

Wiveliscombe

TOWN CENTRE

- a vision for people, place and movement

Somerset West
and Taunton



European Union
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Development Fund



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Wiveliscombe

TOWN CENTRE **a vision for people, place and movement**



Report produced by Richard Guise, architect/planner
 Phil Parker, highway engineering design consultant
 Bruce Winslade, graphic design for report

May, 2022

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Preface

The Square is one of the most important centres of community life for Wiveliscombe and rural parishes around our town. We go there for shopping and information, to drink and eat, to meet people, to get our hair cut, to borrow books and much more. It has attractive historic buildings and sometimes something to attract a crowd, whether it's the town band or the throng of the annual street fair.

This report proposes improvements to The Square in Wiveliscombe and traffic management around the town centre.

Its origins lie in comments many people have made about the appearance of our town and problems seen with traffic and parking in The Square and West Street. Other strands have been ideas to make our town centre even better and to bring the Town Hall back into use.

An opportunity to involve local people in preparing an improvement plan arose from the Town Recovery Fund awarded to Wiveliscombe by Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT). Although, first came an economic development briefing for councillors at SWT, which mentioned the idea of place-making. I followed this up with council officers, who recommended we discuss it with Richard Guise, who, at the time, was working on a planning Design Guide for the district.

After discussions on the Town Recovery Fund Steering Group and with Richard, the project was agreed and a group to work on the project with Richard was

established. We were also advised by Phil Parker on traffic management aspects.

I was pleased to be selected to chair the project group, which also comprised Peter Berman, Heather Harvey, Pauline McNichol, Julian Mellor, and Helen Whelan. All brought valuable contributions and views to the project. We agreed it was important to start by listening to local thoughts on The Square and town centre, and that proposals prepared needed to have widespread support. Therefore, consultation and engagement as the project progressed was essential.

It has been an exciting and interesting journey to get to this stage. We hope people in Wiveliscombe will now give their support to the final proposals that have emerged, and these can move on to being implemented in time.

There have been some small improvements arising already, with town recovery funding used to repaint street furniture in The Square, to update the town maps and direction signs in car parks and to remove graffiti and clean up the approach to the town from Taunton.

With on-going support, this report can provide a blueprint that helps Wiveliscombe continue to have a thriving centre to serve the people of our town and the rural parishes around.

Cllr Dave Mansell

Chair of the Place-making Project Steering Group

Ward Councillor for Wiveliscombe & District, Somerset West and Taunton Council

Section 1: Characteristics, challenges and vision

The Square is the focus for Wiveliscombe, which is itself the focal town for the adjacent rural parishes.

As such, The Square has to fulfil a number of functions, some complementary, some conflicting. It has always been the meeting place for people and events, and destination of routes and crossing point of routes.

As vehicles have become larger, the demands on this historic and human-scale place have become more challenging.

The Square, reflecting this focal position, is defined and enclosed by architecturally significant buildings of a scale appropriate to its role. This significance is recognised in the number of listed buildings in The Square, which lies within the conservation area which covers most of the town centre.

The Square is animated by people using the many businesses and facilities fronting onto it and the events which take place in the public realm throughout the year.

However, The Square has to some extent seen better days; its undoubted qualities are being eroded by the pressures of moving and parked vehicles, the clutter of disused and poorly sited street furniture, the broken and indifferent surface materials and the poor condition of some of its buildings.

This project aims to propose measures to celebrate and enhance the sense of place of the public realm of The Square, whilst recognising and accommodating the activities of this space and the requirements of movement of people and vehicles. In doing this, the ambition is to attract interest and resources to realise the scheme, which we consider will increase the attractiveness of this focal place for the community and its visitors.

Section 2: Project inception

The initial impetus for the project stemmed from two briefs from the Town Recovery Fund Steering Group, dated 22 October and 16 December 2020. These set out the broad aims for a placemaking and enhancement scheme for The Square and its immediate surroundings, which would also address the significant impact of traffic and parking on this location.

The project was funded by The Town Centre Recovery Fund (£5,000) administered by the Wiveliscombe Area Partnership and the Welcome Back Fund (£4,000), jointly established by Somerset West and Taunton Council, HM Government and the European Union.

The consultant, Richard Guise, architect and town planner was recommended by Somerset West and Taunton Council. Richard was lead consultant for the District Wide Design Guide for Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT). Phil Parker traffic and highways consultant, was recommended by Richard Guise, to advise on the highway aspects of the project. Phil had advised on the highway aspects of the Districtwide Design Guide and other settlements in the district.

Following an initial orientation visit with Cllr Mansell and Heather Harvey on 30 April, Richard Guise set out his understanding of the brief in an email on 12 May 2021 and the commission was confirmed in August. It was agreed that a Sub-Group be set up, to liaise with the consultants. The group members are:

Cllr Dave Mansell (Chair) SWT Councillor for Wiveliscombe and District.
Cllr Peter Berman; Town Councillor.
Cllr Pauline McNichol, Town Councillor and Jim Laker Fund.
Heather Harvey, Chair, The Ten Parishes Business Group and shop owner.
Julian Mellor, resident and regeneration consultant.
Helen Whelan, Whelan's Café, the Square.

The first meeting of the consultants and the sub-group was held on 22 September 2021 and meetings have been held on a regular basis throughout the project. The original completion date was the end of March 2022, but due to various factors, this was extended to May 2022.

Section 3: Context





The Square is located in the centre of Wiveliscombe, a small town of about 3,000 residents, lying both about 11 miles west of Taunton and seven miles north west of Wellington, at the foot of the Brendon Hills. 'Wivey' is the bustling focus of the adjacent rural parishes, the centre of local facilities such as the primary and secondary school, health centre, community centre and library as well as a range of shops, pubs and other services.

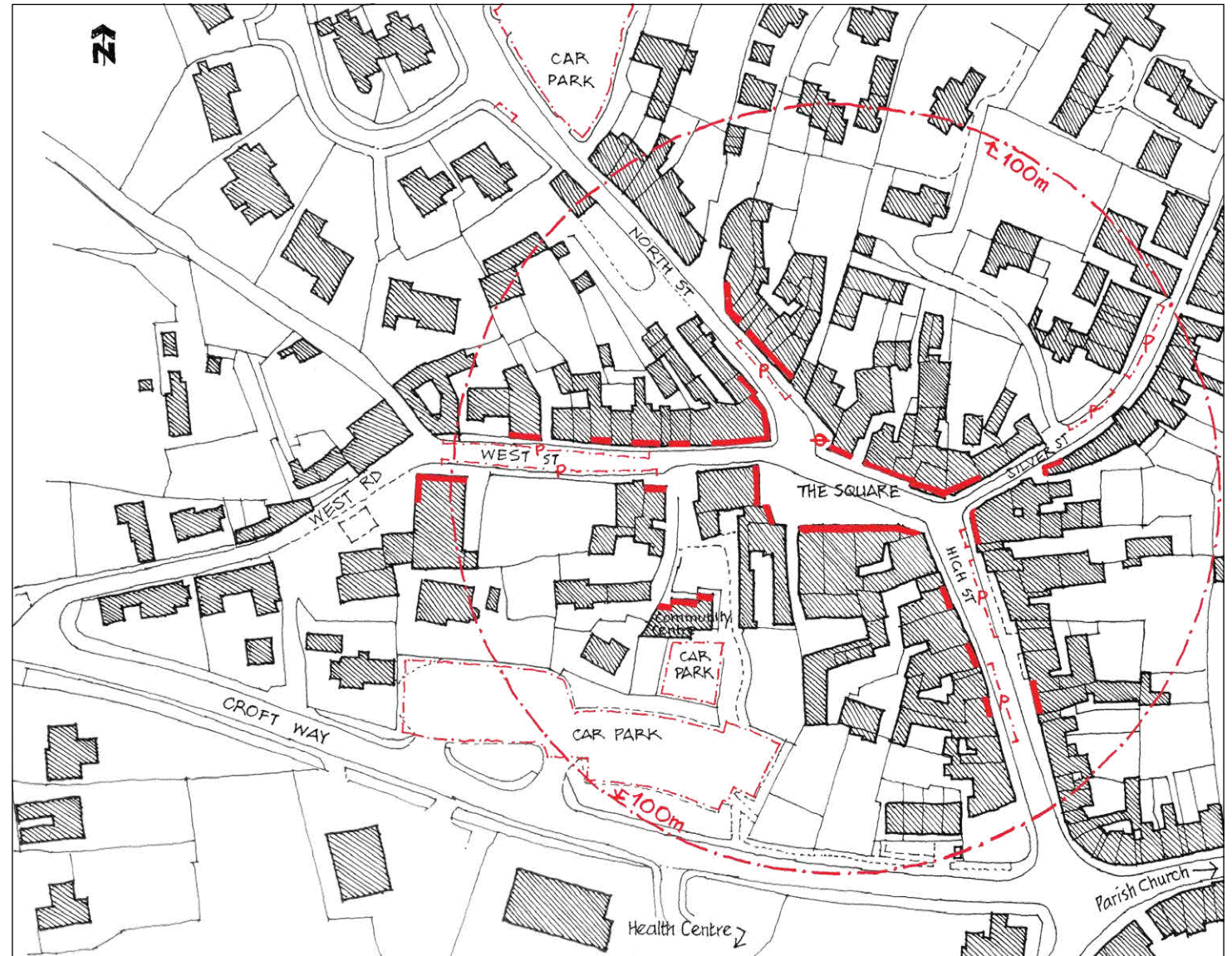
Wiveliscombe, situated on the old road to Bampton dates from the Anglo-Saxon period, trading in wool and later in brewing. Its function as the centre of the local area is reflected in the converging of historic local routes onto the Square and hence the impact of traffic and the need for parking in the town.



The Square from the Town Hall, looking towards North Street.

Figure 1:
Map of Wiveliscombe town centre,
showing its facilities and the central
location of The Square.

-  Retail and services
-  100m radius from Square
-  On-Street parking
-  Bus stop and shelter





Wiveliscombe as hill town; the countryside from Silver Street and Golden Hill.



Wiveliscombe as hill town; the countryside glimpsed from North Street.

Section 4: Character

Townscape and buildings

Wiveliscombe has the appearance of a hilltop town; its skyline is apparent on approaching from the east. The town centre is reached by climbing up the High Street and to a lesser extent, West Road. Silver Street morphs into Golden Hill as it drops dramatically into the landscape, reminiscent of the more famous Gold Hill in the other rare hilltop town, Shaftesbury.

Given this topography, its ancient origins and its period of 18th century prosperity, Wiveliscombe has great townscape quality and architecture of heritage significance. This is reflected in the fact that the town centre is designated as a conservation area and that most of The Square, the High Street, West Street, North Street and Silver Street are fronted by Listed Buildings (see figure 2). These designations mean that the special architectural and historic character of the area and these heritage assets should be preserved or enhanced. It is one of the aims of this placemaking project to respond to this requirement.

The Square, more accurately a triangular space, is dominated, appropriately, by the Town Hall, situated on its long southern side. Designed by the prolific Somerset architect Richard Carver (whose grander Town Hall in Chard is another example), in 1841–2, is an elegant restrained neo-classical design, with a deep projecting pediment, topped by a cupola. Three tall semi-circular windows look out onto The Square. The Town Hall's buff brick contrasts with the largely stuccoed façades of the Square, North Street and West Street. The Town Hall originally sported a portico, which must have anchored it directly to The Square. Sadly, this disappeared, when the faintly Art Deco triple shopfronts were inserted at street level. Whilst their styling is of its time and details such as the original doorhandles are attractive, the effect on The Square is to introduce a strong horizontal emphasis, leaving the Town Hall to 'float' above The Square. The Town Hall is discussed further in sections five and seven.

The other dominant building is the Court House, dating from the 1880s. This eclectic building terminates the view up the High Street, forming a memorable gateway to The Square. Its mix of red tile hanging, dark timber oriel windows and brackets and imported medieval arched doorway is unique in the town. The other

buildings fronting The Square, the eastern end of West Street and the southern end of North Street are predominantly Georgian in style and period, giving the town centre a civic sense. Many of these were apparently built as new at the time, whilst others probably refronted earlier buildings, a familiar feature of market towns. Good examples are the former bank building, at the junction of The Square and North Street, The Croft, West Street, 8 Silver Street and a group at the top of High Street. However, it is the ensemble effect of all the 18th century town houses and inns which in their many variations on this classical theme, give the centre of Wiveliscombe its sense of cohesion and identity.

A few steps beyond The Square and its Georgian core, however, the scale changes to more domestic cottages and small houses, some displaying the use of local sandstone and other materials in their construction. This vernacular style can be seen at the west end of West Street, the north end of North Street and much of Silver Street.

Very little remains of the local paving tradition in the town. Perhaps the most noticeable is the margin in front of properties on the eastern side of the upper High Street. Here, stream pebbles are laid edge on in the style often seen in Devon and Somerset. Whilst pebbles would not be used as footways, they often backfilled to the building frontage. Other attractive local paving is found in the forecourt of the Congregational Chapel and in a driveway in West Road. There are remnants of Lias stone kerbing in the streets, but very little else.

Activities and details

The character of Wiveliscombe is, however, more than its physical fabric. It is very much a 'working', authentic place, keen not to be sanitised and prettified. People are drawn to settle here because it has this character. There is evidence of people establishing craft and other creative enterprises, which exist quietly against the backdrop of a centre serving its rural hinterland. The town comes together in events held throughout the year, at Christmas time and the annual street fair in September. The Square is the focus of many of these, as well as the community

centre and its car park, which serves as the venue for a regular farmers market. Embellishments, such as the attractive gates to the Jubilee Gardens, wall plaques, the installation in The Square, and short-term humorous additions such as the colourful topping to the post box in The Square all animate the street scene and reflect a love of place by the residents.

Figure 2:
Map of Wiveliscombe town centre, showing the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings.

