



“The **strategic** direction for
Royston is to **expand**”

4.0 ROYSTON

Royston is located approximately 6km to the north of **Barnsley**, with the centres of Mapplewell, Carlton and Cudworth located in an arc to the south of the town and **open countryside** to the north. The town is centred on **The Wells** area, the crossroads between the B6428 Midland Road / High Street and the B6132 Station Road / Church Street. **Royston** is now principally residential in character, as employment opportunities have closed or relocated over time.

4.1 Requirements from the Study Brief

The study brief highlighted a lack of light industrial units within Royston. The feasibility work should firstly consider whether there is a market demand for these units and impact on the local economy by delivering them and whether there is a benefit to the wider high street area. Feasibility work is additionally required on the sites identified and whether these sites could accommodate industrial units and the potential costs of development / build.

Consultations undertaken during the course of the commission have highlighted other issues that have been factored in to the work, including a review of the high street (specifically the Midland Road area). Emerging masterplanning and policy considerations for the Royston area also have implications for the future strategic direction for Royston and have been taken into account.

4.2 Overview of Royston

People

Royston has a population of 11,172 (ONS 2016 Mid-Year Population Estimates), nearly 5% of the total population of Barnsley MBC area. Royston has a slightly higher percentage of over 65s than is the case in Barnsley overall. The population of the Royston ward has increased by 4% since 2011.

Mosaic classification (a system which segments populations into a number of groups / types according to a complex variety of socio-economic and demographic factors) helps describe the types of household prevalent in an area. For the Royston ward, Mosaic classification shows the highest proportion of households to be less affluent groups, described as 'Transient Renters' and 'Modest Traditions', although Royston also exhibits higher proportions of households from more affluent groups such as 'Aspiring Homemakers' and 'Suburban Stability' than is the case for Barnsley as a whole. Descriptors of these groups as provided by Experian are as follows:

Transient Renters	single people privately renting low cost homes for the short term
Modest Traditions	mature homeowners of value homes enjoying stable lifestyles
Aspiring Homemakers	younger households settling down in housing priced within their means
Suburban Stability	mature suburban owners living settled lives in mid-range housing

Place

There are two distinct retail areas within Royston: The Wells (in the vicinity of the crossroads in the town centre) and the Midland Road area. The Wells is home to a cluster of retail uses, including the Co-Op foodstore. Some of the traditional buildings fronting onto the main junction have been subject to improvements as part of the Midland Road gateway scheme, and now give the impression of a distinct identity and visual character.

The Midland Road area has a much less obvious identity, with retail and housing intermixed along its length and a higher proportion of vacant units. An Asda foodstore is accessed from Midland Road, with a new Aldi foodstore opening on the former engineering works site on the High Street.

Whilst the town has a number of car parks, these are linked either to the respective foodstores or to the Leisure Centre and are time or user restricted. There are limited opportunities for parking for local businesses.

Royston Leisure Centre is located off Station Road in the vicinity of The Wells and is home to a swimming pool and other leisure facilities. Adjacent to the leisure centre is The Grove, a centre comprising small business units occupied by a range of sole traders and community organisations.

To the east of Royston is the Rabbit Ings Country Park, a 64 ha area located on the former colliery yard and spoil heap of the Monkton Colliery and former Royston Drift Mine which closed in 1989. The Country Park was transferred into the ownership of The Land Trust in 2012 and now contains an extensive network of walking and cycling links providing a valuable recreational opportunity for local residents and visitors. The ongoing development of this area as a multi-functioning open space contributes to the green infrastructure in and around Royston.

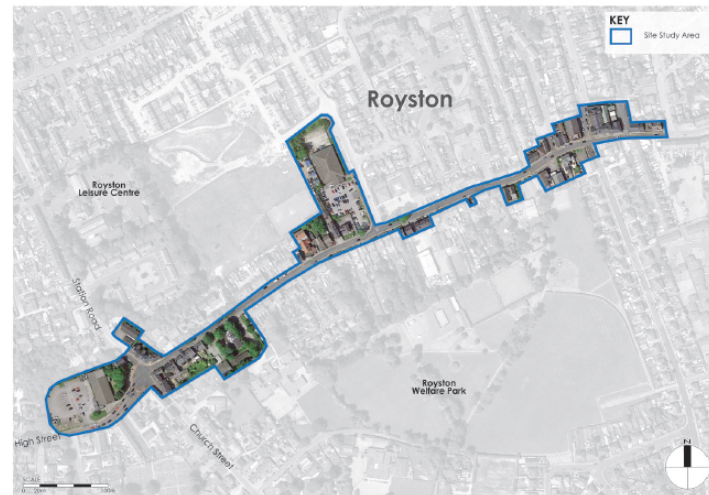


Figure 4.1 - Study Site Area Plan



Other recreational opportunities in the town include the Trans Pennine Trail, which runs along the Barnsley Canal to the east of the town and which forms part of a popular walking and cycling route. Royston Park is located in the heart of the town and accessed from Midland Road.

