

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
in support of application for
Full Planning and Conservation Area Consent

for The Enhancement of

Seaton Seafront

Revision B

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Design and Access statement has been prepared to support a Full Plans and Conservation Area Consent application. This application is made on behalf of Seaton Town Council. The development of the brief and the proposals has been led by Seaton Town Council informed entirely by local consultation response to questions and proposals presented. These proposals have been arrived at because of the ideas and feedback provided by the people of Seaton.

1.2 This application proposes the enhancement of the seafront and esplanade at Seaton, extending north to the junction of Marine Place and Harbour Road with Fore Street. The creation of an inviting and attractive new pedestrianised public realm for visitors and local people will build on recent development targeted at increasing tourist numbers and will encourage visitors to spend more time in Seaton. Alterations to the existing pedestrian routes and improvements to signage will improve navigation about the town encouraging movement between Seaton’s key attractions benefiting local businesses and the local economy.

1.3 The town of Seaton has undergone significant change in recent years, including the closure of the Lyme Bay Holiday Village and replacement with new development on the site including the new Jurassic visitor centre, a new supermarket, and imminent development of a new Tram Terminus for the Seaton Tramway. This area of development is located away from the town centre by a 5 minute walk.

1.4 The town centre and area around Fore Street is home to a large number of independent and locally owned retail, commercial and food businesses. The culture of the people of Seaton is to be determined, positive and proud of their town, and to work hard to grow and support their independent businesses and creative ventures. The town has an energetic and varied community life.

1.5 Seaton benefits from its spectacular and significant geographical location on the East Devon Coast at the gateway to the World Heritage coastline - the Jurassic Coast. The north western section of the application site falls with the Seaton Town Centre Conservation Area.

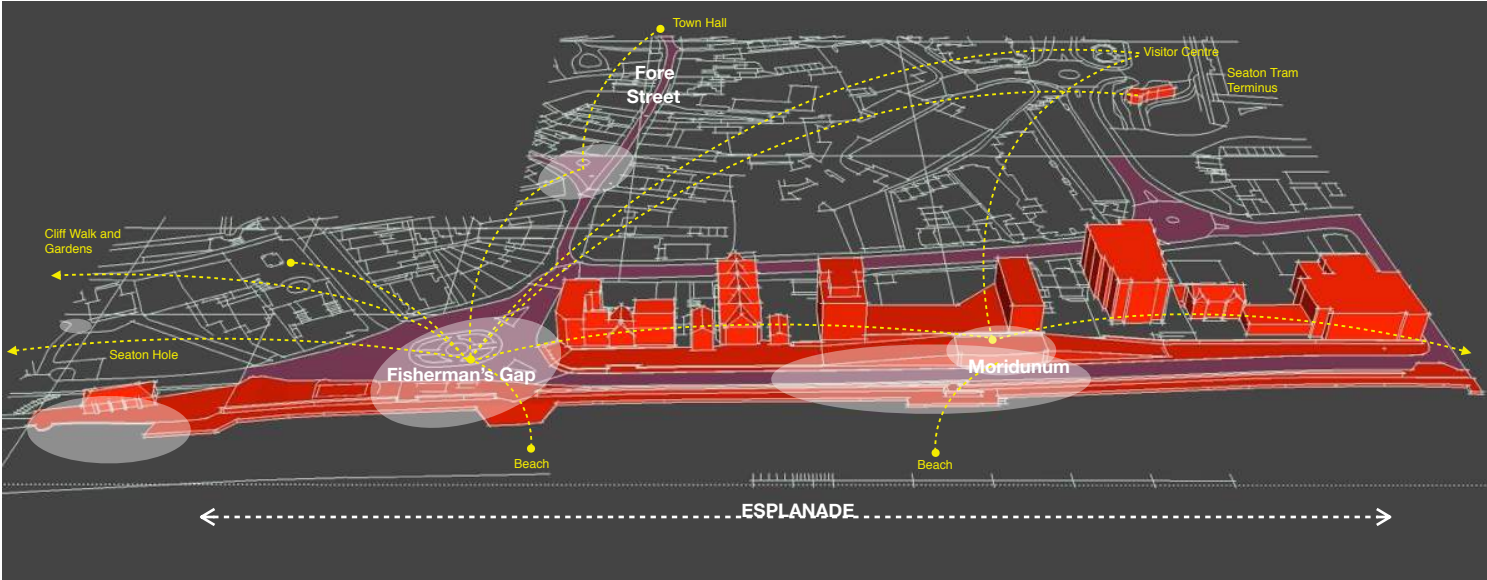
1.6 Consultation with local people in the town and with visitors to Seaton reported a lack of connectivity between use of the town centre businesses, the new visitor developments, and with the seaside - in particular, visitors to the seaside and visitor centre site often omitted visiting the town centre, due to lack of intuitive signposting and the physical barriers presented by the existing road system. This anecdotal evidence is supported by the pedestrian movement data reported in the Transport Statement.

1.7 The creation of a new public realm provides a unifying connection between some of the key attractions of Seaton, and provides an attractive and safe place of arrival to the town from buses. Pedestrianisation of the esplanade will provide a new safe, inviting and vibrant public realm providing a safe space available for events and leisure for the use of local people and tourists. These proposals will regenerate a site that is currently dominated by ‘space hungry’ highways design and vehicle parking.

1.8 The expansion and enhancement of the existing public realm, including provision of new facilities, will both encourage greater use and understanding of Seaton’s unique and beautiful coastline setting and will also allow the town to expand the many community activities that are regularly hosted. The increased area of public space that will be created adjacent to the beach directly responds to the growth and increase of other attractions and residential development that is ongoing in Seaton and the surrounding areas.

1.8 Enhancement of the seafront and the increase in visitor numbers will also increase visitor presence in Seaton overall and will benefit the Jurassic Centre and Seaton Tramway.

1.9 These proposals are intended to link the attractions and key areas of Seaton together and to encourage cross-promotion of the geological, historical and cultural attractions that Seaton offers.



Connectivity between esplanade (including Fisherman’s Gap) with key areas of Seaton

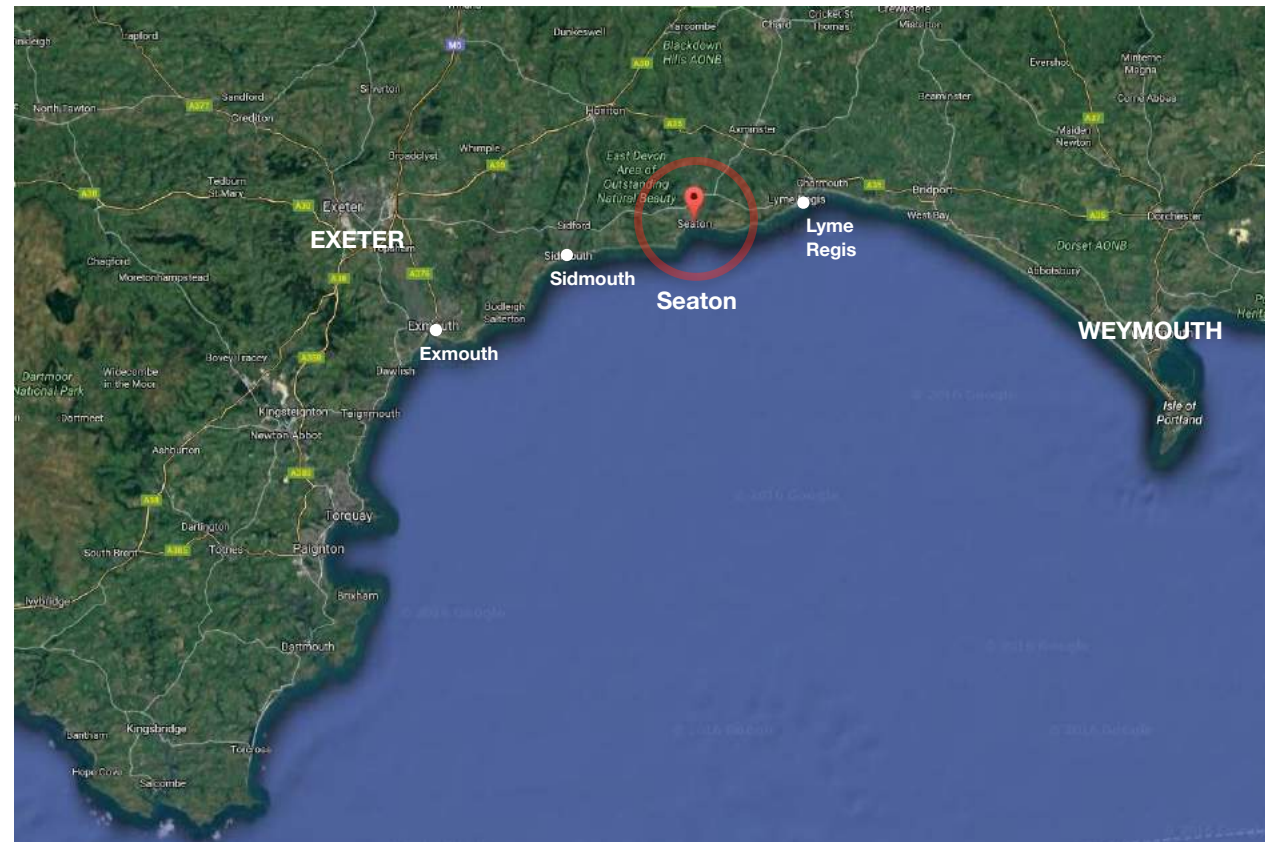
2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 Seaton

2.1.1 Location

Seaton is located on the East Devon coastline, within the wide south facing Lyme Bay. The town is positioned between the tall cliffs of Beer to the west, the Axmouth to Lyme Regis Undercliffs nature reserve to the east, and the River Axe and the wealth of wildlife around its estuary to the north.

Seaton is a south facing seaside resort with a wide beach located within Lyme Bay. The views from Seaton facing South are of undeveloped cliffs, framing the views to each edge.



