

August 2018

# South Street

Urban Design Proposals

Prepared by.





architecture  
urbanism  
landscape

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"First **life**, then  
**spaces**, then  
**buildings** -  
the other way  
around never  
works"

**Jan Gehl**

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

Exeter City Council has identified the importance of South Street and the surrounding area as a key part of the city centre and the interface between the High Street, Cathedral Quarter, West Quarter and Quay.

LHC Architecture and Urbanism were commissioned by Exeter City Council to prepare an Urban Design Strategy for South St and the surrounding area in early 2018, with the aim of identifying potential enhancement and development opportunities that will benefit local business, community and visitors to the City Centre.

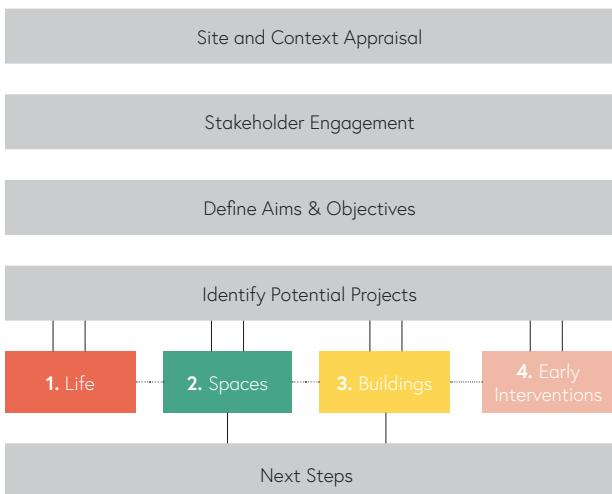
Exeter City Council is committed to the improvement of South Street and its surroundings for the benefit of local business, citizens and visitors. The Council is a stakeholder in the South Street area, being a landowner, leisure facility operator as well as being a custodian of the public realm and the visitor offer.

The approach taken builds upon previous studies into the future and role of the City Centre, and engagement with stakeholders to develop a responsive design which addresses the key aims and objectives set by the brief.

## 1.2 Aims and Objectives

A number of key aims and objectives were set by Exeter City Council within the project brief. These can be summarised as;

- 1) To identify in a document proposal for improved Urban Design focussed on South Street to unleash its potential.
- 2) To have particular regard to a key link and other supporting links crossing South Street between City and Quay.
- 3) To prioritise a schedule of improvements with indicative costings.
- 4) To ensure the Urban Design proposals reflect ambitious but deliverable projects with an incremental approach to improvements identified therein.
- 5) The document has regard to the context and framework for the key priorities and improvements identified from public consultation and for future developments.
- 6) The improvements identified have regard to ongoing negotiations with developers, consultants and others in the six areas shown in the report to Exeter City Council's Executive
- 7) To consult with local stakeholders and relevant Executive Members at the stages of formulating the proposals and then with the prioritised design solutions proposed.





## 2 Understanding The Site



### 2.1 Site Location

The study area is located in the south-western part of Exeter City Centre, roughly defined by Cathedral Yard and the High Street to the north, Fore Street and the West Quarter to the north west, Western Way and the Quayside to the south and Southgate roundabout to the southeast.

A flexible approach to the study area was taken, with a primary focus on South Street, but consideration of the wider area to reflect the importance of the area as transition area and movement zone between the City Centre and the Quay and adjacent residential areas.

### 2.2 Historic Development

The site is at the core of the historic city centre; roughly at the centre of the walled city and one of the key historic routes into the city from the south (and quayside). The top of South Street is the junction between the four key routes through the city centre - High Street, Fore Street, North Street and South Street - historically known as Quatrefoix or Carfax, and the location of the Great Conduit (a public water fountain located in the centre of the street, which was demolished in the 1770s).

Much of the historic fabric of this part of the city centre was destroyed during World War II, and by subsequent post war demolition and clearance. The construction of Western Way required further demolition and introduced a barrier between the city centre and quayside.

Subsequent post war development has resulted in the loss of the historic street pattern and much of the historic built form, a wider street form, and the retention of isolated remnants of the city wall and older buildings in the southern part of South Street and at the corner of North Street. This is demonstrated in the overlay plans provided opposite.

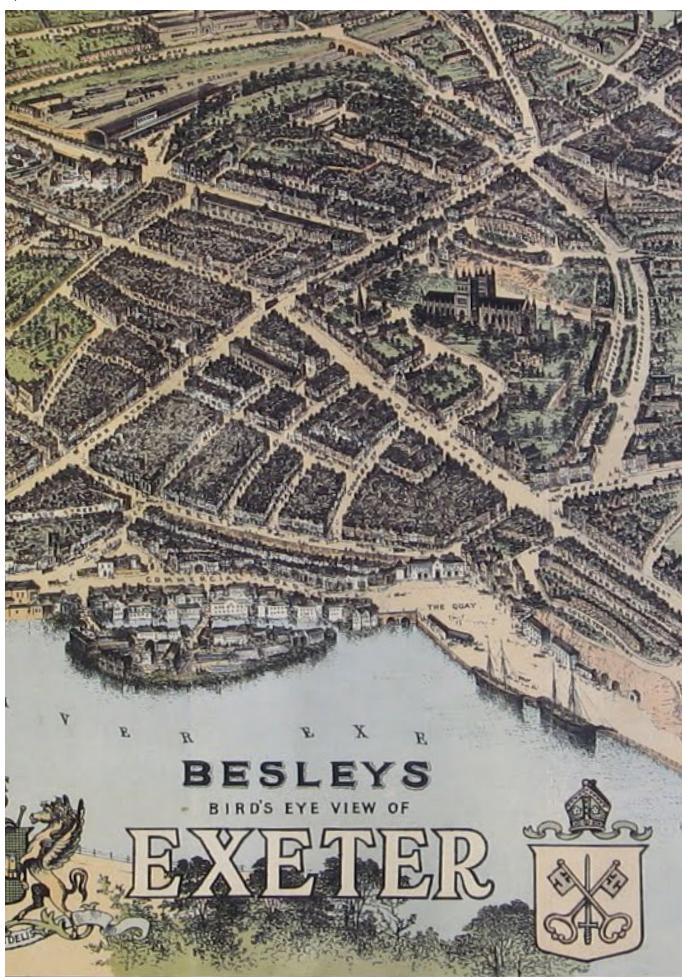
The post war development created larger buildings footprints and a horizontal building emphasis, reducing density and contrasting with the more detailed fenestration and vertical emphasis of the older buildings.

A number of the historic east – west streets, namely Guinea Street, Sun Street and George Street have been closed off by post war development, reducing the permeability of the area and limiting connectivity between the Quayside and Cathedral Precinct/City Centre.

South Street has been widened since the post-war period, resulting in a wide street sided by relatively low-level buildings.



**Historic Map** Besley's Historic Map of Exeter 1905 showing streets linking the city centre to the Quay



## 2.3 Strategic Policy Background

Exeter is an important and rapidly expanding, regional centre, serving a retail catchment of over 1 million people and in the top 50 national retail centres (CACI). Exeter is an important employment hub, and has regionally important cultural facilities including the Royal Albert Memorial Museum.

The role of city centres is changing, with dramatic changes to the retail marketplace and the resurgence of city centres as places to live, work and play. With these changes in mind the Urban Design proposals have been developed both with regard to wider strategic policies for Exeter City Centre, and with thought to future continuing changes to the role of the city centre, which are likely to include:

- Shopping as a leisure pursuit, linked to cultural or leisure activities and restaurant dining
- Changes to transport patterns, with likely reductions in private car use and an increase in public transport, autonomous vehicles and pedestrian/cycle traffic
- Flexible working patterns, including provision of work hubs and shared work space for small businesses
- An increase in the number of people living within the city centre
- The impact of Climate Change on public space and building function and design, and in particular increasing temperatures and rainfall

The **City Centre Vision for a Green Capital**, published 2011, sets out a Vision for a sustainable and accessible city centre that builds upon Exeter's sense of place to create a mixed use city centre that has good transport connectivity, with private cars limited to the edge of the city during daylight hours, and walkable and attractive spaces that support a range of activities.

The Vision document identifies South Street as part of the West Quarter and sets out a number of principles which relate to the objectives of this Strategy:

- *The distinctive character of the different quarters along the linear spine will be reinforced, creating areas with their own unique character and focus. The different quarters... will be well connected beyond the linear spine.*
- *Any new development in the city centre will respect the city skyline and reflect the underlying topography.*
- *Development in the city centre will improve the legibility of the historic walled city and city gates.*
- *Repair the finer grain of the walled city.*
- *Create an exciting mix of contemporary design and historic buildings*
- *Match projected housing growth in Exeter with growth in culture, services, employment and retail. Exeter should be recognised as a cultural centre of the peninsula.*
- *Create a true mixed use urban centre including more employment, housing and evening economy, delivered in a higher density, space efficient urban form.*
- *Become a genuinely 'green' place that moves beyond the standard sustainability agenda and takes advantage of local enterprise and business opportunities*

- *Prioritise pedestrians in the city centre and discourage cross town traffic*
- *Create a clear network of interconnected high quality pedestrian dominated streets, public spaces and parks*
- *Improve pedestrian and cycle access and enhance the arrival experience*
- *Improve foot and cycle connection to the river and surrounding countryside and create more usable green space in the city centre*
- *Increase urban biodiversity by creating and connecting habitats within the built fabric and along the riverside*

The **City Centre Strategy for Exeter 2013 – 2022**, published 2013, builds upon the Vision for a Green City Centre and sets out key City Centre Aims for the next 5-10 years:

1. A sustainable, resilient and competitive City Centre; reinforcing the city centre's unique layout to ensure all the City Centre's quarters are strengthened
2. A vibrant centre which offers attractions for all;
3. A welcoming and safe evening and night-time environment;
4. A better first impression;
5. A clean, well maintained and safe environment.

The City Centre Strategy highlights the need to improve the leisure and cultural offer in the City Centre, which has been recently enhanced by the refurbishment of the Guildhall Shopping Centre (providing a number of high quality restaurants and enhanced public spaces). It also highlights the potential to increase the number of people living in an attractive city centre and the potential to support the current growth in independent retailers, particularly in the West Quarter. The Business Improvement District (BID), with engagement from the public and private sectors is identified as key to the delivery of the Strategy.

The site area is substantially within the **Central Conservation Area**, and adjacent to the Riverside and Southernhay & the Friars Conservation Areas. The relevant Appraisals and Management Plans have informed the site and context appraisal and development of proposals. In addition there a number of Listed Buildings and Schedule Ancient Monuments within and close to the study area.

The New Entertainment Venue Advisory Group (NEVAG), which is made from a broad range of representatives from the arts, cultural and entertainment sectors has worked with officers to oversee a **New Entertainment Venue Needs Assessment** which was undertaken by Fourth Street and published in September 2017. The report included an appraisal of a number of possible sites for a new entertainment venue and concluded that the Corn Exchange was the preferred location for any future venue. This study acknowledges these recommendations however the findings of the assessment will now be the subject to further separate consultation with the public and key stakeholders.

The development of urban design proposals also acknowledges the vision of **Exeter City Futures**, which seeks to solve urbanisation challenges and reduce social inequality in a way that contributes to economic growth.

## 2.4 Site Ownership and Management

The site and wider study area is located within the study area and contains a number of land holdings under various ownership and management.

Exeter City Council has freehold ownership of many of the existing buildings fronting on to the northern section of South Street, which are subject to various occupier leasehold agreements. This offers a potential opportunity should there be future proposals to redevelop existing building stock.

The City Council also has significant ownership within adjacent areas of the city centre, and there is potential for these to be included in any regeneration proposals to widen the opportunity for development and increase potential funding for public realm enhancements.

There are also a number of buildings under private ownership within the southern areas of South Street. The Cathedral and Cathedral School also own a number of key buildings within and adjacent to the study area.

Early consultation with land owners is considered important to ensure that any forthcoming private development proposals are in accordance with the aims and objectives of this Urban Design Strategy.

The majority of the public realm within the study area is adopted by Devon County Council. Therefore, any public realm proposals implicating Highways will need to be developed in close consultation with Devon County as 'Highways Authority'.

However, a number of streets including Kalanderhay, Cathedral Yard, The Cloisters, Deanery Place and Palace Gate are owned by and managed by the Cathedral.



## 2.5 Site & Context Appraisal

South Street sits at the edge between the West Quarter, Cathedral Quarter, and West Quarter, with connectivity to the Quayside to the south.

The area falls between these areas and at present lacks a clear identity and function within the City Centre; which is exacerbated by the poor quality of some of the public realm and some of the buildings. Conversely the historic buildings, including Paternoster House, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, the White Ensign Club, George's Meeting House (Wetherspoons) and the White Hart Hotel give a taste of the streets historic character and generate footfall and activity (see plan bottom right)

Over the past few years South Street has strengthened its retail and leisure offer with a number of independent shops and restaurants locating in the street, along with a number of charity shops, helping to strengthen the character of the street and connection to Fore Street and the West Quarter Independent Shopping Area. This natural evolution suggests the potential for the area to develop as a natural extension to the West Quarter, providing an opportunity for a mix of uses including independent traders, restaurants and bars, arts and cultural activity, workplaces and residential accommodation.

