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**Dorchester Transport
and Environment Plan**

Final Report

December 2005



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Summary

Background

- Dorset County Council (DCC) in partnership with West Dorset District Council (WDDC) and with support in kind by Dorchester Town Council (DTC) agreed to consider the key transportation and environmental issues that affect the town centre today and to prepare the Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan (DTEP).
- The Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan (DTEP), makes proposals to improve the environmental quality in Dorchester through the enhancement of the public realm and a reduction in negative traffic impacts.
- In 2004 Scott Wilson (SW) was retained to undertake technical studies, manage the consultation and make proposals accordingly. They have been assisted by Dorset Engineering Consultancy (DEC), the engineering consultancy arm of Dorset County Council on traffic and related issues.
- Dorchester is a historic English town and as such makes a significant and important contribution to English heritage and culture. It is vital that the

qualities and character of the town are fostered and enhanced through sensitive planning and design and do not continue to suffer as a result of increasing volumes of traffic and associated pollution.

- The transport and environmental problems in Dorchester are similar to those in many centres where quality and character have been eroded over time as commercial pressures, limited resources and traffic build up have moved at a faster pace than conservation, protection and enhancement. They can result in the loss of important heritage landmarks, identity and a unique sense of place ultimately leading to an impoverished urban environment.
- Dorchester has fortunately retained much of its built heritage, its urban landscape and its unique qualities. Public realm improvements can be implemented to re-establish the centre and make it a more attractive, safe and convenient place in which to live, work and visit.
- Inevitably in seeking solutions, compromises have to be made between the freedom of movement currently enjoyed by traffic, very much at the expense of pedestrians, and the enhanced quality of the urban

environment. A medium to long term perspective is required to make regular and well planned enhancements and improvements consistent with available resources to achieve the most effective results

Main Aims of the DTEP

- The main aims of the DTEP were identified through consultation and form the overarching objectives for the proposals:
 - Support the economic prosperity of the town.
 - Reduce through traffic.
 - Provide a higher quality environment.
 - Protect and enhance the historic fabric of the town.
 - Reduce traffic speeds.
 - Increase pedestrian priority and freedom.
 - Improve access for cyclists, the elderly and disabled.
 - Maintain vehicular access for emergency, servicing and public transport.
 - Provide accessible car parking for shoppers, residents and other essential users.

Consultation

- The foundation of the DTEP lies in the process of consultation that has taken place. This process has been guided by the Joint Council's Steering Group, which comprised technical officer representatives from the County Council, West Dorset District Council and Dorchester Town Council and the Dorchester Local Area Partnership. Scott Wilson has reported to the Steering Group and worked through them.
- The consultation process also included presentations and workshops to a Members' Group, (comprising all members of Dorchester Town Council, several of whom are also District and/or County Council members) and a Stakeholders' Group. The list of stakeholders was compiled by the Steering Group and Dorset Area Partnership and they were invited to attend two DTEP workshops. Invited attendees included stakeholders with an interest in the future of the town across a wide range of interest groups. Consultation with the public and with adjoining parish councils took place through staffed public exhibitions.
- In Stage One, consultation workshops took place with the Steering Group, Town Council Members and the Stakeholder Group. The focus of the workshops was to understand what each of the objectives

meant to each town centre user group, what they implied and how they could be addressed within the town centre. The outputs from the consultation presentations and the workshop formed the basis for the DTEP vision.

Options

- During Stage Two of the studies, three options were set up and tested against the existing situation and in September 2004 a public exhibition and a questionnaire survey were undertaken to consider their results.

Option 1 - No Changes (this sets a benchmark from which to draw comparisons);

Option 2 - High East Street and High West Street remain two-way but are traffic calmed;

Option 3 - High East Street and High West Street are one-way in an eastbound direction;

Option 4 - High East Street and High West Street are closed for through traffic other than public transport, servicing vehicles and essential access.

- There are improvements that are common to all three change options. In isolation their effect would not be significant in improving

the overall environment and traffic flows but in combining with each of the options they provide additional opportunities that would make significant improvements to the central area environment.

- The results of the public consultation exercise gave strong endorsement to Option 4 with 60 per cent of respondents in support of the proposals.
- **Option Four**
 - High East Street and High West Street are closed to traffic other than essential access to private properties, public transport, servicing vehicles (out of hours) and prison access between Top O' Town and Church Street / Acland Road.
 - The High East and West Streets are pedestrianised between Trinity Street and Church Street / Acland Road;
 - Access to the Forum Centre Car Parks is via a two- way route up Trinity Street that will reduce the number of arms at The Junction; Culliford North becomes a one-way route south bound towards Prince of Wales Road.
- Following the identification of Option 4 as the preferred option, further meetings were held with WDDC who requested that the options be considered again in the light of their concerns and further views they had received, particularly from those



in adjoining parishes. As a consequence a further public exhibition took place in November, to which representatives of all town and parish councils in the district were invited.

- As a result of this exercise an additional option (Option 5), was prepared. Although this option had many of the Option 4 attributes it did not restrict through movements along the High Street but allowed traffic to free flow from west to east. The effect of this would be to inhibit some of the opportunities in Option 4, to significantly improve the public realm along Cornhill and the High Street.
- Following further work and on the receipt of guidance from the Steering Group a further option was developed that drew together many of the Option 4 and Option 5 attributes but had a greater flexibility and allowed for significant improvements to be made to the public realm. This Option 6 was based on the partial closure of the High Street during the working day. It provided for east to west free flow out of the working day. Option 6 was selected by the officers of the highway authority as the preferred option.

Option 6 The Preferred Option

- Option 6 retains some of the flexibility of Option 5 but also creates opportunities for greater public realm enhancements and recognises the strong public endorsement to the concept of pedestrian priority throughout the central area.
- Option 6 is based on Option 5 with the following main amendments:
- Directional flow on the High Street is from east to west from the Church Road junction to Top O' Town;
- The High Street between the Church Road junction and the Trinity Street junction is closed to through traffic over part of the day;
- Emergency vehicles and vehicles requiring special access would be permitted to access the 'closed' area but only in a controlled manner;
- Public realm enhancements to the partially closed area will involve wider paved areas and reflect the characteristics of a pedestrian environment;

- Trinity Street traffic flows will be south to north joining west moving traffic along High West Street;
- South Street will be accessed from the south for service vehicles access only, with time restrictions.

The enhanced environment for pedestrians can be achieved through the partial closure along High Street, from say 9.30 am to 4.30 pm and for special events and the retention of existing public transport circuits running northwards on Trinity Street.

Preliminary Design

The preliminary design proposals take the main components of the preferred option up to a larger scale and test junction layout and design and give greater detail on the public realm proposals.

The proposals are based on geometrical layouts showing the configuration of junction layouts and public realm improvements.

Preliminary design work has been undertaken by Scott Wilson on each of the key junctions and road links at High West and High East Streets, South Street/Cornhill and Trinity Street.

However, prior to production of detailed contract engineering and landscape drawings, it will be essential that site survey work to obtain accurate levels and the precise location of kerb lines, services and drainage runs is undertaken.

Preliminary design work has been undertaken on each of the key junctions and road links at High West and High East Streets, South Street/Cornhill and Trinity Street.

Implementation

The DTEP proposals provide a coordinated framework of improvements designed to meet the stated objectives; to realise these improvements and enhance the character and quality of the central parts of Dorchester traffic will need to be decanted from the key quality areas.

This can only be achieved through a reduction in through traffic entering the central area and encouraging residents and visitors travelling by vehicle to accept junction design changes and give priority in key areas to pedestrians. This will inevitably result in slightly longer vehicle journey times into and out of the central area.

In order to achieve the proposed improvements set out in Option 6, a medium to long term commitment is required from the elected members from DCC, WDDC, and the Town Council, as well as from the Local Area Partnership.

The proposed improvements will involve considerable expenditure but this can be paced to meet resources as they become available. The DTEP provides a coordinated framework and a vision against which budgets can be prepared and additional funding sought.

Phasing of the junction proposals will require careful consideration to ensure that traffic can satisfactorily adapt to individual changes over time. The relationship between the key junctions of Maumbury Cross, Great Western Cross and the Junction will require particular detailed analysis in this regard. These three junctions will significantly contribute towards the public realm improvements and freer pedestrian movement and traffic flows.

Please turn the page for
Option 6 The preferred option





Summary

- Primary vehicular route
- Secondary vehicular route
- Public transport route
- Pedestrianised area
- Road closed / access only
- Public transport contra-flow
- Partial closure
- One way
- Public transport interchange
- Road closed
- Left turn only
- Car parks
- Disabled parking
- Market site



Option 6 The Preferred Option

Chapter 1

Introduction





Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Project Background and Approach

Dorchester is the county town of Dorset and the local service and administrative centre for a large rural hinterland. It has a rich history, a wealth of historic buildings and attractive streets and public spaces. It is also an expanding town with a population of some 16,000 with expansion taking place at Poundbury to the west of the traditional centre.

Dorchester is a quintessential example of an historic English town and as such makes a significant and important contribution to English heritage and culture. It is vital that the qualities and character of the town are fostered and enhanced through sensitive planning and design and not eroded as a result of negative traffic impacts.

The remains of the previous Roman walls can still be seen in the town centre along with several Roman villas and a network of tree lined walks which are still used today. The town has retained much of its historic elements with the High Street containing the longest length of continuous listed buildings in the country; as in most urban settlements traffic volumes, noise and pollution are causing pressures on the

environmental quality, safety and attraction of the town centre.

Dorchester is located on the convergence of the A35 trunk road, the A352, A354 and the A37; the town is served by the Waterloo-Weymouth and Weymouth-Bristol railway lines at two stations and is at the centre of the rural bus network.

Traffic in Dorchester is now at the level experienced before the by-pass was opened and residents and those visiting and working in the centre are, as a consequence, facing severance through high volumes of traffic. There are also difficulties for pedestrians at junctions and on narrow pavements due to the high traffic volumes in historic areas; as a result they are unable to enjoy the qualities and attributes of the central parts of the town. The situation is exacerbated on market days due to increased traffic and higher levels of pedestrian activity.

The Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan (DTEP) addresses these and other related issues raised in the Local Plan.

Scott Wilson (SW) was commissioned by Dorset County Council (DCC) in partnership with West Dorset District Council (WDDC) and with support in kind by Dorchester Town Council (DTC) to consider the key transportation and environmental issues that affect the town centre today. SW has been assisted by Dorset Engineering Consultancy (DEC), the engineering consultancy arm of Dorset County Council on traffic and related

issues. The focus of the project is to seek solutions that retain the strong historic character and qualities of Dorchester and to build upon its strengths to achieve public realm improvements and to reduce negative traffic impacts.

The main aims of the DTEP, a result of consultation, formed the overarching objectives for the proposals and areas follows:

- Support the economic prosperity of the town.
- Reduce through traffic.
- Provide a higher quality environment.
- Protect and enhance the historic fabric of the town.
- Reduce traffic speeds.
- Increase pedestrian priority and freedom.
- Improve access for cyclists, the elderly and disabled.
- Maintain vehicular access for emergency, servicing and public transport.
- Provide accessible car parking for shoppers, residents and other essential users.

Through a process of guided consultation, DCC, WDDC, DTC and Dorchester Local Area Partnership (DLAP) are jointly working to create a vision for the enhancement of Dorchester Town Centre that celebrates its identity and to produce a management plan for the improvement of traffic flows both within and through the town centre.



Figure 1.1 Aerial Photograph of Dorchester



1.2 The Consultation Process

The DTEP has progressed through an integrated consultative process (figure 1.2) to achieve a strategy that has the ability to meet all the requirements of the town centre, its residents and visitors. This process has been guided by the Joint Council's Steering Group, which comprised technical officer representatives from the County Council, West Dorset District Council and Dorchester Town Council and the Dorchester Local Area Partnership. Scott Wilson has reported to the Steering Group and worked through them, together with a Members' Group (comprising members of the Town Council), Stakeholder Group, surrounding parishes and the public, using a series of presentations, facilitated workshops and public exhibitions. Chapter 3 describes the consultation process in greater detail.

The DTEP approach and consultation process were carried out under three broad stages of work:

Stage One

Setting objectives and defining concepts

Stage Two

Testing options based on concepts

Stage Three

Refining key areas in detail

During Stage One, workshops were held with DTC members and stakeholders to establish

town centre issues, where they were applicable and how they could be addressed. The process was facilitated using plans to provoke discussion and to receive comments (reference Appendix B). This process generated a strategy for the town centre, based on collective ideas that focused on the needs of Dorchester.

During Stage Two, options were set up and tested and in September 2004 a public exhibition and questionnaire survey were undertaken to secure feedback for final option selection and refinement. The results of this consultation exercise are summarized in Chapter 4 with further detail contained in Appendix C.

Following the identification of a preferred option further meetings were held with WDDC who requested that the options be considered once again in the light of their concerns and the feedback they had received. As a consequence a parish council exhibition took place in November 2004, to which representatives of all town and parish councils in the district were invited, with Steering Group and SW representatives available to answer queries and to seek feedback.

As a result of this exercise additional options were considered and this report outlines the study process and the resulting options (reference Chapter 6). On the receipt of guidance from the Steering Group a preferred option has been selected for refinement and the preparation of preliminary design proposals (reference Chapter 8).

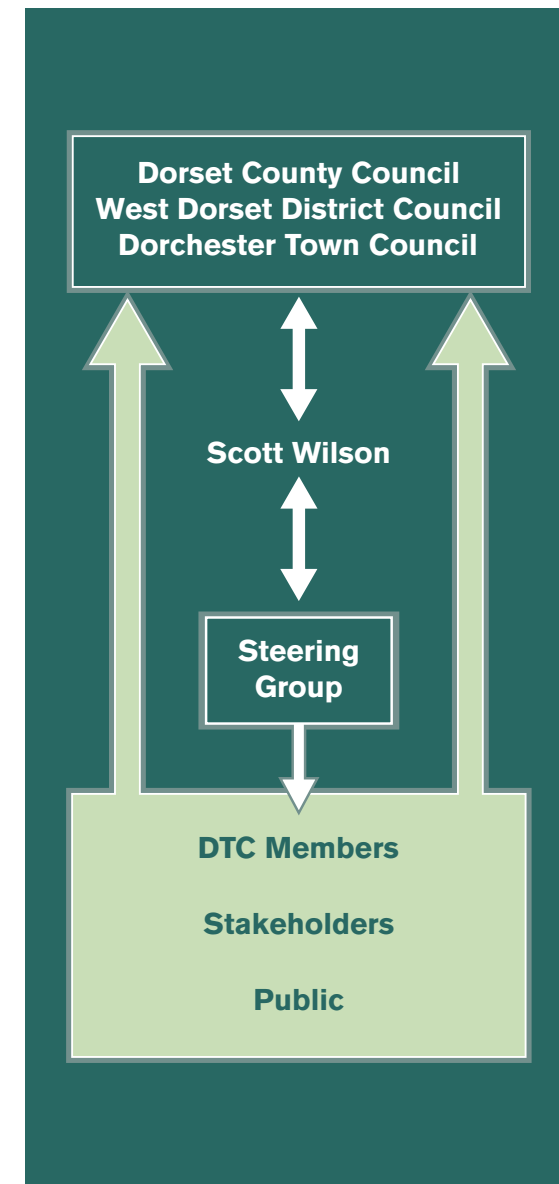


Figure 1.2 The Consultation Process

1.3 The Structure of the Report

This report summarises the key outputs of the three stages of the DTEP studies; it deals with the key issues affecting Dorchester and sets out the significant consultation responses from the workshops and meetings held between the Steering Group, members of WDDC, DTC and the DLAP, the stakeholders and the public. This report draws on an earlier report entitled Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan Baseline Report that was submitted in July 2004.

In Section 1 Introduction and Background, Chapters 1 and 2 deal with the introduction and background to the DTEP study and cover existing conditions and problems in Dorchester. This is followed by a set of opportunities for potential improvements.

In Section 2 The DTEP Vision and Consultation Process is described; this commences with a statement of objectives and a description of the consultation process in Chapter 3. This is followed by a summary of the consultation and the results from the public exhibition and questionnaire in Chapter 4.

Section 3 DTEP Options and Preliminary Design commences with Chapter 5 that describes the formulation of four options and the selection of a preferred option. Chapter 6 gives details on two subsequent options and the selection of a preferred option to take forward as the basis for preliminary design; the design proposals for transportation and public realm improvements are summarised and illustrated in Chapter 7.

The Next Steps are included in Chapter 8 at the end of this report.

The Appendices form a separate volume and include six sections dealing with base statistics, the consultation workshops and questionnaire responses, traffic modelling and junction analysis results and estimated costs.





Quality and Character



Congestion



Green Spaces

Chapter 2

Dorchester Town Centre





Chapter 2

Dorchester Town Centre

2.1 Introduction to the Study Area

Dorchester is located at the south east of the West Dorset District and is the administrative centre for a large rural hinterland (figure 2.1). The town has a rich history and a wealth of listed historic buildings mainly sited along High Street and South Street in addition to the extensive ancient remains of the Roman walls. The High Street boasts the longest continuous length of listed buildings in the country. The historic core of the town is defined by The Walks that delineate the route of the old Roman walls. These tree lined routes form an important part of Dorchester's pedestrian network and tourist trails.

The town is at the convergence of four major roads. There are excellent links into the surrounding Dorset countryside but the town centre environment suffers from high volumes of traffic, particularly during market days. Although there is a bypass skirting the southern edge of the town, a large amount of through traffic still travels along the High Street causing congestion in the historic centre. Traffic volumes currently experienced in the centre are at a similar level as before the by-pass was opened. The layout of the core of the town centre follows

the historic road pattern of primarily narrow streets; as a consequence it is not easy to move through the central area resulting in congestion.

It is difficult for residents, visitors and tourists to take full advantage and enjoy the qualities and character that Dorchester has to offer; traffic volumes, noise and pollution combined with narrow footpaths and complex junctions significantly reduce the attractions of the built and natural environment.

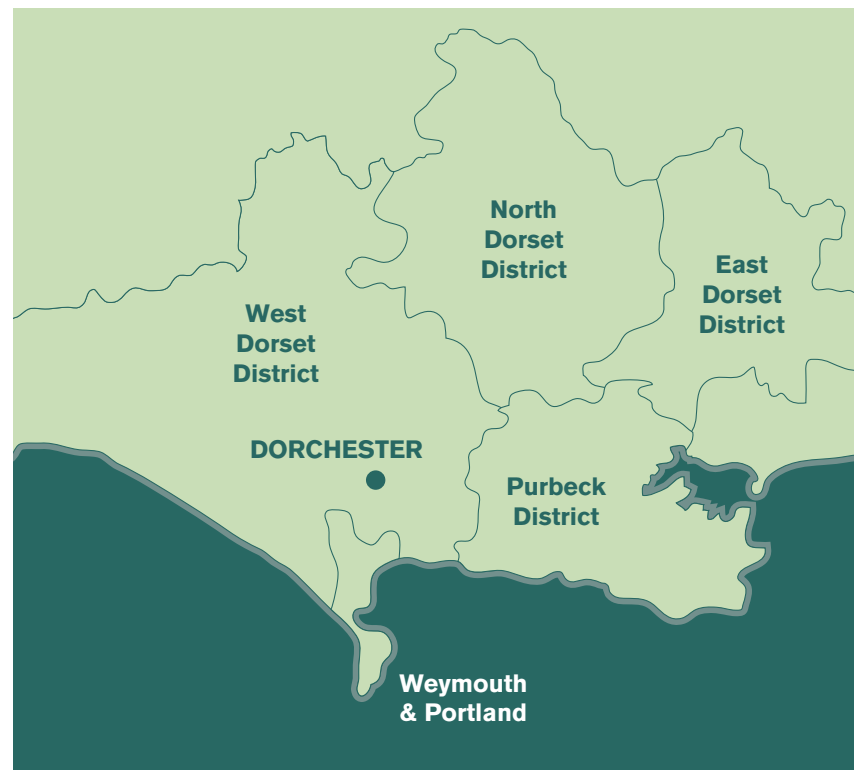


Figure 2.1 Dorset District Plan

2.2 Transportation and Highway Issues

Transport and highway issues within the study area and around the town centre have been analysed. Traffic data was taken from the 'Dorchester Transport and Environment Study' prepared by Dorset Engineering Consultancy (DEC). Traffic data and information was gathered on local issues, such as cycle and pedestrian access and problems within the existing junctions and road layout. The following section outlines the issues arising on the vehicular network, public transport network, car parking, pedestrian and cycle access and service vehicle access. It also provides an overview of future transport schemes that are currently contained in the March 2004 (Revised Deposit) WDDC Local Plan.

2.2.1 Vehicular network

The A35 and the A37 form a partial bypass around the town taking traffic from the east and west on a southerly route; the bypass is not continuous around the periphery of Dorchester with a missing north east segment. The A35 to the south of the town at the Weymouth Avenue roundabout is congested during peak hours and during the summer months, particularly on bank holiday weekends. This junction has been identified by the Highways Agency as requiring improvement and DCC has jointly been commissioned to look at options.

As a consequence of the congestion at the Weymouth Avenue roundabout, traffic travelling in an east-west direction (including Heavy Goods Vehicles), uses the following route to bypass the traffic queues: Stinsford Roundabout, London Road, High Street East and West, Bridport Road, and Monkeys Jump roundabout. It has been recorded that some 18 per cent of traffic in Dorchester is through-traffic that should, in ideal circumstances, use the bypass.

Traffic travelling north to east also uses the High Street, rather than the bypass, mainly because the route is more direct and shorter than using the bypass.

There are four key junctions through which the majority of traffic in Dorchester has to pass (figure 2.2):

- Great Western Cross.
- The Junction (also referred to as Fiveways)
- Top O' Town
- Maumbury Rings

These junctions are currently heavily congested during peak times; pedestrian facilities at and near to these junctions are poor.

The High Street has extensive terraces of historic, listed buildings, which are generally overlooked by visitors and local people due to the frequency and the large amount of vehicles queuing along the road. Pedestrian facilities are generally inadequate in the town centre,

especially in areas where there are high volumes of traffic, for example at Great Western Cross and in the vicinity of the railway station.

Dorchester has one pedestrianised area (with access for deliveries) on South Street, but it is frequently compromised by the intrusion of service and other vehicles.

Figure 2.7 shows the Dorchester Movement Plan that illustrates the main routes for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, the positions of public transport stops and car parks.

2.2.2 Bus network

Bus interchange

There are three major bus stops within the town for local and national departures (figure 2.3) - Trinity Street, Top O' Town and High West Street. Long distance bus and coach services call in at Dorchester South Railway Station. Currently there are no bus lanes or other priority measures for buses within the town centre.

Bus route network

There are five town bus routes which operate solely within Dorchester and there are a further 26 bus routes which stop in Dorchester and provide links to other destinations.

Bus service frequencies/routes

The five town services, routes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 95, are operated by Coach House Travel and are supported by Dorset County Council. These services operate Monday to Saturday with one service per hour during the mornings

1

2



only. Route 95 provides Dorchester's Schools Service including stops at Thomas Hardy School, Damers Road School, St. Osmunds School, Dorchester Middle School and Manor Park School.