Prosper

Unemployment within the Royston area is lower than the Borough average; benefit claimants in Royston as a proportion of residents aged 16-64 % is 1.9%, slightly lower than the Barnsley average of 2.3%. Almost one third of residents (32%) in Royston have no qualifications, over 10% more than the national average but slightly lower than the Borough average.

The Local Plan notes that Royston is average in terms of vitality and viability, with main strengths highlighted as the availability of food shopping, car parking and the high frequency and range of places served by bus services.

Monitoring surveys of Barnsley and District Centres undertaken on a quarterly basis cover all primary and secondary town centre frontages. Findings reveal that vacancy rates in Royston town centre have decreased between 2010 and 2017 from 21% to 8%; the number of units classified as 'service' uses has increased over the same period of time from 17 units (36% of total town centre stock) to 41 units (61%).

Aims for the future of Royston as set out in the Local Plan include to increase the range of pubs, cafes and restaurants, introduce non-food multiple retailers, address high vacancy rates, and to encourage linked trips to the centre.

Planning Policy

Both The Wells area and Midland Road are identified in the Local Plan as District Centres, serving local needs.

The strategic direction for Royston is to expand. The Local Plan is planning for the delivery of 21,546 net additional dwellings over the plan period (2014 to 2033), with **1,302 homes** directed towards Royston (including those with planning permission) and additional homes in Urban Barnsley, which includes the nearby settlement of Carlton.

Key development sites within Royston include land off Lee Lane (Site MU5), allocated as a mixed use site including 828 dwellings, a new primary school and a small scale convenience retail facility. Part of the site allocation already has consent for the erection of 168 dwellings. The former Royston High School site (located to the north of Midland Road and to the west of The Lane) has planning permission for 77 homes (the area of the former school site to the north has already seen new development of 143 homes).

The proposed Masterplan for the Royston-Carlton area includes the Lee Lane site. A Traffic and Transport Impacts Assessment in readiness for the wider Masterplan has been undertaken by AECOM, which identified junctions nearing capacity and those exceeding capacity upon the delivery of the Masterplan sites. The Traffic and Transport Impacts Assessment allowed AECOM to provide indicative phasing advice setting out the level of housing delivery that could come forward on Masterplan sites prior to triggering infrastructure improvements.

4.3 Stakeholder Engagement

The initial public consultation undertaken in February and March 2018 by BMBC officers highlighted a number of issues and opportunities that members of the local community considered to be of importance to Royston. These issues are summarised in Figure 4.2.

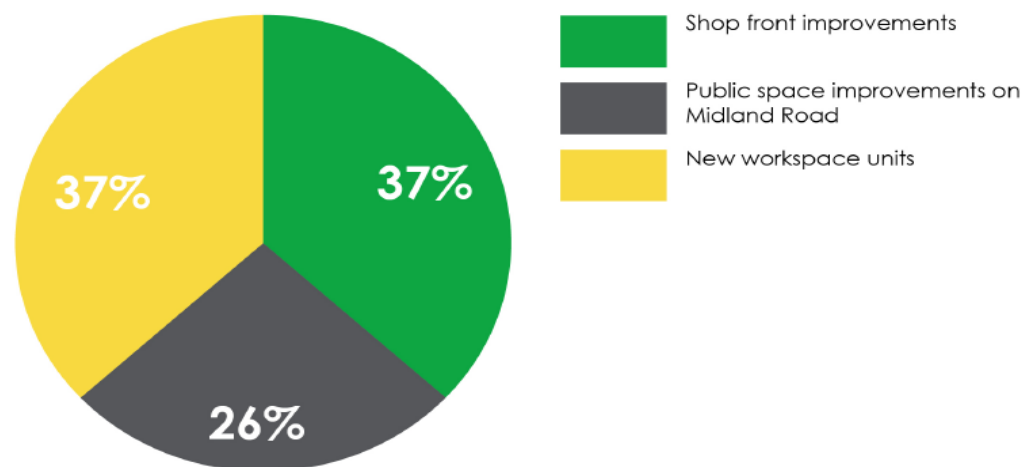


Figure 4.2 – Chart showing initial Feedback from BMBC Consultation in Royston

Figure 4.3 shows key dates and stages at which stakeholders (which in the case of Royston have included elected members, Ward Alliance members and local businesses) have been engaged with and for what purpose during the course of this study.