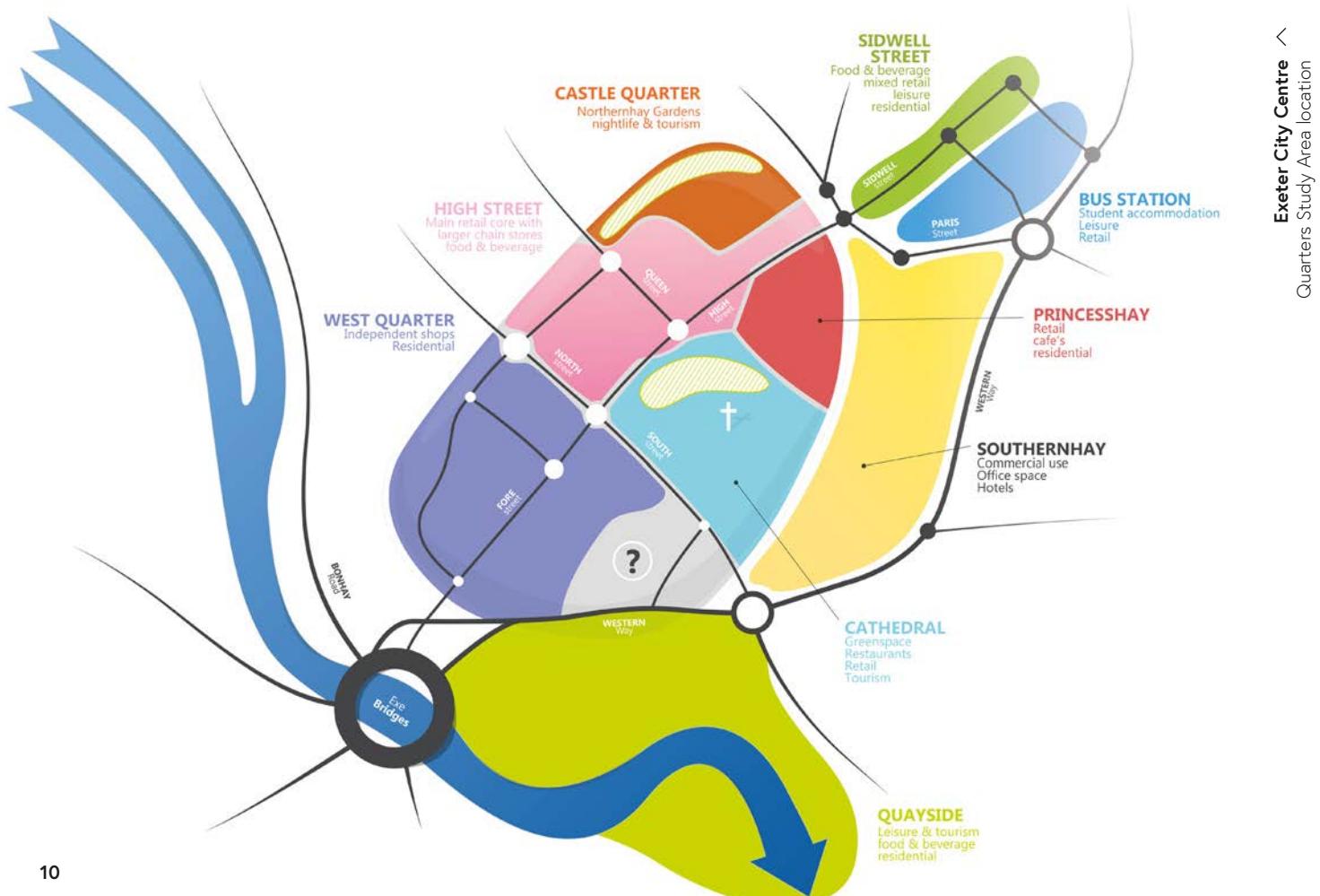
A detailed site appraisal identified key issues within the study area, which are illustrated on the plan opposite. A summary of existing site strengths and weaknesses include;

### Strengths;

- Several key historic and positive buildings fronting South Street
- Occupies a historic route north-south across the city centre, with the site of the historic South Gate (demolished) and potential for excellent connections to the quayside
- Numerous independent traders (retail and bar/ restaurant) already present offering life to the street
- Existing mixed-use area, including some residential uses
- Rising topography creates a key vista looking up South Street, views to the Cathedral and potential views to the wider landscape from upper floors
- Exeter City Council own significant areas, creating potential redevelopment opportunities and opportunities for intensification of uses throughout the area

### Weaknesses;

- Lack of identity of South Street as part of the wider city centre quarters
- Loss of historic character and tired poor quality post-war buildings
- Highways dominated space used as a vehicular cut-through across city centre leading to poor pedestrian environment
- Lack of legibility and poor routes between Quay, City Centre & Cathedral
- Tired and poor quality public realm
- Post-war development has broken historical street pattern and some buildings out of scale





## 2.6 Existing Vehicular and Pedestrian Movement

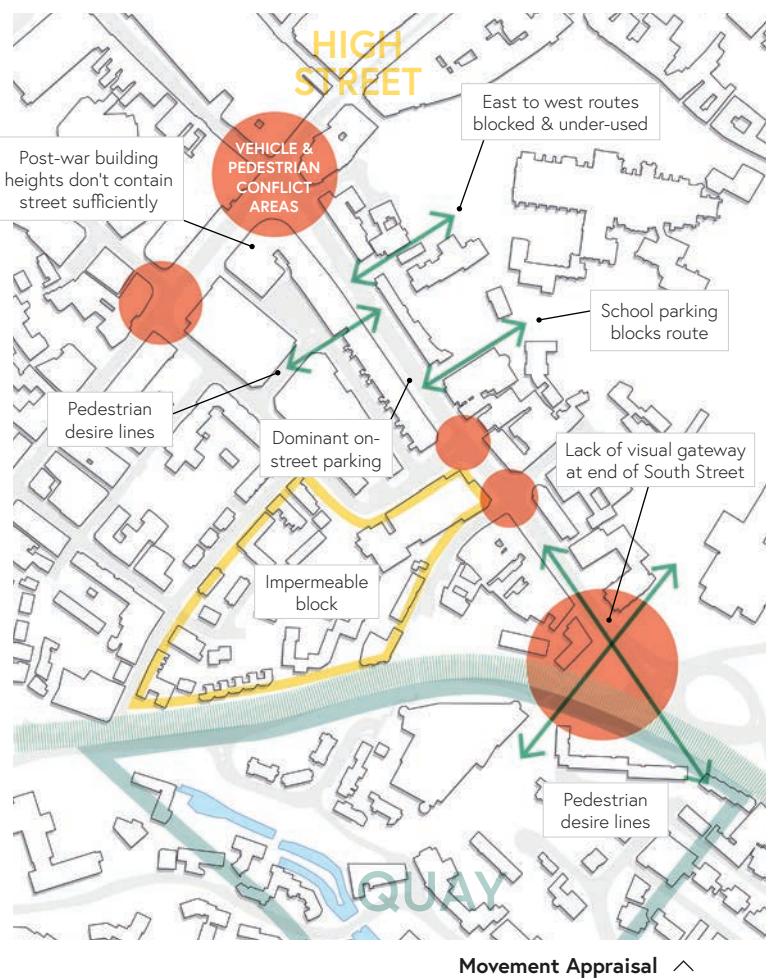
Existing permeability through the study area is restricted by the historic city wall, Western Way and the River. Pedestrian movement routes from adjacent parts of the city are primarily focused on three key routes:

- Exe Bridges - Fore Street (from the south west)
- North St (from the north west)
- Barnfield Road/Bedford St (from the east)

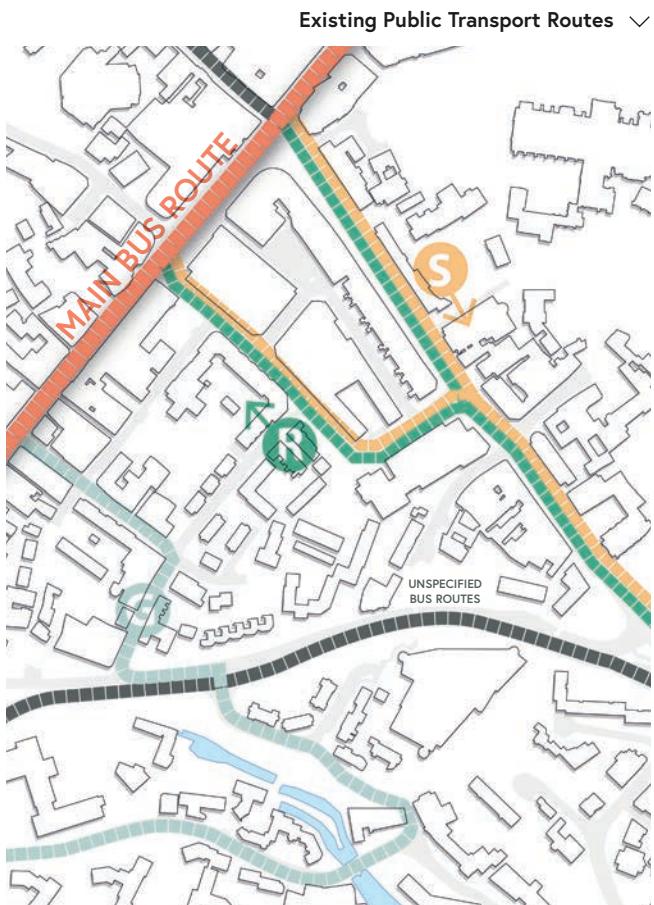
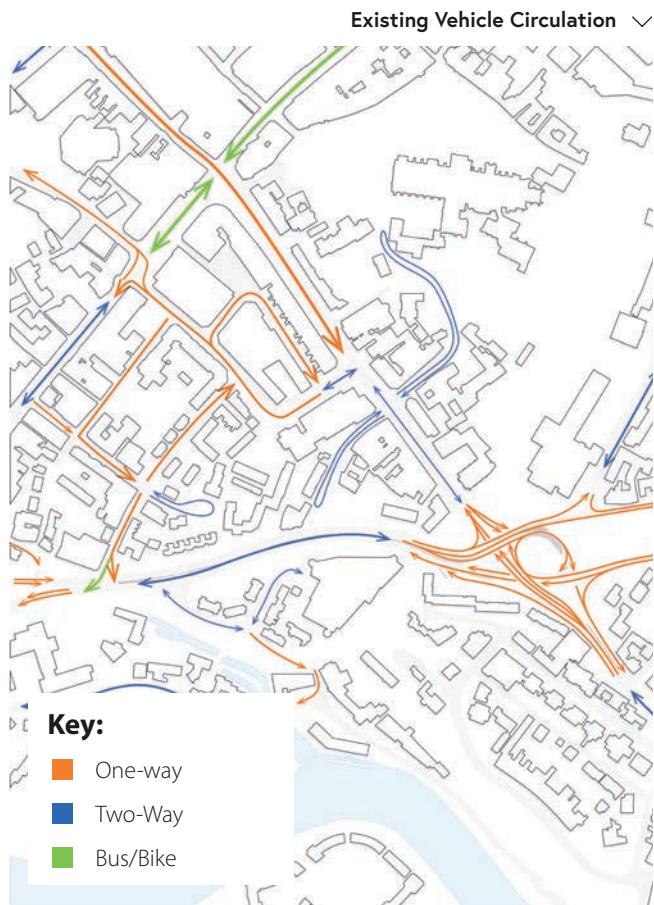
Routes from the south are broken and disjointed as a result of the river, Western Way and City Wall, with confusing and convoluted pedestrian routes at the South Gate roundabout and along Western Way severing links between the City Centre and the Quay. The adjacent diagram highlights the key pedestrian - vehicle conflict areas that result. This challenging permeability has a significant impact on pedestrian and cycle movement and limits footfall through the South Street area - with an impact on the vibrancy and viability of businesses in South Street.

The severance of the historic street pattern through the post war redevelopment of this part of the city centre focuses the potential pedestrian movement along South Street, with links through Lower Coombe St and Quay Hill to the Quay.

Vehicle movement through the area exacerbates this problem, with the north-south vehicular route from St Davids through South Street providing a cut through for vehicles that could use alternative routes avoiding the city Centre (via Exe Bridges/Western Way). There is an opportunity to restrict this traffic movement to create a more pedestrian/cycle friendly environment that supports increased activity on South Street.