Routes to the north and east of Dorchester are operated by Damory Coaches; services 307, 308, 311 and 322, provide links to Holwell, Sturminster Newton, Blandford and Poole. First Group operates routes to the south and east of Dorchester with services 101, 102, 103, 105 and 31 providing links to Crossways, Wareham, Bovington, Weymouth, Lyme Regis and Wool. Shaftesbury and District Motor Services operate services from Dorchester via Gillingham to Shaftesbury. The Wiltshire and Dorset Bus Company provide a one service per hour to Salisbury as well as three services a day to Poole.

2.2.3 Rail Network

There are two railway stations located 400 – 500 metres walking distance from the edge of the town centre (figure 2.4). Dorchester South carries the London Waterloo to Weymouth services, linking to Upwey, Moreton, Wool, Wareham, Poole and Bournemouth. During the morning peak hour, 08:00-09:00, one train runs directly from Dorchester South to London Waterloo taking 2 hours 40 minutes.

Dorchester West carries the Bristol Temple Meads to Weymouth services, linking to Upwey, Maiden Newton, Yetminster and Yeovil. During the morning peak hour, 08:00-09:00am, one

train runs directly from Dorchester West to Bristol taking 2 hours 8 minutes.

2.2.4 Taxis

Rank location

The main town centre taxi rank is located at the southern end of Trinity Street (figure 2.3). It provides space for five taxis.

Taxi ranks are also located outside Dorchester West and Dorchester South Railway Stations and elsewhere as shown on Figure 2.4.

2.2.5 Car parking provision

Figure 2.5 shows the position of car parking in Dorchester.

On street parking facilities

According to a residents survey undertaken by WDDC in 2001 some 10 per cent of residents park on-street. In Dorchester's commercial centre there are some 150 on-street parking spaces. On-street parking in the core is in High West Street, High East Street, Trinity Street and at the southern end of South Street.

Off street parking facilities

The residents survey found that of local residents travelling into the town by car, 83 per cent park in either public car parks or shop car parks. There are eight public car parks managed by WDDC that serve the town centre (figure 2.5), which are situated on Charles Street, Acland Road, Trinity Street, Durngate Street, Bridport Road and Fairfield Road. In

addition, the District and County Council have staff and visitor car parks.

There are several private town centre car-parking facilities, such as Waitrose, Iceland and other smaller retailers. There are also private car parks located to the rear of premises along South Street; these are employee car parks and are accessed via Trinity Street and Charles Street.

Lorry and coach parking facilities are provided at Fairfield and the Top O' Town car parks; some coaches park in the Forum parking area.

A Park and Ride scheme is located off Weymouth Avenue and operates each Wednesday (market day) all year, with a bus service frequency of ten minutes.

The prices of parking in council car parks in Dorchester are in line with the West Dorset average over short periods of time. For long stay car parking of 24 hours or more, Dorchester is much less expensive than the West Dorset average.

Car park occupancy

Ticket sales indicate that car parks located to the east of South Street are the busiest, namely Old Market and Acland Road. The number of ticket sales for the Top O' Town car park is relatively low possibly due to its use by DCC and WDDC staff who do not appear within the ticket sales statistics.

2.2.6 Pedestrian and Disabled Access

Pedestrianisation

The northern section of South Street including Cornhill is pedestrianised. Pedestrian access from the short stay car parks is generally via links from Charles Street or Trinity Street that lead directly onto South Street and the main shopping area. Some of these links are formed by an arcade of shops, however, others are alleyways (figure 2.6) used to access the back of properties or as storage and refuse areas. Many are narrow and some have steps, which makes access for wheelchair users difficult.

Dropped Kerbs

Dropped kerbs are provided at pedestrian crossing points. Some of these crossing points also have tactile paving to indicate the route of the crossing to blind/partially-sighted pedestrians. In some parts of High West Street and High East Street the footways are narrow and restrict pedestrian movement and visibility of the historic buildings. There is no pedestrian provision along the top part of Acland Road, from the High Street to just before the car park.

Pedestrian Signs and Routes

Pedestrian signage in Dorchester is limited from key arrival points comprising the main car parks and stations and needs to be improved with better definition of key pedestrian routes; by this we mean that key routes should be made more obvious to pedestrians. This can be achieved through broadening and more direct routing of paved areas and changing the surface treatment by colour, materials or texture of paving to define the key route; there also needs to be

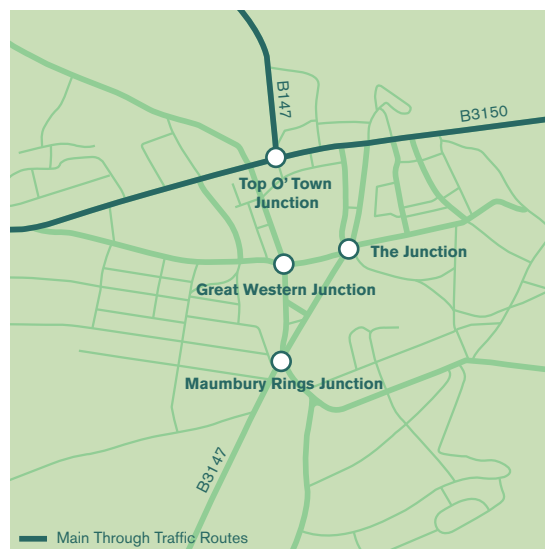


Figure 2.2 Key Routes and Junctions In Dorchester



Figure 2.3 Town Centre Bus Stop and Taxi Ranks

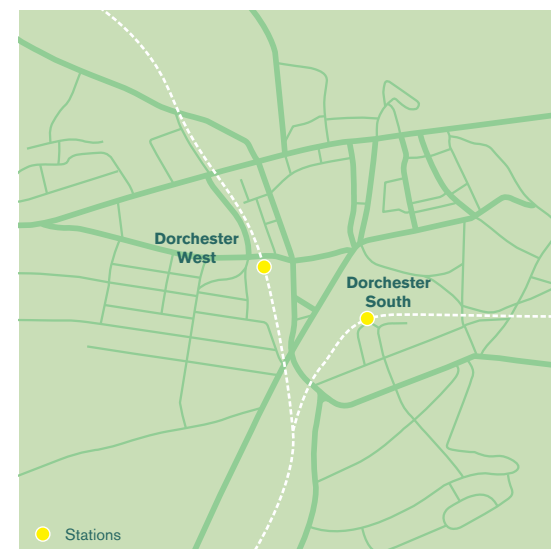


Figure 2.4 Rail Network and Stations



Figure 2.5 Car Parks



Chapter 2 Dorchester Town Centre

a greater provision of signs at key link points along the route, especially at complex road crossing points and changes in direction.

There is no clear pedestrian priority at junctions and in most cases traffic is allowed to dominate except where there are signalised crossing points.

There are incidental fingerpost signs around the town pointing to specific attractions but there is limited signage and no clear definition of pedestrian routes between the popular market site and the town centre.

2.2.7 Cycle Access and Parking

Routes

There is little provision for cyclists in Dorchester within the town centre. However, there are two National Cycle Network routes that are complete up to the outskirts of the town.

South of England Route 2 runs east / west via Dorchester along the south coast between Dover and Bodmin. East of the town this route provides a traffic free link and to the west of Dorchester it follows a signed 'on road' cycle route.

Route 26 is a branch of Route 2 and provides a traffic free link north of Dorchester alongside the A37 road and on to the Dorset borders, north of Halstock. In many parts this route follows traffic free paths although some sections are on road. It is proposed that Route 26 will also provide a link to Weymouth in the south.

Location and stand type

Cycle stands are located on Cornhill adjacent to the pump, at the bottom end of South Street near The Junction and at further locations along South Street between these points.

Cycle Use

2001 census data reveals that four per cent of the working population of Dorchester cycle as their main mode of travel to work; the West Dorset District Council resident's survey reveals that only two per cent of residents use bicycles as their main means of travel to the town centre.

2.2.8 Servicing

Servicing of the pedestrianised South Street is accomplished in a number of ways. Some premises along the eastern side of South Street are serviced from the rear via Charles Street. The majority of premises on the western side of South Street are serviced from the rear via Trinity Street. Service vehicles of up to 7.5 tonnes can also access the front of some premises via South Street, but only between the hours of 17:30pm and 10:00am.

Some of the larger retailers on South Street, such as Marks and Spencer's have their own dedicated service areas, which are accessed from Trinity Street. Other large retailers, such as Woolworths service directly from Trinity Street. Many of the premises on Antelope Walk are also serviced from Trinity Street. The large Argos store on Trinity Street is serviced from a dedicated lay-by arrangement provided on Princes Street. Figure 2.8 illustrates the key servicing and emergency access routes.



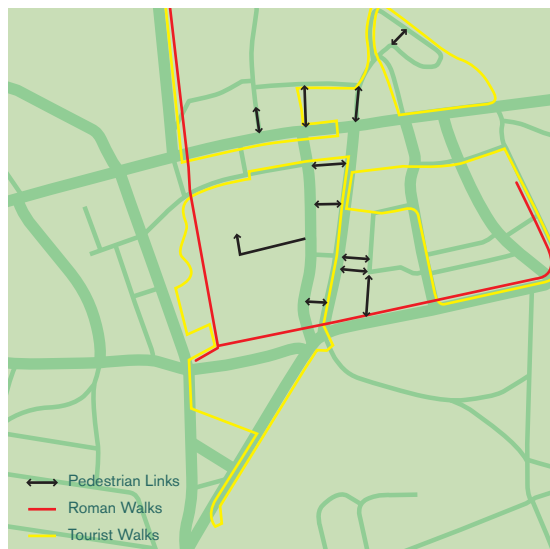


Figure 2.6 Town Centre Linkages

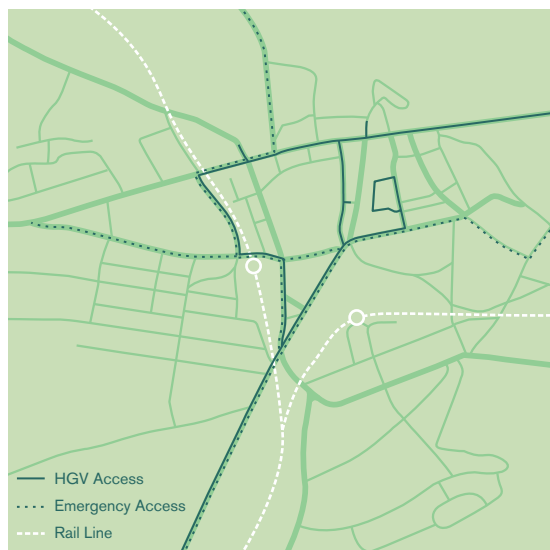


Figure 2.8 Key Servicing and Emergency Access Routes

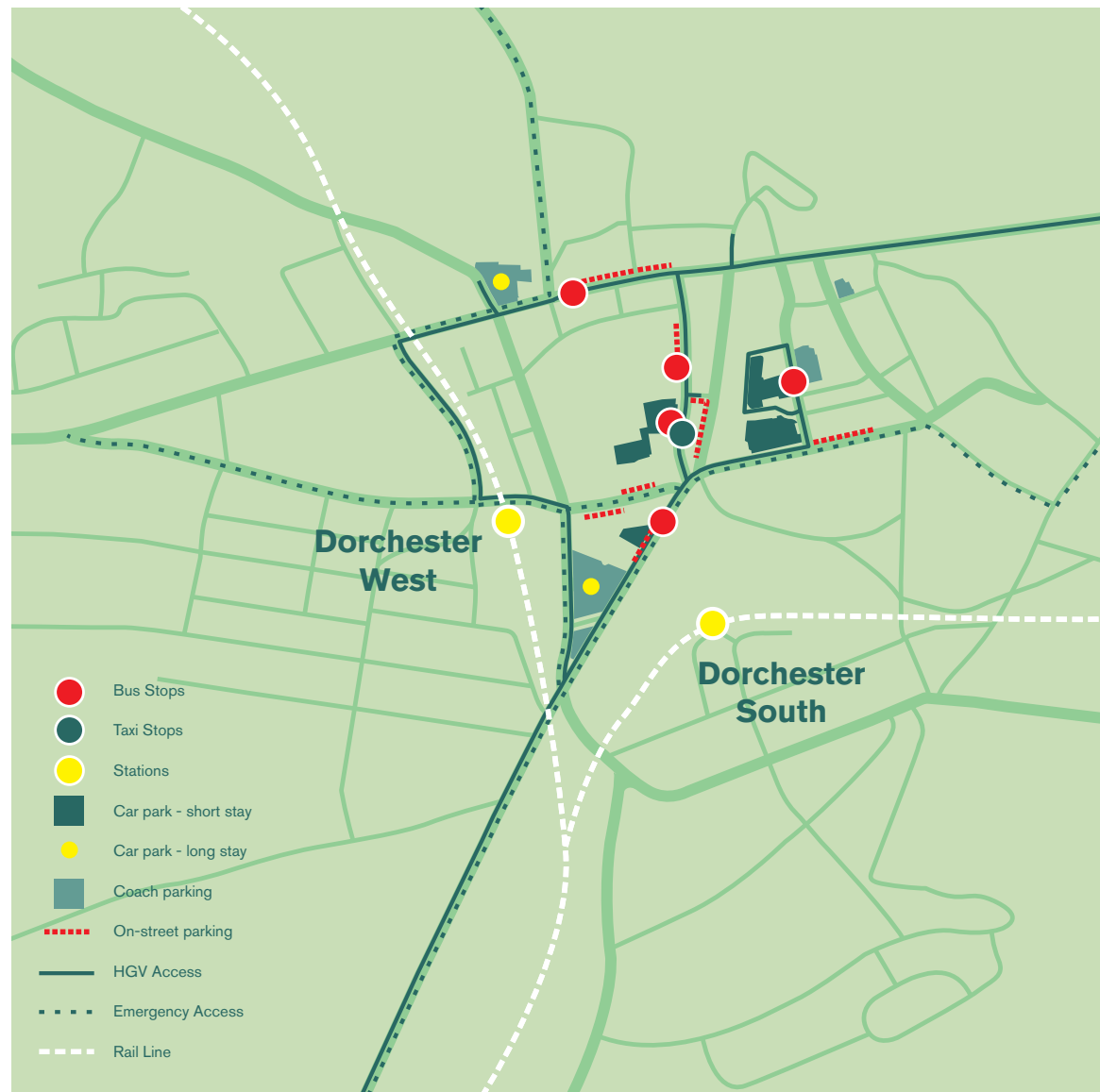


Figure 2.7 Dorchester Movement Plan



Much of the servicing activity in the town centre core is focused on Trinity Street, but this link also provides a route for general traffic and public transport through the town. The conflicting roles that Trinity Street has to fulfil, contribute to significant congestion in the town centre.

2.2.9 Future development schemes

West Dorset District Local Plan First Deposit
January 2003

Primary Route Service Areas

Policy TRAN3 stipulates proposals for a new primary route service area at Dorchester. The policy states that a full range of facilities should be provided, appropriate for trunk roads, namely fuel, food, information, toilets, picnic areas, parking for cars, cars towing caravans/trailers, heavy goods vehicles and coaches.

Park and Ride, Weymouth Avenue

A feasibility study will be undertaken to assess the potential for a Park and Ride facility for a site at Weymouth Avenue, Dorchester. The study will include a technical appraisal of the site's suitability, including a landscape appraisal, the effect on the trunk road and bypass and potential for roadside services, rail shuttle services and tourist information centre.

Cycle Routes

It is intended that the remaining sections of the National Cycle Network will be completed within the Plan period. Route 2 will be completed within Dorchester Town Centre

and from Dorchester to Crossways. Route 26 from Dorchester to Weymouth will also be completed.

Dorchester Roman Town Area

The central area of Dorchester is to be the subject of a traffic management plan aimed at reducing through traffic and achieving a better balance between accessibility and the environment. Major schemes should achieve a priority for pedestrian over vehicular access.

Charles Street

Within the Dorchester walls an area of 2.1 hectares has been identified at Charles Street for a mixed-use scheme including: a food store; residential development; car parking and a bus interchange facility. The Town Centre Health Check 2001 identified considerable expenditure to stores outside of the town centre; the development of the Charles Street site would create the opportunity to retain spend in the central area.

Weymouth Avenue

Land at Weymouth Avenue, totalling 8.9 hectares including the brewery site, is a key gateway site to the town by road and rail and the location proposed for a mixed-use development scheme. The scheme will include residential, employment workspace, retail, car parking and a bus interchange facility. The development will also include a road link through the site from Prince of Wales Road to Weymouth Avenue, pedestrian and cycle links through the site and appropriate junction improvements.

West of Dorchester West Station

Currently, developers are preparing housing plans for the land between the West Station and Edward Road.

Trinity Street

There is scope for a mixed-use development on the western side of Trinity Street, south of the Forum Centre car park entrance. This land currently contains the public toilets, the entrance to the car park, two telephone boxes and areas of parking. The mixed use development would comprise retail at the ground floor and residential at the second/third floor levels.

Poundbury

The first phase of development at Poundbury is now complete, with the second phase well under way. Highway improvements associated with this development include the re-alignment of the district distributor road B3150 Bridport Road. No more than 85 dwellings of Phase 3 of the development will be commenced until the road is completed and open to traffic. A pedestrian/cycle link between Maiden Castle Road and Coburg Road will form an essential part of a comprehensive network of surfaced pedestrian/cycleways and informal walkways throughout the development. The intention is to provide a formal pedestrian/cycleway route around the periphery of the Poundbury development. There are several improvements to junctions associated with the development comprising improvements to six key junctions in Dorchester, namely: Top O' Town; Great Western Cross; Maumbury Cross; Monkeys

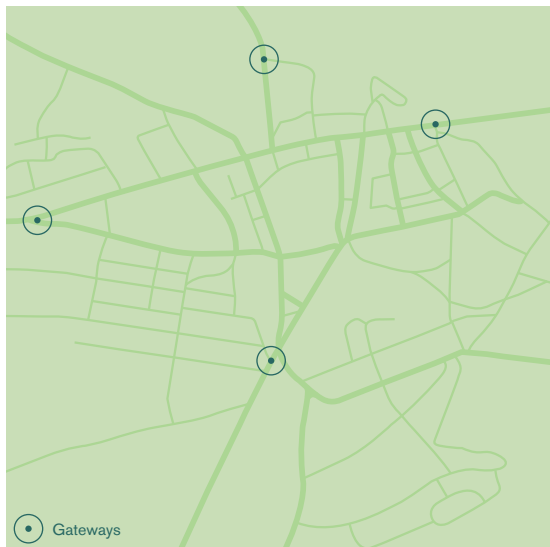


Figure 2.10 Gateways Plan

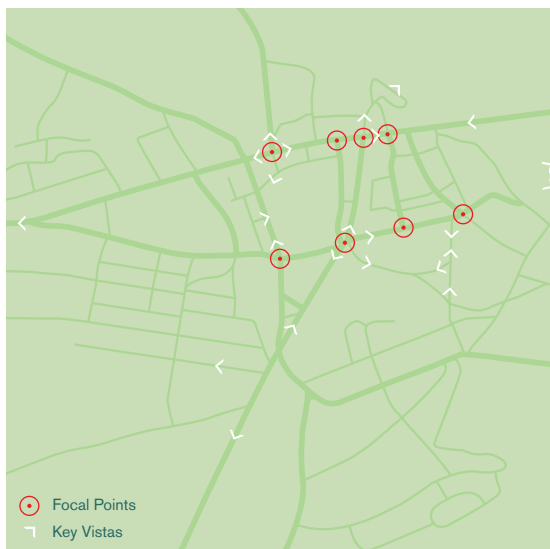


Figure 2.11 Focal Points

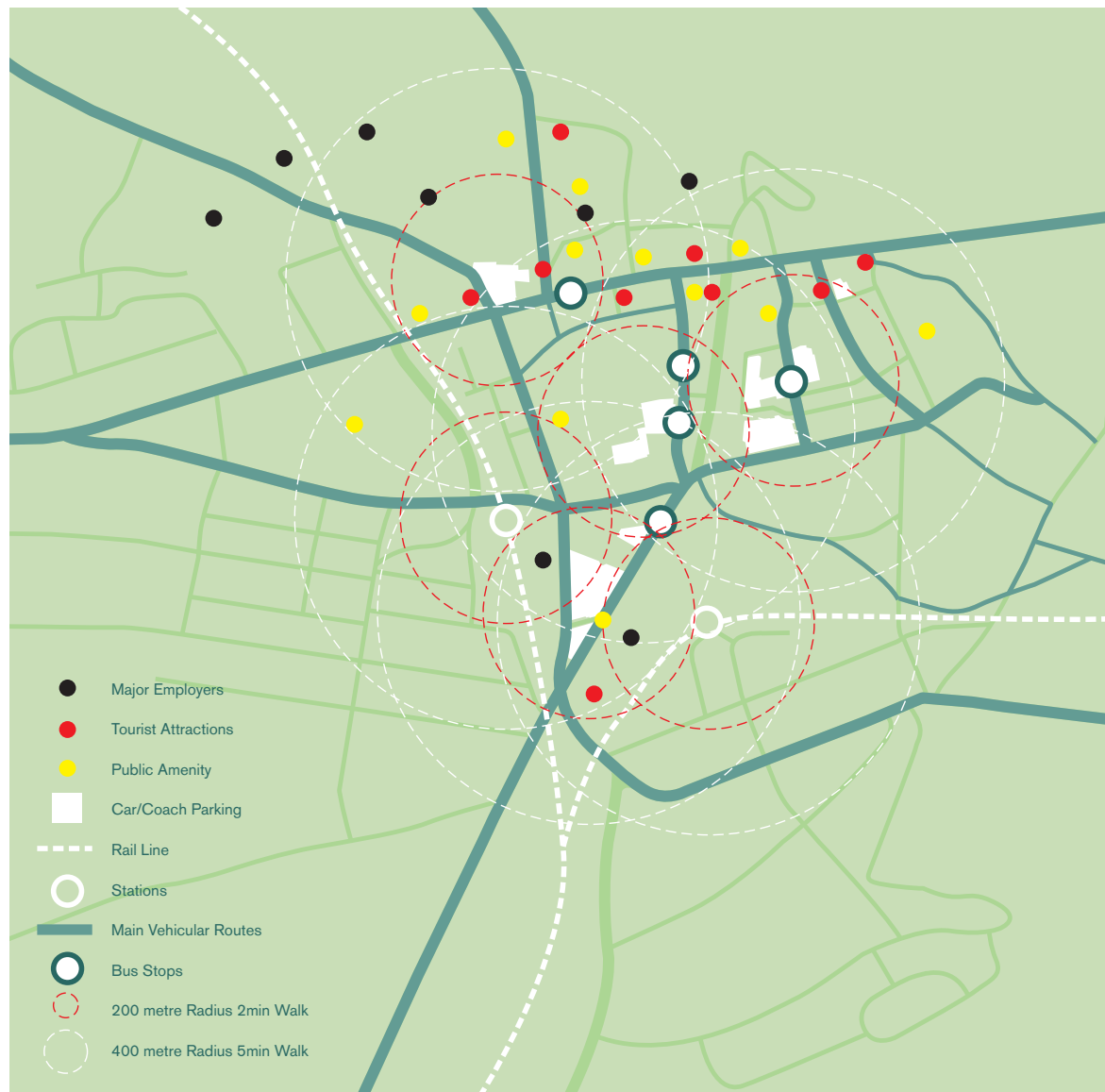


Figure 2.9 Dorchester Destination Plan



Jump; A35/Weymouth Avenue; and A37/B3147 junction.

