

Exmouth Placemaking Plan

Strategic Outline Business Case

Date: February 2026



Glossary of urban planning and design phrases and concepts use within the document.

- **Activation:** The process of making a public space or building active and engaging, often through events, pop-up uses, or improved design to encourage footfall.
- **Character:** The distinct, identifiable, and typical personality of an area, formed by its history, layout, and building styles.
- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** A charge on new developments used to fund local infrastructure.
- **Design Guide:** A document, that provides standards and recommendations on applying design principles to ensure high-quality, consistent, and functional outcomes, such as in building developments or design of the public realm.
- **Hub (Urban/Community):** A central point, node, or building that concentrates activity, linking different functions like work, education, and recreation.
 - **Mobility Hub:** A focal point in the transport network, often combining public transport, bike-sharing, and shared mobility services to promote "first & last mile" connectivity.
 - **Community/Social Hub:** A, often re-purposed, space that fosters social interaction, resilience, and community services.
 - **Business/Economic Hub:** A location designed for startups and entrepreneurs to collaborate, often featuring shared resources and flexible, affordable workspaces.
- **Legibility:** The degree to which a place is easy to understand, navigate, and move around in.
- **Meanwhile Use (Temporary Use):** The short-term, temporary activation of vacant or underutilised land, buildings, or spaces for social or economic gain. These often occur while a landlord secures a new lease or in advance of long-term redevelopment to maintain area vitality. Examples include pop-up shops, community gardens, artist studios, and temporary housing.
- **Mixed-use Development:** A project or area that integrates multiple functions, such as residential, commercial, or retail, in a single, integrated development.
- **Permeability:** The ease with which people can move through an area, defined by the variety and connectivity of safe, direct routes.
- **Placemaking:** A collaborative, community-driven approach to improving public spaces and enhancing the overall quality of life and sense of place.
- **Planting Palette:** A curated, intentional selection of plants chosen for a landscape project that share a cohesive theme in terms of colour, texture, form, and environmental suitability. Similar to how an artist uses a colour palette, a landscape designer uses a planting palette to ensure the garden feels intentional, balanced, and harmonious rather than chaotic or randomly planted.
- **Public Realm:** The spaces between buildings that are publicly accessible, such as streets, squares, and parks.
- **Rationalising the built environment:** This involves redesigning, consolidating, or reconfiguring physical layouts—such as street networks, public spaces, and building plots—to make them more efficient, accessible, and high-quality.
- **Wayfinding:** The process and system of guiding people through physical spaces, combining signage, maps, symbols, colours, and environmental design to help them orient themselves and navigate from point A to B, enhancing user experience, safety, and efficiency in complex environments. It's not just about signs, but a holistic approach that helps users build a mental map of their surroundings, involving cognitive stages like orientation, decision-making, and destination recognition.

Contents

Introduction.....	4
1.1 Project background.....	4
1.2 Strategic Outline Business Case: Summary of Results.....	4
1.3 Report Structure.....	6
2.0 The Strategic Case.....	7
2.1 Overall Description and Aim of the EPP.....	7
2.2 Project Background.....	7
2.3 Scope of high to medium priority interventions.....	7
2.4 Alignment with Council Priorities and Supporting the Council Plan.....	9
2.5 How the Interventions Support Broader Policy Priorities.....	16
2.6 The Need for Change.....	20
2.7 The Key Drivers of Change.....	21
2.8 Impact of Not Changing.....	22
2.9 Objectives and Measures for Success.....	22
3.0 The Economic Case.....	23
3.1 Critical Success Factors.....	23
3.2 Development and Assessment of Options.....	23
3.3 The Preferred Option.....	27
3.4 Net Present Social Cost / Net Present Social Value Findings.....	27
3.5 Cost Estimates.....	28
3.6 Benefits Appraisal.....	29
4.0 The Commercial Case.....	32
4.1 Potential delivery options.....	32
4.3 Proposed delivery model and rationale.....	33
4.4 Procurement strategy.....	33
4.5 Risk allocation.....	34
5.0 The Financial Case.....	36
5.1 Cost Estimate for Programme of Interventions.....	36
5.2 Overall Funding Requirements and Affordability.....	36
6.0 The Management Case.....	41
6.1 Project management and governance.....	41
6.2 Project milestones and timescales.....	42
6.3 Project dependencies.....	42
6.4 Risk management.....	43

Introduction

1.1 Project background

This Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) was commissioned by East Devon District Council (EDDC), to support delivery of the Exmouth Placemaking Plan (EPP). The purpose of the SOBC is to articulate the strategic narrative and need for the identified high to medium priority interventions that sit within the Exmouth Placemaking Plan (EPP). The SOBC articulates why UK Government, EDDC and other public funding support is needed, and provides proposals to support growth and attract investment in Exmouth in support of the EPP.

In line with HM Treasury Green Book guidance, the SOBC adopts the Five Case Model. The high to medium priority interventions as identified in the EPP are the focus for delivery pending availability of funding. The identified high to medium priority interventions aim to deliver three broad aspects of placemaking:

1. Improving wayfinding around Exmouth, for example through the provision of better signage and information boards;
2. Improving the quality of place using Exmouth's existing assets (e.g. promoting public art to complement heritage buildings, strengthening existing recreational spaces); and
3. Creating new spaces and destinations through transformative projects (e.g. unlocking new public spaces and redesigning the public realm in some areas of Exmouth).

1.2 Strategic Outline Business Case: Summary of Results

The **strategic case** demonstrates that there is a need for change in Exmouth's public realm. The key factors driving this change include the challenging economic climate, changing consumer spend and working patterns, and the Climate Emergency. At the local level, Exmouth needs more employment and investment opportunities, to achieve an increase in economic activity.

Improving the public realm in Exmouth is a key opportunity to help better connect and showcase existing assets that do not currently meet their full potential. As well as helping increase use and enjoyment of the individual assets, better connecting and foregrounding these assets aims to create a complete picture which is 'greater than the sum of its parts'.

Another key aspect of improving the public realm and connectivity is the opportunity to encourage greater levels of walking, cycling and wheeling. The impact of not effecting change may result in continued high levels of car dependency, impacting air quality, pedestrian and cycle safety and the quality of Exmouth's natural environment.

Effecting improvement in Exmouth's public realm and helping create a better connected and more accessible place also improves the potential to create the right backdrop for more temporary activities and meanwhile uses, creating further growth opportunities that suit changing social and economic dynamics.

From a policy and planning perspective, the strategic case suggests strong alignment of high to medium priority interventions with strategic planning at the local, county and national levels, namely East Devon District and Devon County Councils' Plans.

The **economic case** outlines the four options for change:

1. No intervention (business as usual);
2. Improve wayfinding around Exmouth;
3. Improve the quality of place using existing assets; and
4. Create new spaces and destinations through transformative projects.

Interventions have been mapped against each of the above options. In turn, each option has been assessed against key themes within the EPP, as well as critical success factors (strategic fit, value for money, achievability, capacity and capability, affordability). Based on this assessment, Option 3 is noted as the Preferred Option for this SOBC.

The cost-benefit appraisal of Option 3 has been indicatively evaluated. In total, 4 of the 13 interventions, which include activating Exmouth's public space and transforming existing assets, are estimated to create a potential 14-35 net direct jobs and 4-11 indirect and induced jobs (mostly within the retail and visitor economy sectors); a minimum of £250,000 per annum of gross-value add through employment creation; amenity benefits of approximately £120,000 per annum; and, public health benefits associated with the provision of cycle infrastructure.

The potential non-monetizable benefits of the thirteen interventions include: a more attractive seafront and town centre which may increase footfall, visitor spend and job opportunities; a better place image for Exmouth and potentially greater investment from businesses; improved accessibility of the town centre and seafront through improved wayfinding and signage; physical and mental wellbeing benefits from the creation of new public spaces and open spaces; and, improved social cohesion and wider community benefits.

The financial case presents cost estimates based on desktop research, estimates from similar interventions elsewhere in the UK, and engagement with EDDC on employee and running costs. Public sector funding is very limited and although it is anticipated that EDDC will be the leading authority and will support with staff resource, public sector funding will need to be from a combination of Exmouth Town Council Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding allocation and Devon County Council (DCC), supplemented where possible with private sector funding, e.g. private investors with interests/operations in Exmouth, and grants from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The commercial case outlines the potential delivery and procurement routes for implementing the high to medium priority interventions. It is anticipated that the preferred procurement route will be confirmed at the next stage of the business case process once the delivery model has also been confirmed.