Movement Appraisal ▲





Poor building frontage at South Street Gateway



Vehicle dominated spaces linking South St to Cathedral Yard



Kalenderhay underutilised and associated with anti-social behaviour



Vehicle orientated street restricts pedestrian movement



High amounts of on-street parking leads to domination of the car within the streetscape



Confusing and convoluted pedestrian crossings of Western Way



Severed pedestrian & cycle links



Confusing and convoluted pedestrian & cycle links between South Street & the Quay



Severed pedestrian & cycle links



Insufficient scale of post-war development provides weak street frontage and lack of architectural variety

# 3 Consultation Process

## 3.1 Previous Consultation

The stakeholder consultation built upon previous consultations with the community which established priorities for this part of the City Centre.

In 2016 a review was initiated with a report to Councillors on the future of the South Street area and the Corn Exchange.

Subsequently a public consultation in February 2017, with more than 450 responses, identified three key priorities for the area:

- Cultural Activity and Entertainment,
- Independent Businesses, and the Farmers Market (currently held every Thursday).
- The need for better links to the Quay

The consultation also identified a number of key improvements to:

- Gateways and connections principally the link from Cathedral to Quay
- the Appearance of buildings and shopfronts
- Public spaces and the street scene
- Transport and getting around

These findings were reported to members in September 2017 with a recommendation that they be addressed in an incremental way through a series of dialogues and further consultation with stakeholders including businesses, residents etc.

## 3.2 Stakeholder Workshop

This study has focused on the busy Fore street area and the key gateways to the town including Old Exeter Road and New Exeter Road. It is these areas where conflict is highest between motorised traffic and pedestrians and their relationship with the surrounding built environment.

The Stakeholder Workshop, undertaken in April 2018, builds upon previous consultation held in February 2017 which identified three key priorities for the area namely: cultural activity and entertainment, independent businesses and the Farmers Market. The consultation also identified a number of key improvements sought in respect of the following: - Gateways and connections principally the link from Cathedral to Quay

- Appearance of buildings
- Public spaces and the street scene
- Transport and getting around

Invitees were drawn from the local community and representatives from different public bodies and council departments that have an influence over or work within the context of South St and the wider area.

## 3.3 Summary of Feedback

### Existing Site Issues/Constraints

#### Circulation

- Current Pedestrian/vehicle conflicts
- South Street on the bus route
- Existing coach parking within the street – there will be an ongoing requirement for this provision. Currently a poor arrival point/gateway for those arriving into the city centre by coach.
- Poor legibility of pedestrian routes between South Street and the Quay and Cathedral Yard.
- Existing junctions on South Street provide a barrier to pedestrian and cycle movements.
- On-street parking and loading considered a positive by shopkeepers.
- Western Way a barrier between South Street and the Quay making route to Quay difficult and confusing. Western Way will continue as a strategic Highways route through the city with high vehicle numbers.
- Guinea Street and back of South Street feels unsafe.
- Historic routes have been closed off or underutilised.
- Poor gateway into the City Centre.
- Route from Quay carpark and underpass onto Combe Street feels unsafe at night.

### Existing Uses

- Retail shops have high turnover.
- Upper storeys of existing buildings are underutilised
- Independent shops and business a positive
- Low numbers of existing residential and office uses.
- Anti-social behaviour within poorly maintained public spaces e.g. Kalenderhay
- Space for Farmers Market not ideal due to existing layout of street furniture.
- Quay car park underutilised.

### Existing Role & Character

- South Street lacks its own sense of identity and mix of uses
- Too much social housing as a proportion of residential tenure

### Existing Strengths

- Good mix of independent retailers.
- On-street parking and loading considered a positive by shopkeepers.
- Historic Route
- A mix of historic buildings
- Tree planting



### Key Opportunities

- Create a new identity of South Street as City Quarter of its own.
- Review Highways movements and potentially close off the upper section of South Street to car movements.
- Identify 'easy win' or temporary projects e.g. parklets within on-street parking bays.
- Encourage and support independent traders.
- Make underpass more user friendly and enhance cycle routes.
- Tie improvements into City Centre wayfinding strategy including potential for street art/ façade artwork/ ground signage.
- Create shared space / pedestrian focussed streetscape and public realm including tree planting.
- Narrow road/junctions. Retain drop off & servicing access for traders.
- Improve cycle connectivity.
- Allow businesses to use and adapt spaces e.g. café terraces, signage, shop frontages etc. Potential grant or funding resource to facilitate this.
- Create an improved public square at the top of South Street – will allow for improved Farmers Market.
- Create an improved coach parking area – New gateway.
- Re-open/improve historic east -west pedestrian routes between South Street and the Cathedral Yard.
- Create potential pedestrian crossings of Western Way to improve connectivity with the Quay. Pending concerns over traffic circulation.
- Redevelop the Cathedral & Quay carpark to allow a new pedestrian link between Quay and Western Way (route to resolve level changes in a more effective way i.e. use of lifts or escalators. This could be further linked into the footbridge over Western Way or link into a further new building at the gateway of South Street.
- Retain or enhance the existing footbridge over Western Way.
- Develop opportunities for live/work/ social within South Street.
- Upward development opportunities upon existing buildings
- Increase amounts of private residential

to offer city centre living

- Increase office and employment space – Co-working/start-ups/modular office

### Devon County Council Highways Meeting

We met with the Devon County Council's Highway Development Officer to review potential for pedestrian/cycle enhancement and changes to the transport circulation within the South Street area. Key opportunities identified included:

- Potential to reduce traffic movements through North St/South St, particularly during the day to improve the pedestrian environment
- Potential to include a cycle contraflow and cycle facilities to improve cycle movements. Potential to access cycle funding streams.
- Consideration of public transport routes, including amended bus stops following bus station development, is required. Visitor coach drop offs located on South Street.
- Existing loading areas need to be retained, but could have limited hours to start and end of the day.

### Exeter City Council Housing and Property Meeting

We met with Exeter City Council's Shadow Director of Development to discuss the emerging proposals for South Street. The main comments, which should be considered as part of any future urban design proposals were:

1. Need to consider how proposals fit in with the city centre strategy and future proofing the proposals to address future changes to - city centre function, transport and climate change.
2. Be clear on identity and function of study area - independent/arts quarter?
3. Development appraisals need to address whether buildings should be refurbished/ extended or redeveloped.
4. Will redevelopment be sufficient to fund enhancement scheme? Development Appraisal (long term) required - should consider options appraisals to achieve sufficient funding. Early projects/interventions should increase land values to improve viability of later phases.

# 4 Strategy & Vision

## 4.1 Vision

South Street will become an exciting destination to live, work and socialise. It will form a key part of the West Quarter with a high quality and attractive pedestrian focused environment and improved links with the Quayside and Cathedral Yard.

## 4.2 Objectives

It is envisaged that South Street should become an integral part of the West Quarter, with an intensification of uses will help to reinvigorate the area and enhance the character of the area.

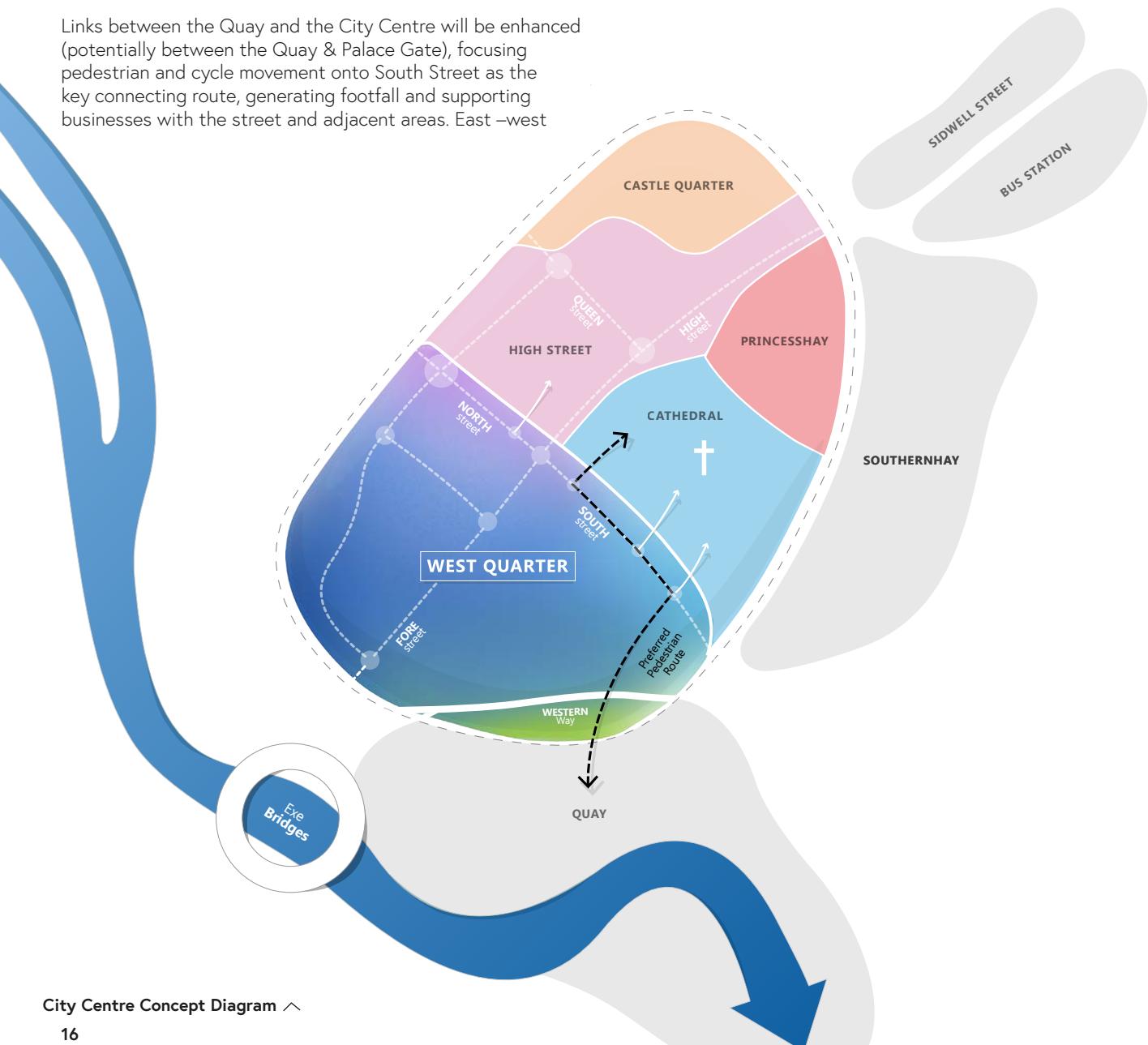
South Street will be treated as a space, rather than the edge between adjacent areas. Traffic management will prioritise pedestrian movement and reduce through traffic which can use alternative routes that avoid the city centre.

Links between the Quay and the City Centre will be enhanced (potentially between the Quay & Palace Gate), focusing pedestrian and cycle movement onto South Street as the key connecting route, generating footfall and supporting businesses with the street and adjacent areas. East –west

Public realm enhancements will be focused on improving pedestrian circulation and supporting sustainable modes of transport, whilst improvements to the built environment will aim to enhance the character of the area and offer exciting mixed-use development opportunities.

Intensification of uses will be achieved through the refurbishment, conversion and/or redevelopment of existing buildings with a mix of innovative community, commercial and residential uses to create a population of people living and working within the area .

Three key underlying and interlinked themes of Life, Spaces and Buildings will guide the delivery of the proposed interventions, focusing on the key objectives , design 'moves' and prioritising proposals that generate activity and life in public spaces.



**South Street will become an exciting destination to live, work and socialise. It will form a key part of the West Quarter with a high quality and attractive pedestrian focused environment and improved links with the Quayside and Cathedral Yard.**



Life



# 5 Life

## 5.1 Highways circulation review

Through the consultation process one of the main issues raised by stakeholders related to the high amounts of vehicle traffic using South Street, which has lead to a vehicle dominated environment.

The presence of traffic and on-street parking limits the ability of pedestrians to cross the road and enjoy the urban streetscape fully.

South Street is currently part of the bus network and is served by a number of bus routes. There is a bus shelter located at the top of the street, which creates pedestrian congestion at busy times of the day.

South Street is also used as a coach drop off, with three spaces available. This presents a convenient access point into the city centre by those arriving by coach but has been recognised as a poor gateway currently.

To address the balance between vehicle, pedestrian and cycle circulation it is proposed that a review of Highways circulation should be undertaken.

Early discussions with Devon County Council Highways Authority have established support in principle for the following changes;

- Implementation of a time restriction for vehicle access during the hours of 9-6pm. This would require restrictions to the one-way system on both North Street and South Street;

- Implementation of a counterflow cycle lane enabling cycle flows up South Street with continued one-way southbound cycle flows on the carriage;
- Retention of bus circulation and bus stops;
- Retention of coach parking with provision for 4No. drop off spaces;
- Reduction and/or removal of on-street parking;
- Retention of adequate loading and delivery space to serve local business and residential properties;
- Carriageway narrowing.

