



ROYSTON

CONSERVATION AREA TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS 27 MARCH 2007

(Part 2 of 3)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

What are Conservation Areas?

- 1.1 Conservation areas are very special places. Each one is of 'special' architectural or historic importance, with a character or appearance to be preserved or enhanced. Conservation areas are an important part of our heritage and each one is unique and irreplaceable. Their special qualities appeal to visitors and are attractive places to live and work. They provide a strong sense of place and are part of the familiar and local cherished scene.
- 1.2 Conservation areas are based around groups of buildings, and the spaces created between and around them. It is the quality and interest of areas, rather than that of individual buildings that are the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas. Each area is different and has a distinct character and appearance.

Conservation Area Legislation, Government/English Heritage Guidance and Conservation Area Policy

Conservation Area Legislation

- 1.3 Conservation areas are defined in The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. The Act specifically places the following duties on local planning authorities:
- To identify and designate areas of special architectural or historic interest as conservation areas (Section 69).
 - To review the extent of conservation area designation from time to time and designate further areas if appropriate (Section 69).
 - To formulate and publish proposals for the preservation or enhancement of conservation areas, clearly identifying what it is about the character and appearance of the area which should be preserved or enhanced (Section 71).
- 1.4 Within a conservation area the usual planning requirements apply. In addition, there are further restrictions designed to aid in the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the area. A leaflet entitled 'Conservation Areas' is available from the District Council and explains in more detail about conservation areas and the methods in place for preserving or enhancing their special character and appearance.
- 1.5 The legislation is designed to provide for the management of change not its prevention. It is designed to allow areas to remain alive and prosperous yet ensuring that we do not sacrifice the quality of our environment and individual buildings for short-term gains. It aims to preserve the quality of our heritage, safeguarding the past for the future.

Central Government and English Heritage Guidance

- 1.6 Government also provides guidance for local authorities on Conservation Areas in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15, 'Planning and The Historic Environment', (PPG15). The contents of PPG 15 must be taken into account in preparing development plans and the guidance is material to decisions on individual development proposals.
- 1.7 In February 2006, English Heritage produced two consultative documents entitled 'Guidance on conservation area appraisals' and 'Guidance on the management of conservation areas'. The former offers advice to those undertaking, or commissioning, conservation area appraisals. It complements and should be read in conjunction with the second document, which describes the legislative and planning policy framework and deals with most aspects of conservation area designation, control and enhancement. English Heritage intends reviewing both documents within the next two years.

Conservation Area Policy

Development Plans/ Local Development Frameworks

- 1.8 Development plans are prepared both by county and district councils. The County Council prepares the Structure Plan, part of which establishes a broad strategy for conservation. The District Local Plan was prepared by the District Council and adopted on 23rd April 1996 and sets out site specific and detailed policies based on the framework of the Structure Plan. Policy 20 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan No 2 with Alterations provides the current District's Local Plan Policy regarding Conservation Areas.
- 1.9 Local planning authorities now produce Local Development Frameworks (LDFs), a portfolio of local development documents: Development Plan Documents (DPDs), Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and a Statement of Community Involvement (SCIs). North Herts' LDF is being prepared in which there will be a core strategy on how its broad strategy for conservation is integrated with other policies and then locally applied in the building of specific local sustainable communities and places.
- 1.10 A conservation area character statement, with or without a related management strategy, cannot itself be a SPD, therefore, **this document will be adopted for Development Control Purposes and will support future SPD.**

The Royston Shop Front Design Guide (1998)

- 1.11 This document was produced by the District Council and provides guidance to shop owners and occupiers on the important characteristics of shopfronts and how to design shop fronts and signage which complement the individual character of buildings and the area in which they are situated.

Conservation Area Character Statements

Why Produce a Character Statement?

- 1.12 The statutory requirements are laid out in 1.3 above. In addition, a local authority's performance in designating conservation areas, defining the special architectural or historic interest that warrants designation through up-to-date character appraisals, and publishing management proposals for the areas based on the character appraisals is now the subject of a three-part heritage "Best Value Performance Indicator" (BV219) for 2006-07.
- 1.13 The purpose of BV219 is to monitor local authorities' performance in relation to Sections 71 and 72 of the principal Act. BV219a comprises the total number of conservation areas in the local authority's area. BV219b requires the percentage of conservation areas in the local authority's area that have an up-to-date character appraisal to be calculated. BV219c requires the percentage of conservation areas with published management proposals to be calculated.
- 1.14 Character statements are a means of ensuring that the importance and special interest of a conservation area are recognized and understood and the reasons for its designation are clearly justified. This enables informed decisions on how this special character or appearance can be preserved or enhanced when changes are proposed within the area. A conservation area character statement looks at the quality of an area in its broadest sense and identifies the special interest, character and appearance.

Who Uses a Conservation Area Character Statement?

- 1.15 A character statement is designed to be used by anyone with an interest in a conservation area, such as homeowners, builders, architects, inspectors at appeals, voluntary groups and the local authority when considering planning applications, etc. It is therefore important that any change is assessed with reference to the special interest, character or appearance of a conservation area as described within the statement to ensure that it is preserved or enhanced.

How the Character Statement is designed and how it should be used?

- 1.16 The Royston Character Statement follows the format of other town centre character statements produced by the local authority and broadly follows English Heritage's current consultative guidelines. It will play a key role in ensuring that changes within the conservation area preserve or enhance its special character or appearance. The Statement is designed not to be prescriptive but to enable flexibility and creativity.

2.0 ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT.

- 2.1 There are a number of finds dating from the Mesolithic to Neolithic periods in Royston and the surrounding area. There are also a number of barrows in the surrounding landscape and records of one barrow in the town by the station. There is no evidence of early settlement in Royston itself, although there is on Therfield Heath, southwest of the town. Finds such as Roman pins, water jars and food vessels suggest possible Romano-British occupation. There is also evidence of Anglo-Saxon burials in and around Royston although evidence of the location of any settlement is inconclusive.
- 2.2 Royston developed at the cross roads of two ancient routes Ermine Street (heading north from London) followed the path of the High Street and Kneesworth Street, whilst Icknield Way (running across the country starting near Yarmouth, across Buckinghamshire and down to Falmouth) followed Melbourn Street and Baldock Street. There are no springs or rivers within the town. Ermine Street was a Roman Road whilst Icknield Way had earlier origins as a prehistoric trackway. Icknield Way marked the county boundary between Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire. At one stage Royston was within five parishes, Bassingbourn, Kneesworth and Melbourn in Cambridgeshire and Therfield and Barkway in Hertfordshire.
- 2.3 Royston is thought to have derived its name from The Countess of Norfolk named 'Roysia' who erected a cross where the two main roads met. The first reference to the Crux Roasisie is in 1184 in relation to the foundation of the Monastery. Kingston suggests that following the foundation of the monastery the settlement that developed around it became known as Royses Town and then contracted to Royston. The base only appears to be shown on the Tithe Map 1725 for Therfield, where Royston is drawn in the corner. However, by 1786 the base was situated at the corner of the Crown Hotel and then moved to the rear of the Bull Hotel and then again to the garden of the Royston Institute in 1856. It is now located back at The Cross, but on the southern side.

The Monastery

- 2.4 There is no mention of Royston in the Domesday Book of 1086. The first documentary evidence of the town is the Charter of Eustace de Merc, Lord of Newsells, regarding the foundation of the Monastery in 1184. He founded the monastery for three Canons of the order of St Augustine and dedicated it in honour of St John the Baptist and St Thomas of Canterbury. The second founder, his Nephew Ralph of Rochester also provided the additional means to build the church and institute seven religious men of canonical discipline from which a parson and prior were appointed.
- 2.5 The monastery was granted considerable rights and powers, with market rights granted by Richard I in 1189 for each Wednesday and also for a fair throughout Whitsun week. In 1242 Henry III granted a

further fair to be held on the 6th to 7th of July. King Richard's Charter also related to the civil side of the community as well as the ecclesiastical. It conferred upon the prior and canons the wellbeing of the community around its walls. The monastery had powers relating to law, punishment, the regulation and control of trade and other beneficial functions relating to education and the sick. The Monastery and its tenants were also free from contributions and taxes, and all tolls in every market or fair and over every bridge. The town developed as charters and gifts continued to be bestowed during 13th and 14th centuries and the Monastery grew in land and wealth.

- 2.6 A hospital dedicated to St John and St James was founded for poor lepers in the 13th century on the corner of Baldock Street and Back Street (Upper King Street). A list of the masters of the hospital stretches from the 13th to the mid 15th centuries.
- 2.7 The monastery was adjacent to the church and formed a square with buildings on all sides except the East, which opened onto cloister gardens. The buildings were divided according to their uses. The chapter house and cloisters were to the south and adjacent to the church with an entrance between. The domestic offices were on the west and south sides of the square, with porter's lodge and gate at the southwest corner. To the south of the domestic buildings were further buildings required for the secular side of the monastery, the dairy, brewery, granary etc. Higher up the hill were the homestead buildings for the work of the monastery farm (Kingston)
- 2.8 The grounds of the monastery largely remain today in the form of the Memorial Gardens. Sections of the flint wall once enclosing the site remain along Market Hill and enclosing parts of the churchyard. The Memorial Gardens are an important green open space within the town contributing to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of St John the Baptist's Church. The gardens also have a number of important trees.