Figure 4.3 – Key Dates and Stages of Consultation

4.4 Employment Space Feasibility Work

Consultations with key stakeholders identified there to be a lack of employment opportunities within Royston, specifically in relation to workshop and grow-on space. Potential new sites for such uses have been discussed, with a site adjacent to the Rabbit Ings Country Park considered most appropriate at the present time. It is noted that alternative opportunities may be presented by the Royston-Carlton masterplan and associated work as this emerges.

Strategic Position

In December 2016, BMBC concluded that the supply of employment land across the authority was 'severely limited' and did not offer the range of locations or volume of space to meet projected future growth and the Council's ambitions. Strategic employment locations have been identified as north of M1 Junction 37; Junction 36 and the Dearne Valley; North of Barnsley (Royston); and Barnsley Town Centre, with growth being directed to the most accessible and sustainable locations.

The Enterprising Barnsley: Workspace for Growth Strategy undertaken by Genecon in 2018 notes that:

- achievable development values for commercial property in Barnsley remain too marginal and too risky to support speculative development
- investment in smaller scale commercial units and those with more bespoke specification is particularly difficult to secure due to the lack of covenant strength and scale of potential occupiers and the additional risk of more expensive build cost
- less profitable and more risky multi-occupancy commercial property developments, such as those for small businesses, tend not to attract private-sector investment, except in the very strongest market
- there is no dedicated provision for grow-on space within Barnsley. This is highlighted as becoming a particular constraint on new economic activity and the retention of businesses in Barnsley. Barnsley town centre appears to offer the best economic opportunity as a location for managed grow-on space in the borough. Typically, a grow-on workspace might provide office units of 860 sqft or larger and/or workshop spaces of 1,075 sqft.

Property enquiry data provided by the Enterprising Barnsley Team (EBT) at BMBC highlighted a total of 247 property enquiries for Barnsley as a whole between January and October 2018, of which 100 were subsequently successful (i.e. a relevant property / solution was identified). EBT consider that enquiry levels have increased generally, with enquiries over the period being 4% higher than for the same period in 2017.

The greatest enquiry demand has been for industrial accommodation units sized 50,000 sqft and for office accommodation of up to 1,000 sqft. Pipeline enquiries have the potential to create nearly 1,500 new jobs. A third of enquiries have been associated with there not being any suitable sites / premises. Property stock levels marketed by EBT across Barnsley had also slightly increased (as at October 2018), including nine smaller units of up to 2,000 sqft in size.

Existing Provision in Royston

Currently, available light industrial / workshop / office accommodation in Royston is fairly limited to provision along the high street and within The Grove. As noted earlier, there are currently several vacant properties along Midland Road. These are former retail / commercial units located within primarily residential areas.

Constraints associated with the repurposing of these buildings for new commercial / workshop space are likely to include the condition of properties (variable, with a number in a poor state of repair); location (surrounding residential uses make these buildings unsuitable for more traditional workshop space); and access and parking (there may be some parking within curtilage but this is restricted in most instances).

The Grove includes a range of business units for let over several floors. Occupancy (as at September 2018) is shown in Figure 4.4. The table shows that the majority of units are smaller. The nature of the building is such that the units are likely to only be suitable to office / storage type uses. Consultation has identified issues with accommodation at The Grove to include a lack of 'grow-on' space as businesses expand and a lack of associated space such as storage. There is anecdotal evidence that businesses that have left The Grove have moved out of the Royston area due to a lack of suitable alternative premises.

Floor	Space (sqft / sqm)	Current Tenant
Ground	269 / 25	Vacant
Ground	326 / 30.24	Community room
Ground	304 / 28.2	Royston & Carlton Community Partnership
Ground	145 / 13.5	Tenants & Residents Association
Ground	311 / 28.87	Vacant
First	127 / 11.79	Financial Flair
First	288 / 26.74	Vacant
First	287 / 26.66	Barnsley Acupuncture
First	104 / 9.7	Agg Pak
First	130 / 12.04	Kitchen
First	106 / 9.85	Dannielle
First	362 / 33.6	Council Chamber Meeting Room
Second	86 / 7.95	Legacy Church Store Room
Second	222 / 20.66	Rosaroma
Second	236 / 21.9	Vacant
Second	224 / 20.8	Kelly Ann Garforth
Second	319 / 29.68	Kelly Ann Garforth

The Grove, Royston – Current Occupancy



The Grove

Source: Royston - The Grove cc-by-sa/2.0 - © Dave Bevis - [geograph.org.uk/p/3766393](https://www.geograph.org.uk/p/3766393)

Future Provision

The Enterprising Barnsley Team is not currently marketing any units in the Royston area. However, this does not mean there is no demand or need for such units and that, were they to be provided, uptake would be positive. The example of Penistone is useful here – a total of fifteen workshop units ranging in size from 1,000 to 1,500sqft have been provided on the Penistone Paper and Board site using Section 106 funding together with match funding from private sector investment. All units are currently fully let, with the development estimated to have generated £96,400 in additional business rates as well as the creation of up to 40 new jobs.