A summary of these proposals is provided in the diagrams below.

It is accepted that to further develop any of these proposals, close consultation with Devon County Council Highways Authority would be required and a suitable Traffic Order would need to be sought.

It is considered that the removal of vehicle traffic during the core daytime trading hour of 9 -6pm would have a profound effect upon the usage of the streetscape, allowing flexible and safer pedestrian flows.

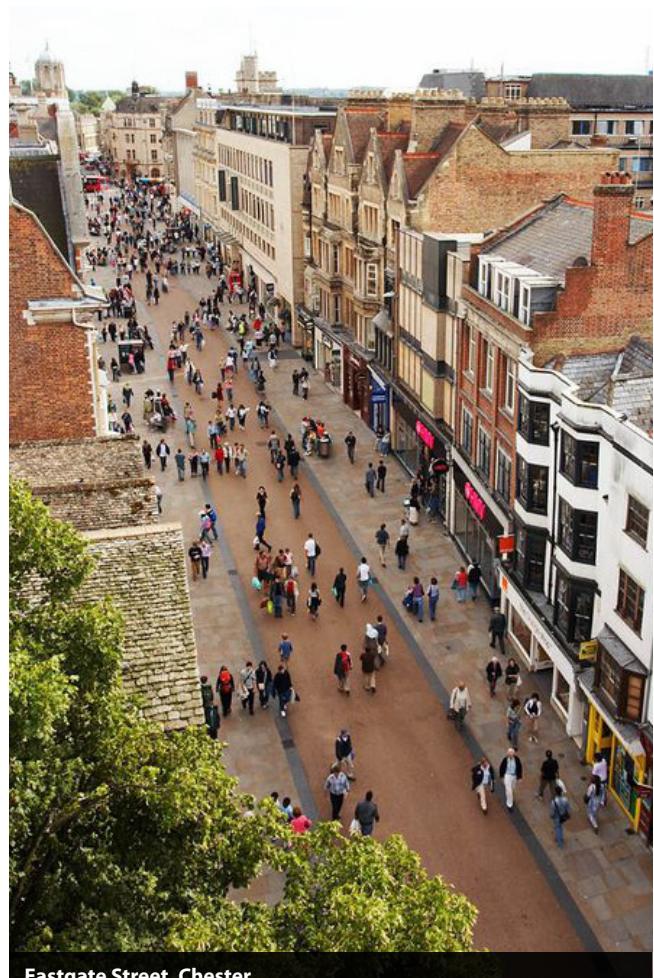
The reduction of vehicles and associated on-street parking would also free up significant areas of the streetscape during the day enabling flexible use by people and local businesses for additional seating, café, and social space.

Both the use by bus services and coaches will need to continue as part of any future proposals and the circulation of such vehicles would not be restricted.





Fishergate, Preston

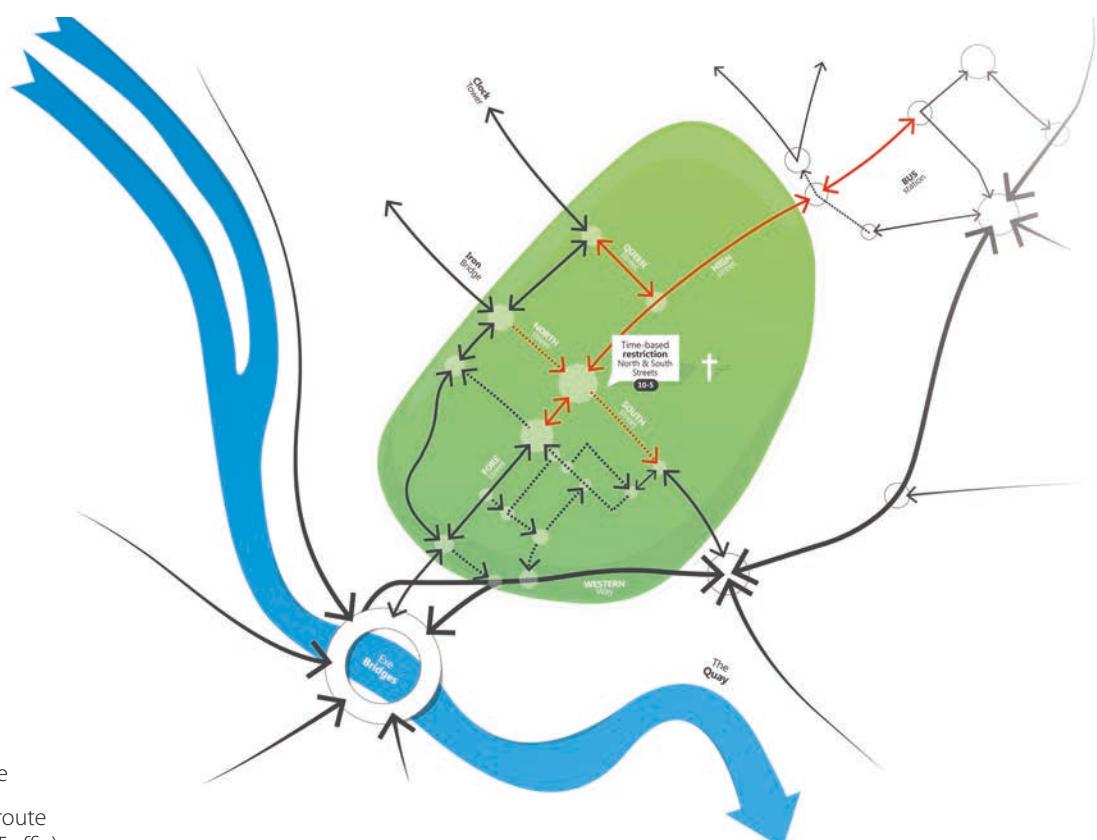


Eastgate Street, Chester



High Street, Maidstone

Examples of recent pedestrian focussed street design schemes within the UK ^



Proposed Traffic Circulation ^

# 5 Life

## 5.2 Intensification and Diversification of Uses

South Street exhibits a variety of uses with a predominance of independent retail and food establishments at street level.

Existing residential properties, the majority of which are social or affordable housing, occupy upper storeys of some buildings. A number of first floor space is used by traders as storage and office purposes.

However, feedback from consultees has acknowledged that the area does not adequately represent the mix of uses commonly present within a city centre urban setting that the area occupies.

In particular, many people thought that the area lacks private residential accommodation or modern work spaces.

To address this issue and increase the vibrancy of the urban environment it is considered important that proposals seek to diversify existing uses. Such changes may be possible through;

- Refurbishment or redevelopment of buildings to deliver increased and vertical mixes of uses;
- Flexible and imaginative leases to facilitate change;
- Explore possibilities of concessionary arrangement for business rates payment (Business rates assessment are not within Local Authority control);
- Enhance existing community buildings and consider the provision of co-working or incubation business space.

## 5.3 Maximise street life and encourage community involvement

To fully enliven the streetscape, street activities should be maximised through the external uses of the public realm. This may include such ideas of café space, parklets, seating and play areas.

The use of temporary structures to provide shelter from the weather should also be permitted to maximise the times of the year that people could use this space.

Engagement of the community should also be encouraged to foster a sense of involvement and ownership. This may comprise encouragement to use the existing Highways License arrangements , enabling local businesses to extend their activities (where relevant) into the street and also other community run events. Possible ideas may comprise;

- Extended street market;
- A Community arts project;
- Street parties.



↗ Indicative existing land uses alongside potential future land-uses



# Spaces



## *Develop spaces for people and reconnect South Street with the Quayside and City Centre*

### **Key Moves:**

1. Identify a series of projects to enhance the public realm.
2. Improve pedestrian and cycle links with the Quay.
3. Improve Legibility and Wayfinding.
4. Create spaces that allow the community and businesses to create a vibrant streetscape, with outdoor seating and cafe areas, public art and organised and impromptu events.

# 6 Spaces

## 6.1 Public Realm Enhancements

South Street would benefit from a series of public realm improvements, which would enable the street to transition from a 'highways' focussed to a 'people' focussed space. These improvements would also enhance street character, seek to maximise street activity and transform South Street into an exemplar destination space.

The adoption of shared space principles with pedestrian focussed street design should be considered. A coordinated palette of paving, external lighting and street furniture should be used throughout the various projects to develop a cohesive streetscape.

The figure opposite shows a concept masterplan illustrating potential proposals. This also separates these into discrete project areas, which could be phased over time.

In summary of potential public realm improvement projects;

S1	Carfax Square	Highways and public realm improvements to create a new flexible public square at the top of South street including potential water drinking fountain.
S2	South Street Northern Improvements	Narrowing of Highways to one way. Creation of counterflow cycle lane and wide multifunctional space either side of the street. Enhanced coach drop off.
S3	Market Street/Palace Gate/Coombe Street Junction Enhancements	Narrowing of Highways, maintaining two way and tightening of junction radii. Raised tabletop.
S4	South Street Southern Improvements	Introduction of improved on-street cycle lanes either side of the carriageway.
S5	Southern Gateway & Embankment Crossing Improvements	Surface crossings implemented to provide direct pedestrian crossing points across South Street and Western Way. Potential information kiosk or gateway feature within green space.
S6	Subway Enhancements	Enhancements to subway via improvement of signage, de-clutter street furniture, widening & resurfacing of shared cycle/pedestrian footway.
S7	Western Way Level Crossing	Potential controlled pedestrian crossing of Western Way and ramp/stepped access onto Lower Coombe Street. Selective tree thinning to open access and views.
S8	Coombe Street Public Realm Improvements	Potential shared space public realm to improve pedestrian route along Coombe Street.
S9	City Wall Walk Improvements	Potential improvements to green space and footway to enhance pedestrian route and celebrate City Wall.
S10	Additional steps to access Quay Car Park	Additional stepped access to southern side of City Wall to improve access to/from Quay car park.
S11	Bear Street	Pocket space on corner of Bear Street with potential shared space street upgrades.
S12	Kalanderhay	Re-open Kalanderhay link to forge improved pedestrian link between South Street and Cathedral Yard.
S13	Kalanderhay Pocket Space	Enhancements to Kalanderhay pocket space & setting of scheduled ancient monument.
S14	Lower Coombe Street Improvements	Potential public realm improvements to Lower Coombe including improved shared cycle/footway.
S15	Wayfinding & Signage Strategy	Potential new signage & wayfinding strategy with potential to create new city trails.

A number of short term or 'quick win' public realm interventions

is detailed in section 8.

## 6.2 Pedestrian and cycle link improvements to the Quay.

At present, the key pedestrian routes between the South Street, The Quay and Cathedral Yard lack clarity and often require convoluted or over burdensome movements to traverse the vehicle dominated streets of South Street and Western Way.

This is a particular issue at the following locations;

- the southern end of South Street, where pedestrians have no clear or direct route to cross both South Street and Western Way Refurbishment or redevelopment of buildings to deliver increased and vertical mixes of uses;
- The junction between Coombe Street/South Street and Palace Gate, where pedestrian movements are restricted by traffic movement within South Street;
- Market Street junction where pedestrians wanting to continue up South Street are restricted by turning traffic movements;

In addition to these issues, the existing east – west links of Bear Street and Kalanderhay are currently underutilised or closed off due to the public.

The existing subway/underpass between Coombe Street and Lower Coombe Street offers a useful function for pedestrian and cycle movements but feels unwelcoming and confusing to those unfamiliar the city.

The public realm improvements proposed seek to address these issues and have been designed with the specific intention of;

- Increasing pedestrian connectivity between the Quay, South Street and city centre to facilitate increased activity;
- Improving the legibility of this area of the city centre;
- Maximising the number of pedestrian movement options by opening up and enhancing the east-west routes between the Quay and Cathedral Yard;
- Enhancing pedestrian routes to improve safety of the pedestrian environment;
- Developing a network of continuous and interlinked quality spaces between the Quay and Cathedral.



# S1 Carfax - Quatrefoil Square

## Project Aims:

To create a new flexible public square at the top of South street, to celebrate it's historic role as Quatrefoil and home of the Great Conduit - a public fresh water source.

## Key Features:

- Enhancement of the public square at the junction of South Street, High Street, Fore Street and North Street
- Tightening of kerb radii to maximise pedestrian space
- Potential creation of a new coffee stall by existing or new traders and public water fountain as a focus for the area reference to the historic function of the space as the location for the Great Conduit
- Retention of existing Highways across the junction
- Potential introduction of 'Rest on Red lights' at the top of north street to aid traffic flows
- Extension of the street market
- Enhanced coach drop off area



# S2 Northern South Street Improvements

## Project Aims:

Enhance the streetscape to maximise street activity and encourage pedestrian and cycle circulation.

