
- Increased passive surveillance
- Additional retail offering and dwell space/active landscape.

Associated Projects: 01, 02, 03 & 05



Figure 58. Car park at The Old Fire Station site



Figure 59. Priory Road and Bodmin Road junction



Figure 60. Grants Walk junction

04



Site 05.

Priory Road and Grants Walk

Project Description:

This project seeks to improve an important pedestrian access to the town centre.

Part of the scope of the overall project is to shift emphasis away from the dominance of vehicular infrastructure in the town centre where there is also a pedestrian access. The refurbishment of the streetscapes and landscapes through project 01, 02 & 03 form a cohesive townscape that creates a sense of arrival whilst accommodating both pedestrians and vehicles. This location, at Project 05, forms part of this Western Gateway and an arrival point into St Austell via Biddicks Court. It aids the activation and enhancement of the north western corner of St Austell as a gateway and useable public realm whilst still accommodating the necessary functional requirements of both commercial and residential properties.

Biddicks Court (Project 06) is a valuable, but underused area of shared space. The value is demonstrated further in the respective project summary. The goals of Projects 02, 03 & 05 feed into this and form part of a cohesive urban environment. This is not purely about aesthetic enhancement, but will facilitate and encourage safe and legible pedestrian access past and around existing business as well as creating opportunity for new.

What Are the Benefits:

- Enhanced public realm presenting improved inclusive accessibility.
- Safer and more attractive pedestrian and vehicular access.
- Increased exposure and potentially footfall, capitalising on the refurbishment of Priory Car Park.
- Defined and managed vehicular access allowing a more legible use of Biddicks Court for pedestrian users and also commercial /vehicular use for access and deliveries.

Associated Projects: 01, 02, 03 & 06



Figure 61. Grants Walk



Figure 62. Grants Walk

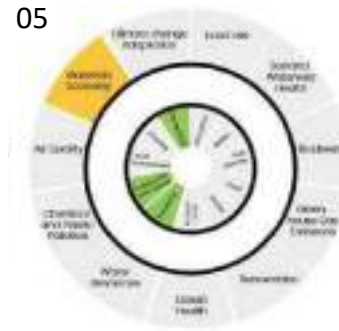


Figure 63. Grants Walk and Biddicks Court



Figure 64. Grants Walk and Biddicks Court

05



Site 06.

Biddicks Court

Project Description:

To improve the functionality, appearance and value of a shared space which is currently unattractive and dominated by vehicles.

The value of Biddicks Court is compromised by the existing vehicular access/parking/deliveries and the unattractive rear aspect of the buildings. The useable space can be managed fairly simply by shifting the emphasis of surface design within Biddicks Court to accommodate a more defined vehicular route which protects public realm. (currently the whole surface and definition of use is ambiguous which results in a confused space).

This project would create an attractive public realm whilst recognising the need for access for deliveries and maintenance. This joint space needs to be made more legible for users to fulfill its contribution to the townscape. This project would redefine the useable space by passively directing users to the access points between Biddicks Court and Fore Street, and accomodate clear and defined vehicular access and storage/parking requirements.

The current approach is to focus on the provision of quality public space and positive accessible landscape. In order to achieve this there may be a reduction in dedicated pedestrian space however this space will be protected from vehicular use and therefore be of greater value to existing and new businesses.

What are the benefits:

- In its current form Biddicks Court is a purely transitional space. There is currently no reason to 'dwell'. The new proposals seek to enhance the transitional spaces, highlighting and encouraging accessible routes to Fore Street and provide reason to dwell within the space as an active community space, possibly through the introduction of new and useable start-up units or temporary market stalls.
- By realigning vehicular routes to (Project 5) through the space we are improving opportunities for positive public use as well as a more coherent vehicular use.
- This will improve the value of Biddicks Court as a destination rather than purely a , sometimes hazardous, transitional route.

Associated Projects: 01, 02, 03 & 06



Figure 65. Biddicks Court



Figure 66. Biddicks Court. From access to Priory CP.

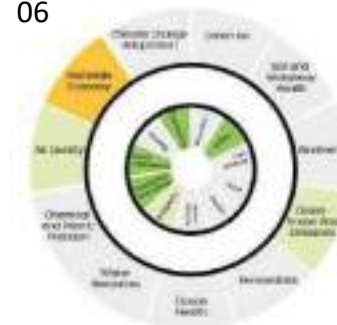


Figure 67. Biddicks Court. Towards access to Priory CP.



Figure 68. Access to town centre underneath the Gurkha.

06



Site 07.

Connection to Fore Street. Removal of 24 - 26 Fore Street

Project Description:

This Project is to improve the route from Priory Car Park to Fore Street to make it more accessible and welcoming.

Although accessible, the current routes are indirect, narrow, unsafe and unattractive.

The stepped access underneath the Gurkha, (36 - 38 Fore Street) is a direct route to the town centre but despite recent improvement through the Green and White Gold project (SABEF), remains a confined and unwelcoming route via a steep set of steps. The arrival to the north side of the building is poorly presented, badly signposted, and does not present a positive arrival to the streetscape of Fore Street.

36 to 38 Fore Street remains a useful link and viable business that fits with the requirements of town centres to address local need. The proposal therefore is to refurbish and enhance the interfaces with the adjacent landscape at Biddicks Court and Fore Street, to make it more attractive as a positive connection to the town and noting the historic connection which followed this route.

This project aims to improve the connectivity and permeability of the town centre to encourage activation and footfall. This proposal includes the removal of the vacant 24-26 Fore Street. The building does not currently contribute positively to the character and quality of the historic streetscape, is long-term vacant and presents a negative impact both on the conservation area and vitality of the town centre. The proposal is to remove the building in favour of an, attractive and accessible route between Biddicks Court and Fore Street. The alignment of this facilitates direct visual and physical access from Priory Car Park, through Chandos Place to Aylmer Square and a new Town Square, (Ref Project 09). This present flexibility in terms of the creation of useable and flexible space.

What are the benefits:

- Dramatically improved physical access into the town centre.
- Visual permeability and passive surveillance will be improved.
- The relocation of the existing, functioning/trading businesses will be possible.

Associated Projects: o6, o8 & o9



Figure 69. 24 - 26 Fore Street



Figure 70. 24 - 26 from Chandos Place



Figure 72. 24 - 26 from Fore Street

07



Site 08.

Refurbishment of 19 - 23 Fore Street

Project Description:

To improve the appearance of 19 - 23 which conflict with the historic character of Fore Street. The proposal is to clad and add a third storey to part of this building.

Several studies have been considered for this site as a standalone project, but also as a pairing with the proposals for the adjacent Poundland site. We are conscious in all of our proposals for Aylmer Square of the north – south topography and to avoid tall imposing flat facades when viewed from the south. Studies have explored the placement of buildings on Fore St and consider that the set-back positioning of the current arrangement helpful as a marker and emphasises a gateway to the proposed widening of Chandos Place. The current resultant scheme steps the building back in plan form to locally widen the space at Fore St and the junction with Chandos Place. In elevation, the buildings to the east of the built form will become three storey with a lower two storey section proposed at the entrance to Chandos Place. Breaking the massing down will return this part of the street to a more vertical proportion, as in the pre-1960s.

What are the benefits:

- Improved character and frontage onto Fore Street consistent with historic context/aesthetic.
- Cladding of the existing form to provide aesthetic improvement and greater thermal efficiencies in line with current requirements. (cheaper running costs for tenants).
- Increased lettable space, both commercial and residential.

Associated Projects: 07, 09 & 14



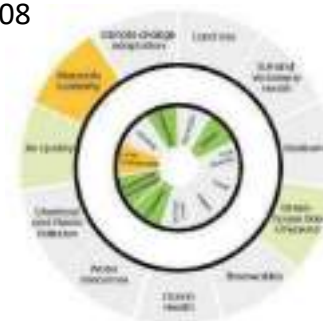
Figure 73. 19 - 23 Fore Street



Figure 74. 19 - 23 from Fore Street
08



Figure 75. 19 - 23 along Chandos Place



Site 09.