Finally, the management case outlines the case for EDDC to promote, administer and manage high to medium priority interventions alongside partner organisations. From a governance perspective, a designated Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) within EDDC's Place & Prosperity Team would lead and appoint a Project Manager from within EDDC, ECT, or DCC depending on the nature of the project, to realise project outputs and objectives. The SRO would be supported by a Steering Group (providing overall EPP oversight), a Working Group (providing oversight at an intervention level), and any other teams within the partner organisations that are needed during implementation.

1.3 Report Structure

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- The **Strategic Case** provides a rationale for the EPP, in particular the high to medium priority interventions, and the degree of alignment with local and central government priorities;
- The **Economic Case** provides an appraisal of the impacts of the high medium priority interventions to determine costs, benefits and value for money;
- The **Commercial Case** outlines potential commercial arrangements and the procurement strategy;
- The **Financial Case** appraises the costs, funding availability and affordability of the high to medium priority interventions; and
- The **Management Case** outlines processes and controls to manage implementation, and to track and realise future benefits.

2.0 The Strategic Case

The Strategic Case sets out the rationale for the Exmouth Placemaking Plan (EPP). It demonstrates that the EPP – and the high to medium priority interventions that are the focus of this Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) – have been developed as part of a broader strategy for Exmouth.

2.1 Overall Description and Aim of the EPP

The EPP outlines a vision, strategic objectives and action plan for delivering placemaking improvements to Exmouth Town Centre and Seafront. The EPP provides an overall strategic direction for the enhancement of Exmouth Town Centre and Seafront through interventions that will contribute positively to the future socio-economic sustainability of the Town. These include improvements to wayfinding, public realm and infrastructure and support to unlocking opportunities for investment in specific areas and sites.

The EPP provides the principal policy guide and plan for achieving a vision for sustainable placemaking in Exmouth town centre and seafront for a period of up to ten years; and is designed to be usable by the Council and its stakeholders to deliver against the Council's and stakeholders' key aims. The approach to the EPP is based on findings from the placemaking consultation undertaken by the East Devon District Council (EDDC) throughout 2022 and subsequent consultations in 2024 and 2025 with members and officers. The EPP also integrates Exmouth's existing strategies and plans, economic analysis of the town, and follows placemaking best practice.

2.2 Project Background

Multiple placemaking interventions are proposed within the EPP, categorised into high, medium, and lower priority interventions. This prioritisation is an evaluation derived from stakeholder engagement feedback. The high and upper half of the medium priority interventions are the focus of this SOBC.

The rest of Section 2 summarises the high and medium priority interventions that are within the scope of analysis for this SOBC, together with a demonstration of their strong alignment with Exmouth Town Council, East Devon District Council, Devon County Council and national government priorities, strategies, plans and actions.

2.3 Scope of high to medium priority interventions

Table 1 provides a summary of the top 13 interventions from the EPP, comprising all the high priority and upper half of the medium priority interventions. Further information on these interventions and how they feed into the overall EPP, and interact with other medium and lower priority interventions, is provided within the EPP.

Table 1: Summary of EPP – Scope of high to medium priority interventions.

No.	Name of Intervention	Short Description	Priority
1	Signage & Wayfinding Strategy	Commission a wayfinding strategy to improve the legibility of the town centre and the seafront.	High
2a	Station Gateway – Phase 1	Initial phase - light touch improvements to 'Station Gateway' area.	High
2b	Station Gateway – Phase 2	Later phase - comprehensive improvements to 'Station Gateway' area to provide enhanced welcome point and appropriately nature sensitive connections to Exe Trail, estuary and town centre.	High
3	Shopfront design guide	Review and update the existing shopfront design guide. Encourage businesses to incorporate design principles when shopfronts are replaced.	High
4	Queens Drive Space	Strengthen the experience at Queens Drive Space as a family attraction by reconsidering it's role as a complementary asset to Beach Gardens and adjacent assets. Reconfigure to make best use of all available space.	High
5	Beach Gardens	Review use of Beach Gardens car park to investigate opportunities for using the space for temporary activities and cultural programming, which do not impact use of seafront venues.	High
6	Affordable Business Occupancy Opportunities	Support the provision of a range of business accommodation opportunities to increase occupancy rates in the town centre.	High
7	Strand Refresh	Work with all stakeholders to formalise various uses of this key space to ensure that business spill-out, events and meanwhile activities are complementary and compliant with requirements for use and maintenance.	High
8	Information Boards	Provide information boards around The Maer Nature Reserve and other heritage and natural assets, to promote and celebrate the rich local heritage.	Medium
9	Town hubs	Encourage hubs within the town centre and the seafront to harness the opportunity to link into the wider walking and cycling networks.	Medium
10	Link station gateway	Link the station gateway area with the estuary by creating a public space and legible route to provide a link to the edge of the estuary. Create non-invasive opportunities for bird watching.	Medium
11	Walking and Cycling Network Improvements	Undertake surveys and develop and implement projects to improve the walking and cycling network in the town centre and along the seafront. Create clearly defined, safe walking and cycling routes where possible.	Medium
12	Comprehensive Public Realm Design Strategy	Commission a town centre and seafront-wide public realm strategy that guides improvements to streets and open spaces to reinforce the recommendations of the wayfinding strategy and other public realm improvements.	Medium

2.4 Alignment with Council Priorities and Supporting the Council Plan

The high to medium priority interventions outlined in the EPP are the focus of this SOBC. This section demonstrates the extent to which these interventions align with the East Devon District Council Plan 2024-2028, which sets the direction for East Devon District Council (EDDC).¹ The key priorities within the Council Plan are:

1. Better homes and communities;
2. A greener East Devon
3. A resilient economy; and
4. Quality services

The priority actions in relation to ‘better homes and communities for all’ relate to promoting better homes and stronger communities; promoting health and wellbeing across the community; and promoting culture and community. Creating a ‘greener East Devon’ involves initiatives to reduce carbon emissions; meet high environmental standards; considering planning aspects in Exmouth’s environment; promoting recycling and reducing waste; and protecting and enhancing Exmouth’s natural environment in coast and country. Finally, the Council Plan asserts that a ‘resilient economy’ requires promoting the green economy, ensuring Exmouth’s financial stability through sourcing and securing available funds to help with asset management; supporting employment through coordinating an effective redundancy response and supporting local small and start-up businesses to ensure an enabling business environment; and, finally, supporting the local economy through transport, housing and procurement initiatives.

Table 2 demonstrates the extent of alignment between the high to medium priority interventions outlined in the EPP to the EDDC Plan 2024-2028. In summary, the table shows that there is broad alignment between high to medium priority interventions and the priority areas within the Council Plan. In particular, the development of a comprehensive public realm design strategy that includes a focus on materiality, street furniture, public facilities, beach huts, and lighting strategy has the potential to satisfy all priorities and actions within the East Devon District Council Plan 2024-28. Interventions such as transforming Beach Gardens and Queens Drive Space are next-most closely aligned with priority areas of the Council Plan. The Council Plan priority action objective that appears to have the most coverage in terms of the scope of the high to medium priority interventions is ‘Supporting employment’, followed by ‘Supporting Exmouth’s local economy’ and ‘Promoting culture and community’.

EDDC is preparing a new Local Plan to replace the existing East Devon Local Plan, and published a second Regulation 19 document for consultation between November 2025 and January 2026.

¹ [Council Plan 2021-23 | East Devon District Council](#)

Table 2: Alignment of EPP high to medium priority interventions with East Devon District Council Plan 2024-2028

East Devon District Council Plan 2024-28: Priorities & Actions	1: Better homes and communities for all			2: A greener East Devon					3: A resilient economy			
	Better homes, strong communities	Better health and wellbeing	Promoting culture and community	Carbon reduction	High environmental standards	Better planning	Recycling and reducing waste	Protecting/enhancing environment	Greener economy	Increased financial stability	Supporting employment	Support local economy
High to medium priority interventions outlined in EPP												
Commission a wayfinding strategy to improve the legibility of the town centre and the seafront.												
Initial phase - light touch improvements to Station Gateway area.												
Later phase - comprehensive improvements to Station Gateway area to provide enhanced welcome point and appropriately nature sensitive connections to Exe Trail, estuary and town centre.												
Review and update the existing shopfront design guide. Encourage businesses to incorporate design principles when shopfronts are replaced.												
Strengthen the experience at Queens Drive Space as a family attraction by reconsidering it's role as a complementary asset to Beach Gardens and adjacent assets. Reconfigure to make best use of all available space.												
Review use of Beach Gardens car park to investigate opportunities for using the space for temporary activities and cultural programming, which do not impact use of seafront venues.												
Support the provision of a range of business accommodation opportunities to increase occupancy rates in the town centre.												