Dorchester Perimeter Walkway

A scheme is identified for a pedestrian route on the perimeter of Dorchester. This will complement the existing and proposed network of formal and informal walkways and thereby provide a recreational resource and an alternative means of access to facilities and services.

2.3 Environmental Issues

In parallel to the transportation and highways analysis, environmental issues have been considered through site visits, desktop review and consultation. The main issues that are most important when looking at transportation and environmental matters in Dorchester are those of destinations, movement, legibility and quality.

This part of the report sets out the problems and issues that need to be taken into account in investigating potential solutions and improvements. In many centres quality and character have been eroded over time as commercial pressures, limited resources and traffic build up have moved at a faster pace than conservation, protection and enhancement. This results in the loss of important heritage landmarks and identity and a unique sense of place and ultimately can result in an impoverished urban fabric, prevalent in many suburban metropolitan areas.

Dorchester has to be seen in the context of an

historic settlement that has fortunately retained much of its built heritage, its urban landscape and its unique qualities on to which to public realm improvements can be applied to re-establish the centre and make it an extremely attractive, safe and convenient place in which to live, work and visit.

The issues raised are intended to help to understand the areas that need to be addressed rather than providing a catalogue of problems and failures; most of the issues raised do, however, present hurdles that detract from the high quality and potential that Dorchester has to offer in order to raise its profile. It will be necessary for those involved in seeking to make improvements to adopt a progressive approach towards the enhancement and cherishing of their urban environment, drawing where appropriate on recent examples where significant improvements have been made.

This section summarises the findings of the Interim Report.

2.3.1 Destinations

Figure 2.9 illustrates the Destination Plan for Dorchester that shows the distribution of major employers, tourist attractions and public amenities and the positions of main arrival points at car parks, rail stations and bus stops. It illustrates five minute pedestrian walking times from each point of arrival that is a best practice consideration. Analysis of this mapped information and first hand experience raised the following issues: -



East / west pedestrian links



Figure 2.12 Visual Landmarks



Figure 2.13 Dorchester Legibility Plan



- Access points are poorly defined – the spread of car parks across the town and the circuitous route to get to find the key ones adds confusion to the arrival in the town centre.
- Poor pedestrian permeability increases journey time - travel on foot from each of the arrival points is not straightforward and poor pedestrian linkages east west across the town centre create a 'rat run' approach to pedestrian traffic. This in turn reduces the legibility of the town centre from a pedestrian perspective; visitors to Dorchester are disoriented as a result.
- Car parks are of a poor quality – poorly laid out with no significant landscaping, creating a low quality first impression upon arrival. The car park at Charles Street also suffers, due to conflicts with servicing to the back of South Street properties.
- Poor pedestrian connections into the town centre – the lack of clear signage and the legibility of principal pedestrian routes leads to confusion, disorientation and a poor sense of arrival. Destinations are not always well connected by visually obvious pedestrian routes.
- Arrival points are well distributed around the centre – mostly of poor quality and badly and indirectly connected to the town centre relying on knowledge of the central area layout of the town. The points of arrival offer pedestrian access to the key tourist attractions and public amenities and this distribution gives a good coverage of the main destinations but paradoxically, because of the wide spread, does not give a clear

sense of arrival in the town centre.

- Lack of integration of tourist destinations – historic trails and other attractions in and around the town centre are currently not well integrated with town circulation routes. The historic Maumbury Rings site, for example, is often visually missed by visitors arriving by vehicle on their approach to the town centre and is then poorly signposted from main car parks and pedestrian routes.

2.4 Movement

The Dorchester Movement Plan is illustrated in Figure 2.7. It shows vehicular, pedestrian and cycle traffic in and around the town centre, positions of car parking provision and the integration of public transport, servicing and emergency access routes. An analysis of the movement network within the town centre has been carried out and the following environmental issues have been raised: -

- Poor footway definition – in several places where pedestrian use is intensive, the footways are too narrow to allow for safe movement of pedestrians without creating potential risks between pedestrians and vehicles. This situation also occurs around bus stops, where pedestrian flows conflict with waiting bus passengers causing pedestrians to step into the road.
- Problematic vehicle conflicts – vehicle, cyclists' and pedestrians' routes are not well defined; as a consequence streets and junctions are dominated by vehicular



Public information and signs

traffic with pedestrians and cyclists taking a subordinate role in most situations. There are no defined cycle routes into the town centre and limited facilities for cyclists. Service vehicles and buses along Trinity Street, for example, create a situation where there is a greater likelihood of potential conflicts with pedestrians.

- Visitor and tourist traffic is badly managed – coaches currently have no clearly defined arrival point and signposting from drop off areas is poor. Tourists being dropped off at The Junction for example, arrive at a point where there are no arrival facilities and poorly defined routes into the town centre shopping area.
- Southern route into town centre lacks definition – although there is a build up of activity along Weymouth Avenue with some sense of arrival being created along the route, the movement to a clearly defined arrival point is still missing. The first car park along this route is of poor quality and movement past a key historic site, Maumbury Rings, is uneventful, without any signage or announcement of its position along the route.
- Strong High Street route with poor definition of arrival – High Street (East / West) is currently used as a through road. The High East Street route in from the northeast and High West Street from the northwest of the town is mainly unimpeded which generally gives road users the ability to drive straight through the town centre. High East and High West Streets embrace a significant number of historic and listed buildings; a



Figure 2.14 Listed Buildings



2.15 High Quality Trees



Figure 2.16 Poor Quality Buildings and Open Space



Figure 2.17 Low Quality Street Frontages

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combination of significant traffic flows, heavy vehicles and parking detracts from the high quality urban environment and makes it almost impossible to take account of and enjoy some of finest features Dorchester has to offer. This occurs as a result of traffic that should be re-directed to the bypass and the free run, throughout the day, of all types of vehicles using High East and West Streets as the most direct route across town. Congestion occurs at junctions and crossings along High East and West Streets that could be minimised through the re-direction of traffic to the southern bypass and by taking away the 'free-flow' movements of traffic along High Street. This would encourage traffic onto the bypass as an alternative.

- Poor public transport integration – buses and taxis are poorly integrated within the town with no clear definition of routes or pick-up points. Taxis are often parked on double yellow lines along Trinity Street due to the poor provision of spaces on the nearby taxi rank.
- On street parking creates congestion – along Trinity Street and High East and West Streets, on-street parking interrupts traffic flows and creates congestion along these strategic routes. Conflicts occur between parked cars, service vehicles and buses along Trinity Street.

2.4.1 Legibility

Legibility is the process used by people as they move around using visual clues that exist

within the environment to guide them to their destination. These visual clues can be buildings, monuments or works of art, landscape features and the sense of place and identity created by the position of open space and buildings around squares.

Points of legibility are: gateways (figure 2.10) occurring where the character of development visibly changes, giving a sense of approach and arrival; focal points (figure 2.11) at important road junctions or key public spaces that allow people to get their bearings between routes; visual landmarks (figure 2.12) such as church spires, clock towers or key public buildings which orientate people and allow them to navigate from space to space; and severance which is caused by a physical barrier such as a railway reducing the easy flow of vehicles and pedestrians.

Figure 2.13 shows the Legibility Plan for Dorchester that illustrates the position of key gateways, focal points, visual landmarks and severance barriers in and around the town centre.

The following issues of legibility have been raised within Dorchester Town Centre: -

- Unclear links across the town centre – a lack of legible east/west routes across the town centre creates weak pedestrian movement corridors and flows with much stronger and more robust north/south routes. This cuts down on commercial opportunities along central east/west links and increases travel

time from main car parking arrival points to key destinations.

- Central car parking creates barrier – car parks surrounding the town centre are not well integrated into development and visually disrupt and block pedestrian routes into the central area; the main car parks create a poor initial image of the town and connections to the town centre are poorly defined with no clear gateways.
- Disconnected south car parks – southern car parks are poorly related to main central area destinations through distance and a lack of well defined, well signposted and connected pedestrian routes. The position of the market creates both a physical and visual barrier on the edge of the town centre.
- Poorly defined retail area – the principal shopping areas are badly signposted from arrival points and there is no clearly defined change in built form or unified surfacing material to announce key pedestrian routes.
- Mature planting defines Roman edges – the existing tree canopy creates a legible edge to the town centre but is not celebrated through the use of any connected network of routes. The mature planting occurs along the perimeter Roman walks but does not integrate into any spaces connected into the town centre.
- Poor movement priority – lack of route hierarchy generates conflict between public transport, vehicles and pedestrian flows.
- High East and West Streets have a low profile – when approaching from the south, the High Street has no sense of arrival or signage. This is due to poor, low key spaces

within the centre and no central public square or main meeting area.

- Lack of connection through the treatment of the public realm – no cohesive street furniture, lighting or surface materials creates a lack of distinctiveness in town centre.
- Poor gateways – there is no real threshold for the town centre. The gateways are not clearly marked and the approach by car has a poor sense of arrival. Arrival in the heart of Dorchester is not celebrated or announced.
- Poorly connected focal points – spread around the outskirts of the town centre, the key focal points do not connect visually to provide a network of legible features. This is especially true in the east/west direction across the town centre where a lack of focal points creates illegible routes that ‘rat run’ along a system of back alleys.

2.4.2 Quality

Figure 2.18 shows the Quality Plan for Dorchester that identifies the historic urban fabric, listed buildings, significant open spaces and high quality mature trees. High quality built form has been identified through the listing of Dorchester’s historic buildings and the identification of significant open spaces (figure 2.14). Figure 2.15 shows areas with high quality mature trees.

Areas of poor quality built form and open space have been identified (figure 2.16) which are shown in the Local Plan as potential sites for future development. Figure 2.17 illustrates areas of low quality street frontages and poorly



Figure 2.18 Dorchester Quality Plan



defined edges that detract from the streetscape and character of Dorchester.

Based upon the mapping of these elements, the following issues have been raised: -

- Low quality arrival points – poor car parking environment combined with poor connections into the town centre create a barrier to the retail and tourist areas.
- The built form of High East and West Streets is set in a low quality environment – the streetscape along High East and West Streets does nothing to celebrate the historic listed buildings that are all the way along the streets. This is accentuated by the lack of any real public open space, reducing the use of High East and West Streets into that of a listed building thoroughfare for vehicles.
- Poor quality detracts from high quality – patchy areas of very low quality built form and public realm detract from areas of the town centre that are particularly attractive. Due to the poor connectivity across the town centre, these areas of poor quality form major parts of the main route system in the centre and therefore are very visible.
- No focus to town centre – with no real public space or clearly defined retail zone, the town centre lacks a quality centre that defines it or makes it memorable.
- Limited public art – with several historic monuments situated on the outskirts of the town centre, the public art features within the town centre are minimal. This reduces the potential quality of the town centre and

adds to the illegible nature of its routes.

- Pedestrian environment is of low quality – crossing points are few and do not coincide with desire lines to destinations, creating potential conflicts with vehicular movement.
- Servicing is poorly managed – along Trinity Street the service and delivery to the back of South Street properties creates a poor quality environment for both vehicles and pedestrians.

2.5 Opportunities

These opportunities, whilst not all embracing, do address many of the issues raised. The resolution of traffic related pressures by junction rationalization, management measures, calming and constraints all play a part in creating the canvas on to which the quality of the urban fabric can be enhanced.

At present traffic dominates almost every part of Dorchester's central area at the expense of the pedestrian environment and reduces the quality and attractiveness of this important historic town.

Improvements to the urban fabric, comprising buildings and spaces, will help to create a sense of place that will contribute towards a unique Dorchester identity.

It is important, however, to recognise that without taking radical steps to reduce the intrusion and negative impacts of traffic, any improvements to the urban fabric will have

a minimal effect; in many cases, following a significant reduction in traffic movement, improved pedestrian circulation areas and routes and modest streetscape and landscape enhancement, there is considerable scope to considerably improve the quality of the central area environment.

- Potential to improve the environment through the pedestrianisation of High West Street between Trinity Street and South Street.
- Rationalisation of the role of Trinity Street and the enhancement of its environment.
- Control/reduction of through traffic via diversion around the core area.
- Promotion of sustainable travel choices via improved pedestrian and cycle links between town fringes and core area.
- Potential for new bus interchange facilities in association with developments at either Weymouth Avenue or Charles Street.
- Potential to rationalise car parking in Charles Street within the immediate core to free up land for redevelopment.
- Opportunity to integrate new development sites within core area via pedestrian / cycle links.
- Opportunity to improve pedestrian facilities at key junctions through highway improvements under changes to the road layout.

Consultation on the Vision for Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan





Chapter 3

Consultation on the Vision for Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan

3.1 Objectives

The vision for the DTEP has resulted from the consultation meetings and workshops that addressed key issues and problems, technical concerns and aspirations. Three stakeholder consultation meetings/workshops were held and the points raised are contained in Appendix B.

The consultation followed the completion of a series of baseline studies that included an appraisal of the present conditions in Dorchester as outlined in Chapter Two of this report.

Nine objectives, identified by the County and District Councils based on the policies or actions for transport in Dorchester set in the Local Plan, the Community plan and the Local Transport Plan, were used as a format for

discussion and elaboration. These objectives are not in order of priority:

- Support the economic prosperity of the town.
- Reduce through traffic.
- Provide a higher quality environment.
- Protect and enhance the historic fabric of the town.
- Reduce traffic speeds.
- Increase pedestrian priority and freedom.
- Improve access for cyclists, the elderly and disabled.
- Maintain vehicular access for emergency, servicing and public transport.
- Provide accessible car parking for shoppers, residents and other essential users.

3.2 Stage 1 Consultation

The consultation process formed the foundation of the DTEP proposals; several key groups were involved as the studies progressed with consultation ultimately moving into the public arena with exhibitions and a questionnaire. At each stage of the work guidance and feedback influenced subsequent stages and the proposals reflect the views and opinions of those involved.

This part of the report deals with the consultation process from the commencement of the project up to the formulation of options. Chapter 6 deals with the public consultation exercise and subsequent meetings.

The consultation process included the following groups:

The Joint Councils' Steering Group

The Steering Group was assembled to guide, monitor and review the progress of the work. The Steering Group comprised technical officers from Dorset County Council, West Dorset District Council, Dorchester Town Council, Dorchester Area Partnership and Dorset Engineering Consultancy; meetings were chaired by Tim Westwood, the DTEP Project Manager, from Dorset County Council.

Members' Group

This group comprised all elected members of Dorchester Town Council, some of whom are also members of the District and/or County Councils. Meetings were also attended by technical officers from DCC, WDDC and DTC, and the DAP co-ordinator.

Stakeholders' Workshops

A list of stakeholders was compiled through the Steering Group and Dorset Area Partnership, based on the 'Town Centre Group' of the Partnership, and invited to attend the DTEP workshop. The list of invited attendees included stakeholders with an interest in the future of the town across a wide range of interest groups. Meetings were also attended by technical officers of the three councils, and the Dorchester Area Partnership co-ordinator.

Stage One consultation workshops took place with the Steering Group, Town Council Members and the Stakeholder Group. The focus of the workshops was to understand what each of the objectives meant to each town centre user group, where they were an issue and how they could be addressed within the town centre. The outputs from the consultation presentations and workshop events formed the basis for the DTEP vision.

The Stage One consultation process took place in June 2004 and was facilitated by SW and comprised the following events:

- Steering Group Consultation 3rd June 2004 (meeting)
- Members' Group Consultation 3rd June 2004 (workshop)
- Stakeholder's Consultation 17th June 2004 (workshop)

The overarching objectives of the consultation in June was to draw out views and concerns from Members, Stakeholders and Technical Officers in order to confirm and adjust objectives, set priorities and provide the framework for a vision for the DTEP. The involvement of the Dorchester Area Partnership was viewed by SW as a critical input into the consultation process because of its broad membership.

Participants in the consultation process clearly were concerned at the loss of amenity and environmental quality in the central area as a result of pressures, noise and confusion caused by traffic. There was a general agreement that

in order to achieve meaningful improvements significantly greater emphasis should be placed on the creation of a safer, more convenient and more attractive pedestrian environment; as a consequence it was also recognized that in order to achieve these goals there would be a strong likelihood that the present freedom and flexibility enjoyed by drivers would have to be severely curtailed, resulting in longer journey times within the central area of the town.

These views were an important conclusion of the meetings and workshops and the foundation of the vision for the DTEP. The subsequent work in option formulation was based on these conclusions and a reconfirmation of the objectives.

Appendix B contains the findings of the workshops in full. The following summary illustrates the areas of concern and gives further detail in respect of the underlying issues.

Increase pedestrian priority and freedom in the town centre

- Pedestrians should be a priority in the town centre.
- Top 'o Town, The Junction, Maumbury Rings and Great Western Junctions need to address pedestrian movement as they are currently considered unacceptable.
- Important pedestrian routes between the stations and the town centre need to be considered.
- Pedestrian movement between the market and the town centre needs to be considered.

- Pedestrian crossing points need to be considered for youths at the proposed skate park / Maumbury Rings junction and for students coming from the Thomas Hardy School into the town centre.
- Pedestrian access to the west needs to be strengthened. A route from the town centre, through the Borough Gardens, across the railway and into the hospital site was suggested.

Reduce through traffic

- Heavy delivery vehicles enter the town centre from the east; signage is needed to deter heavy vehicles with no business in Dorchester. 1
- Signage from the east to key car parks is needed. 2
- Movement along the High Street could be restricted through the pedestrianisation of one section. Access needs to be retained. 3
- Movement along the High Street could be restricted by making it a one-way route.
- Traffic from the north needs to be considered as it currently comes through the town centre southwards instead of using the bypass.
- Traffic from the Top O' Town roundabout exiting eastwards along the High Street needs to be addressed.
- Plans to complete the missing northern link to the bypass should be considered.
- Traffic congestion at the Weymouth Avenue roundabout needs to be addressed to encourage use of the bypass as a through



route instead of the town centre.

- The main approach to the town centre should be from the south along Weymouth Avenue so there is less reason for traffic to pass along the High Street and access to the town centre will be improved.

Improve access for cyclists, the elderly and the disabled

- Concern expressed regarding disabled, partially sighted and blind users of the central area; floorscape varied with poor dropped kerbs; crossings / crossing points are inconsistent.
- Disabled movement should be planned into the DTEP.
- There are no cycle routes within the town centre. Sustrans routes are planned to the edge of the town centre. Provision for cyclists should be addressed.
- Designated cycle routes and facilities from residential areas into the town centre need to be considered to reduce car journeys.
- 'The Walks' and the river provide alternative routes into the town centre from surrounding areas.

Maintain vehicular access for emergencies, public transport and servicing

- Any change in traffic routes and priority should provide priority for emergency and public transport movements.
- The Dorset Museum is an important drop-off point for the town centre.
- A new public transport interchange is planned for the Brewery Site.
- Heavy goods vehicles, servicing and bus / coach movements should be restricted within the historic core.

Provide accessible car parking for shoppers, residents and essential users

- More effective management and control of car parking in the town centre is required.
- A car parking strategy is needed to meet the town centre objectives.
- Park and Ride should be considered as a solution to reduce through traffic.
- Alternative solutions to Park and Ride could include Park and Walk / Park and Trolley / Park and Cycle.
- Coach and bus parking for lay over should be located outside the town centre.
- The standard of car parks in the town centre is very poor and needs improvement i.e. Charles Street, Forum, Top O' Town.
- Only short term car parking should be provided in the town centre.
- Improved signage to car parks is required

Protect and enhance the historic fabric of the Town

- Gateway features into the town centre need to be considered.
- Park and Ride concept seen as an important contributor to enhancement of the Roman Town (not just on market days).
- Visitor coaches dropping off and parking are disruptive; a coherent management policy is required.
- Coaches should be kept out of central area except for pick up and drop-off.
- The Roman Town should have a different character to other areas of the town centre.
- The alley ways between car parks, Trinity Street and South Street need to be improved.
- Trinity Street has greatest potential for growth, small scale development on Trinity Street should be considered.

Provide a higher quality environment

- The Roman Town Centre and Conservation Areas are the most important environments within the town centre.
- The effect of traffic noise and frequency on the Borough Gardens needs to be considered.
- A reduction in through traffic would create a higher quality environment.
- Reduction in commuter traffic to large employers is regarded as a problem, e.g. hospital, county, district council. Travel plans for these sites need to be considered.

- Pedestrian and vehicle routes to schools needs to be considered.
- Café culture and an extended evening economy within the town centre should be encouraged.
- Traffic should be reduced in areas where there are historic buildings, so that the visual impact can be improved.
- Public realm improvements to the town centre will encourage visitors to stay longer.
- Create new areas that future generations will want to conserve i.e. new town square or centre to the town.
- Specific areas for improvement are: South Street (southern end), Charles Street, High Streets (East / West), Durngate Street, Trinity Street.
- Conflicts between servicing, car parking and pedestrian routes create a poor quality environment.

Support the economic prosperity of the Town

- It was appreciated that a higher quality, more traffic-free environment, would encourage local residents and visitors to stay in the town centre for longer periods of time with consequential commercial benefits.

Reduce traffic speeds

- Traffic speeds are seen as a problem near schools and in residential areas. Monmouth Road is regarded as a problem area.
- Speed humps and an abundance of signage

are not regarded as a desirable solution to reduce speed.

- A 20 mph speed limit should exist within the whole of the Roman Town.
- Service vehicle restrictions are seen as an opportunity to improve the urban environment, reduce traffic impacts and give pedestrian priorities.

Finally the list of objectives was re-ordered as a result of the consultation process and prioritised as follows:

- Increase pedestrian priority and freedom (in the town centre)
- Reduce through traffic.
- Improve access for cyclists, the elderly and the disabled.
- Maintain vehicular access for emergencies, servicing and public transport.
- Provide accessible car parking for shoppers, residents and other essential users.
- Protect and enhance the historic fabric of the town.
- Support the economic prosperity of the town.
- Provide a higher quality environment.
- Reduce traffic speeds.

3.3 Stage 2 Consultation

Following the Stage 1 consultation a further round of consultative meetings were held with the three groups of representatives. Three transportation strategies and junctions options were tabled for feedback prior to the public exhibition and consultation proposed in September 2004. These options comprised:

Option 1 Do Nothing Benchmark Option

- Two way traffic along High Street as existing with carriageways minimised and footways widened as far as possible;
- Access to Forum Centre car park via a one way loop up from the southern end of South street along New Street and down Trinity Street

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Option 2 One Way Traffic Eastbound down High Street

- Traffic along High East Street and \High West Street one way east bound to minimise through traffic from west. Carriageway widths minimised and footways widened as far as possible;
- Access to the Forum Centre car park is via a two way route up Trinity Street in order to limit the number of arms at the Junction;
- South Street is pedestrianised from High East and High West Streets to the Junction.