Creation of a Town Square and Transformation of 23 Fore Street/Poundland

Project Description:

This project seeks to create an improved town square through the partial demolition and/or improvement of 23 Fore Street (Poundland building).

The presence of the 'Poundland Building' has been subject to a number of proposals for change/removal/refurbishment, and continues to be a topic of conversation through community consultation.

The current form is in poor repair, is a large and dominant form that contributes little to the town. Of particular note is that the two most prominent facades, facing Old Vicarage Place and Chandos Place are blank and in-active. The scale of the building to the southern aspect blocks most views of the Church and historic buildings to the east and to the northern aspect is of an aesthetic and form that is inconsistent with the historic context of Fore Street.

There are a number of options that have been developed, both long term solutions as well as opportunity for short term and valuable activation of the town centre.

A number of options have been considered, including the total demolition of the building to create an open space. The preferred option however is the partial demolition/partial re-building and the creation of 2 - 3 storey units with the potential residential or alternative commercial use above ground and first floor. This would permit the widening of Chandos Place to create an attractive public realm with a more dynamic streetscape frontage and a larger number of lettable spaces.

What are the benefits:

- Removal of the large, aesthetically poor, facades and creation of a greater number of flexible business units will help transform St Austell.
- Rationalising the building alongside the creation of large, flexible, public space has the potential to activate and animate the town centre.

Note:

The key question is whether to fully demolish or to partially retain in consideration of the embodied carbon within the building structure. This is a matter for resolution as the proposals resolve through the detailed stages of the project.

Associated Projects: 06, 07, 08, 11, 12 & 14



Figure 76. Aylmer Square and Poundland



Figure 77. Poundland southern facade



Figure 78. Aylmer Place



Figure 79. Poundland - From Fore Street.

09



Figure 80. Poundland - Chandos Place

Site 10.

Creation of an enhance 'Low Speed Zone' through Trinity Street

Project Description:

This project aims to improve Trinity Street which is a major gateway to the town centre.

When approaching St Austell town centre from the south, the scale of building and limited 'openings' presents the perception of a visually and physically impenetrable frontage. This project will address this through a softening and activation of this facade as an interface to Trinity Street.

Trinity Street is functional for access (drop-off, pick-up, carpark access and deliveries), and as a public transport 'hub' point for the town. There are accessible routes into the town from this aspect, however they are not easily identifiable and certainly the step access points are unattractive and daunting.

The proposals for Trinity Street are two-fold:

- The enhancement of the northern side of the road as a means of providing a wider, pedestrian footpath, for improved accessibility and greater flexibility for the existing properties. This will highlight the locations of the entrances into White River Place and onwards to the town centre and improve the aesthetic of the south facing aspect of White River Place.
- To realign the vehicular route in order to create a partially shared surface and to act as a traffic calming measure particularly at the junction of Bodmin Road, Trinity Street, Truro Road and West Hill.

What are the Benefits:

- Highlighting the location of the Car Park and pedestrian access will demonstrate more clearly the location of access points (in combination with Projects 11 - 13). This is both an aesthetic treatment as it improves perception of the town and, with the use of trees, the canopies will counter the vertical dominance of WRP. It also gives opportunity for existing businesses to use available space for tables/chairs etc whilst maintaining the opportunity for drop-off and pick-up.
- Changing the perception of the arrival at the southern entrance to St Austell town centre to one of an attractive and pedestrian friendly, active, townscape.

Associated Projects: 01, 11, 12, 13 & 09

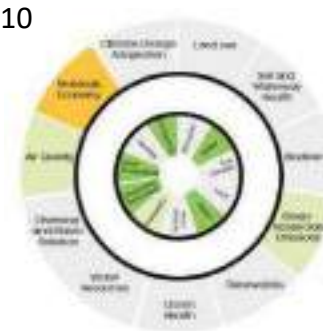


Figure 80. Trinity Street and Cimena access to White River Place



Figure 81. Trinity Street and Cimena access to White River Place

10



Sites 11, 12 & 13. Town Centre 'Active' Links

Project Description:

To improve three key pedestrian links to the town centre through improved greening and lighting.

There are three primary links into the town centre from the south/south east, two through White River Place which are steep, wide and unlit with steps which are intimidating in their aesthetic as well as their height. (Projects 11 and 12). Project 13 is the improvement of a very wide sloping ramp.

Our proposal seeks to enhance these routes through a mix of planting and lighting so that they are visually striking and contribute to the overall greening of the town centre whilst presenting a safe, welcoming and active aesthetic for visitors to the town.

The wider links, 12 and 13, also present opportunity for seating/rest points as well as larger spaces for activity and seating for hospitality/cafe tables, and or performance.

These are all visible from the peripheral road network and present simple, relatively low cost and sustainable benefits to the town centre and improve the quality of the southern aspects of the town.

What are the Benefits:

- Safer access throughout the year and at night through lighting, possibly catenary lighting to give the impression of a 'false ceiling' to counter the scale of the buildings.
- Positive aesthetic changes creating a 'draw' into the spaces
- Opportunity for the creation of green links as part of an overall greening strategy for St Austell with associated positives, ie. biodiversity urban cooling, health and wellbeing.
- Increased potential for on street trading (Vicarage Place) and incidental events.

Associated Projects: 01, 09, 10 & 14.

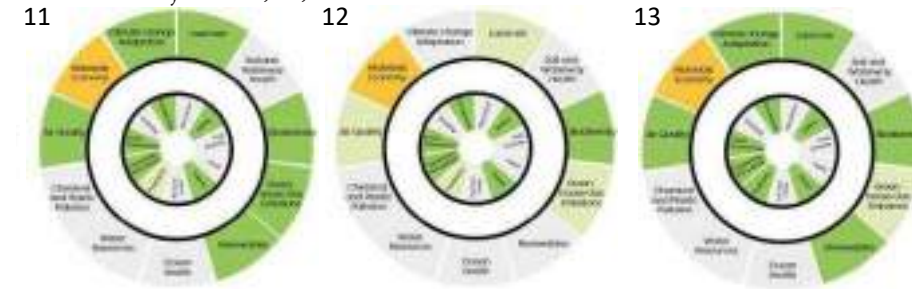


Figure 82. Old Vicarage Place. (Project 13)



Figure 83. Old Vicarage Place. from South Street (Project 13)



Figure 84. Aylmer Square/WRP step link (Project 12)



Figure 85. Aylmer Square/Cinema Step Link (Project 11)



Figure 86. Trinity Street and Cinema access to White River Place



Site 14.

The Rooftop Gardens

Project Description:

This project seeks to create an exciting roof top garden with fantastic views over the town and a contemporary structure suitable for all year round pop-up business and events.

The rooftop of Vicarage Place has great potential due to its location, height and capacity for loading (designed as a car park). There have been numerous requests throughout consultation with community and stakeholders for a town centre park, which is difficult to achieve at ground level as the spaces need to remain flexible. The roof top location gives opportunity to do something unique and that is a dynamic ‘draw’ to St Austell. The proposals suggest diverse gardens, community growing spaces, performance/flexible space, informal play, informal sport/recreation (petanque, badminton etc), covered greenhouse/winter garden, several small business/hospitality units and a ramp bridge connection to WRP and to ground level. The location is sited within a dramatic location amongst the rooftops, with views to the church and the landscape beyond. It presents potential for links to health, wellbeing, community groups and social prescribing.

An additional benefit is that it can be made secure at times when not in use so although open to the public could also host private events; such as weddings, conferences etc as a means of generating additional revenue.

