

TOWN CENTRE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: **GLENROTHES**

September 2016



PLACEMAKING

The Placemaking Agenda
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Placemaking is enshrined in planning and development principles and policies across Scotland and Fife. At the Scottish Government level, the National Planning Framework, Designing Places, Designing Streets and Creating Places comprise a suite of policy documents that set the placemaking agenda for Scotland.

This is taken down to a Fife context through Fife Council's 'Making Fife's Places' Supplementary Guidance, alongside policies within the Development Plan and the emerging Local Development Plan.

The **objective** of the placemaking agenda is to **CREATE SUCCESSFUL PLACES**

Making Places
Making Places
Making Places

The process of placemaking is complex. For new development to create places that are successful requires thinking beyond the boundary of a proposed development, and a proper assessment of how development will relate and respond to its wider surroundings.

Placemaking is more than just creating better design of buildings and public spaces. It is about understanding the nature and character of places, the interaction of buildings, spaces & movement, and how they are (or can be) used by people. Proposals should then respond to this. Schemes that are parachuted into an area, taken from other, quite different places, and that do not have regard for local circumstances and characteristics, will quite often fail.

Successful Places
Successful Places
Successful Places

Good quality, successful places will be assessed against the following principles, as set out by Fife Council in its **Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance**:

Distinctive - Design that makes the best use of site attributes and respects and enhances the character of surrounding buildings, streets and green networks to create places that have a sense of identity.

Safe and Pleasant - Attractive, well managed and appropriately scaled places designed to encourage activity and overlooked by surrounding buildings and active frontages. With clear definition of public and private spaces, where parking does not dominate and there is natural traffic calming.

Easy to move around and beyond - Street design that considers all users and is well connected into existing movement networks, putting people and place before vehicular movement and meeting policy in Scottish Government's Designing Streets.

Welcoming - Places that encourage social interaction, where it is easy for people to find their way around and access local services in a walkable neighbourhood.

Adaptable - Places that can support a mix of compatible activities with built in flexibility so that they can adapt to changes in the future.

Resource Efficient - Development designed to make best use of resources, achieve high environmental performance and minimise impacts on the built or natural environment.

INTRODUCTION

This document identifies design and/or development opportunities, or other interventions, that may enhance the role, function, attractiveness and, therefore, **success, of Glenrothes Town Centre**. The issues are portrayed in a concise, graphical and easy to digest format.

This Framework document provides an analysis of the town centre, examining the **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities**, and provides an **Action Plan** alongside an overall **concept** or vision to help steer the thinking about future projects.

This document is a **concept-based framework**. It is not a technical document with detailed solutions to all the problems. It captures the essence or ideas for actions, and displays them in a way that may help stimulate discussion or debate.

Or, in other words, the document can be seen as a vehicle for establishing a direction of travel for the area and **setting the context** for detailed project work.



The Local Development Plan for the area - **FifePlan**, sets out the expectation within **Policy 1**, Part C(6), that development proposals should:

"Meet the requirements of any design briefs or development frameworks prepared or required for the site."

In addition, Policy 6 - **Town Centres First**, sets out the Council's policy strategy for considering development proposals within our town centres.

The concepts and proposals within this document are consistent with the policy strategy established within FifePlan.

GLENROTHES TOWN CENTRE: STRENGTHS

Riverside Park is located close to the town centre, with its leisure and play opportunities, its open space and natural environment.