East Devon District Council Plan 2024-28: Priorities & Actions	1: Better homes and communities for all			2: A greener East Devon					3: A resilient economy			
	Better homes, strong communities	Better health and wellbeing	Promoting culture and community	Carbon reduction	High environmental standards	Better planning	Recycling and reducing waste	Protecting/enhancing environment	Greener economy	Increased financial stability	Supporting employment	Support local economy
The Strand refresh – working with all stakeholders to ensure events, activation and meanwhile activities are complementary and compliant with requirements for use and maintenance.												
Provide information boards around The Maer Nature Reserve and other heritage and natural assets, to promote and celebrate the rich local heritage.												
Encourage hubs within the town centre and the seafront to harness the opportunity to link into the wider walking and cycling networks.												
Link the station gateway area with the estuary by creating a public space and legible route to provide a link to the edge of the estuary. Create non-invasive opportunities for bird watching.												
Undertake surveys and develop and implement projects to improve the walking and cycling network in the town centre and along the seafront. Create clearly defined, safe walking and cycling routes where possible.												
Commission town centre and seafront-wide public realm strategy to guide improvements to streets and open spaces.												

The aim of East Devon’s Emerging Local Plan 2020-2040 is to “guide and inform decisions on where development will take place in East Devon. The Local Plan is the key document used in determining planning applications.”² The high to medium priority interventions within the EPP broadly align with the objectives within the East Devon Emerging Local Plan 2020-2040. These objectives include:

1. Designing for health and wellbeing;
2. Tackling the climate emergency;
3. Meeting future housing needs;
4. Supporting jobs and the economy;
5. Promoting vibrant town centres;
6. Designing beautiful and healthy spaces and buildings
7. Our outstanding built heritage;
8. Our outstanding natural environment;
9. Promoting sustainable transport;
10. Connections and infrastructure; and
11. Supporting sustainable and thriving villages;

Table 3 demonstrates the extent of alignment between the high to medium priority interventions in the EPP and the objectives within the EDDC Emerging Local Plan 2020-2040. Aside from the desire of the Local Plan to meet future housing needs, there is broad alignment between the proposed high to medium priority interventions and the Local Plan’s eleven objectives. In particular, the closest alignment with Local Plan objectives is through the commissioning of a comprehensive public realm design strategy, followed by the proposed creation of hubs across the town centre to harness the opportunity to link into the wider walking and cycling networks. The Local Plan objective that appears to have the most coverage in terms of the scope of the high to medium priority interventions is ‘Promoting a vibrant town centre’, followed by ‘Supporting jobs and the economy’.

² [commonplace-reg-18-final-071122.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](https://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/media/10000/commonplace-reg-18-final-071122.pdf)

Table 3: Alignment of EPP high to medium priority interventions with relevant East Devon Emerging Local Plan 2020-2040

East Devon Emerging Local Plan 2020-40: Objectives	Designing for health and wellbeing	Tackling the climate emergency	Supporting jobs and the economy	Promoting vibrant town centres	Designing beautiful and healthy spaces and buildings	Our outstanding built heritage	Our outstanding natural environment	Promoting sustainable transport	Connections and infrastructure
High to medium priority interventions outlined in EPP									
Commission a wayfinding strategy to improve the legibility of the town centre and the seafront.									
Initial phase - light touch improvements to Station Gateway area.									
Later phase - comprehensive improvements to Station Gateway area to provide enhanced welcome point and appropriately nature sensitive connections to Exe Trail, estuary and town centre.									
Review and update the existing shopfront design guide. Encourage businesses to incorporate design principles when shopfronts are replaced.									
Strengthen the experience at Queens Drive Space as a family attraction by reconsidering it's role as a complementary asset to Beach Gardens and adjacent assets. Reconfigure to make best use of all available space.									
Review use of Beach Gardens car park to investigate opportunities for using the space for temporary activities and cultural programming, which do not impact use of seafront venues.									
Support the provision of a range of business accommodation opportunities to increase occupancy rates in the town centre.									

East Devon Emerging Local Plan 2020-40: Objectives	Designing for health and wellbeing	Tackling the climate emergency	Supporting jobs and the economy	Promoting vibrant town centres	Designing beautiful and healthy spaces and buildings	Our outstanding built heritage	Our outstanding natural environment	Promoting sustainable transport	Connections and infrastructure
The Strand refresh – working with all stakeholders to ensure events, activation and meanwhile activities are complementary and compliant with requirements for use and maintenance.									
Provide information boards around The Maer Nature Reserve and other heritage and natural assets, to promote and celebrate the rich local heritage.									
Create hubs within the town centre and the seafront to harness the opportunity to link into the wider walking and cycling networks.									
Link the station gateway area with the estuary by creating a public space and legible route to provide a link to the edge of the estuary. Create non-invasive opportunities for bird watching.									
Undertake surveys and develop and implement projects to improve the walking and cycling network in the town centre and along the seafront. Create clearly defined, safe walking and cycling routes where possible.									
Commission town centre and seafront-wide public realm strategy to guide improvements to streets and open spaces.									

2.5 How the Interventions Support Broader Policy Priorities

As well as the alignment of the high to medium priority interventions in the EPP with EDDC strategies and the emerging Local Plan, the interventions are also well-aligned with the priorities of Devon County Council (DCC) and national government more widely, further supporting the case for change.

The DCC Plan 2021-2025 aims to “help the county to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, build on the resilience of local people and communities to create a fairer, healthier and more caring place, and grasp the opportunity to create a greener, more prosperous and inclusive future for all.”³ The priorities of the Plan are to:

1. Respond to the climate emergency;
2. Be ambitious for children and young people;
3. Support a sustainable economic recovery;
4. Tackle poverty and inequality;
5. Improve health and well-being; and
6. Help communities be safe, connected and resilient.

Table 4 demonstrates the extent of alignment between the high to medium priority interventions in the EPP and the DCC Plan 2021-2025. The mapping exercise between short-term placemaking interventions and the DCC Plan suggests that the comprehensive public realm design strategy and the transformation of Beach Gardens cut across all six priorities in the Council Plan. The Plan’s priority area that has most coverage in terms of the placemaking interventions is ‘Help communities be safe, connected and resilient’ followed by ‘Supporting a sustainable economic recovery’.

³ [The best place - Strategic Plan \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/strategic-plan)

Table 4: Alignment of EPP high to medium priority interventions with Devon County Council Plan 2021-2025

Devon County Council Plan 2021-25: Priority areas	Respond to Climate Emergency	Be ambitious for children & young people	Support sustainable economic recovery	Tackle Poverty & Inequality	Improve health & well-being	Help communities be safe, connected and resilient
High to medium priority interventions outlined in EPP						
Commission a wayfinding strategy to improve the legibility of the town centre and the seafront.						
Initial phase - light touch improvements to Station Gateway area.						
Later phase - comprehensive improvements to Station Gateway area to provide enhanced welcome point and appropriately nature sensitive connections to Exe Trail, estuary and town centre.						
Review and update the existing shopfront design guide. Encourage businesses to incorporate design principles when shopfronts are replaced.						
Strengthen the experience at Queens Drive Space as a family attraction by reconsidering it's role as a complementary asset to Beach Gardens and adjacent assets. Reconfigure to make best use of all available space.						
Review use of Beach Gardens car park to investigate opportunities for using the space for temporary activities and cultural programming, which do not impact use of seafront venues.						
Support the provision of a range of business accommodation opportunities to increase occupancy rates in the town centre.						

Devon County Council Plan 2021-25: Priority areas	Respond to Climate Emergency	Be ambitious for children & young people	Support sustainable economic recovery	Tackle Poverty & Inequality	Improve health & well-being	Help communities be safe, connected and resilient
The Strand refresh – working with all stakeholders to ensure events, activation and meanwhile activities are complementary and compliant with requirements for use and maintenance.						
Provide information boards around The Maer Nature Reserve and other built heritage and natural assets, to promote and celebrate the rich local heritage.						
Create hubs within the town centre and the seafront to harness the opportunity to link into the wider walking and cycling networks.						
Link the station gateway area with the estuary by creating a public space and legible route to provide a link to the edge of the estuary. Create non-invasive opportunities for bird watching.						
Undertake surveys and develop and implement projects to improve the walking and cycling network in the town centre and along the seafront. Create clearly defined, safe walking and cycling routes where possible.						
Commission town centre and seafront-wide public realm strategy to guide improvements to streets and open spaces.						