What are the Benefits:

- Unique, and scaleable. It could be ambitious, including built form/glasshouse etc but equally could be a beautiful rooftop garden. If covered, as winter-garden style space, it becomes a valuable year-round/ all weather attraction.
- The site is secure. The space can be locked/secured and safe which limits any chance of antisocial behaviour, but also facilitates events and activities which could become a revenue generator for the owner/operator.
- Its implementation does not require major demolition/major infrastructure change (subject to adequate surveys), to make a significant change, though larger scale elements would require more significant analysis.
- There are further opportunities for leisure use, which can be considered in combination with the works. i.e. Ice rink/rollerskating facility, boules, basketball, Running Track or similar.
- The proposal includes an option for a bridge connection to the adjacent White River Place building. The currently vacant retail/office accommodation offices would benefit from direct and safe access to valuable open space.

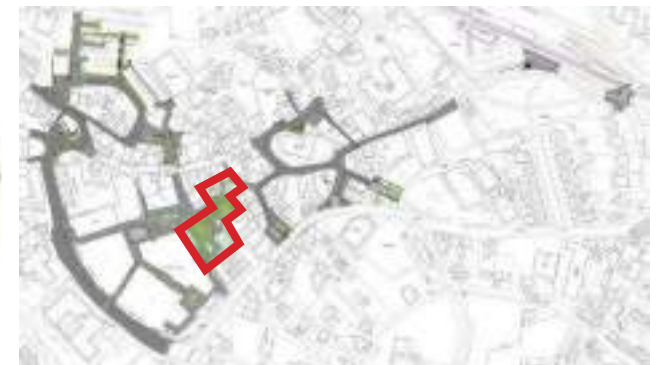
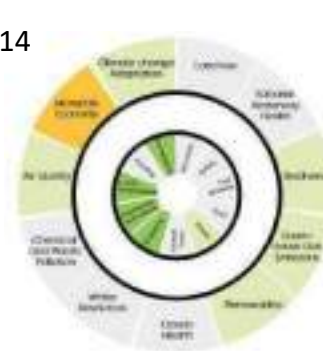
Associated Projects: 11, 12, 13 & 09



Figure 87, 88 & 89. Old Vicarage Place Roof.



14



Sites 15, 16 & 17. 'Historic Quarter' enhancement

Project Description:

To improve the traffic flow around the historic quarter of the town centre near to Holy Trinity Church to make the area safer and function better as a usable space.

The roads around the Market House and Holy Trinity Church are currently congested, both with parked vehicles and a busy road system. The road widths are not sufficient to accommodate the existing 2 way traffic which results in significant conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.

The Market House and Church have both recently invested in facilities which have great potential to increase the activity within this characterful 'Historic Quarter'. This will add to the established Cafe Tingo and White Hart.

By formalising a predominantly one way system the existing routes will not significantly change but pedestrian/vehicular interfaces will be made safer and gives the existing businesses the opportunity to benefit from the use of the streets and a more inclusive access.

The proposals include changes to the pedestrian paths and interfaces with properties and the church landscape improved. Lighting, increased footfall and a refreshing of the landscape structure will create attractive useable space and increase passive surveillance. All of these measures will help to address issues of antisocial behaviour which is a known problem with this area..

When establishing a new traffic system it is necessary to consider the potential impact on surrounding streets and junctions. To mitigate the impact on the small roundabouts at the junction of Carlyon Road/High Cross Street/ Kings Avenue, it is proposed to create a priority junction. This addresses the existing traffic flow and increases safe pedestrian flow across the junction.

What are the Benefits:

- Current footpath widths are not sufficient for wheelchairs/pushchairs etc so widening, even fairly minimally, is of great benefit for health and safety.
- The current arrangement frequently requires vehicles to mount kerbs posing further health and safety risk.
- The area has great character as an historic part of St Austell. The presence of a number of existing venues, resources, and businesses is a great asset and enhancing the pedestrian experience will increase the sense of place and potential for dwell time. The current and recent investment in property would benefit from these fairly simple improvements to the overall streetscape.

Associated Projects: 18, 19, 20 & 23



Figure 90. Duke Street



Figure 91. Market Street



Figure 92. Holy Trinity Church



Figure 93. Duke Street

15-7



Sites 18 & 19.

Active Transport 'Hub' - East Hill.

Project Description:

To improve the eastern gateway to the town centre at East Hill by de-cluttering the space and creating a pocket park and improved public realm.

At the location to the east of the East Hill, South Street junction is a large transitional space which accommodates parking, the cycle trail, and public access. The proposal is to rationalise and de-clutter this space to create a more attractive and useable eastern gateway in to the town centre.

It is currently a visual barrier into a very attractive section of the historic part of St Austell. The proposal is to redesign this to create a more cohesive, publicly accessible pocket park/public realm.

As the location lies on the cycle path it has great potential to become a destination point/hub for active arrival into St Austell. There is sufficient space within this area alone to accommodate a basic 'hub' building. With further development of the adjacent site (Project 19) there is scope to introduce a more permanent building/facility that can act as an active transport hub or similar facility.

(Project 19) The site of the old post office is currently subject to an existing permission for conversion into residential apartments. It is also included within projects 20 & 23 for consideration as accommodation for higher education. Our proposal is that the space to the south of the site is used to create an 'Active Transport Hub' or similar facility. Its location is positive as it sits directly on the cycle route, is visible from the highway though not intrusive and has the benefit of direct access by car if required for pick up/drop off and delivery. It sits in a location that is consistent with many of the walking and cycling routes identified by the LCWIP and is close to the station.

What are the Benefits:

- Increased passive surveillance.
- Benefits from the existing cycle route.
- Protect and enhance historic buildings and character.
- Provide safe access for pedestrians in to the town.
- Revitalise the current buildings through increase in footfall through a new, attractive space.
- Positive visibility/exposure
- A derelict site (albeit subject to some proposals) with scope to accommodate further development.

Associated Projects: 15, 16, 17, 19, 20 & 23.



Figure 94. East Hill



18



19

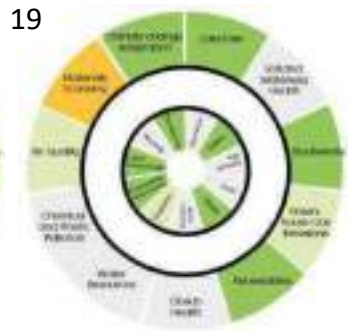


Figure 95. East Hill - towards the Church



Figure 96. East Hill

Project Description:

To create much needed student accommodation in High Cross Street car park to support further education facilities at Cornwall College and Eden Project

The car park offers the opportunity for a unique building, and a site that could be a marker to the entrance of the town from the north with links to the train station and cycle hub? There are three dwellings to the east of the site that the building could have an impact on. The current proposals show a sweeping form to the south elevation with the front of the High Cross St building set back from the street and the adjacent dwellings. This helps to create an open space and allows the attractive front section of the east elevation to The Station to be seen.

There is a current demand for higher education accommodation in this area and Newquay. The location of this site, size of the plot and the access to public transport, including the mainline station, makes this a very good opportunity to provide suitable accommodation and to enhance links to further higher education provision in Newquay.

Consideration has been made to link this site with The Station nightclub and also the former Post Office site that has an extant planning approval. This option to combine could unlock further areas required for possible future growth and expansion.

What are the Benefits:

- Currently a vacant, brown field site with various opportunities for development.
- Simple access by car, rail, cycle and foot.
- Will enhance a 'northern gateway' into the town.
- Allows for activation of the streetscape along High Cross Street.

Associated Projects: 18, 19, 21 & 22



Figure 97. High Cross Street - looking south



Figure 98. High Cross Street - looking north

20



23



Figure 99. High Cross Street car park



Project Description:

This project will improve the public realm and experience upon arrival at St Austell Station by improving wayfinding, interpretation and pedestrian/vehicle interaction.

St Austell benefits from a mainline station between Penzance and Paddington. The station is close to the town centre and there are proposals in place to improve rail links between St Austell, Par, Bodmin and Newquay. (Mid Cornwall Metro).

The principle of this project is to capitalise on the prominence and location of the station and to improve the sense of arrival to St Austell, enhancing the public realm within the existing scope of the space to draw attention to the views of St Austell and to provide positive way marking, interpretation and information. As part of this our proposal seeks to address current conflict between pedestrians and vehicles to the eastern access to the station and to make suggestions for improvements to potential conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.