Option 3 Pedestrianisation of High Street

- High East Street and High West Street are closed to through traffic other than essential access to private properties, public transport, servicing vehicles (out of hours) and prison access between Top 'O' Town and Church Street/Ackland Road;
- The High East and West Streets are pedestrianised between Trinity Street and Church Street/Ackland Road;
- Access to the Forum Centre car park is via a new entrance located off Great Western Road which crosses the The Walks enabling movements at the Junction to be reduced;
- Culliford north becomes a one way route south bound towards Prince of Wales Road

Feedback

Feedback from meetings with other Members' Group, Steering Group and a second Stakeholders Workshop covered a wide range of issues. The key areas of concern raised were as follows:

- Disabled access
- Servicing
- Parking
- By pass congestion
- Charles Street development potential
- Access to Forum Centre car parks through The Walks
- Gyratory/Skate park conflicts
- Pedestrian links across gyratory

Disabled access

Disabled car users find the car parks too far from the shops and wanted to know if the proposals would address their concerns. It was noted that in each concept disabled access would be a primary concern with key areas for disabled parking identified.

Servicing

Servicing in pedestrian areas is a current concern, especially heavy goods vehicles accessing South Street.

Parking

Even though proposals had been made for improved signage to car parks to encourage a better distribution of traffic from the east and west some participants felt this would not discourage traffic from entering the central area.

By pass Congestion

The transfer of through traffic to the by pass was a fundamental part of Options 2 and 3. Some participants queried the impact that this might have on the by pass capacity. It was noted that junctions on to the by pass should be able to cope with anticipated traffic flows under normal conditions.

Charles Street Development Potential

The likelihood of lost development potential of the Charles Street Car Park site was identified as a concern. It was felt that the DTEP scheme should take priority as the development potential of the site has been on the table for many years. It was also noted that so long as development proposals do not reduce parking capacity then there would be no loss in spaces.

Access to Forum Centre Car Parks through The Walks

This component of Option 3 was firmly rejected.

Gyratory/Skate Park Conflicts

This was raised as a potential problem/conflict of issues; two solutions were considered one with and one without the skate park. The opportunity to combine functions and cross the gyratory with a pedestrian crossing would need to be tested at the detailed design stage.

Pedestrian Links Across Gyratory

Participants were concerned over safety issues for pedestrians under the existing situation, especially school children accessing schools from east to west and required clarification that access across the gyratory could be provided safely. It was noted that crossings would be an essential component in the roundabout/gyratory

design and would take priority over other functions.

Stage 2 Consultation Results

Following the meetings and workshop there was general support for Option 3 but with strong reservations in respect of the link across The Walks; Option 1 was felt not to address DTEP objectives and Option 2, although supported by one of the groups in the Stakeholder's Workshop, did not go far enough in addressing some of the key objectives.

Following consultation a hybrid Option 4 was drafted that took on board the main components of Option 3 but with the Option 2 access solution to the Forum Centre car parks, rather than the breaking across The Walks.

3.4 Steering Group Conclusions

On the basis of the results of the consultation exercise and responses the Steering Group concluded that there was a consensus of approval and support for the Option 4 proposals and that this option should be taken forward and refined. As the preferred option it would then form the basis for further detailed refinement during Stage Three of the workplan.

3.5 WDDC Feedback

The Steering Group were subsequently requested by the WDDC Environment

Committee to hold back on the preliminary design to allow more time to consider the options as a result of feedback they had received. Concerns had been expressed by residents living in the local Parishes and the outlying rural areas within the Dorchester catchment, in respect of their involvement in the consultation process. WDDC requested that more time be made for further consultation.

At the request of WDDC representatives of the Steering Group attended a September meeting of the WDDC Environment Committee where members were asked to raise their concerns and views on the proposals embodied in Option 4. The meeting agreed that a further exhibition of the consultation material, with Steering Group representatives present, should be held and the Parish Councils notified.

3.6 Parish Council Exhibition

A second exhibition was held on Monday 8th November, focusing on the views of those living in surrounding parishes. All town and parish councils within the District were invited and a number of representatives attended. During the course of the event discussions took place that embraced not just the central and urban areas of Dorchester but also outlying traffic routes and particularly the bypass.

In summary most of the issues raised had been covered by the previous public consultation exercise but there was much greater emphasis on the following:

- Concerns over the reduction in free access and movement in the central area for people driving in from rural areas
- Loss of short term roadside parking areas
- Inability under Option 4 to cross town along High West and High East Streets
- Increased journey times
- Potential use of non-urban roads to compensate for partial closure of High Street
- Need to improve and extend the bypass and its junctions
- Perceived potential damage to commercial viability of Dorchester because of reduction in free access by vehicle

3.7 Amendments to Option 4 Proposals

The Steering Group attended a further meeting with WDDC and gave feedback on the consultation; as a consequence they were asked to examine the scope for an amendment or further option that would address the key issues raised during the additional consultation. It was agreed at this meeting that SW be asked to make proposals accordingly.

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South Street from The Junction



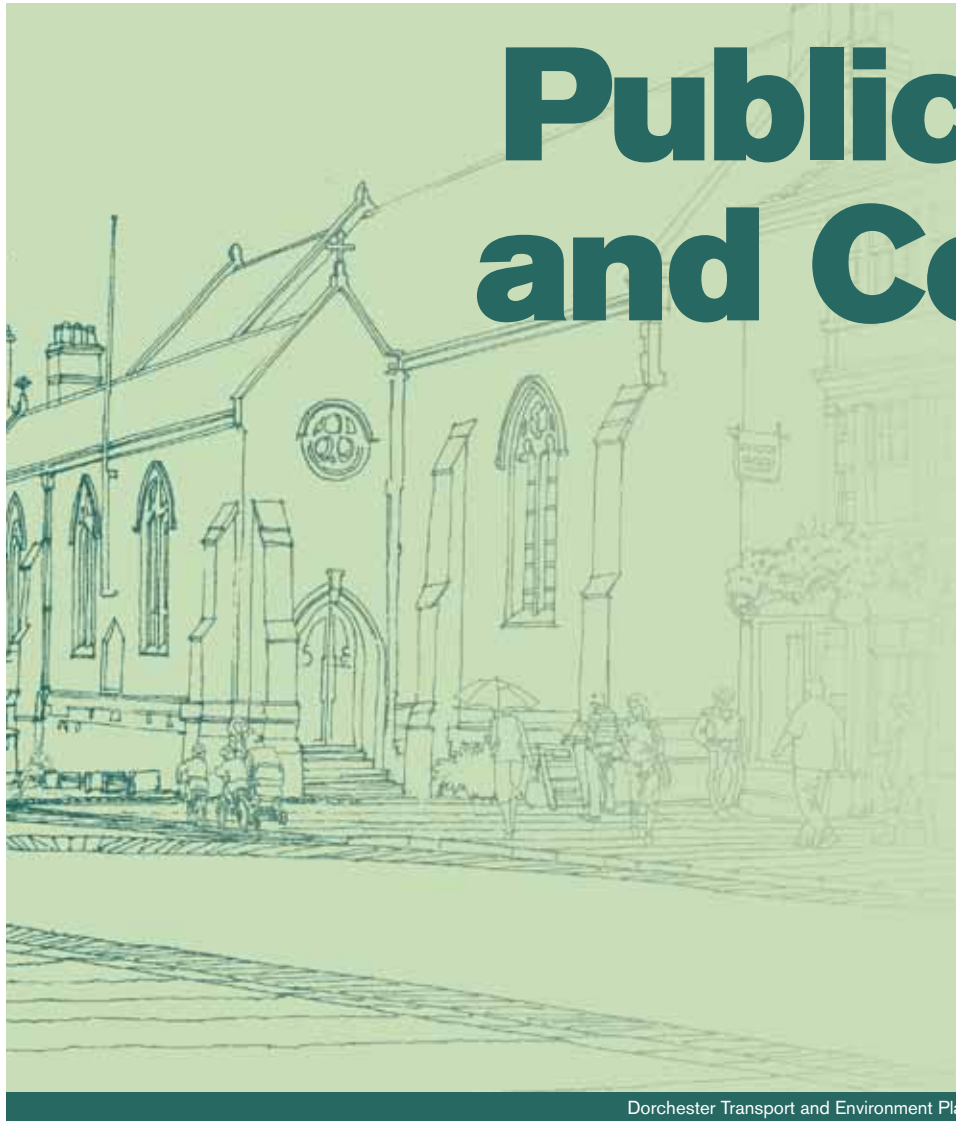
The Walks near The Junction



South Street towards Cornhill

Chapter 4

Public Exhibition and Consultation Responses





Chapter 4

Public Exhibition and Consultation Responses

4.1 Background

A public exhibition was held on the 18th and 19th September 2004 and a descriptive handout and questionnaire circulated to encourage local residents, organizations and interested groups to give their feedback on the proposals.

The questionnaire was divided into two parts (figure 4.1). The first part dealt with respondent's details followed in the second part by a set of questions on the proposals outlined in the leaflet and the exhibition. The questions were designed for 'tick box' responses with two open ended opportunities, one for additional elements to be included in the proposals and another for further comments. 353 questionnaires were returned.

The following section summarises the results. Appendix C contains a tabular record of responses.

4.2 Summary of Consultation Responses

4.2.1 General Information on Respondents

A total of 353 questionnaires were returned with the following results:

- The questionnaire revealed a profile of respondents with 60 per cent between 25 and 64 years and 21 percent over 65.
- 76 per cent lived in a D postcode area and 58 per cent lived in a D1 postcode area.
- Male respondents accounted for some 56 per cent.
- 51 per cent respondents were fully employed.
- 67 per cent respondents wished to receive further information.

4.2.2 Question 1 “How far do you agree with the issues that have been raised about Dorchester Town Centre?”

- 77 per cent of respondents agreed with the issues raised;
- 20 percent disagreed;
- Additional concerns included public transport provision, disabled access, parking and the requirements of villages to the north of Dorchester.

4.2.3 Question 2 “How far do you agree with the ‘vision’ for Dorchester Town Centre?”

- 67 per cent of respondents agreed with the proposals put forward
- 29 per cent disagreed
- Some comments made in respect of ‘ the vision’ arose because the pamphlet did not set out the complete vision due to lack of space and format. The exhibition panels did, however, explain the vision.

4.2.4 Question 3 “How far do you think the preferred strategy meets the aspirations of the ‘vision’?”

- 60 per cent of respondents agreed that the strategy met the aspirations of the vision;
- 33 per cent, however, felt that this was not the case.
- Additional comments addressed the need to involve residents, deal with the detail, inclusion of cycle routes and problems in understanding the proposals



4.2.5 Question 4a “How far do you agree with partially closing High East and High West Streets?”

This question was considered to be one of the key issues in the proposed Option 4 strategy

- 67 per cent of respondents agreed with partial closure
- 32 per cent disagreed with the proposal
- Additional comments included caveats on cycle routes, the Walks
- Some respondents felt unable to judge the scheme without looking at the ‘knock on’ effects
- The SATURN model runs addressed the last point and even though material was available it was not easy to understand’

4.2.6 Question 4b “How far do you agree with limiting traffic on High West Street and Trinity Street to buses and servicing?”

- 62 per cent agreed to the limiting of traffic in accordance with the question
- 37 per cent disagreed
- Additional comments were raised issues in respect of access to provide for key activities and residents, parking needs and safety where some traffic movements are allowed in what would become a mainly pedestrian area.
- Concern over traffic intensification on other roads and cycle routes were also raised.

4.2.7 Question 4c “How far do you agree with limiting traffic through Colliton Street and Cornwall Road?”

- 62 percent respondents agreed with limitations on traffic through Colliton Street and Cornwall Road
- 33 per cent disagreed
- Additional comments elicited detailed responses on traffic circulation and direction on Colliton Street, potential ‘rat runs’, management of speed restrictions, access to the library and pavement width.

4.2.8 Question 4d “How far do you agree with closing Great Western Road to through traffic to improve Great Western Cross and The Junction for pedestrians?”

- 62 per cent of respondents regarded the closure of the Great Western Road junction as positive
- 36 per cent disagreed
- Additional comments included suggestions that traffic lights should be included, a roundabout and a failure to consider the implications of closure on domestic traffic.

4.2.9 Question 4e “How far do you agree with routing traffic around the town centre via Williams Avenue and Church Street / Acland Road?”

- 63 per cent of respondents agreed with the proposal
- 33 per cent disagreed with the proposal
- Additional comments were made in respect of out of town traffic and the use of the bypass and the effects the proposals might have on local traffic, as journeys would be longer.

4.2.10 Question 5 asked respondents the extent to which they agreed with the incorporation of specific improvements into the central area. The improvements were set with each question and included the following:

- More appropriate surfacing
- Pedestrian priority
- New meeting places
- Increased planting
- Disabled parking
- Loading bays
- Seating
- Cycle provision
- Public art
- Street lighting
- Refuse provision
- Water features

A full list of the responses is contained in Appendix C. In summary all but three of the responses achieved significant support with 75 per cent or more respondents in agreement; the exceptions were New Meeting Places and Public Art both only achieving 54 per cent and Water Features scoring only 49 per cent. In respect of New Meeting Places 23 per cent had no opinion but in the cases of Public Art and Water Features 27 and 33 per cent respectively were not in agreement.

The greatest support was given to Seating and Street Lighting at 83 per cent, followed closely by Pedestrian Priority at 81 per cent.

4.2.11 Question 6 “Are there any other features you would like to see incorporated?”

This is one of two open ended questions where respondents were given the opportunity to raise specific issues and matters not covered by the other parts of the questionnaire. 353 responses were received. A full listing of responses is included in Appendix C3.

Comments received covered the following areas:

- Car parking provision and policy
- Increase use of Bypass
- Prosperity of the town
- Access for the infirmed and aged
- Safety and personal security in the public realm
- Cycle routes and facilities
- Public toilets
- Location of County Hall and WDDC and associated parking policy
- Vandalism and maintenance
- Park and ride facilities
- Relocation of Thomas Hardy statue
- Access to High East and West Streets
- Management and control of traffic and parking

The comments received cover a diverse range of topics and provided valuable input into the selection of a preferred option and informed the detailed design process.

4.2.12 Question 7 “What are your views on the consultation material provided for DTEP?”

63 per cent of respondents found the material satisfactory with 22 per cent finding it confusing with a further 15 per cent of the view that it was poorly presented. It was evident at the exhibition that some attendees found it difficult to follow the plans and map symbols. In future consultation the use of diagrams could assist in explaining concepts and proposals.

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4.2.13 Question 8 “Do you have any further comments?”

This was the second open-ended question and it elicited 350 responses covering all the issues listed in the questionnaire and included additional comments; some responses covered topics raised in Question 6. Additional topics are summarized in the following text; a full list of responses is contained in Appendix C4.

Comments received covered the following areas:

- Trial period to test validity of proposals
- Suggestions that High East and West Streets be closed at certain times of the day
- Concern over lack of consultation with parishes and residents
- Concerns over potential rat running in Colliton Street, Northenhay, Slyers Lane, Glyde Path Road and Cornwall Road
- Improvement to traffic management of HGVs and service vehicles and illegal parking
- Concerns over traffic to schools
- Concerns over access to delivery points in the centre
- Concerns over increased traffic near the hospital
- Concern over size of maps and legends in the exhibition
- Location of proposed skateboard park
- Bypass improvements and extension
- Sustrans and associated cycle routes
- Problems occur on the network only at peak periods

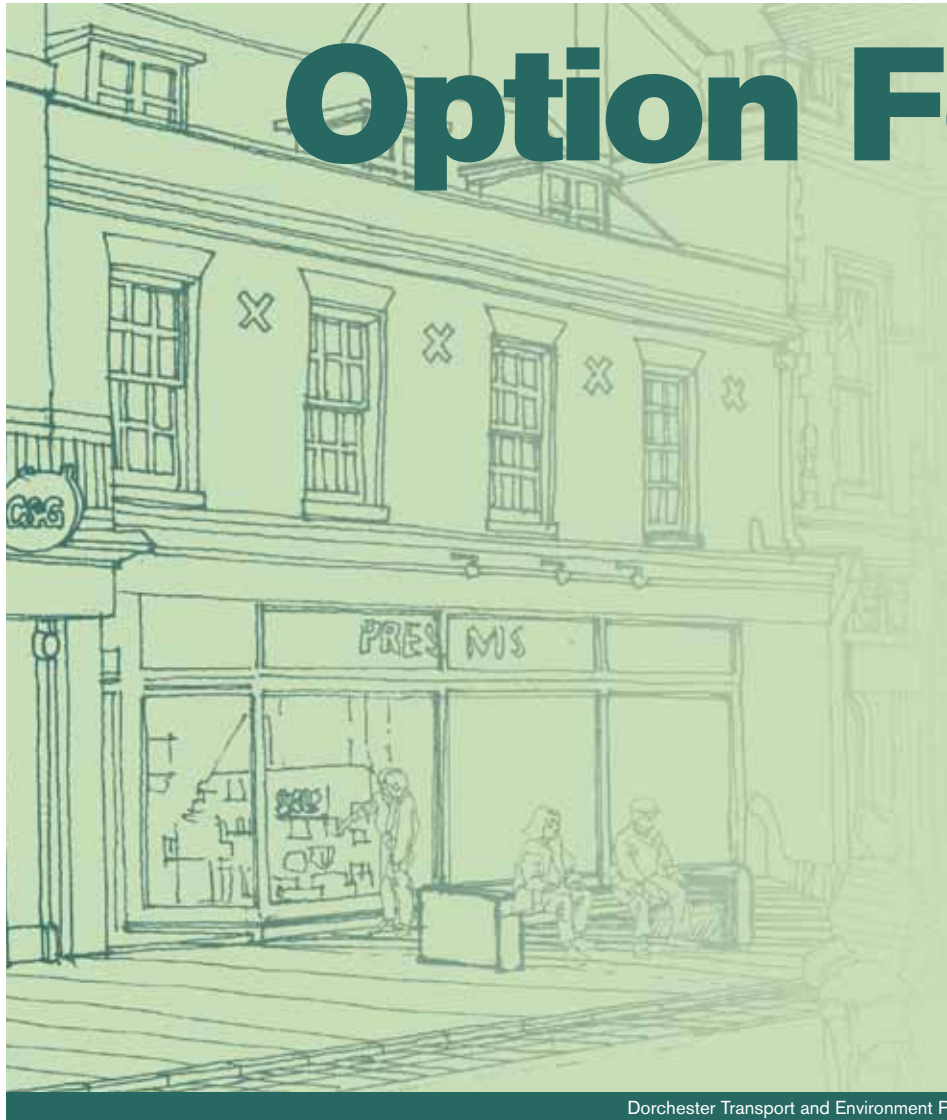
4.3 Conclusions

The consultation exercise was set up to elicit responses and to inform the planning process; in this respect it was successful but feedback suggested a need to continue the process with greater coverage, both geographically and in respect of residents living in the town. One important concern that should influence future consultation is to make proposals and communication material easier to comprehend.

In respect to the questionnaire and the tick box questions a pattern emerged where in excess of 60 per cent of respondents agreed with most of the proposals made, the only exceptions were in respect of New Meeting Places, Public Art and Water Features. The results endorsed the findings and proposals resulting from the Workshops and Steering Group. It is significant that on the issues of pedestrian priority and improved surface treatment there was considerable support at 81 per cent and 78 per cent respectively.

The additional comments and the open ended questions numbers 6 and 8 provided the opportunity to set out other concerns and suggestions over a wide range of related issues. The response of 353 completed forms and comments is an essential input into the planning and refinement of proposals.

Option Formulation





Chapter 5

Option Formulation

5.1 Background

Further to the baseline analysis and the consultation that has been undertaken, Figure 6.1 illustrates the concepts and objectives that need to be considered within the DTEP strategy.

In forming options the first step in the process was to consider the most effective ways in which strategic proposals, dealing with routes and junctions, could provide the opportunities from which detailed proposals could then cascade downwards, working from general to specific improvements. Although it was acknowledged that some of the concerns expressed in the consultation process could be dealt with as discrete initiatives that would make improvements, failure to address the bigger issues of traffic movement and junction design would result in a worsening situation and failure to address the key nine objectives.

A set of options were prepared by Scott Wilson and tested by DEC using a SATURN transport model to show traffic movements and journey times at morning (am) peak and the evening (pm) peak in the year 2020 (High Growth Scenario).

The options are as follows:

Option 1 - No Changes (this sets a benchmark from which to draw comparisons);

Option 2 - High East Street and High West Street remain two- way but are traffic calmed

Option 3 - High East Street and High West Street are one way in an eastbound direction

Option 4 - High East Street and High West Street are closed for through traffic other than public transport, servicing vehicles and essential access.

Options 2, 3 and 4 have common elements in respect of junction design. The following section summarises these elements.

5.2 Elements Common to Options 2, 3 and 4

In forming options and seeking solutions it became clear that there are important improvements that can be achieved that would be common to all three options. In isolation the effect of these elements would not be significant in improving the overall environment and traffic flows. Combined with each of the three non-baseline options, however, they provide additional opportunities to make significant improvements to the central area environment.

The proposal to create a roundabout at Maumbury Rings is a key element in all three strategies as it enables the opportunities to improve current traffic flows and minimises the need for right turning movements at key points.

- Vehicles travelling from the east are signed to car parks in the east and vehicles travelling from the west are signed to car parks in the west;
- Trinity Street is primarily a public transport route;
- Great Western Road is access only from the west;
- Albert Road is closed at its north end to reduce the legs on the junctions at Top O' Town;
- Access is provided to the prison via The Bow
- A roundabout at Maumbury Rings;
- Cornwall Road is one way north bound;
- Williams Avenue and Church Street / Acland Road are the principle north – south routes through the town centre;
- The proposed transport interchange is located at South Dorchester Railway Station;
- Prince of Wales Road is left turn out only at The Junction;
- Traffic priority at the Great Western junction is along Maumbury Road and Damer's Road;
- Traffic priority at the Top O' Town junction is along The Grove and Bridport Road;
- Traffic priority at The Junction is along South Walks Road and Weymouth Avenue.