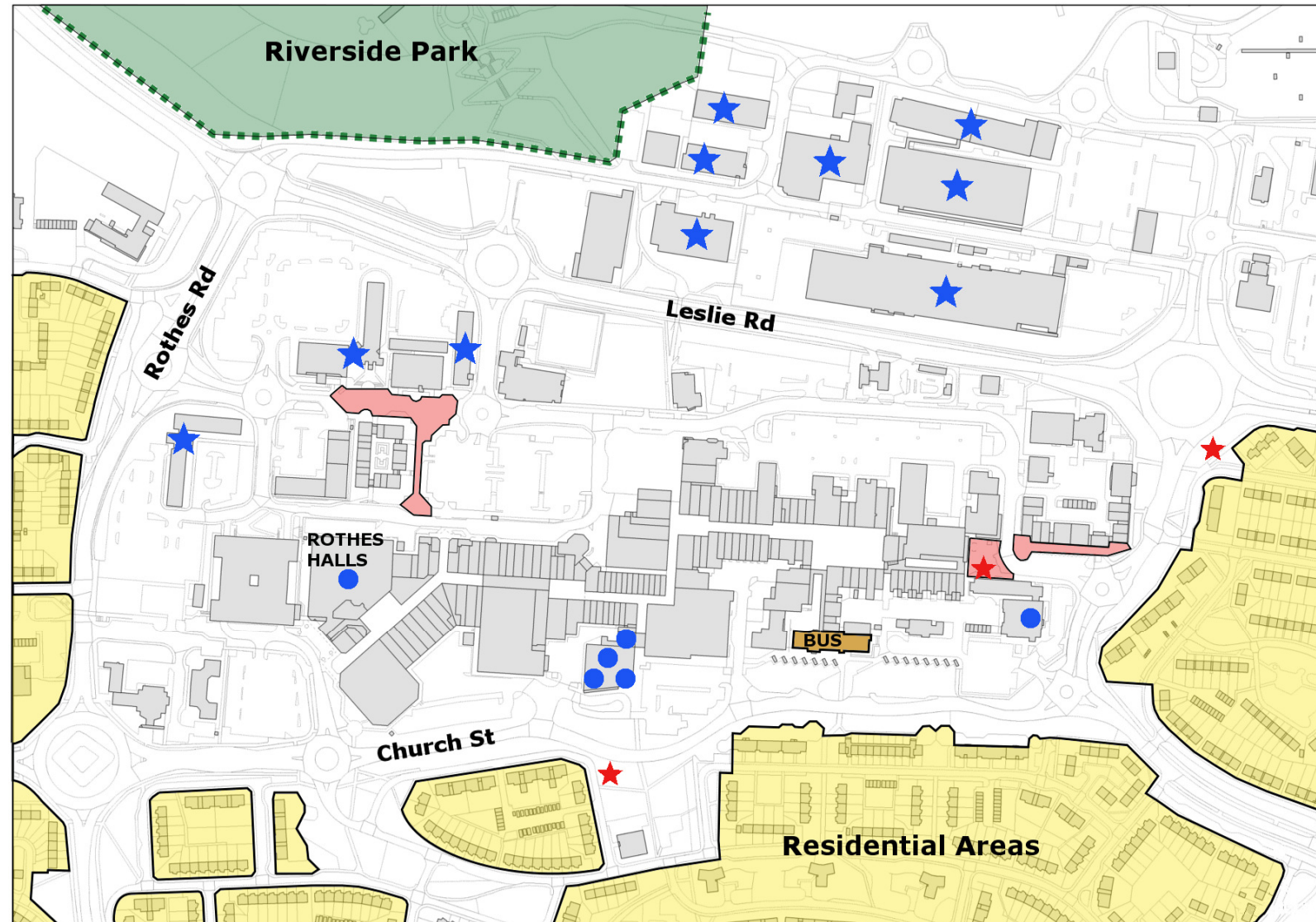
Businesses or organisations that employ a large number of employees work can be found within or on the edge of the town centre, who can support shopping and other leisure activities within the town centre at lunchtime and early evening.



A mix of national/independent shops within the shopping centre helps provide a range of retailing opportunities.

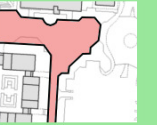


The Bus Station is located within the heart of the town centre, providing excellent public transport accessibility.



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External public space is available at key locations to allow people activity to take place, or provide a setting for adjacent buildings.



There is a significant residential population very close to the town centre who can support the town centre functions and services at different times of the day and evening.



Rothies Halls is a major cultural attraction for the town and wider regional context.



There is some degree of evening economy and leisure orientated activities to provide a (limited) range of uses that one would expect to find in a town centre - for example, theatre, bingo, cinema.



Public Art - there is a significant presence of public art around the town centre, providing distinctiveness and visual interest to the townscape.



GLENROTHES TOWN CENTRE: ISSUES

The Kingdom Shopping Centre is inward looking, and turns it back on external spaces. External spaces associated with the Centre generally offers a poor environmental quality, alongside uncomfortable and unattractive pedestrian routes.



The Shopping Centre is closed in the evening. This create one large barrier (and inactive space) across the whole town centre to movement and activity.

Connectivity to Riverside Park is not clear, presenting a poor pedestrian environment through the town centre to its access point, and very limited car parking within a generally poor environmental setting.



Leslie Road – no indication of arrival to the town centre. It is a busy 40mph road that is more suburban in nature than town centre. There is limited information to announce town centre activities.



The principal location that facilitates a sense of arrival for the town centre is a large car park with limited aesthetic or functional value besides car parking.



