

**ROYSTON TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY: NOTES FROM WORKSHOP 2**  
**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2007**

**Retail, Business Investment and Promotion. Community Facilities & Community Safety Issues**

**Group 1:**

**Q1. Why do or don't people come to Royston Town Centre to shop?**

<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Banking facilities Estate agents Independent retailers Somerfield, Woolworths, Peacocks Good night economy Top end of market parking works ok Adequate close parking Parking space adequate for general use	No butchers No Greengrocers No Fishmongers Different focus for residents and non-residents Big draw from Cambridge, Stevenage, Cheshunt & Hitchin Tesco's Poor signage Parking charges – need first half hour free parking Buses stop at Tesco's, Warren, focus at Somerfield

**Q2. Mix, Type and Quality of Retail, Leisure and other services.**

	<b>Type &amp; Mix</b>	<b>Quality +ve/ -ve</b>
Shops	Need larger stores – Next etc.. Need to encourage independent retailers Need to encourage footfall Need good butcher, plenty in nearby towns and villages More shops selling organic produce Need a wider range of shops	Charity shops are poor quality Question is this a failure of critical mass?
Leisure	Library, Museum, Cave  Restaurants	Excellent  Good in evening but limited during the day
Other Services		

**Q3. Main Pedestrian Flow and measures to increase/extend areas.**

	<b>Location</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Existing	High Street Angel Pavement Melbourn Street	
Extend	Kneesworth Street Reinstate route through Abbott's Yard  Angel Pavement	Improve shops frontage and lighting

**Q4. Ideas to raise the profile and How could these be implemented?**

	<b>Ideas</b>	<b>Implemented – How?</b>
Civic Pride	Museum  Priory Memorial Gardens Rework the Cross – not a focus  Fish Hill's natural Square	Open Museum & Cave more often  Bollard maintenance, Street furniture Signage/Access to/from Warren car park  Exploit – pavement café
Partnership Working	Town Centre Manager Chamber of Commerce Town Centre forum	Improve liaison between NHDC and Town Centre manager
Attract New Business & Investment	Hi tech inflow – good transport links  Cease half-day closing  Pressure on railway providers	Bus linkage from industrial area to Town centre  What's the market, distribution and timescales – need to analyse?  Park 'n' Ride
Attract more visitors	A Multi-storey car park & reduce charges	Link to more shops, better shops

**Q5. Views on range, type and quality of Community Facilities.**

	<b>Range, Type and Quality</b>	<b>Improved – How? What is required?</b>
Market	Location Civic Centre car park	Need electrical supplies New awnings, stalls Get rid of vans, park elsewhere (No vans at Biggleswade) Advertising French/German/Italian markets - but on Sundays Auction market Farmers market may compete with Charter market Currently inadequate footfall
Children/youth	The House Project – drop in centre for youths Meridian C Wise Scout hut  Priory Memorial Gardens & Angel Pavement	A good facility     Informal areas where youths gather
Cultural/Leisure	Cinema demolished Museum The Cave	Market Hill Rooms – flexible space up to 100 seats, multi-function space could use as Cinema/Theatre

	<b>Range, Type and Quality</b>	<b>Improved – How? What is required?</b>
	Library Require in town: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer facility</li> <li>• Bowling Alley</li> <li>• Hotels</li> </ul>	Civic Centre project could provide - Large meeting room, conference centre Arts Centre, Gallery
Elderly/Disabled	Day Centre Reasonably well catered for at Community Centre	
Other	Hotels	Enhance existing health facilities