St John's Church

- 2.9 St John's Church is a prominent and important historic building within the town. It is situated on higher ground to the south of Melbourn Street fronted by trees, which enhance its setting. The Memorial Gardens adjacent to the churchyard is an important open space within the town and contributes greatly to the setting of the church. The Memorial Gardens have a strong relationship with the early Monastic Complex.
- 2.10 The existing church formed part of the Augustinian Canons very large church, with a 13th Century nave and aisles, a 16th century tower and a 19th century chancel and East End of the south aisle. The rear boundary of the churchyard wall linking the church to Church Lane is thought to be part of the original nave of the monastic church.

- 2.11 The earliest parts of the church are the 13th century Early English windows in the north and south walls of original chancel or choir, now forming the Nave. Kingston suggests that St John's Church would originally have followed the conventional layout of similar churches of this type. The eastern end or choir was for clergy and canons and the Nave and west end for the people of the town. The two halves were divided by a rood screen in front of which one of the cannons would provide a service within the Nave at an appointed time. He also considers that the western end of the church was demolished at the time of the dissolution.
- 2.12 Pilgrimages to and from the shrines of St Thomas à Becket in Canterbury and St Albans the Martyr resulted in visitors passing through and resting in Royston from early times. Royston was on the main route from the North to London and as a result had many royal and other important visits through the ages. Richard Duke of York marched from Royston towards St Albans with 3000 soldiers to meet the King to fight the first battle of the War of the Roses in 1455. In 1470 King Edward IV stayed at Royston on his way to put down a rebellion in Lincolnshire (Kingston)

Settlement Pattern

- 2.13 The town layout is medieval in its pattern with buildings set abutting the road on long narrow plots, with the narrowest end onto the street. This arrangement is typical of the medieval period and plots of this shape are known as 'burgage' plots. The main buildings i.e. houses or shops were positioned closest to the thoroughfare with workshops and outbuildings in the plots behind.
- 2.14 The early medieval market was situated at the main crossroads of the historic roads known as The Cross, in a wide part of Ermine Street to the north and south of the crossroads. Over time, the stalls occupying these areas became permanent resulting in an island of buildings within Kneesworth Street and the High Street forming Upper and Lower King Streets. Pevsner suggests that the existing market place was established later judging by the age of buildings surrounding it. It is likely that this occurred in the 17th and 18th centuries following the creation of Upper King Street and Lower King Street
- 2.15 The Lay Subsidies shortly after the establishment of the Monastery show the number of people assessed to be comparatively small. The 13th century returns show slightly more people on the Cambridge side than the Hertfordshire side.
- 2.16 An ancient burial ground was found in Kneesworth Street in the area adjoining Mill Road. The skeletons were found lying at angles suggesting hasty interment and bodies contaminated with disease. This is considered as evidence of the affect of the Black Death on Royston in the 14th century.

- 2.17 In the 15th and 16th centuries, the returns indicate the remarkable growth of the town in relation to the number of people assessed as well as the amount produced. The prominence of population was at this time on the Hertfordshire side.
- 2.18 The importance of the Royston market both locally and regionally is recorded from the time of the Monastery. 'At the time of Henry VI (1423-61) Royston was one of the biggest market towns in the area and this continued into the 17th century when the town and its market were frequently mentioned in travellers writings' of the time (Kingston).

The Dissolution

- 2.19 The Act of Dissolution had a dramatic effect on Royston, where the town and Priory were so interlinked. On 1st April 1534 the Canons of Royston attached signatures to a deed of supremacy renouncing the authority of the Pope and acknowledging the supremacy of the King and his marriage with Anne Boleyn. The transfer of the Priory and its possessions to the King began shortly afterwards and was overseen by the recently elected Prior.
- 2.20 All lands were redistributed to the followers of the King and all possessions were auctioned. This included the Monastery itself, the farm and all the Plate and Vestments, the fairs and market tolls and the old convent mill. The Priory House and land with fieldage for 200 sheep the King leased to Robert Chester, one of his gentleman ushers. These properties remained in the Chester family until 1759. Many of the inns had also paid rent to the Monastery (Kingston).
- 2.21 The Royston market had grown under the monastery and was one of the largest corn markets in the country at the time of the dissolution. This is attributed to the location of the town at the crossing of two great roads within an extensive agricultural district. It was also the centre around which had grown one of the most famous maltings industries in the Kingdom.
- 2.22 The dissolution had the potential to affect the civil infrastructure of the town as well as the religious. An Act of Parliament in 1540 formed one parish for the town, making the late Church into the parish church under a single clerical head, with a small income. The town bought the Church and associated grounds from the King in order to achieve this. The first Vicar, Alexander Stokes, appointed by the King was one of the Canons of the late Priory who had signed the deed of supremacy. Ground was laid out around the church as a churchyard and a vicarage house was erected on the west-side of it bounded by Church Lane and Melbourn Street. The size of the churchyard is now larger, although the gravestones have since been removed and the Vicarage House was demolished in 19th century after falling into a poor state of repair (Kingston).

The Priory House

- 2.23 Elizabeth I considered staying at the Priory House on her travels through Hertfordshire in 1578. However, the Commissioners sent to inspect the suitability of the house reported that it was “... a very unnecessary house for the receipt of her Majesty”. A sketched ground floor plan of the house was attached to the report and indicates a plan substantially the same as the previous domestic monastic buildings (Kingston).
- 2.24 Cole, the antiquary, describes the Priory House in 1747 and records some interesting relics of the old house that was ‘*pulled down of late years to make up that wch is now inhabited by Mr. Lettice*’ (Kingston).
- 2.25 The existing building appears to date to the early 18th century with later extensions and alterations and was built using some of the materials of the original building.

King James’ Palace

- 2.26 James I stopped in Royston on his way from Edinburgh to London to take possession of the throne, staying at the Priory House, then owned by Robert Chester. Hunting and field sports drew him back and he formed a relationship with the town spending much time there. Two inns (The Greyhound and The Cock) in Kneesworth Street were secured by the King for conversion into a hunting box with additional grounds to the rear. Over time the buildings were extended and altered. ‘*The Royal property formed a group bound on the West by Armynge (Kneesworth Street) from the cross to the corner in Mill Road, on the south by Ickneild or Melbourn Street, on the east by Dog Kennel Lane...*’(Kingston).
- 2.27 King James I was often in Royston and it was here that he was brought news of the Gunpowder Plot in 1605 and later in 1618 where he signed the death warrant of Sir Walter Raleigh. Charles I lived in Royston as a boy and stayed in the Old Palace under arrest prior to his captivity and execution. Although during the Civil War Royston’s sympathy had mostly been with the Roundheads 150 Royston men attacked some of Cromwell’s troops in the Market Place after the King’s death. A document describing the uprising at the time is the first written reference to the term Royston Crows that now appears on the town’s Coat of Arms.
- 2.28 Following the death of the King, the Palace and its associated buildings were surveyed and found to be in a decayed state. By an Act of Commons, Parliament sold the Royal Estate. The section of the Royal Palace, which still stands today was claimed by the Earl of Pembroke, although the west side was pulled down on the formation of the Caxton Turnpike Trust and the widening of the road.

Royston Cave

- 2.29 Royston Cave was rediscovered in 1742. It is a man made cave cut from chalk beneath the road and all that was found inside was a human skull and a few bones, fragments of a small drinking cup and a piece of brass. Rectangular and oven shaped recesses are cut into the walls and numerous 13th or 14th century carvings representing a crucifixion, St Christopher and St Catherine, a king and queen, figures on horseback and other symbols were originally painted. The present entrance created in 1790 links to eight Melbourn Street at the only place there were no carvings.

The Coaching and Maltings Industries.

- 2.30 During the late 17th and 18th centuries the North Road was a famous coaching route from London to the North and Cambridge. Royston became important for travellers and mail. It was the 4th stage on the London to Edinburgh route and this supported many inns within Royston. Britain's first Turnpike Road from Wadesmill to Caxton passed through the town during the 18th and 19th centuries when the town had more than 50 inns.
- 2.31 A strong malting industry was developed at Royston through the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. This was due to the high quality agricultural land surrounding Royston and its advantageous position on Ermine Street providing a collection centre and route to Ware (where malting also took place) and then to London. The early maltings would have largely been local industries with many of the townsfolk involved in ale production in small malting buildings to the rear of properties. Indeed Elizabeth I is recorded to have said '*a figge for Spaine so long as Royston afforded such plentie of good malts*' (Kingston). Others maltings are recorded in Melbourn Street and Back Street (now King Street). Larger malting buildings were constructed on London Road and Kneesworth Street with Phillips Brewery in Baldock Street constructed in 1720 but destroyed by fire in 1909.
- 2.32 The thriving coaching and malting industries brought wealth to the town in the 18th and early 19th century. This resulted in the replacement of some of the earlier buildings or their re-fronting in the new Georgian style. This occurred to shops, houses and inns within the town. Pigots and Co Directory 1832 describes the town as follows: "*Considerable business is done by maltsters and corn factors who are for the most respectable farmers living in the neighbourhood and with malting houses and premises in the town. There are several brewers, one or two on a large scale*".

