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# Cheddar Gorge

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**Public Realm Regeneration Project**



**European Union**  
European Regional  
Development Fund



## European Union

European Regional  
Development Fund

The project (either has received or is receiving up to) £15,000 of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (and in London the intermediate body Greater London Authority) is the Managing Authority for the European Regional Development Fund.

For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>.



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1.0

# Background to the Project



↑ The natural beauty of Cheddar Gorge

# 1.1 Introduction

Sedgemoor District Council are currently undertaking a re-imagining of the approach to sustainable tourism throughout the district in order to encourage future economic growth.

The impacts that COVID-19 pandemic has had on the local economy has been profound, especially with regards to the tourist economy which has suffered substantial financial implications for the sustainability of settlements such as Cheddar. Specifically, Sedgemoor District Council has set out to identify a strategy to meet the aim “to re-imagine the future of sustainable tourism across a wide catchment connecting the Somerset coast, Levels and Moors and the Mendip Hills, including the world-famous Cheddar Gorge”.

The area that Sedgemoor District Council identify is the focus of significant day visitor activity accounting for 49% of

Somerset's total visitor activity. With regards to Cheddar Gorge, Sedgemoor District Council identify some 500,00 visitors visit Cheddar Gorge annually although this has declined substantially in recent years.

The impact that Covid-19 has had on the tourist economy within Cheddar Gorge has been profound as lockdowns and travel restriction have affected the public's willingness to spend money on accommodation, hospitality and visiting attractions. Communities such as Cheddar with a high dependence on visitor expenditure have suffered disproportionately and the absence of spending has contributed to the challenges facing tourist and urban centres. While 2022 has seen a complete removal of restrictions in England, the long-term damage to tourism and leisure businesses requires a co-ordinated response, not only

to support short-term recovery but also to position the sector for sustainable growth.

In addition to the impacts of Covid-19, Cheddar and the gorge area have suffered from the provision of poor public realm and anti-social vehicular behaviour. This has created a negative environment which has detracted from the tourist offer which is not fulfilling its true potential. Overcoming these issues through the creation of positive and attractive public realm will encourage sustainable and active leisure activities, eliminate anti-social behaviour, and help create a step change in Cheddar's tourism offer.



↑ The Project Study Area



## 1.2 Project Brief

In response to this, LHC Design and Stantec have been commissioned by Sedgemoor District Council (SDC) to provide support and develop a Cheddar Public Realm Regeneration Strategy with the works funded through the European Union's Welcome Back Fund. The Welcome Back Fund is a £56m share of the European Regional Development Fund to support the safe return to high streets and help build back better after the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Strategy aims to overcome a range of constraints within Cheddar Gorge in order to create a safer, attractive public environment that will enable Cheddar's tourism offer to be maximised and support economic recovery.

The associated Cheddar Accessibility Strategy is also relevant to this work. Both the Accessibility strategy and the Cheddar Gorge Public Realm Regeneration Strategy have been locally adopted by Sedgemoor District Council and will be a material planning consideration. They have also been used to support the Councils submission to the Government's Levelling Up Fund in August 2022.



↑ A view of the Gorge

## 1.3 How the Project was Undertaken

The project was guided strategically by the Project Steering Board, chaired by SDC and comprising of a range of SDC Officers from Economic Development, Planning and Regeneration alongside local members.

The proposals were well informed by previous work and on-going community and stakeholder engagement in the village.

Building on this foundation, the project team set about understanding key issues and constraints, liaising with local stakeholders and the wider community and doing its own work to understand the role, character, strengths and weaknesses of the Cheddar Gorge project areas.

Full details of the consultation process and responses are included as a technical appendix. These responses have helped shape the regeneration strategy and additionally provide a wealth of detail that will be drawn upon as part of the subsequent detailed design phase.”

### **ANALYSIS HAS INCLUDED:**

- *Explanation of key issues by SDC, SCC and local stakeholders*
- *Site visits to the village at different times and days of the week*
- *A desk top review of literature and policy*
- *An overview of key issues including consideration of: - physical, economic, social constraints; parking issues; servicing issues for retailers; transportation; sustainable settlement considerations; historic and cultural context; townscape and heritage; public realm assessment; barriers to movement; designations; conservation issues; listed buildings; views and features; character and appearance; land use; retail requirements; topography/gradient; microclimate; landscape and green space; drainage; ground conditions; underground services; neighbourhood and amenity issues.*

### **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT INCLUDED:**

- *Project Inception Steering Board session to identify key issues and requirements*
- *Regular workshops with SDC steering Group*
- *Community/stakeholder project review workshop with Steering Board and Parish Council Members*
- *Final Steering Board session*
- *Focussed online public consultation*
- *Design suggestions have been presented in different ways throughout the project at the various engagement sessions. Feedback has helped to develop ideas and form recommendations within this document.*

## 1.4 Planning Context

### **SEDGEMOOR LOCAL PLAN 2011-2032**

The Sedgemoor Local Plan was adopted in February 2019 and sets out the vision, objectives, and strategy for Sedgemoor District up to 2032. It outlines how Sedgemoor District will grow and develop into the future, with an emphasis on sustainable development that will help to support the District Councils priority for new housing, boosting the economy and creating new jobs.

With regards to policies engaging with urban realm enhancement, the following policies provide guidance that are relevant to improving the urban realm facilities throughout Cheddar.

### **“POLICY C6 – VILLAGE CENTRE**

Proposals that contribute to the regeneration of the centre, enhance its role as a District Centre and provide for the needs of the local community will be supported. In particular proposals to improve the existing public realm and provide enhanced facilities for pedestrians will be encouraged. The District Centre boundary is defined on the Policies Map”.

### **“POLICY C7 - CHEDDAR GORGE**

Within the identified Cheddar Gorge Commercial area (as defined on the Policies Map) and new retail or commercial proposal should be associated with the tourism function of the area. The loss of existing retail or tourist facilities will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impact on the vitality of the commercial area as a whole.

Proposals for the enhancement of the existing area including improvements to pedestrian facilities, traffic management or enhancement of existing public realm will be supported provided there is no adverse effect on horseshoe or other bat species that cannot adequately addressed under Policy D20”.

### **SOMERSET FUTURE TRANSPORT PLAN**

Somerset Future Transport Plan sets out Somerset County Councils long-term strategy over the next 15 year to encourage economic, urban and employment growth without compromising Somersets aim to reduce carbon emissions and impacts on the environment.

Somersets Future Transport Plan sets out the follow policies that are particularly relevant to this Public Realm Regeneration Strategy.

### **“SUS 3 – SMARTER CHOICES**

We will help people make smarter travel choices. We will provide high quality transport information and encourage organisations to develop ‘Travel Plans’ ”

### **“SUS 4 – CYCLING**

We will encourage people to cycle more by helping them to make smarter travel choices and get better cycling skills. We will support the provision of appropriate and well-connected cycling facilities”

### **“SUS 5 – WALKING**

We will help people to make more trips on foot and help people see the benefits of walking”

### **“SUS 8 – EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES**

We will consider how electric vehicles, responsibly sourced biofuels and other new technologies could help us meet our goals and challenges”

### **CHEDDAR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (2011-2027)**

Cheddar Neighbourhood Plan was adopted by Cheddar Parrish Council October 2018 and set out a series of policies which aimed to maintain the vision for the village in which “Cheddar will retain its identity as a village, within an attractive setting of surrounding rural landscape and hamlets. Its distinctive local character will be maintained and enhanced. Cheddar will be a sustainable place, providing an outstanding quality of life for current and future generations and will continue to be a visitor destination of regional, national and wider significant”.