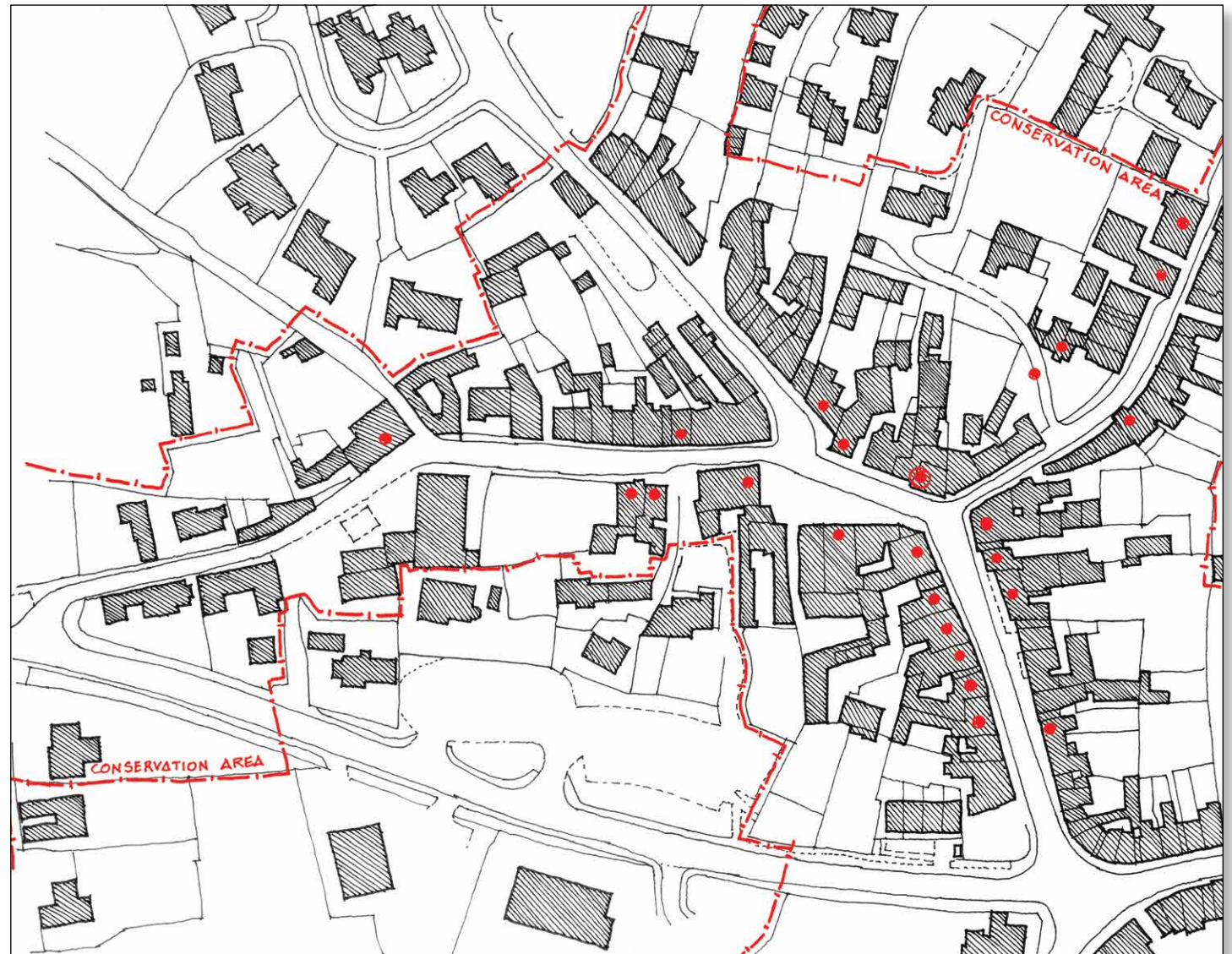
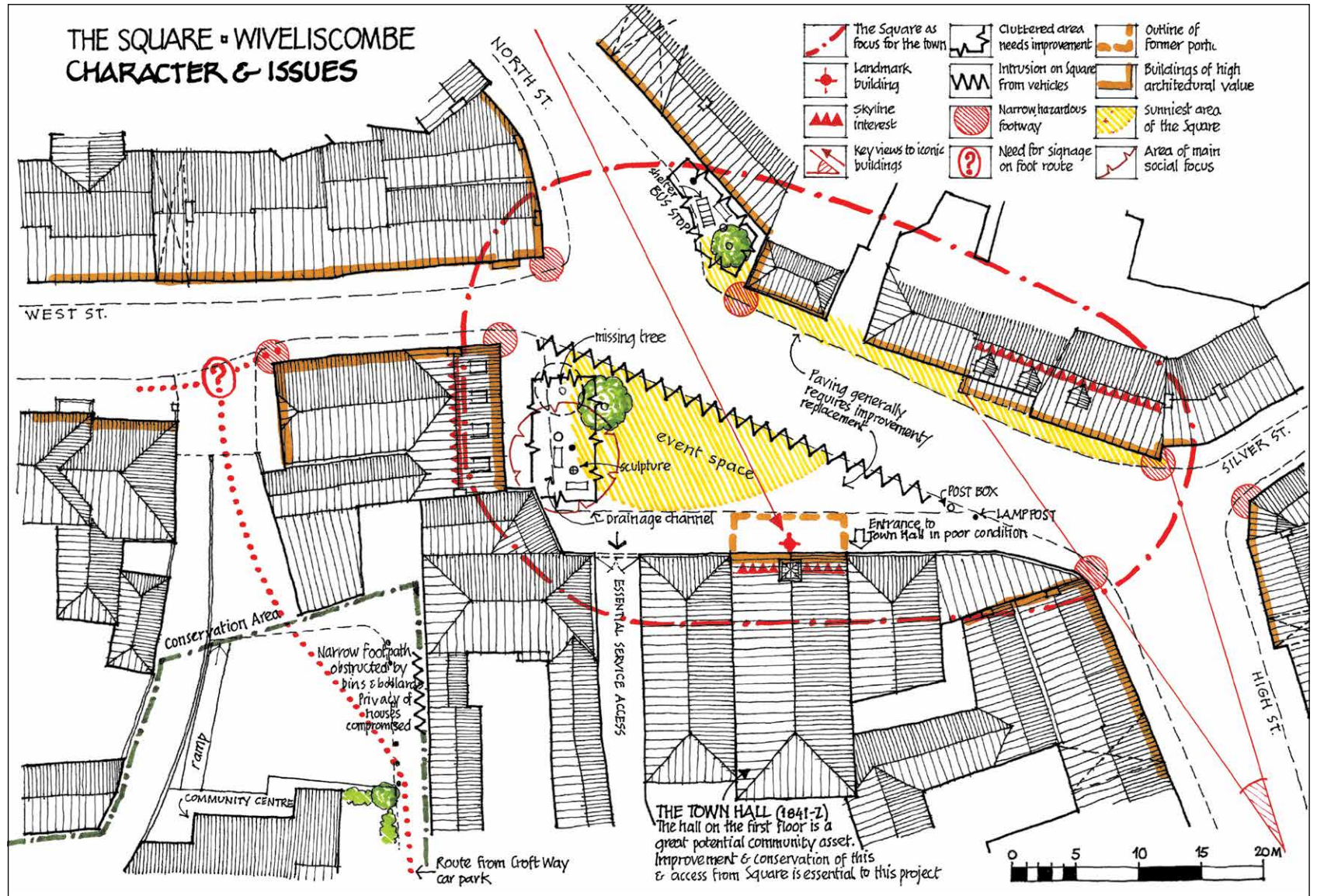


Figure 3:
Plan of The Square showing its character and issues.





The Square on approaching from the High Street and Silver Street, with the Town Hall on the left and London House terminating the view.



Approaching The Square from West Street, intriguingly glimpsed beyond the 'pinch point' between London House on the right and the White Hart to the left.



Approaching The Square from North Street, the Town Hall dominates the vista.



West side of The Square, with London House and the later Whelan's Café building.



The Square tapering to the east, showing its sense of enclosure and civic scale buildings.



Approaching The Square, climbing up the High Street lined by handsome buildings on either side.



The Square from the south west corner, showing the street furniture and tree, with the recently reinstated notice board.



The eye-catching grade 2 Court House building designed in an eclectic style of the late 19th Century.*



The well-maintained late Georgian former bank building maintains the formality and scale of The Square whilst making the transition to the more domestic scale of North Street.



The classically styled Pharmacy and Community Office are key facilities in The Square.



The Library and a studio shop make excellent use of the smaller frontages on The Square.



The gun shop with the Town Hall on the first floor.



Christmas lights in The Square.



The Co-op and café are the focus of activity in The Square.



Shop at the end of West Street, where the scale is more domestic.

Thorne's Butchers and its neighbour, The Croft, at the civic scale.





Imaginatively designed gates to the Jubilee Gardens.



Traditional pebble margin fronting the High Street.

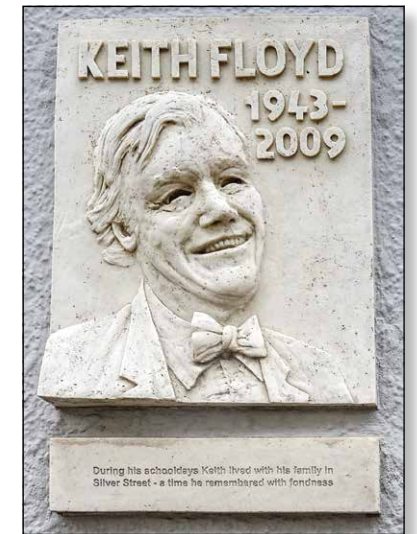
Crochet work adorns the post box.



Interesting details on Thorne's Butchers.



Stylishly designed plaque celebrating Keith Floyd.



Section 5: Condition and issues

This section highlights the condition of The Square and the approach streets, in particular, the footways and street surfaces, street furniture, trees and buildings. Additionally, it examines the impact of the vehicle, both moving and parked.

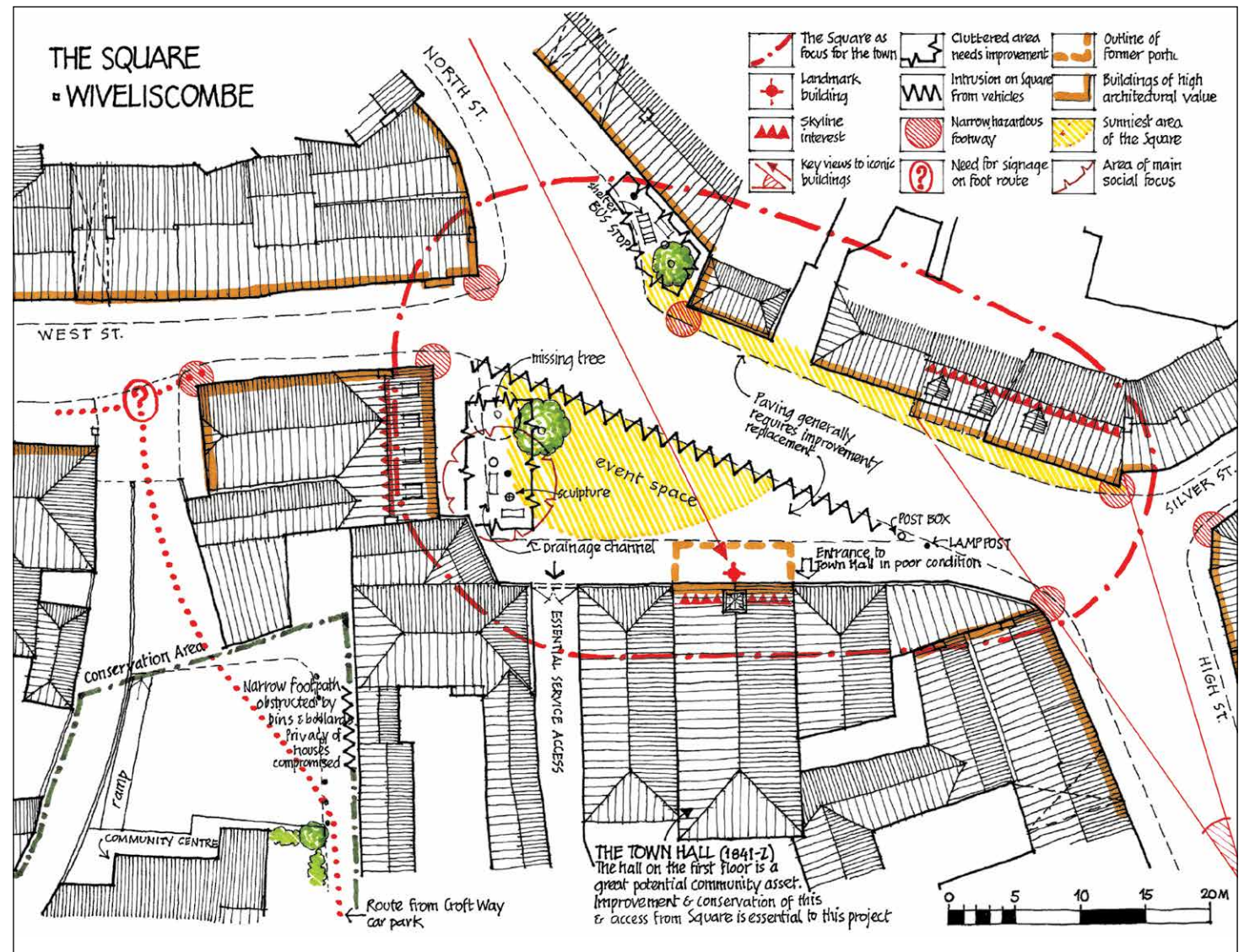


Figure 4:
Map of condition and issues

Footways

It is readily apparent that the widths of pavements on the approaches to The Square are very narrow, in some cases barely wide enough for a single person and especially for a person in a wheelchair or for a person pushing a child's 'buggy'. Whilst good practice requires footways to be 2m wide, with an absolute minimum of 1.8m, the following examples are between about 1m and in some cases less than a metre. Particular examples are by the Court House, the corner of Silver Street, the top of High Street, outside the pharmacy, the corner of the White Hart. Indeed, at the northern end of North Street the footway ends abruptly. These cases are hazardous as some vehicles tend to pass through the centre at some speed.