There is scope within this project to make significant improvement within the physical constraints presented by the site, through effective wayfinding and interpretation, promote the town centre offer.

What are the Benefits:

- To maximise positive first impressions on arrival at St Austell mainline station.
- As an information 'hub' the station is in a good location and presents a number of opportunities for rental of bikes/mobility/information sharing.
- There is a conflict between vehicular and pedestrian movement to the eastern access so the station. This can be addressed by surface treatments, and clear signalled crossing points.



Figure 100. Railway Station town interface



Figure 101. Railway Station at Trevarthian Road



Site 24.

WH Smith/Boots/Argos Building

Project Description:

To improve the facade of an unattractive and prominent town centre building.

The original brief required a review of the facades to this building, and where possible to create elevations that relate to the White River Place aesthetic. The proposal is to over clad this building in a ceramic / or porcelain rain screen cladding.

This removes the thermal bridging of the concrete exposed frame to make the building more thermally efficient, removes the projecting windows and eaves lines, provides a cost effective way of adapting the existing envelope and allows the building to create a unique vernacular material and one that is reminiscent of St. Austell and its history.

The theme of using a clay/porcelain based material is potentially very exciting with unlimited options as to what can be achieved.

What are the benefits:

- By cladding the building we address issues of sustainability whilst also improving the aesthetic and creating a unique feature within St Austell.
- The building being more efficient makes it more attractive to tenants for reasons of affordability and sustainability.
- Using ceramics is a 'tried and tested' method of achieving this and is a positive reference to St Austell heritage.

Associated Projects: 08, 09, & 10



Figure 102. Aylmer Place view of Argos and Boots building



Figure 103. View from Aylmer Square



General Townscape Enhancement (25)

Project Description

An overall and ongoing strategy of town wide enhancement has been identified throughout the project duration.

This strategy ranges from the simple decluttering and 'high level/soft touch' enhancement such as new planting and seating, to more ambitious strategies to address the visual and technological infrastructure of the town. Projects include:

- Installation of an hierarchy of interpretation and signage throughout the town, including virtual connectivity between businesses, information resource, accessible and inclusive information and a connectivity to the surrounding St Austell communities.
- The technology allows for engagement with education facilities community groups and business and can be presented in numerous methods throughout the town to activate an informative and dynamic townscape.
- Refreshing, replacing and enhancing the biodiverse landscape of the town through shrub and tree planting, rain gardens and, where possible, sustainable drainage associated with new buildings and landscapes.
- Improved accessibility and inclusive design through streets and at interfaces with buildings.
- Opportunities for renewable energies in car parks and in new or refurbished buildings and spaces.
- Refreshed and replaced surfaces and features where currently degraded or hazardous.
- Refurbished frontage to existing properties that are either degraded or present an outlook that affects the perception of St Austell, potentially following the precedent successfully set by the Townscape Heritage Initiative.



Project Cost Plan.

Throughout the analysis and design process a cost plan has been developed which captures at a high level the potential costs involved in each of the respective subprojects as well as the overall townscape enhancements. The purpose of this has been to ensure that we are well placed to be able to deliver effective bids for funding that can demonstrate a well-considered and realistic approach to the project development .

The emerging proposals for each site have been broken down into capital costs and fees (Surveys, Consultants fees, risk, preliminaries & contingencies etc. The summary page is shown for reference.

Project: St Austell Revitalisation

Date: 09.11.22

Project:		Item cost	Extra fees	Acquisition	Sub-Total	Total
1	General Wolfe	2,225,900	1,544,190		4,170,090	4,170,090
2	Priory Carpark	1,067,350	730,182		1,797,532	1,797,532
3	Carpark Interface	164,350	137,814		302,164	302,164
4	Old Fire Station	1,942,000	1,209,456		3,226,456	3,226,456
6	Biddicks Court	266,250	192,660		458,910	458,910
7	24-26 Fore Street	467,150	348,450		990,600	990,600
8	19-23 Fore Street	2,695,000	1,851,920		4,996,920	4,996,920
9	Poundland	6,096,100	4,299,042		11,545,142	11,545,142
10	Trinity Street	911,850	598,174		1,510,024	1,510,024
11	Cinema Link	120,000	114,720		234,720	234,720
12	WRP Link	208,250	154,612		362,862	362,862
13	Old Vicarage Link	288,300	243,125		531,425	531,425
14	Vicarage Place	4,375,000	3,194,000		7,569,000	7,569,000
15,16,17	Changes to Road Network	1,413,750	999,420		2,413,170	2,413,170
18&19	East Hill	566,170	461,408		1,027,578	1,027,578
20	High Cross Car Park	4,140,000	2,943,840		7,333,840	7,333,840
21&22	Station Enhance	247,400	180,294		427,694	427,694
23	Station and Post Office	4,962,500	3,339,400		8,301,900	8,301,900
24	Façade to new Post Office	372,500	292,360		664,860	664,860
25	New Town Centre	321,250	234,740		555,990	555,990
General	General	200,000	167,200		367,200	367,200
Total		33,051,070	23,237,006	2,500,000	58,788,076	58,788,076
	Infrastructure - upgrading southwest water, Western Power, BT ETC					2,939,404
Total						61,727,480

07. Consultation and Engagement

The manner in which the community and stakeholder groups are engaged is important both in terms of ensuring that the opinions of the residents, owners and users are heard and where possible incorporated into the developing project. The consultation also helps to inform the key issues and possibilities that the town faces. Those people who have used and run businesses in the Town for many years are well informed and can help to shape the proposals to present the most successful outcomes.

Our approach to consultation has therefore been staged to the following:

01.

A presentation of the existing condition of the town centre, encouraging an understanding of the issues the town is facing and what opportunities may be developed through the use of precedent projects and images.

This allowed us to communicate the overall problems and to identify key locations and features within the town that we perceive to present opportunities for change. This then evolved as we received feedback from the consultees to incorporate further issues and locations that could be addressed.

02.

To present an evolution of the baseline consultation that introduced further information, demonstrating an analysis of issues; lighting, signage, parking etc as a means of promoting more specific feedback. This allowed to 'show' the proposals on a plan of St Austell.

03.

Evolving from the analysis the emerging proposals were shown on a plan of St Austell. These were a combination of the sub-projects as identified at the analysis stage, the projects resulting from 'need', for example highways changes, opportunities for specific property, access and egress and the ideas and suggestions coming from the community groups and stakeholders/landowners.

04.

Clear identification of the emerging projects, their implications and benefits. These were listed as opportunities and also tied into the respective benefits, e.g; biodiversity, economy, tourism, well-being etc. This allowed consultees to make suggestions, present preference and opinion and also to input further in to the design development.

05.

Presentation of proposals. The final stage of this element of the consultation allowed us to present 'high level' proposals, supported by sketch and 3d visualisation which allowed people to respond from a more informed point of view. It allowed for a clearer understanding of how the town could be re-shaped and also what the potential benefits could be.

Consultation was undertaken in the following ways:

- Online, through social media
- Physical/ face to face, through incidental conversations, and scheduled events.
- Through online and physical surveys.
- Through media/press.

It is envisaged that the consultation will continue through these early stages of the project to allow more people to respond to the emerging proposals.

In addition, three further 'Deliverables' have been run by members of the Revitalisation Partnership addressing education, accessibility and events.

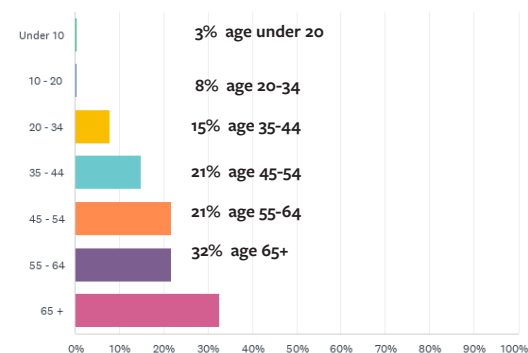
We have spoken to over **120 people** face-to-face in our walk- overs, consultations and pop-up events.