**Q 6. Personal Safety Concerns and Suggestions to reduce such concerns**

<b>Concerns</b>	<b>Suggestions</b>
<p>Pedestrian/Traffic conflicts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crossing Lower King Street</li> <li>• John Street opposite the /Barbers shop</li> <li>• Warren/Market Hill Zebra crossing – high traffic speeds</li> <li>• High speed, narrow pavements on Priory Lane between Market Hill and Barkway Road junctions</li> <li>• Road between Fish Hill and Market Hill next to the Corn exchange is dangerous with 2way traffic being allowed</li> </ul> <p>Steps down to Market Place from Market Hill</p> <p>Lighting in Angel Pavement is poor and youths tend to congregate there</p> <p>Priory Gardens and the open area at The Green used by local children/older youths do not come into Royston to cause trouble</p>	<p>Improve street lighting Controlled crossing</p> <p>Traffic calming</p> <p>Make one-way</p> <p>Improve street lighting</p> <p>Cultural problem rather than aggressive or abusive behaviour</p>

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**Group 2:**

**Q1. Why do or don't people come to Royston Town Centre to shop?**

<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Reasonable range but 'hanging on' as many are family run.  Elderly people wish to shop locally rather than travel.	Lack of variety of shops Too many competing towns Not too many new shops Tesco and recent expansion Car parking expensive relative to shops available. Free parking at Tesco's Increasing number of vacancies Too many charity shops Difficult to attract new shops due to lack of footfall Fails to attract 'newer' residents

**Q2. Mix, Type and Quality of Retail, Leisure and other services.**

	<b>Type &amp; Mix</b>	<b>Quality +ve/ -ve</b>
Shops	Lack of variety Need for larger units Some charity shops use larger units  Charity shops	Negative Query investment and site availability Positive in terms of potential size of units Potential of Angel Pavement Too many, trade unfairly, but better than empty
Leisure	Potential for Bowling alley but no site!	Negative and reflects lack of facilities for young people.
Other Services	Restaurants and pubs  Cinema gone	Positive (reasonably good mix for all ages) Negative

**Q3. Main Pedestrian Flow and measures to increase/extend areas.**

	<b>Location</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Existing	High Street  1. Bus Station/car park to High street 2. Town Hall car park to High Street via Priory gardens Both 1 & 2 via Angel Pavement and John St  Somersfield car park to High Street  Very few people cross to King St/Kneesworth St	Shop displays on footways  Possible traffic free from John St to A10  George Lane cobbles a barrier  Abbots Yard is barrier  Narrow pavements, parked cars, HGV's Lower King Street paved only one

	Location	Measures
		side – pushchairs and invalid buggies especially.
Extend		

**Q4. Ideas to raise the profile and How could these be implemented.**

	Ideas	Implemented – How?
Civic Pride	<p>More publicity for historic features? (Cave/Church) Royston Heath Promote market</p> <p>Parking charges for 1 hour are a barrier</p>	<p>Free parking – possibly on specific days? Saturdays Allow on-street parking in High St, but problem with highway authority Charges for focussed on promoting longer stay or no charge at all!!</p>
Partnership Working	<p>NHDC Town Council Chamber of Commerce Town Centre forum</p>	<p>Good ideas but lost in overall NHDC process. NHDC devolve power to Town Council who could react quicker and not upset Hitchin/Letchworth E.g. car parking More prominent Town Centre signs for traffic Slow traffic through the Cross area.</p>
Attract New Business & Investment	<p>Heath House redeveloped Query of need for more office space vs. residential development</p> <p>Town Centre Manager</p>	<p>Problem of needs of whole district affecting Royston.</p> <p>Long process but starting to come forward on initiatives such as electrical power bollards at the market. Still have some barriers to delivery i.e. processes and money!</p>
Attract more visitors	<p>Town Hall site Potential for hotel/conference/leisure use. Public transport poor</p>	<p>Planning process promote correct mix.</p>