## Key Features:

- Narrowing of Highways to 3.6m one way
- Creation of 2m wide counterflow cycle lane
- Removal or reduction of on-street parking to deliver a wide multi-functional space either side of the street which could be used as café, seating, parklets or play space
- New street tree planting and street furniture
- Retention of bus stops and coach parking
- Extension of the street market
- Introduction of flexible loading bays for local businesses



## S3 Market Street/Palace Gate/Coombe Street Junction Enhancements

### Project Aims:

To improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity across the Market Street and Coombe Street junction.

### Key Features:

- Creation of a raised shared table to improve pedestrian movements from Coombe Street to Palace Gate and also those travelling northwards and southwards along South Street
- Narrowing of Highways to 5.5m two way whilst maintaining existing traffic movements
- Tightening of junction radii
- Market Street/Palace Gate/Coombe Street Junction Enhancements



### Key:



Focal Point

Light blue square Potential development opportunity

## S4 Southern South Street Improvements

### Project Aims:

To improve pedestrian and cycle circulation and increase the width of public realm areas

### Key Features:

- Introduction of improved on-street cycle lanes either side of the carriageway
- Removal or reduction of on-street parking
- Retention of bus Layby
- Allow businesses to use external street space



### Key:



Focal Point

Light blue square Potential development opportunity



Enhanced pedestrian route from Cathedral & Quay Car Park



## S5 Southern Gateway and Embankment Crossing Improvements

Project Aims:

To improve pedestrian movements across South Street and Western Way to improve links to the Quay.

Key Features:

- Surface crossings implemented to provide direct pedestrian crossing points across South Street and Western Way.
- Potential information kiosk or gateway feature within green space



## S6/7/8 Underpass Enhancements / Western Way Level Crossing / Coombe Street Public Realm Improvements

Project Aims:

To improve pedestrian and cycle movements between South Street and the Quay.

Key Features:

- Potential shared space or public realm improvements to pedestrian route along Coombe Street;
- Potential controlled pedestrian crossing of Western Way and ramp/stepped access onto Lower Coombe Street to create a more direct and legible route for pedestrians;
- Selective tree thinning to open access and views of Quay from Coombe Street;
- Enhancements to underpass via improvement of signage, declutter street furniture, widening & resurfacing of shared cycle/pedestrian footway;
- Potential kiosk at gateway of underpass to increase activity and surveillance.

Key:

- Focal Point
- Potential development opportunity
- - - Potential pedestrian route



S9/10

## City Wall Walk Improvements & Additional Steps to access Quay Car Park

### Project Aims:

To improve connectivity with the Cathedral & Quay car park and enhance the greenspace and setting of the city wall.

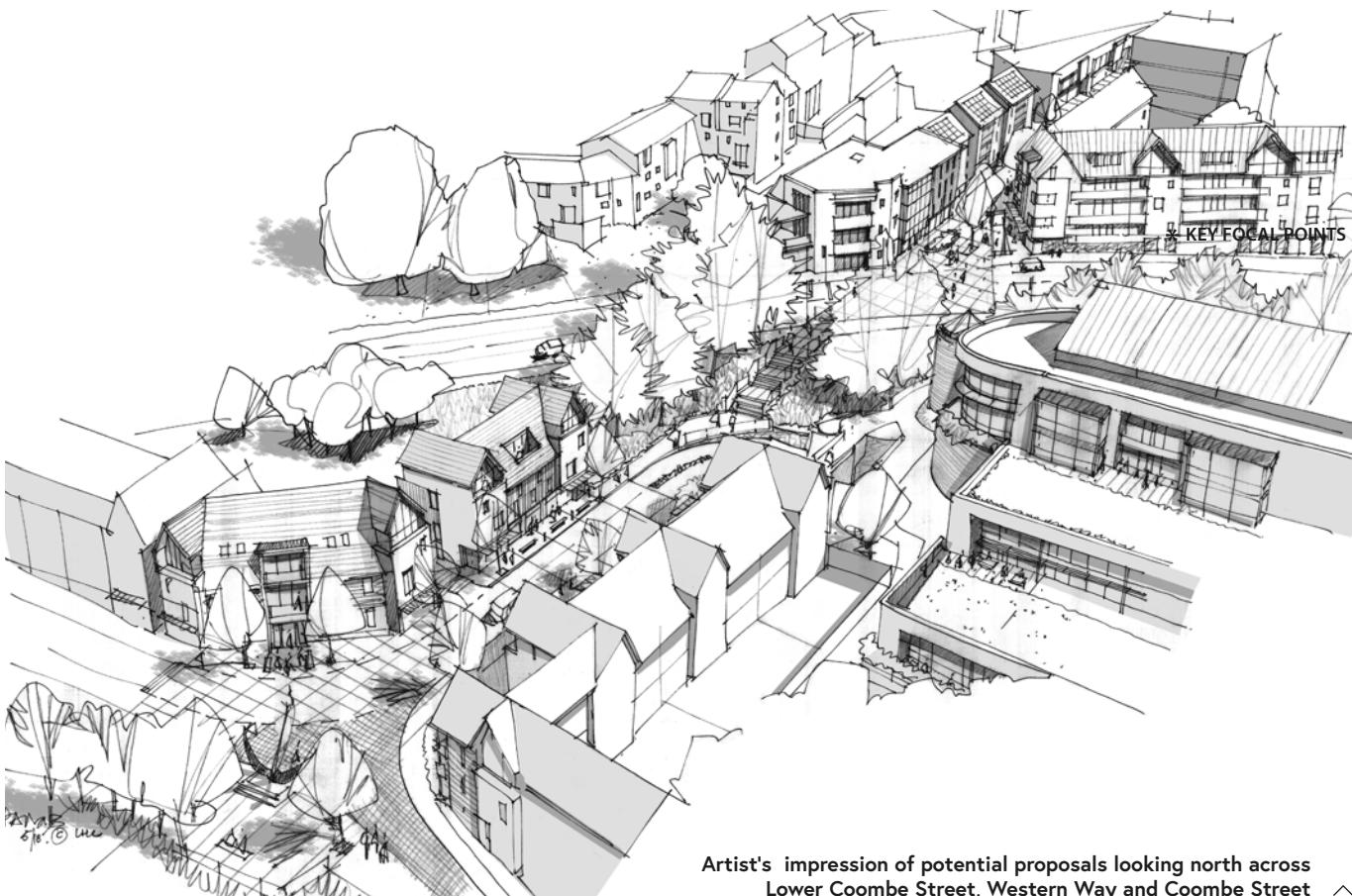
### Key Features:

- Potential improvements to green space and footway to enhance pedestrian route between South Street and the Quay. Designs should celebrate the City Wall;
- Additional stepped access to eastern side of City Wall to improve access to/from Quay car park.
- Improved external lighting scheme to develop architectural accent and safer route in the evening.



### Key:

- \* Focal Point
- Potential development opportunity
- Enhanced pedestrian route from Cathedral & Quay Car Park



Artist's impression of potential proposals looking north across Lower Coombe Street, Western Way and Coombe Street



## S11/12/13 Bear Street/Kalanderhay/Kalanderhay Pocket Space

Project Aims:

Develop small pocket spaces as a focal point of activity.

Key Features:

- Pocket space on corner of Bear Street with potential shared space street upgrades to Bear Street;
- Re-open Kalanderhay link to forge improved east-west pedestrian route between South Street and Cathedral Yard;
- Enhancements to Kalanderhay pocket space & setting of scheduled ancient monument.



Key:

- Focal Point
- Potential development opportunity
- - - Potential pedestrian route

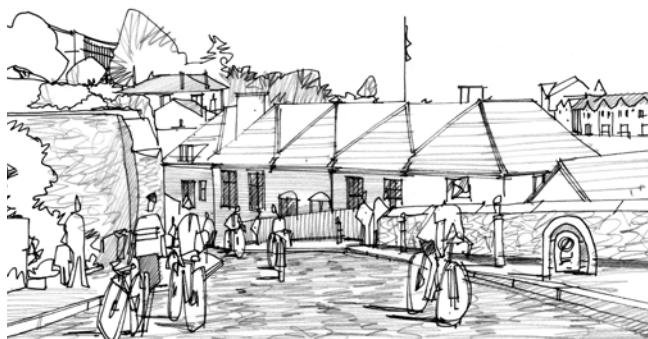
## S14 Lower Coombe Street Improvements

Project Aims:

Enhance pedestrian and cycle movements to Quay by improved surfacing and signage.

Key Features:

- Potential public realm improvements to Lower Coombe Street including improved shared cycle/footway and better connection with Quay Hill.
- Improve surfacing on Quay Hill to enhance the cycle link to and from the Quay (i.e. replace sections of cobbles with more suitable cycle friendly paving.)
- Improve wayfinding and signage.



## 6.4 Improve Legibility and Wayfinding

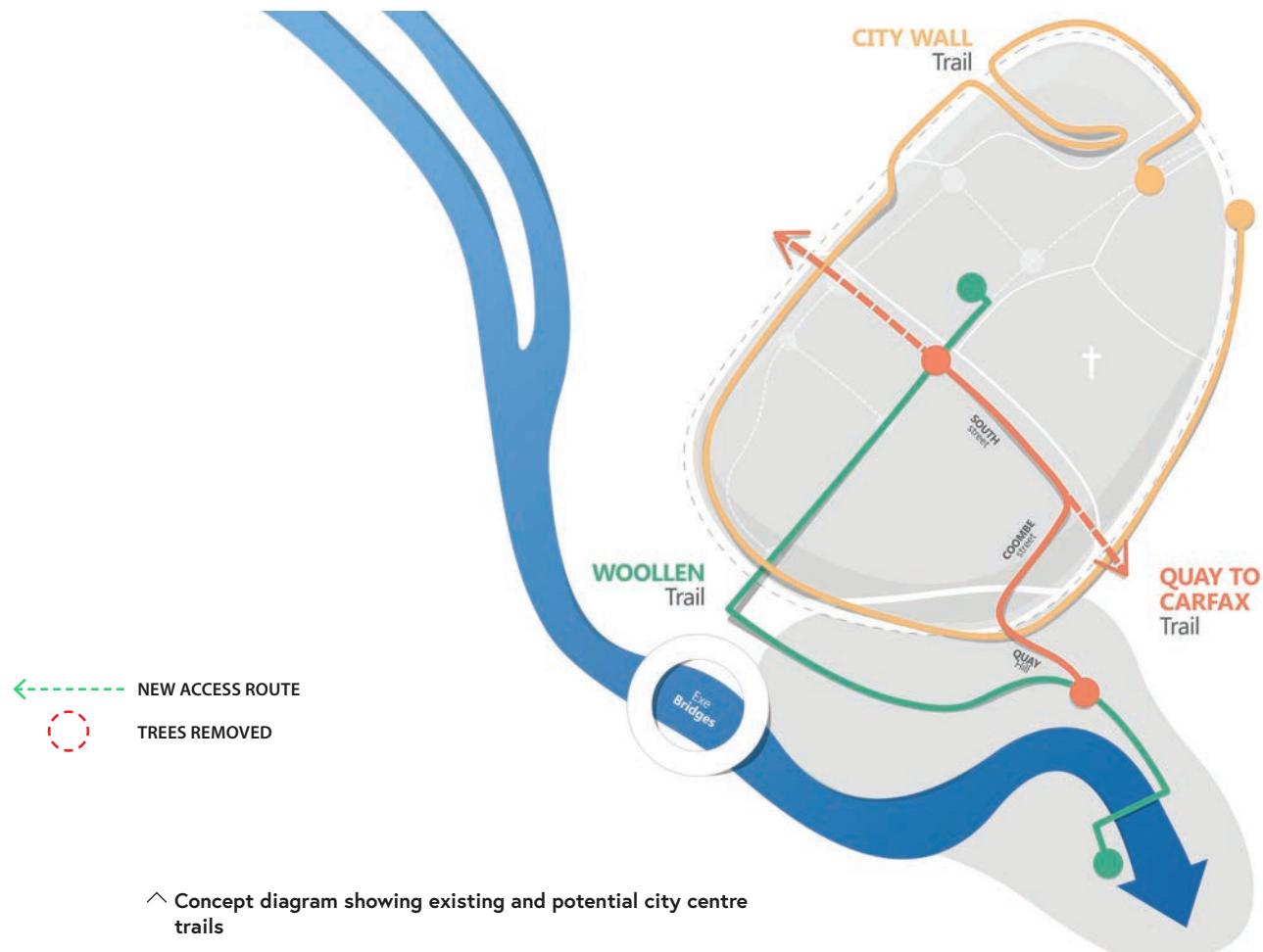
Woollen Trails city with potential additional new links.

Although public realm improvements are likely to assist with the legibility and understanding of the area, these should be considered in conjunction with wayfinding and signage improvements.

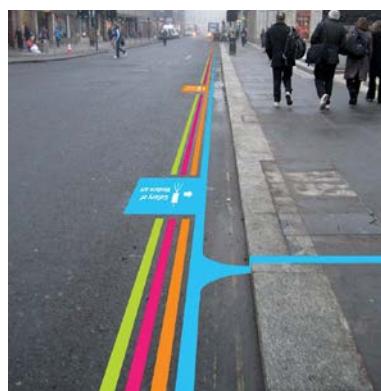
This could be achieved through a series of schemes including a coordinated street signage strategy, external lighting and public art.

