

Aberdare Town Centre Strategy

Spatial Analysis

Produced November 2022

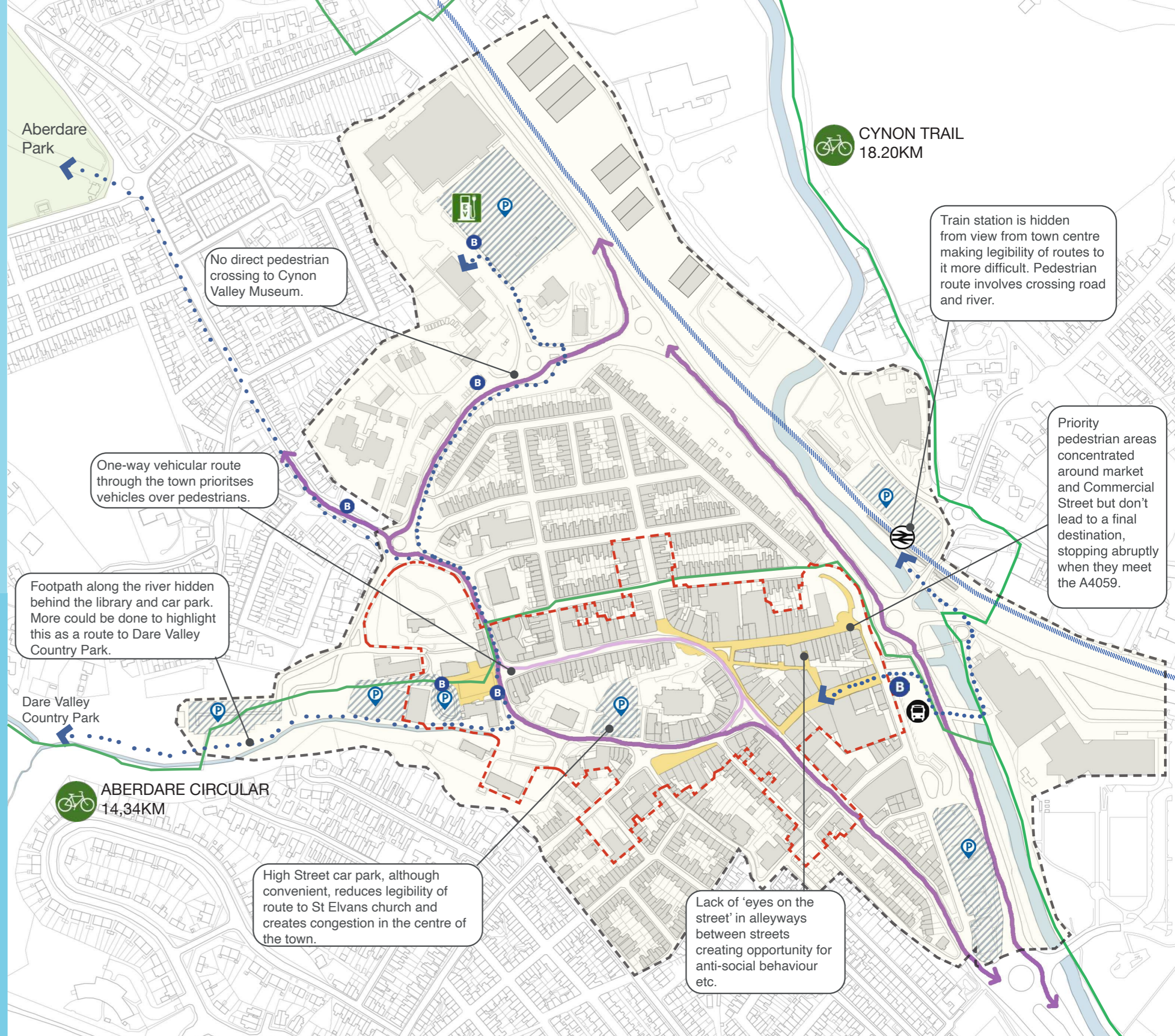
By RCTCBC Regeneration Department



Movement

Weaknesses & Constraints:

- Poor pedestrian/cycling route from town centre area to Cynon Valley Museum.
- Enhanced lighting to alleyways, located between Commercial Street and Market Street, may reduce potential for anti-social behaviour.
- Pedestrian route from town centre to Aberdare park not clearly signposted.
- High Street car park, although convenient, does contribute to congesting movement around the town centre.
- Lack of electric vehicle charging provision.