The policies outlined within the Neighbourhood Plan have been designed in line to Sedgemoor District Councils Core Strategy and with the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Neighbourhood Plan states that the following policies should be incorporated in future development throughout Cheddar and align closely with the Cheddar Gorge Public Realm Regeneration Strategy.

### **“TRANSPORT POLICY 3 (T3)**

Proposals to enhance and expand pedestrian space within the centre of Cheddar and elsewhere will be supported provided that they form part of the master plan that has been subject of public consultation and formal approval by the relevant authorities.”

### **“TRANSPORT POLICY 4 (T4)**

Proposals to reduce the impact of car parking upon the natural beauty of Cheddar Gorge through the alternative provision will be supported that they achieve net overall benefit in terms of landscape and visual impact and do not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on habitat or the highway network.”

## THE BENEFITS OF PUBLIC REALM REGENERATION AND ENHANCEMENT CAN INCLUDE:

### HEALTH BENEFITS

- Approximately 85% of residents (typically) feel that the quality of public space and the built environment has a direct impact on their lives and on the way they feel
- Increased levels of well-being and reduction in stress
- Increased pedestrian safety through traffic calming measures
- Increased walkability and cycle access leading to greater levels of activity
- Reduction in noise and air pollution through reduced traffic and increased green infrastructure

### SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Reinforcing a sense of place
- Providing an inclusive environment and free resource to be enjoyed by all of the community
- A place for public events to bring the community together
- Enhanced public realm has been linked to a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour
- Diversity of uses

### ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- Increased urban greening and access to green space
- Increased biodiversity through increased planting
- Reduced risk of surface water flooding through the use of sustainable urban drainage (SUDs) and increased tree canopy
- Reduction in noise and air pollution
- Increased urban shading and climate change adaptation
- Improved air quality

### ECONOMIC BENEFIT

- In public realm works of similar characteristic and size an approximate relative increase on footfall of 10% was reported
- Markets and events can increase footfall by 15-27%, and increase spending.
- Public realm and lighting enhancements will help to support the night-time economy
- Improvements to the public realm and pedestrian environment have been shown to increase residential and commercial property values

## 1.5 Potential Benefits of Enhancement

High quality public spaces are important for attracting visitors and investment to a village centre. Well designed, well maintained buildings, public spaces, parks, streets and squares play a vital role in creating attractive and welcoming village centres and tourist experience.

It is considered that there are a number of general benefits of an enhanced public realm (as shown opposite) and that those relevant within Cheddar Gorge include;

- *A safer pedestrian environment for people to explore the Gorge*
- *An enhanced setting for tourist*
- *A more distinctive and reinforced character*
- *Improved legibility*

**“Well-planned improvements to public spaces within can boost commercial trading by up to 40% and generate significant private sector investment”**

(CABE SPACE 2004).

**“Local authorities are increasingly recognising that improving streets brings a range of benefits to everyone. Local businesses report better trade, more people are encouraged to walk and cycle, the streets become safer, more sociable places, and the historic character of an area is enhanced rather than degraded”.**

(STREETS FOR ALL: PRACTICAL CASE STUDIES, ENGLISH HERITAGE)





2.0

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**Site Appraisal**



↑ Vehicle dominated street with little space for pedestrians



↑ Temporary gabion barriers to prevent anti-social behaviour



↑ A beautiful setting at the Daghole area of the Gorge



↑ Narrow and absent footways and vehicle designed street



↑ Pedestrian movements impacted by parking



↑ Over dominance of parking within the public realm

## 2.1 The Existing Context

### CHEDDAR GORGE TODAY

Cheddar Gorge is the finest example of a limestone Gorge in Britain, and its cliffs support many valuable semi-natural habitats, home to a wide range of plant species, many of them rare

The Gorge is a wooded landscape with grey limestone cliffs, almost vertical in places, reaching up to 500 feet and three miles long.

The natural beauty and attractions at the Gorge contribute towards making it a major tourist hotspot that before the pandemic attracted approximately 500,000 visitors a year.

### KEY ISSUES

There are a number of issues that impact upon the public realm setting of the Gorge.

#### **Vehicular dominated streets**

The Cliffs Road (B3135) is the single route through the Gorge and in the summer months becomes congested with

vehicles. This road becomes narrow at numerous pinch points and dominates the streetscape to impact upon free and safe movement of pedestrians. The presence of vehicles also detracts from the natural and tranquil setting of the Gorge itself.

#### **Anti-Social and Dangerous Driving**

It is reported that dangerous and anti-social driving is a problem in the upper Gorge area, which has prompted the Highways Authority to introduce Gabion features within parking areas to restrict certain manoeuvres.

#### **Over dominance of car parking**

There are a number of car parks and parking areas throughout the Gorge. Although these provide visitors with parking and support the tourism offer, they also occupy large areas of public realm, contribute towards a car dominated feel, and are in conflict with the natural beauty of the Gorge itself - especially in the upper Gorge area.

A number of the car parking areas are within private ownership and likely to yield highly as income generators within the tourist season.

#### **Lack of Pedestrian and Cycle Connectivity**

Despite the high visitor numbers, the existing public realm does not provide adequate and safe footways in numerous locations due to constrained street widths and Highways focussed street design.

The area also lacks any meaningful provision for cyclists and does not encourage the use of active travel modes.

#### **Land Ownership**

Many areas within the Gorge area are within private ownership, which may limit the extent of proposed changes without support and buy-in from various third parties.



↑ A high quality natural setting within the Gorge

## 2.2 Opportunities for Change

### KEY OBJECTIVES

As described in the introduction of this report SDC have set a number of key objectives of this study and strategy. These include;

1. *Identify potential public realm enhancements within the Cheddar Gorge area to support the safe return after the Covid-19 pandemic.*
2. *Use public realm improvements as a tool to support the tourist economy.*
3. *Use public realm improvements to develop a safer and more attractive environment with pedestrian priority.*
4. *Encourage a modal shift to encourage use of walking and cycling to, from and within the Gorge.*
5. *Strengthen gateways in to the Gorge and improve wayfinding and legibility.*
6. *Support and encourage further private sector investment.*

### KEY OPPORTUNITIES

This report seeks to identify key opportunities that may be available to enhance the public realm within Cheddar Gorge.

The opportunities seek to achieve the key objectives set and address the current issues and problems identified.