Public Buildings.

- 2.33 School buildings were established during the 18th and 19th centuries in Fish Hill in 1718 and Market Hill in 1827. The County Court building was constructed in 1849 facing into the square formed at the bottom of Fish Hill and Market Hill.

- 2.34 Further public buildings constructed throughout the 19th century such as the Institute (Town Hall), Congregational Chapel, (now offices) and Schools, (i.e. the museum) show that Royston continued to be a progressive town.

The Railway

- 2.35 The opening of Hitchin, Royston and Cambridge Branch of the G.N. Railway in 1850 slowly bought the end of the coaching era but also resulted in the expansion of the town. Up until the end of the first quarter of the 19th century Royston had largely stayed the same in layout with very few houses distant from the centre.

The Gas Company and the Water Company

- 2.36 The establishment of Royston Gas Company in 1837 and Royston Water Company in 1859 in conjunction with the railway provided new opportunities for the town, which steadily began to expand. There was no river or springs at Royston, with water supplied from private wells and large ponds within the town. Following the establishment of the Water Company, water was obtained by drilling through the chalk and there were two sites, one near London Road behind the Mount and the other to the north in Queens Road (previously known as Water Street)
- 2.37 The town expanded on its north side, around the Railway Station, Maltings and Corn Mill in Kneesworth Street. The population doubled in the 19th century but business remained predominantly agricultural with employees principally working for a brewery, the mill, or on the land.

3.0 TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

- 3.1 This section is designed to analyse in more detail the special character and appearance of the individual streets within the conservation area. Each street will be analysed in turn considering layout, the form and design of the buildings and the spaces between them, noting any important views or focal buildings. Each section is concluded with a brief synopsis of the main characteristics of each street.

HIGH STREET, JEPPE LANE, JOHN STREET, GEORGE LANE.

- 3.2 The High Street is a relatively narrow but straight street reflecting its origins as the direct route through the town to and from London. It slopes down towards The Cross with clear views along its length from London Road to the hills to the north of the town. Most of the buildings are listed and provide a strong building line on the back pavement edge with continuous facades. Generally, there are no accesses through buildings to rear courtyards from the High Street. The High Street is relatively narrow with narrow pavements to either side of the road. The road and pavement are surfaced in materials of similar colour unifying the street. The pavements are of York stone and the roads brown/grey bricks. There are no verges or street trees.

- 3.3 There are small narrow alleys at intervals linking the High Street to Upper King Street to the west and narrow streets namely John Street, Jepps Lane and George Lane linking to Market Hill to the east. George Lane retains its historic cobbled surfaces and drainage channels. John Street is named after John Phillips who presented the site to the town to connect the High Street to Market Hill after one of his public houses burned down. The access through to Jepps Lane is via a carriageway under a timber-framed jetty between nos.24 and 26. From this point there is a glimpsed view of the church tower. The Masonic Hall is situated to one side, constructed of gault bricks. It was opened in the 1840's as a Sunday School to John Street Congregational Chapel which once stood opposite. The chapel was built in 1843, but was demolished in the 1960s.
- 3.4 Building plots are elongated with narrowest edge to the street. The lengths of the plots are constrained by King Street to the west. Longer plots exist to the east owing to the position and angle of Market Hill. The majority of building plots have been lost to the large scaled redevelopment of the central section, such as Angel Pavement.
- 3.5 A large section of the east side of the High Street, between The Bull Inn and no.32 on the corner of John Street, has been completely replaced with modern buildings. Angel Pavement and other modern buildings are set back slightly from the building line and the divisions to the modern façades do not reflect the general division of the historic buildings and layout pattern. Flat roofed forms of Angel Pavement do not contribute to the strong gabled form and plain clay tiles characteristic of the area. George Lane, between the buildings, has been retained and makes a positive contribution to the character and layout of the town.
- 3.6 The Bull and The Chequers retain the elongated form of their plots and there is evidence of the historic plot forms to the rear of nos.46 and 48 High Street where an outbuilding remains following the line and elongated form of the plot. Courtyard arrangements are also maintained to the rear of some of the buildings with access via Market Hill.
- 3.7 Shop frontages (with fascias and stall risers) predominate but there are also buildings which retain a more domestic character with ground floor sash or bay windows such as no.41. The two main inns of the town, The Bull and The Chequers are situated at the top of the hill at the junction of the High Street with London Road and are a strong reminder of the importance of the former coaching industry in the town. The slope of the street becomes steeper at this point and access to the inns and the timber-framed cottages opposite are via external steps up to the doors.

- 3.8 The buildings generally reflect the classical style popular in the 18th and 19th centuries. The majority of buildings have vertical sliding sash windows, although some of the earlier buildings have lead light or small paned side hung casements. Earlier timber-framed buildings have either been given a red brick facade or rendered with little timber framing visible. The high quality of the brickwork in Flemish bond with narrow joints to a number of the buildings reflects the wealth of Royston during this period due to the coaching and malting industries.
- 3.9 The buildings are generally two storeys, although there is the occasional three storied buildings such as no.11, an 18th century house and Natwest, on the corner with The Cross. The use of the attic spaces is a feature in some of the buildings within the High Street, with dormer windows in the roofs creating two and a half storied buildings. The dormers are generally small hipped or gabled forms with plain tiled roofs and casement windows.
- 3.10 Even where the number of storeys is constant, roof heights differ due to the date and method of construction, providing the street with a varied roofscape. The rising slope of the land also results in the stepping up of buildings. Chimneys and the differing heights of buildings roofs with or without dormers provide additional variety and interest. Roofs are predominantly simple gables with the ridges running parallel to the street. Plain clay tiles are the characteristic roofing material and eaves are generally plain although some have parapets.
- 3.11 Curved corners to buildings and curved windows are characteristic to a number of buildings on corner sites. No.2 is situated on the corner with Melbourn Street and has a curved façade and shop front. No.28 High Street is situated on the corner of John Street and has curved corner windows. No.1 John Street also has curved windows where the first floor elevation steps forward.
- 3.12 Barclays Bank is a grade II listed building and is an important focal feature when approaching the High Street from John Street. The building was originally designed to accommodate Royston Bank established by the local Fordham family in the late 19th century.
- 3.13 Adjacent to no.25 High Street is a side garden enclosed by simple iron railings. This open space provides views to and from King Street. From the High Street, the façade of no.43 King Street, a grade II listed building, can be viewed. On the 1886 Ordnance Survey map this appears to have been an access between the two streets and forms part of the special layout of Royston with narrow interconnecting alleys between the two streets. Interesting glimpsed views of building facades occur through to all the alleys and make up an important feature of the town.

UPPER KING STREET.

- 7.2.2.1 **3.14** **Upper King Street is a long narrow street with a subtle curve at the southern end. It lies parallel to the High Street sloping down towards The Cross. It is narrower than the High Street and lined with buildings abutting directly onto the street. There is a small section of narrow pavement to one side of the road only and no street trees or verges.** Upper King Street opens into The Cross to the north and onto a small open space adjacent to Sun Hill House at the bend of London Road to the south.
- 3.15 The eastern side of the Upper King Street is formed by the rear elevations of the shops fronting the High Street. Except for the two very narrow alleys linking to the High Street there are no breaks in the building line. The buildings fully occupy their plots except for a few at the southern end, which have small courtyards with outbuildings directly onto the Street. Apart from a small terrace of cottages to the southern end, this side of the street has a utilitarian character.
- 3.16 Abbots Yard is the first building to the north on the western side of Upper King Street. It is constructed of gault bricks with an industrial character. A carriageway provides access to a small central courtyard, which now contains a number of shops. A modern office building is situated adjacent reflecting the character of its neighbour. Beyond, is an historic outbuilding orientated to end onto the street.
- 3.17 The middle section of the western side has a large number of listed buildings of domestic character, following the classical style. These date either to the 18th century or are earlier timber-framed buildings with 18th century facades. They have carefully proportioned and balanced facades. Most have vertical sliding sash windows and cornices below the eaves. Some of the timber-framed buildings have leaded light windows, but these also tend to have vertical emphasis. Porches are not characteristic, although houses have classical style door surrounds or simple recessed doorways.
- 3.18 These frontage buildings on the western side are generally two storied with gabled roofs orientated with the ridges running parallel to the street. Small hip dormers are also a feature, symmetrically and evenly placed within the roof slopes. Behind the frontage buildings are courtyards accessed via carriageways, through or between the buildings. Lower ranges and outbuildings form the rear courtyards. Set at right angles they step down in height from the frontage buildings. The rear buildings are predominantly timber-framed, a notable one of which being a 'building at risk' forming the north boundary to no.41. Some have timbers exposed and others are rendered. Mulberry Court is a good example with an 18th century brick façade fronting an earlier timber-framed building. Many of the carriageways retain their historic cobbled surfaces, such as the access between nos.43 and 43a.
- 3.19 Adjacent to Mulberry Court is a large weather-boarded barn, which is grade II listed. It is elongated in form and its gable end is directly onto

the street. Also on the western side between nos.67 and 69 Upper King Street is Norman's Lane providing access to Mount Terrace. As its name suggests Mount Terrace is a row of 19th century cottages located on steeply rising land.