Key:

- Study Area
- Conservation Area
- National Cycle Routes
- Primary Vehicular Routes
- Primary Pedestrian Areas
- Railway
- Key Pedestrian Routes
- Car parks
- Bus Station
- Train Station
- Electric Vehicle Charging
- Bus Stops

Plan not to scale at A3 & information accurate as of November 2022.

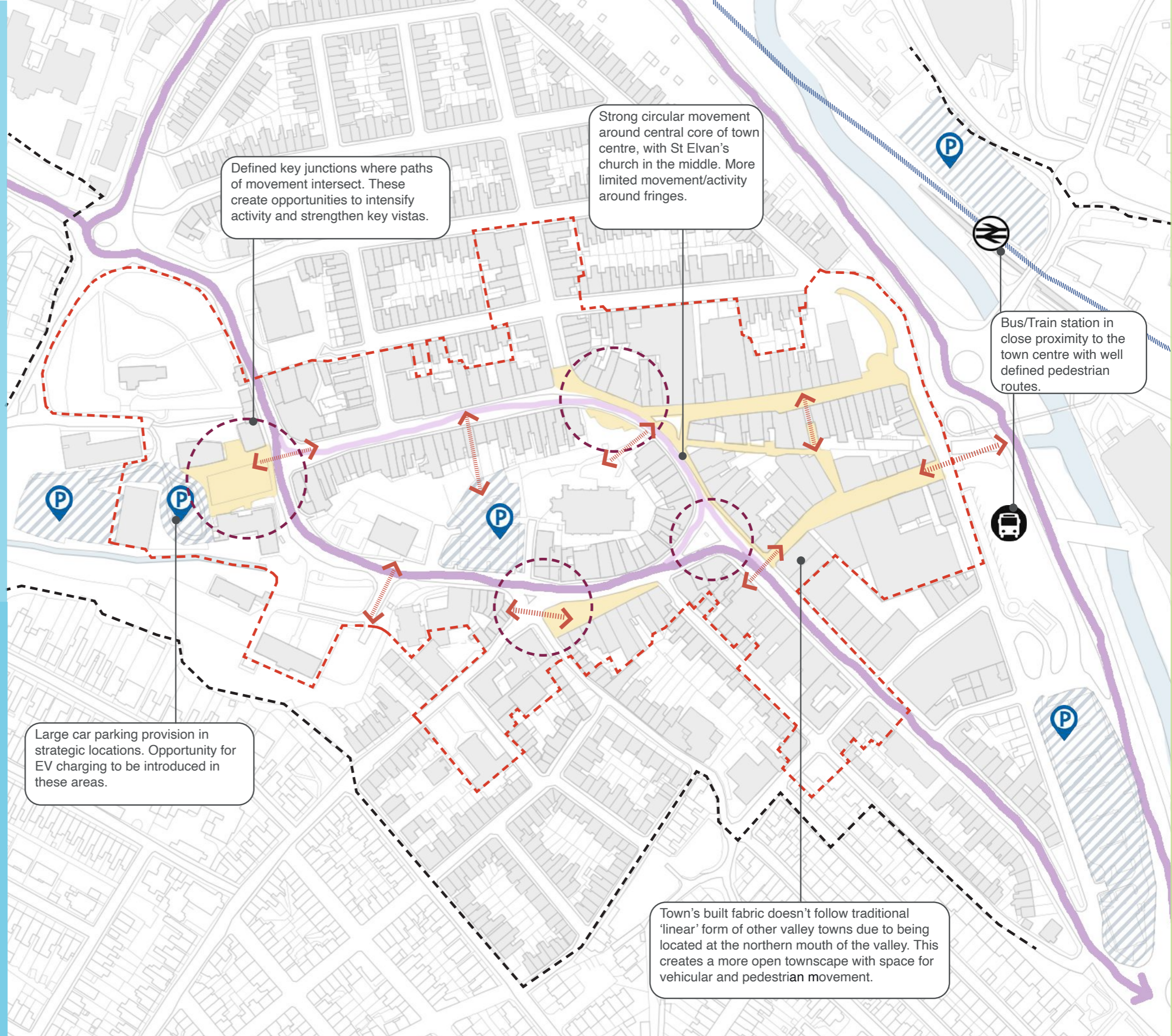
Movement

Strengths & Opportunities

- Abundance of car parking within the town centre area.
- Principal vehicular routes encircle town centre providing easy access to key parking facilities.
- Strong circular movement with St Elvans acting as focal point.
- Enhanced pedestrian links between town centre and bus station/train station via the recently completed, new active travel route.
- Key nodes where multiple pedestrian routes intersect provide opportunities for congregation points.
- Good bicycle/pedestrian routes to nearby towns and to Dare Valley Country Park. These could be better signposted.

Key:

- [- - -] Study Area
- [---] Conservation Area
- [P] Car parks
- [Bus] Bus Station
- [Train] Train Station
- [Dashed Circle] Key Movement Intersects
- [Dashed Arrow] Key Connections



Defined key junctions where paths of movement intersect. These create opportunities to intensify activity and strengthen key vistas.

Strong circular movement around central core of town centre, with St Elvan's church in the middle. More limited movement/activity around fringes.

Bus/Train station in close proximity to the town centre with well defined pedestrian routes.

Large car parking provision in strategic locations. Opportunity for EV charging to be introduced in these areas.

Town's built fabric doesn't follow traditional 'linear' form of other valley towns due to being located at the northern mouth of the valley. This creates a more open townscape with space for vehicular and pedestrian movement.

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Built Environment & Public Realm