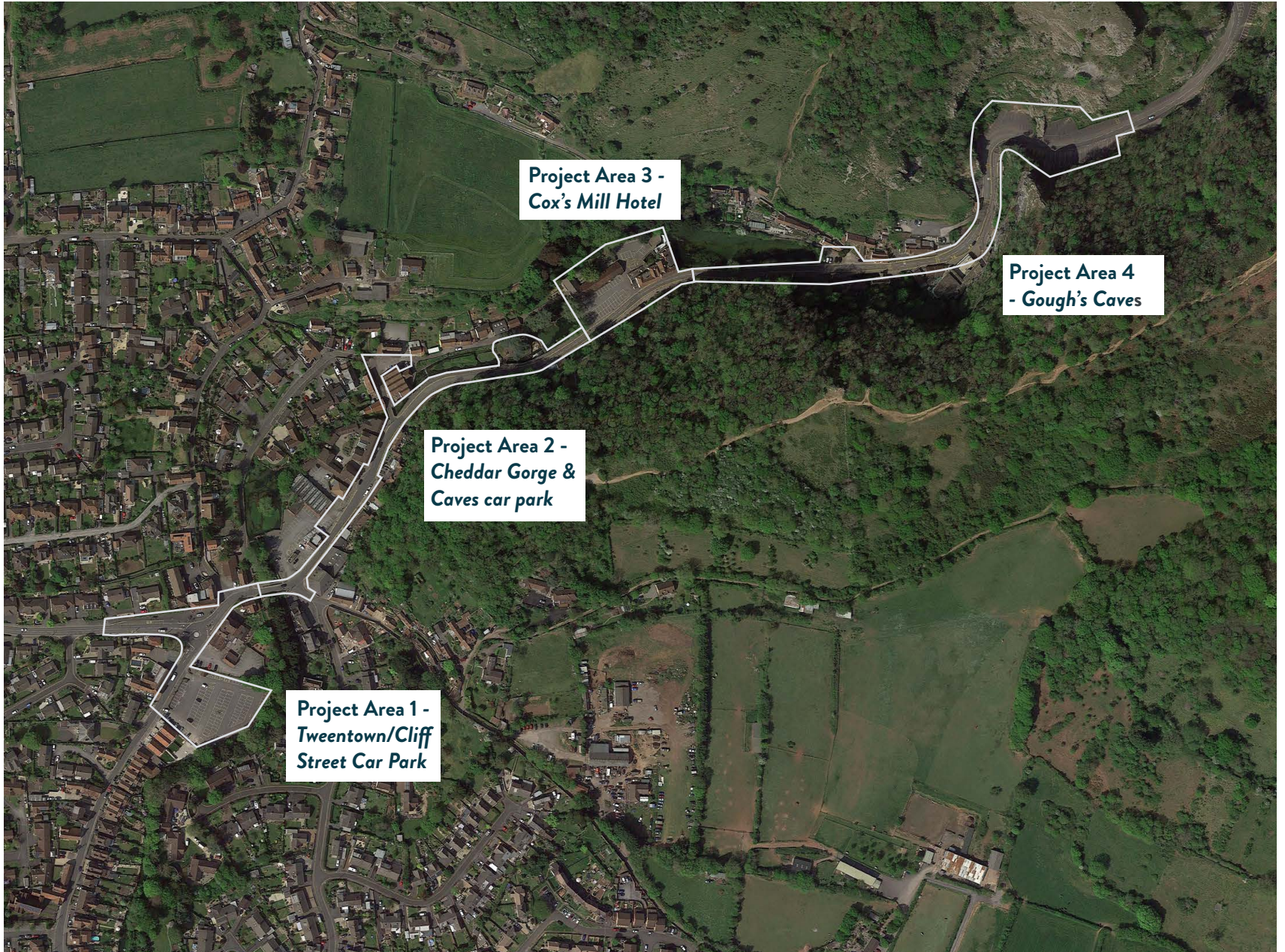
In identifying initial project areas and strategies, this report sets a framework to guide key decision makers and stakeholders in consideration of future investment in the public realm areas.



3.0

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**Proposals**



**Project Area 3 -  
Cox's Mill Hotel**

**Project Area 4  
- Gough's Caves**

**Project Area 2 -  
Cheddar Gorge &  
Caves car park**

**Project Area 1 -  
Tweentown/Cliff  
Street Car Park**



## 3.1 Project Areas

Site appraisal work has led to the identification of four key project areas.

These project areas constitute key activity nodal points within Cheddar Gorge and enable the identification of key issues and targeted public realm enhancements appropriate to each area.

The four project areas covered in this report are shown on the projects map opposite and comprise;

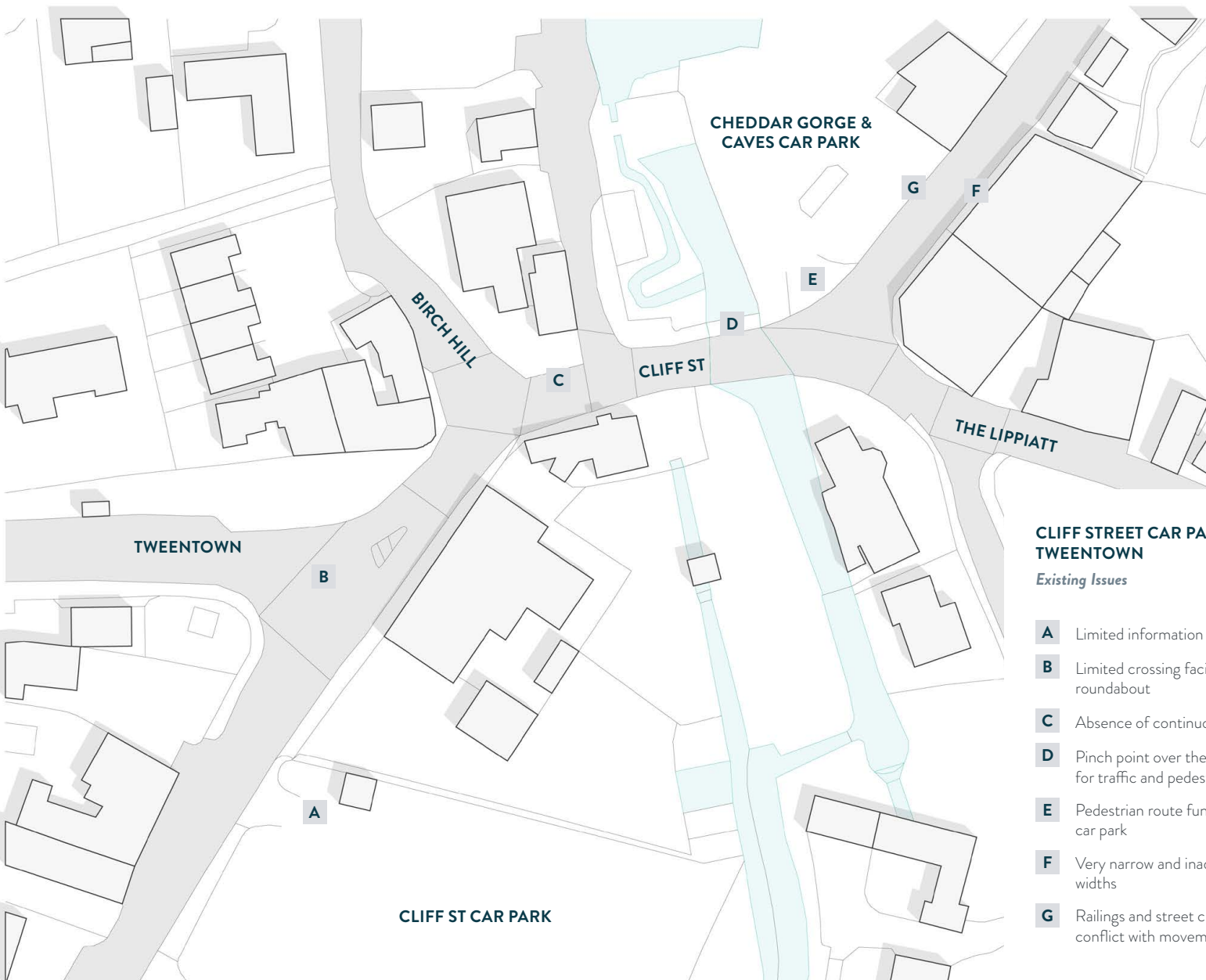
**Project Area 1 - *Twentown/Cliff Street Car Park***

**Project Area 2 - *Cheddar Gorge & Caves car park***

**Project Area 3 - *Cox's Mill Hotel***

**Project Area 4 - *Gough's Caves***

In addition to these areas a series of localised interventions have been considered within the connecting areas and in the wider Gorge area.