Seaton's location on the East Devon coast, approximately halfway between Sidmouth and Lyme Regis



Seaton's location to the west of Lyme Bay, adjacent to Beer, Axminster & Lyme Undercliffs & River Axe estuary.

Historic photograph showing large public realm and tourists enjoying the esplanade



'The Grizzly' fun run



2.1.2 History & Tourism

The town and surrounding area contains evidence of inhabitation from 6000 years ago. For centuries there has been speculation that Seaton could have been the site of the Roman station Moridnunum (from which the building on the seafront gains its name). In 2014 one of the largest and best preserved 4th Century collections of Roman coins was unearthed at Seaton Down.

Seaton was transformed to a Victorian Seaside resort with the arrival of the railway, a development that also ended Seaton's historic ship building industry. When the Seaton branch of the railway was closed, the Seaton tramway adopted use of the track bed and continues to operate as a popular tourist attraction to this day.

During WWII Seaton, with its broad beach, was considered high risk for invasion and defences installed to defend the coastline. A 'Stopline' was established from coast to coast across Devon as a secondary line of defence should the south west peninsular be invaded - the Stopline Way is now a long distance cycling route tracing the route of this defensive line, with Seaton esplanade forming the southern terminus.

During the 1930's Seaton had a tourism boom with the development of several large scale holiday camps and continues to be a popular holiday resort. The closure of the Lyme Bay Holiday Village in 2009 and replacement with a supermarket on the site was a frequent subject of concern raised by local business owners during our consultation who feel that their businesses have suffered as a result of the decrease in tourism.

These proposals will help to re-establish Seaton as an attractive destination for tourism and reinforce the importance of the seafront and town centre as important attractions within Seaton.

2.1.3 Leisure & Arts

Seaton's geographical location makes it popular as a home for outdoor adventure activities and watersports, including the following that use the esplanade for access:

- Paddle boarding, kayaking and canoeing;
- Sailing;
- Walking and running, including providing access to the South West Coast Path from the seafront;
- Swimming;
- Boat trips and Cruises (including Stuart Line Cruises 3-4 times per year arriving at Fisherman's Gap); &
- Fishing.

The sport of cycling is also important to the town. The southern terminus of the Stopline Way cycle route is within the application site, and in June 2016 Seaton hosted the first annual Seaton Cycle Festival.

In Seaton and to the areas immediately adjacent are sites of internationally acclaimed geological and wildlife habitat significance, including:

- The Jurassic Coast - Seaton is the gateway to the Jurassic Coast, England's only natural World Heritage site. This geologically significant coastline also provides a fascinating window into geological history and the Victorian history of fossil hunters, geologists and evolutionists;
- Seaton Wetlands - the wetlands provide nearly 4km of level trails and boardwalk through beautiful marshland and reed beds alongside the river Axe, abundant with wildlife; &
- Lyme Bay Reefs - the reefs in Lyme Bay provide a safe haven for marine life. Rock pools and reefs at Seaton Hole provide the opportunity to view marine wildlife in their habitat.

Seaton town also has an active programme of community events, many hosted in the outdoor public spaces in the town, including:

- Outdoor summer arts show 'Art@Jubilee' hosted in Jubilee gardens adjacent to the application site;
- Victorian Artisan markets;
- Christmas markets & Christmas lights switch on;
- Town barbecues;
- Natural Seaton Festival; &
- Carnival along esplanade.

These proposals retain or extend all access to facilities enabling the activities described above. The pedestrianisation of the seafront will make it easier for the town to host and grow the existing events programme. Extending the public realm will also allow for these activities to be undertaken more safely.

2.1.4 An Evolving Seaton

In recent years, new significant development in the town has included:

- New Jurassic Visitor Centre; &
- New supermarket (on site of former holiday park).

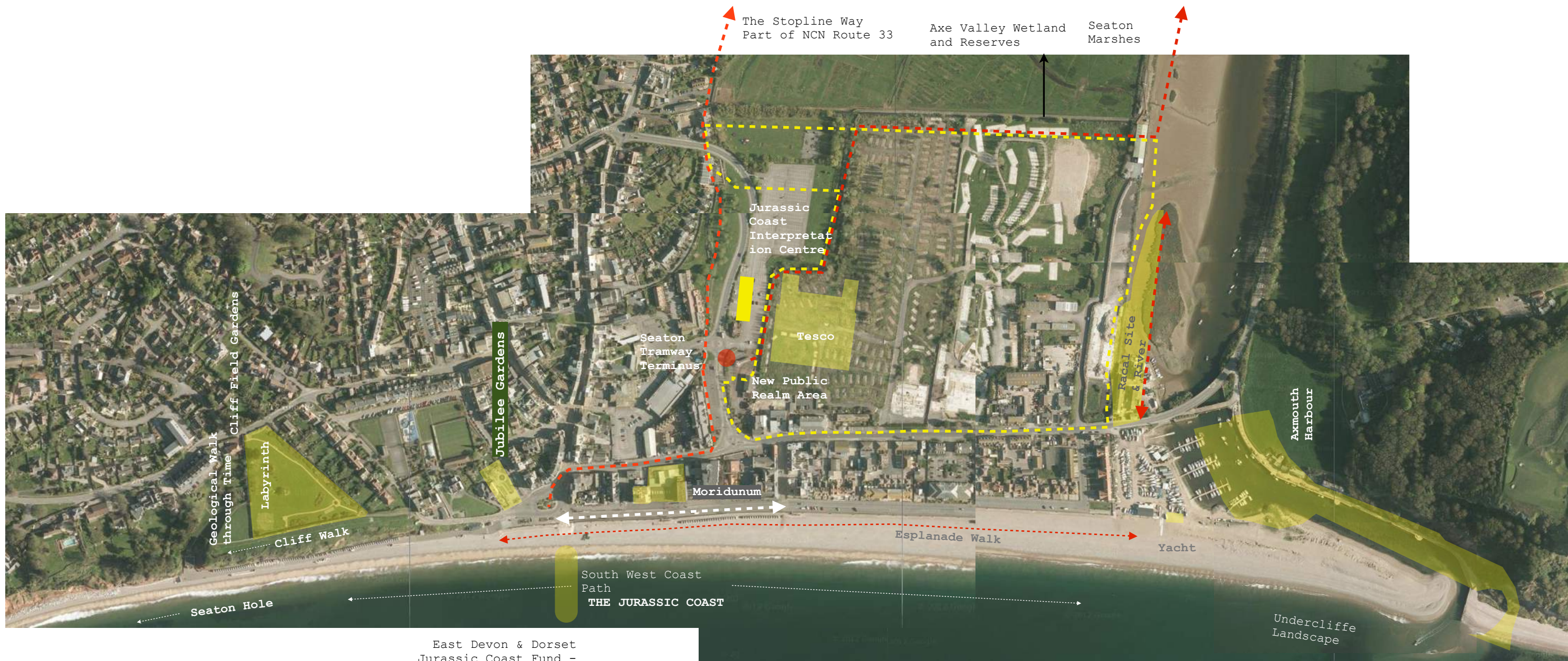
New significant development with approval, also includes:

- New tram terminal building, including new cafe and gift shop for the Seaton Tramway;
- Refurbishment and extension of residential apartments at Fosseway Court on the esplanade;
- New Premier Inn Hotel on Harbour Road; &
- Seaton Quay Development of 90 new riverside homes.

The proposals enclosed within this application to enhance the esplanade, creating a larger public realm adjacent to the beach, directly responds to the growth and expansion of other attractions and residential development that is ongoing in Seaton and the surrounding areas. Investment in proposals to enhance appreciation of the bay and Jurassic Coast and proposals that allow Seaton to take advantage of its unique geography will benefit the town and enhance the locally distinctive features and significant character of Seaton.

2.1.5 Overview of Town connections & attractions

The diagram below summarises the key existing and proposed attractions of Seaton described in this chapter.



East Devon & Dorset
Jurassic Coast Fund -
Jetty & Boat Proposals

View from Fisherman's Gap across existing roundabout to Jubilee Gardens



View from Fisherman's Gap across existing roundabout toward entrance to Fore Street



View of Moridunum and Fosseway Court behind from the east



2.2 The Esplanade

2.2.1 Use of the Existing Site

Existing use of the site area is public realm and highway, providing access to the Beach and connection to the town centre. Land use is divided between vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. Located at a pivotal point between the town shops and the seafront, part of site known as Fisherman's Gap also includes bus stops serving key routes from Exeter and Devon, and from Dorset along the Jurassic Coast. As such the site is a key point of arrival for visitors.

The majority of the site area serves vehicles, as a roundabout and carriageway parallel to the sea wall, with a mix of disabled and non-disabled car parking. License is often sought by Seaton Town Council for temporary closure of the Esplanade carriageway for the purpose of hosting town events, including the carnival, market days and bicycle races.

The esplanade carriageway provides access to parking and to the esplanade extending further east past Beach Road junction. The businesses fronting onto the esplanade are served by deliveries and refuse collection from Harbour Road to the north and do not rely on the esplanade for access.

To the north of the carriageway is a pedestrian walkway (raised above the sunken carriageway), providing external seating for a number of cafes to the northern edge of the site. To the south of the carriageway and parking is a pavement at a low level behind the sea wall, with restricted views to the beach and sea. Hard physical boundaries have been installed to separate the public from vehicles, such as planted beds and metal railings.

The existing raised pedestrian walkway leads to a ramped access up and over a single storey building (referred to as the Moridunum) providing a high level public square with seating and views across the bay. The internal ground floor space within the existing Moridunum is a disused public toilet and is inaccessible.

All areas of the application site are currently accessible to the public, with the exception of the public toilets/beach concessions store to the ground floor of the Moridunum, now closed.

2.2.2 Fisherman's Gap

The area referred to as Fisherman's Gap is the area immediately to the north of an existing opening in the sea wall (from which it gains its name) and the area of convergence of Castle Hill, Sea Hill, Fore Street and Marine Place.