- 3.20 On the eastern side opposite Mulberry Court there is a row of small cottages formed from the rear sections of the buildings fronting the High Street. These are largely timber framed with jetties, rendered to the upper floor and brick to the ground floor. The windows are vertical sliding sashes and most are small paned. Doorways are formed under simple arches or lintels and have planked doors with no surrounds or porches. Although the buildings are elongated in form and run parallel to the street, they have been divided into smaller units of individual cottages. The row is completed by a pair of gault brick cottages typical of the early 19th century in character.
- 3.21 The remaining buildings on the eastern side of the street have a clear utilitarian character as outbuildings to the houses, shops and inns fronting the High Street. Typically these originally had no windows (although some have been added in recent years) and are constructed of brick or timber-frame and weather-boarding. Most of the roofs are of plain clay tiles although some slates are used on later outbuildings.
- 3.22 The characteristic materials within Upper King Street are gault or red brick. Renders also cover timber-framed buildings, those fronting the street as well as the rear ranges and outbuildings. No.47 displays pargetting. Weatherboarding is characteristic of outbuildings and is stained dark brown/black. Plain clay tile is the predominant roofing material. Chimneys are important to the townscape and provide an interesting roofscape, particularly when viewed from the higher ground of London Road. The chimneys are tall and narrow with elongated pots and constructed of either red or gault bricks.

KNEESWORTH STREET, LOWER KING STREET, THE GREEN AND DOG KENNEL LANE.

The Southern End of Kneesworth Street.

- 3.23 Kneesworth Street is a wide linear street divided at the south end into a central island of buildings to also form Lower King Street. The island of buildings probably originated from temporary market stalls being replaced by permanent buildings. The narrow roads formed by the island of buildings have an enclosed and intimate character.
- 3.24 The buildings to the southern end relate to a predominantly medieval pattern of elongated plot forms with the narrowest ends onto the street. The buildings are two storied with simple plain clay tiled gabled roofs and plain eaves and are orientated with ridges running parallel to the street. The buildings have a continuous frontage on the back pavement edge with occasional small narrow breaks to provide access to rear

yards enclose by brick or flint walls and occupied by timber framed and weather-boarded or brick outbuildings.

- 3.25 The character of the buildings to the southern end of Kneesworth Street is mainly that of shops. The shop fronts have fascias and stall risers. Many of these buildings are timber-framed and rendered. A number have front projecting jetties under which shop fronts have been inserted. Red and gault brick buildings are also characteristic, particularly in Lower King Street.
- 3.26 The buildings on the western side of Lower King Street have a domestic character with sash windows and no shop fronts. The eastern side is formed by the back elevations of the island buildings. These have short gabled projections and a limited number of small window openings.
- 3.27 The buildings to Lower King Street and the southern end of Kneesworth Street have a continuous frontage on the back pavement edge. Narrow breaks between and occasionally through buildings, provide access to the rear of plots. The plots are narrow and elongated in form with the narrowest edge onto the street. The buildings are orientated with ridges running parallel to the road reinforcing the linear character and appearance of the street.
- 3.28 The windows are mainly sliding sashes providing an overall vertical emphasis to the appearance of the buildings. First floor canted bay windows are also seen in Lower King Street, whilst some of the buildings have timber casements or leaded lights.
- 3.29 The pavements in lower King Street and the south of Kneesworth Street are of York Stone. However, north of the Diana Memorial Garden, the pavements are of tarmac. The Memorial Garden is paved with reconstituted York Paving slabs and contains a number of trees. Except for this group, street trees are not characteristic to the southern end of Kneesworth Street.

The Old Palace.

- 3.30 The Old Palace is situated at the point where Kneesworth Street divides to form Lower King Street. The Old Palace itself is now only half the original building, which previously projected further forward into Kneesworth Street. This was because the street was widened in the 18th century to allow for better passage of traffic along the Old North Road. The tall chimneys on the front elevation of the Old Palace were previously in the centre of a double-gabled building. The street front has a hooded door and Venetian window dating from the mid 18th century.
- 3.31 Many of the buildings around the Old Palace and in Lower King Street originated as outbuildings to the royal residence. Adjoining the Old Palace was The Buttery, Guard House and Privy Kitchen- nos.7, 9 and

11 Kneesworth Street. These buildings line directly onto the street and are timber-framed buildings with rendered frontages. Nos.18-20 Kneesworth Street, situated in the island block between Kneesworth Street and Lower King Street, is believed to have been the house of the King's equerries and nos.13-15 Kneesworth Street were probably stables. Opposite the Old Palace, nos.28 and 30 Kneesworth Street were coach houses and barns. All the buildings in the vicinity of the Old Palace have group value and a scale characteristic of medieval settlement. In addition the buildings relating to the Old Palace are listed buildings.

- 3.32 To the rear of no.30 Kneesworth Street, in Stamford's Yard, is a large timber-framed building clad in dark weatherboarding. This is considered to be an outbuilding to the Old Palace and retains a utilitarian character with limited openings. The boundary wall between the entrance to Stamford Yard and no.32 is constructed of clunch (Chalk Blocks). The clunch is exposed to the side of the Stamford Yard, but has been faced in gault brickwork in a Rat Trap bond to the side facing no.32. Rat Trap bond is where the bottom of the bricks are displayed rather than the sides.

The Museum

- 3.33 Opposite the Old Palace is The Museum. It is a gault brick building in Flemish Bond constructed in 1879 as a Sunday school. It is set back from the street with no.5 (the original caretakers house) situated directly onto the pavement to one side creating an enclosed front courtyard. Both buildings are orientated to have gables facing towards the street. The buildings are also very similar in design, constructed of gault bricks and are strongly unified to form an attractive grouping within the street. Classical elements form the design with the gabled end of no.5 appearing as a pediment with corner pilasters. Dentil courses are used to divide the upper and lower floors of both of the buildings as well as to decorate the eaves and chimneys. The windows are timber vertical sliding sashes mainly of two panes over two panes, but also three panes over three with proportions all matching. The large central external chimney-breast to The Museum is an interesting and important feature to its façade. The chimney has a window inserted at ground floor level and the date plaque at first floor level. The roofs are of slate complementing the design and grouping of the two buildings.
- 3.34 Nos.43 and 45 have a similar character. Both are two storey buildings constructed of gault brick. No.45 was originally the town police station prior to 1896 and has iron railings to the front boundary which are an important surviving feature within the street where few other railings remain. No.45 is also the corner building onto the green and its side elevation is constructed of flint work. No.43 has a large tree in the side garden which makes a positive contribution to the street.

The Green.

- 3.35 The Green is formed around a curved road joining both Kneesworth Street and Mill Road, creating an island around no.47, North Hall. The brick and flint wall enclosing the plot of no.47 is an important feature. A small area of grass is maintained at the entrance with Dog Kennel Lane. Five small, two storey houses principally dating to the 19th century are situated to face towards the road. The buildings have a variety of walling materials such as gault brick, red brick and render, although the roofs are mainly slate. The stables to no.47 line the end of The Green abutting onto Mill Road.

Dog Kennel Lane.

- 3.36 Dog Kennel Lane derives its names from the time of King James I when this area contained the kennels and associated buildings to the Old Palace. Banyers Lodge, a grade II listed building constructed of flint, is a focal building at the entrance to Dog Kennel Lane from The Green. The special interest of Dog Kennel Lane largely relates to its historic associations with the Old Palace, the long flint wall on its east side and two large trees in the front gardens of Jowlers and Copper Beech rather than the quality of buildings. Opposite Richard Cox House, the flint wall ends and the boundary is continued by a close-boarded fence with a line of trees behind which also contribute to the character of the lane.