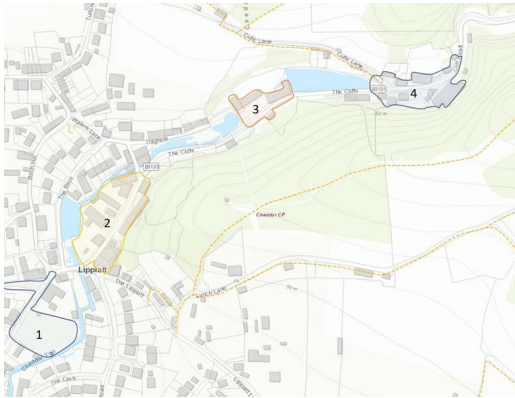
**CLIFF STREET CAR PARK & TWEENTOWN**

*Existing Issues*

- A** Limited information and gateway point
- B** Limited crossing facilities at Tweentown roundabout
- C** Absence of continuous footways
- D** Pinch point over the Cheddar Yeo River for traffic and pedestrians
- E** Pedestrian route funnels users into the car park
- F** Very narrow and inadequate footway widths
- G** Railings and street clutter in car park conflict with movement and use

## PROJECT AREA 1

### TWEENTOWN/CLIFF STREET CAR PARK



↑ Location Plan

### CURRENT DESCRIPTION

Cliff Street car park acts as the main gateway for visitors arriving at the Gorge. There are public toilet conveniences within this car park along with a historic information board. However, it is considered that this constitutes a poor gateway to the Gorge and offers little information to help guide visitors towards Towntown and the Gorge.

Visitors entering from this gateway are required to traverse Tweentown roundabout, interrupted and broken footways and are channelled through a narrow crossing over the historic bridge leading to a poor and somewhat unsafe pedestrian experience.

There are no cycle parking provision or facilities in this area to support active travel.

### SUMMARY OF EXISTING ISSUES

- Limited crossing facilities at Tweentown roundabout.
- Interrupted and broken footways towards the Gorge.
- Lack of pedestrian legibility, particularly vulnerable users.
- Pinch point over the Cheddar Yeo River for traffic and pedestrians.
- Pedestrian route funnels users into the Cheddar Gorge & Caves car park.



↑ Interrupted and broken footway



↑ Narrow footway over bridge



↑ Narrow and absent footways



### CLIFF STREET CAR PARK & TWEENTOWN

#### Proposals

- A** Travel mobility hub with EV bike hire and cycle parking facilities
- B** Enhanced information and wayfinding point at gateway
- C** Enhancements to roundabout including resurfacing and new crossing points as a gateway feature
- D** Potential continuous footway introduced
- E** Enhanced bus stop facilities

## POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

- *Cliff Street / Tweentown car park is located within 400m of a large majority of Gorge attractions. This could provide a good location for a mobility hub.*
- *Potential to introduce continuous footway links to improve connectivity between Cliff Street car park and Tweentown shops*
- *Potential to widen footways - especially beside the existing retail units and at the pinch point.*
- *Potential to provide enhanced signage and wayfinding.*
- *Pedestrian crossing improvements.*
- *Improved cycle parking and micro-mobility provision.*
- *EV charging within Cliff Street Car Park*
- *Improved tourist information*
- *Improved bus stop facilities/RTPI.*
- *Gateway features such as new wayfinding or public art on approach and surfacing treatments.*