A potential site for small workshop units has been identified adjacent to the Rabbit Ings Country Park. The site has good access from the B6428, is located away from residential uses to enable take-up by a wider range of potential business / workshop opportunities and has sufficient space to enable the provision of a variety of units of different space sizes, associated parking and storage facilities. If the units are adequately priced and there is a general limited supply, provision here could be advantageous for current and future Royston residents.

Considerations need to include the forthcoming Masterplan for the Royston-Carlton area and what this will mean in terms of future employment and infrastructure links (for example potential new road links to the western side of Royston). Public sector or grant assistance for the provision of small and grow-on workshop units is likely to be necessary – small and medium sized enterprises are not likely to be able to meet the risk of build costs.

4.5 Summary of Key Issues

The following is a summary of key issues for Royston, drawing on findings of site and market appraisal work and from consultations undertaken with key stakeholders.

- Stakeholder engagement identified a clear requirement for additional light industrial / workshop type units within Royston, to primarily provide grow-on space for local businesses and prevent them moving to alternative locations elsewhere.
- The high street in Royston stretches over an extended area and is intermixed with residential and non-retail uses. This prevents the development of an 'identity' for Royston with the exception of the area around The Wells. The shop front scheme in this location has helped provide a visual identity here.
- There are a number of vacant properties along Midland Road, some of which are in deteriorating condition and which give a negative impression of the high street.
- Parking is an issue within Royston – time limited parking within foodstore car parks means that visitors to the town centre and staff employed in local businesses feel limited in terms of parking opportunities.
- Future plans for major housing development in the Royston / Carlton area provide an opportunity to reinvigorate the town centre through increased footfall / retail usage; the retail offer needs to be capable of dealing with this.
- Public realm along the high street could be improved through planting, the presence of street furniture and wayfinding / signage. Links with Royston Park in particular could be improved.

4.6 Environmental Improvements – Royston

In addition to the outline feasibility work, we have considered environmental improvement opportunities for Royston town centre and these are illustrated on Figures 4.4 and 4.5. Opportunities include:

- Improvements to parking within Royston, either through negotiation of parking for permit holders only in Royston within existing foodstore car parks, through improved signage / visibility of parking, and through further investigation of opportunities to formalise car parking in new locations (for example in verge areas along The Green or in the vicinity of Parkside Primary Academy as illustrated on Figure 4.5).
- Creation of a core area between The Wells and the section of Midland Road as far as the Asda foodstore, which becomes the focused retail area for the town. This acknowledges that frontages further east along Midland Road (where there are existing retail uses and vacant properties) could be released for conversion to residential use in the future. This would have the effect of both causing a focus of activity / identity in a single area, together with providing an incentive to improve the environment further to the east.
- More could be made to the entrance to Royston Welfare Park and the masterplan proposes improved entrances / gateways and signage here.

KEY



Site Study Area

Royston

Royston Leisure Centre

The Grove

Station Road

Existing pedestrian link to leisure centre to be maintained through new development

Asda Store

The Lane

Royston Group Practice (GP Surgery)

Parkside Primary Academy

Royston Welfare Park

Levels issues

Co-Op Store

Natural Springs

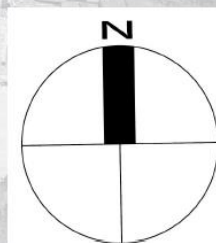
New Street

Church Street

400m radius = approx. 5 minute walk

Sitewide

- Review opportunities for employment space
 - Improve quality of high street pavements
- 1 Restricted car parking - option to negotiate proportion of car parking for permit holders only and to improve the signage/visibility of parking
 - 2 Opportunity to formalise car parking on existing grass verge subject to underground services survey - issues with ground water / natural springs
 - 3 Lack of expansion/move-on space for existing businesses
 - 4 Improve entrances/gateways/boundaries to Royston Welfare Park
 - 5 Consider options to reduce parking on the pavement
 - 6 Consider other uses for vacant shop units
 - 7 Paint existing shop shutters to improve frontages when shut
 - 8 New pedestrian crossing linking retained pedestrian access into new development with Parkside Primary Academy
 - 9 Core area for focused high street shopping offer (not including supermarkets)
 - 10 Potential area for future development



SCALE
0 20m 100m

INITIAL ZONING IDEAS PLAN

Site-wide issues and opportunities

- 11 Lack of identity / separation between settlements of Royston and Carlton
- 12 Traffic issues with congestion / rat runs through Royston