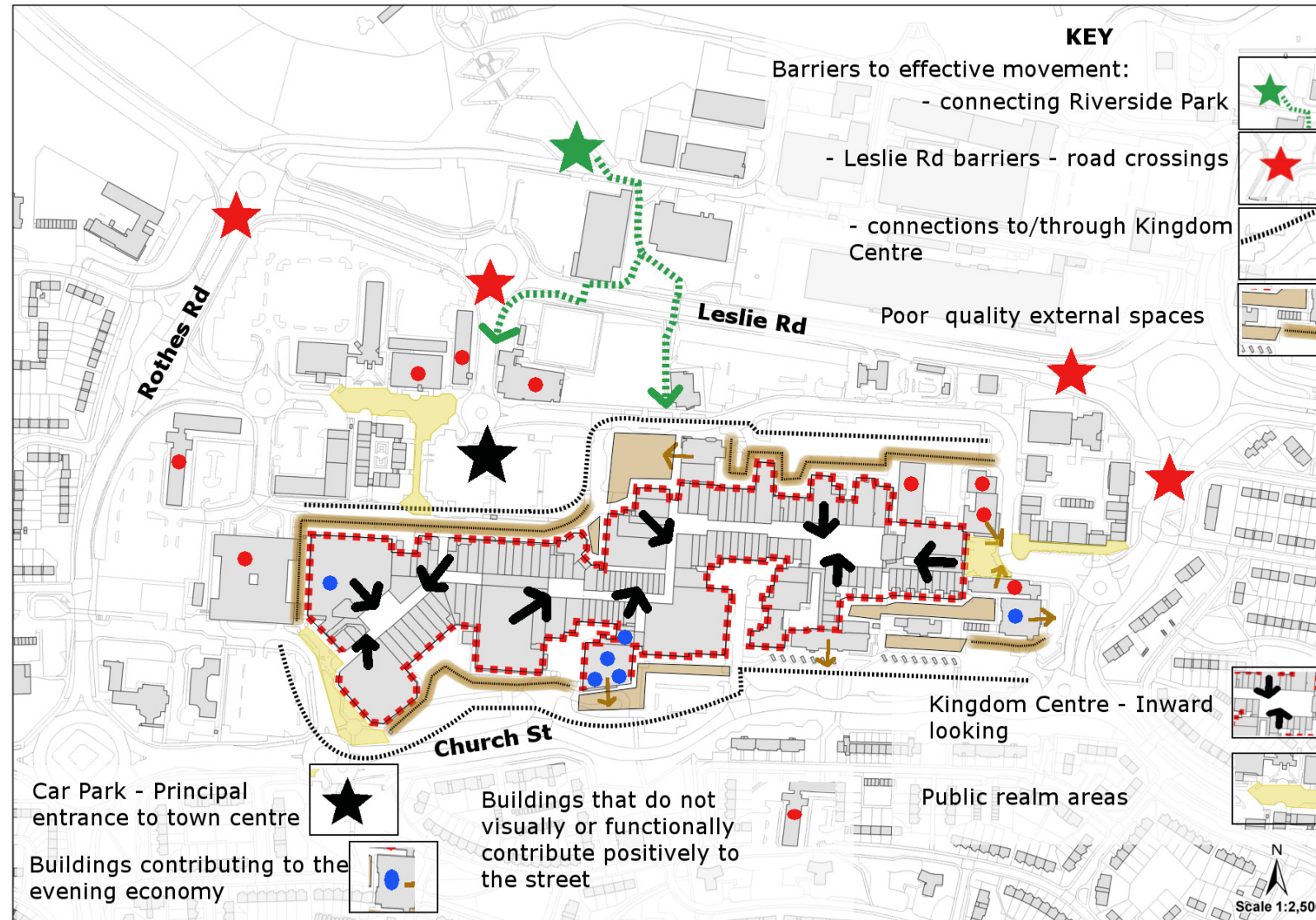
Tired, unattractive and/or vacant buildings do little to create attractive spaces within the town centre.



The existing external civic space, public realm, or "linger" space where people can meet and/or spend some time in is underused, sometimes of poor quality, unappealing, and contains some unattractive features that detracts from the experience of the space. Albany Gate, for example, offers a very poor environment and so is not a successful external space.



The pedestrian movement environment is not positive. There are many roads that create barriers to effective and comfortable movement. In addition, the external pedestrian movement environment is of very poor quality, creating a disjointed, unattractive and unappealing place to walk to access town centre facilities.



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Very limited evening activities are present within the town centre, and any there, are generally spread across the town centre - with poor quality pedestrian connections between the facilities.

The Bus Station presents a tired and generally unappealing entrance from both the KSC and the external spaces beyond.



Few residential properties sit within the town centre. Therefore, at night the town centre feels "closed" and offers little of the vitality that other town centres with a noticeable population can offer – eg people movement, local shops, services, pubs etc.