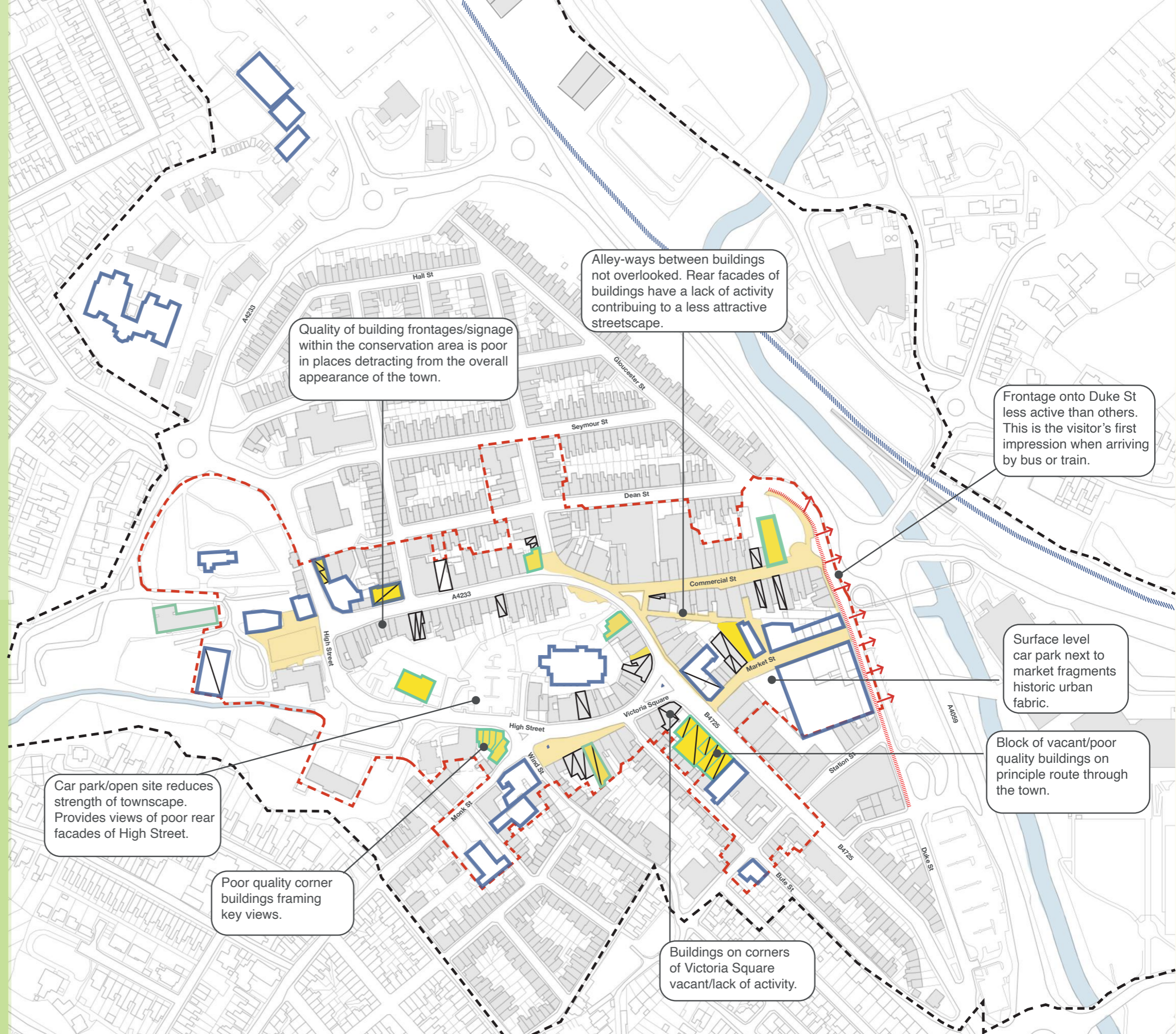
Weaknesses & Constraints

- Poor quality shop frontages in some places within the conservation area, detract from overall appearance of the town.
- Clearly defined, compact, town centre core (identified by conservation area boundary) with limited availability of sites to introduce new facilities.
- Key frontage facing A4059 lacks vibrancy/activity. Acts as first impression to visitors arriving by