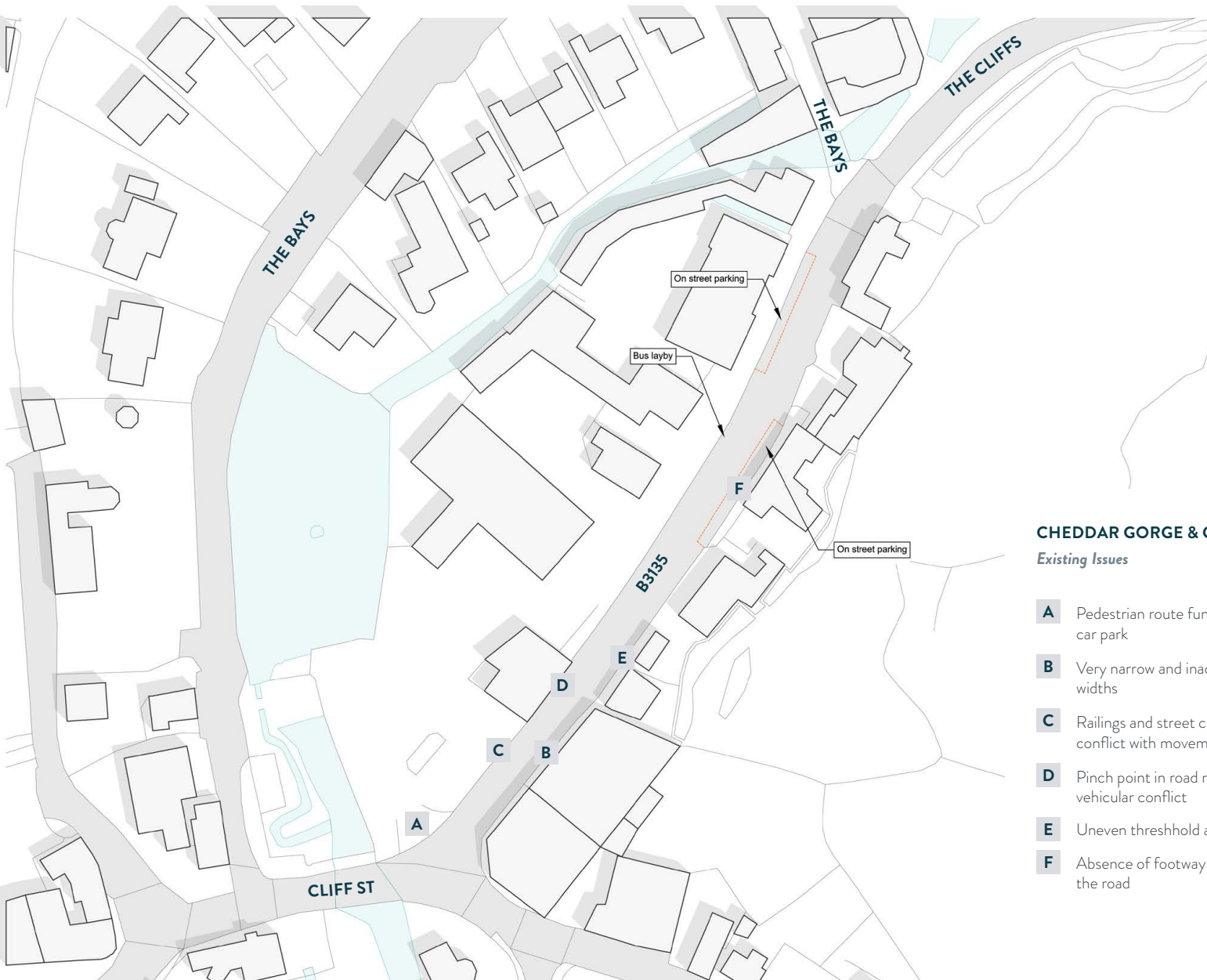
↑ Potential enhanced roundabout



↑ Potential At-grade footways in contrasting surfacing



↑ Potential continuous footways at junctions

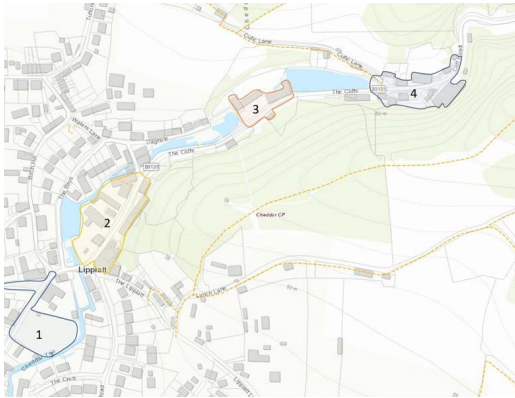


**CHEDDAR GORGE & CAVES CAR PARK**  
*Existing Issues*

- A** Pedestrian route funnels users into the car park
- B** Very narrow and inadequate footway widths
- C** Railings and street clutter in car park conflict with movement and use
- D** Pinch point in road makes pedestrian and vehicular conflict
- E** Uneven threshold and lack of footway
- F** Absence of footway on eastern side of the road

## PROJECT AREA 2

### GORGE & CAVES CAR PARK



↑ Location Plan

## CURRENT DESCRIPTION

The Cheddar Gorge & Caves car park area forms a significant activity node within the Gorge. The car park dominates the setting and has a poor interface with the public realm areas.

The street runs through a pinch point between retail frontages leading to a poor pedestrian environment with very narrow footways.

Further north the street widens but there is only one footway present on the western side of the road, which makes circulating to businesses on the eastern side of the street difficult

## SUMMARY OF EXISTING ISSUES

- Commercial units lie close to the carriageway limited ability to provide footway enhancements.
- Road pinch point reduces traffic to single working.
- Intermittent footways in front of shops but these are stepped and not accessible for all users.
- Absence of footway on the eastern side of the street.



↑ Wide carriageway and absence of footway



↑ Narrow thresholds with level changes



↑ Narrow and absent footways



### CHEDDAR GORGE & CAVES CAR PARK

#### Proposals

- A** Railings replaced with new stone walls & planting
- B** Footpath widened on eastern side of street
- C** Road narrowed to one-way priority
- D** Footpath widened on eastern side of street in front of business units
- E** Existing on street parking relocated to enable footpath widening
- F** New uncontrolled crossing point to connect footways
- G** Speed table to slow traffic speeds
- H** Potential pocket space
- I** Daghole Square - Public realm enhancements



## POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Create a step change in approach to clearly signal that there is a pedestrian focus within the streetscape.
- Potential enhancement of the interface between the Cheddar Gorge Car Park and the public realm areas by removing existing balustrades and other street clutter.
- Potential to widen footways in front of commercial premises and introduce a pavement build out and road narrowing at the pinch point to deliver with vehicles one way priority arrangement to slow traffic and provide an unbroken footway.
- Introduce a new footway on the eastern side of the street by relocating existing on-street parking.
- Introduce new uncontrolled crossing points to enable safer crossing of the road.
- Retention of limited numbers of on-street parking to support adjacent businesses.



↑ Examples of sensitively designed streets and crossings



↑ Illustrative image of public realm enhancement concepts



↑ Illustrative image of public realm enhancement concepts in Cliff Street

# Daghole Square - An enhanced space



↑ Artist's impression of Daghole Square concept



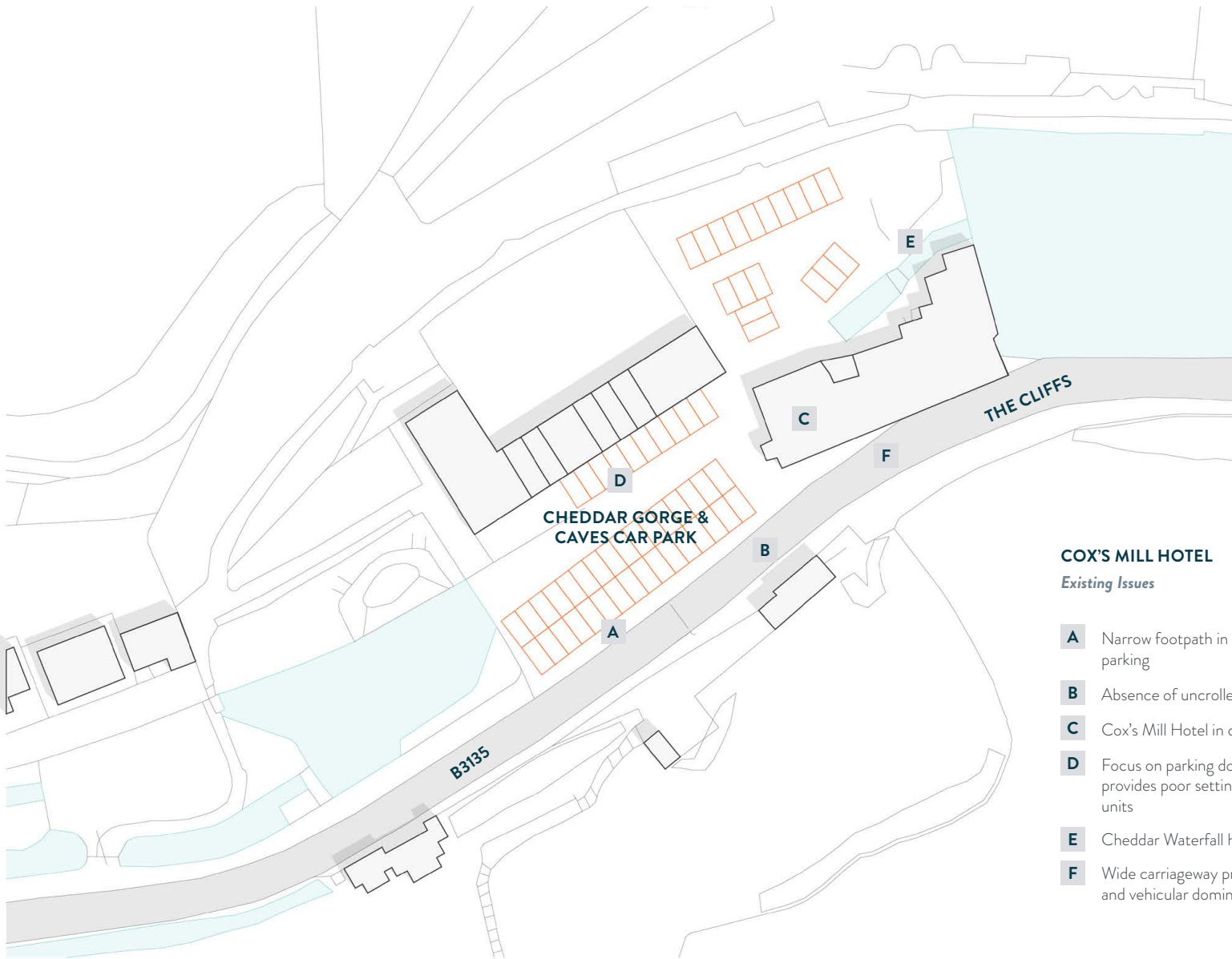
↑ Location Plan

# A new Pocket Space to enliven the Street



↑ Artist's impression of Cliff Street & Pocket Space concept

↑ Location Plan



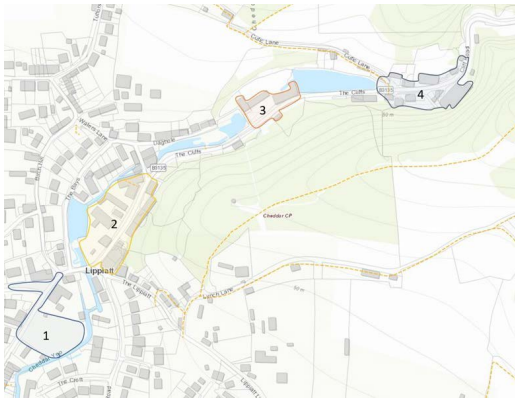
### COX'S MILL HOTEL

#### Existing Issues

- A** Narrow footpath in conflict with car parking
- B** Absence of unrolled crossing points
- C** Cox's Mill Hotel in derelict state
- D** Focus on parking dominates space and provides poor setting for existing retail units
- E** Cheddar Waterfall hidden and neglected
- F** Wide carriageway promotes high speeds and vehicular dominance