The Fisherman's Gap roundabout is beyond the size required. Historically a large open space occupied this location, which then evolved to house the roundabout, rather than the roundabout being the result of conscious and necessary design.

This area is the 'gateway' to the town centre, and is the main view when approaching the seafront from the town centre.

Public events held in this area often require road closures to ensure that the public are safe. The licensed road closure is not always granted to the extent which would best benefit these events.

The visual impact of the roundabout has a negative impact on the impression of the town's seafront, and the physical impact reduces the seafront's accessibility. The large roundabout and large road width can be confusing to vehicles and pedestrians at a danger to safety,. The expanse of tarmac restricts easy, safe and obvious access to between two of the town's main attractions - the seafront and Fore Street.

2.2.3 The Moridunum

The Moridunum is essentially a single storey building with an east/west ramp providing access over, and to a viewing platform with benches on the roof.

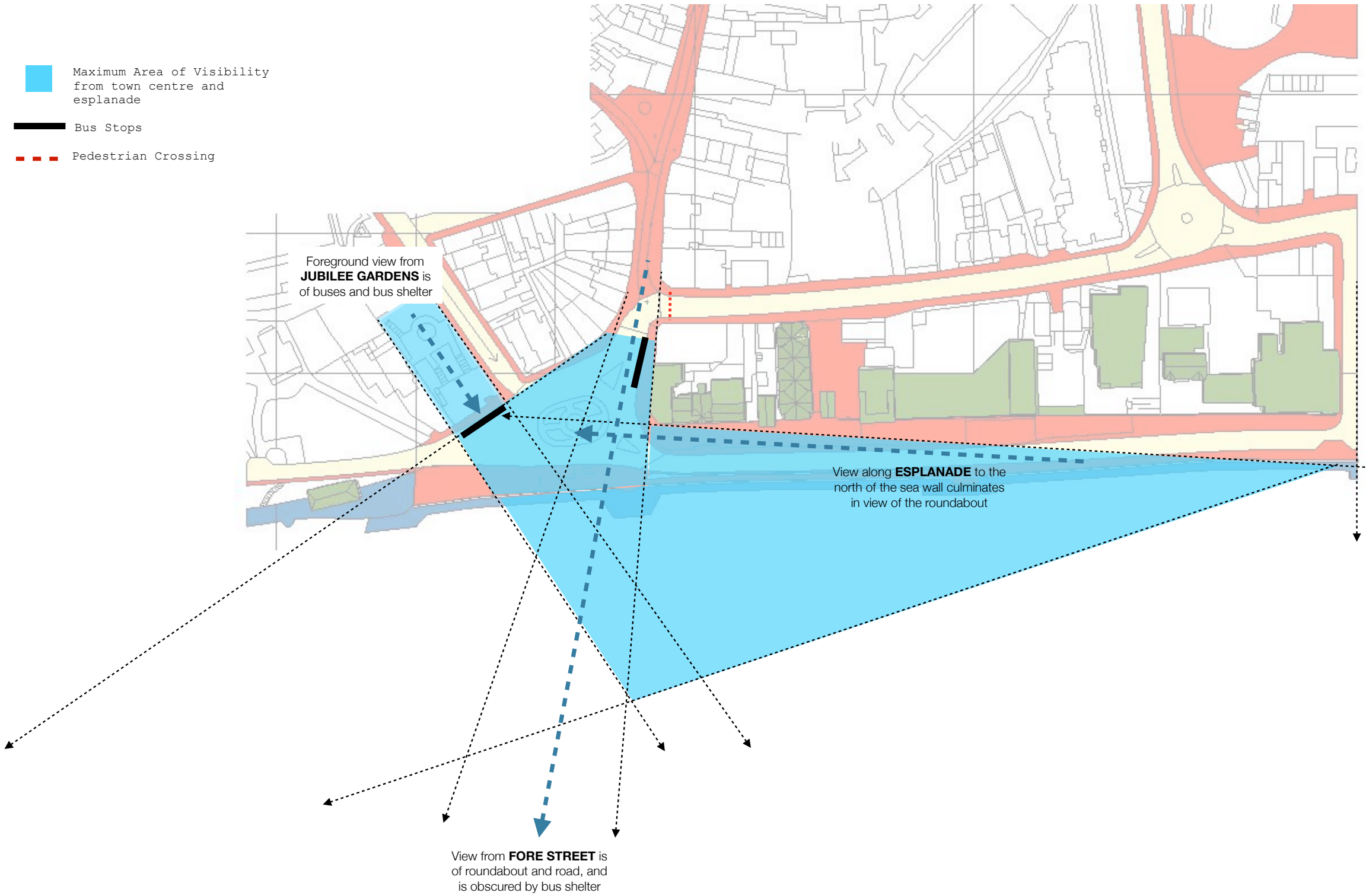
The existing condition of the Moridunum building is poor, requiring a degree of refurbishment that is not economically viable. Its most recent official use has been Public WCs, but more recently has been used as a store for beach concession equipment.

The site of the Moridunum is historically important to the town but the existing building is not. As such, the demolition of the existing building and associated ramps to east and west, is proposed. The consultations were unanimous in that, at the very least, significant refurbishment was required.

2.2.4 Fisherman's Gap - Key Views of the Site

The diagram below illustrates the site lines from areas local to the site, and demonstrates the importance of the Fisherman's Gap location as central to navigation and views of the town.

The large roundabout and wide tarmac roads are the predominant visible features of this area and do not inspire movement through the space to explore other parts of the town. As the gateway to Seaton for those arriving on buses, the appearance and design of the space does not promote Seaton's qualities to visitors and encourage visiting the town.



2.2.5 Site Character and Landscape

The following photographs illustrate the visual character of the site. The site is dominated by tarmac and vehicle parking, and comprises of a disorganised variety of material types in varying states of disrepair, including tarmac, render, concrete, painted metal, plastic street furniture, brick and timber.

The western end of the site includes part of the Seaton Town Centre conservation area, with buildings that are largely Victorian and Edwardian in date and style with shop frontages (see also *Heritage Statement*). The centre of the site is dominated by the dilapidated moridunum structure and the large residential apartment blocks at Fosseway Court. The eastern end of the site is bounded by residential villa properties.

To the south of the site and beyond the sea wall, the wide pebble beach is beautiful and the cliffs spectacular. There is a marked difference between the quality of the setting and that of the built environment behind the sea wall.

The existing built environment detracts from the unique setting.



Wider Views: The views from the seafront of the Lyme Bay are stunningly beautiful. The cliffs that frame Seaton’s outer extents are colourful and dramatic. Views along the esplanade are dominated by the tall apartment blocks of Fosseway Court (shortly to be refurbished).



Views west along the esplanade: The view at the end of the esplanade at Fisherman’s Gap is of the wide tarmac carriageway. The central section of the site comprises of the moridunum, which is currently rendered with previous patch repairs undertaken.



Views west from the Moridunum: The raised height of the moridunum provides elevated views of the surrounding coastline. Cars line the esplanade road, presenting a view uninviting to barrier to pedestrians.



Views east from the Moridunum toward the Undercliffs: The raised height of the moridunum provides elevated views of the surrounding coastline. The existing railings are painted in red to match the lamp posts but are in need of redecoration. The tarmac surface and colour of the beach present a striking contrast.



View down Fore Street: The primary view down Fore Street toward the seaside is toward Fisherman’s Gap and the roundabout. The view along the pavement adjacent is partially blocked by the bus shelter. The view is uninviting.



Views east along the esplanade: These views show the contrast between the textures and colours of the beach and the patched tarmac surfaces behind. A mixture of brick types form raised beds which restrict the flow of pedestrians behind the sea wall and use of the space for events.



Views from the raised cafes to the north of the site: The exterior tables and chairs provide raised views over the sea wall, but these are obstructed by street furniture and railings, providing protection from the road edge.



View back towards the site from the west: Wide bay and setting can be appreciated from this view. The view also shows a line of beach huts and the rich ocre colour illustrative of one of the key phases of geology that form part of Seaton’s local identity.

3.0 CONSULTATION & AIMS

3.1 Consultation

The proposed development of Seaton seafront provided the opportunity for the views of members of the local community and stakeholders such as local business, business groups, service providers and statutory authorities to inform the design proposals.

In order to achieve this, consultations have been conducted at regular intervals in the development of the design, and so have informed the design process since late 2013. The feedback from these consultations can be traced through the different phases of design and into the Planning Submission for planning of the esplanade.

Please refer to the Statement of Community Involvement and Consultation Summary for detail regarding extensive pre-application consultation discussions undertaken.

3.2 Project Aims

3.2.1 Seaton Town Council, in partnership with East Devon District Council, have worked with consultants and local stakeholders to progress proposals to enhance Seaton Seafront.. The brief for the proposals was established directly as a result of public consultation and consideration of a wide range of options to enhance Seaton.

3.2.1 The principle aims of the project established were to:

- Promote tourism including promotion of cycling and seaside leisure activities;
- Provide a safer and more accessible public spaces;
- Expand commercial opportunities for Seaton;
- Promote and support existing businesses, in particular Town Centre shops and services;
- Promote the use of non-car transport, including public transport, cycling and walking;
- Replace the dilapidated moridunum building and replace the public toilet facilities no longer in use;
- Improve connections between the town, the esplanade and to the beach;
- Increase opportunities to enhance appreciation of the beach and heritage coastline;
- Increase opportunities to host town events, such as performances, carnivals, local markets, sporting events; &
- Enhance the architecture and appearance of the esplanade, in particular with materials that reduce maintenance requirements and expenditure.