At a national government level, the interventions in the EPP are strongly aligned and highly relevant to the latest Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill 2023.⁴ The Act created new laws to transform town centres by “giving councils the powers to work directly with landlords to bring empty buildings back into use by local businesses and community groups, breathing life back into empty high streets.”⁵ Furthermore, the Act aims to “make it faster for local authorities to give hospitality businesses permission to use outdoor seating.”⁶ These aims are in line with proposed high to medium priority interventions such as:

- Support the provision of a range of business accommodation opportunities to increase occupancy rates in the town centre;
- Review and update the existing shopfront design guide. Encourage businesses to incorporate design principles when shopfronts are replaced;
- Commissioning a comprehensive public realm design strategy;
- Creating hubs within the town centre and the seafront to harness the opportunity to link into the wider walking and cycling networks; and
- Proposed improvements to Beach Gardens and Queens Drive Space.

2.6 The Need for Change

The EPP identifies a number of inherent challenges within Exmouth town centre and seafront that have informed the vision for change, strategic objectives and proposed actions:

1. Lack of economic dynamism, employment opportunities and challenging demographic profile;
2. Public realm and wayfinding in need of improvement to make the most of existing assets, create an enhanced backdrop for activation, temporary and meanwhile uses and to promote more walking, wheeling and cycling; and
3. A limited number of development opportunities that are attractive to investment.

The economic challenge

The lack of economic demand in Exmouth is tied to two principal factors: employment opportunities and demographics. Exmouth is heavily reliant on seasonal tourism visitors. For year-round work, most employers within the economic area are based in Exeter. This is reflected in a smaller than average working age population due to a tendency for younger people to leave Exmouth once they receive higher qualifications to find work elsewhere. The area has a draw for an older population, which compounds the lack of demographic diversity in the town.

To address the lower value offering in the town, one aspect that should be addressed is making it more attractive for younger people to live there by providing workspaces and attracting employers based on the quality of the water-based lifestyle and surrounding natural environment and improved public spaces, facilities and an improved town centre offering.

The perception-related challenge

Whilst Exmouth has an abundance of high-value natural assets and attractions, these are not as fully connected into the town centre and seafront as they could be, inhibiting growth and

⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/55/enacted>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-laws-to-speed-up-planning-build-homes-and-level-up>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-laws-to-speed-up-planning-build-homes-and-level-up>

vibrancy in these areas and the town. The town centre and seafront are places where more priority needs to be given to maximising the experience for residents and visitors to encourage more engagement in economic activities by addressing current inconsistencies in the quality of signage, public realm and prioritisation of pedestrians and cycles.

The challenge of limited investment opportunities

Thirdly, linked to both the economic and demographic factors, and the environmental challenges, there is a lack of development opportunities to attract private sector investment and innovation. The demographic and economic character of the town and seafront is tied to the population and visitor characteristics, which in turn influence and are influenced by the town centre and seafront offering in terms of activities as well as infrastructure that supports leisure interactions with the natural environment.

The EPP aims to address these factors through the proposed interventions to improve the attractiveness of Exmouth as well as create spaces for new types of employment that will attract younger people to stay and work in Exmouth. Crucially, this will require private sector-led development of key sites and areas identified in the EPP alongside strategic investment from local government. These together can be a trigger for innovation across Exmouth to catalyse future social and economic development, and long-term sustainability.

2.7 The Key Drivers of Change

The impact and after-effects of COVID-19, the cost-of-living crisis, low growth economy and climate emergency are combining to create significant challenges for the health of town centres. Conversely, each presents potential opportunities, which are especially resonant with Exmouth. One of the long-term effects of COVID has been a renewed appreciation and demand for accessible outdoor spaces, which Exmouth has in abundance. Another resulting trend has been an increased demand for collective recreational experiences, which has been recognised as a possible focus for town centres to shift towards, to make use of space freed up by diminishing retail demand. The proximity of the town centre and seafront creates potential for the town centre to evolve to more closely align with and support the water-based activities available on the seafront. The town centre and seafront will also have an increasing role to play in hosting and supporting activities that enable the cultural life of the town to flourish. The key aspects of the EPP that respond to the drivers for change and opportunities are:

1. Unlocking the placemaking potential through better linking, highlighting and increased use of existing natural and built assets;
2. Diversifying the mix of land uses, initially through temporary activation and meanwhile uses to encourage new business and cultural activity; and
3. Introducing measures to enhance climate resilience, including promoting active travel alternatives to reduce car dependency

(1) Exmouth's overall public realm lacks legibility for users to navigate between key areas. There is a huge potential to unlock the power of place in Exmouth, from a better arrival experience at the station gateway to improvements in navigating through the town centre and onwards to the seafront. Improvements to wayfinding and connectivity can work as a driver for increased economic activity in the town centre and seafront.

(2) Diversifying the mix of land uses is essential to achieving economic resilience by attracting increased footfall for existing businesses through an increased recreational, cultural and entertainment offering. This can be achieved in part through activation and increased utilisation of existing assets through innovative re-use and retrofitting and partly through creating opportunities for meanwhile uses. As a mechanism to address the costs and negative impacts of unused space and generate short-term revenue, meanwhile uses benefit both the landlord and the entrepreneurs, thereby helping to deliver positive social outcomes.

(3) Creating resilience to climate change is a key challenge for Exmouth. Reducing car dependency is one aspect, and this is best brought about through offering attractive alternatives rather than introducing restrictions. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment and green spaces that frame and thread through Exmouth is another key aspect – and better connecting and highlighting these also helps strengthen the sense of place, benefitting residents and enhancing the tourism offer.

2.8 Impact of Not Changing

The impact of not effecting change is that there will continue to be a lack of economic opportunities for Exmouth's population in Exmouth, and the increased unemployment experienced because of the COVID-19 pandemic will persist. Unemployment was especially pronounced in East Devon, and particularly in Exmouth. The economically active population in employment as of 2021 was 52% in Exmouth, which is less than the 57% average for England as a whole. The lack of economic dynamism also means that Exmouth's economically active population will continue to generate a lower value-add compared to the rest of East Devon and Devon as a whole; as well as having lower productivity per worker. Exmouth's GVA per worker in 2021 was £24,316, indicating workers in Exmouth have lower productivity compared to East Devon (£41,678), Devon (£47,304) and England (£63,728).

The absence of any change to improve wayfinding and connectivity within Exmouth or improvements to encourage more activation and meanwhile uses may potentially adversely impact investment and innovation prospects for Exmouth.

2.9 Objectives and Measures for Success (Strategic Objectives, Specific Objectives, Measures for Success)

It is important to consider from the outset what constitutes successful delivery of the high to medium priority interventions under the EPP, as this informs the development and appraisal of the options, the selection of the preferred option, and the monitoring and evaluation of the preferred option's performance after (and during) delivery. This section maps the high to medium priority interventions identified in the EPP against the following key themes:

- Strengthening the Local Economy;
- Providing opportunities for development in Exmouth;
- Ensuring an inclusive and prosperous community; and
- Promotes sustainable Built Environment.

3.0 The Economic Case

The Economic Case identifies and appraises the project impacts to determine its overall value for money (VfM). It takes account of the costs of implementing the high to medium priority interventions, and the benefits and disbenefits of its impacts. The Economic Case considers the extent to which the high to medium priority interventions' benefits will outweigh its costs.

3.1 Critical Success Factors

Critical Success Factors (CSFs) describe attributes essential for successful delivery of the potential options. All the shortlisted options will be assessed against the agreed CSFs. The CSFs for this SOBC are based on HM Treasury Green Book guidance and reflect the Council's objectives. These are presented in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Critical Success Factors (CSF)

CSF	Description
Strategic fit and meets local needs	Confirm that the option meets EDDC and DCC priorities and objectives as detailed in the Strategic Case.
Potential Value for Money	Understanding which options have the potential to deliver the greatest economic benefits. Considering the wider/social economic benefits and return on investment.
Achievability / Risk Profile	Considering the risk profile for each of the options and the mitigation actions required to manage high-risk options.
Capacity and Capability	Reflecting deliverability and the ability/capacity of stakeholders to deliver to the timescales.
Affordability / Cost	Determining which options are affordable within the scope of the funding requirements and other funding sources and/or borrowing available to EDDC.

3.2 Development and Assessment of Options

This section organises the high to medium priority interventions described in **Table 1** into options for assessment within this SOBC. The options considered within this SOBC are:

Option 1 – Do Nothing: The 'Do Nothing' option is a continuation of 'business-as-usual'.

Option 2 – Do Minimum "Improving wayfinding around Exmouth": Commissioning a signage strategy to improve legibility and connectivity between the town centre and seafront; provision of information boards around the Maer and other natural and built heritage assets; and the creation of hubs within the town centre to improve links with wider walking/cycling networks.