train/rail. Shop windows could be enhanced to provide information about the towns offering.
- Legibility of access to St Elvans church is limited.
- Vacant buildings on key corners of high-street.

Key:

- Study Area
- Conservation Area
- Listed Structures
- Poor Condition
- Poor Quality Structure
- Vacant
- Inactive Frontage

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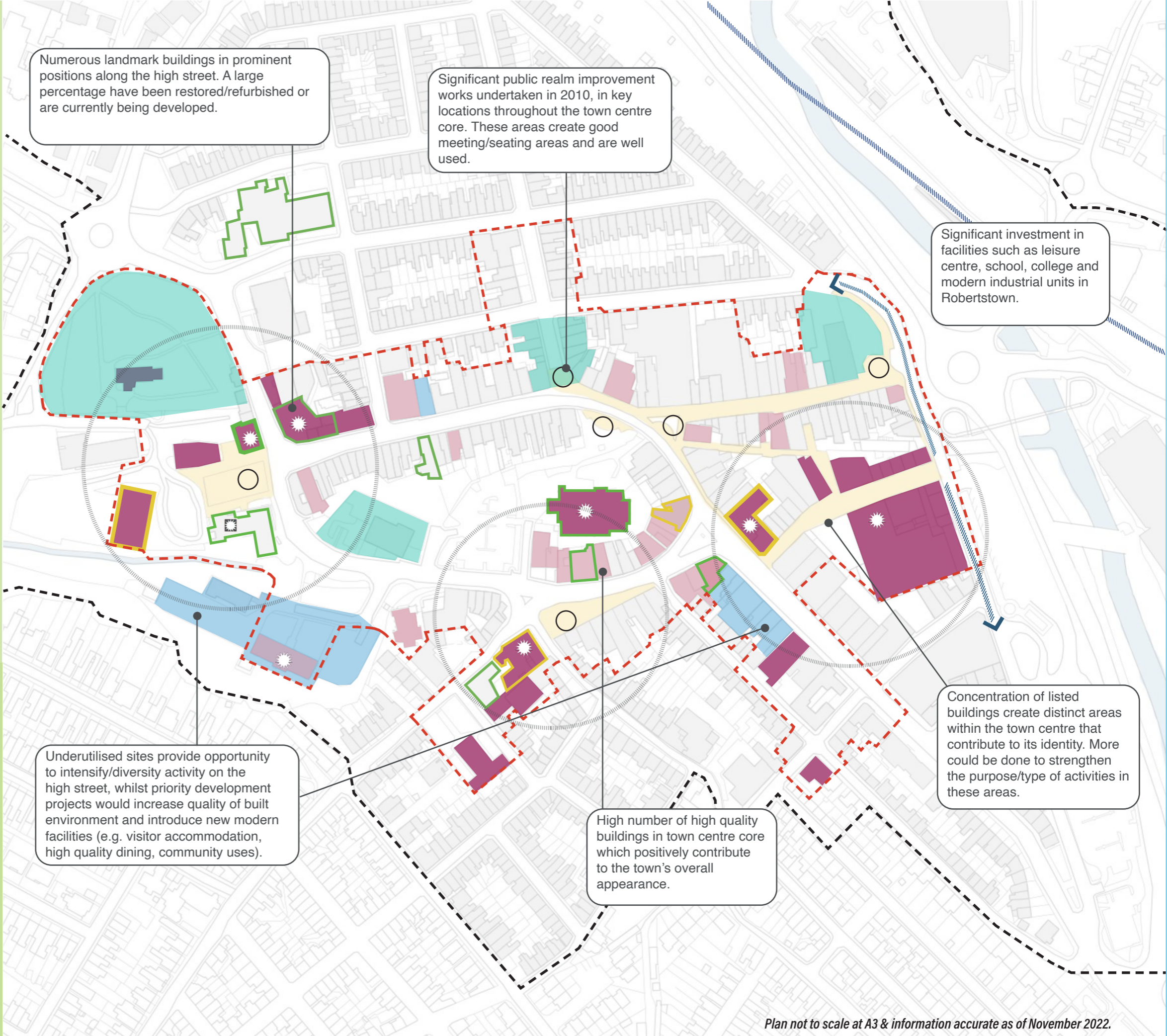
Built Environment & Public Realm