General issues and opportunities

- 13 No identifiable 'centre' - focused high street offer should be on Midland Road between The Wells and Asda Store
- 14 Explore potential for creation of car parking for high street
*including potential selective demolition to create new car park in existing pocket park
- 15 New business units to provide suitable grow-on / start-up space for SME's
- 16 Opportunities to encourage Trans Pennine Trail users into the town centre

WIDER CONTEXT ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES PLAN

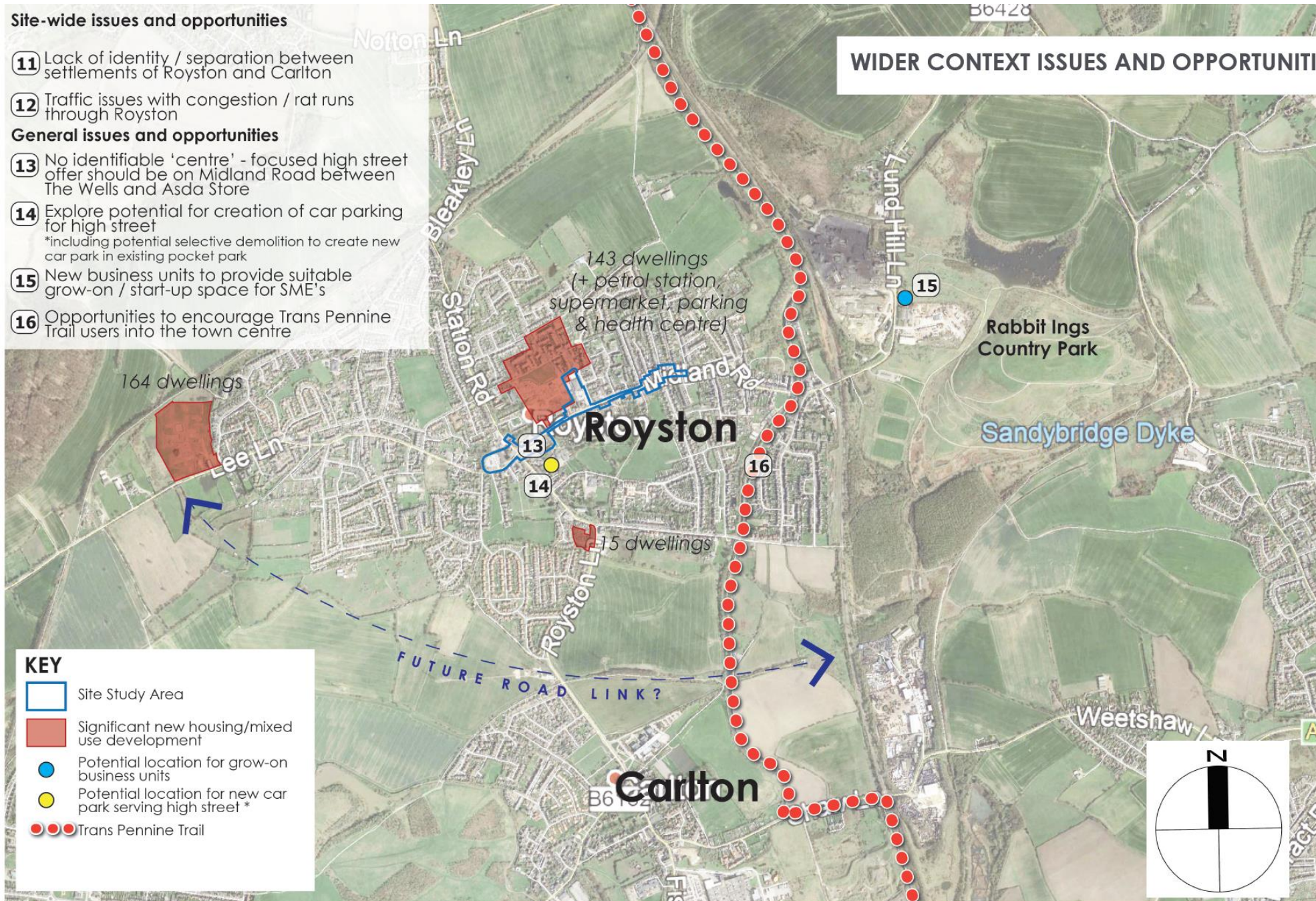


Figure 4.5 – Royston Wider Context Issues and Opportunities Plan

Figure 4.5 considers Royston in terms of its wider context, outside of the study area boundary. Potential additional opportunities identified here include:

- Potential for links between the Trans Pennine Trail and Royston town centre could be further explored, with opportunities for increased expenditure in town.
- The location of a potential site adjacent to Rabbit Ings Country Park has been identified as suitable for the creation of new industrial / grow-on units. Although it is likely that the provision of new uses in this location could be attractive for local businesses, there are existing uncertainties around the location of significant new residential development and associated transport links, which may result in changes to site suitability. Once further information regarding these areas has been confirmed, plans for development at Rabbit Ings or a more appropriate location could be progressed.