210 people have completed the online feedback and survey.

Of these, approximately **75%** are local residents. **12%** work here and live outside St Austell. and **13%** were visitors to St Austell.



Age range of participants:



Which areas of the Town Centre do you think most need revitalising?

Alford Square particularly Fore Street Old Forge Place High Cross Street main street centre White river street High Street empty shops area Fore Street shops need town town centre buildings many White River Place Aylmer Square Market House

What improvements in the Town Centre would encourage you to use the Town Centre more?

independent shops Free parking local encourage people need Better shops town use town centre areas go restaurants cafes centre etc shopping area clean controlled cafes shops dining days and local behaviour parking empty shops

Which areas of the Town Centre do you like best and Why?

White River Place White River needs Fore Street town shops area None Market House church market house old place town centre church

Any other comments, suggestions or ideas?

“Need to encourage growth and diversity.”

“We need things/shops/destination places that draw people in. I want something to do, I want to feel safe and I want to be positively engaged. I grew up in St Austell, still live in St A, used to love the town. I now mostly go to Truro because I feel safer and I can get everything done there. Such a shame.”

“We aren’t going to get retail back into our towns so some (empty) properties need to be turned to residential apartments (change of use) - this will in time bring restaurants for evenings, instead of dead town centres which is much needed”

“A town centre without subsidised parking will only go the same way, downwards. If subsidised parking cannot be achieved then the town centre needs to be shrunk to half the size and the other half made into housing.”

“Covered walkway on Aylmer square route.”

“When I first moved to St Austell there were table tennis tables along the walk ways, providing fun & entertainment for parents and children”

British White British Resident live Local resident Local St Austell

“A larger covered area would help - offering protection from the elements whilst walking between shops”

“Build on our Clay/China environment”

“Safe interesting spaces. Good seating.”

“What I would like to see in the centre of the town is open air markets, either a farmer’s market, craft/arts market or something along the lines of a market with various stalls, fruit and veg, clothing etc. Or a market showcasing local produce.”

“More things for children and teenagers is needed. More sports and recreational activities. Then nice places to go for families to eat and drink coffee. It does not feel safe at the moment for this demographic.

“Community centres and activities for people to go.”

(Refer to Appendix 4 for the full consultation summary).

one people will build community centre Fore Street meet friend rather Better signage spaces
coffee seating moment children Also see Removal smaller place go town lunch nice
around streets little activities Remove plants Look time Eden
independent shops cafes restaurants open local businesses
empty shops young people Free parking St Austell local things
make housing encourage markets people decent need
families Better Tidy shops Less town help use safe
town centre visit areas drinking go Earth Goddess
restaurants encourage people cafes want go centre rid etc money Will
work shopping area reason rent variety businesses Community Clean security
covered New clothes shops square evening part days something
anti social behaviour car parks parking variety shops events cafes bars easier places eat
know choice shops bring put



08. Demographic, Need and Priorities.

Throughout the design and design development process, the proposals have been embedded in the analysis of 'Need'.

This has led to an ongoing assessment of the individual sub-project value and their ability to address the specific requirements of the revitalisation process and wider goals in terms of economy, biodiversity, access etc.

This appraisal has allowed proposals to develop and provide justification for their inclusion, and in some cases exclusion, from the ongoing project.

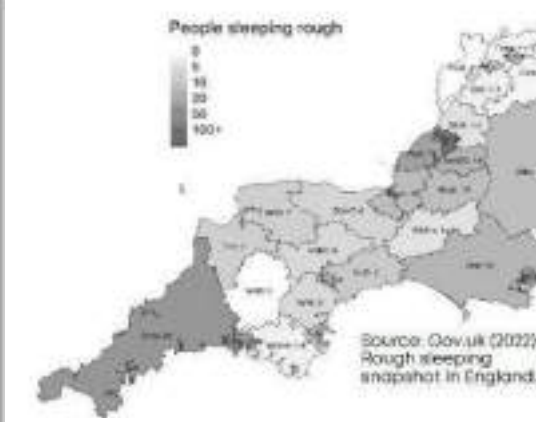
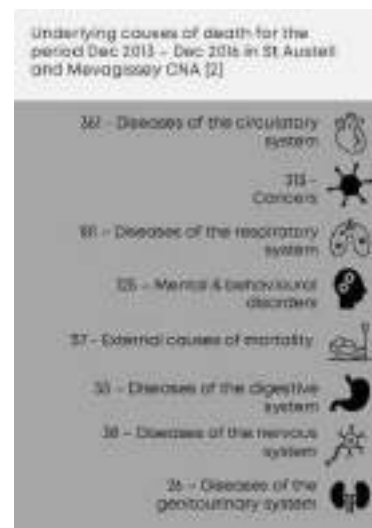
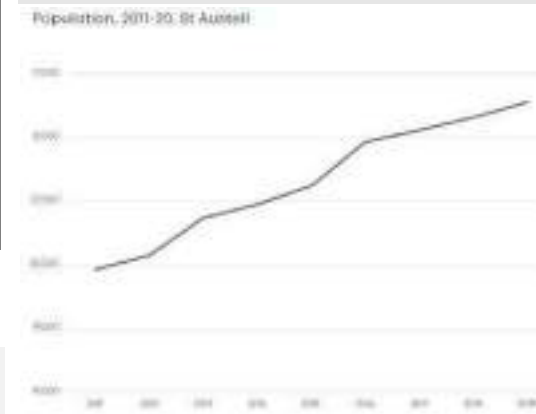
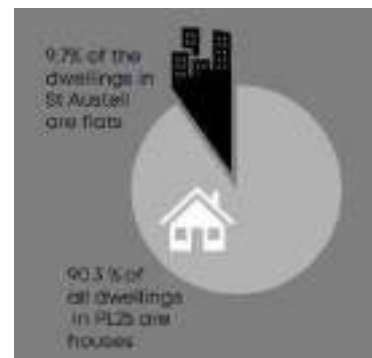
Any project coming forward will need to illustrate how it contribute to strategic objectives. These will vary depending on the business case being made at the time but for this project appraisal the following policies have been reviewed:

- Levelling Up White Paper, February 2022 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- Gyllyn Warbarth, Together We Can: The Cornwall Plan, 2020 to 2050.
- The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Strategic Economic Plan 2017-2030: Vision 2030, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP, March 2017

In addition to the above, we also compare each projects alignment with strategic needs and priorities identified in the July 2022 Kovia review of needs and opportunities – Ref Appendix o2

Needs and priorities identified in Kovia July 2022 review

1. Need to create locally more diverse and better paid jobs.
2. Focus on actions to meet needs of population including accessibility and to attract and retain younger families.
3. Actions to improve overall opportunities to improve health and wellbeing, tackle deprivation and access to better paid and enriching employment.
4. Need more affordable homes including those aimed at young and young families.
5. Need to develop better quality retail, leisure and food offering along with greener better-connected centre.



People



Population **28,000, 3rd Largest** built-up area in Cornwall

(Source: ONS Population estimates for built up areas, 2020)

Less people within St Austell's younger working age population (school leavers to 44yrs) and generally an older population with 22% 65+yrs compared with 16%

Steady growing population including element from in-migration. Growth (c.26 to 30%) expected within oldest age group (90+yrs), secondary age children (10 to 14yrs) and those within late 30's (35 to 39yrs) to 2025

Need to focus on actions to meet needs of population including accessibility and retain younger families.

Deprivation

Gover is **within top 10% multiply deprived** and in the **2% most deprived for employment deprivation** in the country.

Parts of central St Austell also have poor levels of health and disability, and quality of life indices. Areas surrounding the town centre have poor physical and financial accessibility to housing and local services and locally a poor-quality environment. (IMD, DHLUC, 2019)

30.6% of 16-64yrs in the 'St Austell, Pennwinick and town centre' are claiming universal credit for This is the fourth highest rate for similar areas (LSOAs) across Cornwall (Cornwall Council, 2020)



"St Austell should have top priority in the County given the scale of need as well as potential opportunity. Significant investment in the Town Centre is vital to ensure the heart of the community remains healthy."