**Q5. Views on range, type and quality of Community Facilities.**

	<b>Range, Type and Quality</b>	<b>Improved – How? What is required?</b>
Market	Dwindling – used to be full of stalls Too down market Some traders 40yrs +  Farmer's market once month Italian/French	Traders resistant to change Attract new traders – may mean change (pitches etc) for existing (break to fix) More specialist e.g. Cambridge Needs new look – too many flowers – veg stall sells out  Mix French, Farmers and Ordinary markets Traders might not like this, but would be better – Consider equal rents, - although tried this in Waltham Abbey and failed.
Children/youth	Hang around old bandstand in Priors Gardens Town Hall well used but needs investment  The House – youth drop in centre at Fish Hill	Stage for shows  Only open 2/3 nights too hit & miss Leisure centres too expensive
Cultural/Leisure	Lack of Cinema	Consider temporary screen at Town Hall site Encourage new ideas for existing town. Takeout obstacles. Snooker/darts/bowling
Elderly/Disabled	Need volunteers to run things  Many places inaccessible.  A lot of disabled buggies	Need more venues - clubs etc.  Town Hall especially
Other		

**Q6. Personal Safety Concerns and Suggestions to reduce such concerns**

<b>Concerns</b>	<b>Suggestions</b>
Priors Memorial Gardens in evening Gangs of youths - the odd mugging  Market Place upturned litter bins  Old Post Office and Princes Mews car park – unpleasant to walk past  Road conflicts between Market and Market Hill and at bottom of Fish Hill	One area with no CCTV    More a perception of danger than real danger

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**Group 3:**

**Q1. Why do or don't people come to Royston Town Centre to shop?**

<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Corn Exchange Specialist shops	Nothing to meet daily needs – grocers, butchers Market in decline Decline of shops in town – Tesco Parking is a problem Decline of Angel Pavement Too many charity shops – 6 3 main shop types Banks, charity, building societies - with only a few needed shops Parking charges Need something to test Tesco's Need shops to meet everyday needs i.e. M&S Simply foods.

**Q2. Mix, Type and Quality of Retail, Leisure and other services.**

	<b>Type &amp; Mix</b>	<b>Quality +ve/ -ve</b>
Shops	Charity Coffee shops Specialist shops	-ve +ve +ve
Leisure	Restaurants	Positive
Other Services	Banks Building Societies	Lots of them

**Q3. Main Pedestrian Flow and measures to increase/extend areas.**

	<b>Location</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Existing	Up and down High Street From Angel Pavement to The Cross Car parks dictate where people flow Church Lane, John Street, high Street Market day – public in area	
Extend	Fish Hill Square – possible market location Close Market Hill to traffic	Signage OK

**Q4. Ideas to raise the profile and How could these be implemented.**

	<b>Ideas</b>	<b>Implemented – How?</b>
Civic Pride	Museum Church Cave Farmer's market/Italian market Kite festival	
Partnership Working		
Attract New Business & Investment	Occupy site (Toilet site) at top end of Kneesworth Street to connect town again	Chamber of Commerce – encourage retail to town Tourist info centre
Attract more visitors	New hotels – 2 in town i.e. the Banyers & Bull are out of date Business hotels Do something with old cinema site  Late night shopping  Christmas/Easter activities Improve parking situation – tickets given too freely  Tourist Info Centre  The Town Trail  Arts Festival Increase Royston Cave opening times	Bus station location = retain bus stop there also  Cinema Site (with swimming pool)  Carnival  Being more prominent in an existing building Advertise in local papers Leaflet drops in other town libraries

**Q5. Views on range, type and quality of Community Facilities.**

	<b>Range, Type and Quality</b>	<b>Improved – How? What is required?</b>
Market	Not enough range Stall holders won't come not enough money in the town. No longer cheaper than shops e.g. Tesco's	Too spread out sometimes – may be better to cover a smaller area. Market – move to Fish Hill Square – Let commercial people run it. More parking for Market Place More specialist markets, but not too often (what about antiques)
Children/youth	Scouts, Guides There are youth clubs, but want to go to parks Provide Snooker hall/Bowling Alley?	More for teens. Get moved on when in group in parks etc...