The footway surfaces are generally precast concrete slabs with exposed aggregate finish, laid about 30 years ago. These have been replaced in places by somewhat newer versions of the same materials, but in square format. In other places brick pavers of two colours are laid. Tarmac patching is also in evidence. The older paving slabs are very worn in places and cracked in others, mainly due to vehicle override. Concrete kerbs predominate; these seem to have settled in places. Overall, the effect of the footways is of a patchy, worn appearance.

The surface of The Square comprises a fringe along the building frontages of



Narrow Footways – clockwise from top left: Footways outside the Court House; North Street; White Hart; West Street shopping frontage; the Pharmacy; cnr. Silver Street and High Street.



about 3m comprising the concrete paving slabs described above, a continuous drainage channel covered by a steel grille and then the remainder which is not carriageway surfaced in red brick pavers, laid over 35 years ago in a stretcher bond. This pattern is more irregular along the west side and is also broken by cast iron tree grids and pavers laid with wider jointing to facilitate irrigation of tree roots. As with the footways, the surface is looking very worn in places and, where preference is expressed, the brick pavers are not liked.

The carriageway surfaces in the area are conventional tarmacadam finish, in reasonable condition, except in West Street, where the surface is broken in places.

The footways on the north side of West Street are narrow; in most cases around 1–1.5m wide. Given that these pass the frontages of well patronised shops, it would be highly desirable to widen them. However, this has to be balanced with the strongly expressed desire to retain car parking on this side of the street.

The awkward and cramped arrangement of street furniture at the bus stop.



Street furniture

Generally, the west end of the Square has a cluttered, unkempt appearance, where street furniture in some cases is damaged, missing or poorly maintained. At the time of writing, safety barriers surround the hole where the cast iron fingerpost had been until it was damaged in a collision. A second tree has been



The street furniture in The Square requires repair in places and reconsideration.



Are all bins necessary?

missing for some time, although the steel tree guard remains. The lamp post is in good condition and appropriately sited. The two fixed benches have been repainted and are in good order; however, due to their position in relation to the tables and chairs belonging to the café, they are either used by patrons, or they can obstruct the generally welcome 'spilling out' of the café. Other items of street furniture which might benefit from closer consideration is the position of the waste bin (which is in good condition) and the removal of the metal bin, which obstructs one of the attractive gates to the access way to the side of the Co-op store. The hitherto missing tripod community notice board has very recently been replaced by a new one and the cast iron finger post is soon to be reinstated. Arising from this project, there are plans to relocate the wooden vertical art installation from The Square. The lamp standard has recently been repainted.

At the eastern end of The Square, the second lamp post is of a similar design and condition to that of the west side. The post box is in good condition and well located. Four cycle stands are located here are in good condition and are again in an appropriate location.

At the junction of North Street and The Square, the existing bus shelter and fixed bench sit awkwardly close together, making access to either difficult. A lamp post is also located here, as well as a litter bin, both in good condition. The tree seems to be thriving, with a cast iron tree grid. Given that the shelter here is lightly used, it may be that the bench might be relocated in The Square and the bin location more carefully considered. Additionally, there are two utility boxes adjacent to the wall. They do not obstruct and if they are fully utilised, then they should remain. If not, they could be removed.

The impact of parking and traffic

As all residents and road users know, Wiveliscombe Square and the streets leading to it, are under considerable pressure from through traffic (ranging from cars to vans, HGVs, farm vehicles, buses and emergency vehicles). The largest vehicle is the articulated lorry which delivers to the Co-op store on a frequent basis. This vehicle is 16m long and parks on the kerbside in The Square. There is the need to pick up and set down for servicing the 10–12 businesses and services fronting The Square and the No.25 bus on the east-west route stops



The Square is a busy through route whilst a hotspot for deliveries, informal bus stopping and parking for the shops.



West Street is under the pressure of parking and deliveries throughout the day.

informally near Wiveliscombe House Community Office. Additionally, people wish to park in the remaining very limited space available, often disregarding the double yellow lines and in cases parking on the kerbs and the pedestrian area of the Square. Peak times are during trading hours and particularly at the beginning and end of the school day. It is at these times when pedestrian activity is at its peak, involving crossing at multiple points often where footways are at their narrowest. The situation in West Street is very similar, where formal (including controlled) and informal parking exists for about 16–19 vehicles, including a delivery bay.

Other smaller areas of kerbside parking are on the High Street, North Street, Silver Street. The main car parks are Croft Way, a little less than 100m down a slope to the south, and North Street, 100m to the north, both are free. A small car park, with electric vehicle charging is situated on the south side of the Community Centre, accessed via Croft Way Car Park.

Obviously, an historic town whose original route and street network originated in the early medieval period has a maximum capacity in terms of available space in the public realm. This situation has become more intense, as vehicle size and speed has increased. Similarly, due to the continuous frontages along the historic streets, residents park on-street or in the car parks. The challenge is to reconcile the conflicting demands of pedestrians and vehicles, whilst maintaining and improving the sense of place of The Square and adjoining streets.

Buildings

Most buildings facing The Square and in North Street seem in good to reasonable condition, although as many are listed, it is important that alterations and maintenance retain the character and appearance of the building as a heritage asset. Two buildings are of concern and would require attention.

No.1 The Square, a Listed Building, Grade 2, occupied by the pharmacy on the ground floor, appears to be in poor condition on its first and second floors, in that the render is cracked in places and a shrub growing from one of the second floor windows. The parapet and timber sash windows probably require inspection.



No.1, The Square – poor condition of upper floors.

Following remedial work, repainting would enhance this significant building.

The Town Hall, at first floor level, is a Grade 2 Listed Building, is now administered and maintained by a Trust. Given that it has been unused for over 50 years, it is, according to a recent structural survey, in sound basic condition, although much work has yet to be done to make it more accessible, with repair and maintenance and decoration to be undertaken. All these works would be phased and rely on funding, which in part relies on income from events. Plans are progressing in this direction.



Town Hall from the Square; external repairs and redecoration are necessary.



The entrance to the Town Hall needs upgrading.

The interior, whilst generally intact, requires repair in places and redecoration.



Section 6: Community engagement and development of options

Following the inception meetings between the Project Steering Group and the consultants, it was agreed that an on-line and in-person survey be launched to gather the views of people in the community regarding their responses to The Square. To do this, a project website was established: <https://wivey.co.uk>

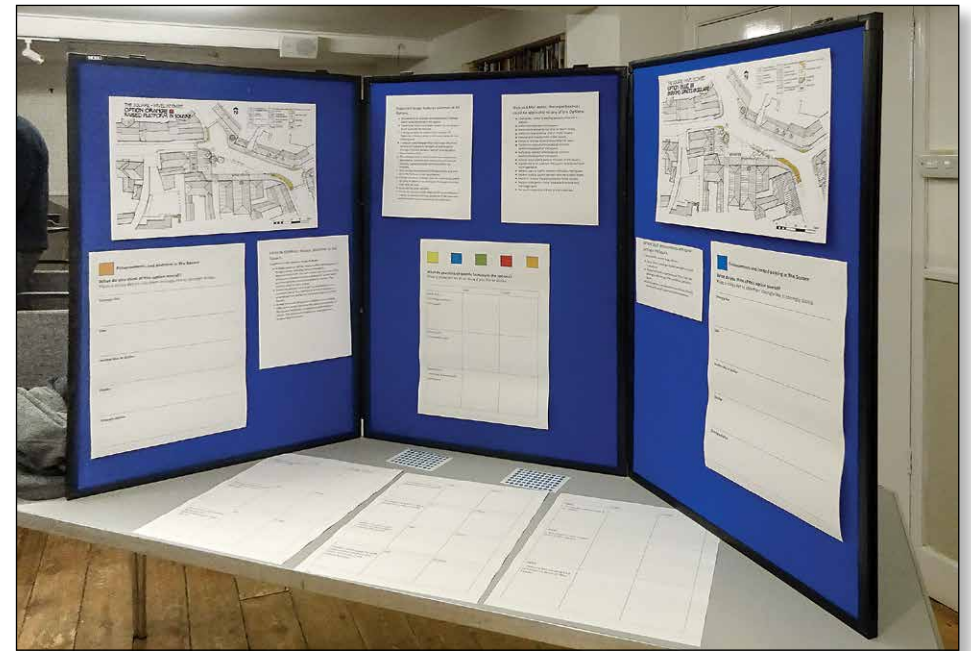
The online and in-person survey was conducted in October 2021, the results summarised below. This was followed by two days of exhibitions, meetings and presentations in January 2022, where two preferred options emerged and formed the basis for the scheme in this report.

Engagement in October 2021

Both surveys posed four open questions, based on a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) approach for respondents to consider all aspects of the Square. The survey questions and a full analysis of the responses to the survey is available on the website above.

The exhibition at the public meeting.

One of the exhibits at the public meeting.



From the responses, five options were developed. While they shared some features, they generally took differing approaches to addressing the issues raised in this first round of consultation.

Consultation on the five options took place both online at wivey.co.uk from 28 January 2022 to 4 February 2022 and via face-to-face events held at the Community Centre on Friday 28 and Saturday 29 January. The consultation was promoted via social media, email, posters and flyers delivered to every household in the town.

Five options, individually identified by colours, were developed:-

- **Blue** – Enhancements, with limited parking within The Square
- **Green** – One Way in West Street
- **Orange** – Raised ‘platform’ in The Square
- **Red** – One way traffic in The Square, east to west
- **Yellow** – Enhancement of The Square, with existing traffic conditions

(See figs 5–9)

A plan and summary of each option was presented online and at the events. Participants were invited to give each option a score:

-2 = strongly dislike -1 = dislike 0 = neither like nor dislike 1= like

There were also opportunities for people to write what they liked, disliked and what they would change for each option.

In addition to the options, there were nine common features. Respondents were asked for their opinions on each and to make further comments. Detailed reports and analysis of the consultation are available on the website.

Summary of the consultations

The website had 751 visitors during the consultation period and the face-to-face events were attended by over 100 people

1,324 votes were cast on the options and common features during the consultation period (671 online and 653 at the events). 221 comments were left online and further (uncounted) comments were made verbally or in writing at or following the events.

The average scores for each of the options were as follows:

Option	Online	Rank	Events	Rank	Combined	Rank
Blue	-0.3	4	-1.7	5	-1.00	5
Green	0.8	1	1.2	2	1.00	1
Orange	0.6	3	1.3	1	0.95	2
Red	-0.3	4	-0.9	4	-0.60	4
Yellow	0.8	1	0.6	3	0.70	3

Both the online and face-to-face events placed the Green, Orange and Yellow options in the top three. However, the online event found the Green and Yellow options to have the equal highest average score, while the events found the orange option to have the highest average score. The least popular options were Red and Blue.

Combining the averages of the online and face-to-face events, the Green option (one-way on West Street) provides the highest average score, closely followed by the Orange option (platform on The Square).

In terms of the common features, the online and face-to-face events had little difference, with all supporting new paving, one or two more trees, a marked loading bay in West Street and The Square, planters to prevent vehicles driving onto the pedestrianised part of The Square, reinstatement of the Town Hall portico and new seats.

There was opposition to removing the existing tree and/ or the seats. The results from the events revealed a lower level of overall support for pavement widening than the online consultation.

Online opinion was split as to the future of the artwork in The Square, whilst the face-to-face events were firmly in favour of its removal.

The additional comments received represent a diversity of opinions, especially on matters of parking and traffic management. They can be read on the website.

Conclusions.

In addition to the results from the scoring, the conclusions drawn from the combination of the consultations are as follows:

- Make a place that puts people first, not vehicles.
- Retain existing trees and add another one or two.
- Retain the seats with a preferred location by a tree.
- Reduce clutter and improve design in The Square.
- Remove or relocate the artwork.
- Install obstacles to prevent vehicles accessing the pedestrian area of The Square, but favour, for example, blocks of carved stone rather than planters (which have maintenance problems), or bollards.
- Need to support businesses in the town centre.
- Part time delivery bay in The Square, with short term parking allowed at other times.
- Part time delivery bay in West Street.
- Avoid loss of on-street parking spaces.
- Use pavement widening to prevent parking on corners.
- There are no alternative routes for through traffic from/ to north of Wiveliscombe to be diverted away from The Square.
- Bear in mind requirements of large vehicles that have no option but to drive through The Square.
- Ensure that turning into Silver Street and through the cartway openings from High Street is still possible.
- 20mph speed limit applied to the central area.
- Install a pedestrian crossing in The Square with dropped kerbs at both ends.
- Replace existing paving with natural stone slabs and replace brick pavers.
- Retain bus stop in The Square.
- Consider reversing the proposed one-way in West Street to west-east direction.
- Encourage maintenance needed for buildings in and around The Square, including the Day Lewis Pharmacy.
- Support for the Town Hall generally and particularly to reinstate the portico.
- Improved signage for pedestrians and drivers.

These points have created the agenda for the design and it will be seen they have been addressed in the scheme proposals, based on the combination of Options Orange and Green.

In addition to the community engagement a number of key stakeholders were approached to ascertain their views on the preferred options. They include, in random order:

Thorne's Butchers, West Street
The Co-op store, The Square
Devon and Somerset Fire Brigade (Wiveliscombe Fire Station)
First Bus
Jones Garage, West Street
West Country Guns, The Square
Somerset Sight
Maundown Sawmills*
Wessex Water*
Wiveliscombe Town Council
Somerset West & Taunton Heritage at Risk Officer
Wiveliscombe Town Hall Trust
Somerset Building Preservation Trust

**Contacted, but reply not received at time of writing.*

Generally, the response from stakeholders following an explanation of the scheme was agreement to varying degrees with the general objectives, but many were keen to ensure that vehicular movement to and through the town would be maintained, and that on-street parking and provision for deliveries should be retained within the town centre as close as possible to the existing situation.