Source: Kovia Consulting

Need Actions to improve overall opportunities to improve health and wellbeing and access to better paid and enriching employment.

Living

Living **Apartments** make up 14% of dwellings in Cornwall and **only 4% of stock in St Austell** (ONS, 2011)



Average house prices in St Austell (£264k) are **18% lower** than that across Cornwall and have experienced 4% less growth over the last two years reflecting lower demand. (Rightmove, 2021)

c.800 homes are needed in PL25 post code with **half of the demand for one bedroom properties** for young and older persons (Homechoice, 2022).

St Austell estimated to have: **5% less social rented** properties compared with national availability (ONS, 2011 and Kovia Consulting)

In St Austell there has been reported to be a: *"huge increase in individuals who presented as homeless and required immediate support."* (Safer St Austell, 2021)

Need more affordable homes including those aimed at young and young families. Homes – tend to be detached bungalows – less variation for younger working age – e.g. flats. This is in the context of a relatively rapid increase in price and availability of accommodation for young and small families and low proportions of social rented accommodation.

Retail, recreation and leisure

Of the c.205 uses, there are **19% unoccupied units (47)** in 2020. An increase from 12% vacant in 2013 (Cornwall Council 2020 St Austell Retail Survey)



Loss of businesses from Town centre: **retail 10% offices 30% cafes and restaurants 40%.** (Cornwall Council 2020 St Austell Retail Survey)

“St Austell is a town centre that has been in decline for more than a decade although there has been a significant growth in out of town and office and shopping provision.”

Source: Kovia Consulting



Attractions in the wider St Austell area receive in the order of c£120m /year from visitors indicating a significant potential income stream. (2019, direct and indirect South West Research Company Ltd, 2020)

Need to develop better quality retail, leisure and food offering along with greener better connected centre: Greenspace and recreational facilities in St Austell are poor and not well connected. The leisure offer is also relatively poor and much dependent on car. There are tourist opportunities in the local area but no connection or relation to town centre. Shops – focus on outside of town and poor retail and food offer, low numbers of offices and high numbers of vacancies (c.20%) is a town centre in real decline.

Employment, businesses and productivity

4% lower economically active residents and those in full time employment than national average.

higher unemployment among young (16 to 24) 1.4% compared with SW 0.9%



Proportion of **retired 5% higher** than National Average (Eng) **long-term sick or disabled 2-3% higher** than across SW

(Source: ONS 2011)

Only 9.3% self-employed (11.2% SW)

The population has a higher proportion reporting to be in **fair to very bad health (23%)** compared with regional and national vales (18.5%). (Source: ONS 2011)

Despite an urban area with almost a third bigger population than Truro, St Austell advertised a fifth of the number job listings in 2019 (1,356 compared with 5,946 in Truro, Careers Hub, CloS 2019)



Employee base has lower proportion of sectors that take office space **13% (22% England)** (Sectors = administrative, professional, technical, finance, insurance activities and services, ONS 2011)

Reportedly 4 out of 10 employers across Cornwall had difficulty filling their vacancies in past year. (Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP, 2021)

This is expected to be significantly higher in St Austell.

20% have level 4 qualification (England 27%)

Lower proportion of “higher skilled occupations” such as managers, directors, professional or technical occupations. (Source: ONS 2011)



A quarter of residents have no qualifications compared with 1/5th across Cornwall. While acute in St Austell does reflect Cornish context of low skilled labour and need to support

Need There is a desperate need to create locally more diverse and better paid jobs within the Town Centre.

09. Planning Policy.

The Following are Key Government recommendations and targets:

- Improving transport access to town centres
- Improving vehicle and pedestrian flow in town centres
- Congestion relieving infrastructure
- Infrastructure to facilitate new housing and office space
- Projects that seek to substitute under-used and persistently vacant retail units into residential units.

The findings, recommendations and guidance contained in the St Austell Masterplan retain a consistent theme throughout which captures the decline of the high streets, identifies broad strategies and goals to address this and also tools for communities (Local Authority, community groups and private enterprise) to develop proposals to bring their respective towns and cities back to popular and effective community use.

The following paragraphs are an extract from a report to: Economic Growth and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Cornwall Council). (Reduced)

Recommendation 1:

Cornwall Council to ensure that High Street vitality is made a key priority of the Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Recommendation 2:

Significant resources be dedicated by Cornwall Council to support high street vitality

Recommendation 3:

Establish resource and capacity to lead on High Street Vitality:

Recommendation 4:

Planning and regulatory powers be used to:

- (i) Actively support towns by creating informal planning frameworks for towns that most need them.
- (ii) Ensure future planning policy for town centres moves away from outmoded zoning of A1/A2 retail space and instead prioritises high street vitality with more mixed use.
- (iii) Actively plan to replace ‘holes on the high street’ as occupiers depart, requiring high quality design standards when shops are converted to other uses.
- (iv) Explore targeted offers of business rates relief to businesses which actively support community uses which generate vitality.

(v) Make formal requests to Government through the Devolution Deal process for Cornwall to pilot higher business rate charges on high street properties left empty for long periods and on new out of town retail/B1 developments that could drain economic activity from the town centre.

Recommendation 5:

Link high street vitality with culture and creative industries by:

- (i) Helping creative industries to re-brand high streets, including shop fronts, planning and public realm. Prioritise support for bids to arts, culture and heritage funds that can be used to help high streets.
- (ii) Facilitating the role creative industries can play. Connect possible direct investment in town teams (as set out above) with bids to fund such as Arts Council and Heritage Lottery.
- (iii) Understanding and maximising the impact of culture on enhancing the attractiveness and viability of town centres. Link high street vitality work with emerging culture compacts for towns.

Recommendation 6:

Direct delivery of housing in town centres, on and near high streets should be prioritised to both support High Street Vitality and tackle climate change by:

- (i) Delivering more housing in town centres directly and through planning/grants.
- (ii) Using the Investment Programme and other financial resources to purchase suitable sites to deliver high quality homes on those parts of high streets and town centres that need to diversify.

Recommendation 7:

Transport and other connectivity investment should give greater priority to High Street Vitality by:

- (i) Increasing the proportion of overall investment earmarked for high street vitality, with spending reported annually and ensure that pedestrian- friendly schemes such as “shared space” layouts in town centres be maintained to original design, specification and supported by appropriate ongoing investment. (Policy 26 in the services’ Connecting Cornwall Local Transport Plan).
- (ii) Investing in electric charging points in Cornwall Council car parks to encourage electric vehicle users to spend time/money in town centres as numbers grow.
- (iii) Widely promoting the new resident multi-use season batch tickets, encouraging workers and residents to park in Council car parks affordably rather than in residential streets.
- (iv) Actively promoting public transport options including the new half hour train service making all public transport options as affordable as possible.

10. Cost-Benefit Analysis.

We have undertaken a Social Cost-Benefit Analysis in line with the guidance within the HM Green Book, to express the (economic) value of a proposals to society. It seeks to express the full social costs and full social benefits of the vision including economic and environmental costs and benefits in monetary terms to illustrate the overall value for money to society.

In the high level assessment undertaken the project costs have been drawn from the cost plan and include estimates of potential cost for acquisition that may be necessary. We have made the assumption that public money may be used to facilitate some aspects including feasibility, planning, land assembly, help with abnormal costs to enable development and that other costs will be met with match funding or other private investment. In terms of the benefits much work has been undertaken to illustrate the full suit of benefits to society including:

Environmental

- Benefits to well-being and biodiversity as a result of local environment improvements (including biodiversity, green space, public realm)
- Benefits to water resources as well as ecosystem services resulting from improved water management and climate change mitigation / adaptation
- Benefits such as reductions in green house gas emissions and air quality improvements (with health impacts)

Economic

- Increased local employment including both an uplift in jobs from construction related employment and space for new businesses
- Pride of place leading to improved 'place value', rental return and income opportunities.
- Increased revenue to area and local businesses
- Increased value and avoided dis-benefit of vacant spaces
- "Cluster benefits" as potential space provided for locally key economic sector

Overall, there is a good Value for Money case for public investment in the vision and it is likely a very strong case can be developed through more detailed work to define the projects, funding available and refine some of the conservative assumptions made at this illustrative stage. It is very likely that many of the individual projects (such as the Winter Gardens project) will already deliver a very high level of benefit.