4.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

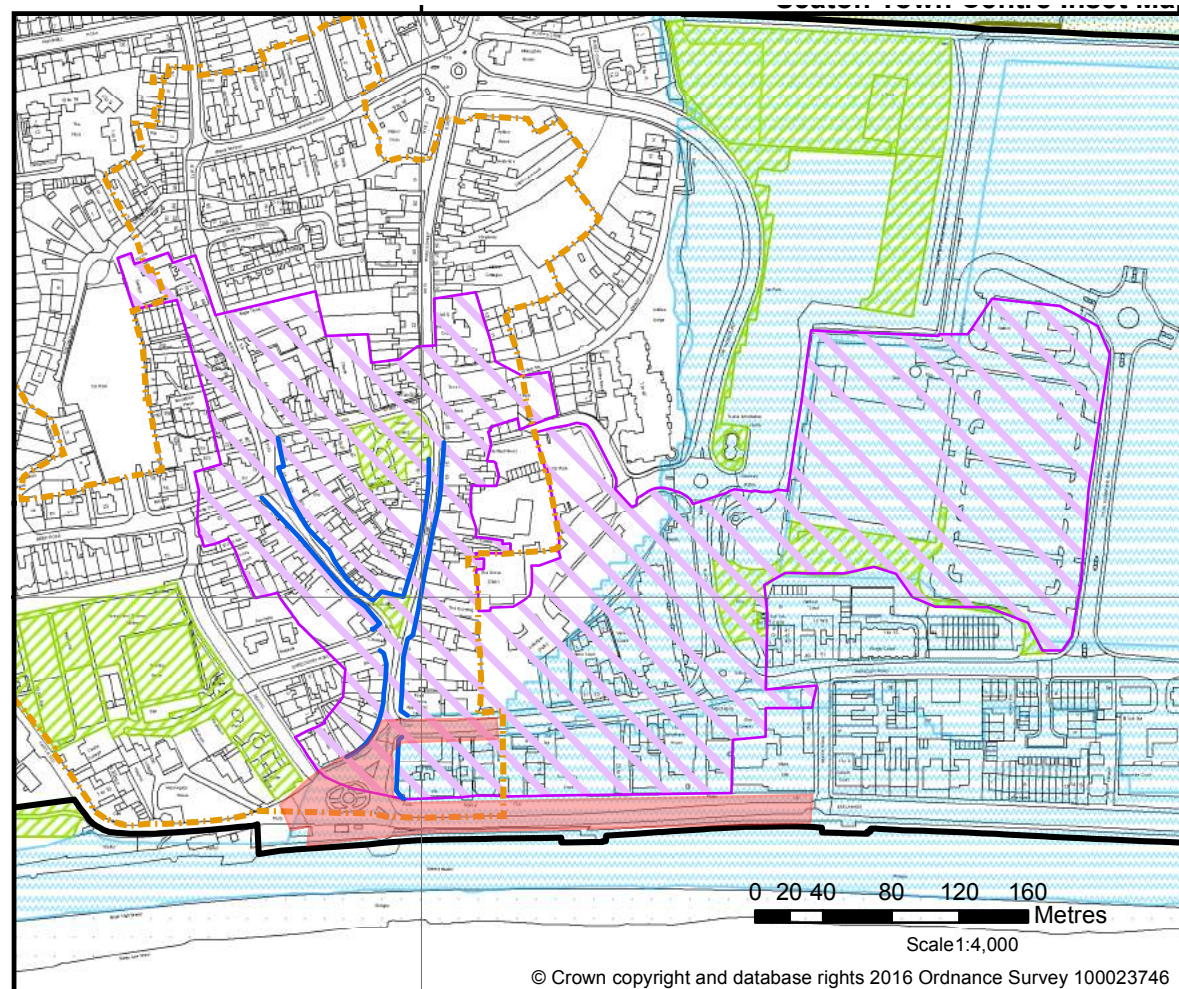
The application site is located within the allocated Built-Up area boundary of Seaton (Strategy 6).

The site is primarily within Flood Zone 2 - See Flood Risk Assessment report enclosed as an appendix to this document.

The northwestern corner of the site is located with the Seaton Town Centre Conservation Area.

The northern edge of the site has a boundary with the Town Centre Shopping Area (E9) and includes shop frontages to Marine Place allocated as Primary Frontages (E10).

Please refer to the Planning Statement included as part of this document sets out how these proposals have been informed by and comply with both local and national planning policy.



Adopted Local Plan map showing Seaton Town Centre Inset Plan.

Application site indicated approximately shaded red.

5.0 PROPOSALS SUMMARY

Key elements of the proposed scheme:

- Enhancement of the seafront and creation of a new fully accessible public realm adjacent to the beach;
- Pedestrianisation of the existing esplanade from Fisherman's Gap to the junction with Beach Road;
- Alterations to the existing highways layout to improve safety, legibility and provide additional pedestrian crossings;
- Demolition of existing dilapidated moridnum building and replacement with a new building for Planning Use Classes A1, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2 - uses have been selected to allow public access and use of building;
- New public square for events, with tiered seating, plantings and fountains at Fisherman's Gap;
- New public square and widened opening to beach adjacent to the Moridunum;
- New public toilets;
- New 'seaside village' seasonal huts for Planning Use Classes A1 & A5;
- Raised walkway behind sea wall;
- Relocation of bus shelter; &
- New planting, street furniture, resurfacing & improved lighting.

Key design principles of the scheme:

- To use materials and forms that enhance the local distinctiveness of Seaton;
- To use materials and forms that are robust and low in maintenance requirements;
- Design to be timeless befitting the adjacent Conservation Area and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Design to be informed by the topographical landscape;
- Design to provide a neutral foreground for existing buildings, particularly those in the Conservation Area, and to avoid detracting from the unique setting in Lyme Bay;
- Use of solid materials to form changes in level and retaining walls;
- Use of sheet materials to form structure to infill solid materials, that are more adaptable to change; &
- Inclusion of proposals that consider strategy for flood and wave risk.

Key activities to be undertaken in the new public realm and public squares include:

- Organised events, concerts & carnival;
- Sitting and enjoyment of views of the seaside, both for individuals, couples and families;
- Safe play for children;
- Walking and running;
- Cycling;
- Picnicking and eating (Fish and Chips);
- Markets; &
- Waiting for buses.

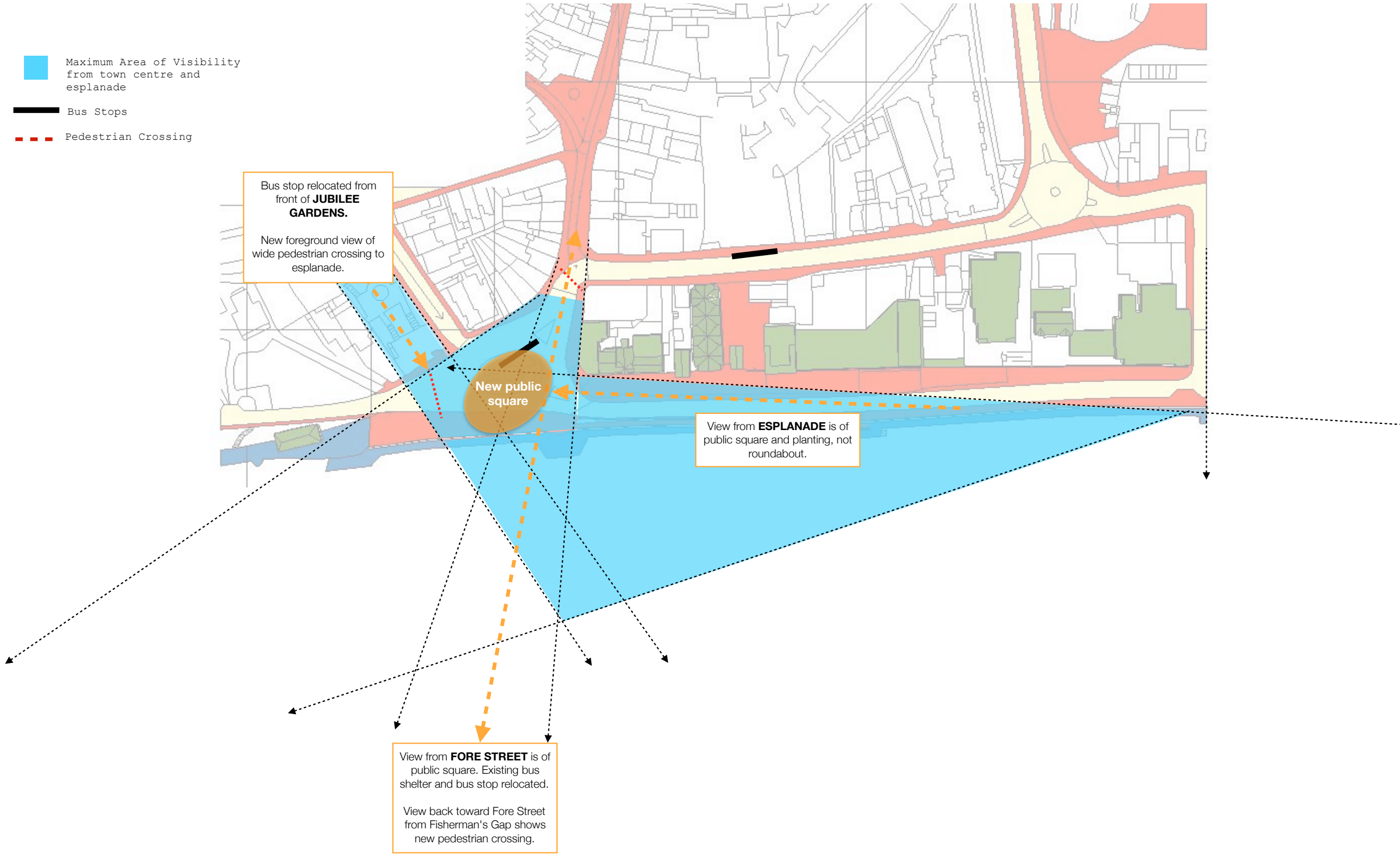


5.1 Fisherman’s Gap Concept - Proposed Key Views of the Site

The proposal to alter the layout of Fisherman’s Gap to include a new public square and include information and way finding signage was informed by the prominence and visibility of Fisherman’s Gap from many directions from the sea front, and its location as a hub for vehicle, cyclist and pedestrian circulation.