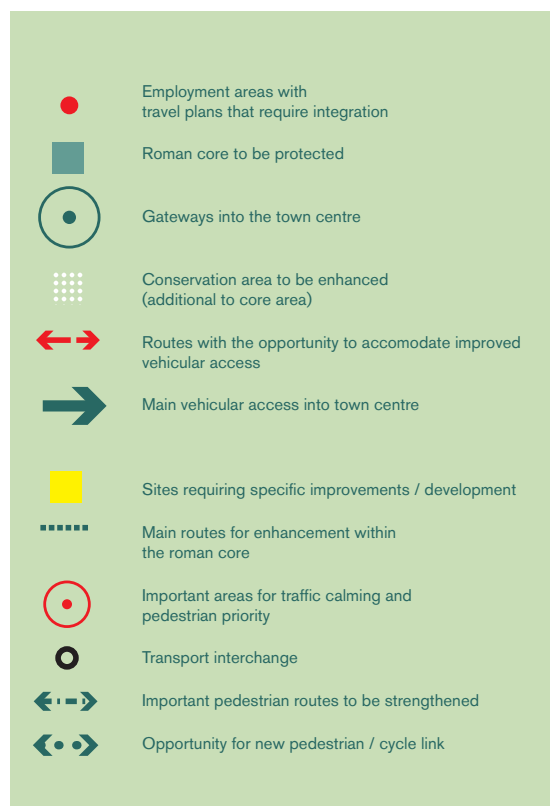


Figure 5.1 Dorchester Strategic Vision Plan



5.3 Options

Four options were prepared and tested on the County Council's SATURN transport model and the results are summarized in the following sections dealing with each option and relate to option one that forms the baseline in a 2020 scenario.

Option 1

This is the baseline or 'do nothing' option that provides a format from which to consider the relative benefits and improvements of subsequent options. It assumes that the status quo prevails and there are no improvements or adjustments to the present circulation pattern. See figure 5.2.

Option 2

This option is based on two- way traffic along High East Street and High West Street with carriageway widths reduced and footways widened as far as possible. See figure 5.3.

Access to the Forum Centre Car Parks is via a one-way loop up the south end of South Street, along New Street and down Trinity Street.

The results of the traffic model show the estimated changes to traffic volumes in the morning peak time (AM) and the afternoon/ evening peak (PM):

Road Link Flows

- Bridport Road (AM) – No significant change
- Bridport Road (PM) – Increase in two way flows
- Williams Avenue (AM) – Increase in two way flows
- Williams Avenue (PM) – Increase in two way flows
- Damers Road (AM) - Increase in two way flows
- Damers Road (PM) – Reduction in two way flows
- Maumbury Road (AM) - Reduction in two way flows
- Maumbury Road (PM) - Reduction in two way flows
- The Grove (AM) - Reduction in two way flows
- The Grove (PM) - Reduction in two way flows
- High West Street (AM) – Increase in two way flows
- High West Street (PM) - Increase in two way flows
- Church Street (AM) - Increase in two way flows
- Church Street (AM) – No significant change
- Cornwall Road (AM) - Reduction in two way flows
- Cornwall Road (PM) - Reduction in two way flows

Car parking

The number of off-street car parking spaces remains as existing on all options.

- High East and West Streets – As existing
- Trinity Street – All spaces removed, some replaced with disabled car parking, taxi rank retained
- South Street – All spaces removed
- Cornwall Road / Albert Road – Increase in spaces
- South Walks Road – Increase in spaces

Journey times

- West to east – Increase in journey time
- East to west – No significant change
- North to south – No significant change
- South to north – No significant change

Option 3

Traffic along High East Street and High West Street is one-way east bound to reduce through traffic to the west. Carriageway widths are considerably reduced and footways widened as far as possible. See figure 5.4.

Access to the Forum Centre Car Parks is via a two- way route up Trinity Street that will reduce the number of arms at The Junction;

South Street is pedestrianised from the High East and West Streets to The Junction.

Road Link Flows

- Bridport Road (AM) – Significant reduction in two way flows
- Bridport Road (PM) – Significant increase in

- two way flows
- Williams Avenue (AM) – No significant change
- Williams Avenue (PM) – Increase in two way flows
- Damers Road (AM) - Increase in two way flows
- Damers Road (PM) – Reduction in two way flows
- Maumbury Road (AM) – Significant reduction in two way flows
- Maumbury Road (PM) – No significant change
- The Grove (AM) - Reduction in two way flows
- The Grove (PM) - Reduction in two way flows
- High West Street (AM) – Reduction in two way flows
- High West Street (PM) – Reduction in two way flows
- Church Street (AM) - Increase in two way flows
- Church Street (PM) – No significant change
- Cornwall Road (AM) - Reduction in two way flows
- Cornwall Road (PM) - Reduction in two way flows

Car parking

The number of off-street car parking spaces remains as existing on all options.

- High East and West Streets – As existing
- Trinity Street – All spaces removed, some replaced with disabled car parking, taxi rank

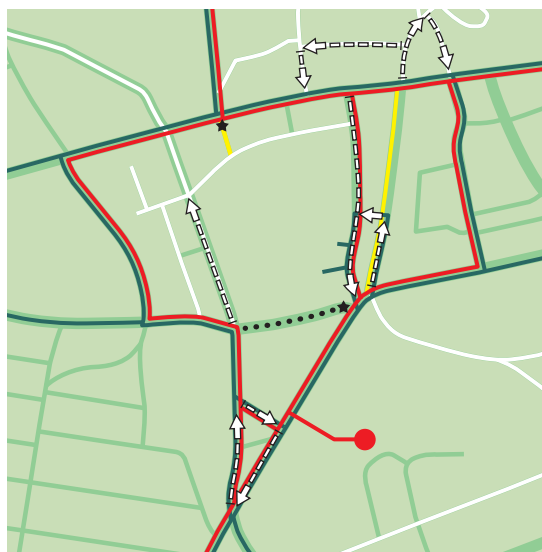
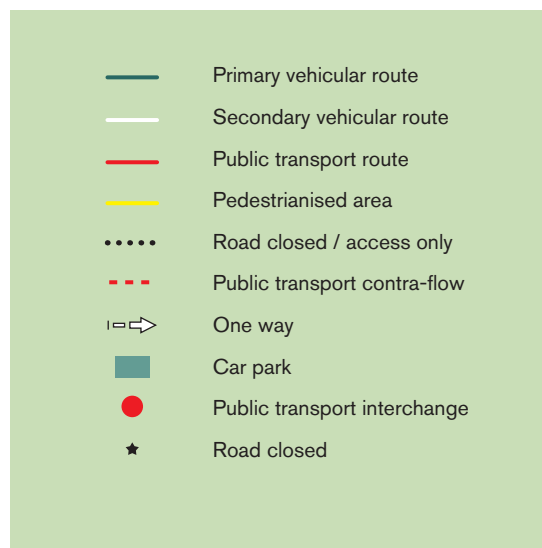


Figure 5.3 Option 2

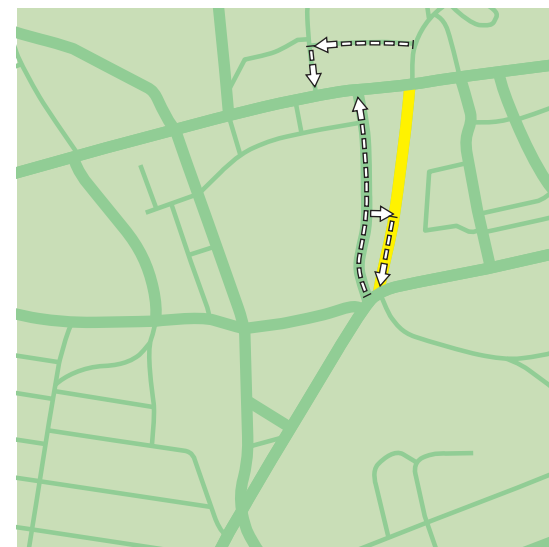


Figure 5.2 Option 1 (do nothing)

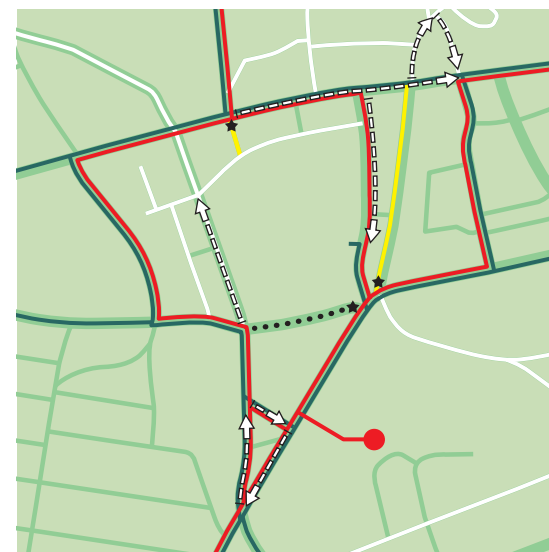


Figure 5.4 Option 3



retained

- South Street – All spaces removed
- Cornwall Road / Albert Road – Increase in spaces
- South Walks Road – Increase in spaces

Journey times

- West to east – Reduction in journey time
- East to West – Significant increase in journey time
- North to south – No significant change
- South to north – No significant change

Option 4

High East Street and High West Street are closed to traffic other than essential access to private properties, public transport, servicing vehicles (out of hours) and prison access between Top O' Town and Church Street / Acland Road. See figure 5.5.

The High East and West Streets are pedestrianised between Trinity Street and Church Street / Acland Road;

Access to the Forum Centre Car Parks is via a two- way route up Trinity Street that will reduce the number of arms at The Junction;

Culliford North becomes a one-way route south bound towards Prince of Wales Road.

Public transport runs contra flow along Trinity Street northwards and then westwards along

High West Street to the Top o' Town junction.

Road Link Flows

- Bridport Road (AM) – Significant reduction in two way flows
- Bridport Road (PM) – Increase in two way flows
- Williams Avenue (AM) – Increase in two way flows
- Williams Avenue (PM) – Increase in two way flows
- Damers Road (AM) – Increase in two way flows
- Damers Road (PM) – No significant change
- Maumbury Road (AM) – Reduction in two way flows
- Maumbury Road (PM) – No significant change
- The Grove (AM) – Reduction in two way flows
- The Grove (PM) – Significant reduction in two way flows
- High West Street (AM) – Through traffic removed
- High West Street (PM) – Through traffic removed
- Church Street (AM) – Significant increase in two way flows
- Church Street (PM) – No significant change
- Cornwall Road (AM) – Reduction in two way flows
- Cornwall Road (PM) – Reduction in two way flows

Car parking

The number of off-street car parking spaces remains as existing on all options.

- High East and West Streets – All spaces removed, some replaced with disabled car parking
- Trinity Street – All spaces removed, some replaced with disabled car parking, taxi rank retained
- South Street – All spaces removed
- Cornwall Road / Albert Road – Increase in spaces
- South Walks Road – Increase in spaces

Journey times

- West to east – Increase in journey time
- East to west – Increase in journey time
- North to south – No change
- South to north – No change

5.4 Option Selection

Following the formulation and modelling of options, the Stakeholder's Workshop, Members' Group and Steering Group members recommended that Option Four be selected as the preferred option for the Public Consultation process. Consultation with these groups on the options had taken place in a series of meetings in July, as described in Chapter 4. There was a minor amendment in respect of access into the Forum Car Park; the original option had considered a route in from Great Western Road

designed to alleviate pressures on the Junction, but involved creating a new route that made an access break through the Walks. Following discussions at the Steering Group meeting it was agreed to revert back to the Option Three solution to access the Forum Car Park as it was felt that there should no new breaks in the Walks which should be preserved in their present form.

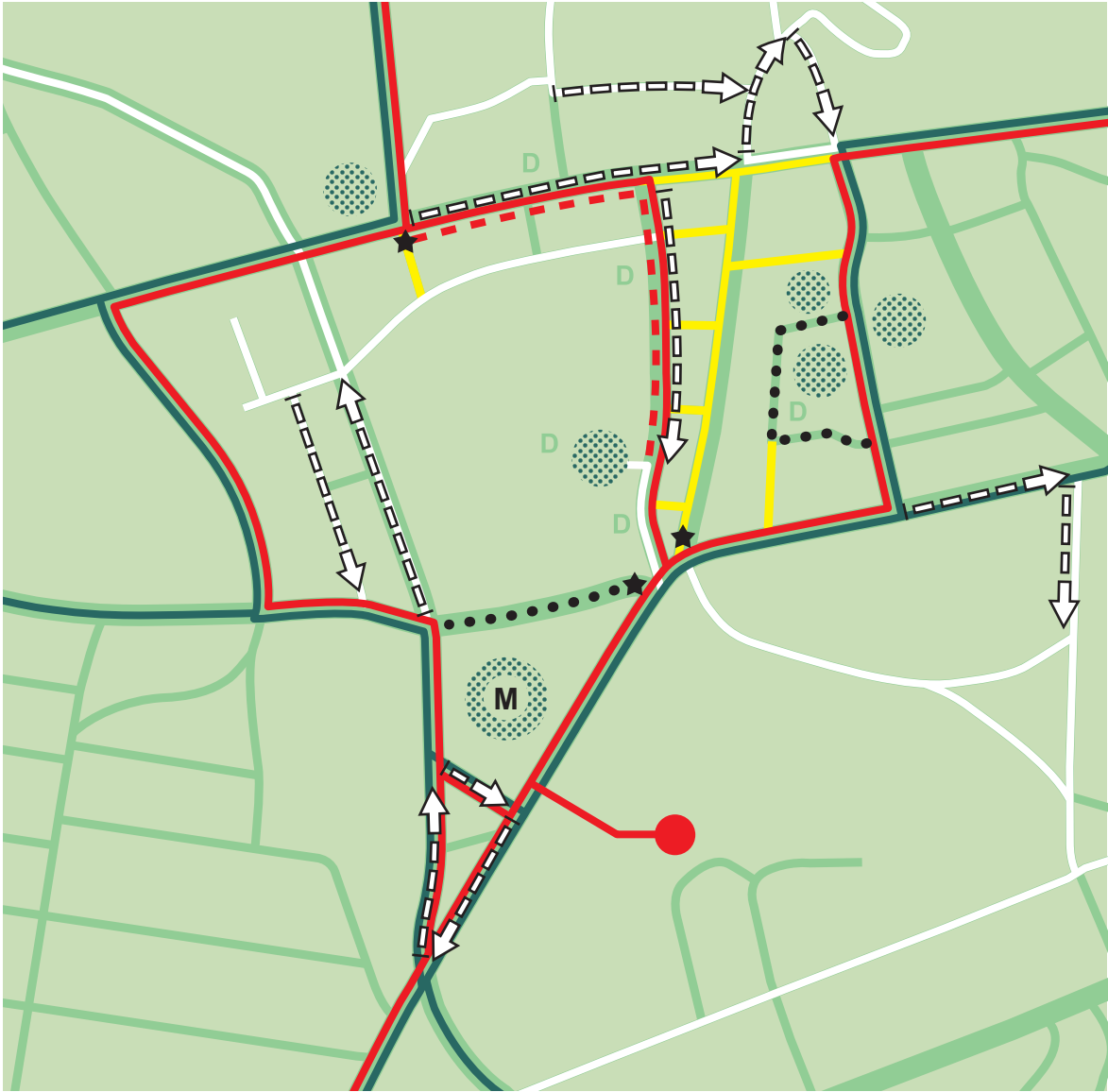
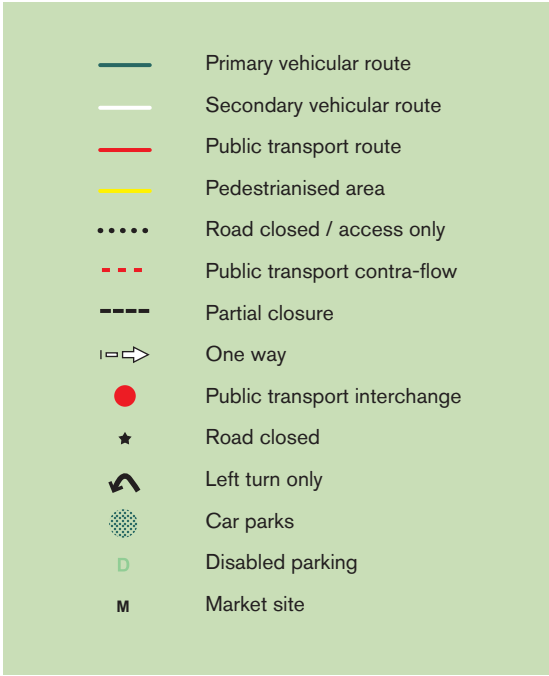


Figure 5.5 Option 4



Top O' Town



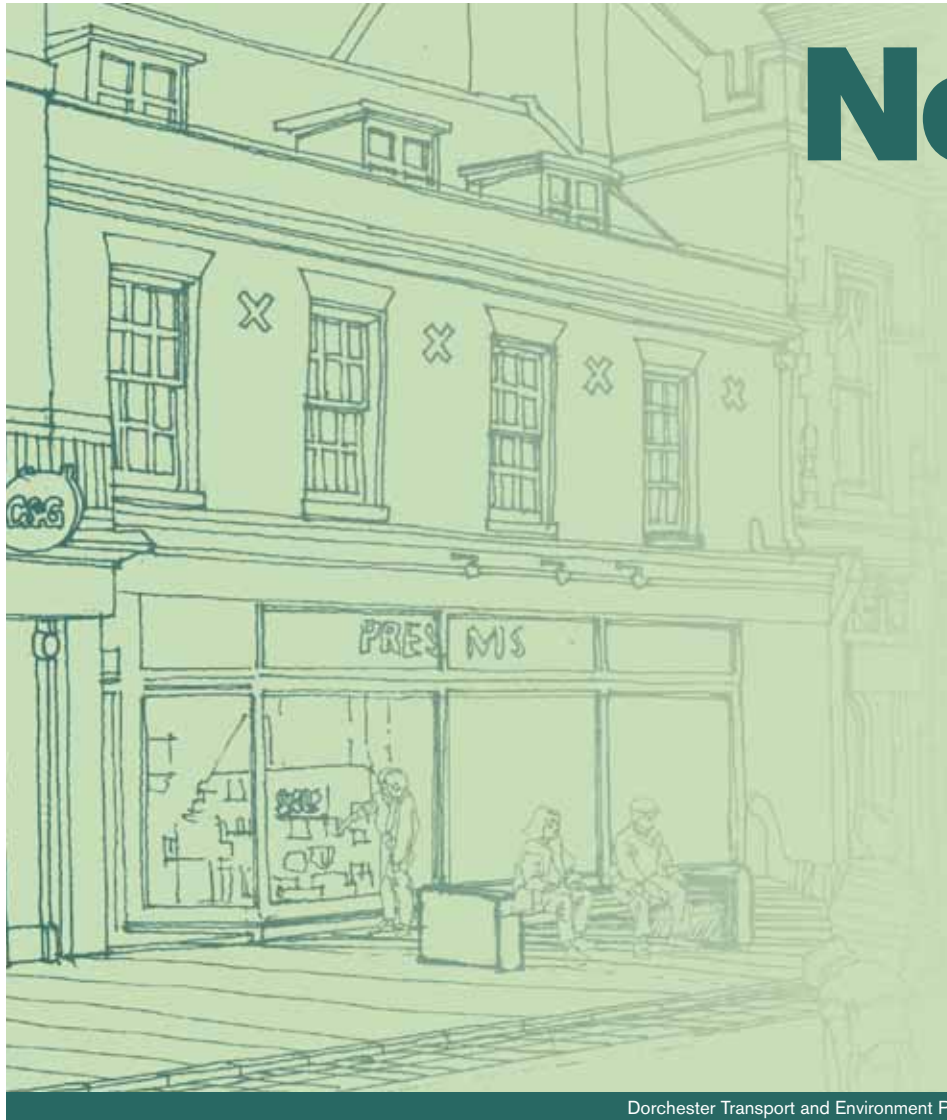
High East Street



High East Street

Chapter 6

New Options





Chapter 6 New Options

6.1 Option 5

Following the liaison with WDDC and feedback from the public meetings a new option was developed (figure 7.1) that adopted most of the attributes of Option 4 but with following main changes:

- High West Street and High East Street is not closed but allows traffic movements from west to east from Top O' Town to Church Road;
- Top O' Town junction is redesigned to accommodate new movements over Option 4 as a result of the High Street changes;
- Design of public realm and traffic route along High Street to take account of the one way easterly link to the Church Road junction;
- No contra flow public transport route along Trinity Street and High West Street.

The Option 5 proposals were presented to WDDC on January 26th 2005 and generally endorsed as a suitable solution on which to progress. At this time the proposals had not been tested using SATURN and more feasibility work was needed in respect of the junctions.

At the meeting it was made clear that the ability to enhance the public realm in the High Street diminishes considerably from Option 4

to Option 5 and as a consequence the ability to give pedestrian dominance and create wider footpaths would be severely limited.

6.2 Steering Group Conclusions

The Steering Group considered the results of the Option 5 testing and concluded that the solution appeared to work from a traffic viewpoint and was suitable for refinement and preliminary detailed design as part of the Stage 3 workplan.

The Steering Group felt, however, that having received strong support at the first public consultation for an Option 4 solution, whereby the public realm enhancements would be significantly greater than under Option 5, the opportunity should be examined to see whether further amendments and refinements could be made before embarking on the preliminary designs. The main objective would be to embrace some of the flexibility in Option 5 with some of the attributes of Option 4.

6.3 Option 6

Following the objective of drawing together the attributes of Options 4 and 5 a further option was developed (figure 6.2). Option 6 retains some of the flexibility of Option 5 but also creates opportunities for greater public realm enhancements and recognizes the strong public endorsement to the concept of pedestrian priority throughout the central area.

Option 6 is based on Option 5 with the following main amendments:

- Directional flow on the High Street is from east to west from the Church Road junction to Top O' Town;
- The High Street between the Church Road junction and the Trinity Street junction is closed to through traffic over part of the day;
- Emergency vehicles and vehicles requiring special access would be permitted to access the 'closed' area but only in a controlled manner;
- Public realm enhancements to the partially closed area will involve wider paved areas and reflect the characteristics of a pedestrian environment;
- Trinity Street traffic flows will be south to north joining west moving traffic along High West Street;
- South Street will be accessed from the south for service vehicles access only, with time restrictions.

The main advantages of the Option 6 solution over Option 5 relate to a more flexible solution where the advantages embraced by Option 4, in respect of larger and improved pedestrian areas, can be realized. The enhanced environment for pedestrians can be achieved through the partial closure along High Street, from say 9.30 am to 4.30 pm and for special events and the retention of existing public transport circuits running northwards on Trinity Street.