Option 3 – Do Moderate "Improving quality of place using existing assets": In addition to Option 2 interventions, enhancing the tourism experience by maximising existing heritage assets and trails, strengthening existing events spaces, enhancing walking and cycling measures, and improving the look and feel of the town centre through an update of the existing shop-front design strategy.

Option 4 – Do Maximum "Creating new spaces and destinations through transformative projects": In addition to Option 2+3 interventions, commissioning a public realm design strategy and interventions to create new development opportunities.

Table 6: Options comprising high to medium priority interventions from the EPP

Option 1: Do nothing	Option 2: Do minimum <i>'Improving wayfinding in Exmouth'</i>	Option 3: Do moderate (inc. Option 2 interventions) <i>'Improving quality of place using existing assets'</i>	Option 4: Do maximum (inc. Options 2+3 interventions) <i>'Creating new spaces and destinations through transformative projects'</i>
	Commission a wayfinding and signage strategy to improve the legibility of the town and the seafront.	Review and update the existing shopfront design guide. Encourage businesses to incorporate design principles when shopfronts are replaced.	Strengthen the experience at Queens Drive Space as a family attraction by reconsidering it's role as a complementary asset to Beach Gardens and adjacent assets. Reconfigure to make best use of available space.
	Provide information boards around The Maer Nature Reserve and other built and natural heritage assets, to promote and celebrate its rich local heritage.	Create hubs within the town centre and the seafront to harness the opportunity to link into wider walking and cycling networks.	Review use of Beach Gardens car park to investigate opportunities for using the space for temporary activities and cultural programming, which do not impact use of seafront venues.
	The Strand refresh – working with all stakeholders to ensure events, activation and meanwhile activities are complementary and compliant with requirements for use and maintenance.	Undertake surveys and develop and implement projects to improve the walking and cycling network in the town centre and along the seafront. Create clearly defined, safe walking and cycling routes where possible.	Link the station gateway area with the estuary creating a public space and legible route to provide a link to the edge of the estuary. Create non-invasive opportunities for bird watching.
	Support the provision of a range of business accommodation opportunities to increase occupancy rates in the town centre.		Commission town centre and seafront-wide public realm strategy to guide improvements to streets and open spaces.
	Initial phase - light touch improvements to Station Gateway area.		Later phase - comprehensive improvements to Station Gateway area to provide enhanced welcome point and appropriately nature sensitive connections to Exe Trail, estuary and town centre.

Table 7: Alignment of Options with Key EPP Themes and CSFs

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Description	Do nothing	Do Minimum	Do Moderate	Do Maximum
EPP Key Themes				
Strengthening the local economy	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Opportunities for development	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Inclusive and prosperous community	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Sustainable built environment	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green
Critical Success Factors				
Strategic fit and meets local needs	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green
Potential value for money	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Achievability	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
Capacity and capability	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Affordability and cost	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Summary	<i>Not viable</i>	<i>Not viable</i>	<i>Preferred option</i>	<i>Weakly viable</i>

3.3 Recommended Option

Option 3 'Do Moderate – Improving quality of place using existing assets' is the best performing option. The option performs best for the following reasons:

- This option comprises a combination of initiatives that focus on improving wayfinding around Exmouth and improving the quality of place using Exmouth's existing assets. The initiatives within Option 3 are complementary, combining improved wayfinding around Exmouth together with improved quality of place. This has the potential to improve the cohesion of the town centre and linkages to the seafront, with the effect of increasing footfall. This is likely to promote healthier business activity within the town centre as well as tourism at the seafront, benefitting residents, workers and visitors.
- The Strategic Case has shown in detail that the menu of high to medium priority interventions is strongly aligned with East Devon District Council's priorities for 2024-2028, with the Emerging Local Plan for 2020-2040, and finally with the Devon County Council Plan 2021-2025. Interventions span thematic areas for East Devon including ensuring a greener East Devon; promoting vibrant, connected and thriving town centres; and supporting a sustainable and resilient local economy.
- The investment strategy that accompanies this and other documents as part of the Exmouth Placemaking Plan shows that there is potential for some of the interventions to be funded or part-funded through a combination of support from local authorities, UK Government regeneration funding, funding from S.106/CIL, funding from the charitable sector, such as the National Lottery, as well as private capital investment from key businesses and local stakeholders in Exmouth.
- Selecting Options 2 rather than Option 3 would carry the risk of delivering only smaller strategic interventions that on their own may not contribute significantly to Exmouth.
- Option 4 represents a higher risk option, with limited viability and affordability, Option 3 in comparison provides a better return on investment from identifiable funds.

3.4 Net Present Social Cost / Net Present Social Value Findings

Overview of the Approach

The economic assessment of the preferred option has been undertaken in accordance with the HM Treasury Green Book and MHCLG guidance:

- The appraisal is developed using additionality principles. In other words, only those impacts (benefits) that are genuinely additional and are over and above those that would have been realised in the absence of the intervention are considered. In this instance the 'counterfactual' / do nothing scenario would be a continuation of business as usual within Exmouth. For this assessment, this is assumed to be a continuation of existing activity and incremental or piecemeal investment from EDDC in supporting or promoting placemaking interventions within the town;
- Both the costs and benefits input assumptions are based on EDDC estimates of employee costs and running costs, WSP estimates of key activities required to complete each intervention through construction and/or consultancy services, Exmouth 2015 and 2022 visitor survey data, and similar and existing interventions in other locations;

- The appraisal model developed for the economic impact assessment is based on 'best practice' principles whereby all 'inputs', 'calculations' and 'outputs' worksheets are presented separately to the model; and
- The model is designed so that input assumptions can be readily changed for sensitivity testing whilst a series of standard economic output metrics are provided (Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) and Net Present Value (NPV)). The evaluation period is 10 years

General Appraisal Assumptions

- All economic impacts have been calculated over a 10-year appraisal period in line with the MHCLG appraisal guide and Green Book Guidance. The only exception is appraisal of transport infrastructure which has been appraised over a 20-year appraisal period;
- All financial values are discounted to 2024/25 using a standard public sector discount rate of 3.5% per annum; and
- The financial values (covering both cost and benefit) represent 2025 values.

Non-Monetised Impacts

Several impacts associated with the EPP have not been monetised as part of the appraisal given the nature of the interventions and the appropriateness of appraising them within the economic model. However, these should be considered as part of the overall Economic Case. Although it has not been feasible to monetise these impacts, they should be considered part of the overall value for money framework.

3.5 Cost Estimates

To understand the value for money category of a project, it is necessary to know its estimated delivery costs, be those capital or revenue expenditure costs or a combination of both. A brief description of the basis for the cost estimates is presented here. **Table 8** presents the capital costs (present values) for the selected options appraised in the economic case.

Capital Costs

Total capital costs have been determined for the high to medium priority interventions that could potentially be implemented. Depending on the nature of the intervention, this includes high-level estimates of initial site surveys or investigations, construction phase and equipment.

Revenue Costs

Revenue expenditure costs have been determined based on high-level estimates of internal and external staffing costs and overheads. Internal refers to EDDC employee and running costs and is benchmarked on comparable staffing requirements designed to deliver similar service requirements. External fees are mainly for consultancy services and are based on estimates for similar previous interventions.

Optimism Bias Adjustment

The purpose of Optimism Bias (OB) is to ensure that the cost-benefit analysis is reliable. OB is only applied to costs in the Economic Case. In line with Green Book guidance, an OB adjustment has been applied to all costs. Given the current level of design which the proposed interventions are currently at, the upper ranges of OB adjustments have been applied to the appropriate capital cost estimates.

Table 8: Total Capital and Revenue Costs by Option

Investment Costs by Intervention	2026 Costs (£000)		
	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
I1: Signage & Wayfinding Strategy	£80	£80	£80
I2: Station Gateway – Phase 1	£98	£98	£98
I3: Station Gateway – Phase 2			£15,198
I4: Shopfront design guide		£45	£45
I5: Queens Drive Space			£6,618
I6: Beach Gardens			£4,418
I7: Business Accommodation Opportunities	£77	£77	£77
I8: Strand Refresh	£162	£162	£162
I9: Information Boards	£37	£37	£37
I10: Town Hubs		£1,810	£1,810
I11: Link station gateway			£816
I12: Walking and Cycling Improvements		£562	£562
I13: Comprehensive Public Realm Design Strategy			£229
Total	£453	£2,870	£30,150

Source: EDDC (2023), WSP Calculations (2025) £000's, 2025 prices

3.6 Benefits Appraisal

For the preferred option, the following benefits have been appraised:

- The creation of new permanent employment opportunities. It is estimated that the activation of Exmouth's public space and the transformation of some of its existing assets such as car parks into new areas of active public realm with associated commercial uses could generate between 14 and 35 net direct jobs (depending on the option) and between 4 and 11 indirect and induced jobs.
- The additional Gross Value Added (GVA) impacts associated with the employment created through the implementation of these interventions would equate to between £257,000 and £640,000 per annum. Most jobs would be created within the retail and visitor economy sectors.
- Amenity benefits capture the external benefit to the surrounding area from bringing forward new public spaces. In the case of the EPP, current car parking space and underutilised land will be used to provide new open and public space benefiting the local population.
- Public health benefits are associated with the provision of new cycle infrastructure including secure cycle parking and a cycle hub. The scale of these benefits has been derived from the Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit.