## PROJECT AREA 3

### COX'S MILL HOTEL



↑ Location Plan

## CURRENT DESCRIPTION

Cox's Mill is located in the middle of the Gorge area and is home to a number of small retail units served by a car park accessed from the Cliffs Road. Cox's Mill Hotel building stands in a vacant state and is now undergoing demolition. The Cheddar Waterfall is hidden behind this area.

## SUMMARY OF EXISTING ISSUES

- *The site is within private land ownership and has an existing planning consent for demolition that has recently been implemented.*
- *Carriageway widens encouraging increased speeds.*
- *Retail units are separated from ticketing office by the car park and road. There would be a high demand to cross the road but there is a lack of crossing facilities.*
- *Footway is almost at grade with the carriageway and requires parked cars to cross to access spaces.*
- *Lack of cycle storage/EV charging provision.*
- *Improvements to car park may require third party land consent.*



↑ Absence of crossing between Cox' Mill and ticketing office



↑ Cars cross footway to access parking bays



↑ Existing car parking dominates the setting



### COX'S MILL HOTEL

#### Proposals

- A** Widened footpath protected from vehicular movements
- B** Raised table crossing point to align with square and ticketing building and entrance to Cox's Caves
- C** Demolishment of Cox's Mill Hotel building
- D** Reconfiguration of car parking to give additional space to existing retail units and make circulation safer
- E** New pedestrian square - enhanced setting at Cheddar Waterfall with seating and interpretation information
- F** Potential new visitor centre building
- G** New pedestrian connection to link Cox's Mill to the existing adjacent footpath
- H** Potential Hydro Water Wheel
- I** Potential enhancement to existing green space



## POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

### Existing planning Consent

The area of Cox's Mill is currently in private ownership and has an existing planning consent in place that will;

- Demolish the existing Cox's Mill Hotel building
- Create a new public square
- Create new pedestrian footpath connections between the site and adjacent footpath.
- Reconfiguration of the car park

It is considered that these proposals shall act as a starting point that further public realm enhancements and development opportunities should consider.

### Potential future public realm and Development Opportunities

- Create public realm enhancements to improve the setting and safer pedestrian environment as part of a holistic review of development opportunities within the area.
- Consider further reconfiguration or a reduction in car parking
- Possible scope to create a 'square' with improved circulation and improved access between retail units and the ticketing office.
- Possible Hydro water feature and new visitor centre as a longer term aspiration.
- Potential to create a 'mini mobility hub' with EV Charging and cycle storage



↑ The consented scheme for Cox's Mill (Planning Application 17/19/00063)



↑ Artist's impression of potential green space enhancements



**GOUGH'S CAVES**

*Existing Issues*

- A** Gateway to Mendip Way blocked by parking
- B** Pocket space lacks interest
- C** Narrow footway rises against carriageway with some steep gradients
- D** Pinch point on bend leading into the Gorge

## PROJECT AREA 4

### GOUGH'S CAVES

#### CURRENT DESCRIPTION

Gough's Caves is located in the upper Gorge area and leads in to the picturesque section of the natural Gorge. The landform constrains the existing development and footway, which is embedded close to the sides of the Gorge.

#### SUMMARY OF EXISTING ISSUES

- Narrow footway on one side and intermittent footway on the other that is subject to footway parking.
- Gateway to the Mendip Way is blocked by residents parking and there is no crossing point to access this at present.
- Narrow corridor to work in and constrained by the topography of the Gorge.
- Limited cycle storage provision at the tourist information office and pocket park.
- Pinch point on the footway on the tight bend leading in to the wilder section of the Gorge area.
- Existing built form of low quality in some places and would benefit from renovation works.



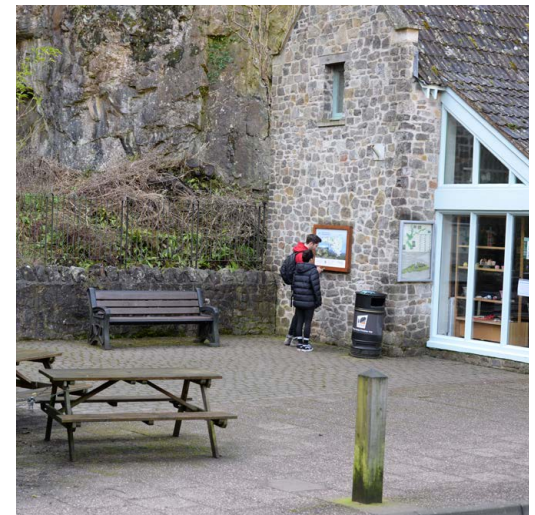
↑ Gateway to the Mendip Way blocked by parking