The Northern End of Kneesworth Street

- 3.37 There is a transition point midway along the Kneesworth Street where the layout pattern, form and scale of buildings changes. The northern end is characterised by large detached or semi-detached houses situated within relatively large garden plots. Here the buildings continue to relate to the line of the road, but are set back slightly, fronted by brick walls or iron railings on low brick walls.
- 3.38 The houses date to the 18th and 19th centuries and are constructed in brick, some in red and others in gault. Two of the buildings namely North Hall and North Lodge are rendered buildings one finished in white the other in light ochre. The roofs are either gabled or hipped with either plain clay tiles or slates. The windows are predominantly sashes and range from the small paned types, those with margin lights, to the later simple one pane over another design. This reflects the progression of window construction and design from the late 18th century until the end of the 19th century.
- 3.39 The Congregational Church is set back from the street within a front churchyard, now converted for car parking. It is situated on the western side of the street between nos.32 and 34. It dates to the early to mid 19th century and is constructed in gault bricks with a slate roof.
- 3.40 The Rookery and Yew Tree House are two large dwelling houses, which occupy a large section of the western side of Kneesworth Street

between the former congregational church and the junction with Palace Gardens.

- 3.41 The Rookery is a large early 19th century house situated in a large garden plot that compliments its size. It is on the back pavement edge and is constructed of gault brick with slate roof and sash windows with margin lights. Full height bay windows are a feature to one end of the façade with an off centre recessed 6-panel entrance door with columns to either side.
- 3.42 Yew Tree House is a large red brick house dating to the early 18th century. It is set back slightly from the street and fronted by a low brick wall and high Yew hedge. Like, The Rookery, it is situated in a large garden plot complimenting its size and status. Adjacent and fronting the road, is an 18th century brick wall enclosing the side yard to Yew Tree House. This wall is listed and is also an important feature within the conservation area. The adjacent brick stables and coach house, now used as a nursery, continues the building line and relates to the group in character. Yew Tree Cottage dating to the early 18th century also constructed in red brick completes the group.
- 3.43 Gaillard's Lane runs between The Rookery and Yew Tree House to later houses to the rear. The lane is paved in brown cobbles with side drainage channels. The use of brown cobbles as a paving material is a special historic feature in Royston although relatively small sections survive. A large and impressive flint wall lines the garden to no.36 and Gaillard's Lane. On the opposite side to the end of the lane is a brick crinkle-crankle wall, which is an unusual feature due to its curved zig-zag form.
- 3.44 Hesman House is a two-storey listed building dating to the 19th century. It was built for Hesman Abbots who owned a furnishing company in the town. It has a hipped slate roof with a shallower pitch than the plain clay tiled roofs of earlier buildings. It is deeper in plan and has symmetrically placed sash windows with margin lights and a central door. This style and form is continued on both sides until the end of the street excepting no.40.
- 3.45 The houses to the northern end of Kneesworth Street are constructed of either gault or red brick, with slate roofs. Bay windows are also a feature and are typically cantered in shape. However, no.44 displays two curved front bays with fine glazing bars dating to the early 19th century. The houses are symmetrical in design, usually with panelled central entrance doors. The doors are situated either within set recessed arches or framed by flat roofed porches supported on Doric columns.
- 3.46 No.40, North Lodge is a large, white rendered dwelling house dating to the 19th century but of a different style to the other buildings within the street. It is of the Italianate style and is situated in a large garden

extending to the rear and side of the building enclosed by a boundary wall.

- 3.47 To the rear of the houses are gardens enclosed by brick, flint or clunch walls. The gardens are important to the special character and appearance of the area and large trees in gardens, notably at The Rookery and adjacent to the road at North Hall.
- 3.48 The former Corn Mill on the western side of Kneesworth Street is a landmark building at this end of the town. The building dates to the 19th century and was one of the largest employers within the town at this time, along with the Manure Company and breweries. Situated close to the station, the corn would either have been used in the town's maltings or sent via train to other malting towns. The mill is a large building of two storeys with a large corner tower and large hoist doors projecting from the roof. The mill is important to the industrial history of the town and along with the railway lead to its development to the north in the 19th century.
- 3.49 In front of the corn mill are Mrs. Barfield's Almshouses also constructed of gault bricks, but built before the mill in 1833 and enlarged in 1858. They have an effective 'H' plan layout and dominant chimneys. Opposite, 19th century gault brick houses and shops with slate roofs line the east side of Kneesworth Street. The buildings are gault brick with a stucco rendered ground floor. Disappointingly, Upvc double glazed windows have replaced previous vertical-sliding sash windows. The almshouses, around the corner in Queens Road, were erected in 1885 to house spinsters. They are decorative in design with fish scale roof tiles and decorative plasterwork above the windows. Both Almshouses reflect important aspects of the 19th century social history of Royston.

MELBOURN STREET AND CHURCH LANE.

- 3.50 Melbourn Street forms the east side of the cross pattern layout at the centre of Royston, originally the historic route of Ickniel Way. The street is relatively wide with large individual buildings to the north side and the Memorial Gardens and church to the south. There are buildings to both sides of the road close to The Cross. These are smaller in scale and situated on smaller plots reflecting the early medieval layout.
- 3.51 The church and churchyard along with the Memorial Garden form the south side of Melbourn Street. This historically formed the grounds to the Priory and was originally enclosed with a high flint and clunch wall. None of the monastic buildings, with the exception of the church, survive. Priory House occupies the site of the domestic quarters of the monastery buildings.

- 3.52 The Church of St John the Baptist is constructed of flint with carved stone work dressings and contains sections of the 13th century Priory Church. Whilst the church tower is particularly prominent within Melbourn Street, part of the nave is screened from Melbourn Street by a number of Yew trees. The east end of the nave is the dominant feature within the Memorial Gardens, otherwise, the church is not that prominent from elsewhere in the town. The existing flint boundary wall to the southern side of the churchyard adjoining the tower is thought to have once been part of the original nave. Once forming part of the monastic site, the church is an important historic and prominent building within the town.
- 3.53 The Gardens are dedicated to the memory of Royston inhabitants who died in World War II. The Memorial Gardens are an important green open space within the town and provide an important setting for and open views of the church, particularly from Priory Lane. The gardens are important to the historic layout of the town and are a reminder of the historic relationship of the town with the monastic site. Parts of the enclosing boundary wall to the monastic site survive along Fish Hill.
- 3.54 Part of the churchyard continues the open green character of this side of Melbourn Street. It sits on higher ground reflecting its importance within the town. The churchyard including the yew trees on the north side of the church, contribute positively to the setting of the church.
- 3.55 A wall encloses the gardens and churchyard along Melbourn Street. This is a high flint wall with brick dressings fronting the gardens and incorporates the War Memorial. The War Memorial is constructed of stone and includes a statue of Thomas Cartwright founder of the presbyterian movement in Britain who was born in Royston. It was erected in 1922 and is listed grade II. The wall fronting the churchyard is lower and constructed in brick. A high flint wall encloses the churchyard along Church Lane.
- 3.56 The Vicarage House used to occupy the part of the churchyard adjacent to Church Lane. This was demolished in the mid-19th century when the present Vicarage House, was built to the eastern side of London Road. Maps also indicate that other buildings fronted the churchyard to Melbourn Street, the last of these was removed in the late 1950's (Urban Survey Project).
- 3.57 The Town Hall is located on a corner plot at Junction of Melbourn Road and Melbourn Street. It is a landmark building at the edge of the town centre. It was built by public subscription in 1855 as a Literary Institute and an exhibition was held in honour of its opening. The exhibition was attended by nearly 7,000 people. It is an austere classical building, with pilasters dividing the elevations and semi-circular headed sash windows. It is constructed of gault yellow bricks with a slate roof and has a dentil eaves cornice. The Town Hall has been extended with flat roofed additions to the rear that do not complement its design.

- 3.58 Prior to the building of the Town Hall, the Newmarket Road and Melbourn Road were barred by a turnpike gate across each and the Toll Keeper's House stood at this corner.
- 3.59 The Health Centre makes no positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area. The Police Station returns the building line and is designed to successfully relate to the other buildings within the street.
- 3.60 Three large listed buildings line the north side of the street, following the classical style. These are Thurnalls, Banyers and The Manor House. Originally houses (now used as offices and a hotel) they are situated in large garden plots, important to their setting as well as contributing to the special character and appearance of the conservation area. Unfortunately, the garden of the Manor House has been converted to a car park.
- 3.61 Thurnalls (no.18) is a grade I listed building and is a large house. It has an 18th century elevation fronting an early 17th century building with fine interiors. It sits within a long garden plot enclosed by high flint walls with many mature trees and a side cobbled access. The large tree to the front of the house also contributes to the street scene.
- 3.62 Banyers Hotel is unusually positioned side onto the street with its façade looking towards the Cross. It is named after Reverend Banyer, Vicar of Royston who lived here in the 18th century. The building was re-fronted in the 19th century and its orientation and façade with central pediment and tall Greek Ionic pilasters make it an important feature in the street. It is located within a large garden plot containing a number of large trees. The trees and garden are important to its setting as a grade II listed building and contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Its rear garden is enclosed like most along Melbourn Street by high flint and brick walls. The side access is surfaced with brown cobbles.
- 3.63 The Manor House is grade II* listed and is another large dwelling with a classical façade. It was the home of a branch of the Phillips brewing family. Dating to the early 18th century it is constructed of red brick with vertical sliding sashes. The rear elevation is equally impressive with a central pediment projection and plum coloured brickwork. Unfortunately, the garden to the rear of the house has been converted to car parking which has an adverse affect of the setting of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area. There is a private access to the rear of the Manor House into Dog Kennel Lane and it is possible that it once joined up with Church Lane on the other side of Melbourn Street.
- 3.64 Between Banyers and The Manor House is a recent development, which reflects the scale and classical character of the other buildings

within the street. A carriageway through the building, typical of many historic buildings in Royston, provides access to the rear of the plot, where there are the converted stables once belonging to Banyers.