Figure 6.1 Option 5

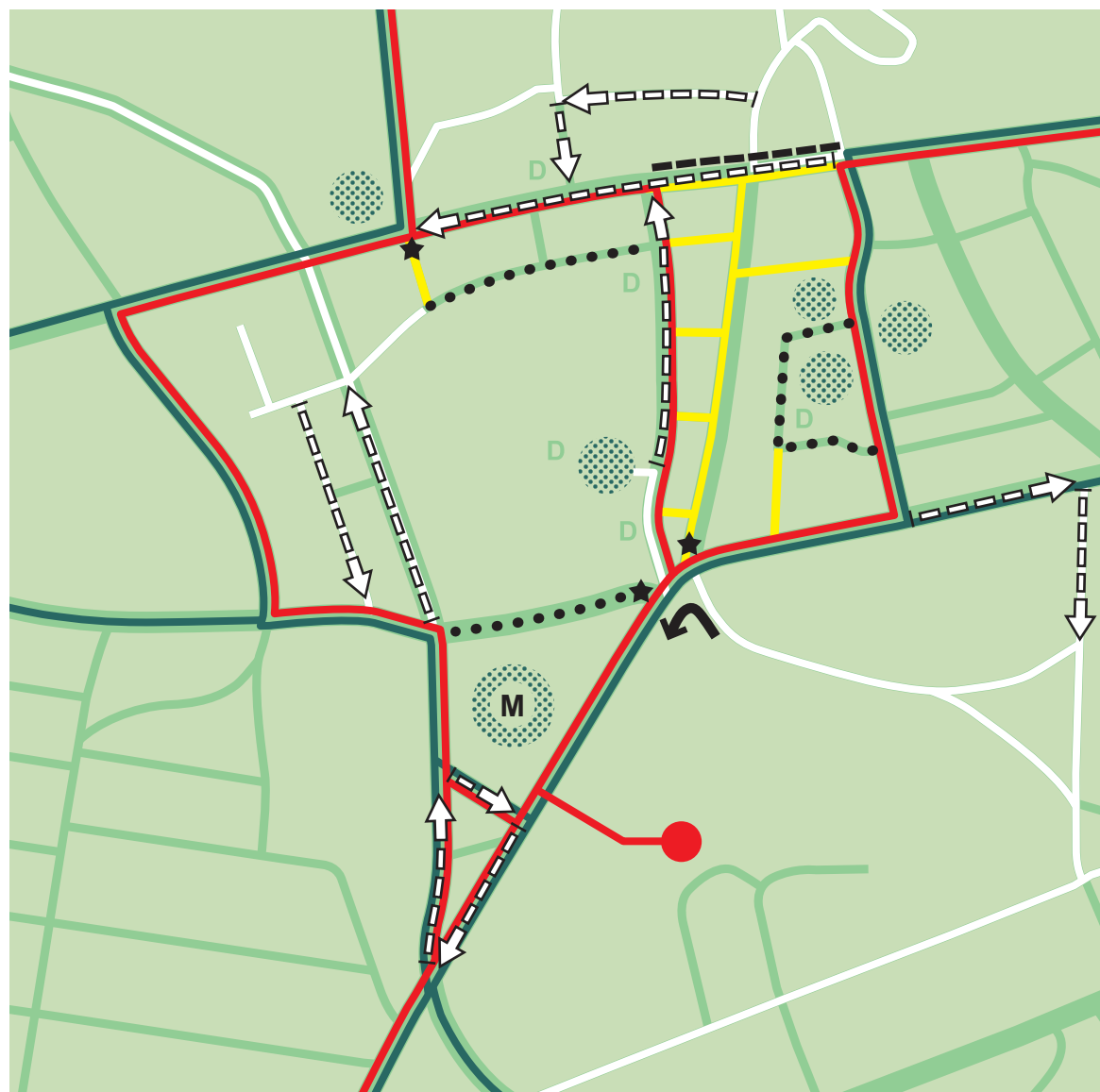
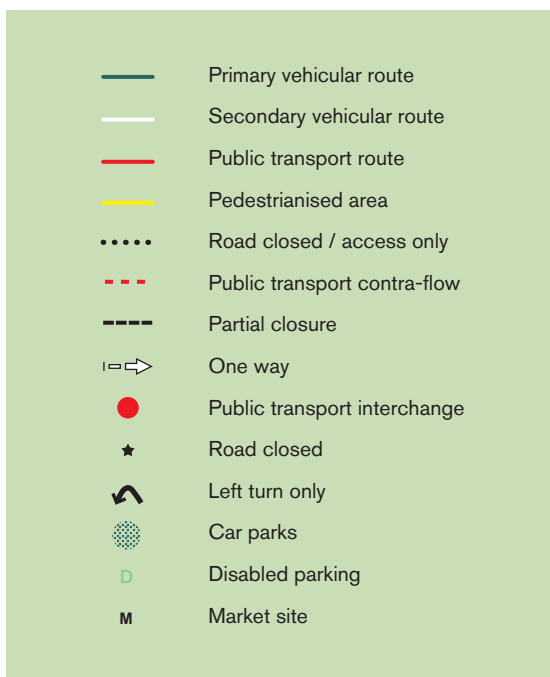


Figure 6.2 Option 6



In respect of the partial closure of the High Street to westbound movements, survey work was made possible as a result of the TRANSCO works that took place in 2004/2005. Traffic movements along the High Street from the east were restricted over the central area with west moving traffic allowed to flow as at present.; traffic wishing to access the central area were diverted through to South Walks Road and through traffic was signed to use the bypass.

The TRANSCO works provided an opportunity to monitor traffic flows on the northern peripheral roads that might be used as alternatives for through traffic going to the north. DCC undertook traffic counts on Lover's Lane Charminster, Rectory Road and Piddlehinton Road C110. Lover's Lane offers the most attractive link from Stinsford Hill in the east to the B1343 to the west.

Traffic counts taken in December 2004 before closure and January/February 2005, during closure, revealed marginal changes in movements along these roads over a seven day average; a rise in westbound traffic suggests that the route was being used as an alternative to the High Street due to the closure to through traffic.

There was a 47 per cent increase in westbound traffic on Lover's Lane but this only amounted to a modest increase averaging 385 vehicles per day; movements during the peak hours over consecutive seven day periods in January/February were marginally less during closure in the am peak and marginally higher in the pm

peak. Most of the 385 westerly movements were spread across the day between 7 am and 7 pm. In respect of road capacity this is not significant.

Changes in traffic movements on Rectory Road and Piddlehinton Road were negligible. As a result it was concluded that the impact of the closure of the High Street to westbound movements did not cause significant problems on peripheral northern routes.

6.4 Option 6 Modelling Results

The opportunities presented by Option 6 were regarded by the Steering Group as an important step in the development and refinement of the options and it was tested using the SATURN model.

As a consequence of the results it was decided by the Steering Group that Option 6 should form the basis for the preliminary design.

6.4.1 Junction Flows

The SATURN traffic model results are based on a 2020 (High Growth) prediction of morning (AM) and evening (PM) peak movements and compare Option 6 with a do nothing scenario, also projected to 2020, where no changes are made to the roads and junctions as they exist at present.

High West Street

In Option 6 no vehicles would use High West Street in its eastbound direction during the AM Peak Hour since it would only be open to service and access traffic. In the do nothing situation 700 vehicles are carried in the eastbound direction, so Option 6 would result in the re-routing of this volume of traffic away from High West Street.

The westbound direction is also expected to see significant relief under Option 6 in the AM peak hour. Traffic flows are expected to reduce from the 720 predicted in the do nothing situation to only 270 vehicles in the westbound direction. This is less than an average of five vehicles per minute.

In the PM peak, the difference in flows between the do nothing situation and Option 6 is even more pronounced. The 500 vehicles in the eastbound direction would re-route away from High West Street under Option 6.

In the PM peak hour, the westbound direction would see an even greater reduction in traffic volumes with a reduction from the 1,150 vehicles predicted in the do nothing situation to only 75 vehicles with the implementation of Option 6.

Based on this analysis, it is evident that High West Street will benefit from significant traffic relief in both the AM and PM peak hours. Without taking account of the partial closure opportunities it is assumed that a similar

situation would also exist throughout the day, thereby greatly improving the situation for workers, residents and visitors to the town centre during this period.

Top O' Town Junction

Traffic flows through this junction will be greatly reduced as a result of the Option 6 proposals, since access from Albert Road would not be possible and traffic on High West Street will only be approaching the junction from the westbound direction. AM Peak hour analysis of this junction has indicated that the 160 vehicles wanting to go ahead from High West Street to Bridport Road and the 110 that want to turn right into The Grove, can be accommodated by a priority junction arrangement with High West Street as the minor arm. In the PM peak hour, only 75 vehicles want to turn right from High West Street into The Grove.

Despite these low traffic flows it may be preferable to make the junction signal controlled to allow possible coordination of traffic from the adjacent proposed signal controlled junctions at Poundbury Road/Cornwall Road and at the junction of Williams Avenue/Bridport Road. A signal controlled junction would also be more pedestrian friendly, allowing pedestrians to move more easily between the Top O' Town car park and the rest of the Town Centre.

Cornwall Road / Bridport Road / Poundbury Road Junction

To improve conditions for traffic turning right out of Poundbury Road onto Bridport Road and manage the potential conflict with traffic turning

right from the opposite Cornwall Road arm of the junction it is proposed that this junction is signal controlled under Option 6. In the AM peak hour right turning traffic from Poundbury Road is predicted at 110 vehicles and the right turn from Cornwall Road is predicted to be 140 vehicles. In the PM peak hour only 85 are predicted to turn right out of Poundbury Road, but the right turn from Cornwall Road is predicted to be 420 vehicles.

The turning volumes in both the AM and PM peak hours therefore support the need for signals at this junction.

As mentioned above, if the Top O' Town Junction is signalised then the opportunity to signalise the Poundbury Road / Bridport Road junction should be investigated. The two junctions could then be linked to coordinate flows on both Bridport Road and Poundbury Road. The merits of providing a further linkage to the Williams Avenue signals should also be investigated. However, it is noted that Williams Avenue already forms part of an UTC and a linkage may be detrimental to its operation.

Trinity Street

In the AM peak a northbound flow of 460 vehicles is estimated on Trinity Street in the do nothing situation. Implementation of Option 6 results in a substantially reduced southbound flow of 80 vehicles. A similar reduction is predicted to be achieved in the PM peak hour, with the 420 vehicle flow in the do nothing scenario falling to only 120 vehicles following implementation of Option 6.

The Junction (Fiveways)

The Option 6 proposals are predicted to reduce traffic through this junction and improve its operation, particularly for pedestrians. In the AM peak hour, traffic on the Weymouth Avenue arm of the junction is predicted to fall from 1,750 vehicles (two-way) in the do nothing situation to 1,150 vehicles (two-way) following the implementation of Option 6. This represents a reduction of 35 percent.

In the PM peak hour, an increase in traffic on the Weymouth Avenue arm of the junction is predicted with flows increasing from 1,400 vehicles (two-way) to 1,500 vehicles with Option 6.

However, this increase is less than one per cent greater than the five per cent threshold considered to represent a material impact. It should also be noted that the Prince of Wales Road and South Walks arms are predicted to see traffic reductions in both the AM and PM peak hours.

Great Western Cross

The Option 6 proposals will significantly reduce traffic on Maumbury Road during the AM peak with a fall from 1,450 vehicles in the do nothing scenario to 1,100 vehicles under Option 6. This equates to a reduction of 339 vehicles or 24 per cent of total two-way traffic flows. In the PM peak a minor increase of 97 vehicles is predicted on Maumbury Road.

Damers Road is predicted to experience an increase of 97 vehicles, but this will occur in

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the AM peak hour. In the PM peak a minor reduction of 23 vehicles is predicted.

6.4.2 Journey Times

Northern Approach: Weir Roundabout to Acland Road/Church Road Roundabout

During the AM peak period the northern route would take 700 seconds to complete under Option 6, compared to 450 seconds for the do nothing scenario. Under Option 6 delays are expected at the Damers Road/Williams Avenue, Damers Road/Victoria Road, Maumbury Road/Cornwall Road and Weymouth Avenue/Great Western Road and would be some 100 seconds each. The longest delay would be at Damers Road/Victoria Road at around two minutes.

During the PM peak period the northern route would take 700 seconds to complete under Option 6, compared to 470 seconds for the do nothing scenario. Under Option 6 the longest delays of some 100 seconds would occur between Weymouth Avenue/Great Western Road and the pedestrian crossing on South Walks Road.

Western Approach: Monkeys Jump to Acland Road/Church Road Roundabout

During the AM peak the western route would take 700 seconds to complete under Option 6, compared to 450 seconds under the do nothing scenario. Under Option 6 delays are expected at the Maumbury Road/Cornwall Road junction;

Damers Road/Victoria Road; and at Weymouth Avenue/Trinity Street.

During the PM peak period the western route would take 645 seconds under Option 6, compared to 450 seconds under the do nothing scenario. Under Option 6 the most significant delay occurs at the junction of Weymouth Avenue with Trinity Street, of some 160 seconds.

Southern Approach: Stadium Roundabout to Top O' Town Car Park

During the AM peak the southern route would take 380 seconds for Option 6 and 280 seconds under the do nothing scenario. Under Option 6 a 100 second delay would be expected at the Weymouth Avenue pedestrian crossing.

During the PM peak the southern route is expected to take 350 seconds under Option 6, compared to 275 seconds for the do nothing scenario. Under Option 6 the longest delay is expected in the Maumbury Road to Damer's Road area of 70 seconds.

Eastern Approach: Stinsford Roundabout to Top O' Town Car Park

During the AM peak the eastern route would take 780 seconds under Option 6, compared to 360 seconds under the do nothing scenario. Under Option 6 the longest delays of around 100 seconds are expected at the Maumbury Road/Cornwall Road/Damer's Road junction

and 150 seconds at Weymouth Avenue/Fairfield Road. Other delays are expected at Church Street/High Street.

During the PM peak period the eastern route would take 780 seconds under Option 6, compared to 250 seconds for the do nothing scenario. Under Option 6 the significant delays are expected at Weymouth Avenue/Fairfield Road junction and Maumbury Road/Cornwall Road/Damer's Road junction of the AM proportions.

South Eastern Approach: Max Gate Roundabout to Top O' Town Car Park

During the AM peak the south-eastern route would take 600 seconds under Option 6, compared to 300 seconds for the do nothing scenario. Under Option 6 the greatest delays are expected at the Maumbury Road/Cornwall Road/Damer's Road junction and where Maumbury Road meets Fairfield road.

During the PM peak the south-eastern route would take some 650 seconds under Option 6, compared to 300 seconds for the do nothing scenario. Under Option 6 the longest delays are expected around the Maumbury Road/Cornwall Road/Damer's Road junction by up to 160 seconds; Prince of Wales Road/Culliford Road of 100 seconds and at the Williams Avenue/Hospital junction of 40 seconds.

Chapter 7

Preliminary Design





Chapter 7 Preliminary Design

7.1 Introduction

The preliminary design proposals as carried out by Scott Wilson take the main components of the preferred option, in this case Option 6, up to a larger scale and test junction layout and design and give greater detail on the public realm proposals.

The preliminary design proposals are based on geometrical layouts showing the configuration of junction layouts and public realm improvements; no new or detailed topographical information was available at the time of the study. It also should be noted that precise services and drainage runs were not available at the time of the preliminary design work.

It will be essential prior to production of detailed contract engineering and landscape drawings that site survey work to obtain accurate levels and precise location of levels and kerb lines, services and drainage runs is undertaken.

7.2 Junction Rationale and Design Considerations

The following junctions have been tested using Auto TRACK to ensure that public transport and delivery vehicles can easily make all manoeuvres at the junctions. AutoTrack enables the designer to 'drive' a variety of vehicles around the design to verify that the highway geometry is suitable for the traffic forecast to use the road.

It should be noted that the AutoTrack testing and the preliminary highway design have been undertaken on OS mapping. During the detailed design of the highway and landscape improvements to the junctions and town centre area by the Highway Authority, we recommend that this analysis be redone on topographical survey data, as OS mapping is known to have some inaccuracies.

All restrictions at the following junctions are in place to ensure that the majority of traffic through Dorchester uses the preferred routes through and around the town.

The Junction

It is proposed that The Junction will have a number of changes implemented to allow traffic to flow more easily through the area. The changes are as follows:

Great Western Road will be closed at its junction with The Junction, which will help traffic flow on Weymouth Road / South Walks Road

by preventing right-turning manoeuvres into Great Western Road. Local traffic will access Great Western Road via the Great Western Cross junction.

Prince of Wales Road will be restricted to left in – left out movements at The Junction. This will stop right-turning traffic blocking Weymouth Road / South Walks Road and give pedestrians wider footways whilst reducing the number of roads to cross in order to get from the town centre to the Fairfield Road car parks.

Trinity Street will remain one-way in a northbound direction. Only traffic requiring local access to the car parks, local properties, delivery vehicles and public transport will be permitted along Trinity Street.

A new access onto South Street will be provided from South Walks Road for delivery vehicles. The orientation of the access onto South Street will mean that it will only be easily accessed from Weymouth Avenue direction. This will be reinforced by traffic signs on the A35 directing delivery vehicles from the southern side of Dorchester. South Street access is proposed to be restricted between the hours of 10am and 5.30pm by means of rising bollards.

In addition to the above restrictions, it is proposed that South Walks Road is widened so that a right turn lane can be provided for vehicles queuing to turn right onto Trinity Street. This should enable through-traffic to keep moving past any queuing traffic.