Figure 5:
Option blue

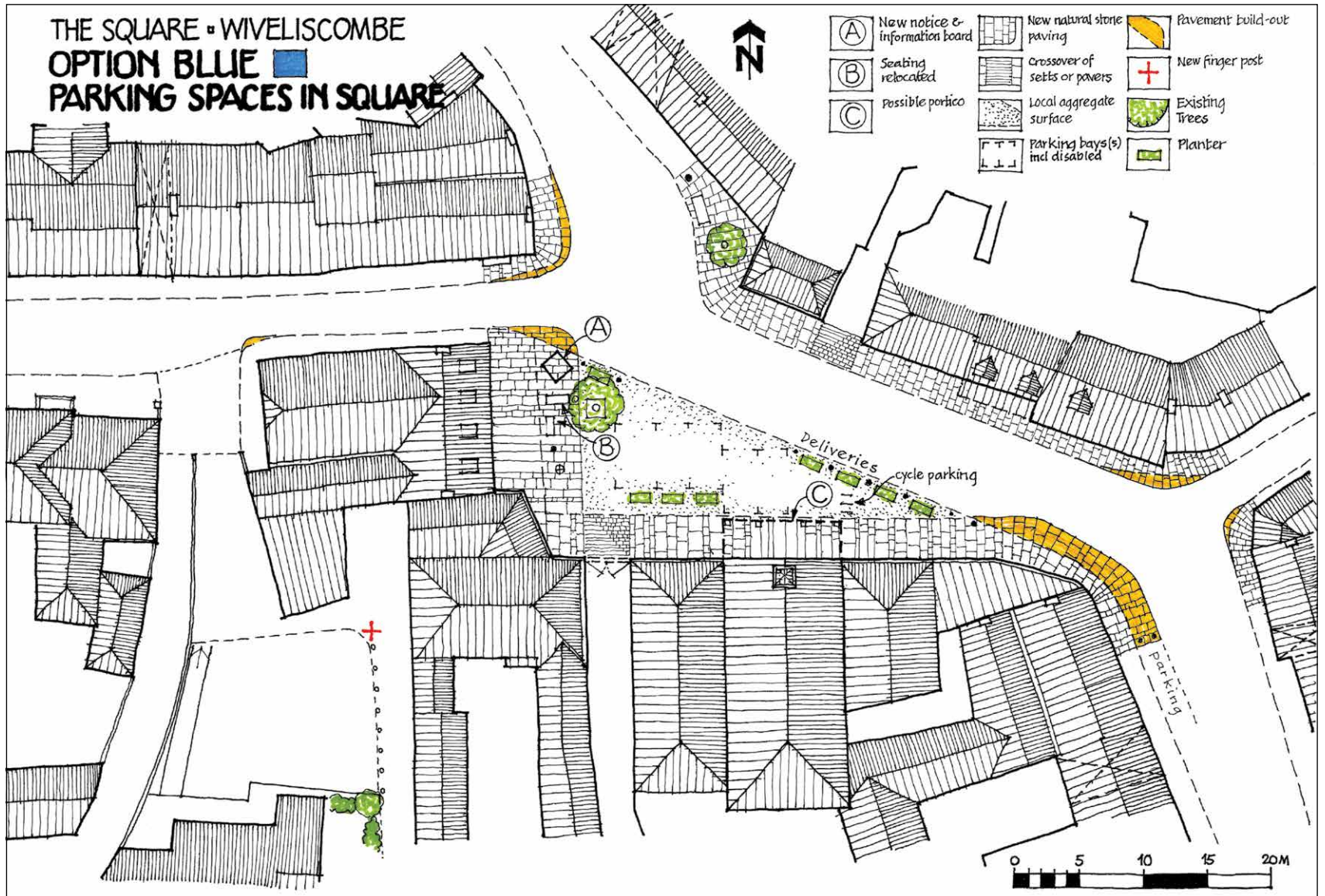


Figure 6:
Option green

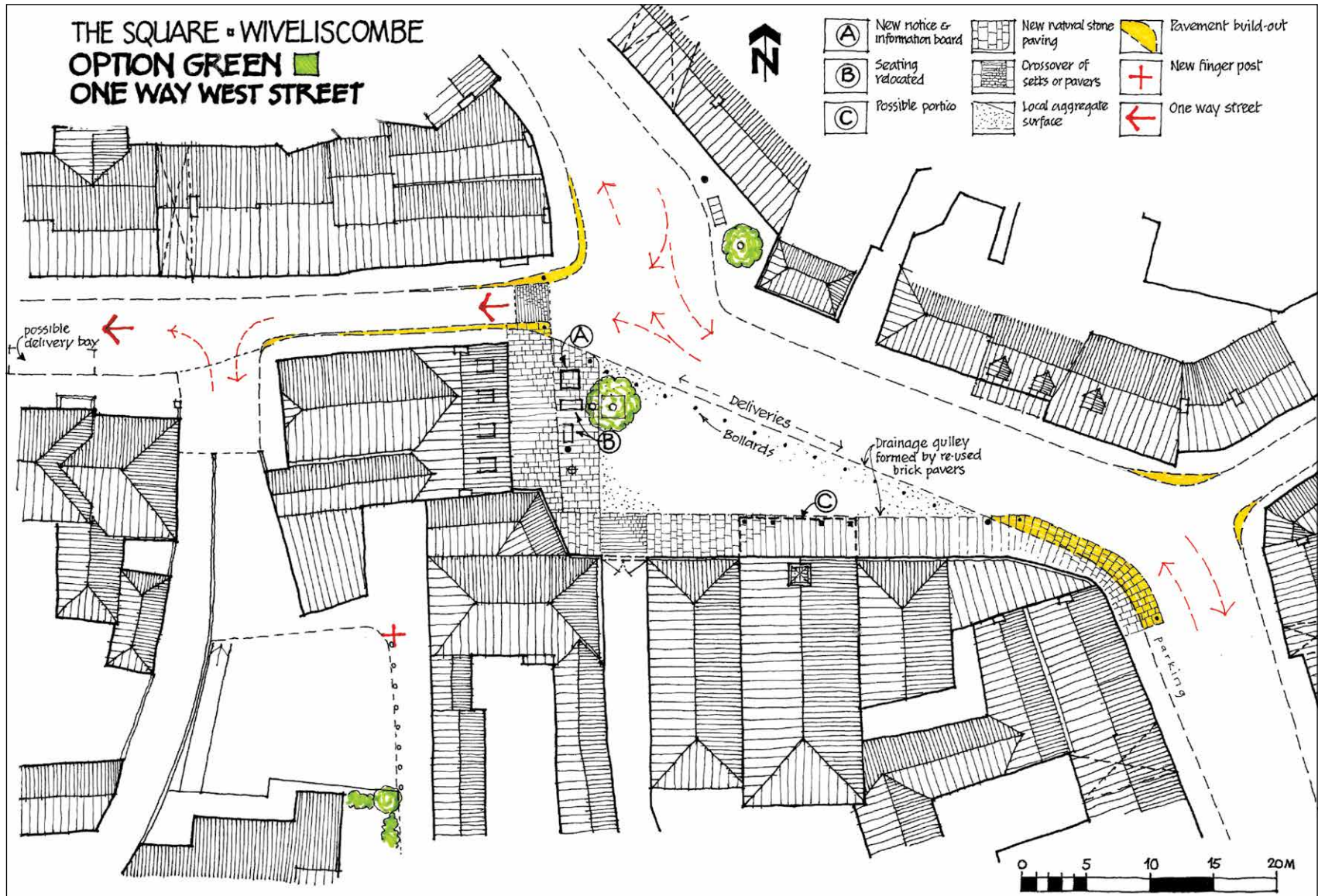


Figure 7:
Option orange

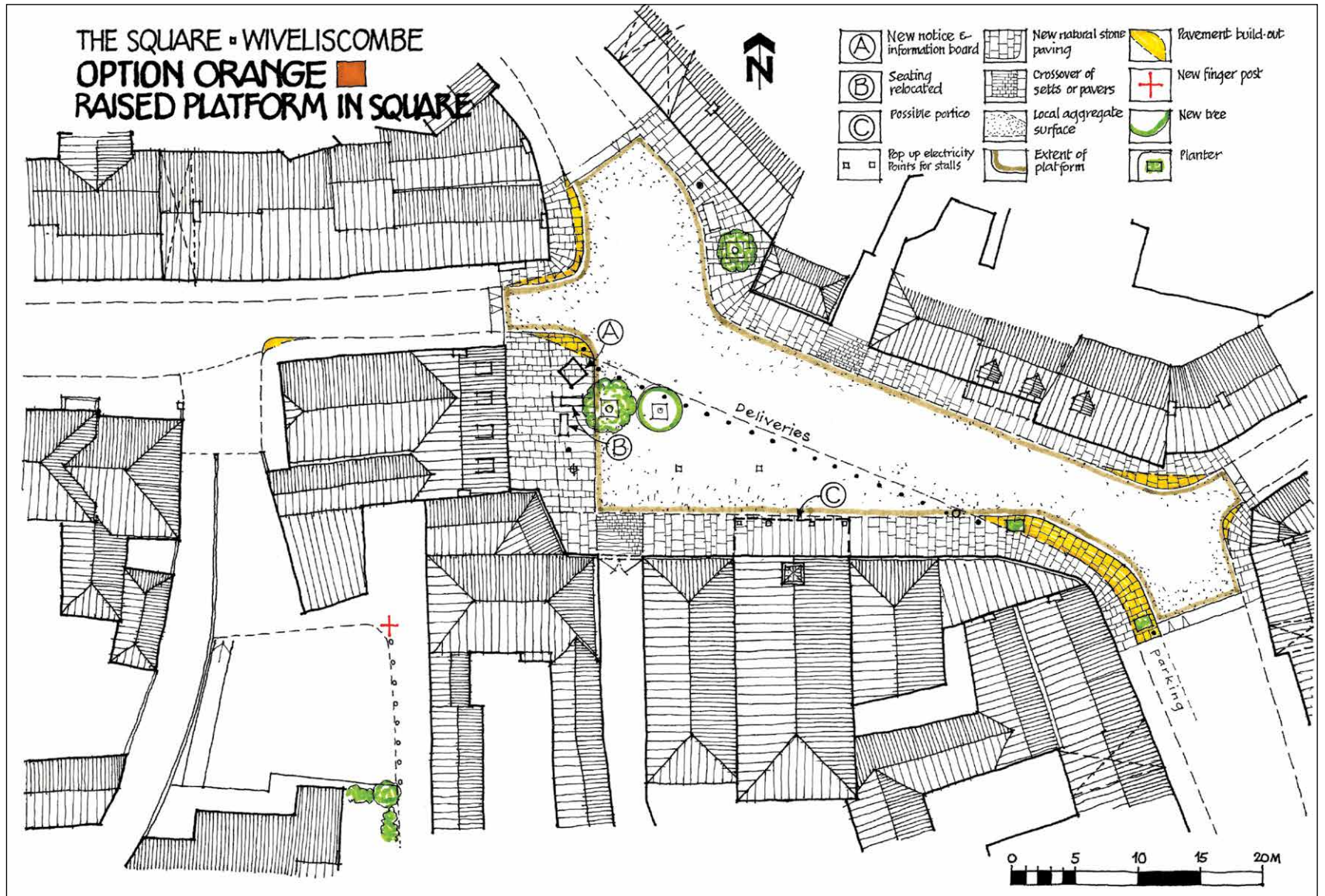


Figure 8:
Option red

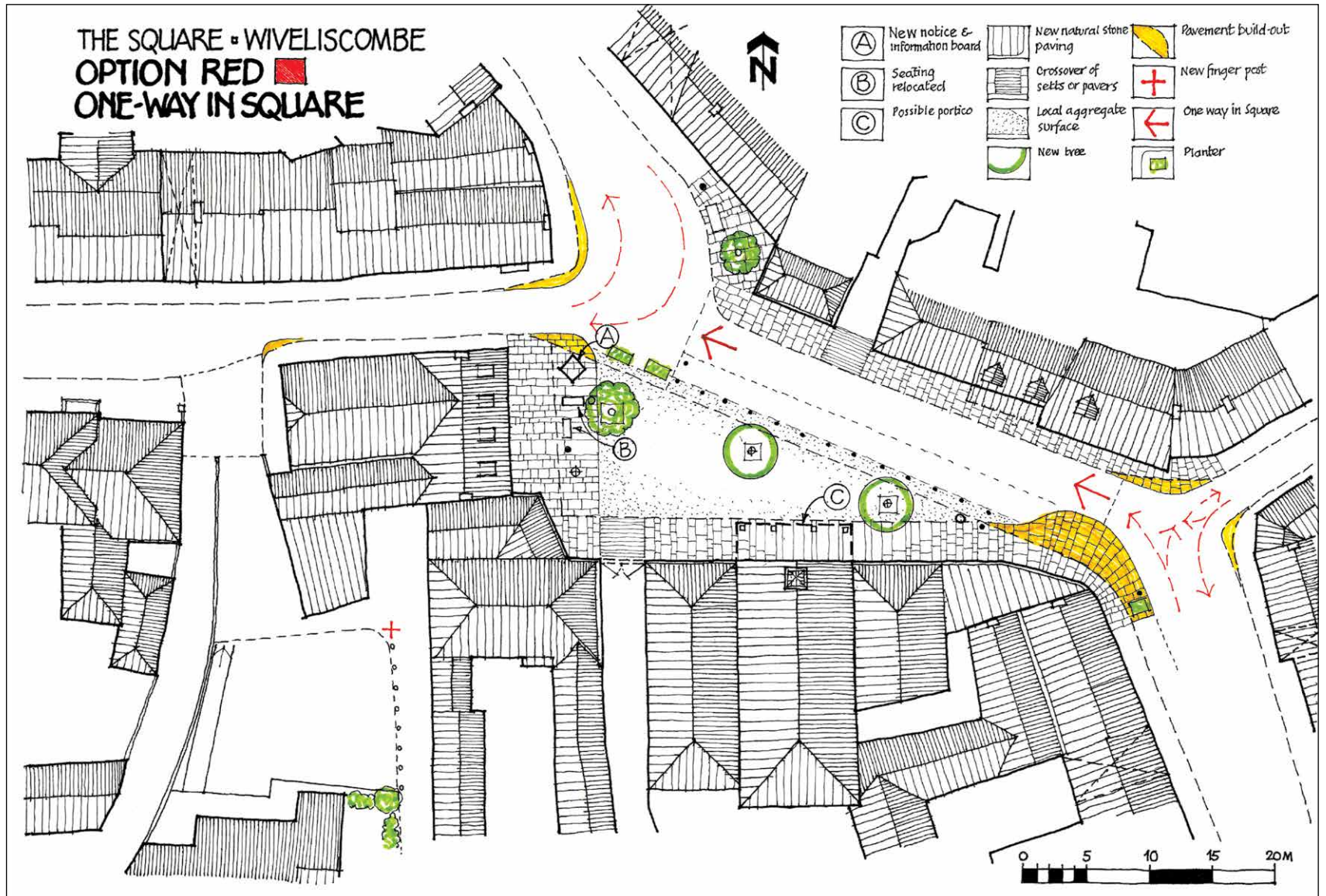
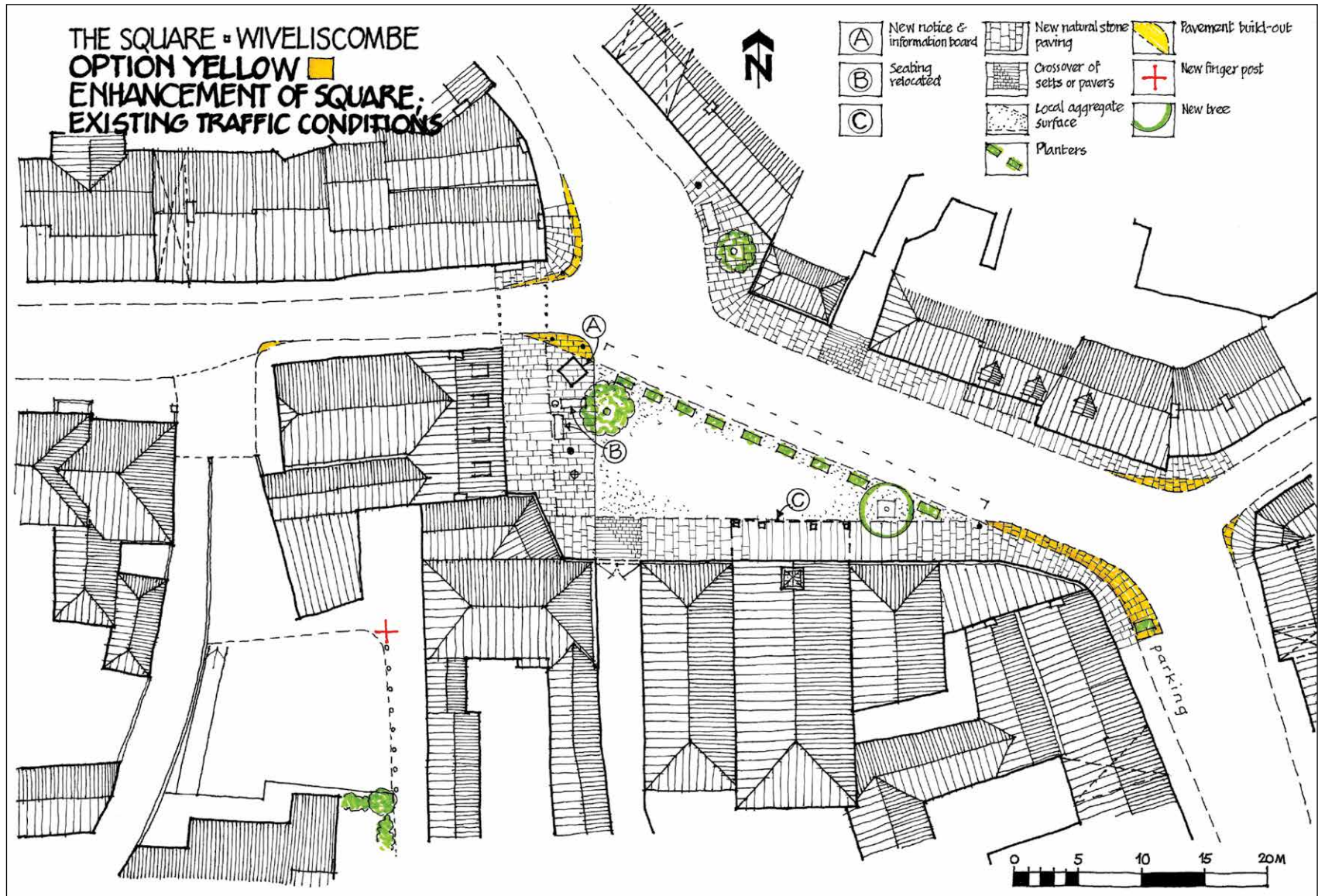


Figure 9:
Option yellow



Section 7: The placemaking scheme

The scheme has evolved from the consideration of the views expressed in the engagement with the community, as summarised in section 6 and having regard to the issues raised by stakeholders.

The overall aim is to enhance The Square's function as the focus for the community and its activities, to celebrate its sense of place and identity and its heritage. These aims have been balanced with the acceptance of the need for the centre to be accessible for traffic, deliveries and the parked car, whilst acknowledging the capacity of this historic town and street pattern.

The design recognises and responds to the priorities in both current highway, planning and placemaking policies which place the pedestrian at the top of the hierarchy of considerations regarding the users of the public realm (ie; pedestrians, cyclists, public transport, emergency and utility/delivery vehicles, the private driver) Sources:-Highway Code, SCC Highways Guidance, Sept 2021, NPPF, SWT Design Guide, Local Transport Note 21. Manual for Streets.

Whilst the scheme is primarily concerned with the design and layout of the public realm, it has regard to the buildings enclosing The Square and adjacent streets.

Integrating the conservation and revitalisation of the Town Hall with the scheme, and reinstating this community asset as a key element, would contribute to the sense of place of The Square. The Trust is working on schemes to hold temporary events in the Town Hall, both to encourage a habit of use for the building, raise awareness of its potential and create some income for further conservation. The longer-term plans to reinstate the original portico would be a welcome feature which would enhance The Square (see fig 15). The design is not fixed at this point, but could either recall the neo classical style of the original, or be a more lightweight contemporary interpretation.

As the Wiveliscombe Conservation Area covers the town centre and many of the buildings in the centre are listed, there is a duty to conserve and enhance the historic and architectural character of the area and its buildings. Whilst it is beyond the remit of this project to develop a conservation plan for the buildings in the centre, it often follows that a placemaking scheme has a positive impact on frontage buildings in

that owners feel encouraged to sympathetically improve the appearance of their properties, contributing to the uplift of an area and its prosperity.

Description of the scheme as illustrated in figs 10–15

The scheme area covers The Square, West Street, the southern end of North Street and the top of the High Street.

Surfaces

The surfaces replace the variety of materials in various states of repair with two main materials.

The pavements (footways) and fringes of buildings fronting The Square are proposed to be natural stone slabs of, preferably, Pennant Stone. This material has traditionally paved the streets of Somerset towns, has excellent non slip properties and is attractive. The proposal is to specify flagstones of three widths and varied lengths. This means that the most economic use is made of the stone and its appearance contrasts with standardised concrete products. Additionally, where vehicles could cross the footway, such as the passageway to the side of the Co-op and to the side of the Pharmacy, the traditional measure of creating a 'crossover' in stone setts would be installed.

The main area of The Square, both the carriageway and the streets identified above, would be designed as a 'platform' raising the surface by about 75cm to just below the footways, to convey the impression of a space which puts pedestrians at the forefront and helps to calm the speed of traffic. The platform would be approached by low ramps. This device is used with success in a number of schemes, both in the UK and in Europe. Kerbs would be re-laid in some instances, to ensure a distinct edge between carriageway and footway, allowing people with limited vision to use a stick to guide them. The platform surface would be asphalt with an exposed aggregate, of a red/brown hue. (see section 8).

The narrow footways, identified in section 5, are improved at key points by the construction of modest 'build-outs', (ie; pavement extensions into the roadway). These have two purposes; to provide more space for pedestrian movement and safer road crossings, and to slightly 'tighten' corners, to encourage traffic to reduce speed on entry to the platform area. The build-outs would be paved to match the footways and have dropped kerbs at crossing places.

Main crossing places, such as outside the pharmacy, at the junction of The Square and West Street and associated with ramps, would be differentiated by a contrasting textured material possibly by a strip of brick pavers approximately 3m wide.

Street furniture