- 3.65 On the south side of the road adjacent to Church Lane is a 1960's building, which has no special interest and has an adverse impact on the special character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 3.66 The buildings on either side of Melbourn Street adjacent to The Cross are smaller buildings arranged to form a continuous frontage to the street, excepting narrow access between or through the buildings to the yards behind. No.7 is an example where there is an access through a building, here historic brown cobbles also remain.
- 3.67 Nos.1 to 7 form an effective group of buildings with mixed heights, roof forms and ridge orientation, unified by the proportions and use of sash windows. Characteristic materials are red or gault, bricks, or render finished in cream or ochre. Nos.5 and 7 have brick facades of the classical style and proportions. These buildings are all shops. However, whilst some have shop fronts with stall risers and fascias or bay windows like no.7, others have a more domestic appearance with first floor sash windows. No.5 is a good example of a late 19th century shop front with dividing columns and carved consoles.
- 3.68 Opposite, on the northern side of the road, the buildings have a similar scale and form. Nos.6 and 8 has a central carriageway with gabled wings on either side. No. 8 provides access to the Royston Cave situated beneath the road. To the rear of these buildings detached outbuildings are orientated to follow the elongated form of the plots and are an important part of the character and appearance of the town, reflecting past industrial or workshop uses. They are simple rectangular buildings with gabled tiled roofs, one is timber-framed with rendered panels the other is weather-boarded, both with limited window openings.
- 3.69 Lloyd's bank is Italianate in style, steps down in height from the adjacent building and effectively addresses this corner position onto The Cross.

Church Lane

- 3.70 The flint wall to the churchyard encloses Church Lane to one side with a modern building of shops stepped in form to the other side. This creates a diagonal line to the lane, which widens to form a small open space. This is paved with concrete blocks and a row of three trees follows the diagonal form of the lane at its centre. The street furniture is scattered and does not unify or relate to the shape of the space. A red brick building closes the view along Church Lane, but a narrow gap between this and the modern building leads into the open space at the bottom of Fish Hill. Through this gap from Fish Hill there is an important view of the church tower through the church gates.

BALDOCK STREET

- 3.71 Baldock Street forms the western side of the cross pattern at the centre of Royston, originally the route of Icknield Way. The street is relatively wide with relatively narrow pavements to either side.
- 3.72 The layout pattern and scale of buildings is different to each side of the street. The north side is lined by two storey historic buildings of a domestic scale relating to the medieval plot size and layout with continuous frontages abutting directly onto the pavement edge. The southern side includes the Old Post Office and Upton House, both are on the back pavement edge, are larger, taller buildings with square plans. The buildings that continue the south side of the street namely Phillips Court and Dunedin House are recent and have been designed to preserve the special character of the conservation area.
- 3.73 The Old Post Office Building is situated adjacent to The Cross at the entrance to Baldock Road. It is a large two-storey building with a hip plain clay tiled roof and a symmetrical façade following the classical style. The principal façade faces onto Baldock Street with a central doorway with semi-circular arch and windows to match on the ground floor with sash windows with flat gauged brick arches at first floor level. This site was originally occupied by the Medieval hospital of St John and St James of Jerusalem and prior to the construction of the Post Office was the garden to Upton House.
- 3.74 Adjacent to the Post Office is Upton House, originally the Brewers House of the Phillips family. It is constructed in white Cambridgeshire bricks in a simple classical style. The house originally fronted a large site of brewery buildings, which produced Royston Fine Ales for 250 years until 1948. To the west of Upton House were the offices, stables for dray horses and Earls Hill House (the family home of the Phillips family). The brewery was destroyed by fire in 1909, but reconstructed and brewing continued for another 40 years. In 1948, the buildings were used as a factory for Barratts sweets. The Somerfield supermarket, which steps back from the building line, now occupies the brewery site, and makes a relatively neutral contribution to the appearance of the conservation area. Somerfield is identified as an improvement opportunity site on the conservation area plan. Earls Hill House was demolished in 1959 and Phillips Court now occupies the site.
- 3.75 On the northern side of Baldock Street a three storied building with triple gables and applied timber-framing is a focal building on the corner of Lower King Street. The building complements the Old Post Office and Upton House on the opposite side of the street in scale.
- 3.76 The buildings then drop to two-storey, a characteristic of the remainder of this side of Baldock Street. All the frontage buildings have a

domestic character with no shop fronts, just ground floor windows, even those close to The Cross. The buildings have a simple classical character unified by their proportions and use of vertical sliding sash windows. The buildings are either rendered or of gault brick. Some of the brick buildings are painted in light ochres or creams, as are the rendered buildings. The roofs are largely slate with some use of plain clay tiles. All the buildings are rectangular blocks with ridges parallel to the street. Eaves are open or covered by simple cornices and roofs are hip or gabled and generally interrupted with dormers only characteristic on the larger houses such as nos.19 and 21.

- 3.77 Narrow breaks between buildings provide access either to courtyards, rear gardens or narrow lanes such as The Fleet. The Fleet was originally a private roadway to the lime kiln and clunch pit now forming the picturesque dell in the grounds of the Rookery. Courtyards with rear ranges and outbuildings tend to be located near to The Cross, whilst the houses to the west have rear gardens and trees, such as no.19.
- 3.78 The buildings opposite Upton House (nos.7 & 9) are also reputed to have belonged to and formed part of the Brewery. Gault brick ranges and outbuildings form a courtyard behind with access provided via a carriageway through the frontage building. The yard is called Kiln House Yard reflecting its past use.
- 3.79 Nos.13, 15 and 17 are late 20th century buildings and reflect the historic buildings in scale character and materials. Nos.15 and 17 front Cardinals Gate, a small courtyard development of terraced houses which is successful in preserving the scale, form and layout to the rear plots within this part of the conservation area.
- 3.80 The Fleet is a narrow lane accessed between Little Croft and no.23. Nos.13, 15 and 19 The Fleet are 19th century houses and form a group lining one side of the Lane.
- 3.81 Nos.19 and 21 Baldock Street are dwellinghouses, one dating to 17th century and the other to the 18th century. No.21 was refronted in the 19th century with gault brick and both have sash windows of classical proportions. Both houses are situated in gardens that complement their domestic character and scale. The garden plot to no.21 extends to the side of the house providing an important element to the setting of the listed building and the space between buildings within the street scene. The front wall enclosing the side garden matches the brickwork to the façade of the house and links the main house with Little Croft.
- 3.82 A section of brown cobbles to the pavement fronting no.19, indicate the historic surfacing material of the pavements along Baldock Street. The remainder of the surface to the pavements is a mix of differing ages of tarmac and detracts from the special character of the street. A grass verge lines one side of the road in front of Phillips Court and Dunedin House. There are no street trees in Baldock Street although large trees

within rear gardens such as those at no.19 contribute to the setting of the buildings and the character of the street.

- 3.83 Nos.23 to 33 are buildings of a similar scale, unified by the use of sash windows and are constructed in characteristic materials. In this respect they form an effective group situated at the entrance of the conservation area to the west as well as contributing to the overall character of the street.

FISH HILL AND MARKET HILL

- 3.84 Fish Hill (named after the fish market originally held there) and Market Hill are parallel streets situated to the east of the High Street. The streets are relatively narrow, creating an intimate character which is maintained for the length of Fish Hill, however, Market Hill is tapered in shape and becomes wider as the hill rises to the south and then opens into the Market Place. The Market Place is at a lower level than the A10, which separates the Market Place from The Boars Head and The Green Man public houses which are on the south side of Market Hill and close the view at the top of the Market Place. There is also an open space at the bottom of the hill to the North enclosed by buildings of mixed age and appearance.
- 3.85 There is a strong building line to the west of Fish Hill, but it is more open to the east with The Priory set at an angle to the road and the gateway into the Memorial Gardens providing a more open character. In Market Hill, the east side has a constant building line with buildings on the pavement edge. The building line to the western side of Market Hill is less constant with breaks between the outbuildings, which line the street to provide access to the rear yards of the buildings fronting onto High Street. Nos.25 and 27 are situated forward of the building line and also side on to the Market Place creating its square shape.
- 3.86 The square to the north, at the bottom of the hill, where the streets join has narrow streets or lanes leading off. Jepps Lane and John Street lead off to the west, linking with the High Street and Church Lane, leads off to the east linking with Melbourn Street. There is an important view of the church tower, from Church Lane, whilst Barclay's Bank is the focal building at the end of John Street.
- 3.87 The Old Court House built in 1849 is the central feature of this small square. It is situated to the south where Fish Hill and Market Hill join. It is a symmetrically designed building with white rendered walls and with arched windows.
- 3.88 Opposite the Old Court House is a weather-boarded outbuilding of two storeys with first floor hoist door. The hoist door at first floor level suggests its use is likely to have been for the storage of corn for malting. Adjacent is a modern shopping centre that extends back to Melbourn Street. The eastern side of the square is enclosed by two

buildings one with a shop front and the others with windows of a domestic character.