4.7 Summary

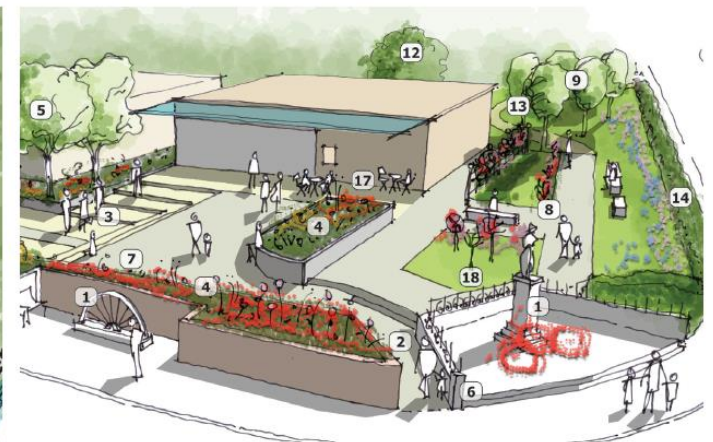
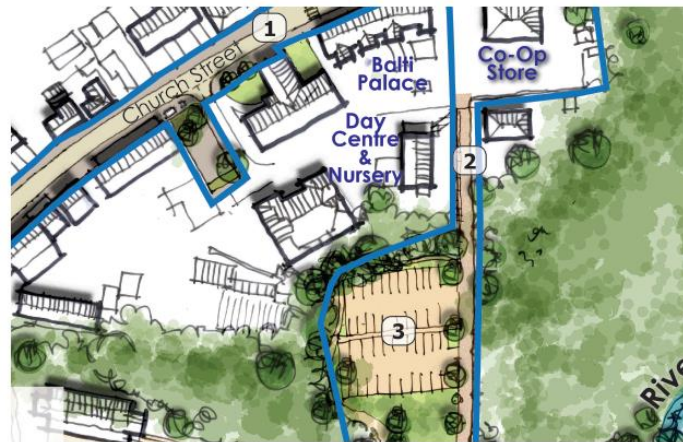
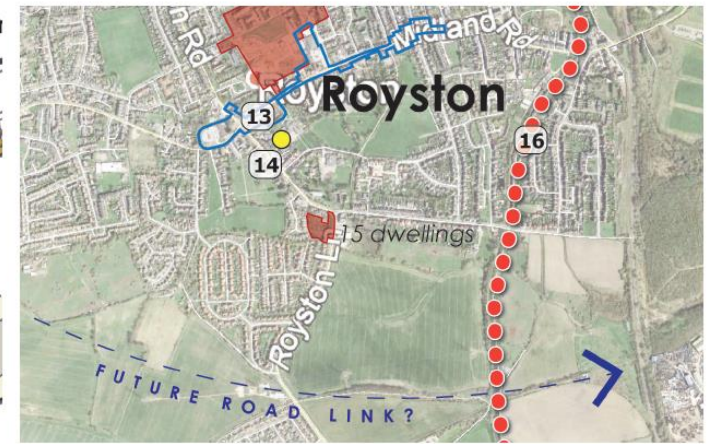
Royston struggles with the lack of a distinct town centre identity as a result of the historical development of a very linear high street which has effectively created two 'clusters' rather than a single focus. Parking is an issue within the town, with restricted parking for customers at the town's foodstores and limited alternative availability.

There is also a shortage of employment 'grow-on' space within the Royston area, potentially causing employers to move their businesses to alternative locations that may be more suitable. Future plans for the Royston / Carlton area include substantial housing and infrastructure growth, which make the improvements to Royston as a place potentially more important in order to achieve an attractive and sustainable centre for current and future populations.

An Action Plan for Royston, including costs, priorities and a summary of the benefits that the opportunities presented for inclusion in the Principal Towns programme could provide, is provided in Chapter 8 of this report.

8.0 ACTION PLANS

This chapter presents the Action Plans and associated information for each of the six towns. For each town, the Action Plans contain detailed costs for individual projects and proposals, as well as an indication of timescale for delivery and priority (high, medium or low). This is followed by an assessment of the benefits for each town scheme, focusing both on economic and social benefits. Finally, we have set out a series of recommendations for each town in addition to a summary of next steps.