Social/Health/Equalities

- Pride of place (improved quality of urban environment – improved image of place – distinctive character - attractiveness) with an impact on health and wellbeing effects
- Ability to hold community events
- Passive surveillance – safer area – enhanced lighting, reductions in crime and ASB
- Improved accessibility and better connections to town (incl groups – improved accessibility to disabled and those with low mobility including elderly)
- Improved traffic safety and active travel with health and wellbeing benefits

The benefits are measured in relation to St Austell and Cornwall (taking into account the additionality of projects) and illustrate a significant overall net present benefit to society and will be important to illustrate in subsequent funding bids.

High level preliminary assessment of benefits and costs

Benefits

Economic benefits have been estimated based upon local expected outputs for all 10 projects (described in relation to each project), converted to financial outputs through established models and in line with guidance (e.g. HM Treasury Green Book and Additionality Guide). The benefits quantified include:

- Construction expenditure with a portion of additional external investment in the area of interest (as Gross Value Added);
- Gross Value Added as a result of each job additional created or sustained in (with reference to ONS Broad Industry Sector classification):
 1. retail (Part of broad sector G);
 2. hospitality (Sector I);
 3. Administration (commercial), technical and professional services (Sectors J, K, L M and N); and
 4. Arts entertainment and recreation and personal services (Sectors R, S, T, and U).
- Increase in expenditure in local area as a result of increased footfall from additional visitor trips as well as relating to sixty students living in accommodation at High Cross site;
- Reduction in severe and serious accidents as a result of improvements and alterations to Highways, road, junction and footpath;
- Walking / cycling health (and other) benefits as a portion of the town's employees and visitors are more active;
- Carbon savings from green infrastructure.

Some key assumptions include:

- That all the projects are taken forward which has a revitalising impact on St Austell with most vacant commercial spaces reoccupied (taking into account some space that is removed or modified as part of the projects) and there is a commensurate uplift in overall town centre economy. This is included here as a 10% increase in the number of people currently employed in the same sectors above – around 150 jobs (gross direct).
- The total (gross direct) new jobs estimated created in these sectors by each of the projects c.50.

- Highways, road, junction and footpath alterations avoid ten slight and three severe accidents over next ten years (and associated human costs, which reflect, pain, grief and suffering; the direct economic costs of lost output and the medical costs associated with road accident injuries. In addition to casualty related costs for each accident there are also costs related specifically to accidents, comprising of damage to property, police costs, and the costs of insurance administration).
- In addition to the alterations above the improved “active mode” infrastructure and experience for cyclists and pedestrians results in a range of potential benefits over the life of the investment including (congestion benefit, infrastructure maintenance, wider social benefits, accidents (if driving vehicle), local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases, reduced risk of premature death, absenteeism, and journey ambience – estimated with reference to DoT Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit – Note complete appraisal not undertaken).
- Carbon benefits as stated relate to additional planting only, there are other carbon benefits included in the “active modes” estimate relating to an element of population shifting from combustion based transport mode.
- Following a ‘proportionate approach’ to the appraisal, there are many other types of benefits that have not been monetised – mainly as are harder to quantify at this stage - and are excluded and could be significant (for example increase in value of assets, private sector investment, increase in business tax from business growth, agglomeration effects, ecosystem services from green infrastructure, meeting demand for accommodation, etc.).

The overall quantified benefits are shown below in terms of Net Present Value which are discounted to value benefits received today higher than the same benefit in the future:

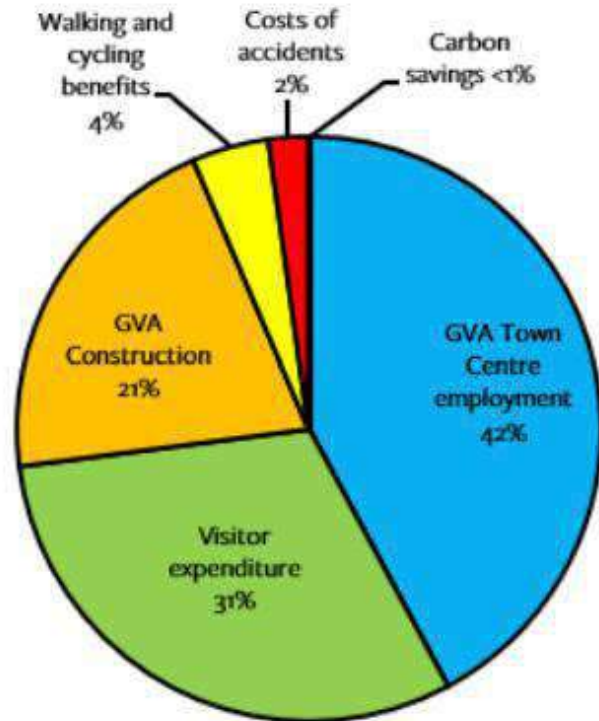
Benefit Category	NPV of Benefit (£)	% by category
Gross Value Added (Town Centre employment)	30,440,000	42%
Increased visitor expenditure	22,300,000	31%
Gross Value Added (Construction)	14,860,000	21%
Increased walking and cycling (“Active modes”)	3,078,000	4%
Avoided costs of casualties and accidents	1,596,000	2%
Carbon footprint	4,000	<1%
TOTAL DISCOUNTED BENEFITS	(A) 72,300,000	

Figures do not sum due to rounding.

These figures are estimates to illustrate the potential scope and scale of benefits but should not be relied upon as are high level indicative estimates only.

Categories of benefit estimated:

Costs



Economic costs are taken from the estimated capital costs and adjusted to align with HM Treasury Green Book guidance. This includes taking account optimism bias, removing contingency and inflation to ensure assessment based on “real costs” and discounted in the same way that benefits were.

Calculation Steps	TOTAL (£m)
Costs	44,514,000
Less: contingency within costs	(3,092,250)
Less: Inflation contained within costs	0
Sub-total: Costs less contingency and inflation	39,421,750
Add: Optimism bias (20%)	7,884,350
Sub-total: Total costs undiscounted	47,306,100
Discount rate	3.5%
TOTAL DISCOUNTED COSTS	(B) 44,110,265

Note this assessment assumes that the total costs will be covered by public funding and a small element of other external funding is included from private owners/developers. In reality there would need to be a level (proportion of total costs) of funding available set by respective funding criteria and likely a greater proportion of matched and external funding. This depend ultimately on the funding available and applied for which is not known at this time.

Total costs undiscounted (as above)	47,306,100
Less: External Funding	(2,909,000)
Undiscounted costs (Public Fund Only)	44,397,100
TOTAL DISCOUNTED COST (PUBLIC FUNDED)	(C) 41,394,623

Figures do not sum due to rounding.

Taking the overall costs from the benefits [A – B] leaves a significant positive overall benefit to society of around +£28million (NPV).

Value for money

The summary of the benefits and costs are assessed below, showing a good value for money case; with expected benefits covering created and support employment in important sectors, increased investment, as well as well-being and other learning outcomes.

Measure	Value (£m 2022/23 values)
Total discounted benefits (A)	72,300,000
Total discounted costs (B)	44,110,265
Total discounted costs – Public funding only (C)	41,394,623
Benefit Cost Ratio [A / B]	1.64
Benefit Cost Ratio for Town Fund [A / C]	1.75

The ratio of benefits to the costs to Public Funding was 1.75, meaning for every £1 invested by the Towns Fund, £1.75 of benefits would be realised.