The diagram below illustrates the strategic layout proposals for Fisherman’s Gap in relation to the sight lines from areas local to the site. The new strategic proposals include:

- New public square at Fisherman’s Gap to act as an attractive and informative welcome to Seaton, and as a lively central hub visible from most locations on the seafront;
- Relocation of bus stops and shelters where these were obscuring views;
- Increase in number and visibility of pedestrian crossings to encourage better connection between the town’s attractions.



6.0 DESIGN

6.1 Use

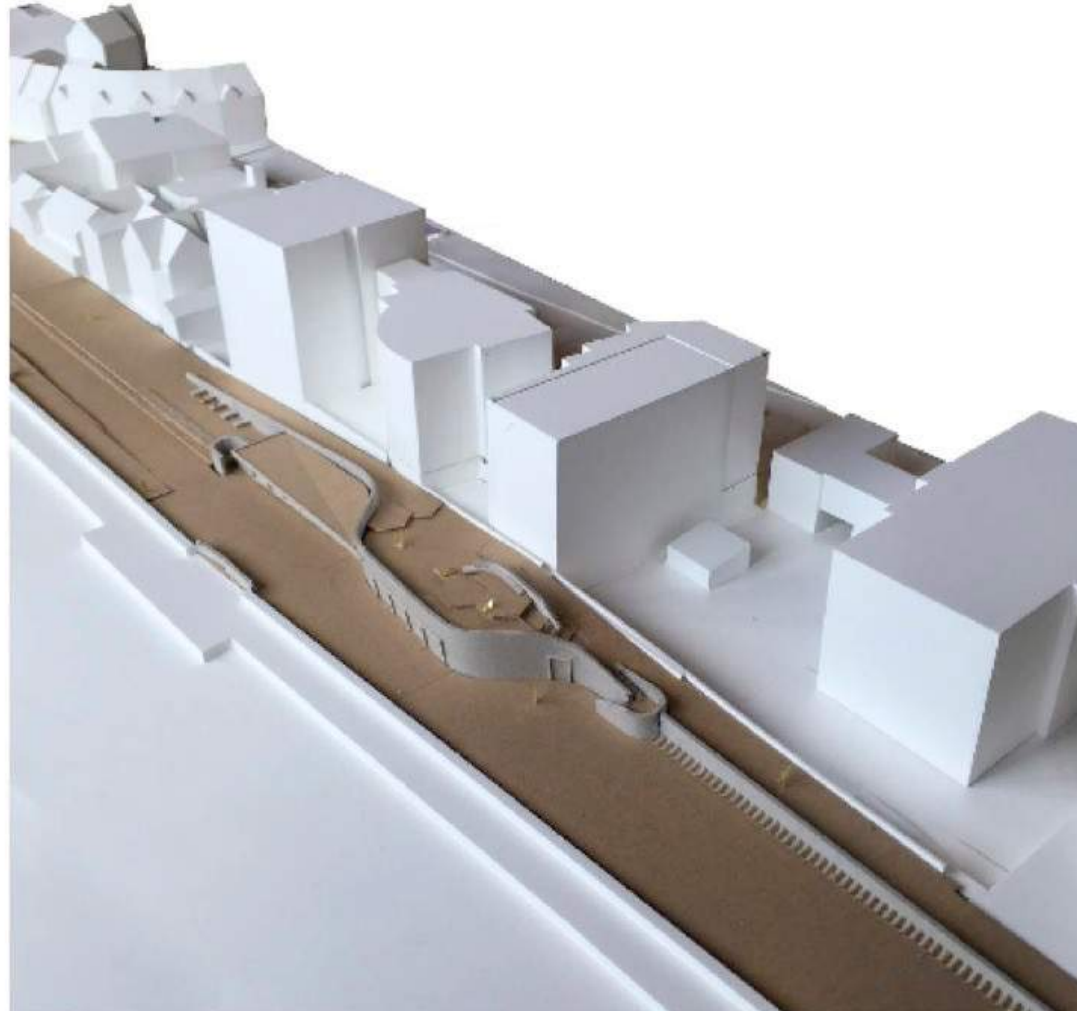
6.1.1 These proposals retain the existing uses of the publicly accessible areas of the site. Connection between the seafront and the town centre is enhanced by reducing the area occupied by road infrastructure and increasing the areas accessible to pedestrians and cyclists including full pedestrianisation of the existing carriageway. The proposals maximise the connections between the positive characteristics of the locality, improving the visual and physical connections between the seafront and the town, to the economic benefit of the local businesses in the vicinity.

6.1.2 Pedestrianisation of the seafront and the enlargement of public spaces will allow Seaton town to expand the range of public events held and entertainment opportunities, and will remove the requirement to seek license for temporary road closure. Improved public space design, with tiered seating and fountains for play, will encourage prolonged dwell time by visitors and have a consequential positive affect on the local economy.

6.1.3 This application seeks consent for the use of the interior ground floor of the reconstructed Moridunum to be retained as a public toilet and for the remainder of the internal floor area restricted to Planning Use Classes A1, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2. These categories of Use Classes have been judged as appropriate to the location, imposing minimal disruption to adjacent residential properties whilst allowing flexibility for a range of uses adaptable to Seaton's evolving economic and tourism needs.



*Aerial View of Fisherman's Gap seating, picnic area and events space
(Public realm in brown)*



Aerial View of proposed reconstructed Moridunum

6.2 Amount

6.2.1 These proposals comprise the enhancement and re-surfacing of approximately 9000m² of the public realm and highway between Seaton Town Centre and the Seafront. The development of proposals for this large site area concurrently ensures that a unified and consistent design approach is applied.

6.2.2 These proposals include a reduction in the size of the existing roundabout and consequential increase public space between the highway and sea wall providing increased areas for recreation and improving safety.

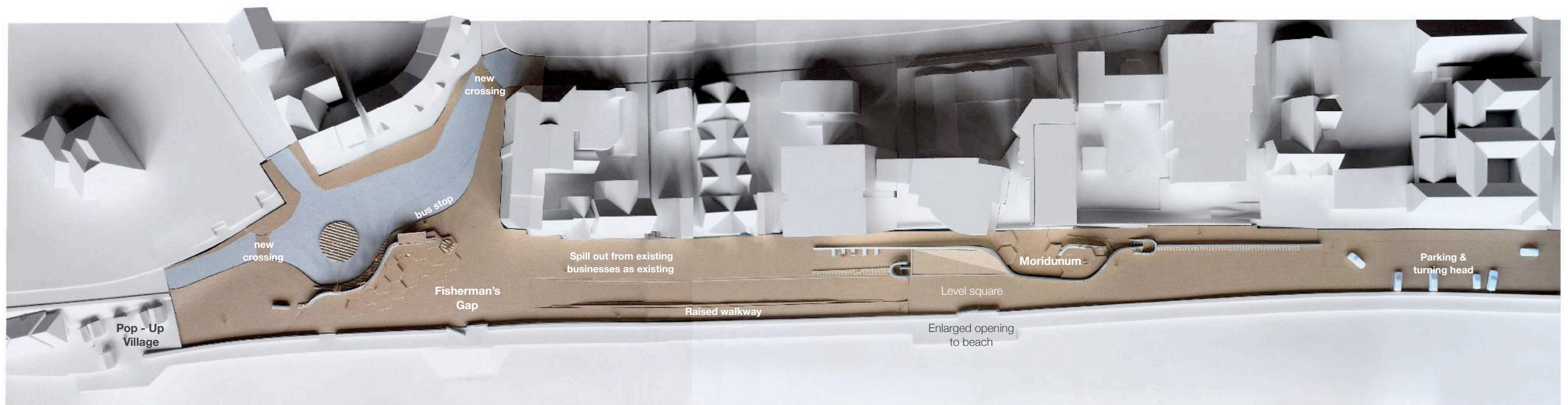
6.2.3 These proposals include the demolition of the existing moridunum building - presently a disused toilet block on the Ground Floor with public access to the roof space over. The replacement building increases the size of the public square, increasing the area from which views across Lyme Bay and the Jurassic Coast.

6.2.4 The interior space to the Ground Floor of the Moridunum building is almost double the existing area providing approximately 400m² of internal space, improving the viability of cost of development of the new building and increasing the vitality of activity at this location extending attractions along the esplanade.

6.2.5 These proposals include the construction of seven new retail/food huts at the western end of the esplanade. This number of huts will provide a concentration of activity and interest in this location, while still allowing free movement of pedestrians along the esplanade and vehicles for access.

6.2.6 Pedestrianisation of the Esplanade also requires the loss of the existing parallel parking alongside. These proposals include in their place a car park at the eastern end with bay parking, providing 15 car parking spaces (9 disabled, 6 non-disabled).

6.2.7 These proposals include an increased amount of benches and seating, and include new covered seating at Fisherman's Gap. The proposals increase the amount of bicycle racks.



*Aerial View of Proposal Model
(Area shown in white as existing)*

6.3 Layout

6.3.1 These proposals reduce the size of the roundabout and propose its relocation to the north. This move provides a larger south facing public square adjacent to the Fisherman's Gap access to the beach.

6.3.2 Relocation of the bus stops and narrowing of the carriageways on approach to the roundabout provides wider pavements to the front of the businesses flanking the route from the town centre to the seafront, offering potential to expand into these spaces.

6.3.3 The existing pedestrian crossing bridging Harbour Road providing the link between Fore Street commercial shopping street and the seafront and esplanade is infrequently used, as is recorded in the Traffic Survey. These proposals include relocation of this crossing to align with the direct view between the seafront and Fore Street to encourage more frequent and safe movement between these two key attractions within the town.

6.3.4 A new pedestrian crossing is proposed to the western end of the esplanade to also encourage more frequent and safe movement between the esplanade and Jubilee Gardens, and other parts of the town accessed from Sea Hill, including the library.

6.3.5 The raised walkway levels to the front of the cafe businesses to the north of the site will be retained to allow for continued use by these businesses.