- 3.89 Royston National School Building (1886-1944) is situated behind the Old Court building between the two streets. It is a single storey flint building with regularly positioned chimneys situated close the eaves. The School provides a strong building line to both Fish Hill and Market Hill and has an enclosed courtyard facing onto Market Hill.
- 3.90 Priory House is situated to the east of Fish Hill adjacent to the Memorial Gardens. It is located on the site of the domestic buildings belonging to the monastery. It backs onto Fish Hill at an angle and faces across its garden towards the Memorial Gardens beyond. The rear and side elevations facing into Fish Hill are constructed of red brick of a mixed age with inserted timber sash windows. The red brick walls are complemented by the use of plain clay tiles of a similar soft texture and colour to the roof. A high flint wall provides the side part of the south boundary to the gardens and ends at the road edge.
- 3.91 Mature trees within both Priory House garden and The Memorial Gardens provide an attractive setting for the Priory House and glimpses of the green open space contribute to the character of Fish Hill. A pair of large wrought iron gates provide access to the Memorial Gardens and are an important feature within Fish Hill. These date to the 17th century and originally belonged to Pickering Mansion in Waddon. The open character and size of the gates provide a focal entrance into the Memorial Gardens and enable the green open character to penetrate into Fish Hill. Large trees in the grounds of Priory House and the Memorial Gardens also make a positive contribution. High sections of flint wall line the boundary with the gardens and enclose part of the plots of Kennedy Court. These walls appear early in date and are possibly sections of boundary wall to the historic monastic site.
- 3.92 Kennedy Court reintroduces the building line to the eastern side of Fish Hill. A small car parking area creates a break and is not an attractive feature within the conservation area.
- 3.93 The Market Hill Rooms at the top of Fish Hill were built in 1840 as a British School for children of non-conformist families. The building occupies a corner plot and faces towards the Market Place. A flint boundary wall divides the Market Hill Rooms from Kingfisher House. To the north-west of Market Hill Rooms is the Corn Exchange which was built in 1829 by Lord Dacre and forms a square with an internal courtyard. The building is listed and is an example of a building constructed of the moulded yellow bricks patented by Caleb Hitch
- 3.94 Three storey red brick buildings enclose the west side of the Market Place. Nos.29 and 31 are listed buildings and maintain the building line of the tapered shape of Market Hill. Nos.31 and 33 step back enlarging

the Market Place. Adjacent to no.29 is the rear access to The Bull Hotel. There are views through this access to the rear elevation of the building, which has high quality brickwork and a central Venetian window. The Bull Hotel is also a good example of the rear courtyard arrangement of inn buildings within Royston.

- 3.95 The remainder of the west side of Market Hill has been largely infilled with modern buildings, such as Angel Pavement, with the exception of a small cluster of historic buildings to the south of George Lane and no.1 Market Hill on the corner with John Street. There are also a number of outbuildings, of which Edge Barn a large weather-boarded barn is a good example.
- 3.96 The library and doctor's surgery buildings, which complement the character of public buildings within this area, occupy the majority of the central section between Fish Hill and Market Hill. The buildings are of one architectural composition and are constructed in yellow brick characteristic of the area. They are larger in scale than the surrounding buildings, but maintain the building line and make their own architectural statement. The continuation of the line of George Lane has been retained as a break between the building and provides views into the High Street and to the entrance gates to the Memorial Gardens in Fish Hill.
- 3.97 The materials are also mixed with gault brick and render being the predominant walling material within the streets, with a few examples of red brick and flint. Roofs are either plain clay tile or slate. The age and variety of building types is reflected in the use of fenestration. Outbuildings have limited or no window openings and simple planked door. Schools and other public buildings have either timber casements or timber sashes depending upon their style and character, as is the case for the dwelling houses in this area. Shop fronts are also a feature mainly to the buildings in the Market place or the buildings in the open space at the bottom of the hill where Fish Hill and Market Hill meet.

THE WARREN, LONDON ROAD AND SUN HILL

- 3.98 The Warren derives its name from its early use as the rabbit warren to The Monastery. Kingston states that until the 18th century there were not many houses around it. In the 19th century houses lined the sides of the Warren adjoining both London Road and Market Hill. The optical glass factory (one of the first in England) was situated on the Warren amongst densely packed cottages. The old parish workhouse also stood on the Warren next to London Road.
- 3.99 Today, the Warren is an open space. The northern section is a green open space scattered with trees, whilst the southern section is hard surfaced and forms a car park and bus station. The houses that surround the green and face across it are situated in individual plots with spaces between and maintain a constant building line.

- 3.100 The surface materials to the car park are a harsh grey and the boundaries and terracing have a similar harsh and mixed appearance. The bus shelter and toilet block buildings are also designed and constructed in materials, which do not preserve the special character of the conservation area. There is a section of grass to the corner of The Warren opposite the Chequers, which provides a soft edge to the road.
- 3.101 London Road is to the south of the town and continues the line of the High Street. The road slopes down hill into the town turning at right angles at the Chequers and into Market Hill. A slight pinch point is made just before the bend by historic cottages that line either side fronted by small narrow pavements. The gradient of London Road provides important views into the town down the High Street and over the roofs of the buildings to the hills beyond the town to the North.
- 3.102 The Warren provides open space to the east of London Road, but to the west is a line of modern three storey houses set back from the road edge. These houses are built of gault brick with flat roofs with horizontal casement windows and grey tile hangings providing vertical stripes along the facades. They also have a mix of boundary types and do not preserve the special character or appearance of the conservation area. Nos.33 & 35 London Road reinstate the building line and are an important feature at the southern edge of the conservation area. They are the only thatched buildings within the conservation area and are situated above the level of the road with steps up to the front doors. They were once the Three Horse Shoes Public House and is a grade II listed building.
- 3.103 A small section of Sun Hill is included in the conservation area to encompass nos.1 & 2 Sun Hill, which continue the line and character of Upper King Street. The open space in front of no.2 complements the arrangement and character of the buildings surrounding it and unites the junctions of the adjoining roads.

BARKWAY ROAD, BARKWAY STREET, MARKET HILL AND PRIORY LANE.

- 3.104 No.1 Barkway Road (previously the Cottage Hospital) was erected in 1869 from endowments from public subscriptions. In 1924 another hospital was built and no.1 subsequently became a private home. The building is set back from the road and is regarded as a Building of Local Interest. On the opposite side of the road stands 'The Limes', no.2 Barkway Road and is a double bay fronted Edwardian building which makes a positive contribution to the streetscene and is regarded as a gateway building into the conservation area.
- 3.105 Barkway Street, Market Hill and a section of Priory Lane enclose an island of buildings to the south of the town. The Boars Head Public House occupies the corner of Market Hill and Barkway Street, with the

Green Man Public House adjacent facing across the road into the Market Place. These buildings contribute to the form and character of the Market Place and are key focal features enclosing views up Market Hill, across the Market Place and from the west where London Road splits to create the island.

- 3.106 Green Lawns is situated to the rear and side of the Green Man Public House and is also a listed building. It is another house which belonged to the Phillips brewing family. Its garden runs along Market Hill and is enclosed by a high flint wall, which contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area. No. 41 Market Hill is situated on the back pavement edge and its flank wall provides the boundary to the end of the garden to Green Lawns. It dates to the 18th century and is clunch faced with gault bricks and contributes to the character and appearance of the group of buildings to this side of Market Hill.
- 3.107 Along the Priory Lane side of the island is the Magistrates Court and Police Station Buildings built in 1883. These form an important part of the history of the town as well as an attractive group of similar design and materials. Constructed of gault bricks with red brick and terracotta dressings, with small paned casement windows. Unfortunately the railings to the front wall no longer exist.
- 3.108 Barkway Street is largely lined with the rear plots to the houses and inns along Market Hill to the north and later individual modern houses to the south. The boundary walls of brick and flint that enclose the plots and line the roads contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Lawns Court is a large block of flats built in part of the garden of Green Lawns. It is large in scale in relation to its neighbours and is not considered to preserve the special character or appearance of the conservation area.
- 3.109 Priory Lane continues down the hill to Melbourn Street and encloses the Memorial Gardens. The boundary to the memorial gardens is low hedging providing an open green character to the road and important views into the gardens and across to the church.