The two fixed seats, together with that which is inserted close to the bus shelter would be relocated much closer to the trees, in a slightly sunnier position and away from the tables and seating associated with the café. The new notice board and finger post will be located near the junction with West Street. The artwork, it has been agreed, will be relocated away from The Square and the large disused bin obstructing the gates to the passageway removed. The post box and the four cycle parking stands will remain in situ and may be supplemented by two others at the western end of The Square. It is proposed that a pop-up electricity point be inserted below the surface of the Square, for use for events.

It is proposed that vehicles are prevented from entering the pedestrian part of The Square by a line of cubes of either exposed aggregate concrete or granite, each measuring approximately 60x60x60cm, lying parallel with the line of the existing kerb, which would be replaced by conservation quality kerbs. Cubes have been found to be very effective vehicle deterrents and require less maintenance than bollards or planters. Parking restriction signs can be affixed to them and they act as informal seats. Additionally, they could be the subject of public art projects, involving, for example, mosaic inlays or low relief carving. Cubes would be spaced approximately 2 metres apart, except one 3 metre gap, controlled by a retractable bollard, for essential maintenance access.

Trees

The existing trees, one in The Square the other by the bus stop, would remain in situ. These would be supplemented by another close to the one in The Square and one at the eastern end, near the library. The existing unoccupied tree grid and support may be too close to the existing tree; advice would be sought from a landscape architect regarding the exact location of both trees, taking into account root containment measures, the presence of any underground services, tree species, and expected spread of the tree. The siting of the tree near the library would need to have regard to the possible construction of the portico at a later

date. It is expected that semi mature trees may be best, to be robust enough and to give appropriate visual impact. The trees would be contained at surface level by cast iron tree grids

Signage for pedestrians

Until recently, signage to the centre from Croft Way and North Street car parks was poor and what existed was in poor repair. This situation has improved with the installation of new signs. The information board/town map at Croft Way, which was in poor condition and has been replaced with updated and improved maps.

West Street

The platform and the natural stone footways would extend westward from The Square to the junction with the access to the Community Centre. The one-way carriageway along the platform would be the minimum, 3.2 metres, meaning that the footway along the White Hart frontage could be slightly widened. Where West Street becomes West Road, adjacent to Jews Lane, it is proposed that build outs signify the street is calmed and that a one-way scheme commences at a point at the eastern side of the yard alongside Jones Garage. The build outs are aligned to mitigate the flow of water from heavy downpours, which are channelled down Jews Lane and can flood the garage frontage area. Crossover-type details demarcate property entrance.

North Street

The platform would extend as far as the building which projects onto the back of the carriageway, opposite the garden centre. This is a natural 'pinch point', suggesting vehicles should reduce speed and is where people are crossing the road. The natural stone paving would, ideally extend as far as this point (with crossovers at yard entrances). However, if resources do not allow for this, the paving could initially end at the bus stop.

Traffic management and parking measures

This section should be read with the following section 8.

It is proposed that the town centre be declared a '20 Zone'. This would mean that there is a blanket speed limit and signage can be minimal within the cordon.

The limits are shown in fig 14, and are by the toilets in North Street, at the junction of West Road and Croft Way, the junction of High Street and Croft Way and near the Congregational Chapel in Silver Street.

It is proposed that a loop system be planned for vehicles, especially buses, on an east-west route, but needing to access West St and The Square, proceed west along Croft Way turning right at West Road, joining the one way system in West Street and proceed through The Square and High Street, turning right at the bottom of the High Street, rejoining Croft Way westward. This proposal would mean that buses on this route would stop informally at the same place in The Square, going in either direction. This proposal has been put to the bus company. To date no response has been received and enquiries will continue. The manager of the Co-op has been approached and sees no objection as the articulated lorry will approach The Square in the same way as existing.

On-street parking has been retained in West Street in much the same configuration as existing, at the request of the steering committee. This does leave the carriageway somewhat narrower than is required by highway standards. However, the final arbiter on this matter will be the Highway Authority, who will also grant licences regarding parking and loading restrictions. The need is expressed that the loading bays in The Square and West Street should be time limited, in order that cars can park in these bays at other times. The existing on street parking bays in North Street will remain in situ, as will those in Silver Street. The single bay at the top of High Street will be removed, to facilitate turning near the build-outs. This is proposed to be added to the bays at the southern end of the High Street.