The benefits are assumed to be generated from 2026 onwards as this is the first year after which any of the selected interventions would commence in a phased approach. Similar to the project cost estimates, all economic impacts have been discounted by 3.5% per annum across the appraisal period.

Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) and Value for Money

The BCR considers the impact to the economy, society, the environment and the public accounts. It is an estimate of the value of benefit generated for every £1 of public expenditure. Therefore, any BCR above 1.0 shows Value for Money (VfM) for every £1 of invested cost. The VfM category is defined by the BCR and these are summarised below:

- BCR <1.0 Poor;
- BCR between 1.0 – 1.5 Low;
- BCR between 1.5 – 2.0 Medium;
- BCR between 2.0 – 4.0 High; and
- BCR >4.0 Very High.

The economic costs and benefits of Option 2 cannot easily be quantified as its interventions focus on early-stage strategic development and minimal infrastructure development. This early-stage focus means that it is not possible to factor in capital costs. Therefore, Option 2 does not have a BCR value. While monetised benefits cannot be estimated for Option 2, the non-monetised benefits set out in the section below have been considered.

Table 9 shows the initial analysis of Monetised Costs and Benefits (AMCB) and the Initial BCR associated with the EPP based on the projects from which benefits could be monetised.

The economic costs and benefits of Option 2 cannot easily be quantified as its interventions focus on early-stage strategic development and minimal infrastructure development. This early-stage focus means that it is not possible to factor in capital costs. Therefore, Option 2 does not have a BCR value. While monetised benefits cannot be estimated for Option 2, the non-monetised benefits set out in the section below have been considered.

Table 9: Analysis of Monetised Costs and Benefits

(£000)	Options		
	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Present Value of Benefits (PVB)	n/a	£3,409.50	£6,289.35
Present Value of Costs (PVC)	n/a	£2,597.00	£36,304.57
Net Present Value (NPV)	n/a	£812.50	-£30,015.21
Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)	n/a	1.31	0.17

Source: £000's, 2025 Prices

The cost benefit analysis for the EPP shows that the discounted monetised benefits of Option 3 (PVB), £3.4 million, is greater than the discounted monetised costs of £2.6 million. The discounted monetised benefits of Option 4 (PVB), £6.3 million, is less than the discounted monetised costs of £36.3 million. The adjusted BCR for Option 3 and 4 is in the range of 1.31 and 0.17, suggesting a low and poor VfM respectively.

A range of sensitivity tests has been undertaken to show the impact of different variables on the VfM outcome of the Project. This includes:

- Adjusting OB percentage to 50%: BCR = 0.17 to 1.26;

- Reducing the additionality assumptions from 25% to 50%: BCR = 0.12 to 1.03; and
- Adjusting the OB percentage to 50% and reducing the additionality assumptions from 25% to 50%: BCR = 0.11 to 0.98.

The results of these tests show that the impact on the BCR ranges from 0.11 to 1.26. The results indicate that for all these tests, the EPP demonstrates a wide range of VfM categories, from poor to low.

Non-Monetised Benefits

The VfM assessment has focused on the GVA produced by the creation of additional jobs, as well as amenity benefits from new public realm and health benefits associated with new cycle infrastructure.

As discussed earlier, however, there are a number of benefits that cannot easily be quantified, that will contribute to the success of the EPP, and that are not included in the VfM section set out above. These include:

- Making the town and seafront a more attractive and enjoyable place to visit which in turn increases the number of tourist visitors and increases local spending. This may result in further job creation within retail, leisure and visitor economy activities, generating further economic activity within Exmouth's economy;
- Supporting wider placemaking objectives and regeneration within key areas of Exmouth Town and the seafront. This in turn will lead to a better place image for Exmouth and potentially more business investment;
- Labour market and skills – generating new jobs for local people;
- Improving the accessibility of the town centre and seafront through improved wayfinding and signage;
- Improved connectivity between walking and cycling transport routes;
- Improved public realm leading to increased footfall within the town centre;
- Physical and mental wellbeing benefits from the creation of new public spaces and open space;
- Improved social cohesion and wider community benefits.

4.0 The Commercial Case

The Commercial Case sets out the potential commercial arrangements of the preferred option, and the potential procurement strategy used to engage the market and deliver the preferred option as set out within the Economic Case.

4.1 Potential delivery options

This section of the Commercial Case considers different delivery options, in line with HM Treasury Green Book guidance. The aim of the Commercial Case within the SOBC is to consider delivery strategies and propose a preferred option that needs further validation and confirmation at later stages of the business case process.

For the purposes of the suite of high to medium priority interventions, the most likely delivery strategies include: a concessionary model (public and private-sector funded); and public ownership. Preliminary consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy are considered here and further consideration will be needed at the next stage of the business case before confirming the final decision. The finalised delivery strategy is dependent on the high to medium priority interventions being taken forward, asset ownership, East Devon District Council's risk preferences, availability of funding, and other resources.

Concessionary model (public/private funded)

The concessionary model is widely used in the public sector but is less common amongst private organisations. It is potentially well-suited to larger organisations when taking a portfolio-level approach. This model strikes a good balance of risk and control, enabling the host (EDDC) to leverage some third-party investment. This model typically involves a revenue or profit share arrangement. Broadly, the greater the share of the risk taken on by the local authority through a public model, the greater their potential revenue or profit share and control. Conversely, when the concessionaire has a larger stake in the investment, they will typically require a reduced level of revenue or profit share, and more assurance over levers such as pricing or longer contracts, in order to have greater confidence in their potential to recoup their investment.

The Concessionary Model enables the public sector to 'package' together more profitable and less profitable interventions, potentially enabling private investment in areas which would otherwise be underserved. The risk is that private sector investors may be less willing to fund and operate less profitable interventions. This may result in a more complex contractual arrangement.

Public ownership

The publicly-funded model involves local authorities fully funding capital and operating expenditure, as well as external fees such as those for contractors and consulting services. In the case of Exmouth, this cost would be covered through funding grants from government for EDDC. All public realm infrastructure would be owned by EDDC.

Of the two models, the fully public model entails the greatest role for EDDC, as it would be responsible for funding all costs associated with the interventions. In so doing, the Council retains ownership and revenues generated by the interventions.

4.3 Proposed delivery model and rationale

Based on the high to medium priority interventions proposed under the preferred option, the preferred delivery option at this early SOBC stage is the concessionary model. With asset ownership but limited funding availability from ETC, EDDC and DCC, additional grant and private funding will be needed to deliver the required interventions.

In many areas, East Devon District Council and the Town and County Council's assets interface with each other, requiring a joined-up management and delivery approach to ensure seamless implementation and operation.

4.4 Procurement strategy

The Treasury Green Book requires consideration of how the required services, supplies or works can best be procured in accordance with established rules and regulations and the commercial strategy of the organisation. The procurement strategy has not been confirmed at this stage of the SOBC. The procurement strategy is expected to be confirmed once the delivery strategy is confirmed, and therefore it will be finalised at the next phase of the business case **Table 10** provides an overview of potential procurement routes.

DCC and EDDC have a robust procurement strategy that also recognises the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, ensuring all procurement should be as sustainable as possible and prioritising opportunities for local suppliers, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise.

Table 10: Procurement Options

Procurement option	Description
Open Tender	An open tender offers an equal opportunity to any organisation to submit a tender. This approach makes the tender process highly competitive and can create opportunities for new or emerging suppliers. However, due to the possible high volumes of tenders it can be very time consuming, and there is more onus on East Devon District Council to undertake background checks on bidders.
Closed tender	This route limits submissions for tender by implementing a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) which can assess the capacity, capability and relevant experience of potential suppliers. Submissions that meet the qualification requirements are then selected to continue to the Invitation to Tender (ITT) stage. This approach could provide greater confidence in the quality of supplier. However, the tender price may not be as competitive as under open tendering and the closed two-stage process can take longer than other routes.
Existing National/Regional framework	Use of an existing framework agreement would ensure suppliers are already vetted and with some common contractual terms in place. This can be an efficient way to work either via a mini competition or call-off, instead of having to go through a full tender process each time. Alternatively, some frameworks allow a direct award without any competition or call-offs.