6.3.6 The design of the new public square at Fisherman's Gap is intended as part-amphitheatre oriented south from which views of the beach and coast can be enjoyed, and part-stage to support performance events. The location of the tiered levels and seating set back from the sea wall maintains a free promenade route, following the line of the sea wall. The curved wall behind the tiered space divides the pedestrian realm from that of the highway providing south facing seating and physical separation for safety, particularly for children. A number of trees are proposed to provide shading and further separation. The location and spacing of planting behind the curved wall has been designed to minimise impact on views from the ground floor businesses to the north.

6.3.7 The new moridinum building is proposed in a similar location to the existing moridunum - although it is longer in length and the high level public square over the moridunum is proposed located slightly further to the east. During the design process careful consideration was given to the recently approved planning application for further residential development at Fosseway Court, directly north of the moridunum. Demolition and reconstruction of the existing moridunum allows opportunity to relocate the high level square in order to reduce the potential overlooking from the Fosseway Court first floor apartments, and affords increased privacy to these properties in return.

6.3.8 Directly to the south of Fosseway Court, the proposed Moridinum building includes an highly glazed space, raised above the level of the square in front by approximately 700mm. This is the key design change proposed as part of the reinstatement of the Moridunum building and is included because it provides a venue from which views of the bay can be appreciated from within an interior space. The location of this building will also serve as an attraction to draw people along the esplanade to the east, extending their time spent in Seaton.

6.3.9 Ramped access to the top of the moridunum is retained, and the gradient of the ramp is decreased overall, improving accessibility.

6.3.10 All structures and buildings have been located to ensure free movement of emergency, permitted maintenance and carnival vehicles along the esplanade from west to east when required.

6.3.11 The proposals include a new carpark to the eastern end of the esplanade to retain car parking as close as possible to the existing esplanade attractions.

6.3.12 This application includes no alteration to the existing sea wall, maintained by the Environment Agency, with the exception of widening the existing opening in the sea wall directly to the south of the moridunum.

6.3.13 The proposals include a new carpark to the eastern end of the esplanade, proving 15 spaces. This is accessed from Beach Road and includes a turning head to allow cars back to join the esplanade at Beach Road, without needing use of the pedestrianised realm.

6.4 Scale

Please refer to the Proposal Drawings that include levels and scaled plans and sections.

6.4.1 These proposals include minimal and negligible alterations to the existing ground levels as is demonstrated in the submitted drawn sections, with the following exceptions:

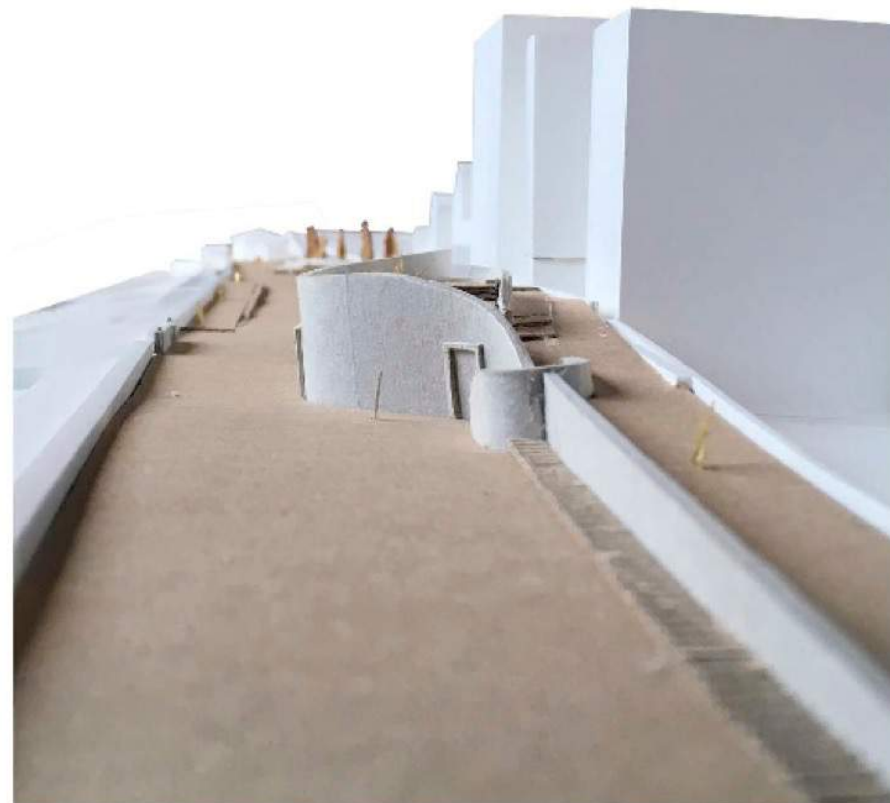
- Construction of an elevated walkway behind the sea wall to allow views over;
- Tiered levels for elevated seating to public square at Fishermans Gap providing views over sea wall; &
- Tiered levels for elevated seating to the public square on the roof of the Moridunum.

6.4.2 Where levels have been raised to provide improved public space design, these have been located respectful to the views form surrounding buildings and properties.

6.4.3 Relocation of the high level square above the Moridunum roof further to the east, allows for the highest level of this square to be raised above the level of the existing square with little impact on the views and light of the adjacent properties - it is located in front of a first floor apartment with no windows on its south elevation. Raising the levels on the roof of the moridunum allows for improved views for the public of the bay and provides more opportunity for seating and dwelling on the raised south facing square. These works enhance this distinctive feature of Seaton.



*Proposal Model View, from raised walkway to winter garden & moridunum
- showing ramped access to moridunum roof and raised seating*



*Proposal Model View, from parking toward moridunum
- showing entrance to public toilets, ramped access to moridunum from
east, & fisherman's gap in the distance.*

6.5 Landscaping

Please refer to the Design Code document for details of the proposed materials, street furniture, and planting, along with justification for their selection. Please refer to the Heritage Statement to review assessment of impact of proposals on significance of Conservation Area.

6.5.1 Material and specification choices for the external landscaping proposals have been informed by detailed assessment of the existing site and consideration of the East Devon Local Plan, resulting in the following key criteria:

- Safety for users, including providing clear distinction between pedestrian and vehicle areas;
- Ease of maintenance and cleanliness;
- To reflect the local distinctiveness of Seaton and the surrounding heritage coastline;
- To respect the significant features of the Conservation Area (see Heritage Appraisal);
- Robustness and longevity; &
- To improve legibility of navigation around the town and seafront.

6.5.2 Pedestrian surface will be concrete to provide a smooth, even and well-laid surface to avoid tripping. The construction of the pedestrian finish using rough surface concrete reduces risk of slips and falls, particularly when wet. The detailed concrete mix will be designed to include an aggregate mix informed by the local geology and colour of the pebbles on the beach.

6.5.3 Street furniture not already set out on the plans will be located together to avoid obstructing routes, for example, bins.

6.5.4 Existing street lighting is proposed maintained, but additional lighting is proposed to provide adequate lighting to assist the visually impaired and to improve safety and security. Festoon lighting for use for events and occasions is also proposed.

6.5.5 Planting and trees proposed within the application site will:

- Reduce water run off and consequential flooding risk;
- Provide shading to public spaces;
- Provide some screening between pedestrian zones and highway;
- Reflect the local character of the landscape;
- Be restricted in height to reduce impact on views from adjacent properties;
- Provide interest and 'softening' to public spaces; &
- Have a beneficial impact on ecology.

6.5.6 The proposals include the reinstatement of the existing Moridunum in recognition that the ascent to and descent from the moridunum, along with a platform for views from the top, is an important feature and experience of the esplanade, and is distinctive to Seaton.

6.5.7 The proposals include new fountains in the Fisherman's Gap area to provide an attraction for families and children, particularly on sunny days. The installation of a fountains for children will provide an added reason to visit Seaton over other local towns, and reinforces Seaton's position as a family friendly destination.



Existing View



Proposed View

Existing view



6.6 Appearance

6.6.1 The architecture proposed comprises of a simple palette of materials and forms, chosen for both their practical and aesthetic qualities. The design of the new public realm is inspired by the colours, textures and topography of the surrounding landscape. The proposals apply a common architectural language to both the buildings and structures on the site as well as the landscaping between intended to unify the esplanade as one.

6.6.2 Monolithic and robust curved concrete walls form the walls of the moridunum, and continue beyond the extent of the building into the landscape, acting as balustrades for the ramped walkways and as backdrops for planting, and shelter for seating. This same language of curved concrete walls is used at Fisherman’s Gap to form a safe barrier to the rear of the tiered seating between the public space and the highway. The same wall continues again into the landscape to form the back of benches further to the west of the esplanade and as a backdrop for information boards providing information relating to the town. It is also used as the primary support for the new bus shelter.

6.6.3 The walking surface and the walls are both proposed in concrete to provide a uniformity to the spaces, but in contrasting textures for subtle interest and better visibility of edges for safety. Concrete is used to form permanent street furniture; used as benches and for permanent bollards.

6.6.4 The simplicity of the choices of material and form are deliberate, and decoration is kept to a minimum, to act as a neutral backdrop to the many colourful and lively events hosted in the town. The tiered design of the public spaces is simple, but will encourage varied use, including play, and staging for watching performance and informal activity.