It should be noted that the centre is served by two relatively large free car parks (North Street and Croft Way) and a small one for about 10 spaces (behind

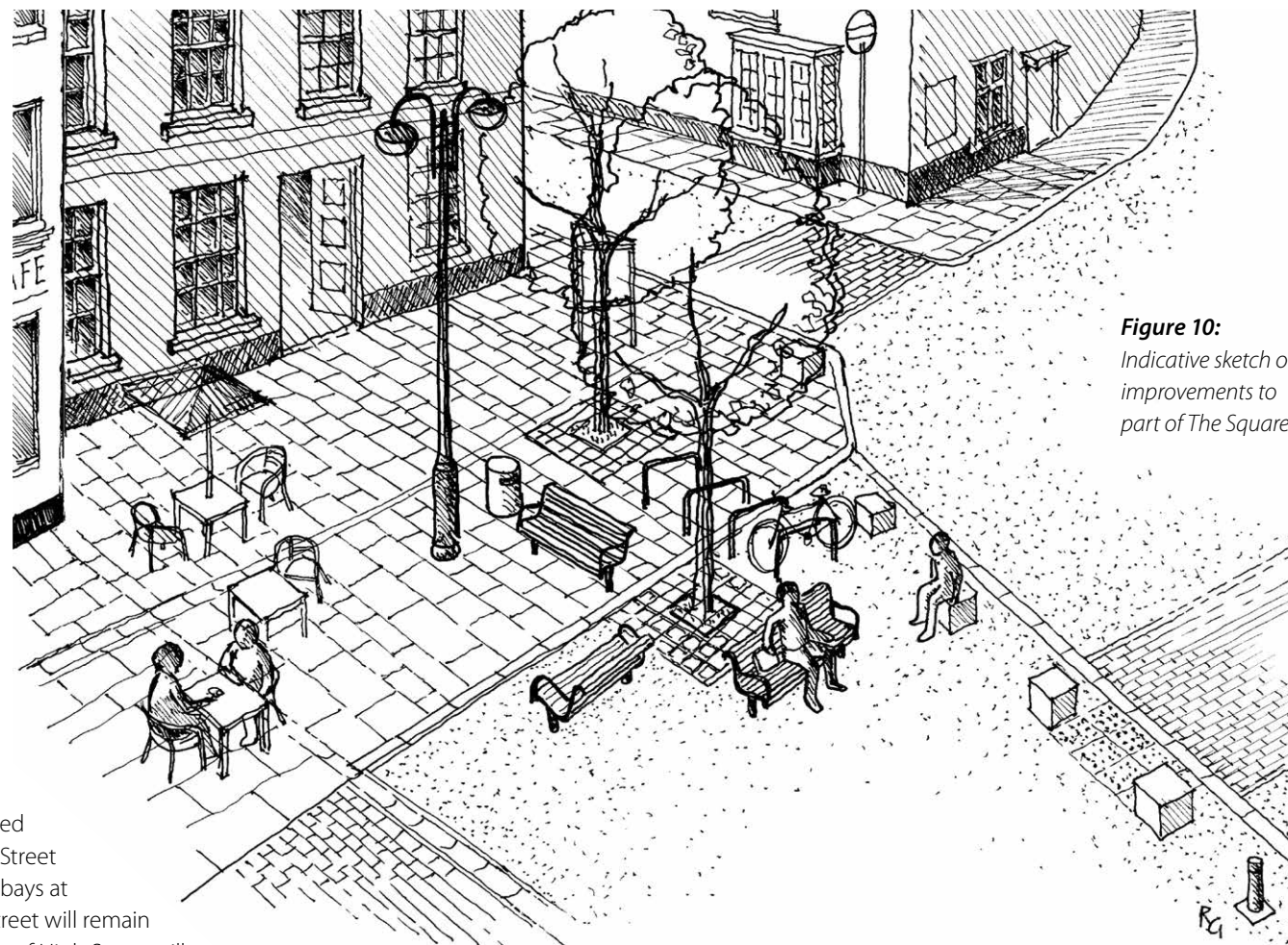


Figure 10:
Indicative sketch of improvements to part of The Square

the Community Centre), all within 120m of The Square. It is suggested that a future project looks at the configuration and design of Croft Way car park, as there may be the potential for a limited number of extra spaces and the provision of more Electric Vehicle charging points.

Figure 11:

Plan of proposed scheme for The Square.

NB: the colour shown is purely to indicate the extent of the platform. The actual colour will be determined at the detailed design stage, but may be a red-brown tone.

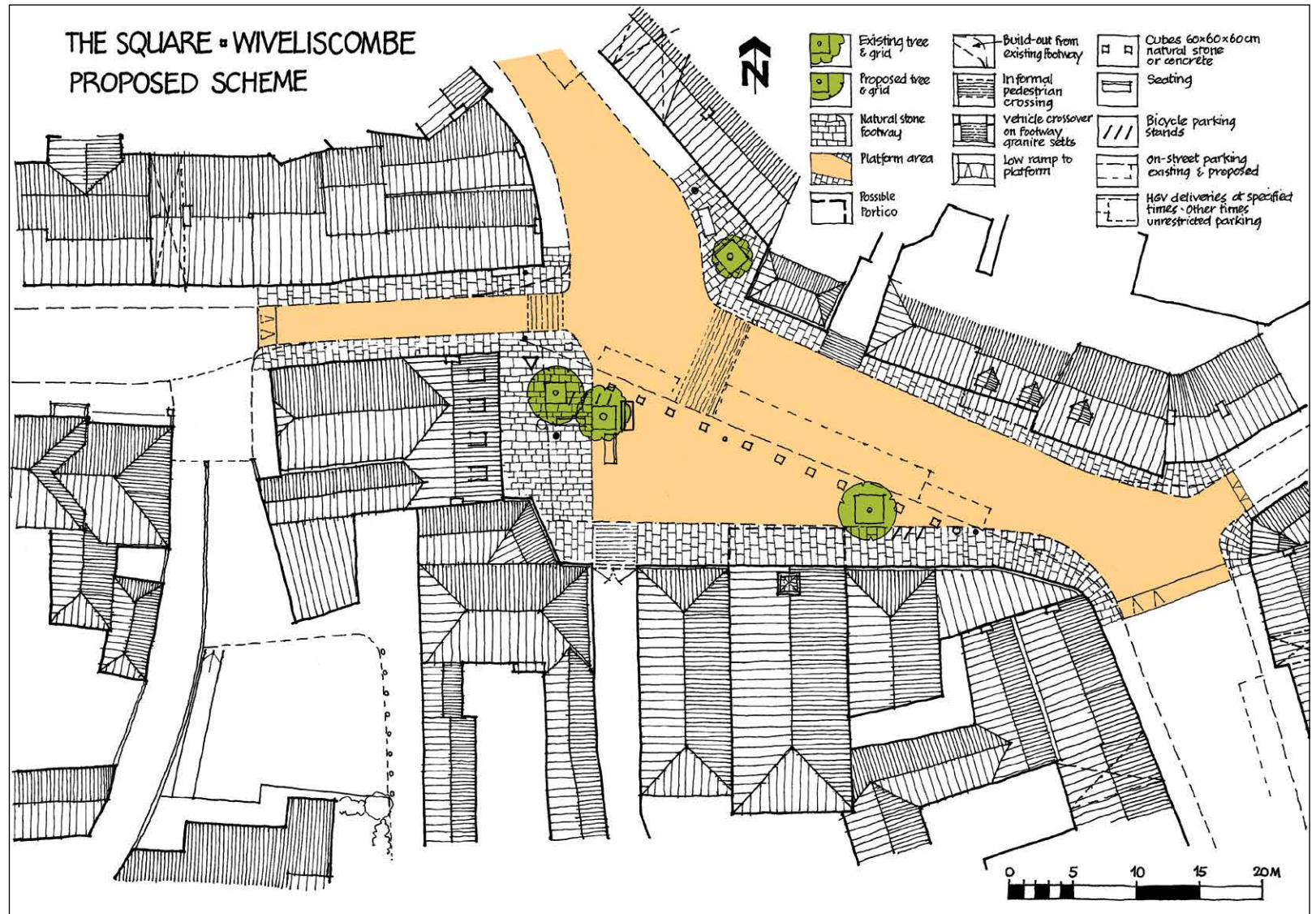


Figure 12:
Indicative details of
the proposals for
The Square.

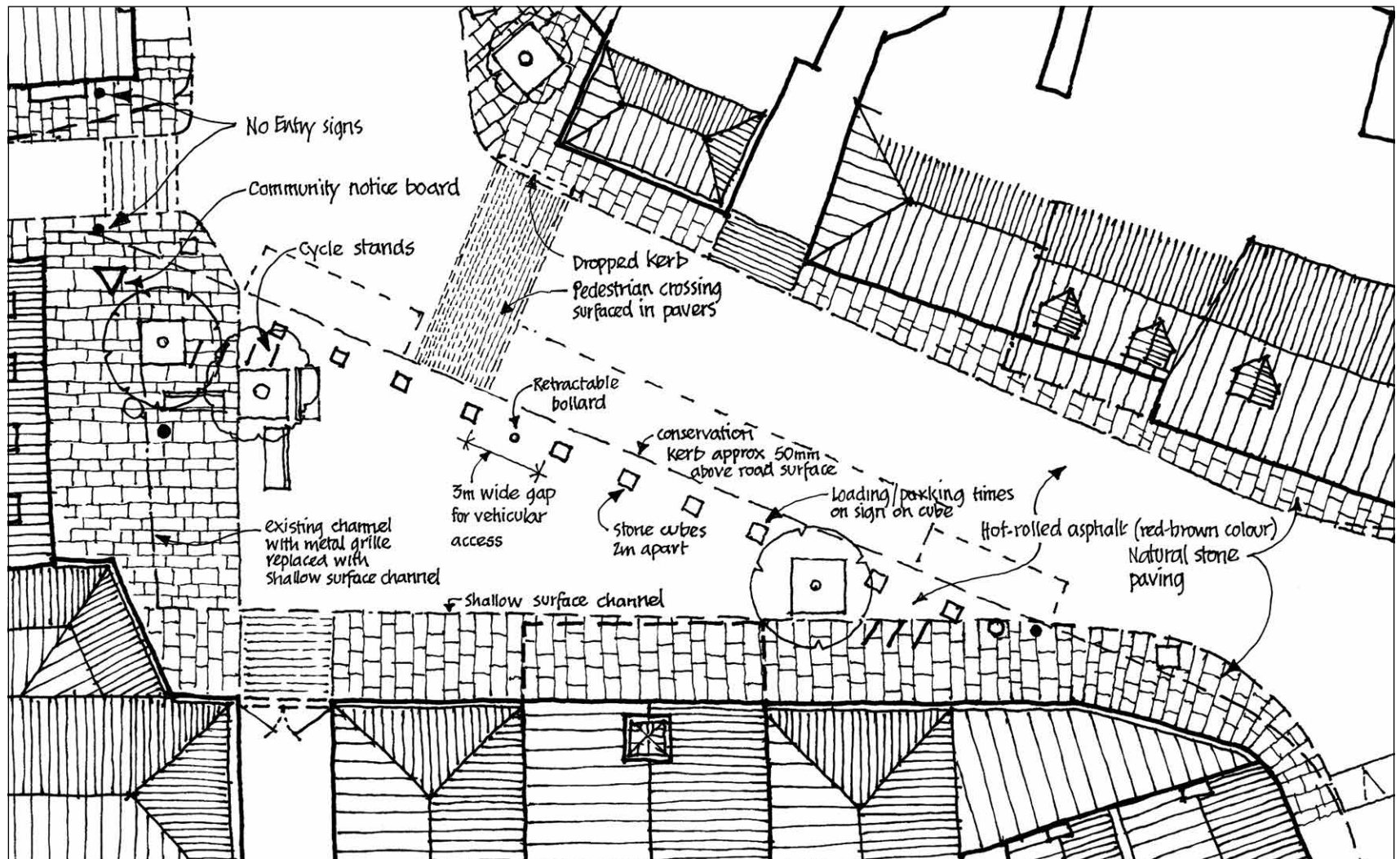


Figure 13:
Plan of proposed
scheme for West Street.

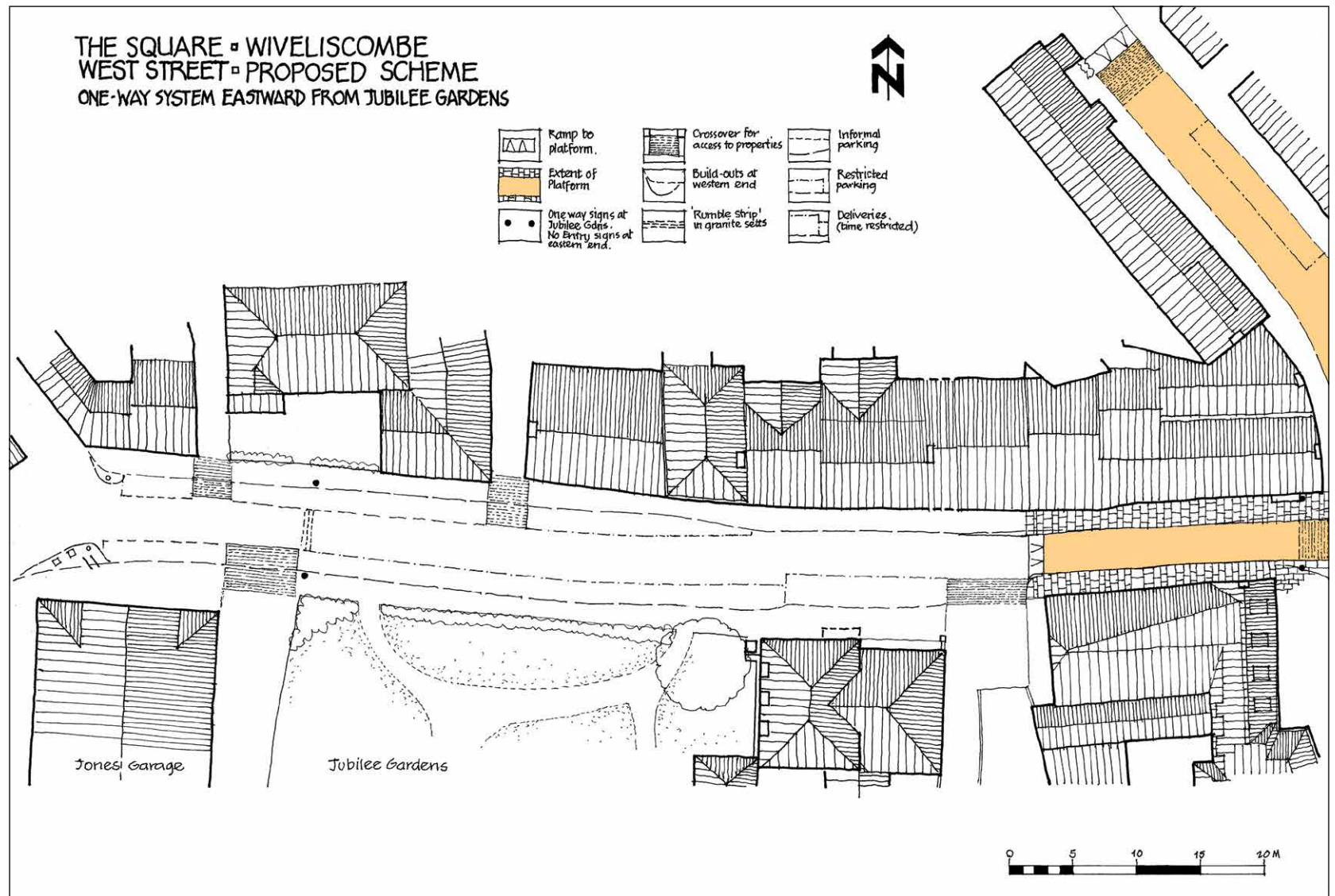


Figure 14:
Map of town centre showing the extent
of the 20 Zone and proposed loop for the
east-west bus route.