↑ Existing footway



↑ Existing footway rises above road due to landform



↑ Existing pocket space



## GOUGH'S CAVES

### Proposals

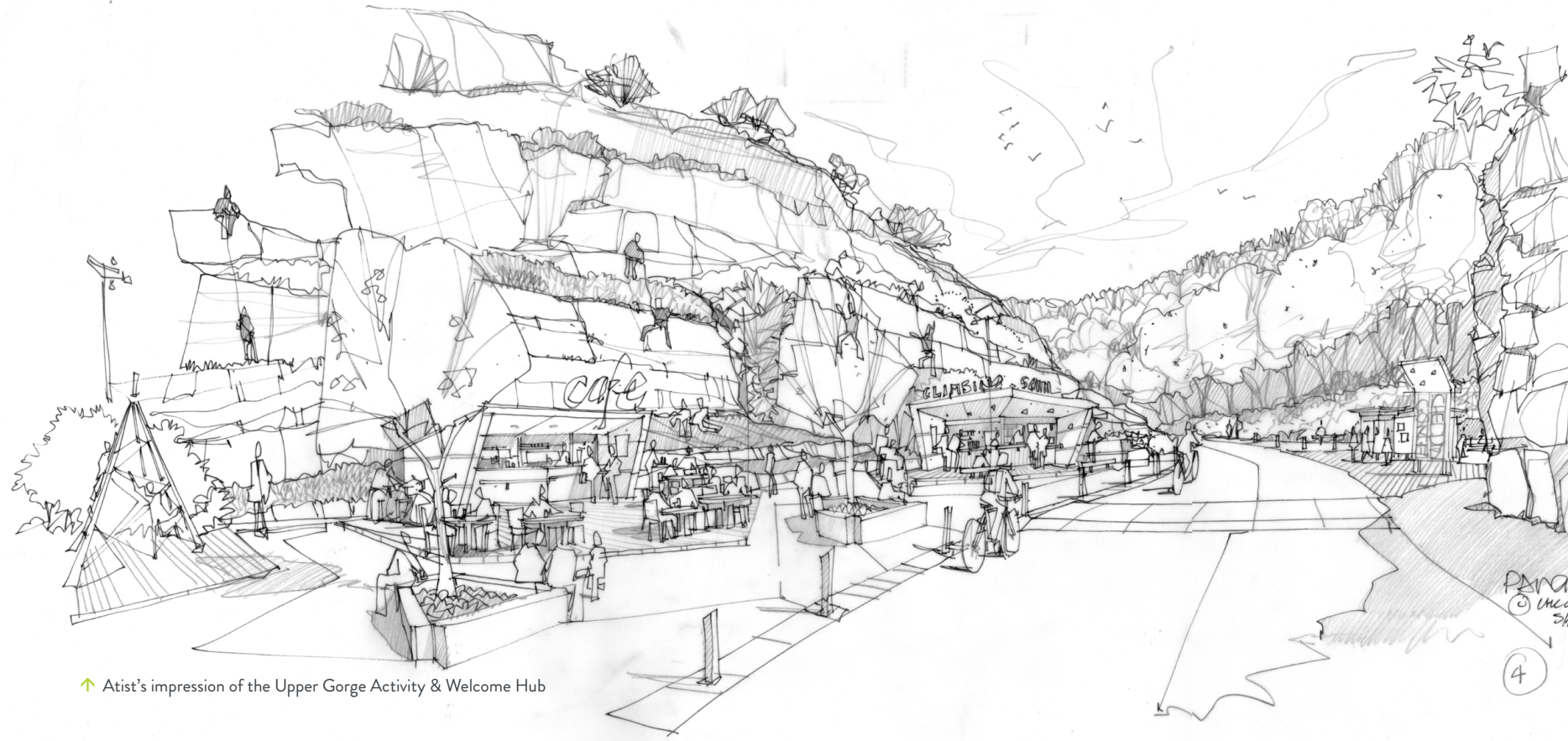
- A** Enhanced gateway to Mendip Way and introduce an improved uncontrolled crossing point
- B** Enhanced pocket space and introduce additional cycle parking
- C** Potential to improve paving surface
- D** Northern footway widened to improve connectivity
- E** Potential Activity Node with low ropes climbing, accessible climbing, cafe kiosk and picnic areas
- F** New gateway with visitor information, wayfinding and seating
- G** Enhanced coach parking area with improved footway
- H** 20mph zone with speed controls to deter speeding and anti-social driving

## POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Potential to improve the gateway of the Mendip Way and introduce a safer uncontrolled crossing point at this point.
- Surface treatments could help raise driver awareness of increased pedestrian activity in this area.
- Footway enhancements to improve legibility to disabled/coach parking.
- Improved cycle storage facilities at the pocket space.
- Sensitive integration of residents parking within the streetscape.



↑ Examples of gateway features on public footpath routes



↑ Artist's impression of the Upper Gorge Activity & Welcome Hub

## 3.2 Focussed Interventions

There are a number of focussed interventions that will be implemented across the Gorge area - both within the four project areas and the intervening public realm areas.

### Decluttering Exercise

There will be an audit of existing street furniture and Highways features and signage to establish if any features could be removed as part of a decluttering exercise within the public realm.

### Consistent materials and Street Furniture Palette

The implementation of a consistent and robust palette of paving materials and street furniture is a simple way of developing character and cohesion within the public realm. There will be an audit of existing street furniture and paving finishes should be carried out before establishing a new suite of suitable finishes to be used within the area.

### Minor Highways Interventions

There are a number of minor Highways interventions including new road marking and signage that will be proposed as part of bite-sized interventions throughout the area where they are not already identified as part of the key project areas. The full plan proposals are provided in Appendix 1.



↑ Example of public realm with consistent use of materials and street furniture



↑ Existing photos of street clutter and Highways focussed streets with low quality materials





↑ Illustrative image of public realm enhancement concepts in Tweentown





4.0

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# Community Feedback & Next Steps

## 4.1 Consultation Process

The project was guided strategically by the Cheddar Working Group, chaired by SDC.

The proposals were well informed by previous work and on-going community and stakeholder engagement in the town.

Community and stakeholder consultation and feedback will be an integral part of the iterative design process.

In Cheddar, Sedgemoor District Council held a ten-day consultation in June 2022, targeting businesses, residents and key stakeholders in the Cheddar area and seeking their feedback on levelling up Cheddar. Businesses were contacted directly, with leaflets hand-delivered to premises across central Cheddar and the Cheddar Gorge areas during the consultation period. The consultation was also publicised via the Somerset County Gazette, Burnham-on-Sea.com and Somerset Live.

Full details of the consultation undertaken and responses received are attached as a technical appendix .

Design suggestions have been presented in different ways throughout the project at the various engagement sessions. Feedback has helped to develop ideas and form recommendations within this document.

### **Stakeholder engagement has and will include:**

- *Project Inception Steering Board session to identify key issues and requirements*
- *Regular workshops with SDC steering Group*
- *Workshops with SCC Highways*
- *Community/stakeholder project review workshop with local interest groups*
- *Final Steering Board sign-off*

## 4.2 Next Steps

As stated in the introduction, the Cheddar Gorge Public Realm Regeneration Strategy sets the framework for improving the public realm within Cheddar. Creating positive and attractive environments will aim to encourage increased numbers of visitors, maximising the tourism potential of the area. This will be achieved by creating environments that will deliver enhanced provision for pedestrians and cyclists, prioritising their movements to enable sustainable tourism and health and well being benefits.