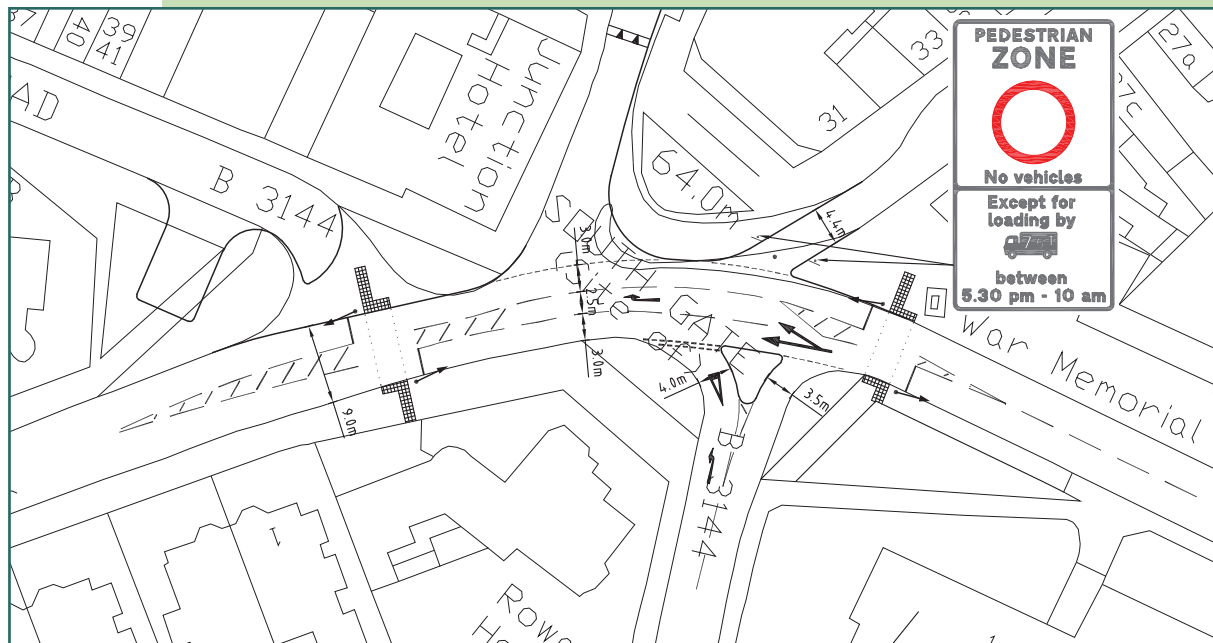


Figure 7.2 The Junction

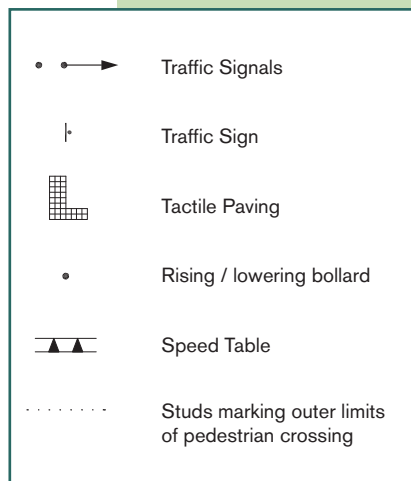


Figure 7.1 Key to Junction Diagrams

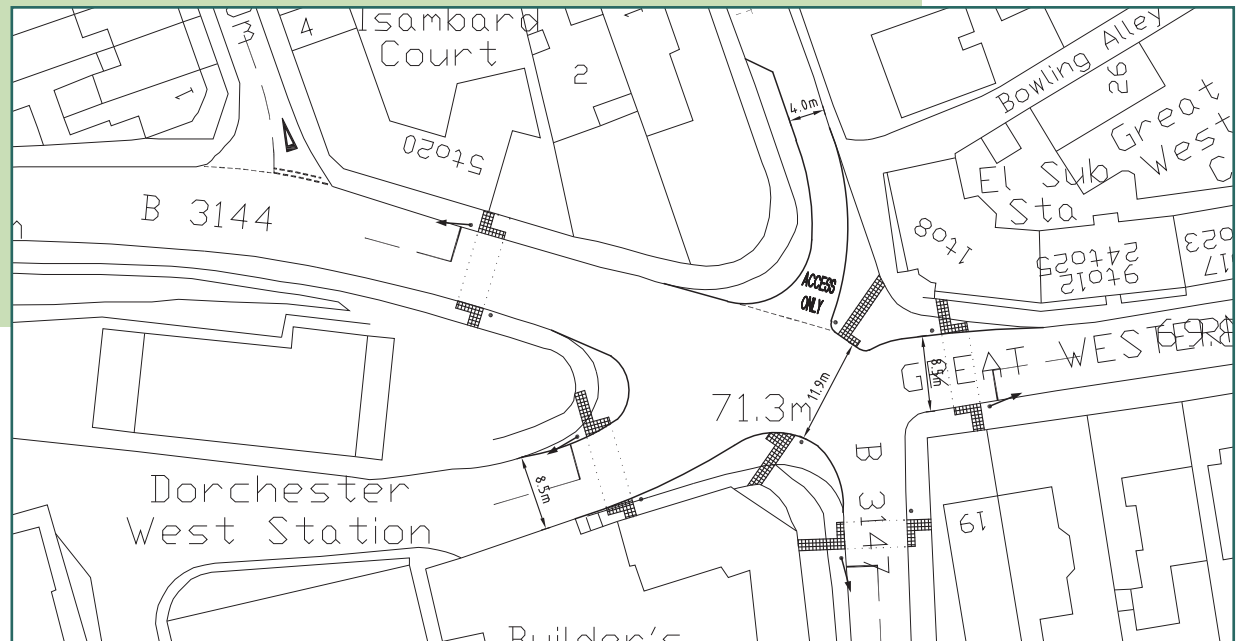


Figure 7.3 Great Western Cross Junction

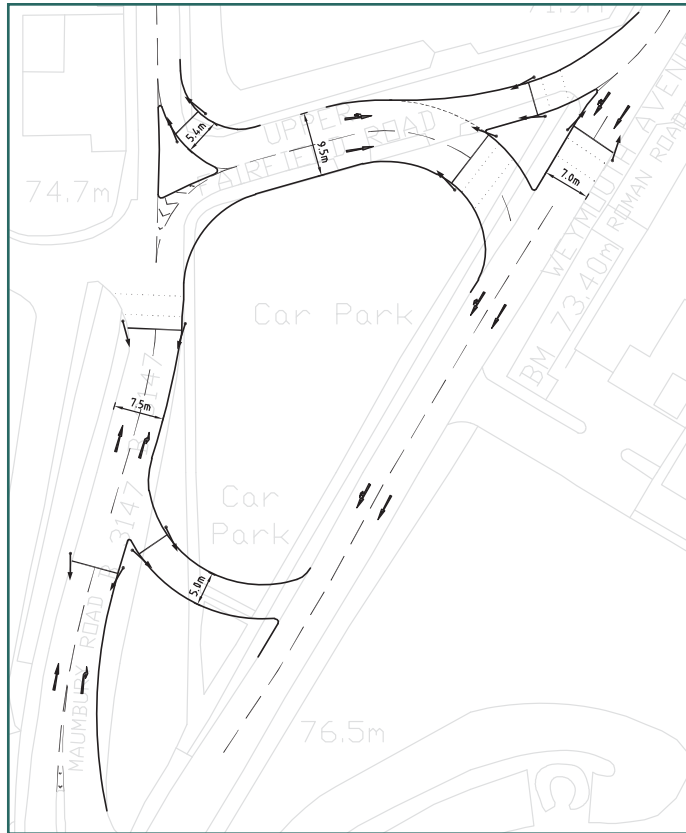


Figure 7.4 Maumbury Rings

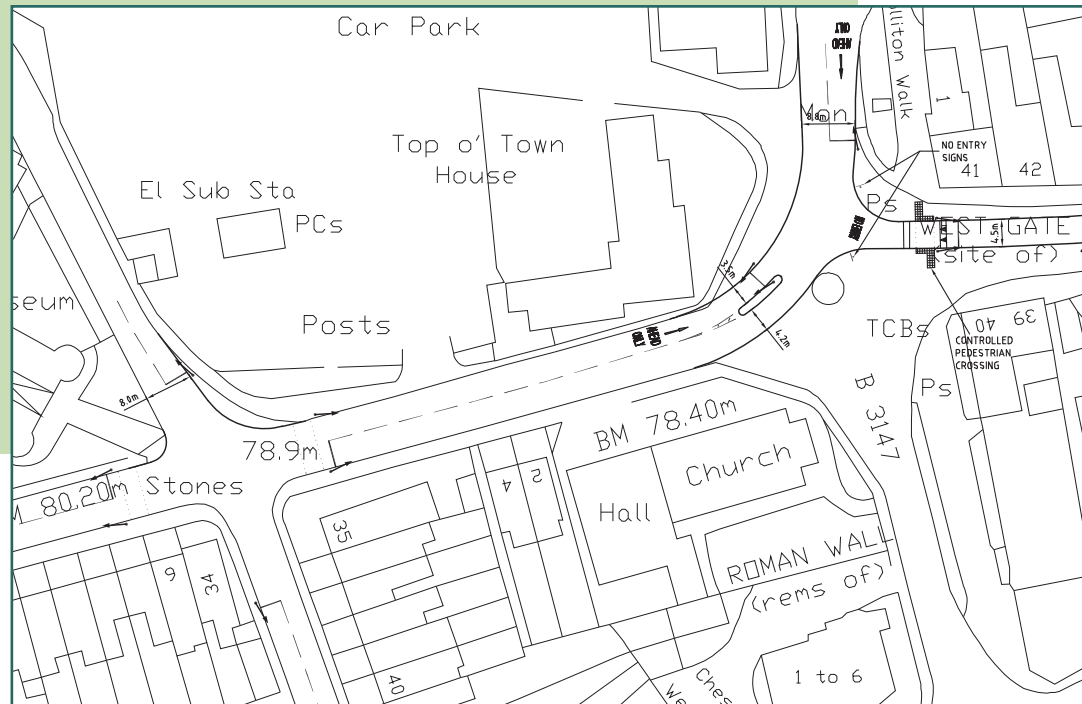


Figure 7.5 Top O' Town Junction

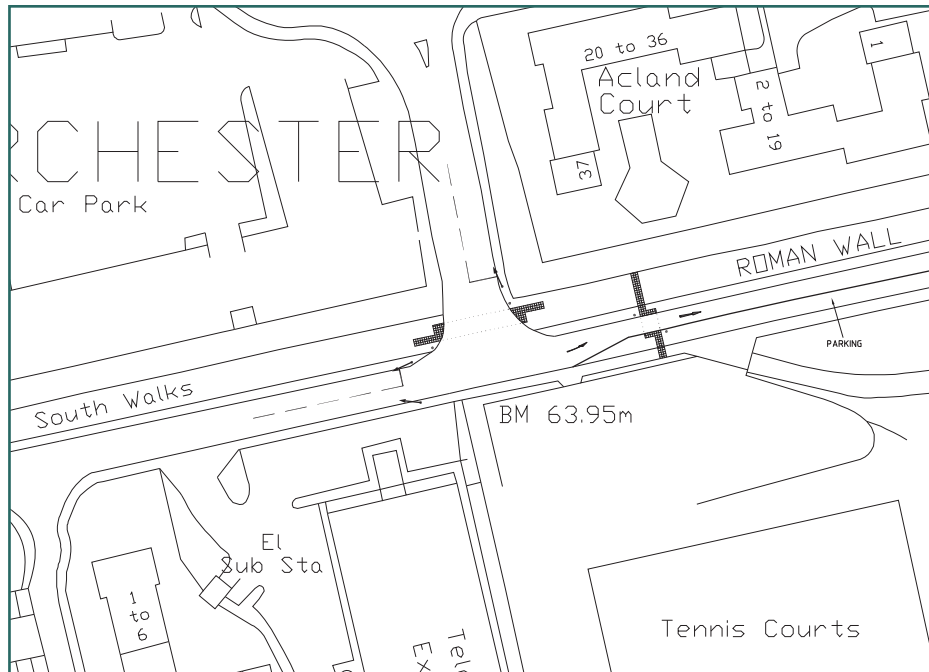


Figure 7.6 Acland Road / South Walks Road

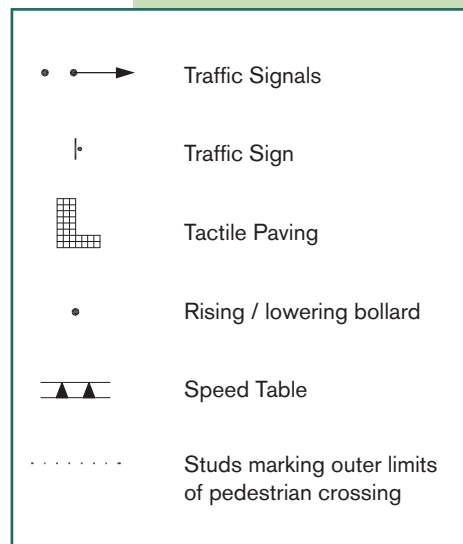


Figure 7.1 Key to Junction Diagrams

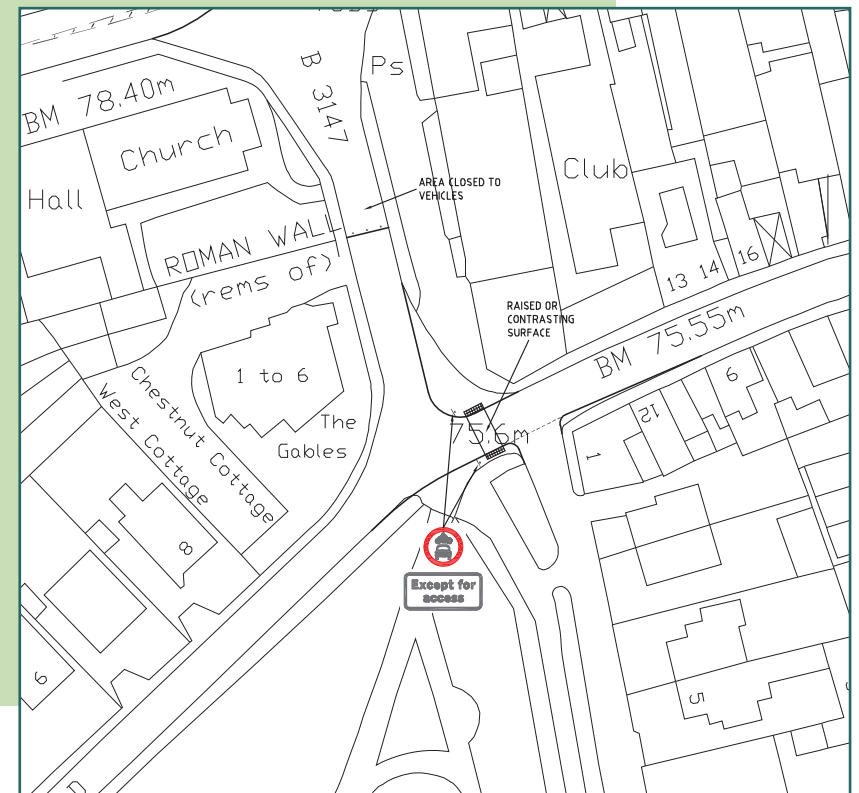


Figure 7.7 Albert Road / Prince's Street



In response to pedestrian desire lines, an extra pedestrian crossing is proposed on the western side of The Junction adjacent to the southern end of Great Western Road. This crossing could be installed as a TOUCAN, which would also provide cyclists with a safe crossing facility.

Great Western Cross Junction

This junction is proposed to remain signal controlled with Cornwall Road restricted to one-way in a northbound direction. This will reduce the amount of traffic using Cornwall Road and stop rat-running traffic using residential streets.

As mentioned previously, Great Western Road will be closed at its junction with The Junction so that only local residents and business traffic will use the road, rather than through-traffic as at present.

These changes will mean that traffic entering the junction from two arms will be reduced, thereby increasing capacity at the junction for through-traffic on Maumbury Road / Damers Road.

As there are currently no provisions for pedestrians at this junction and site observations show that a large number of pedestrians cross from Cornwall Road to Dorchester West Railway Station, it is proposed that pedestrian footways around the junction will be widened where possible and a pedestrian / cycle crossing will be provided on each arm of the junction.

The crossing facilities could also be used by cyclists to improve their access through the town. In addition, cyclists could use Cornwall Road as vehicles will use it less frequently.

Maumbury Rings Junction

It is proposed to create a gyratory system at the Maumbury Rings Junction around the skate park, which is proposed for the area currently used as the market place car park.

A gyratory system offers improved performance at other junctions by reducing the number of turning movements that have to be accommodated.

The layout includes several pedestrian crossings to provide controlled crossing facilities to the central island where the skate park is proposed to be located.

The area could also be improved with enhanced traffic signs to clearly indicate access routes and available capacity within the town's car parks and delivery areas.

Top O' Town Junction

The Top O' Town junction is proposed to be changed to a three arm junction, with vehicular traffic banned from using the top part of Albert Road. The main through-traffic flow will be along Bridport Road and The Grove, with public transport and local access traffic approaching the junction from High West Street.

Preventing traffic using Albert Road will enable the area outside the church to be pedestrianised and will also prevent through-traffic from using Cornwall Road and Prince's Street as a rat-run, thereby forcing traffic to use the preferred main routes through or around the town.

Traffic signals are proposed at the 'T' junction to allow public transport unhindered egress from the High Street, however, they could also be used to deter through traffic by delaying their egress from the High Street through the use of shorter periods of 'green time'. This would be particularly useful during times when traffic is free to move along the length of High East and West Street when the bollard near the Top O' Town Junction is lowered.

The traffic signals also allow a controlled pedestrian crossing to be located at the top of High West Street.

Acland Road / South Walks Road

This junction is presently a signal controlled T-junction with two-way access allowed on each arm. It is proposed to keep the junction signal controlled but only allow one-way traffic eastbound along South Walks Road (to the east of the junction). This will prevent traffic finding an alternative route through the town from the east when the High Street is closed to through-traffic.



Figure 7.8 Cornwall Road to Bridport Road (top) and Albert Road (middle)



Figure 7.9 The Bow / High East Street (middle) and Church Street / High East Street (right)

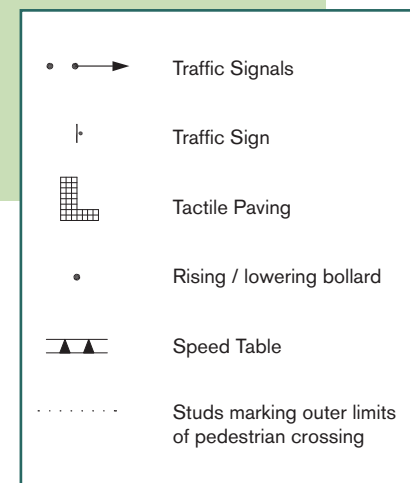


Figure 7.1 Key to Junction Diagrams

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To the east of the junction, following the introduction of one-way traffic along South Walks Road, it should be possible to introduce parking on one side of the road.

Albert Road / Prince's Street

It is proposed that the northeastern kerb line at the Albert Road / Prince's Street junction is built out to reduce the size of the road space. This enables a short raised uncontrolled pedestrian to be located at the end of South Walks to improve the pedestrian route into the town centre and along the route of the old Roman wall.

It is also proposed that Prince's Street is open for access only to reduce the amount of traffic using the mainly residential road to Trinity Street.

Cornwall Road / Albert Road

The top of Cornwall Road is proposed to be re-opened to two-way traffic, so the junction of Albert Road and Cornwall Road will have to be realigned as two T-junctions, with the Albert Road traffic having priority. The existing parking bays may have to be removed, depending on the anticipated flow of traffic on Cornwall Road.

The principal objective of opening up Cornwall Road is for local convenience and not as an attractive alternative northern route from the Maumbury Road/Damers Road junction; traffic calming measures along Cornwall Road to slow traffic and effective traffic light sequencing at

the Bridport Road junction would diminish the attractiveness of this route for through traffic.

It is recommended that the western section of Albert Road be sign-posted for access only to prevent through traffic using Victoria Road as a rat-run to avoid Williams Avenue.

Cornwall Road / Bridport Road Junction

The northern section of Cornwall Road is proposed to be open to two-way traffic to allow residential access to Cornwall Road (north), St Helen's Road and Victoria Road.

As Bridport Road is anticipated to be a primary route through Dorchester, it is recommended that the Cornwall Road / Bridport Road junction is signal controlled in order to facilitate local traffic's egress from the residential areas.

The Bow / High East Street

Depending on the proposed locations of controlled pedestrian crossing points along High East Street or the traffic flows along either High West or High East Street in the future, it may be prudent for this junction to become signal controlled to improve access for turning traffic into/out of The Bow.

Residential traffic will be able to exit The Bow in either direction, as the rising bollard on High East Street close to the junction with Trinity Street will lower to allow traffic to leave the area.

Church Street / High East Street Junction

This junction will remain signal controlled.

7.3 Road Links

Trinity Street

It is proposed that Trinity Street remains one-way to the north as it is at present. This will ensure that public transport routes are unaffected thereby reducing confusion for the travelling public. This will enable the existing taxi ranks, bus stops and disabled parking spaces south of the access to the Forum Centre to remain. Access to the Forum Centre car park will be from the south and all traffic will exit to the north.

It is proposed to reduce Trinity Street to one lane of traffic and remove the traffic signals at its junction with High West Street. This means that traffic on Trinity Street will not be delayed as at present when it arrives at the junction with High West Street.

The removal of the traffic signals also means that through-traffic on High West Street will have to stop to give way to Trinity Street traffic and will eventually deter vehicles from using the High Street as an alternative to the preferred primary route through or around the town.

Parking bays have been included in the design for the northern part of Trinity Street. We have not specified how many of these spaces

should be allocated for use by disabled drivers, as during the detailed design stage the Highway Authority are likely to undertake further consultation with local disability groups to identify their requirements. Alternatively, if several parking spaces were removed it would be possible to provide additional footway space, or additional loading facilities.

South Street / Cornhill

In South Street and Cornhill it is proposed that these roads are closed to all vehicular traffic between 10am and 5.30pm. This could be enforced through the use of automatic rising / lowering bollards. At the exit from South Street onto Trinity Street (via New Street) a bollard will lower to permit vehicles to leave the pedestrians area in a westbound direction only. Police, ambulance and fire vehicles will be able to control the bollards in case of an emergency.

Delivery vehicles will access the northern part of South Street from High East Street and egress via New Street and Trinity Street. Delivery vehicles will access the southern part of South Street from The Junction and egress via New Street and Trinity Street.

No access will be allowed from Trinity Street to South Street or Cornhill.

Access for cyclists and pedestrians will be unrestricted on South Street and Cornhill.

High East and High West Street

High East Street is proposed to be two-way from London Road to The Bow to allow free access to the Prison and residential area to the north of the High Street. High West Street will become one-way westbound from The Bow to the Top O' Town junction.

A rising / lowering bollard located near the Holy Trinity Church is proposed to deter traffic from using High West Street as a through-route and encourage vehicles to return to the east and use the specified primary route. The bollard will not be able to be time controlled as access is required to the churches at all times and it is not desirable for traffic to u-turn on the High Street. The bollard will detect westbound traffic waiting to egress the area and will slowly lower to allow traffic through to High West Street.

It is proposed to narrow the carriageway on High West Street to one lane, which will allow additional parking and loading bays to be included and for the footways to be widened

7.4 Servicing

Existing Arrangements

No clear directions for servicing vehicles are currently provided from the A35 into Dorchester. There are three available routes into the town from the bypass, along Bridport Road, Weymouth Avenue and London Road.

There are no restrictions to vehicle movements within the current Town Centre layout with the exception of South Street where access is only permitted between 5.30pm and 10.00am although some vehicles have been observed to break this restriction.

Option 6 Proposals

Under the proposals, the restrictions to the top part of South Street would be extended to include the lower part of South Street. Rising bollards should be provided at the entrances to South Street to enforce this restriction. These bollards would lower at the end of the time restriction to permit access and should be configured to lower automatically for emergency vehicles carrying a transponder.

In order to ensure that servicing vehicles access their destinations using the most appropriate part of the highway network and when roads such as South Street are open it is recommended that routes for servicing vehicles are indicated by traffic signs from the A35. This is particularly relevant given the proposal to make High West/East Street one-way westbound and to close it to through traffic from 9.30am to 4.30pm. The use of Variable Message Signs on the A35 would be an effective medium to deliver this information to drivers.

Weymouth Avenue should be used as an access route for servicing to Trinity Street, High West Street and the lower part of South Street (when it is open).

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London Road to the east of Dorchester could be used to service High East Street, Charles Street/ Church Road/Calando Street and South Street (when it is open).

Service vehicles wishing to access properties on Princes Street should use Cornwall road and Albert road.

Service vehicles on South Street (north or south) would leave the pedestrianised area through New Street. In order to prevent access from Trinity Street into New Street, No Entry traffic signs and road markings would be required. A bollard could also be provided, which would lower when vehicles approached from the South Street direction only.

7.5 Parking

While the evidence of car park occupancy, provided by WDDC, shows that there is a capacity in a number of car parks throughout the day, there is still a public perception of inadequate parking provision in Dorchester.

Visitors go to Dorchester for various purposes, including work, shopping or tourism. The parking requirements for these different types of visitors have been considered in this study. Given the proposed alterations to the highway layout, we would recommend the following:

- A signage strategy is implemented for tourists from the A35 to the Town Centre car parks depending on which attractions they are going to; similar system for shoppers;
- Variable Message Signs indicating which car parks have spaces available;
- Enforcement of on-street parking to ensure there is appropriate turnover of short-term parking and no inappropriate use of disabled spaces.

The car parks currently adopt a “pay and display” system that does not encourage visitors to remain within the Town and requires patrolling to ensure there are no violations of the system. We would recommend that WDDC consider implementing a self-enforcing system such as “pay on foot” which would also encourage visitors to stay for longer.

7.6 Costs and Programme

Indicative cost estimates for junction, links and public realm improvements are included in Appendix F. These estimates do not include utility diversions, as the precise locations of utilities were not available at the time of the study. Variable Message Signs (VMS) associated with parking and servicing strategies have not been included, as these will have to be designed at a detailed level to suit specific locations at entry points into Dorchester. No inclusion has been made in respect of VAT, design and legal fees and allowances for inflation.

It is envisaged that transport and environmental improvements will be accomplished over medium term time frame of say ten years as resources are made available; it is essential that a comprehensive and integrated approach towards these improvements is adopted and the vision set out in the DTEP provides the framework for a consistent programme of improvements.

The capital costs involved are substantial and it would be unrealistic to consider a short term fix; in most other centres where significant transport and environmental improvements have been made, these have been achieved by adopting a consistent programme of improvements over several years.

7.7 Public Realm Improvements

7.7.1 Public Realm Principles

Surfacing Hierarchy

The intention is to create a simple hierarchy of surface materials to give pedestrian users, cyclists and motorists a clear and consistent indication of the limits of their environments throughout the town centre. A Stage1 Road Safety Audit will be required on the preliminary design proposals to guide the detailed design process.

Surface Materials

Materials

The use of primarily natural stone paving, on footways will complement the materials of the existing architectural frontages and provide a clean and simple surfacing. General carriageway areas will be in bituminous surfacing to avoid confusion and give motorists clear direction to their routes.

Footways

Footways are clearly identified and paved with 600mm width courses and random length of natural stone slabs. Depth of paving units, however, will be dependent on the type of natural stone used and, where necessary, smaller slab units of thicker depth will be required to provide the required vehicle loading capacities where service or emergency vehicles are expected to mount the kerbs. Construction, Design and Management (CDM)

issues associated with slip resistance of paving material to be established with stone supplier at detailed design stage and considered in specific choice of stone.

The use of larger unit natural stone paving slabs necessitates the use of mechanical laying under CDM regulations and this must be considered in any maintenance work.

Detail within the paving is designed to highlight and identify a heritage trail through the town centre defined with 100 by 100mm natural stone blocks with three lines of 100 by 200mm granite setts to define the extents of these areas. Heritage elements of interest will be identified by bronze or stainless steel paving insets to guide pedestrians.

Carriageways

Carriageways are defined in bituminous surfacing to give motorists and pedestrians clear indications of individual movement zones. The carriageways are further defined at the kerblines by three lines of 100 by 200 by 100mm granite setts to give a crisp edge treatment. The kerbstones themselves will be granite. Junction entrance thresholds are defined in 100 by 200 by 100mm Granite setts at 'Top 'O' Town' and 'The Junction'.

Pedestrian Crossings

Pedestrian crossings and the service access route on South Street / Cornhill are paved in 200mm width courses and random lengths of natural stone blocks. Depth of paving units will be dependent on the type of natural stone

used and, where necessary, smaller slab units of thicker depth may be required to provide the required vehicle loading capacities. CDM issues associated with slip resistance of paving material to be established with stone supplier at detailed design stage and considered in specific choice of stone.

Tactile paving adjacent to pedestrian crossings in the town centre should ideally take the form of brass studs bolted into the natural stone paving to maintain a unified appearance and minimize the visual disturbance of the tactile. Dorset County Council Highways engineers to advise on the CDM and Road Safety issues associated with such an approach to tactile paving and advise on appropriateness.