-  East & West Bus loop Route
-  One-Way Scheme limit
-  Informal Bus Stop, Both directions
-  20 Zone Limit
-  Platform Surface

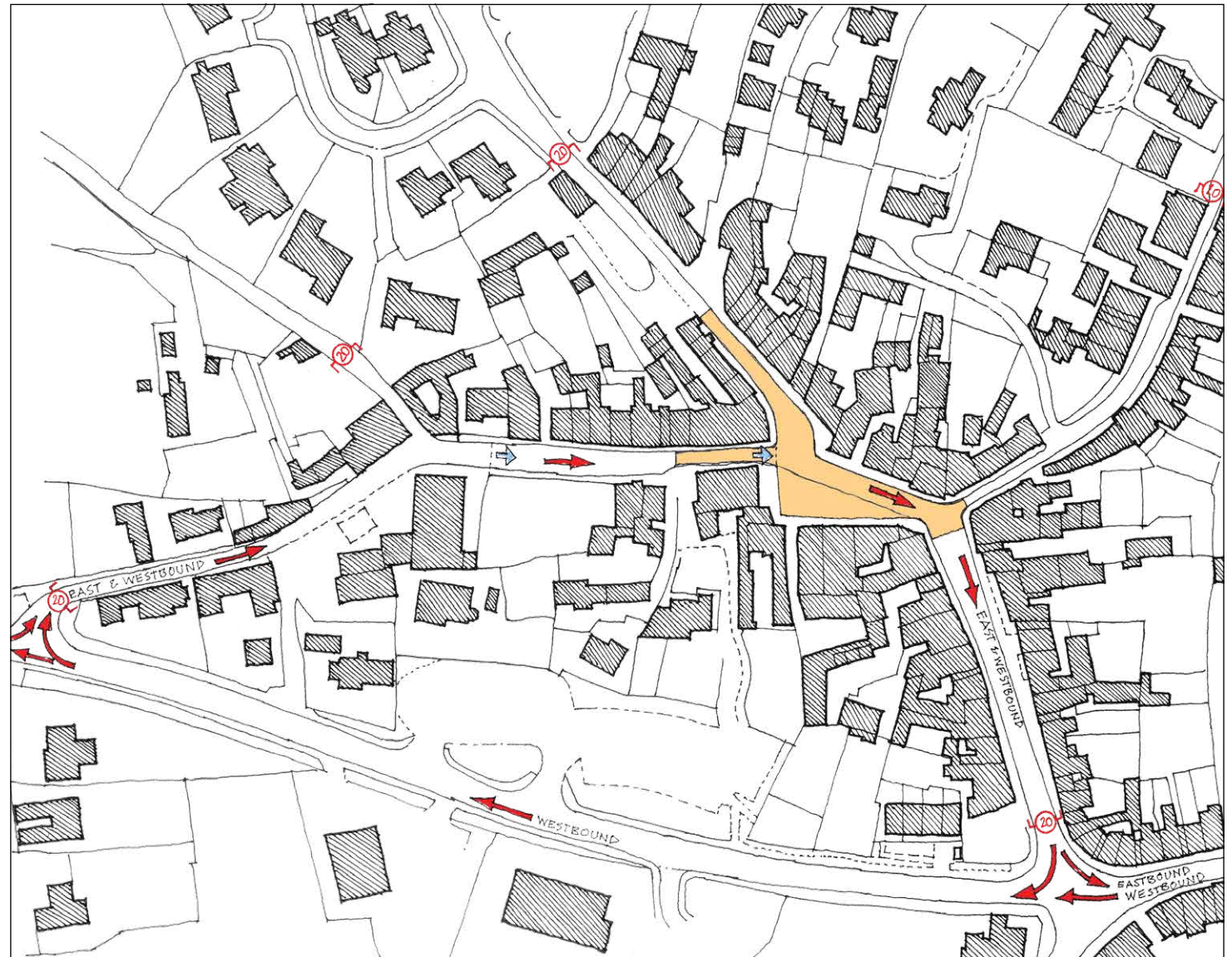
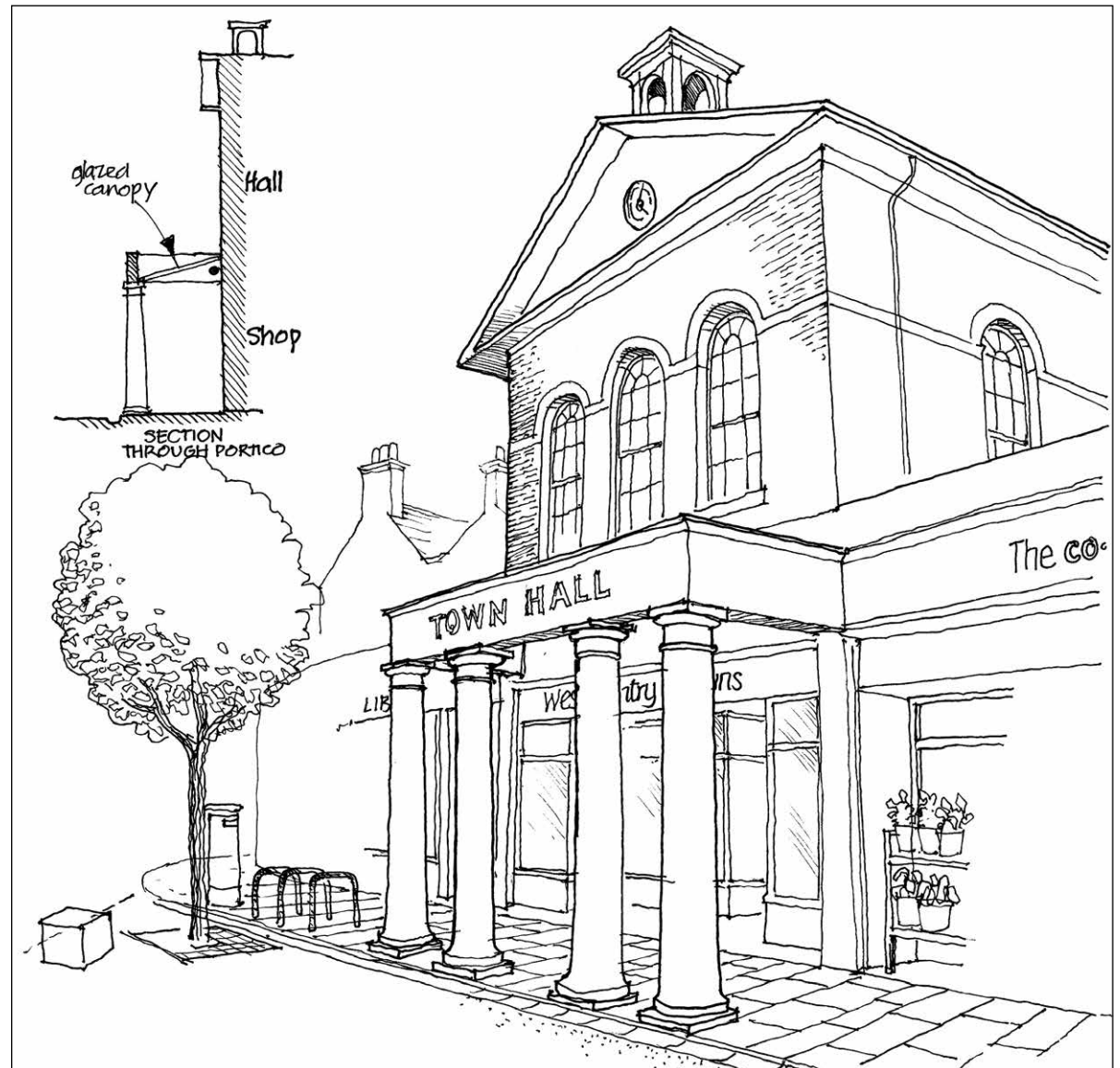


Figure 15:

A possible design for the reinstatement of the original portico to the Town Hall, which recalls the design as built. An alternative design could be more lightweight and contemporary in nature. In either case, the roof of the portico would be glazed, to allow daylight to the shopfront. This reinstatement project would be carried out following the restoration of the Town Hall as a venue, as funding would become available.



Section 8: Next stages

This report has set out a vision and a preliminary design to achieve the objectives of placemaking and traffic and parking management based on the endorsement of these objectives as a result of a number of community engagement events.

It is intended that the proposals here will be formally adopted by the Wiveliscombe Town Council, following a final public consultation and that the project will be taken forward by a new implementation group involving representatives from the town council, local businesses, community organisations and also local residents who can provide relevant professional perspectives and a ward/division councillor.

In order for the proposals to be implemented, the Highway Authority will have a key role in terms of permissions and licences to be granted. For clarity, the Highway Authority has responsibility for all the area up to the building frontages, that is the footways, carriageways and The Square. In view of this situation, preliminary discussions have taken place with officers of the Highway Authority, where the scheme in this report was explained. It should be noted that the Highway Authority, in its latest guidance (September, 2021) fully endorses the principles of placemaking. The design aims of the platform, build-outs, the one-way scheme and the 20 Zone was seen as acceptable by the Authority, subject to a number of provisos which are outlined below.

- Any scheme must be based on a full topographical survey being commissioned and carried out. The present scheme is based on Ordnance Survey mapping, which is recognised as having insufficient accuracy at the level of detail for an implementation scheme.
- The topographic survey should also inform a drainage statement and plan.
- The 20 Zone and any planned omission or reduction in signs and markings would need to be checked by the Authority.
- The detailed design and footprint of the build-outs would need to be checked against 'tracking' drawings (again based on the topographical survey), to cover large HGVs, buses and agricultural vehicles.
- The positioning and appropriateness of the cubes may need a licence to be placed in the highway.
- The one way scheme, as it joins The Square, would need to be assessed as to whether a formal 'Give Way' is needed or whether, as preferred, the layout introduces an informal approach.
- All parking and cycle spaces should accord with current policy standards.
- The bus loop proposal was seen as the better solution to the bus routing, following the introduction of the one-way system.
- The pedestrian crossing points would be acceptable, if between 3–5m wide.
- The parking facilities in The Square should be for loading and Blue Badge holders only. An appropriate Traffic Regulation Order would be required.
- The parking facilities in West St should be retained as existing and the restrictions on the northern side should be retained, in order to allow a widened footpath to be provided.
- Any new planting in the highway will need to be approved by a licence from the Authority and root guards would be required.
- The proposed portico will oversail the highway and will therefore require a licence under section 177 or 178 of the Highways Act, 1980. (It will of course also require Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission).
- Generally, the scheme will need to be undertaken as part of a Section 278 Agreement with the Authority.
- The next stages of the scheme would require consultation with the following teams in the Highway Authority:
 - Development engineering (for adoption and choice of materials).
 - Road Safety Team
 - Traffic Management Team
 - Passenger Transport for bus routing.
 - Drainage Engineer regarding ponding issues.

Following the conclusions from the consultation, the project steering group believes that parking should be retained in The Square and that there may be scope for some additional restricted parking in West Street, with the one-way scheme. The group wishes to see deliveries allowed between specific times in the morning in both The Square and West Street. At other times, these bays should be available for time-limited parking and by Blue Badge holders.

The project steering group also believes that a phased approach to the implementation of the project may be appropriate and more affordable. This would need to be negotiated with the Highway Authority. The suggested phases are:

1. One-way West Street with improvements on west side of The Square, including to improve the paving and relocate street furniture. A 20 mph speed limit through the town centre and an informal crossing across The Square between dropped kerbs in front of the pharmacy.
2. Enhancement of the paving, street furniture and tree planting on the rest of the south side of The Square.
3. The Platform and remainder of footway paving, including on the north side of The Square.

It is recommended that a plan for the improvement of the Croft Way Car Park be undertaken to maximise the capacity of the space, rationalise the access, improve the appearance and pedestrian links to The Square. Additionally, interpretive material should be provided at this point.

The scheme outlined in this report has set the agenda for achieving an improved sense of place in The Square and a sequence of actions which will be required to implement these objectives.

Appendix: Technical appraisal of street, parking and movement proposals

Background

The vision for Wiveliscombe is to increase its attractiveness for the community and visitors. The highway design challenges to support this aim have been principally identified as accommodating parking and deliveries within the Town Centre Square and surrounding streets, which is largely uncontrolled, and, it is recognised has eroded the local character. In addition, many of the streets have very narrow footways and limited crossing facilities for pedestrians of all abilities, including children and those users with mobility and sight issues, and which has led to unsafe and uncomfortable places for pedestrians, and which contributes to making an unwelcoming environment for visitors. The proposals developed are intended to mitigate these problems and contribute to the vision of creating a more attractive Town Centre.

The original brief has also recognised the possibility of a one-way system in West Street and the need to consider the wider town centre, and the surrounding on-street parking.