Furthermore, with costs containing appropriate contingencies and benefits conservatively estimated the overall scheme represents a good value for money case in combination – there will be some project elements that have significantly higher benefits than others. The catalytic impact it could have beyond this and kick-start the wider regeneration of the town is greater still, especially considered range of projects included. Additionally, asset and land value improvements, future investment and all the other benefits that have not been quantified at this stage will provide further benefits to the area.

Sensitivity

Potentially without some of the wider harder to quantify benefits, sensitivity stress testing shows that if the overall costs increase by 50% or benefits fall by a half the whole programme of projects scheme may not deliver a Value for Money via the calculated BCR.

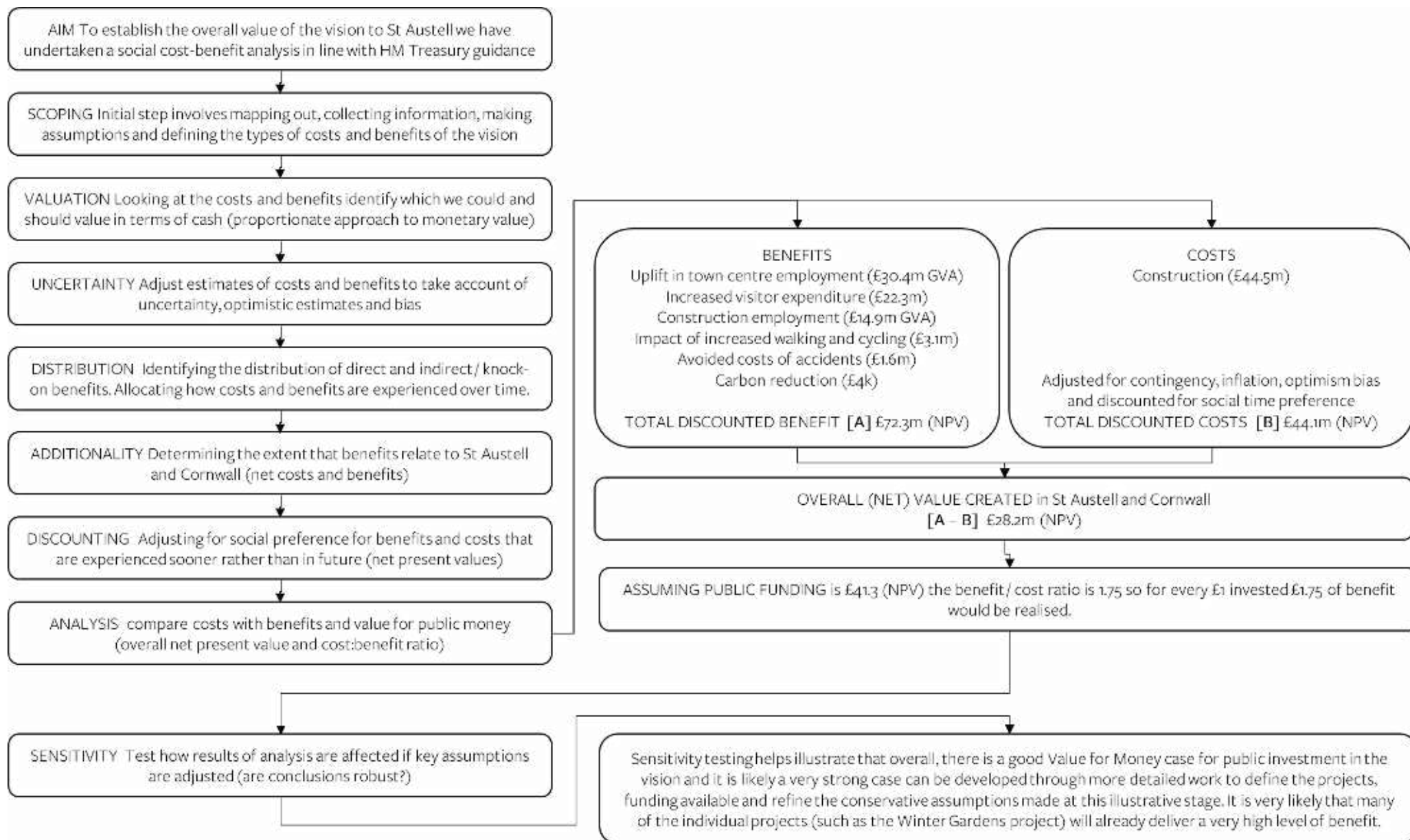


Figure 104. Cost-Benefit Summary Chart.

11. Summary.

St Austell has a great opportunity to become a thriving town again and is a great resource for users:

- It is well located geographically, has excellent links to public transport and a mainline station in a town centre location,
- benefits from a largely pedestrianised town centre combined with existing and extensive town centre parking,
- Sits centrally within numerous existing and developing residential development
- Provides easy and quick access to activity and landscape resource surrounding the town, (coast, landscape, public gardens, cycle trails, adventure sports)
- Has a strong history of cultural activity and heritage.

This project has highlighted that there is a lot that can be built upon in the short term to capitalise on existing assets and is key to the success of the revitalisation of the town. Whilst a long term vision must be demonstrable as positive change, we have identified and quantified the benefits of a hierarchy of projects that can be started immediately in an achievable and sustainable manner. This 'quick start' will maintain the momentum of positive change and assist with the implementation of the more ambitious proposals as and when possible and appropriate. The phasing of projects will accentuate the growth and vibrancy of the town centre and help transform St Austell into a socially, environmentally and financially sustainable place.

This Masterplan has been developed using the following steps:

- Identification of opportunity and 'Need'. This presents consideration of where there are clear gaps in the town's basic facilities and resources both for the current users and those who would benefit from a currently missing, town centre offer.

- Analysis of the existing condition.
- Identification of physical resource; buildings, vacant land etc, where change may be possible to address need.
- Detailed analysis of condition and townscape legibility such as degraded signage, lights, paving, building interfaces, building/architectural condition.
- Review and protection/enhancement of character and heritage.
- Analyse current value of the town in terms of its 'offer' and how it addresses the needs of the current users, identifying deficiencies and the demographic it seeks to address.
- Analyses the current commercial value of property to present a 'baseline' from which to assess the social-cost/benefit appraisal.

We have undertaken an analysis that has brought forwards and proposed identifiable and deliverable 'sub-projects' that address the needs of the town and also align with the principles of revitalisation, regeneration and renewal, testing the projects as they develop as part of an ongoing consultation and engagement exercise. These have then been developed and combined to form the Masterplan for St Austell.

'Revitalisation is an approach whose aim is to improve the quality of space and the ability of inner town areas to function. Revitalisation goes beyond the purely spatial factors, and involves broadly understood economic and social considerations.'

Revitalisation as a Method of Planning Sustainable Development of Old Town Complexes in Historic Towns. Marek Zagroba and Dorota Gawryluk 2017 IOP Conf. Ser.: Earth Environ. Sci.

12. Conclusion.

The Masterplan has sought to develop proposals and strategy that address the brief, government guidance, policy and recommendations and best practice in terms of the approach to Townscape Revitalisation. The outputs have been created to present a series of scaleable and deliverable outcomes from simple decluttering of streetscape to more aspirational proposals that seek to transform the St Austell town centre.

In terms of the revitalisation of town centres, there is no 'One size fits all'. In St Austell the level of decline is such that simple refreshing of the streets and buildings would not be of sufficient impact to generate footfall and change of use that would re-populate and address the decline that is being experienced.

The town is in a difficult position as it is not currently easy to provide an attractive offer for new business and population by users/shoppers/visitors etc. It has also become apparent that there is little incentive to develop due to financial risk linked to viability of development. This is in part due to limited space within the town centre and a notable offer of large scale out of town development, though also a perception of a 'glass ceiling'.

St Austell does have **great opportunity, high quality architecture, valuable historic context and, as demonstrated by the consultation exercise, a dynamic and enthusiastic community.** There is much to draw upon and the studies have demonstrated demand and opportunity to transform the spaces and places within the town to address current need and also to deliver a unique and attractive townscape.

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