Parking Bays

Parking bays, inset from the carriageway, will be clearly distinguished from both carriageway and footway with 100 by 200 by 100mm granite setts, and defined by granite kerbs.

Furniture

Seating within the town centre is to be bespoke and constructed from natural stone and hardwood timber to provide an appropriate addition to the streetscape. Proposed seating is confined to nodes and clusters in locations where visitors can appreciate points of architectural or historical interest. The general principle has been to keep street clutter to a minimum.

Other furniture, such as tree grilles, bollards and cycle stands and litterbins will be of traditional

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cast iron construction to complement the historical setting of the town. Use will be limited to reduce street clutter.

Lighting

The existing lighting scheme throughout the town centre works well and few additional lighting columns are currently used to complement the building mounted lighting elements. The town centre proposals build upon this principle with additional columns being kept to an absolute minimum. Replacement of columns will be necessary at Top O' Town and The Junction where building frontages in close proximity are not available. Lighting columns will be subtle in design to blend into the streetscape in an incongruous manner. Heritage style lighting will not be used. The use of additional uplighting elements to improve the appearance of building frontages and tree canopies by night will be maximized. In addition uplighting will be used to enhance new sculptural and planting features at Top O' Town, Cornhill, and The Junction.



Figure 7.10 Top 'O' Town Sketch (View 1)

7.7.2 Junction Public Realm Improvements

Top 'O' Town

Principles

- To make maximum use of the increased area of public realm at Top 'O' Town.
- To create an attractive stopping and seating space outside the church, accessible from 'The Walks'.
- To provide opportunities for small scale fetes and sales associated with the church.

- To provide an eye catching feature creating attractive views towards the town centre from Bridport Road.
- To provide clear pedestrian crossing points provide good access across High West Street on 'The Walks'.

Design Features

- Use of a Horse Chestnut Tree variety (*Aesculus hippocastanum* 'Baumani') to create high tree canopy with an eventual

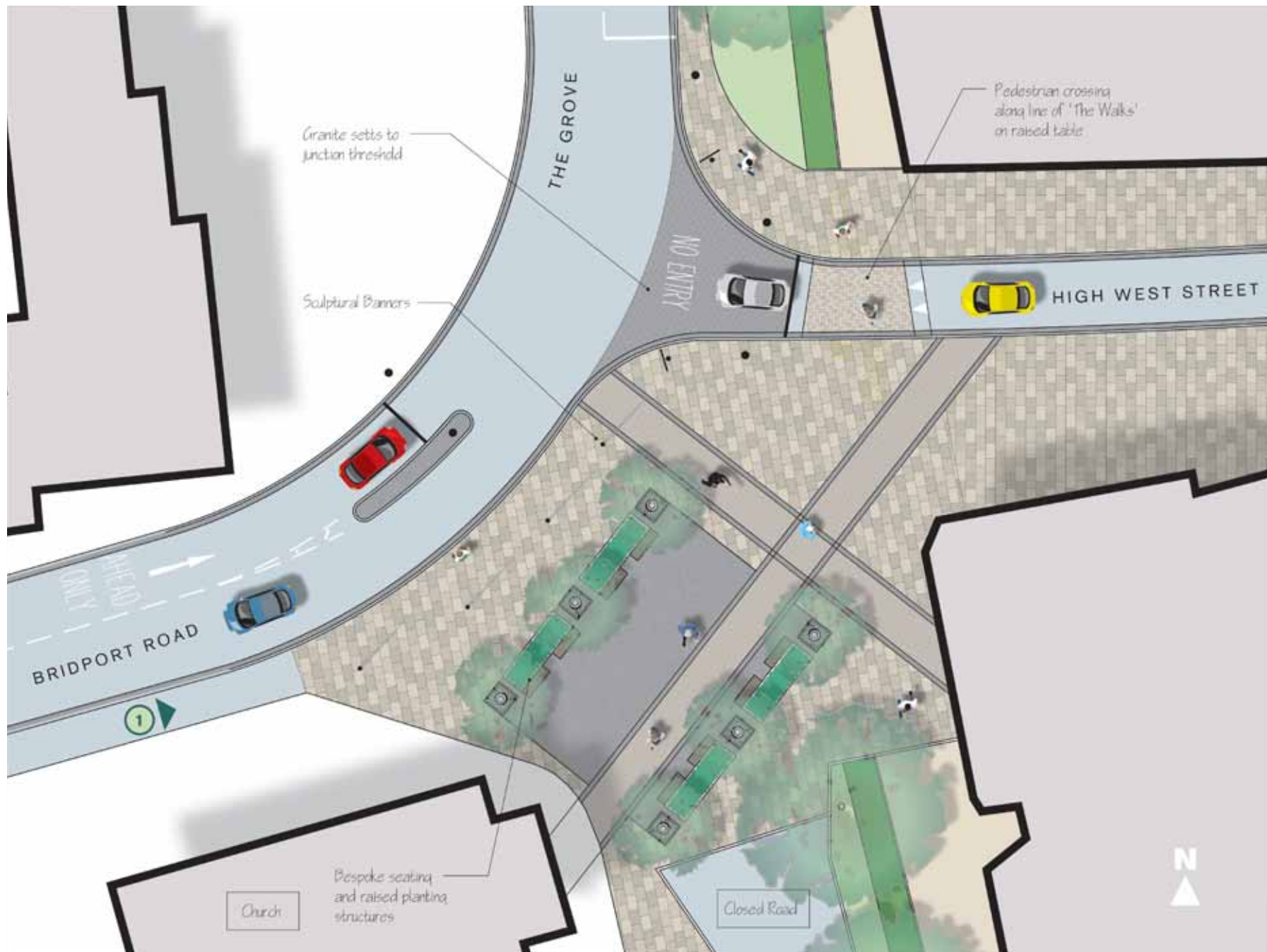


Figure 7.11 Top 'O' Town Preliminary Public Realm Plan (see fold out legend flap at back of this report)



height of 15-20metres to complement the existing planting along the walks.

- Provision of sculptural banner features to follow the sweep of the road and announce local events to passing pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- Use of uplighting to enhance tree planting / sculptural banner features and create a distinctive nighttime feature.
- Opportunity to create a paving inset feature to illustrate the history of the town.
- Construction of raised planters with integrated bespoke seating finished in natural stone and timber.

High West Street

Principles

- To provide a legible environment for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists with minimal conflict between uses
- To create an attractive foreground to views along High West Street.
- To install pedestrian crossing points at intervals to create good pedestrian links
- To provide clearly defined parking bays, bus stops and service access points.

Design Features

- Simple uncluttered footway design using natural stone paving flags.
- Minimal use of additional street furniture to maximize the use of public realm for pedestrian movement.
- Provision of raised tables at pedestrian crossing points to slow traffic and facilitate easy movement across the carriageway.



Figure 7.12 High East Street Sketch (View 2)

Raised tables will be designed to allow HGVs and buses to pass over them without grounding.

High East Street – Trinity Street to Cornhill

Principles

- To create a suitable setting for the historical frontages along High East Street, such as Holy Trinity Church, St Peters Church and Dorchester Museum.

- To reflect the dual function of road, in its treatment, acting as a pedestrian environment from say, 9.30am until 4.30pm and a pedestrian and vehicular environment during peak hours and in the evening.
- To create nodes of street furniture where appropriate

Design Features

- Use of paving detail to accentuate buildings of particular historical interest extending

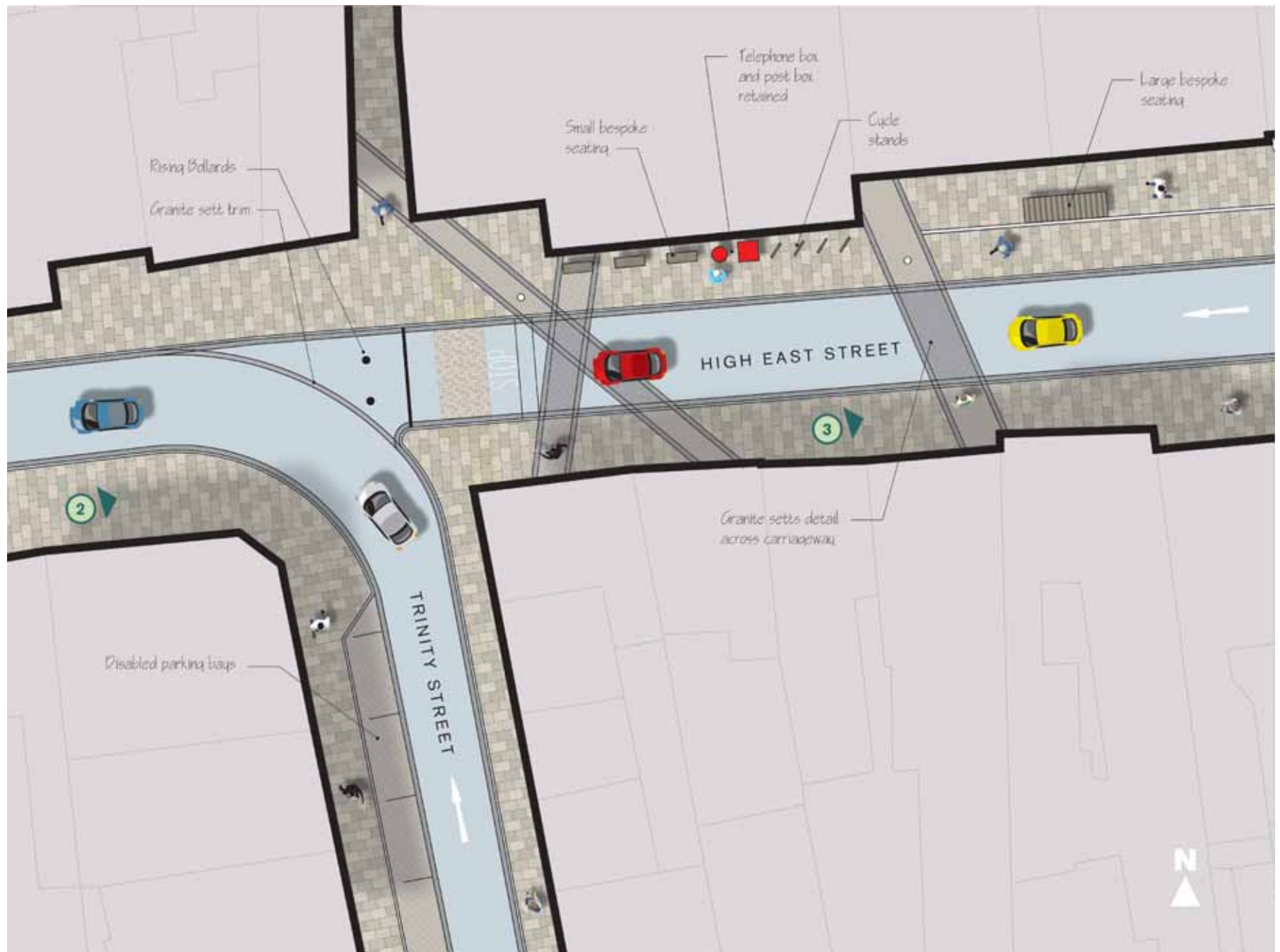


Figure 7.13 High East Street Preliminary Public Realm Plan 1 (see fold out legend flap at back of this report)



across the carriageway to notify motorists that they must exercise caution along this stretch of road.

- Use of bespoke cast bronze paving insets to guide pedestrians to points of interest
- Seating and street furniture is concentrated to the north of the carriageway where a wider area of public realm is available.
- Large bespoke timber and natural stone seating between Holy Trinity Church and St Peters Church including one seat outside Dorchester Museum.
- Use of rising bollards at the entrance and exit to this stretch of road to enforce the exclusion of traffic between 8.30am and 5.30pm.
- Retention of phone box and post box adjacent to Holy Trinity Church and replacement of existing street furniture with small bespoke stone and timber seating, cast iron litter bins and cast iron cycle stands.
- Definition of pedestrian crossings in stone blocks to slow traffic and provide a clear route across the carriageway.



Figure 7.14 High East Street Sketch (View 3)

High East Street – Cornhill to Church Street

Principles

- To provide a legible environment for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists providing improved views along High Street West.
- To create minimal changes to existing carriageway alignment but improved pedestrian environment through resurfacing to provide an improved setting to listed frontages.

Design Features

- Minimal use of street furniture to retain narrow footways for pedestrian movement.
- Simple uncluttered footway design using natural stone paving flags.
- Provision of raised tables at pedestrian crossing points to slow traffic and facilitate easy movement across the carriageway.

South Street / Cornhill

Principles

- To create a pedestrianised environment for the full length of Cornhill / South Street.
- To provide a setting suitable to the historic frontages, in particular at the north end of Cornhill.

Design Features

- Provision of street furniture node, with cycle



storage, bespoke stone and timber seating litterbins and tree planting in close proximity to 'The Pump'.

- Creation of a service route, defined in smaller unit stone blocks, to provide variation between frontages and maintain the feeling of a street rather than a 'wall to wall' pedestrian surface.
- Use of rising bollards at the entrance and exit of South Street / Cornhill to enforce the exclusion of service vehicles when necessary.
- Use of bespoke bronze paving insets to guide pedestrians to points of interest.
- Provision of tree planting at intervals where set back frontages and vehicle tracking of service and emergency vehicles will allow.

The Junction

Principles

- To provide a clear indication of the major vehicular through route
- To clearly define the thresholds to town centre or secondary streets.
- To create a focal space opposite the bottom of South Street.
- Retention of mature tree planting at bottom of South Street / Trinity Street.

Design Features

- Provision of sculptural banner and public art features opposite the end of South Street.
- Use of granite setts to define thresholds to Trinity Street and Prince of Wales Road.



Figure 7.16 The Junction Sketch (View 4)

- Accentuation of the route of 'The Walks' across Trinity Street to the war memorial through paving detail.
- Provision of tree planting at the base of South Street to frame views.
- Provision of raised tables at pedestrian crossing points to slow traffic and facilitate easy movement across the carriageway along the route of 'The Walks'.

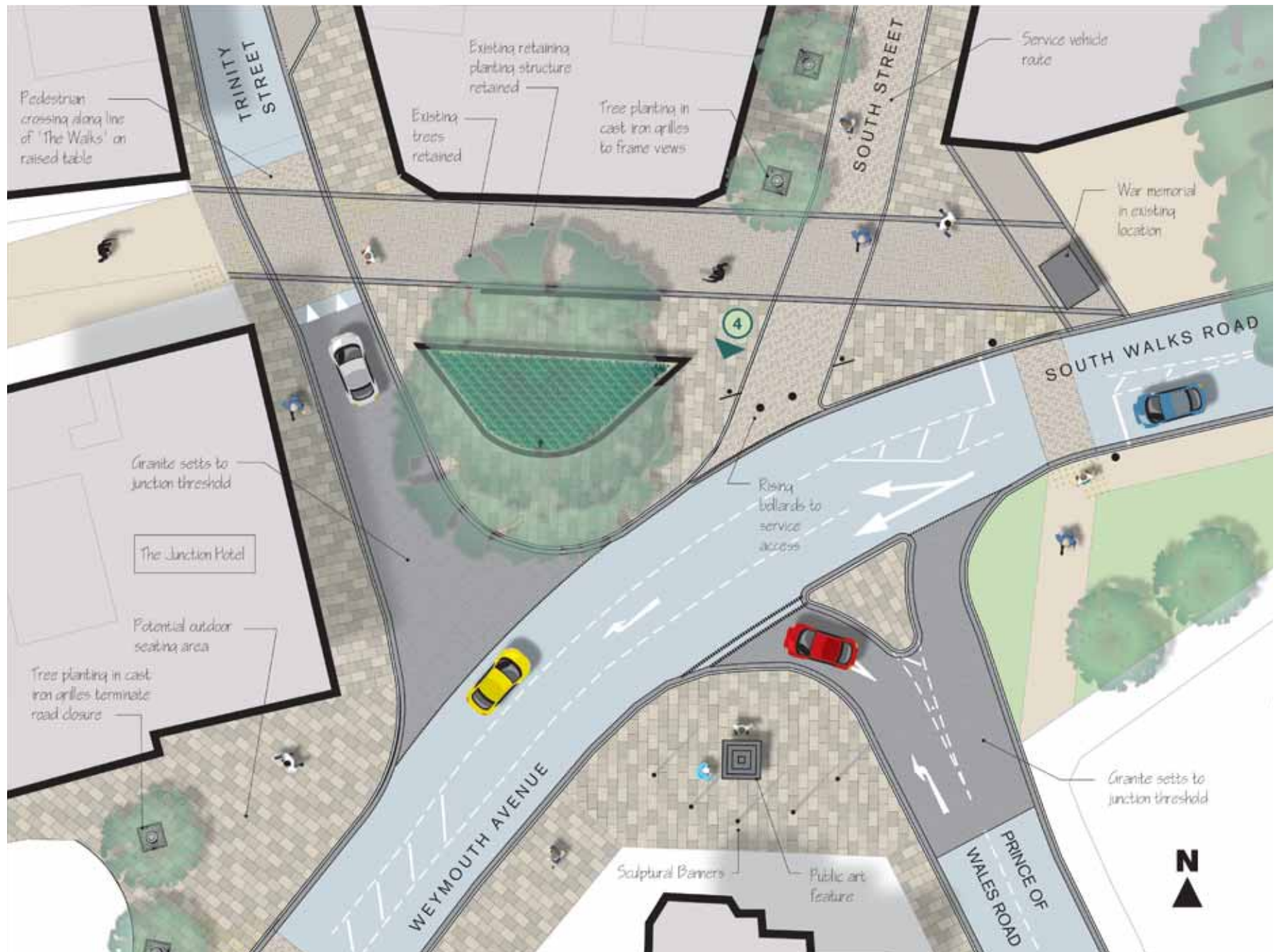


Figure 7.17 The Junction Preliminary Public Realm Plan (see fold out legend flap at back of this report)



Great Western

Principles

- To provide simple clean and uncluttered streetscape design.

Design Features

- Use of concrete paving slabs to provide a simple distinction between footway and carriageway.

Maumbury Rings

Principles

- To integrate the skate park proposal if required (as far as possible).
- To provide grassed islands where possible
- To retain as many mature existing trees as possible (unable to ascertain exact numbers due to lack of a topographic survey).

Design Features

- Creation of grassed mound features to mimic the form of Maumbury Rings Archaeological feature to the east of the gyratory.
- Use of concrete paving slabs to provide a simple distinction between footway and carriageway.
- Surfacing of pedestrian crossings with small scale concrete blocks to clearly define carriageway crossing points.



Figure 7.18 Great Western Junction Schematic Plan

Acland Road / South Walks, Albert Road / Princes Street, Cornwall Road / Albert Road and York Road / Culliford Road

Other junction improvements at Acland Road / South Walks, Albert Road / Princes Street, Cornwall Road / Albert Road and York Road / Culliford Road constitute primarily highways

changes and benefits to the public realm are minimal.

7.7.3 Maintenance

Use of natural stone or granite slab or block paving on footways and carriageways brings up several specific maintenance issues:

Different types of stone require different thickness of block /slab to withstand loading exerted by vehicles. Relevant British Standard and stone supplier to be consulted.

The loading exerted by maintenance, service or emergency vehicles can break slabs in footways. The larger the paving unit, the more prone it will be to defected breakage. Footways likely to have vehicle overrun problems should be identified and will require smaller slab units with thicker depth to reduce the possibility of vehicle damage. Relevant British Standard and stone supplier to be consulted.

Due to high cost of material, service ducting should be considered in a strip and the method for removal of flags to minimize damage should be identified at the outset.

High power jet or suction machines should not be used in the first year.

The use of larger unit natural stone paving slabs necessitates the use of mechanical laying under CDM regulations and this must be considered in any maintenance work. Manual Handling Operations Regulations need to be observed and the implications, in respect of using larger slabs, must be taken account of in the Designer's Risk Assessment.



Figure 7.19 Maumbury Rings Junction Schematic Plan



Chapter 8

The Next Steps

Transportation and Environmental Framework

This report summarises a step in the process of improving the transportation and environmental conditions in the centre of Dorchester. It provides an integrated set of preliminary proposals that will provide a framework from which decisions can be taken, budgets prepared and more detailed studies and proposals made for specific areas.

The proposals contained in Option 6 provide the format for consideration by the respective committees that have been involved in the DTEP. The proposals illustrate an end state situation where key junction improvements and associated public realm enhancements work hand in hand to achieve a significantly improved urban environment.

Implementation

The implementation of the proposals will take time to be realised dependent on resources available; at this stage it is not possible to foresee the precise extent of the implementation period but it would probably be of the order of 10 years. Funding sources for road and junction improvements and civic and public realm improvements will need to be identified and will take time to come to fruition.

It is important that the proposals are regarded as a vision and a framework that can be achieved in a series of steps, starting for example, with the Maumbury Rings improvements that would then create opportunities for improvements at other junctions and on critical road linkages.

The inherent flexibility of Option 6 in respect of the High Street allows concepts to be tested before significant investment is made, as borne out by the recent TRANSCO closure to traffic from the east. Traffic flows can be monitored and proposals refined. The time frame of partial closure can be sensitive to feedback and varied to meet specific circumstances and events.

Stakeholder Involvement

The proposals contained in this report focus on transport and public realm issues. As implementation takes place and enhancements to the central area become apparent it is anticipated that stakeholders in the public and private sector will participate with the respective authorities in upgrading the environment; this should bring in a wide range of additional resources.

An important tool to this end will be to encourage contributions as redevelopment and new development takes place in the central area consistent with planning gain policies. Opportunities, for example at Charles Street, to attract new development can be tied to improved parking facilities and pedestrian linkages.

Consultation and Surveys

The public consultation that took place revealed the public's concerns and views over a wide range of issues that relate to the attraction, convenience and safety of the central area. This was valuable input into the DTEP and further consultation needs to continue as implementation progresses to encourage stakeholder participation and investment.

A benchmark used by funding organisations, considering grants for central area civic and public realm improvements, is to assess the potential for improved economic activity. One of the techniques used is to consider the relationship between the quality of the environment, as a result of enhancement and the increased length of time people stay in the area as a consequence. This leads to increased expenditure and creates economic benefits, working on the basis that because the location is attractive people will visit and stay longer. Working with the Chamber of Commerce the impact of improvements should be monitored.

It is important that as implementation takes place survey work is undertaken, not only in respect of traffic flows and parking, but also in respect of retail expenditure, duration of visits to the central area and feedback from the public on the improvements made. This would build on the existing data base of knowledge gained from the public consultation and the Dorchester Town Centre Health Check and would provide an opportunity to create valuable benchmark data.

Approvals, Resources and Programming

The first and most important step in the implementation process will be for the DTEP Steering Group to secure the approval and endorsement of the proposals from each of the respective Councils.

Following approval an outline programme will need to be prepared that identifies the sequence of implementation and detailed site survey and design work. The financial resources required to meet the programme will need to cover pre-contract management, survey and design costs, contract capital costs and recurring management costs.

The allocation of responsibilities and funding sources required to meet the programme will need definition and budgets identified to commence the first stages of implementation.