Proposals – The Square

To support improving The Square in placemaking terms the highway design can be developed following the two basic principles of low traffic speeds and easily navigable space for pedestrians, which as a result will improve the safety, attractiveness and more relaxing sense of place for people walking within the space. The design features to support this would be based on the CIHT 2018 Report “Creating better streets: Inclusive and accessible places.” whose recommendations are supported by the Government’s Inclusive Transport Strategy, and which promotes the design category ‘Informal Streets.’ The ‘Informal Street’ principles have been successfully delivered in recent notable schemes in the UK formerly described as ‘Shared Space’, such as at Poynton and Regent Circus, Swindon. This ‘Informal Street’ design approach creates spaces that are not totally ‘shared space’ but where traffic controls such as signs, markings and signals are absent or largely reduced, and where there is a footway and carriageway but the differentiation is markedly less.

The detailing to support this approach includes the following:

- The features described in the ‘Inclusive design’ section below, in particular low height contrasting colour kerbs and easily followed navigable pedestrian routes that are kept clear of all street furniture and parked vehicles;
- The carriageway surface can be provided using Hot Rolled Asphalt (HRA) incorporating a ‘Harden Red’ chipping. This is the ideal material to be provided at this location as it provides an economic solution to reduce kerb face by overlaying the existing surface, rather than by reconstruction. HRA is a traditional very robust surface favoured by highway authorities. The applied ‘Harden Red’ chipping provides an attractive colour finish, that is more a soft burgundy colour than ‘red’ and has been successfully used elsewhere in the UK. The colour is innate within the geology of the stone and so will never fade as some coloured surfacing materials might, and has the required engineering properties (eg PSV = 60) that the highway authority would require;
- Extending the adjacent footway paving across the carriageway at informal pedestrian crossings to help reinforce the legitimacy of pedestrians within The Square and awareness of approaching vehicles as illustrated in Figure 6.2 of Manual for Streets;
- Raising the carriageway levels within The Square will incorporate a 1 in 15 ramp that will provide an element of traffic calming to reinforce low speeds but will be acceptable to buses and the like. This is further discussed below;
- Introducing footway buildouts at the carriageway entries to reduce carriageway width will also assist in regulating low traffic speeds, and where included as part of an informal pedestrian crossing or an entry point detail will help manage low speeds for approaching drivers and increase their awareness of the presence of pedestrians;
- Including The Square within a 20 Zone will help remove warning traffic signs and road marking;
- Inclusion of granite cubes will provide a more aesthetic protection of pedestrian comfort zones.

Proposals – West Street

A one-way section along West Street is confirmed as offering the most benefit to the town centre by rebalancing the space between the carriageway and footways, and creating a more pedestrian-friendly space and attractive shopping experience for the independent shops in West Street and for visitors to the town. This approach is exemplified by the town centre in Godalming, Surrey which like Wiveliscombe has a 1960s/1970s inner relief road (Croft Way) that diverts traffic away from the historic town centre and presents this opportunity. Images of Godalming are included in the case study at the end of this Appendix.

The direction of the one-way section has been considered. A one-way section from west to east that does not include The Square, and so maintains two-way flow between the High Street and North Street, has overwhelming advantages over the alternative one-way direction from East to West as follows:

- The difficult right-turn from North Street into West Street will no longer be required. Any vehicle will simply proceed along the High Street and turn right at the lights. A very minor addition to the journey length using Croft Way.
- There is more space created at the No Entry position at the junction with The Square that can accommodate a suitable informal pedestrian crossing, that is currently lacking, and also include a gateway feature as part of The Square design.
- Large Co-op articulated HGV delivery vehicles will be facing the correct way for parking in the loading area, and as they currently operate.
- Large vehicle deliveries to the Garage can simply follow the alternative diversion route along Croft Way to gain access and exit in the direction of the one-way section of West Street and onwards via the High Street
- The Square-North Street effectively becomes a straight-through route with a simple junction at the end of West Street. There will be no need for designing a turning head for anyone approaching West Street from the High Street who had wanted to turn left. They would simply continue along North Street and turn perhaps in the car park.
- There will be a case for inclusion of a weight restriction for the turn from West Street into North Street, so that there will be no need to be concerned about turning tracking of a large vehicle. The large vehicle would exit the town via the High Street and the Croft Way traffic lights.

- Vehicles exiting the town in Croft Way have an easier exit at the High Street/Croft Way traffic light junction than the alternative West Road/Croft Way priority junction.

Geometric design of West Street as a one-way street

Detailed design will be ultimately approved by Somerset County Council and will be expected to comply with their standards and also with national standards.

The design developed within this project report is based on OS mapping which has limited accuracy, and is also supported by occasional measurements made on site. The proposals developed represent a preliminary assessment only using nominal dimensions. Any detailed design that would need to be subsequently developed would have to be based on a fully detailed topographic survey.

Relevant standards for these works are as follows (References: Local Transport Note 1/20 Section 7.2, incorporating Table 7-3, Manual for Streets DfT 2007, and Manual for Streets 2 CIHT 2010):

- Width of single lane carriageway to accommodate motor traffic and cyclists – 3.9m
- Width of disabled car parking bay – 2.7m
- Width of general car parking bay – 2.0m preferred, 1.8m absolute minimum
- Width of loading bay – 2.7m preferred, 1.8m absolute minimum
- Footway width – 2.0m. Absolute minimum over short lengths (less than 6m) 1.0m

The one-way section would commence immediately to the east of the Garage entrance, near The Larder and so will not constrain the garage or the private entrance to No 24 who will both be able to turn either to the left or right on exit.

The following is an example of a design for West Street as a one-way street:

The width between wall lines of the main section between The Larder and the entrance to the Community Centre was measured on site outside the Post Office at 10.4m. The design that can be developed within this width can comprise the following:

- 2.0m wide north footway;
- 3.9m wide carriageway;
- 2.7m median comprising disabled parking bays/additional footway to support a raised, paved informal pedestrian crossing /cycle parking/landscaping.

- 1.8m South footway. This is the existing width which would have historically been the normal standard. If the topographic survey reveals that that West Street is slightly wider than 10.4m then this width can be increased accordingly.

At the section between the informal pedestrian crossing near The Larder and the garage, the parking bay width can be reduced to the standard parking bay of 1.8m to help the transition between the main section and the existing layout to the West.

For the existing narrow section between the Community Centre entrance and The Square the width between buildings was measured on site at 6.5m. This will accommodate a continuation of the 3.9m wide carriageway with 1.3m footways on both sides. There is a strong case however for future development to propose a carriageway width of 3.0m over this short section with 1.75m footways on both sides, and it is recommended that this could be offered during detailed design development with Somerset CC Highways Officers. LTN 1/20 will allow carriageway widths of 3.0m but recommends that widths of 3.2m – 3.9m are avoided to prevent cyclists from being ‘squeezed’. And this reduced carriageway width would help manage low car speeds and restore the balance of the space in favour of the pedestrian.

Some of these features were not prepared and presented for consultation and were not favoured by the Project Steering Group. This includes the further disabled parking bays and further raised pedestrian crossing. As shown in Section 7, the Project Steering Group supported informal pedestrian crossings at other locations and felt there were sufficient other opportunities for disabled parking.

Bus access

The existing No 25 bus service from Taunton to Dulverton stops in The Square and travels along West Street. This would present a problem whichever direction the West Street one-way is configured. In the case of the preferred West to East one-way route the service from Taunton to Dulverton would require re-routing. The Project Steering group strongly favour initiating a ‘loop’ system, as set out in Section 7, illustrated in figure 12. This has the benefit in that the bus would stop in The Square (albeit informally, as at present) whichever way it is travelling. The lack of a bus stop in The Square is not ideal, although the shelter with timetable

located round the corner for north-south services can be seen as a compromise solution. It is hoped that some form of bus stop in The Square will emerge as a result of negotiations with the relevant stakeholders.

This option has been put to First Bus, but to date, no reply has been received. The Highway Authority will also be approaching the Passenger Transport Authority.

Currently, there is not a bus stop sign or road markings for buses stopping on The Square. Therefore, it is unclear at present how a bus stopping can safely drop off/pick up any person with a wheelchair/pushchair, or with a walking/sight impairment, when the highway area to the front of the Co-op is fully occupied with vehicles. This would remain an issue for Taunton-Langley Corner buses and should be addressed.

Inclusive design

It must be noted that any new design has to acknowledge the needs of less able pedestrians. The following reference documents are relevant:

- The Inclusive Transport Strategy: achieving equal access for disabled people – GOV.UK
- Creating better streets: Inclusive and accessible places. CIHT 2018

The designs promoted within this report can be developed fully in accordance with the requirements of these documents. The main aim will be to provide comfortable and easily navigable space, and low traffic speeds. In particular the following can be developed within the design:

- 60mm kerb face as a tapping edge for white stick users;
- Suitable width footways to accommodate the needs of all users;
- Convenient and appropriately sited flush channel kerb pedestrian crossing points with appropriate guidance tactile paving for sight-impaired users;
- 60mm face kerbs to provide a contrasting colour to the adjacent carriageway to increase trip awareness for the partially-sighted;
- Flush channel kerbs to provide a contrasting colour to the adjacent carriageway surface to confirm the edge of the footway/carriageway for the partially sighted.

On-street parking

At present there is limited convenient on-street parking for the disabled (one space in West Street), although there are double yellow lines at several locations which permit parking by disabled users. Disabled users who would struggle to access the town centre from the local car parks, and commercial vehicles servicing the local businesses form the two user groups who must be provided with adequate facilities in the town centre. Other able-bodied users travelling to the town centre by car have the benefit of local car parks close by in Croft Way and North Street.

A loading bay has been provided in West Street outside the butchers to replace the double-yellow lines, and also in The Square with sufficient space for the Co-op large articulated vehicles to park. This would have a single yellow line and a sign (probably mounted on the cubes) prohibiting parking at specified delivery times. The exact limits would be subject to Highway Authority permits. It is expected that deliveries would be allowed in a fixed time slot in the mornings and parking would be permitted at other times.

There is pressure to maintain the existing number of on-street parking spaces. The proposals in West Street to provide for a comparative capacity as at present through a mixture of formal and informal parking. It may be possible to provide additional time-limited spaces in West Street with traffic flowing one way only. There are two locations within the town centre area where it may be possible to consider the provision of additional spaces through the removal of existing double yellow line restrictions. The locations are The High Street, where the existing parking on the west side outside Nos 12–16, could be extended to No 18 and so provide two additional spaces, and North Street between Richard Beadon Close and the dropped kerb crossing next to the Public Toilets which could provide three additional spaces.

Existing car parks

To help the town centre achieve its potential in terms of placemaking and providing an attractive place for visitors from outside the town who have to drive, the existing car parks in Croft Way and North Street should provide an attractive entry point into the town. At present they are poorly maintained, with limited visitor information and guidance signage to the town centre. The

pedestrian routes from the car parks to the town centre are also sub-standard, all of which does not contribute to a welcoming first impression of the Town. Some recent improvements to signs and the management of open spaces have been made. Further improvements should be considered, especially to improve the attractiveness of the walkway from the Croft Way car park into the town centre.

20 Zone

There is a good case to provide a 20 Zone for the town centre. To be most effective the limits of the 20 Zone would coincide with a change of character and where the town centre effectively starts. Figure 12 shows some suggested locations. It is important to distinguish between a 20 Zone and 20mph speed limit. In accordance with Statutory Instrument 1999 No. 1026 Traffic Calming Regulations, natural features including paving, planters, fences, trees and shrubs can all be included as they are considered to constitute traffic calming, and no warning signage or markings is required in a 20 Zone. Note the point of difference; this does not necessarily apply to a section of road subject to a 20mph speed limit. Once the 20 Zone has been established all natural measures that are deemed necessary to further reinforce low traffic speeds can all be added without spoiling any environmental improvements and placemaking features.

Raised carriageways and approach ramps

With respect to raised paved informal pedestrian crossings, as considered in the West Street improvements near The Larder, the details are informed by the recommendations included in Local Transport Note 1/07 Traffic Calming 2.5.4 requiring a 1 in 15 ramp and a minimum 6m long plateau. Increasing the length of plateau has significant placemaking benefits. It was found at Regent Circus, Swindon that a 10m plateau delivered a significant improvement and appeared to be optimum in terms of placemaking and highway safety. Notwithstanding this recommendation, it has been decided to omit a plateau and insert a 'rumble strip' of setts at the point where the one-way scheme commences, due to the overriding need to maximise space for parking.

Street furniture – granite cubes

1m granite cubes are proposed within The Square and within the West Street informal crossing as being one of the more attractive means of preventing cars parking within crossings and blocking the pedestrian route. Permeability of the crossing is maintained, but vehicles cannot physically override the footway, and they also provide a potential seat. Within The Square they can be spaced to provide 2m clearance between the cubes which will be wide enough to allow access for maintenance vehicles but still sufficiently closely spaced to deter parallel parking on the footway.



Granite cubes in use, Regent Circus, Swindon

Conclusions

Wiveliscombe benefits from the Croft Way inner relief road that provides the opportunity to rebalance the space in West Street in favour of pedestrians and create a more welcoming and relaxing place to visit.

Wiveliscombe also benefits from the two large (free) car parks that are both within an easy walking distance of less than 2 minutes from the Town Centre.

The present on-street parking numbers within the Town Centre can be maintained, whilst optimising the spaces for the benefit of disabled users and for loading/unloading to the commercial premises and businesses.

The issue with how bus route 25 from Taunton services the Town and how any bus stopping places and details such as high access kerbs, bus stop locations and shelters can be accommodated within the designs will need urgent resolution.

Case Study – Godalming Town Centre



Note how the space is divided into four sections. From left to right:

- Block-paved wide footway
- Asphalt single lane carriageway with 60mm low face conservation kerbs
- Parking bay/additional pedestrian space
- Wide block-paved footway



Note how the median between right-hand footway and the carriageway can offer other uses such as supporting an informal block-paved pedestrian crossing, cycle parking, additional landscaping.