A review of the existing city centre trails could be undertaken to establish if there is potential to extend these trails to incorporate South Street, Combe Street and Palace Gate within them, or identify the potential of a new 'Quay to Carfax' trail .

The diagram below illustrates the existing City Wall and



Examples of possible alternative wayfinding and signage features



Build

# ings

*Identify potential opportunities for viable refurbishment and redevelopment which intensifies activity in South Street, creates a mix of uses and sustainable forms of development*

## **Key Moves:**

1. Identify potential opportunities for viable building refurbishment and redevelopment
2. Improve shop frontages and street level architecture
3. Intensify uses, including homes and workplaces, and seek to maximise mixed-use development
4. Introduce a new vernacular based upon modern and sustainable forms of development

# 7 Buildings

## 7.1 Potential opportunities for building refurbishment and redevelopment

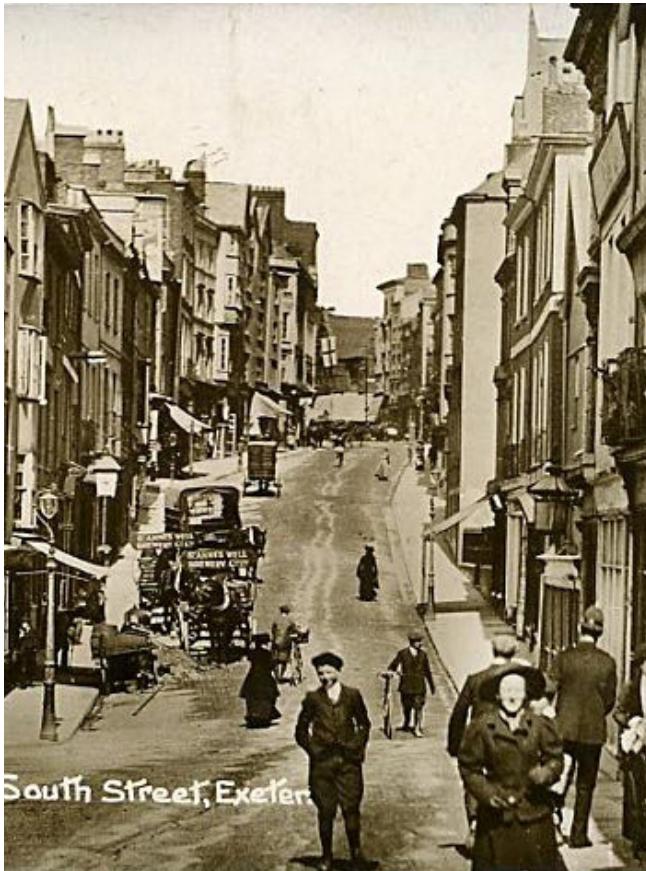
It has been established that there are a number of potential opportunities for refurbishment and redevelopment within the study area.

These would be subject to further studies and discussions with land owners.

A wide range of options may be available including refurbishment, upward development upon existing buildings and/or complete redevelopment of selected buildings and potential infill development.

Redevelopment of buildings within the study area may offer a number of benefits to South Street and the wider Western Quarter and City centre. These include;

- Increasing the density and numbers of private residential dwellings;
- Developing an improved urban form and architectural appearance;
- Delivery of mixed-use buildings enabling the option to live, work and play within the city centre;
- Opportunities to design out crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Improve the environment to the rear of existing development, particularly to the rear of George Street .
- Improved ICT connectivity within new buildings .



▲ Photo of South Street in 1900 showing pre-war built form

Precedent images of potential built form



## 7.2 Shop frontages and street level architecture

There is potential to improve the street level architecture along South Street via shop frontage improvements. To coordinate the improvements a shop frontage improvements design code or guidance document would be recommended. To fund these enhancements, Exeter City Council could consider setting up a grant scheme available to traders for improvements including painting, repairs and signage.

## 7.3 Mixed-use developments

To support increased street activity, new mixed-use development should be encouraged to enable people to live, work and socialise within South Street.

The retention of an active street frontage is imperative in the development of a diverse urban character and both day and night-time uses should be supported to ensure that activity is maintained throughout various times of the day.

The provision of modern and flexible city centre work space including co-working and business incubation space should be considered along with other innovative community and business uses.

Increased private and social housing provision should occur to offer people the opportunity to live within this sustainable city centre location whilst contributing towards an enriched community of the wider West Quarter.

## 7.4 Building Character and sustainable forms of development

New development should introduce a new high quality architectural vernacular.

Both the Central Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan and A City Centre Vision for a Green Capital document support development which references the pre-war period, seeking to reintroduce a tighter urban grain and vertically proportioned buildings.

There is potential for upward and/or redevelopment that introduces taller buildings within the street enabling the intensification of built form more akin to the pre-war development form.

An architectural design code could be considered to provide design guidance and set out key architectural design principles.

Modern methods of construction (MMC) and sustainable forms of development should be considered to ensure that any proposals are forward thinking and future proofed.

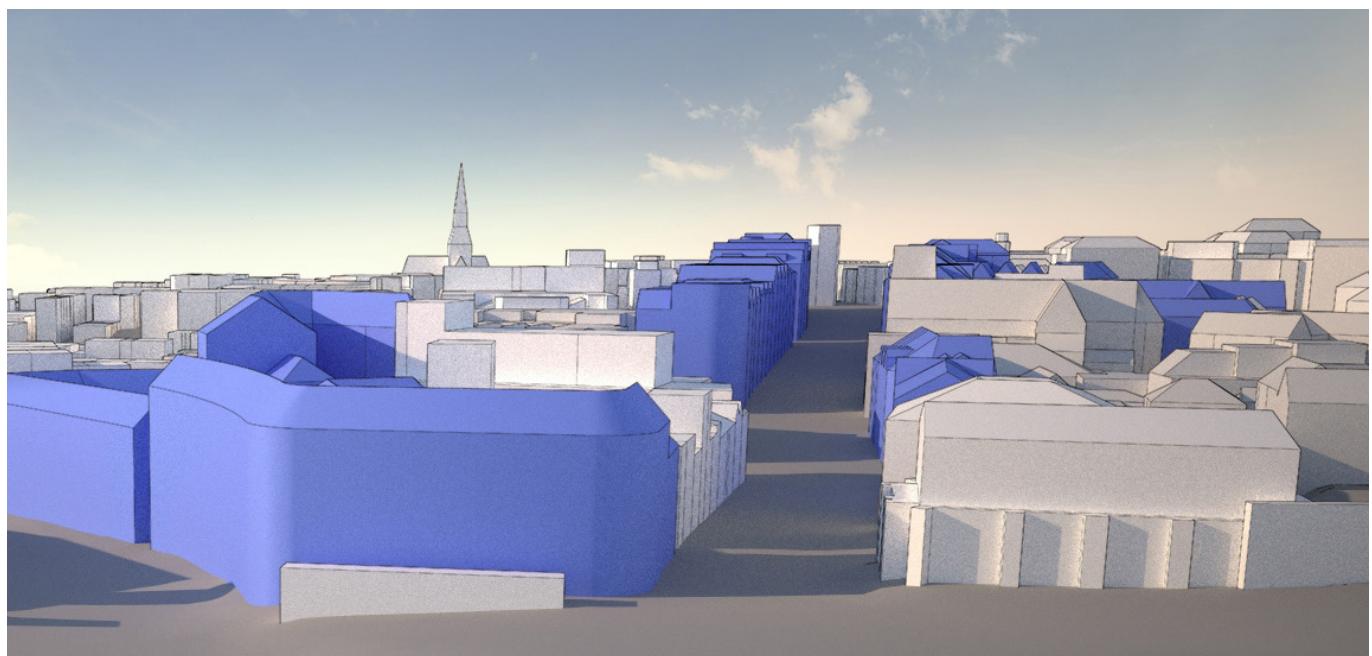
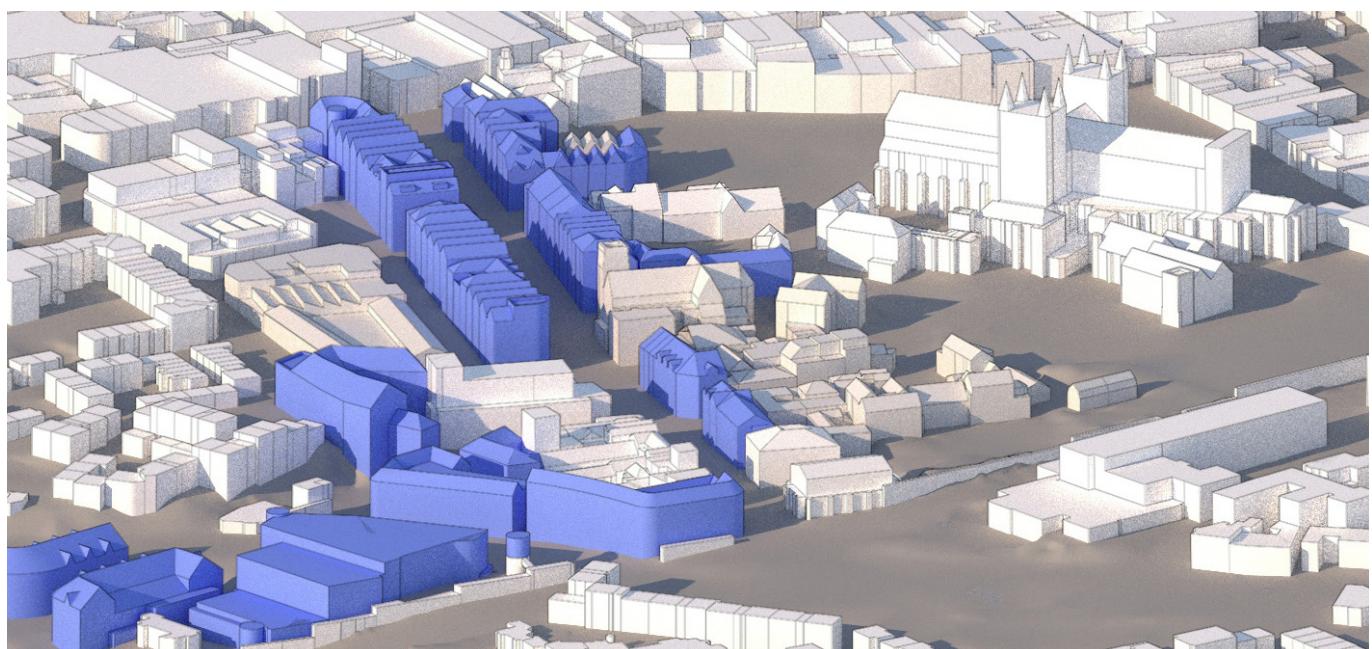
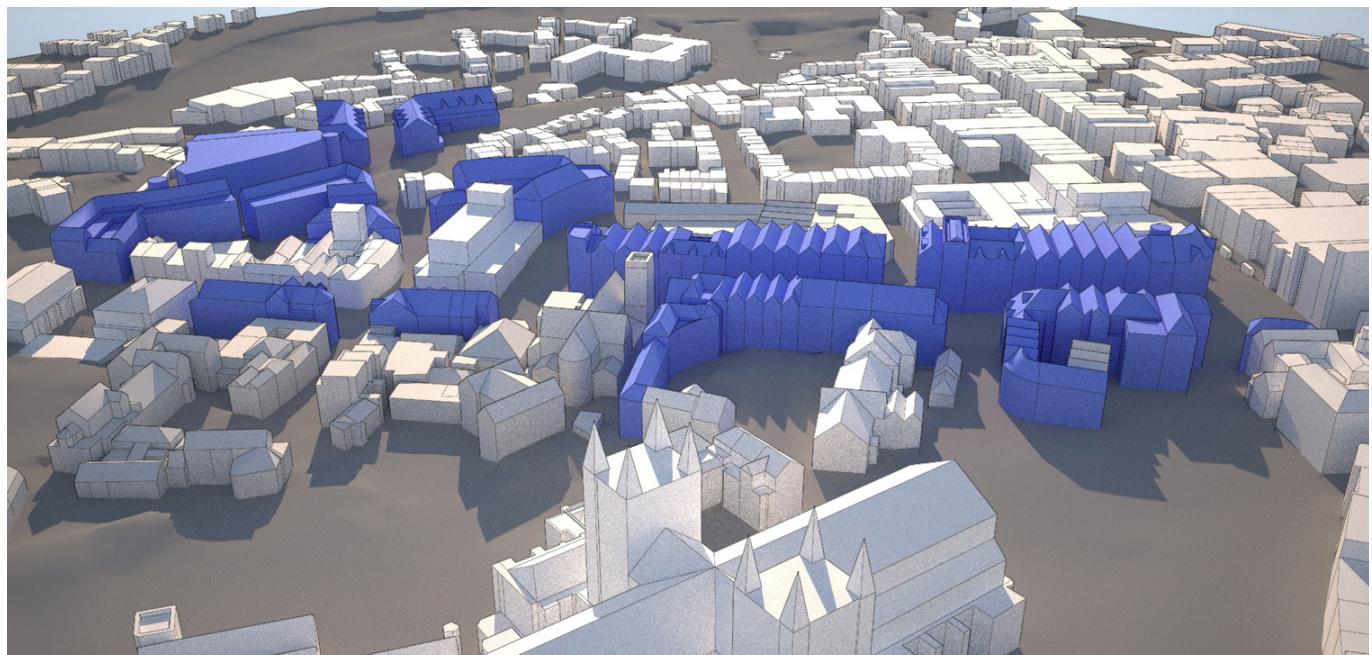
The images below show potential massing of redevelopment within the South Street area. The plan provided in appendix 1 identifies potential redevelopment sites and opportunities along with an associate development schedule.