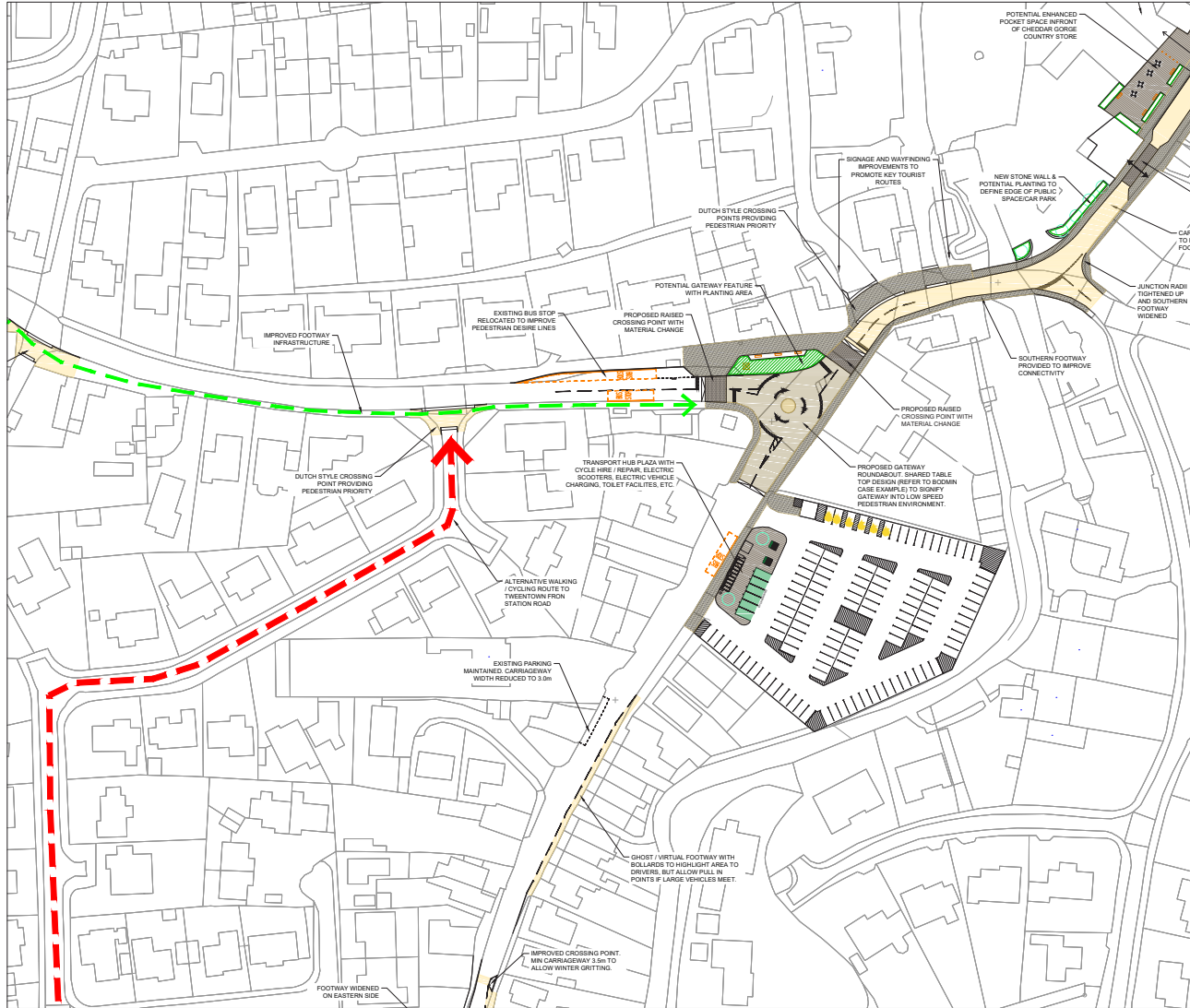
Therefore, framework strategy can be used to target current and emerging funding opportunities such as the 'Levelling Up Fund' in order to deliver a step change in tourism potential within Cheddar.



5.0

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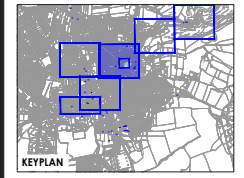
# Appendix 1.0



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ISSUE / REVISION	DATE	BY
P02 - PRELIMINARY DESIGN UPDATE	2022-04-14	MMR
P01 - APPROVED FOR CONSTRUCTION - CLIENT REVIEW	2022-05-13	MMR
Issued/Revision	2022-06-14	MMR
Drawn	2022-06-14	MMR
Checked	2022-06-14	MMR
Approved	2022-06-14	MMR

Issue Status

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Client/Project  
**SEDGEMOOR DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Title  
**CHEDDAR ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY  
 CHEDDAR GORGE, CLIFF STREET,  
 TWENTYTOWN PEDESTRIAN / PUBLIC REALM  
 INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

Project No: 332310573  
 Scale: 1:500  
 Revision: P02  
 Drawing No: 332310573/2001/SK004

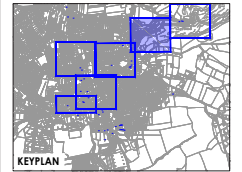
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ISSUE	AMENDMENTS FOLLOWING CLIENT SITE VISIT	DATE	BY	2022/04/13
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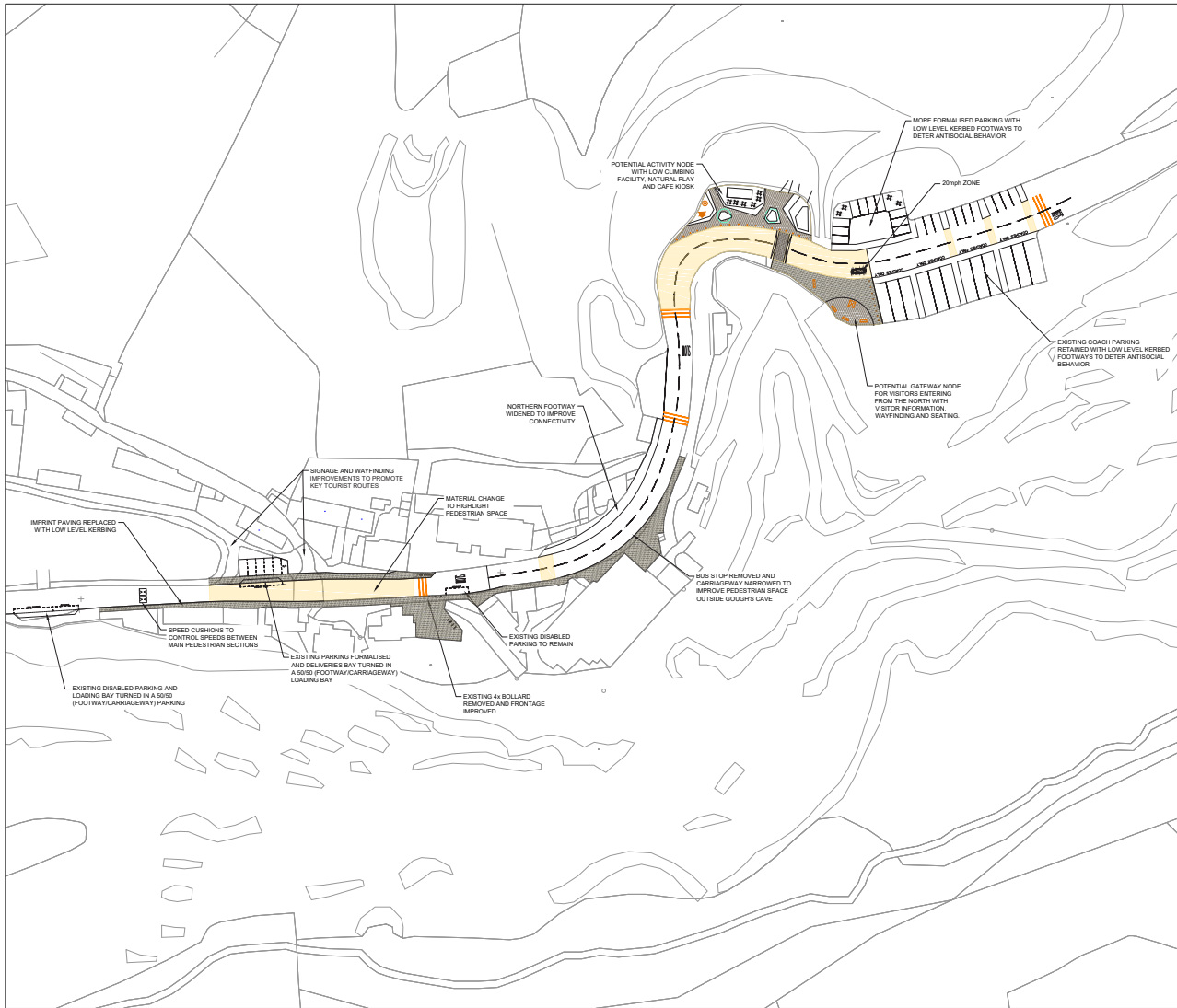
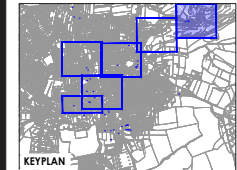
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# Cheddar Gorge

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**Public Realm Regeneration Project**