Action Plan: Royston

Project / Intervention			Delivery Period yrs							Socio-Economic Benefit		
Ref	Item	Tier 1 Proposals	Tier 1 Cost £K*	Sub-Ref	Tier 2 Sub-Proposals	Tier 2 Cost £K*	0-2	2+	Priority	Social Benefit	Economic Benefit	Economic Impact
1	Foodstore Car Parking - Despite several foodstores in Royston they are all time restricted with no public parking allocations for town centre use. Consider re-opening negotiations with foodstores and leisure centre as a central location to the high street.	Restricted car parking - option to negotiate proportion of car parking for permit holders only and to improve the signage / visibility of parking, with Co-Operative, Asda and leisure centre	30	a	At Co-Operative	10	10		H	H	H	Resolving parking issues in Royston is likely to bring increased footfall and extend dwell time.
				b	At Asda	10	10		H			
				c	At leisure centre	10	10		H			
2	Parking on The Green? - There is no public car park for town centre users (other than time-restricted at foodstores)	Opportunity to formalise car parking on existing grass verge near The Green subject to underground services survey (potential issues with ground water / natural springs) and local consultation	176	a	Formalise existing car parking on grass verge; includes costs for relocation of existing drainage (as issue here with excessive water - natural springs)	126			M	L	M	Resolving parking issues in Royston is likely to bring increased footfall and extend dwell time.
				b	Surveys/relocation of services and installation of new formal parking with sufficient drainage to new hardstanding	50	50		H			
3	High Street Car Park - The town centre is lacking a public car park	Explore locations off Midland Road for potential car park sites though would likely require selective CPO and property demolition to gain access			Other more attainable / likely cheaper options should be explored for town centre car parking prior to the potential of CPO and demolition to create access to land off Midland Road for car parking.				H	H	H	Resolving parking issues in Royston is likely to bring increased footfall and extend dwell time.
4	Development Opportunity - Land adjacent to Co-Operative car park, if access resolved, may provide an opportunity for small development or town car park	Potential area for future development / car park for the town, subject to access such as through Co-Operative car park		a	The scrub land adjacent to Co-Operative foodstore and car park could potentially double the size of the car park, offering provision for public town centre parking. Further investigations would be required to confirm land owners, access agreement, ecological surveys, to identify real constraints. Ecology survey window most effective between end March and end Sept.				H	H	H	Resolving parking issues in Royston is likely to bring increased footfall and extend dwell time.
5	Welfare Park Entrances - Welfare Park is a fantastic asset for the town. Whilst some work has been done on entrance archways, further intervention would help to celebrate and wayfind entrances.	Improve entrances / gateways / boundaries to Royston Welfare Park	28	a	Upgrade paving surface at park thresholds	18			M	H	L	Minor impacts associated with improved sense of place.
				b	Signage and wayfinding improved within town	10	10		H			
6	Address Pavement Parking - Vehicles illegally parking on the footway along Midland Road causes a nuisance issue near GP Surgery	Consider options to reduce parking on the pavement, such as installing bollards	10	a	Install bollards	10	10		H	M	L	N/A
7	Vacant Shops - A number of vacant shops toward the eastern end of Midland Road	Consider other uses for vacant shop units, including consolidation toward 'The Wells' / west of Asda junction on Midland Road. May require a policy position to encourage shift and, for example, change of use of vacant shops to residential							M	H	M	Potential economic benefits would include revitalising the high street and improving sense of place.
8	Shutters Impact - Many of the businesses around The Wells and on Midland Road use shutters during closing hours which create a negative impact to the street scene	Paint existing shop shutters to improve frontages during closed hours	25	a	Art project to create painted shutters / creative LED lighting to change negative perceptions when shutters closed	25	25		H	M	M	Minor impacts derived from improvements to sense of place.