The building storey heights shown are indicative and should not be used as a definitive guide nor should they preclude potential for alternative building heights or development opportunities coming forward.

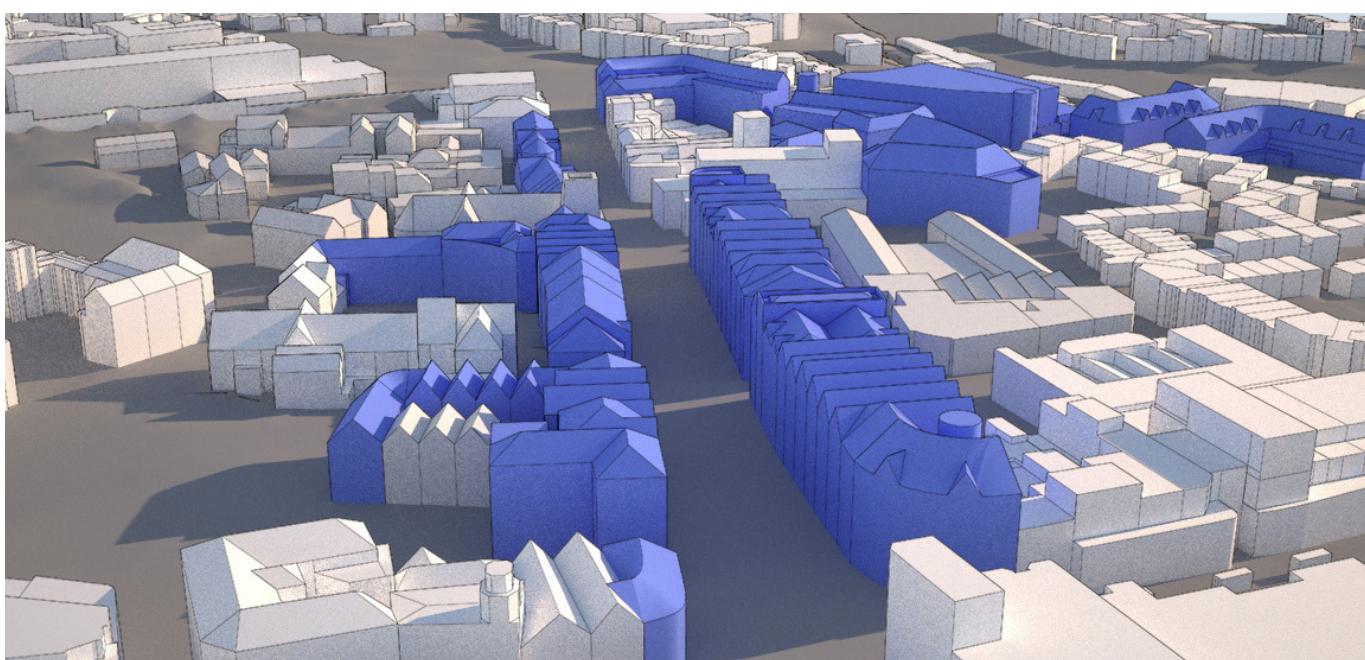
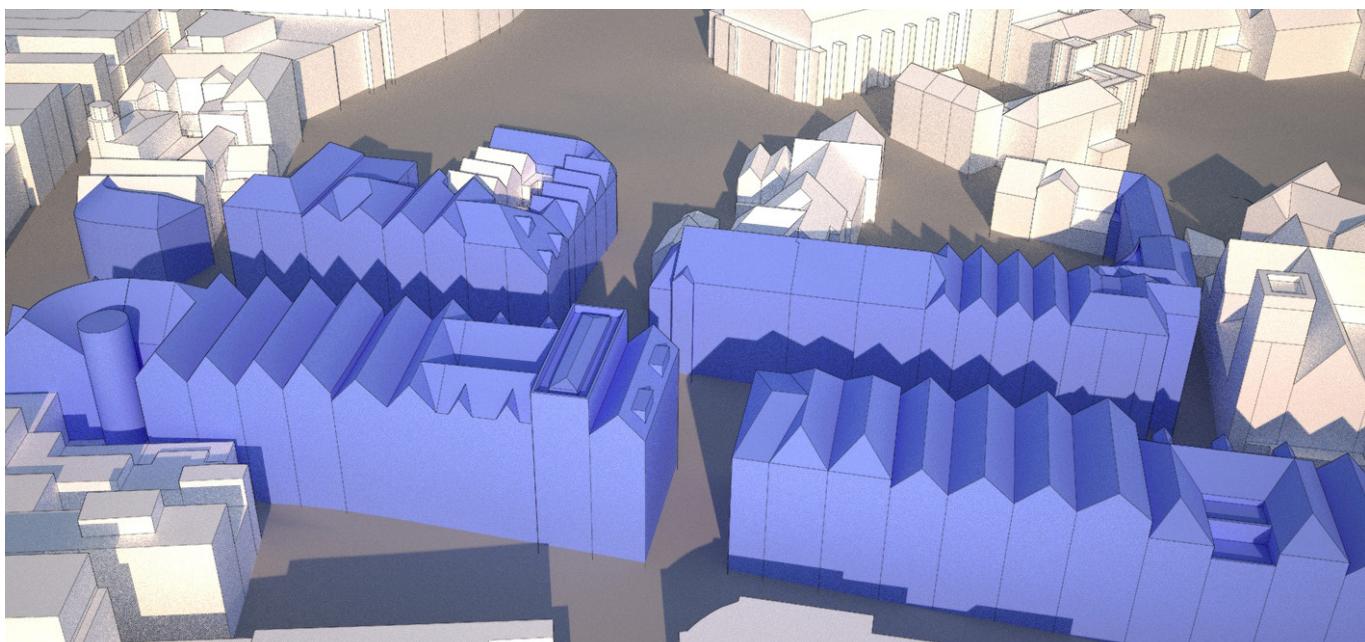
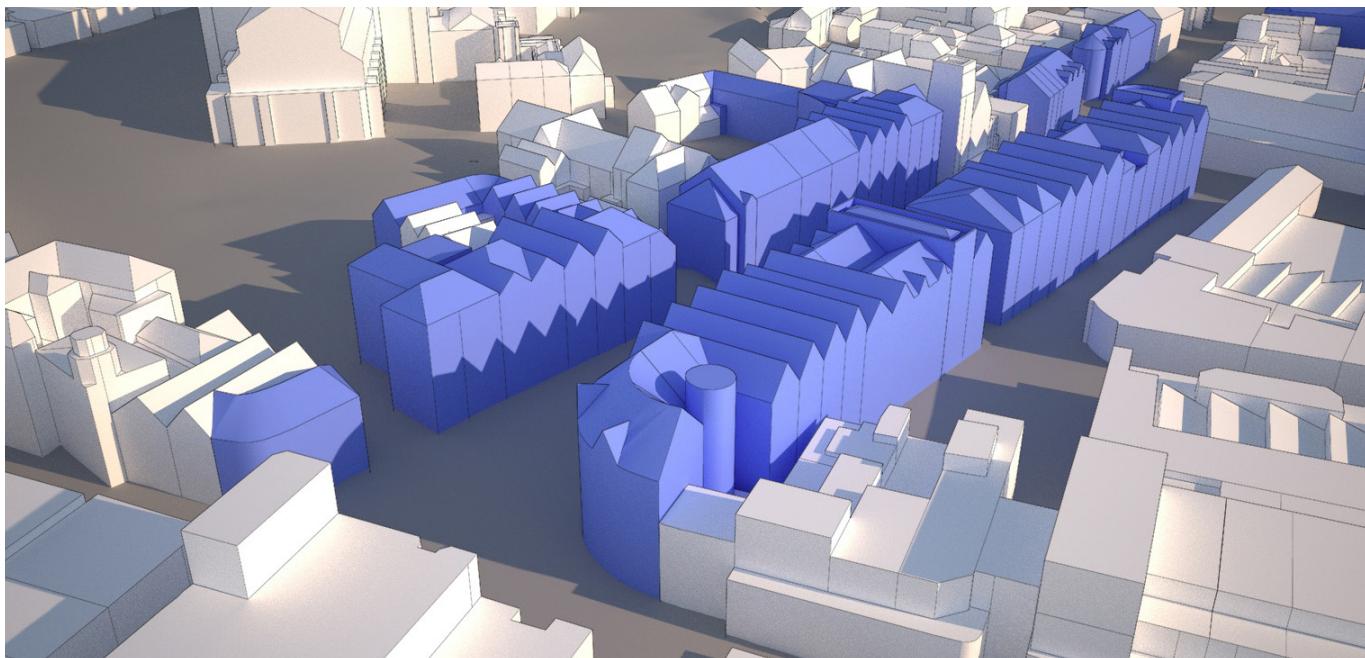


^ Artists impression showing the potential character of new built form

Indicative massing models showing potential built form ▼



Indicative massing models showing potential built form ▼



Artists impression looking up South Street ▼





# Early Interven

*Develop a series of advanced and early interventions that produce immediate impact and generate momentum for longer term projects.*

# Interventions

## **Key Moves:**

1. Identify early Highways Interventions to enhance the pedestrian environment and support pedestrian and cycle movement
2. Identify a series of low cost and deliverable interventions that improve connectivity, lift the quality of the existing public realm and develop momentum for change

# 8 Early Interventions

The following proposals represent a series of potential advance projects and early interventions which would produce immediate impact and generate momentum for longer term projects.

## 8.1 Early Highways Interventions

A series of early changes to Highways may be possible subject to further Highways studies and funding mechanism. These would improve pedestrian and cycle movement in the short term.

Priority of any works would be to the Coombe Street/Market Street junction and southern areas of South Street due to current accident statistics. The potential enhancements are illustrated on the plan opposite and may comprise;

- Early implementation of traffic order (subject to required analysis) to remove private vehicular traffic from North Street and South Street during specified hours, supported by temporary public realm enhancements (set out below)
- Rest on red traffic lights at the top of North Street offering greater priority to pedestrian movements.
- Consider paint or surface treatments to narrow the carriageway widths of South street between Market Street and Coombe Street. The addition of street planters may physically narrow the carriageway further;
- Replace the signalised crossing at Market Street/Lower Coombe Street with a zebra crossing to facilitate safer pedestrian movements northwards and southwards;
- Implement a counterflow cycle lane within the existing carriageway by thermoplastic line marking or surface treatment;
- Consider the use of zebra crossing on Market Street to enable safer pedestrian movements northwards and southwards;
- Declutter unnecessary Highways signage street clutter and improve wayfinding signage.
- Narrow the entrance to South Street from Western Way and introduce a low speed limit to the entire length of South Street. Consider a pedestrian crossing aligning with the City Wall walk.

## 8.2 Low cost and deliverable interventions

There are a number of low cost and deliverable interventions that would increase activity, lift the quality of the existing public realm and develop momentum for change. These comprise;

### South Street

- Licence a high-quality and distinctive mobile pop-up cafe at the top of South Street to act as a focal point.
- Consider potential to rename the junction of South St, North St, High St and Fore Street as 'Carfax Square' to reflect historic function and identity.
- Close off selected existing on-street parking bays and allowing use of the street by local traders for external seating;
- Increase the area for the Street Market, utilising parking bays, to create a more spacious and attractive market.

- Potential drinking fountain or water feature within the Carfax square to reflect the historic location of the Great Conduit ;
- Pop up cafés and seating areas at key locations e.g. Kalandehay or in parklets within closed off on-street parking bays;
- Façade artwork to act a gateway or wayfinding feature at the southern end of South Street
- Work with the BID and traders to create a festival (potentially linked to the Food Festival and Farmers Market) to promote the area. Encourage links to Fore Street Traders.
- Consider a trial of awnings and street canopies to business frontages where it would support external use.