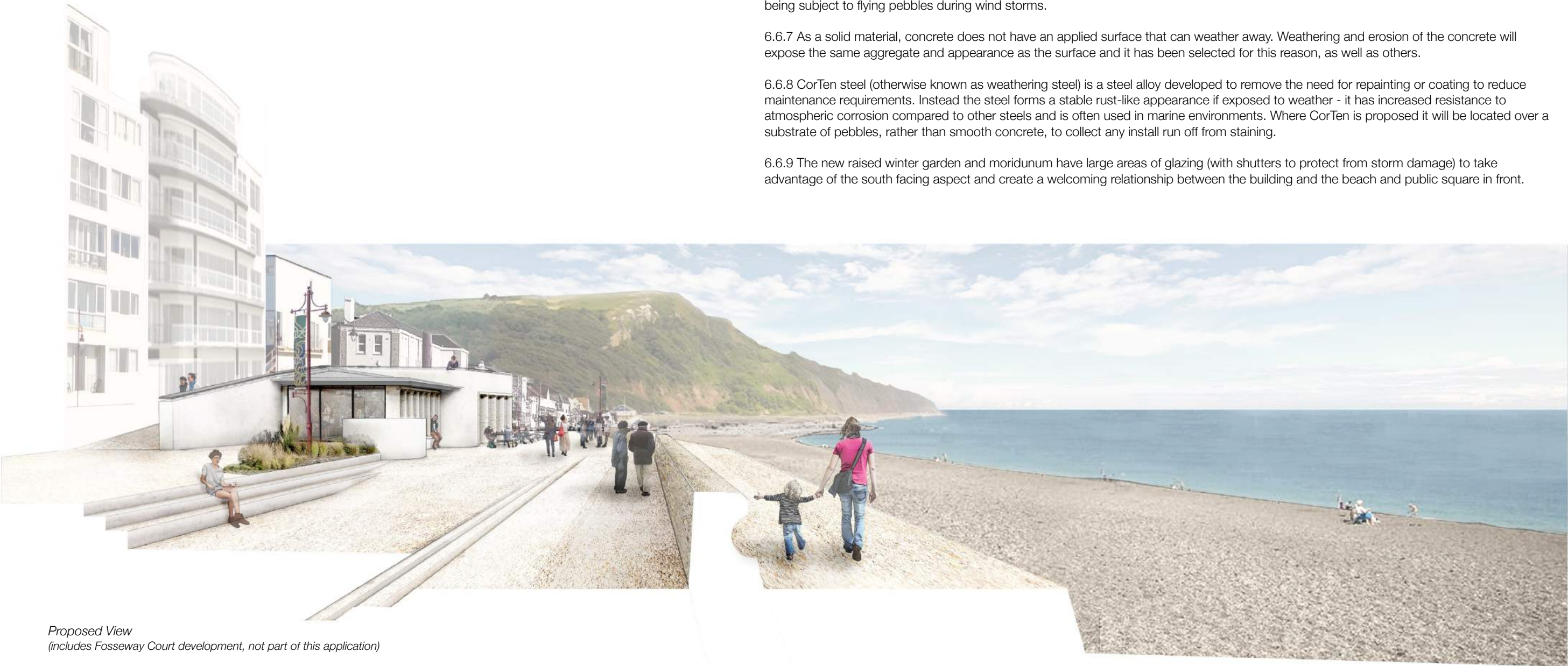
6.6.5 The monolithic design of the proposed moridunum, with sloping ramps to each side, retains the existing character of the building as an extended landscaped mound, rather than a simple single storey building.

6.6.6 Materials for the proposed development have been selected to retain their appearance over time and across different weather and environment conditions, in particular consideration has been given to how the materials will respond to long term exposure, salt spray, and being subject to flying pebbles during wind storms.

6.6.7 As a solid material, concrete does not have an applied surface that can weather away. Weathering and erosion of the concrete will expose the same aggregate and appearance as the surface and it has been selected for this reason, as well as others.

6.6.8 CorTen steel (otherwise known as weathering steel) is a steel alloy developed to remove the need for repainting or coating to reduce maintenance requirements. Instead the steel forms a stable rust-like appearance if exposed to weather - it has increased resistance to atmospheric corrosion compared to other steels and is often used in marine environments. Where CorTen is proposed it will be located over a substrate of pebbles, rather than smooth concrete, to collect any install run off from staining.

6.6.9 The new raised winter garden and moridunum have large areas of glazing (with shutters to protect from storm damage) to take advantage of the south facing aspect and create a welcoming relationship between the building and the beach and public square in front.



Proposed View
(includes Fosseway Court development, not part of this application)

7.0 ACCESS

Careful reference has given to the following relevant East Devon District Council Local Plan Policies in developing the access proposals:

- TC2 - Accessibility of New Development;
- TC3 - Traffic Management Schemes;
- TC4 - Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycleways; and,
- TC7 - Adequacy of Road Network and Site Access.

Please refer to the Transport Assessment for details of the existing and proposed vehicle and transport links within Seaton.

7.1 Vehicular and Transport Links

7.1.1 This application proposes full pedestrianisation of the existing Esplanade from Fisherman's Gap to the Beach Road junction, and alterations to the existing highway. The decision to propose pedestrianisation of this section of the esplanade was arrived at by Seaton Town Council following detailed assessment of the existing transport routes and access requirements, along with extensive public consultation and consultation with DCC Highways.

7.1.2 Measures to improve the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians included in the proposals are:

- Pedestrianisation of section of esplanade providing exclusive surface for pedestrians and cyclists separate from vehicle movement;
- Increase in the number of pedestrian crossings;
- Relocation and widening of two key pedestrian crossings - crossing Harbour Road and crossing Castle Hill;
- Resurfacing of crossings and resurfacing of junction of Fore Street and Marine Place to indicate a priority of pedestrians over vehicles, in order to promote more cautious and slow driving to improve safety; &
- Widening of the narrowest section of footpath at the base of Castle Hill, to improve safety by discouraging those with pushchairs or in wheelchairs from using the carriageway as an alternative route.

7.1.3 These proposals include the following measures to promote cycling for recreation and transport and improve the safe and efficient movement of cyclists:

- Increased bicycle storage;
- Increased signage to provide information regarding key cycle routes that commence and terminate within the site area, including the Stopline Way;
- Permitted access for bicycles to the pedestrianised esplanade;
- Full pedestrianisation giving priority of the space to pedestrians and cyclists, removing vehicles from the esplanade, thereby providing a wider public realm to provide additional width for cyclists and pedestrians to co-exist safely;
- Full pedestrianisation of the esplanade removes the need for Seaton Town Council to apply for a license to close the road for the annual cycle race event, and promotes the increase of similar events;
- Independent bicycle exit from the new roundabout, located to avoid conflict with buses and other vehicles; &
- Removal of railings, barriers and highway signage that can be a physical safety hazard for cyclists.

7.1.4 Measures to improve the safe and efficient movement of vehicles included in the proposals are:

- Re-design and reduction in the size of the roundabout to make movement more intuitive and reduce confusion for drivers consequentially reducing accident potential - the traffic survey includes record of a driver going the wrong way around the roundabout;
- Relocation of bus stop from western side of the roundabout, to the eastern side of the roundabout, allowing the roundabout to be used for turning reducing accident potential. Bus drivers currently use the width of the junction onto Castle Hill to turn which can cause obstruction to other traffic entering Castle Hill junction;
- The new roundabout to allow for Sea Hill to be converted to two-way traffic, in the event.

7.1.5 The proposal to reduce the area available for buses to wait in the area of Fisherman's Gap, adjacent to residential properties and businesses, will reduce the impact of exhaust pollution in to these properties. Relocation of the east-bound bus stop adjacent to Co-op car park will relocate this bus stop away from residential properties.

7.1.6 Access to the existing opening in the sea wall at Fisherman's Gap is to remain unchanged, with access for fisherman across the public square maintained.

7.2 Inclusive Access

7.2.1 The policy followed by Seaton Town Council in developing these proposals and established as part of this statement is to encourage equal use and accessible access to all spaces within the public realm wherever possible.

7.2.21 These proposals include the full pedestrianisation of the esplanade, from Fisherman's Gap to the Beach Road junction, improving general safety for the disabled and impaired by increasing the separation between vehicles and pedestrians, providing a safe public zone adjacent to the beach.

7.2.3 The proposals also improve the existing access provision to the esplanade in the following ways:

- The replacement moridunum building has ramp access to either side at a shallower gradient than the existing moridunum, providing easier access to the raised square above;
- The Winter Garden provides a fully accessible internal space with views over the sea wall;
- The ground floor of the moridunum building has either ramped or level access and is fully accessible;
- Provision of new working public toilets halfway along the esplanade improves access to facilities, including disabled facilities;
- An increased number of benches are proposed providing frequent resting places;
- The existing pavement behind the sea wall prevents views from a wheelchair height. The new proposals include a raised walkway, that is fully accessible at either end, ensuring views of the sea and beach from seated eye-level; &
- New raised tiered seating at Fisherman's Gap includes two ramps providing access to raised areas, improving views over the sea wall to those requiring use of a wheelchair and providing easier access to raised levels for the ambulant disabled.

7.2.4 At present, the esplanade road provides 15 no. disabled parking spaces adjacent to the carriageway. Although these proposals include pedestrianisation of this road, these proposals retain 9 of these spaces, and prioritise this disabled parking closest to the eastern end of the esplanade.

7.2.5 The proposals include increased lighting levels to the seafront - improving safety and security for all users.

7.2.6 Clear access is retained along the full length of the esplanade for emergency services access.

7.2.7 Overall these proposals increase accessibility, safety and opportunity for disabled users of the esplanade.

8.0 FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 The majority of the site is located with Flood Zone 3, with the western-most extent within Flood Zone 1, with the primary source of flooding being tidal.

8.2 Please find enclosed the 'Flood Risk Assessment' prepared by Sands Civil & Structural Chartered Engineers. The recommendations of the report (listed under item 7.1 in the report) have been implemented as part of the proposals as follows:

8.2.1 Floor levels of the ground floor commercial units within the Moridunum building are to be a minimum 150mm above the level of the Moridunum Square outside, while still complying with access requirements. The level of the square slopes away from the building toward the sea wall and drainage. A large portion of the moridunum accommodation created will be located 700mm above the adjacent level of the square.

8.2.2 The proposed commercial units within the Moridunum building and toilets are to include the following floor resilient construction techniques:

- Plug sockets, boilers, and service meters to be located higher up on walls;
- Closed cell insulation to be used;
- Solid flooring and finish materials, and water resistant fixtures internally; &
- Concrete structure is water resistant.