4.0 SUMMARY OF CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES IMPORTANT TO THE SPECIAL INTEREST OF THE CONSERVATION AREA.

- 4.1 The medieval layout of the town resulting from the relationship with the ancient trackways and historic roads (including Icknield Way and Ermine Street), the Priory and the formation of a central cross to the layout.
- 4.2 The location of the monastery and its grounds and its major contribution to the history, development and layout of the town together with the current position and contribution of the Church of St John the Baptist and its churchyard.

- 4.3 The size, shape and open character of the historic market places and their relationship to each other.
- 4.4 The width, shape and alignment of streets and the strong building lines and their relationship with the narrow alleys between the main commercial streets.
- 4.5 The elongated form of the plots with narrowest end onto the street.
- 4.6 The transition in Kneesworth Street from narrow fronted shops with continuous facades in south to rectangular detached or semi-detached houses set in individual plots in the north.
- 4.7 The large classical houses in Melbourn Street.
- 4.8 Buildings lying parallel to and abutting the roads or back pavement edges creating a strong building line, with occasional narrow breaks between buildings to rear yards or gardens.
- 4.9 Island buildings forming additional historic streets are important to the historic development of the town.
- 4.10 The historic and architectural contribution of the Old Palace and its associated buildings and land within the centre of the town.
- 4.11 The classical character of most frontage buildings either constructed or re-fronted in the 18th and 19th centuries. The symmetry and detail of these buildings and the vertical emphasis of sliding sash windows.
- 4.12 The earlier buildings of various character interspersed amongst the buildings of classical character adding historic and architectural interest and variety.
- 4.13 Rear ranges and outbuildings, gabled and lower in form and aligned to follow the narrow shape of the plots and the characteristic carriageways between or through buildings reflecting the original use of the buildings.
- 4.14 The mix of original building types, inns, maltings, houses, shops and public buildings still reflected today together with the utilitarian character of rear outbuildings, coach houses and maltings, which are simple gabled forms with limited window openings constructed either of brick or timber-framed and rendered or weather-boarded.
- 4.15 The surviving brown cobbles and other historic surface treatments under carriageways, within alleyways, fronting buildings and edging pavements.
- 4.16 The open green character of The Warren and the grouping of houses around it and the open character and contribution of the Memorial

Gardens to the layout of the town, its historic relationship with the priory and views into and out of the conservation area.

- 4.17 The lack of trees and green features within the streets and the contribution made by garden trees over rooftops and glimpsed through carriageways.
- 4.18 The views from the higher areas of the town namely down London Road, High Street, Market hill and Fish Hill. The roofscape of the town with a variety of chimneys and strong gabled roof forms provides important views of the town from the higher areas.
- 4.19 Brick, flint and clunch boundary walls enclosing yards and gardens, and dividing and defining plot boundaries and lining alleys and roads.
- 4.20 Boundary walls linking or fronting buildings within the street scene and following the building line and the strong use of flint and clunch to boundary walls and building construction.
- 4.21 The heights of buildings, which are largely two storeys with some three storey buildings. In addition the slight variances in roof heights between buildings of different styles and construction.
- 4.22 The large mix of walling materials especially red or gault bricks and renders of neutral colours of whites or ochres.
- 4.23 The predominant use of plain clay tiles and occasional use of Welsh Slate to some 19th century buildings, notably those at the north end of Kneesworth Street and the strong characteristic of plain eaves to most buildings.
- 4.24 Historic shop fronts in buildings close to The Cross and particularly along the High Street and the concentration of public buildings in Fish Hill and Market Hill and also in Kneesworth Street and Melbourn Street.
- 4.25 Surviving historic street features such as railings, handrails and foot scrapers.
- 4.26 The use of timber joinery to windows, doors, cornices, door surrounds and canopies.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Definition
Bay Window	A window which projects outwards from the external wall of a building.
Casement Window	A window hinged on one of its sides to open inwards or outwards.
Cant	Angled sides achieved by cutting off the corners of a square.
Chapter House	The building attached to a church where the monks and cannon met for the transaction of business.
Chancel	The eastern part of the church, where the alter is situated.
Classical	A term applied to architecture based on precedents of ancient Greece and Rome
Cloister	Covered walk way around three or four sides of a square giving access to several buildings of apartments.
Clunch	Hard Chalk.
Colour Washed	Pigmented lime wash or paint.
Console	An 'S' shaped bracket
Cornices	A moulded projection to a wall
Crinkle Crankle Wall	A zig- zag shaped wall
Dentillation or Dentil Course	Small square projections set at intervals to form a row.
Diaper work	Decoration consisting of repetitive patterns of diamonds or squares.
Domestic Character	Buildings which appear as houses.
Doric Order	A type of column where the head (capital) is cushion shaped.

Dormer Window	A window projecting from the slope of a roof and having a roof of its own.
Dressings	A finish to doors, windows and other openings as well as the use of stone used to walls conjunction with another material.
Early English Style	The first of the Gothic Styles in general use in England from the end of the twelfth to the end of the Thirteenth century. Characterised by its use of pointed arches.
Eaves	The lower edge of a roof overhanging a wall.
Façade or fronting	Any exterior face or front of a building, but usually refers to the main front.
Fascia	A broad band often used in conjunction with mouldings. Used for shop fronts. Usually for the signage.
Flat Canopy	A flat projection above a door, forming a type of porch, usually supported on brackets.
Flemish Bond	Consists of the headers (ends) and stretchers (lengths) of bricks laid alternately in the same course (line of brickwork).
Gable Roof	A triangular roof form.
Gauged Brick Arch	Soft bricks cut to shape, rubbed smooth to finish and laid with very fine joints to form an arch.
Gault Brick	A yellow coloured brick made from gault clays.
Georgian Style	Generally the style of architecture during the reign of the four Georges, 1714-1840.
Glazing Bar	The timber bars used to secure the glass in windows.
Header Bond	Brick laid so that only the end of the brick shows on the wall face.
Hip roof	A roof sloping up on all four sides.
Hoist Door	A first floor level door with the mechanics to hoist goods up. Often the door projects from the building in a dormer.
Hood	A cover over an opening.
Ionic Order	A type of column where the head (capital) is ornamented with a pair of scrolls (like rolled paper)

Italianate	Refers to styles popular in the 1820's and 30's which were interpretations of the large palaces and public buildings in Italy which had framed windows and no columns and pilasters. Italian villa style is characterized by low pitched hip roofs, brackets to eaves and square towers.
Jetty	A part of a building which overhangs the wall below.
Knapped Flint	Split to show the black surface.
Leaded Lights	Window lights formed by small sections of glass held together by lead framework. Usually found in wooden or metal casement forms of window.
Margin Lights	A fixed side light to a window.
Ochre	A natural brown pigment.
Panelled Door	A door constructed with small square panels as part of the design.
Parapet	A low wall at the edge of a roof.
Pargetting	External plasterwork with ornamental patterns.
Pediment	A triangular gable that either finishes the end of a sloping roof or is used above doors and windows.
Pilaster	A rectangular projection to a wall rather than a free standing column.
Plain Tile	A simple rectangular tile which is cambered usually in both sections.
Rat Trap Bond	A brick bond where the bricks are laid with bases showing rather than the sides.
Ranges/ rear wings	A row of buildings forms projecting to the rear of a principle building.
Render	A finished surface of plaster usually external
Rubbed Bricks	See <i>Gauged Brickwork</i> .
Sash Window	Consists of two glazing frames (sashes) that slide up and down with the aid of counterbalancing weights, pulleys and cords.

Small Paned window	A window where small panes of glass divided by glazing bars.
Stall Riser	A vertical surface between the pavement and the shopfront window
Stretcher Bond	Brick laid on its side so that only the side shows on the wall face.
String Course	A moulded projecting band running horizontally across a wall.
Stucco	An exterior plaster finish or lime, sand and brick or stone dust to resemble stone.
Terracota	Unglazed baked clay moulded and used for ornamental work on the facades of buildings.
Timberframing	A building constructed of timber as the main structural element jointed together to form a frame. The spaces between usually filled with brick or plaster
Timber planked doors	Door made from planks of timber, which are usually laid vertically.
Venetian Window	A window with a large central arch and two smaller arches either side.
Weatherboarding	An external cladding of timber boards laid horizontally and lapped over make waterproof.

The definitions above are largely taken from
 Illustrated Dictionary of Architecture 800-1914
 by Jill Lever and John Harris, published by Faber and Faber

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Statement of consultation and process

20 th December 2006	Royston & District Committee
16 th January 2007	Cabinet meeting
20 th January 2007	Public exhibition at Royston Town Hall
22 nd January 2007	Royston Town Council
6 th February 2007	Royston Town Centre Strategy Workshop
7 th February until 2 nd March 2007	Exhibition at Royston Library
14 th March 2007	Royston & District Committee
27 th March 2007	Cabinet meeting

In addition, there was local publicity, entry on the District Council's website and letters
were sent to various interest groups details of which are available from the address
below.



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