Establish a Bespoke Framework	Establishment of a bespoke framework contract tailored to East Devon District Council's specific requirements with a single supplier that offers services from feasibility to delivery and management within a certain rate, or a framework with a number of suppliers and the option to run mini competitions or direct awards. This can be a useful approach for direct access to one supplier, or a panel with whom EDDC can engage repeatedly; however, it can be very time consuming to set up and manage.
-------------------------------	---

4.5 Risk allocation

The allocation and management of risk is central to strong and successful commercial contracts which will need to be undertaken as part of each intervention. EDDC will manage risk carefully by negotiating provisions to transfer or share risk with suppliers of services. The project management team will ensure that effectiveness and value for money of contracted services will only be achieved where risk allocation is equitable and where the party managing the risk are the ones most reasonably able to do so.

At this stage of the Project, all risks have not been identified or explored in detail. It is important to note that the design team for each intervention would be expected to prepare a risk assessment once appointed and conduct a detailed investigation on the ground. The risks for each intervention will be mostly transferred to the Contractor or service provider procured to undertake the works/service, as they are responsible for ensuring that works are completed and the service is delivered in line with the contract scope. EDDC risks with regards to the interventions are more reputational and related to overall delivery of the suite of interventions.

5.0 The Financial Case

This section sets out the financial case for the proposed scheme, covering scheme costs and funding availability to assess its affordability. The section covers the assumptions and our approach to calculating the costs.

5.1 Cost Estimate for Programme of Interventions

The scheme costs have been estimated by WSP based on desktop research, estimates from similar interventions elsewhere in the UK, and engagement with East Devon District Council. The cost estimation includes capital costs such as site survey, construction and equipment, and revenue costs such as East Devon District Council employee costs and running costs. Optimism bias is only used in the Economic Case. A breakdown of costs for each of the 13 interventions listed in are presented in **Table 11** below.

5.2 Overall Funding Requirements and Affordability

The programme of interventions for preferred Option 3 requires a total capital funding contribution of £2.812 million. Public sector funding will be needed to cover operating expenditure. EDDC has no specific capital budget available, other than where existing funding can be re-allocated. Exmouth Town Council has access to CIL funding and further support may be possible from Devon County Council and will be sought from grant sources and private investors with an interest in making the proposed improvements.

Different sources of funding will be monitored and as more funding sources become available, these will be explored. Based on the availability of public sector funding between Exmouth Town Council, East Devon District Council and Devon County Council the programme of interventions is considered to be affordable.

Table 11: Breakdown of Costs per Intervention

	1: Signage Strategy				2: Station Gateway 1				3: Station Gateway 2			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Capital Costs												
Investigation	£10,000	£0	£0	£10,000	£8,000	£0	£0	£8,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Construction	£0	£0	£0	£0	£50,000	£0	£0	£50,000	£0	£0	£15,000,000	£15,000,000
Equipment	£0	£0	£0	£0	£12,000	£0	£0	£12,000	£0	£0	£45,000	£45,000
Fees (External)	£50,000	£0	£0	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£45,000	£90,000	£135,000
Other (Strategy)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Subtotal				£60,000				£70,000				£15,180,000
Revenue Costs												
Employee Costs	£4,212	£4,212	£4,212	£12,637	£4,212	£4,212	£4,212	£12,637	£0	£4,212	£4,212	£8,424
Running Costs	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£7,500	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£15,000	£0	£5,000	£5,000	£10,000
Subtotal				£20,137				£27,637				£18,424
Total	£66,712	£6,712	£6,712	£80,137	£79,212	£9,212	£9,212	£97,637	£0	£54,212	£15,144,212	£15,198,424

	4: Shopfront Design Guide Update				5: Beach Gardens				6: Queens Drive Space			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Capital Costs												
Investigation	£25,000	£0	£0	£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Construction	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£6,000,000	£6,000,000	£0	£0	£4,000,000	£4,000,000
Equipment	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Fees (External)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£600,000	£0	£600,000	£0	£400,000	£0	£400,000
Other (Strategy)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Subtotal				£25,000				£6,600,000				£4,400,000
Revenue Costs												
Employee Costs	£4,212	£4,212	£4,212	£12,637	£0	£4,212	£4,212	£8,424	£0	£4,212	£4,212	£8,424
Running Costs	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£7,500	£0	£5,000	£5,000	£10,000	£0	£5,000	£5,000	£10,000
Subtotal				£20,137				£18,424				£18,424
Total	£31,712	£6,712	£6,712	£45,137	£0	£609,212	£6,009,212	£6,618,424	£0	£409,212	£4,009,212	£4,418,424

Exmouth Placemaking Plan: Strategic Outline Business Case

	7: Affordable Occupancy Opportunities				8: The Strand Refresh				9: Info boards			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Capital Costs												
Investigation	£35,000	£0	£0	£35,000	£25,000	£0	£0	£25,000	£8,000	£0	£0	£8,000
Construction	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000	£0	£0	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Equipment	£0	£0	£0	£0	£9,000	£0	£0	£9,000	£20,000	£0	£0	£20,000
Fees (External)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other (Strategy)	£30,000	£0	£0	£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Subtotal				£65,000				£134,000				£28,000
Revenue Costs												
Employee Costs	£1,343	£1,343	£1,343	£4,029	£4,212	£4,212	£4,212	£12,637	£455	£455	£455	£1,365
Running Costs	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£7,500	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£15,000	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£7,500
Subtotal				£11,529				£27,637				£8,865
Total	£68,843	£3,843	£3,843	£76,529	£143,212	£9,212	£9,212	£161,637	£30,955	£2,955	£2,955	£36,865

	10: Town hubs				11: Station Gateway to estuary			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Capital Costs								
Investigation	£45,000	£0	£0	£45,000	£50,000	£0	£0	£50,000
Construction	£1,500,000	£0	£0	£1,500,000	£0	£600,000	£0	£600,000
Equipment	£45,000	£0	£0	£45,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Fees (External)	£90,000	£0	£0	£90,000	£100,000	£0	£0	£100,000
Other (Strategy)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Subtotal				£1,680,000				£750,000
Revenue Costs								
Employee Costs	£38,253	£38,253	£38,253	£114,758	£17,077	£17,077	£17,077	£51,231
Running Costs	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£15,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£15,000
Subtotal				£129,758				£66,231
Total	£1,723,253	£43,253	£43,253	£1,809,758	£172,077	£622,077	£22,077	£816,231

Exmouth Placemaking Plan: Strategic Outline Business Case

	12: Walking and cycling				13: Public Realm Strategy			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Capital Costs								
Investigation	£50,000	£0	£0	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Construction	£500,000	£0	£0	£500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0
Equipment	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Fees (External)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£200,000	£0	£0	£200,000
Other (Strategy)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Subtotal				£550,000				£200,000
Revenue Costs								
Employee Costs	£1,343	£1,343	£1,343	£4,029	£4,554	£4,554	£4,554	£13,662
Running Costs	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£7,500	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£15,000
Subtotal				£11,529				£28,662
Total	£553,843	£3,843	£3,843	£561,529	£209,554	£9,554	£9,554	£228,662

6.0 The Management Case

The Management Case sets out the processes and controls in place to manage the implementation of the scheme, and track and realise future benefits. It demonstrates how the scheme will be delivered in accordance with best practice, outlines timescales, and establishes the governance structure and assurance framework that will oversee the project.

6.1 Project management and governance

It is likely that a partnership between ETC, EDDC and DCC will promote, administer and manage the interventions identified in the preferred Option 3. EDDC will act as the Responsible Owner (SRO) and will appoint a project manager (PM) from within either EDDC, ETC or DCC depending on the individual action/project. The PM will ensure efficient management of the project delivery of the high to medium priority actions from the Strategic Objectives. The PM will work with other teams within EDDC, DCC, ETC and any other applicable partners or stakeholder groups and will ensure a good level of communication and input from the wider community. The PM's responsibilities include management of risk, change, documentation, reporting, and supporting governance functions. The exact list of responsibilities will depend on the final governance model, which will be developed at the next stage of the business case process.

At this early stage of the business case process, the simple governance model is the likely preferred model for ensuring successful delivery of the set of the interventions. The final governance structure will be developed at later stages of the business case process.