Action Plan: Royston

Project / Intervention				Delivery Period yrs					Socio-Economic Benefit			
Ref	Item	Tier 1 Proposals	Tier 1 Cost £K*	Sub-Ref	Tier 2 Sub-Proposals	Tier 2 Cost £K*	0-2	2+	Priority	Social Benefit	Economic Benefit	Economic Impact
9	Crossing Midland Road - With recent development in Royston either side of Midland Road a well located pedestrian crossing would help to address severance and improve connectivity of built assets	New pedestrian crossing linking retained pedestrian access into new development with Parkside Primary Academy	35	a	New pedestrian Toucan crossing	35	35		H	H	L	Improve footfall along and across Midland Road.
10	Consolidate the High Street through Improved Public Realm - The high street businesses are stretched intermittently along the length of Midland Road. The most identifiable cluster is at 'The Wells' with the potential for a legible end to the high street to the east at the junction with Asda	Core area for focussed high street shopping offer (excluding supermarkets)	200	a	Public realm improvements on Midland Road from 'The Wells' to Asda store junction to provide high quality and identifiable town centre	200			M	L	M	Creation of a focused retail core.
11	Royston & Carlton - Lack of sufficient identity between Royston and Carlton	Potential to create a more distinct identity for Royston using signage, branding, landscape buffers and clearer separation		a	Future potential link road would create an urban design opportunity to support the separation and distinction between Royston and Carlton.				M	M	M	Minor impacts derived from improvements to sense of place, potentially leading to increased footfall.
12	Royston 'Rat-Run' - Royston is increasingly used for 'rat-running' within the wider commuter network	A transport and movement strategy specific to the Royston area may be required to understand the current and future transport issues, including in context of planned housing growth			Transport and movement study for Royston and hinterland, (including junction modelling but excluding traffic modelling)				H	M	L	N/A
13	Rabbit Ings Business Space - The lack of grow-on space at the Grove might be addressed at Rabbit Ings	New business units at Rabbit Ings to provide grow-on space for SMEs that is otherwise not provided in the Royston area	550	a	Site preparation, investigations, remediation and other enabling works including utilities provisions, highways and parking	250			M	M	H	Employment creation (10-20 FTE estimated). Annual rental income to BMBC (estimated £35k from rental of five 1250sqft units).
				b	Construction of 5 No units at approx. 1250 sq ft	300			M			
14	Trans Pennine Trail - The TPT passes north south to the east of Royston but is currently untapped.	An opportunity for users to support the economy and for locals to improve health and well being with stronger wayfinding to encourage use	50	a	Signage and demarcation to and from the Trans Pennine Trail to encourage greater interaction to promote economic and health benefits	50	50		H	M	M	Potential benefits from increased foot and cycle traffic into Royston, resulting in spend in local economy.
Total			1104				210					
							Preliminaries (20%)	42				
							Risk / contingency (15%)	32				
							Professional fees (13%)	27				
							Grand Total	311 (+ VAT)				

Priority

Taken from public consultation and need / importance to regeneration and perception under Principal Towns programme. Low / Medium / High prioritisation.

Project Delivery Period

Catalyst Project Threshold 2 yrs

Long Term Project 2 yrs +

Royston

Summary Area of Benefit

Commentary

Creation of Light Industrial Units	The commission has identified potential for up to ten light industrial 'grow-on' units at a site adjacent to the Rabbit Ings Country Park. The benefits of this are clearly economic in terms of employment creation (potentially a range of 10-40 FTE jobs) together with income to BMBC from business rates and to the local economy from potential spend within the community.	Economic
Town Centre Enhancement	The public realm improvements identified for Royston are focused on improving parking opportunities and on creating a distinct retail area within the town clustered around The Wells. The benefits of both these opportunities are again centred on potentially increasing footfall within the town centre and thereby expenditure. Research has shown that there is a lack of evidence linking parking strategies and town centre footfall and that impacts of changes to parking arrangements are far more locally-specific than perceived. The planned future growth in the Royston / Carlton area does however make the benefits of creating a more sustainable town centre here more attractive - if people perceive the town centre to be accessible and visually appealing (Royston does already have a good choice of local foodstores and the shop front scheme in The Wells area has been a good first step) then people are more likely to visit the town as their retail destination.	Economic
	Enhancement of the public realm and creation of civic spaces can generate a greater sense of civic pride and wellbeing amongst residents.	Social

8.3 Recommendations and Next Steps

The report has identified a range of opportunities for each of the six towns, looking at ways to improve local economies, improve green and public spaces, ensure opportunities are of a high quality and are sustainable, and where relevant, consolidate community assets. The Action Plans presented in the previous section set out indicative costs and timescales for individual opportunities and present an assessment of the potential economic and social benefits.

Recommendations and next steps are summarised below. A number of recommendations are overarching, relating to the wider dissemination and implementation of the Principal Towns project; whilst others relate to specific towns.

Overarching Recommendations and Next Steps

- Wider dissemination of the Final Report and Action Plans for each of the key towns to relevant stakeholders to consolidate shared ownership and buy-in.
- Full business cases to be prepared for each of the six towns setting out how Principal Towns funding will be utilised, including identification of match-funding opportunities.
- Not all of the projects identified within the Action Plans are for Principal Towns funding and as such it will be necessary to identify funding opportunities for those projects included for implementation beyond the next two years.

Royston

- The report notes the substantial housing and infrastructure growth planned for the Royston / Carlton area. The implications of this and future growth, including future road links, are such that place-making and improvements to Royston town centre will become increasingly important as part of the creation of a sustainable settlement.
- Short-term priorities for Royston which could be progressed with Principal Towns funding are considered to be focused around:
 - identifying ways to unlock parking in the town centre – through discussions with existing landowners in the first instance and through exploration of land ownership and covenants to establish a clear picture of potential opportunities.
 - signage and wayfinding improvements (for example the entrances to Royston Welfare Park and links to/from the Trans Pennine Trail).
 - new pedestrian crossing on Midland Road to help improve connectivity.
- Longer-term opportunities such as new workshop space may be impacted by new road links / growth locations as to the most suitable location.