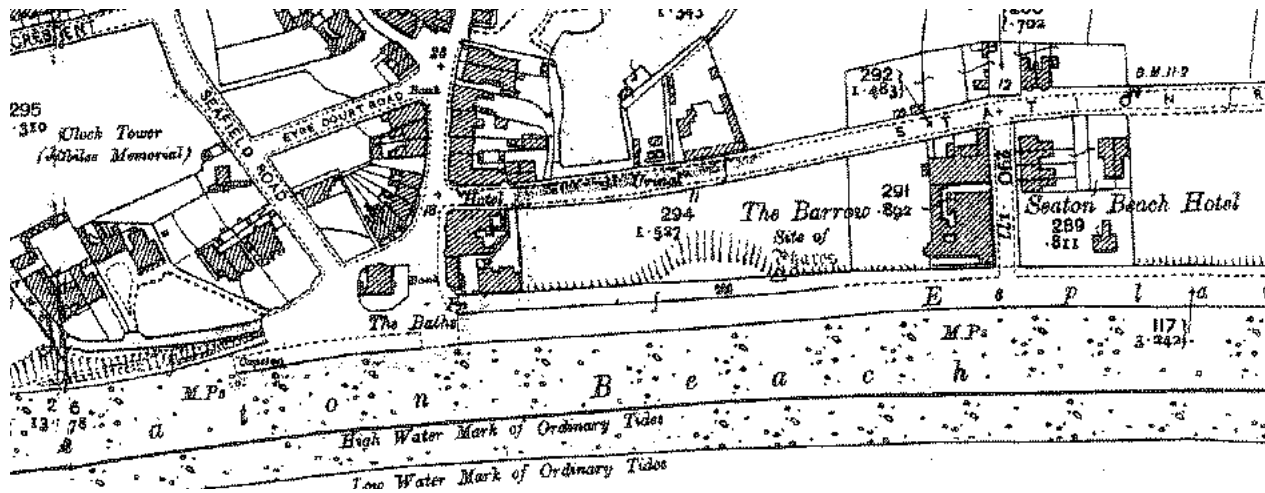
8.2.3 Proposed new levels of surfacing to fall towards sea wall, away from the properties to the north of the esplanade.

8.3 The existing gully locations are to be moved to suit the new layout (as required), whilst maintaining the existing points of discharge. The highways maintenance team have indicated these gullies flood during heavy rainfall events and that this is due to the soakaways being filled with beach material, thus reducing their capacity. The existing soakaways will be cleared of material and externally wrapped with a suitable permeable geotextile material in order to prevent the intrusion of material in the future, thus maximising the volume.

8.4 The new raised walkway behind the sea wall will be constructed independently from the existing Environment Agency sea wall to maintain existing defences.

8.5 The existing opening in the sea wall adjacent to the Moridunum is proposed widened to provide better access between the raised walkway to the southern side of the sea and the esplanade in good weather. The enlarged opening will take the same form at the opening at Fisherman's Gap with new flood gates to be installed, and closed in the event of weather warnings being issued.

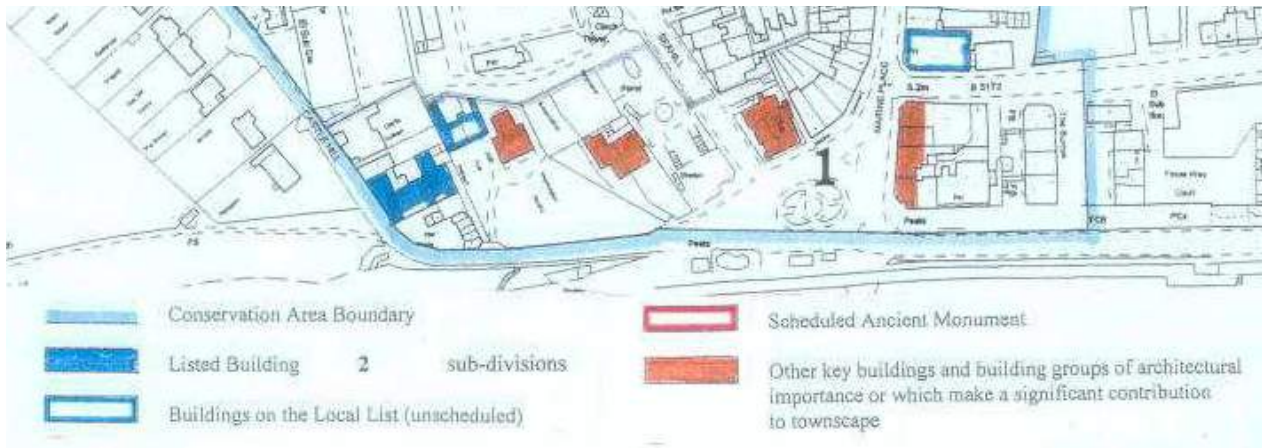
8.6 In summary, the alterations to the application site retain the existing flood defences and will improve the active soakaway drainage. The new Moridunum building on the site will be designed and furnished in compliance with flood damage mitigation recommendations.



1905 Ordnance Survey Second Edition



Historic photographs of Seaton - showing shared use of space



Conservation Area Character Appraisal - Historic Building Character

9.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

The northwestern corner of the site is located with the Seaton Town Centre Conservation Area.

9.1 Conservation Area Appraisal & Appraisal of Significance

An understanding of the significance of the Conservation Area was gained with reference to the Seaton Conservation Area Appraisal, published 1999, and the Seaton Town Centre Conservation Area - Shopfronts Practice Notes.

Key features of the Conservation Area:

- Fore Street - The main commercial centre of Fore Street and Queen Street contains a good number of buildings that retain much of their original detail and shopfronts interspersed with modern infill and bland shopfronts;
- Fore Street - The earlier settlement centres on Fore Street, which also hosts the majority of listed buildings;
- Fore Street - Individual the buildings to Fore Street are small units, but together they create a character that has a major impact on the centre.
- Esplanade - The layout dates fro the late Victorian development of the resort, but much character has been comprised by 'typically bold seaside commercialism';
- Jubilee Gardens makes a significant contribution to the townscape with formally landscaped areas;
- No areas of early surfacing are retained - tarmac and concrete paving slabs are universal;
- Victorian Seaton is characterised by painted stucco render or brickwork to buildings;
- The use of round pebbles forming decorative patterns to low level walls is a distinctive feature; &
- New street furniture and information banners for the Heritage Coast has given the sea front a more distinct appearance and character.

The historic photographs included here show use of the Fisherman's Gap area as a shared space used by pedestrians and vehicles providing generous access to the beach.

9.2 Impact of Proposals on Significance

These proposals include no change to the existing buildings within the Conservation Area.

This application includes the following proposals that are judged to have a positive impact on the Conservation Area:

- Removal of modern and insensitive street furniture and railings obscuring frontages of buildings within the Conservation Area;
- Reinstatement of predominant pedestrian use of the area around Fisherman's Gap for tourist; &
- New proposals are contemporary in materials that respond to the natural landscaping characteristics of the setting, removing much of the dominating tarmac material;
- New proposals are contemporary in design and authentic to the present day and do not seek to imitate Vistorian and Edwardian features which would confuse the legibility of the heritage assets;
- The importance of the route from Fore Street to the seaside is reinforced as part of the proposals, and use of the town centre encouraged; &
- The proposals retain Jubilee Gardens as existing and improve their connection to the seafront public realm in order to encourage use and appreciation.

In summary, the proposals will have a positive impact on the significance of Seaton's Conservation Area.

10.0 LOCAL REQUIREMENTS

10.1 Biodiversity Survey and Report

Proposed demolition of the existing Moridunum building required the completion of a Phase 1 Ecological Survey. Please find enclosed with this application the survey report undertaken by Kestrel ecology. The report concluded that ‘given the lack of evident of use by protected species, no mitigation measures will be necessary in this case, should the property be redeveloped’.

10.2 Foul Sewage and Utilities

Please refer to Flood Risk Assessment document.

There are public sewers in the vicinity of the site. It is anticipated that there is adequate capacity available within the existing sewerage system to serve the proposed development. However, flow rates and discharges can be confirmed to EDDC on confirmation of use of the Moridunum.

10.3 Lighting Report

The lighting scheme for the esplanade will focus on creating a safe public realm, ensure energy efficiency and minimize light pollution.

The existing street lamps will be retained and recessed accent lighting is proposed installed to highlight edges to improve safety and to wash light over the new curved concrete walls. The Winter Garden and Moridunum will be well lit when in use providing additional lighting to the central section of the pedestrianised esplanade - the illumination of the Winter Garden in particular provide a glowing presence on the esplanade highlighting activity on the seafront.

Festoon lighting is also proposed for events and occasions to allow Seaton Town Council to illuminate targeted areas of the sea front where events are happening. Occasional lighting will allow for light levels to be raised in areas of the sea front in support of specific events without requiring permanent lighting of the seafront to the same levels.

Please see the Design Code Document for further details and annotated lighting proposal plans.

10.4 Extract & Ventilation Statement

To be provided to EDDC if use of moridunum is established as falling within Use Classes A3, A4, or A5 or other uses requiring the provision of ventilation or extraction equipment.

10.5 Tree / Hedgerow Survey / Arboricultural Statement

No trees or hedgerows are proposed removed as part of these application proposals.

10.5 Refuse Strategy

The proposed Moridunum plan indicates a covered area within the ground floor for bin storage. The amount and type of bins required will depend on the eventual use and ownership of the Moridunum, and is to be agreed with EDDC

11.0 SUMMARY

This design and access statement is written in support of the Full Plans and Conservation Area Consent application for the enhancement of Seaton Seafront, including replacement of the existing Moridunum building.

The design for the new public realm and public squares respond for the requirements for the development to be robust in an exposed location and adaptable to many public uses. The form and materials of the site are selected to visually blend with the colours and textures of the surrounding Heritage landscape. The removal of existing street furniture, railings and signage, and replacement with simplified and unified features, will clear the setting of modern clutter and enhance the legibility of both the Conservation Area and World Heritage Site.

The proposed seafront enhancement is of appropriate scale to its surroundings and will provide local people and visitors with a range of enjoyable spaces and experiences in a safe new public realm overlooking Lyme Bay.