	<b>Range, Type and Quality</b>	<b>Improved – How? What is required?</b>
Cultural/Leisure	Leisure Centre site No cinema or theatre, but do have Town Hall New nightclub Church used for concerts	Too expensive for elderly
Elderly/Disabled	Good range of clubs for elderly	
Other	Well used Library Incorporate hotel, leisure complex	Baby changing facilities

**Q6. Personal Safety Concerns and Suggestions to reduce such concerns**

<b>Concerns</b>	<b>Suggestions</b>
Kneesworth Street at night	More CCTV in Town Hall area and train station – Kneesworth
Muggings along Melbourn Street Outside old Post Office	More Police presence
Cycling on pavements E.g. Angel Pavement Anti-social behaviour less since clubs hours cut.	Signs, but kids ignore them
High traffic speeds in Melbourn Road	Speed cameras in Melbourn Road

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**Group 4:**

**Q1. Why do or don't people come to Royston Town Centre to shop?**

**Positive** - Specialist shops, independent traders, customer care.  
 Grade I listed cave, Church, The Heath – History and Tourism.  
 Somerfield is great helps to maintain other businesses.  
 Geography/layout of town centre – small for on foot.

**Negative** – Tesco's - free parking and everything in one shop.  
 - Prices are competitive (cheap toys, house ware)  
 Not enough specialist trading.  
 People feel they can't get all they want so go to Cambridge.

**Q2. Mix, Type and Quality of Retail, Leisure and other services.**

	<b>Type &amp; Mix</b>	<b>Quality +ve/ -ve</b>
Shops	No Greengrocer No Butcher No bookshop No modern shops – Next etc... Clothing shops Charity shops Hairdressers	Need better range and mix Lots of them Too many of them
Leisure	Pubs/Restaurants No other leisure – need snooker hall Lost Gym  No Cinema/Theatre Would like an internet café	Good range  Wouldn't want Leisure Centre in Town Centre Want it back
Other Services	Travel Agents Banks Estate agents Accountants Solicitors Insurers	Too many ) ) Good mix ) )

**Q3. Main Pedestrian Flow and measures to increase/extend areas.**

	<b>Location</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Existing	Along High Street	
Extend		Improve signage out of High Street onto Alleys Town maps – showing location of shops. - Is the existing map in the right place? Better pedestrian flow from car parks.

**Q4. Ideas to raise the profile and How could these be implemented.**

	<b>Ideas</b>	<b>Implemented – How?</b>
Civic Pride	Town Centre Website Local advertising Tourist Board – Cave & Heath International market	Fund a fixed term post
Partnership Working	Ramblers Association One off events, festivals etc...	
Attract New Business & Investment	Conference Centre on Town Hall site for business use (e.g. Johnson Matthey) Civic/Cinema/Theatre Better hotels Tourist centre	
Attract more visitors	Sunday opening Specialist markets on Sunday may encourage traders to open. Shuttle bus from industrial area.	

Investigate other towns E.g. Ludlow, Saffron Walden.

**Q5. Views on range, type and quality of Community Facilities.**

	<b>Range, Type and Quality</b>	<b>Improved – How? What is required?</b>
Market	It's dying – although good veg, fish van. WI stall - wonderful	Electrical sockets New stalls More shoppers More Organic produce Farmers market – could help support existing.
Children/youth	Youth Club - fantastic	Modern facilities McDonalds Snooker Hall Cinema Bowling Alley Music Venue Night Café
Cultural/Leisure	Museum The Cave Library – very good	No facilities for local amateur groups
Elderly/Disabled	Evergreens – elderly group The Barn Club for disabled – once a month	Volunteer Bureau Organises all local groups – would like central office

	<b>Range, Type and Quality</b>	<b>Improved – How? What is required?</b>
	Pavements lowered for disabled recently Access on buses not good – not modern buses	
Other	Church – focus	Would like a Church Hall

**Q6. Personal Safety Concerns and Suggestions to reduce such concerns**

<b>Concerns</b>	<b>Suggestions</b>
Church Lane – at night Footpath – Butchers Baulk Tennis courts in Priory Gardens where youths congregate	CCTV Clean-up graffiti Provide shelter for youths - link to improving facilities for youths