Strengths & Opportunities

- Abundance of high quality and/or listed buildings in key areas.
- 2010-2015 improvements to public realm have created pleasant seating areas at key points within the town centre.
- Opportunity to concentrate investment efforts around these areas.
- Number of buildings currently being restored/redeveloped, by the private sector, including the former Boot Hotel.
- Significant investment by RCTCBC in key facilities such as the library and leisure centre increase overall quality of built environment.
- Key priority development sites and vacant space above retail units, provide opportunities to introduce new amenities such as high quality restaurants and visitor accommodation.
- Potential to facilitate temporary uses in vacant spaces to create dynamic offer, encouraging repeat visits.

Key:

- Study Area
- Conservation Area
- Listed Structures
- High Quality Structures
- Under Utilised Plots
- Priority Redevelop Structures
- Refurbished
- Ongoing Development
- Improve Edge
- Landmark Buildings
- Areas subject to THl Improvements














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Amenities

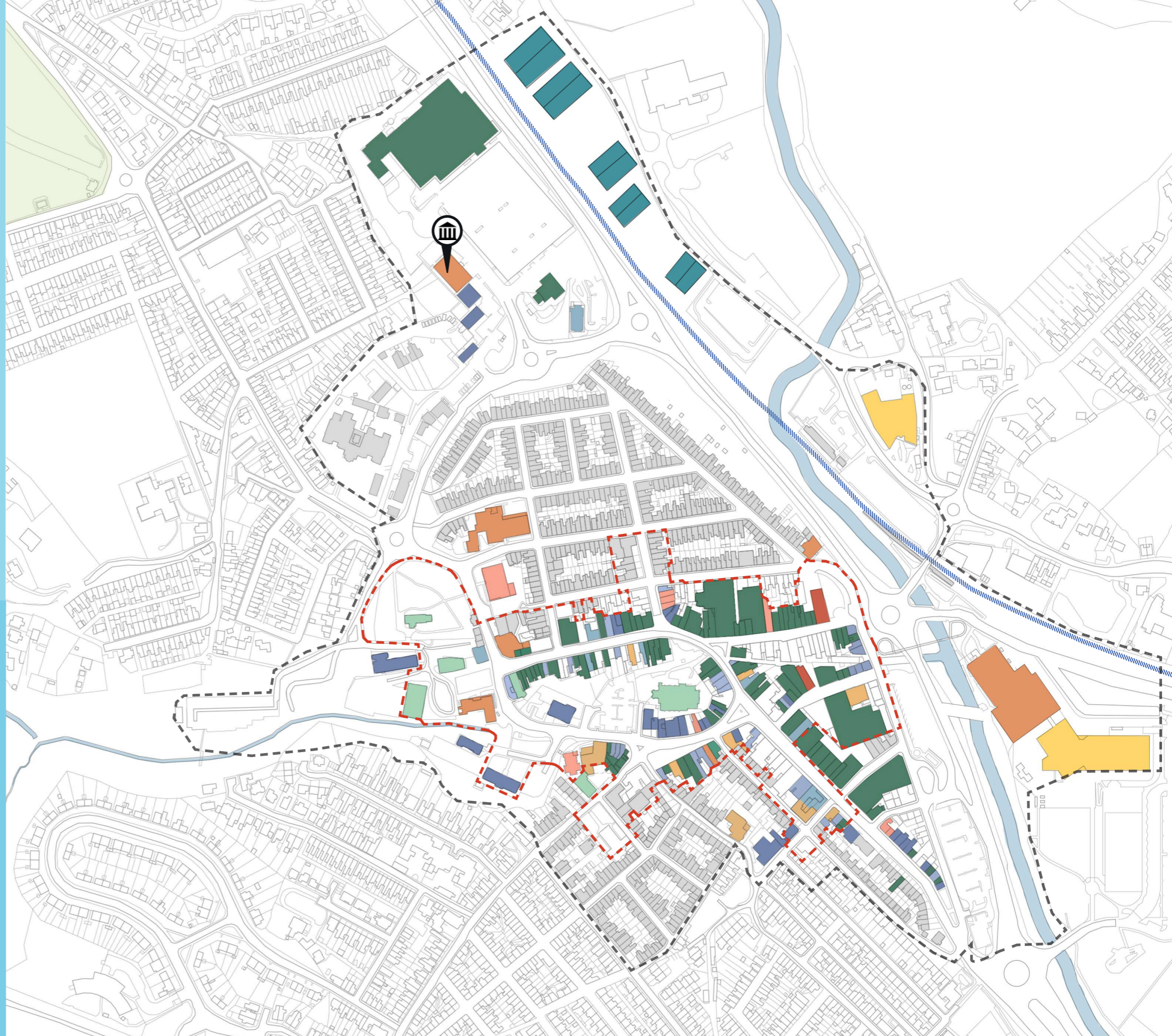
Weaknesses & Constraints

- Lack of visitor accommodation within walking distance of the town centre.
- Public conveniences difficult to identify, due to lack of signage.
- Limited high quality sit down restaurants - lack of choice.
- Dependence on retail as dominant sector.
- Vacant properties in key locations.
- Outdated interpretation (QR codes out of date) and signposting to nearby attractions such as Dare Valley Country Park/ Cynon Valley Museum could be improved.
- Aberdare Park is within walking distance of town centre but signage could be improved to inform visitors of how to get there.
- Strong market, although well used/occupied, lacks external visitor appeal.
- Basic visitor infrastructure could be improved upon.
- Overall high occupancy rate of premises on ground floor, less so on upper floors.

Key:

 Community Facilities	 Health / Fitness
 Education	 Cafe
 Retail	 Industrial Unit
 Office/Services	
 Religious	
 Amusement Arcades	
 Bar / Pub	
 Takeaway / Restaurant	

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Amenities

Strengths & Opportunities

- Compact town centre with residential areas to the north and south.
- Diverse mix of amenities within town centre contributing to sustainability of overall town.
- Abundance of local independent businesses.
- Close proximity of education institutions provides increased footfall/engagement opportunities along with new industrial development at Robertstown.
- Central St Elvan's church has recently undergone a major refurbishment and acts as a key landmark in the town.
- Potential to introduce more dynamic offerings above shops e.g. unique visitor accommodation, co working, short term workshops etc.
- Opportunity to intensify/cluster certain types of activities in defined areas to create key distinguishable zones.

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