Simple governance models are more suitable for shorter, less complex projects with less stakeholders involved. The high to medium priority interventions within preferred Option 3 could be delivered using a simple governance model. A potential simple governance model could consist of a few key stakeholder groups who jointly manage decision-making and delivery. Potential groups are detailed below and summarised in **Table 12**:

- **Steering Group:** The Steering group is the highest level within the governance model and has the final decision-making power. It can have various powers, including sign-off on strategic plans, policy, funding bids, site selection and income surplus allocation. It consists of members from both the Working Group and any other relevant decision-makers.
- **Working Group:** The Working Group is responsible for the strategic delivery of the interventions, ensuring all incentives are aligned moving forward. It is possible that, given the number of interventions, there may need to be different workstreams and Workstream Leads/Project Managers assigned to each workstream who take ownership of delivery of a particular intervention, or sub-set of interventions. All Workstream Leads/Project Managers report to the Senior Responsible Owner for Exmouth's Placemaking Plan.
- **Supporting teams within ETC / EDDC / DCC:** Given the spread of interventions, participating teams within ETC, EDDC and DCC will be responsible for local engagement, communication, and recording and actioning feedback. These teams may also need to participate in organising and seeking additional funding and submitting funding applications.

Table 12: Key programme management positions

Position	Responsibilities
Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)	Owner, who is responsible for overall delivery of the programme of interventions within the EPP
Project Manager (PM)	Management of project delivery, risk, change, documentation, reporting, and supporting governance functions.
Steering Group	Council Programme and EPP oversight
Working Group	Detailed oversight at intervention level
Supporting Teams within EDDC	Support for delivering interventions

6.2 Project milestones and timescales

Table 13 below outlines key project milestones and delivery timescales subject to securing approvals from within EDDC and funding for interventions. Future business cases can confirm further details regarding key tasks per intervention, sub-tasks, durations, interdependencies between interventions and/or tasks, and confirmed milestones and gateways. It is envisaged at this early stage, that EDDC progresses through the key business case stages and can secure funding during 2026, such that implementation can begin at least by the end of 2026 for a duration of three years.

The programme of high to medium priority interventions will be live once EDDC has reached Full Business Case (FBC) stage and secured funding. Progress towards completion will be monitored against a proposed work programme on a regular basis by the SRO.

6.3 Project dependencies

The successful delivery of the programme of interventions is not dependent on the prior delivery of any other interventions as they will form the initial roll-out of the EPP. The following dependencies should be noted and explored in the next stage of the business case:

- Delivering the programme of interventions is dependent upon receipt of adequate funding over the lifecycle of each intervention – be this grant funding or other financing;
- Where interventions relate to property not owned or jointly owned by EDDC and other EDDC entities, agreements will need to be made between EDDC and relevant parties;
- Successful contracting of consultants with pre-requisite expertise and experience to deliver the interventions;
- Time from EDDC staff during implementation;
- Successful stakeholder engagements.

Table 13: Indicative Timescales

Details	Date	Delivered by
Strategic outline business case submission and approval	Q1 2026	EDDC
Outline business case and full business case submission and approval	Q2 2026	EDDC
Implementation of high to medium priority interventions	2026-2028	EDDC and suppliers

6.4 Risk management

The management of risk and uncertainty will be critical to successful implementation. It will identify threats to implementation and enable practical risk management actions to be assigned. The approach to risk management will be finalised at the next stage of the scheme development, i.e. the next stage of the business case. It is anticipated that risk management of the programme of high to medium priority interventions will be aligned with EDDC's risk management policy objectives:

- embed risk management into the culture of the project team;
- work with partners, providers and contractors to develop a common understanding of the risk management expectations;
- integrate risk management into policy, planning and decision making; and
- enable the PM and the project team to anticipate and respond to changing social, environmental and legislative conditions.⁷

These objectives will be met by:

- identifying, assessing and effectively managing strategic and operational risks;
- establishing clear roles, responsibilities and reporting lines for risk management;
- incorporating the assessment of risk into all key decision making and planning processes; and
- using SPAR.net or similar for recording, assessment, monitoring of controls and reporting of risks.⁸

The risk management approach will broadly follow the process of:

- Risk identification;
- Risk quantification – Assessing the impacts of risk; and
- Risk mitigation.

Risk management of the programme of interventions will entail the construction and regular updating of a risk matrix which shows the risk score from the combination of the likelihood and the impact of the Risk. The Risk will increase in severity as the likelihood and impact increase.

⁷ <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-business/our-key-policies/risk-management-policy/purpose-of-the-risk-management-policy/#article-content>

⁸ <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-business/our-key-policies/risk-management-policy/purpose-of-the-risk-management-policy/#article-content>

Identifying risks

EDDC risk identification criteria and risk assessment techniques are summarised in **Table 14**.

Table 14: Risk identification tools⁹

Tools	Description
Questionnaires and checklists	Individually designed questionnaires and check lists to collect information to assist with the recognition of the significant risks.
Workshops and brainstorming	Collection and sharing of ideas and discussion around the events that could impact on the objectives.
Audit and inspection reports	To understand and check that processes and procedures are in place and working.
Flowcharts and dependency analysis	Analysis of processes and operations with the organisation to identify critical components that are key to success.
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threat (SWOT) and Political Economic Social Technological Legal Environmental (PESTLE) analyses	SWOT and PESTLE analyses offer structured approaches to risk recognition.

Assessing risks

Risks associated with the programme of interventions will be assessed using existing processes within EDDC and key partner organisations. Not all risks can be eliminated completely but the likelihood and impact can be reduced or better controlled through assessment, control actions, monitoring and review.

Strategic or operational risks will be assessed in the context of the scale of risk associated with each. This may be determined by considering:

- the likelihood of the risk occurring; and
- the impact, or severity of the consequences should it occur.

Risks will be assessed by selecting a scale for both likelihood and impact and multiplying them to produce a risk rating. This rating then falls within one of the following categories in the matrix – high, medium or low (see EDDC risk management processes for further details.)¹⁰

Controlling and managing risk

Having identified a risk and assessed its impact and probability, the next step in the process is to develop actions to manage the risk. These are referred to as 'control actions'. Controls are intended to help in mitigating either the impact or likelihood of the risk. In light of the control actions that have been put in place, the risk now needs to be re-assessed to find the level of 'residual risk' and assigned a corresponding residual risk score.

The Project Manager determines who will ultimately be responsible for the risk (the responsible officer). This role will involve monitoring the control actions and writing the reviews

⁹ <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-business/our-key-policies/risk-management-policy/how-we-identify-risks/#article-content>

¹⁰ <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-business/our-key-policies/risk-management-policy/how-we-assess-risk/#article-content>

on the PM's risk control system e.g EDDC's internal SPAR.net system. The responsible officers review risks at regular intervals (monthly, quarterly, twice a year, or annually). Operational risks should be monitored regularly as part of the performance management within all services. This includes assessing whether the control actions are still adequate or need revising and or replacing SPAR.net or equivalent system, should be updated with any changes as soon as they arise.

Completion of each of these processes enables the population of a risk register for operations.

Table 15 provides an extract of some of the possible risks associated with the programme of interventions and will be iterated on at the next stage of the business case.

Table 15: Potential risks involved within the programme of interventions

No.	Risks involved with the project	Likelihood	Impact	Score
1	Failure to 'Sign a deal' with partners as needed for some interventions	Possible	Major	12
2	Failure to deliver agreed outcomes between partners	Possible	Major	12
3	Failure to get political support locally	Possible	Major	12
4	Significant negative change in the financial market delaying Placemaking Plan interventions	Possible	Major	12
5	Planning and/or Council approvals delayed or refused	Unlikely	Major	8
6	Funding not available	Unlikely	Moderate	6
7	Partners not producing a detailed design	Unlikely	Major	8
8	Council's reputation adversely affected by programme perception	Unlikely	Minor	4
9	Failing to manage stakeholder expectations	Unlikely	Minor	4
10	Local supply chain/community benefit conditions not maximised	Possible	Negligible	3
11	Change of legislation	Possible	Moderate	9
12	Internal staff resources do not match required capabilities or experience	Possible	Moderate	9

Note:

For likelihood – Almost certain=5, Likely=4, Possible=3, Unlikely=2, Almost impossible=1;

For Impact – Severe=5, Major=4, Moderate=3, Minor=2, Negligible=1;

The score is the product of the likelihood and impact ratings.

In terms of reviewing and reporting risks, the Project Manager will enter new risks on the SPAR.net or equivalent alternative system if not entered by the heads of service or corporate managers including those identified by South West Audit Partnership during service area audits. They will monitor risks that they are responsible for – to ensure control actions are up to date. The SRO will ensure that the risks are being well managed throughout the life of the project and that SPAR.net or appropriate systems are reviewed and updated when required.