### Links to The Quay

- Removal of unnecessary railings & clutter to create a level shared pedestrian-cycle path between Coombe Street and Lower Coombe Street.
- Selective clearance of trees from the Embankment to open views of the Quay (and Haldon Hill) from Coombe Street;
- Widen the pedestrian-cycle bridge at the entrance to Cathedral and Quay car park and sign this as the route to the quay
- Consider removing on street parking to Lower Coombe Street and widening the pavement to create a shared foot-cycle way.
- Widen footpaths around the Cathedral and Quay Car Park and enhance planting in this area to open up views of the Quay and improve the pedestrian experience
- Reduce the size of the no-entry signs at the bottom of Quay Hill and add 'Except Cycles' allowing cyclists to cycle up Quay Hill

### Buildings

- Encourage conversion of upper floors to residential or employment use in Council owned buildings.
- Consider providing grants for building enhancement - encourage facade and shopfront enhancement to improve the character of the street and increase vertical emphasis and rhythm along the street
- Instigate a Public Art programme through the BID. Identify opportunities for temporary murals to key facades
- Encourage short-term development opportunities (e.g. 14-18 South Street) to allow a step change in the character of South Street.
- Cathedral & Quay Car Park - enhancement scheme to improve lighting, remove planters which reduce daylight to parking decks, improve signage to decks and directional signage to city centre.
- Promote infrastructure changes from built development opportunities.
- Improve bin storage and service areas to rear of buildings, particularly within George Street.



↗ Plan showing potential quick win projects

The images opposite demonstrate how simple changes could be introduced to enhance the existing environment.



▽ Potential use of Kalanderhay as a pocket space with cafe

△ Existing Kalanderhay space is underutilised





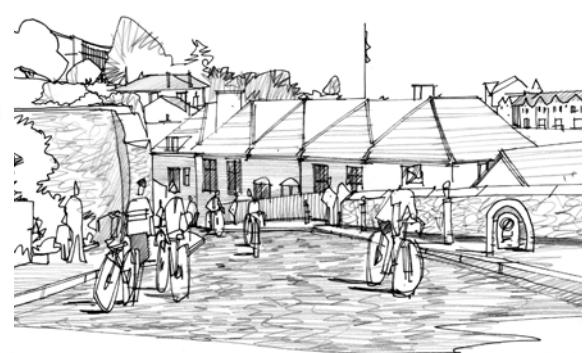
^Existing pedestrian and cycle link tightly constrained



^Potential surfacing and bridge widening improvements



^Existing cobbles and signage to Quay Hill



^Potential paving enhancements to Quay Hill



# 9 Summary of Projects

## 9.1 Summary of Projects

This report has identified a number of urban design projects.

Further project development is required to refine project briefs and costings, identify potential funding and assess the viability of individual schemes.

The table opposite offers a summary of the projects identified.

## 9.2 High Level Costing

Indicative budget guidelines have been provided for each of the separate projects. Further input from a quantity surveyor is recommended to develop cost estimates should any of the schemes be pursued.

## 9.3 Phasing

It is anticipated that the projects proposed within this report will be delivered through a pragmatic and phased approach.

Changes to the highways circulation and implementation of a traffic order to restrict traffic between core daytime hours may present the largest catalyst for all subsequent enhancement schemes.

The short term & Easy Win projects offer an opportunity for early interventions, which would result in a marked improvement to the urban environment, improve connectivity and footfall and generate both momentum and support for further projects and enhancements.

The proposals seeking to maximise activity and community engagement provided in section 5 of this report should be given a high priority. Although these will not provide significant alterations to the existing built urban fabric they will generate a profound change in behaviour and shift the priority to pedestrian activity.

The public realm improvements outlined in section 6 are separate yet connected with the development opportunities presented in section 7. These will need to be phased pragmatically and may need to be linked with building development to secure sufficient funding mechanisms. A wider development appraisal is required to identify capital and revenue streams that will fund public realm enhancements.

Potential external funding streams, such as funding for the delivery of cycle infrastructure, should be identified with project partners such as Devon County Council and Exeter BID.

Area	Project	Name	Summary Description	Budget Guidelines		
				Low (<£100K)	Medium (<£500K)	High (>£500K)
LIFE	L1	Highways Order to South Street	Seek to introduce a Traffic Order limiting times private cars can enter onto South Street.			
	L2	Community Involvement Scheme	Potential Arts based community involvement scheme to introduce public realm features e.g. gable artwork or temporary parklet designs			
SPACES	S1	Carfax Square	Highways and public realm improvements to create a new flexible public square at the top of South street		Yellow	Red
	S2	South Street Northern Improvements	Narrowing of Highways to 3.6m one way. Creation of counterflow cycle lane and wide multi-functional space either side of the street			Red
	S3	Market Street/Palace Gate/Coombe Street Junction Enhancements	Narrowing of Highways to 5.5m two way and tightening of junction radii. Raised tabletop			Red
	S4	South Street Southern Improvements	Introduction of improved on-street cycle lanes either side of the carriageway		Yellow	Light Green
	S5	Southern Gateway and Embankment Crossing Improvements	Surface crossings implemented to provide direct pedestrian crossing points across South Street and Western Way. Potential information kiosk or gateway feature within green space		Yellow	Light Green
	S6	Underpass enhancements	Enhancements to subway via improvement of signage, declutter street furniture, widening & resurfacing of shared cycle/ pedestrian footway	Green		
	S7	Western Way level crossing	Potential controlled pedestrian crossing of Western Way and ramp/stepped access onto Lower Coombe Street Selective tree thinning to open access and views.		Yellow	Light Green
	S8	Coombe Street public realm improvements	Potential shared space public realm to improve pedestrian route along Coombe Street		Yellow	Light Green
	S9	City Wall Walk Improvements	Potential improvements to green space and footway to enhance pedestrian route and celebrate City Wall		Yellow	Red
	S10	Additional steps to access Quay Car Park	Additional stepped access to southern side of City Wall to improve access to/from Quay car park	Green		
	S11	Bear Street	Pocket space on corner of Bear Street with potential shared space street upgrades	Green	Yellow	Light Green
	S12	Kalenderhay	Re-open Kalenderhay link to forge improved pedestrian link between South Street and Cathedral Yard	Green	Yellow	Light Green
	S13	Kalenderhay Pocket space	Enhancements to Kalenderhay pocket space & setting of scheduled ancient monument.	Green		
	S14	Lower Coombe Street improvements	Potential public realm improvements to Lower Coombe including improved shared cycle/footway		Yellow	
	S15	Wayfinding & Signage Strategy	Potential new signage & Wayfinding strategy with potential to create new city trails	Green	Yellow	Light Green

## Early Interventions

	ST1	Traffic Order	Early implementation of traffic order to remove private vehicular traffic from North St & South St during daylight hours			
	ST2	Misc short-term Highways enhancements to South Street	Rest on red traffic lights to top of North St, Surface treatments to narrow carriageway, Street planting, Declutter street furniture & Signage, 20mph signage, potential zebra crossing across Market St			
	ST3	Counterflow cycle Lane	Counterflow cycle lane implemented within existing carriageway			
	ST4	Close off selected on-street parking bays	Close off a number of on-street parking bays to increase flexible pedestrian space for use by farmers market, adjacent businesses and parklets			
	ST5	Pop-up cafes and kiosks	pop-up cafes and kiosks under street trading license at key nodal points e.g. Kalenderhay, Carfax square			
	ST6	Potential water drinking fountain/water feature within Carfax Square	Potential water drinking fountain/water feature to reference the location of the Great Conduit			
	ST7	Potential community/street festival	Work with BID and traders to organise a South Street festival			
	ST8	Improved links to Quay	Removal of unnecessary street furniture/clutter, selective tree clearance, widening of pedestrian/cycle bridge, Improved cycle signage			
	ST9	Building shopfront & Building Enhancement Grant	Potential shop frontage enhancements to enhance quality of street character			
	ST10	Public Art Programme	Potential façade art, Street furniture, signage etc.			
	ST11	Improvements to Cathedral & Quay Car Park	Improved lighting, signage etc.			

# 10 Next Steps

## 10.1 Next Steps

This report has provided a series of urban design concepts and proposals which set out key aims and objectives required to enhance the urban environment of South Street and improve pedestrian and cycle links with the Quay and wider city centre area.

## 10.2 Further Studies

A number of further studies would be recommended to test the viability and provide more in-depth design guidance to support potential projects as they come forward. Further studies may comprise;

- **Design Code** - Design principles based upon these proposals to support high quality development;
- **Event/Marketing Strategy (Exeter BID)** - Document integrating key principles within a marketing strategy for the city centre;
- **Lettings and Business Rates** - To explore flexible leases, other lease terms and the potential for business rates concessions to facilitate change;
- **Development Appraisal** - Financial appraisal to test viability of proposals. Consider wider development options, sustainability and lifecycle appraisal.

## 10.3 Exeter City Member Engagement

The urban design projects proposed have been developed through close consultation with Key stakeholders and Exeter City Council officers.

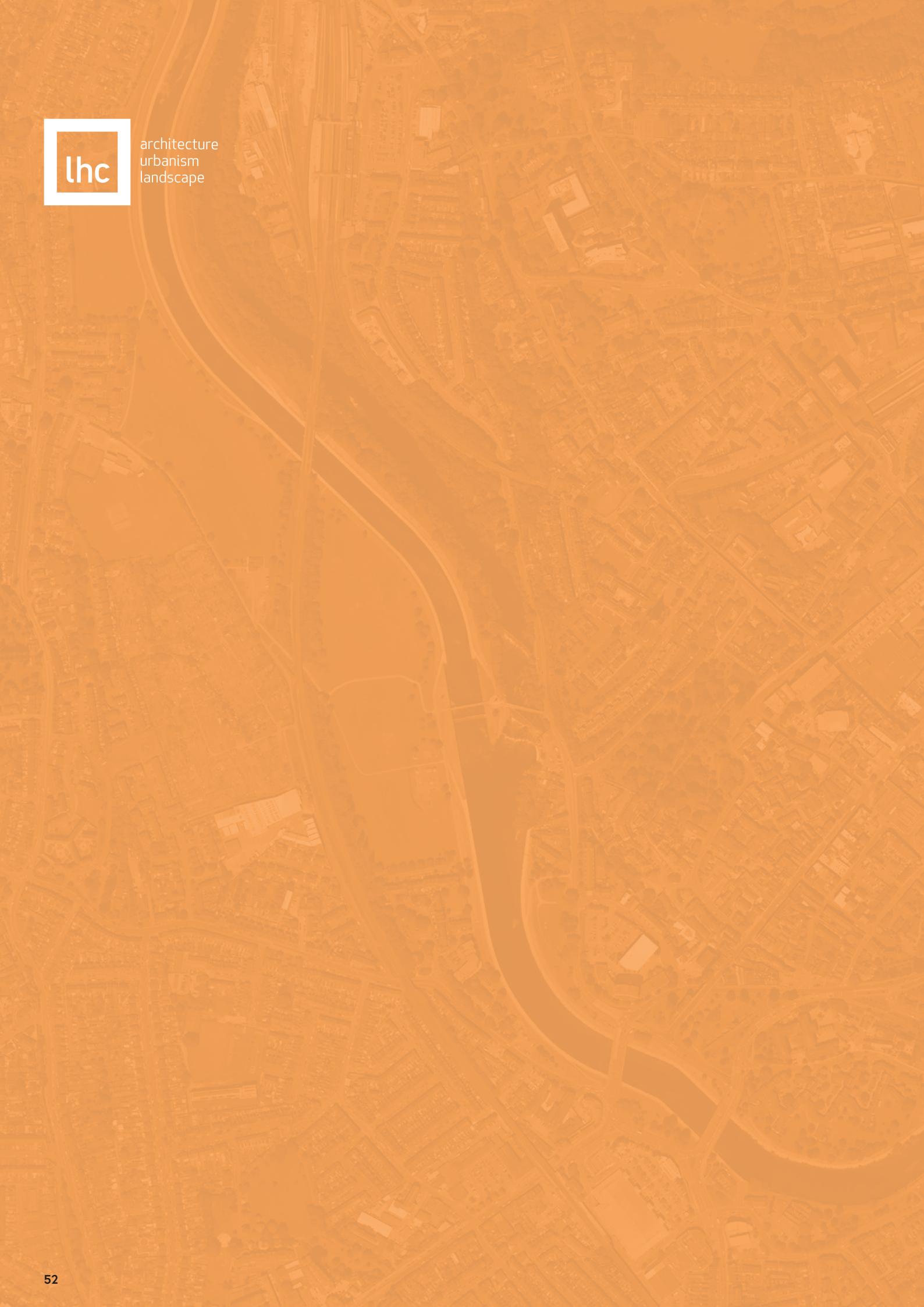
Council and Ward Members have subsequently been engaged through separate discussions and via Place Scrutiny Committee.

The time-line opposite illustrates the key consultation stages of the scheme process and indicative programme going forward.





architecture  
urbanism  
landscape



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