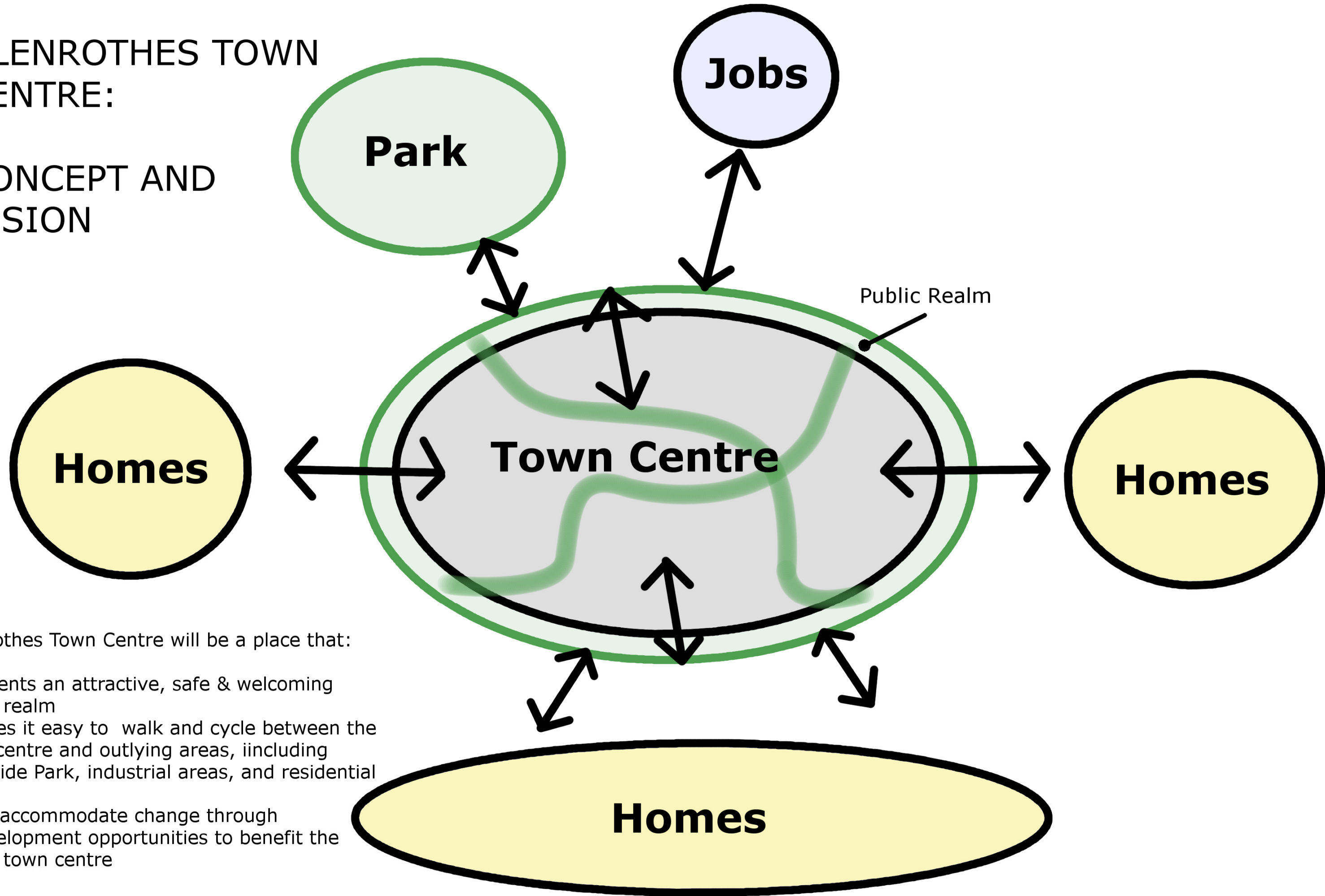
Public Art – there is little comprehension of the location or story behind the artworks.



There is no overall identity that is clearly apparent for the town centre and wider area.

GLENROTHES TOWN CENTRE:

CONCEPT AND VISION



Glenrothes Town Centre will be a place that:

- Presents an attractive, safe & welcoming public realm
- Makes it easy to walk and cycle between the town centre and outlying areas, including Riverside Park, industrial areas, and residential areas
- Can accommodate change through redevelopment opportunities to benefit the whole town centre

GLENROTHES TOWN CENTRE: OPPORTUNITIES

New development opportunities – opportunity to create quality, distinctive, and attractive streets and spaces with active building fronts, pedestrian priority/shared spaces, attractive and useable pedestrian links and accessible car parking. These opportunities may increase the range of town centre activities outwith the Kingdom Shopping Centre.

Better links to Riverside Park from the town centre – clearer routes, tree planting, signage, lighting, distinctive street surfacing. Any new development on the north side of the KSC should consider the ability to facilitate easy movement towards routes leading to the Park.

Leslie Road – reduce to 30mph. Consider slowing down further at key crossing points (including shared surface options) to create enhanced pedestrian spaces which would enable safe and attractive routes to be established between the town centre and Riverside Park.



Albany Gate – once the principal entrance to the KSC. Opportunity to regenerate this now tired, unattractive and unappealing space, with demolition, re-build to provide a range of town centre uses including retail, leisure and residential, and the improvement of public spaces.



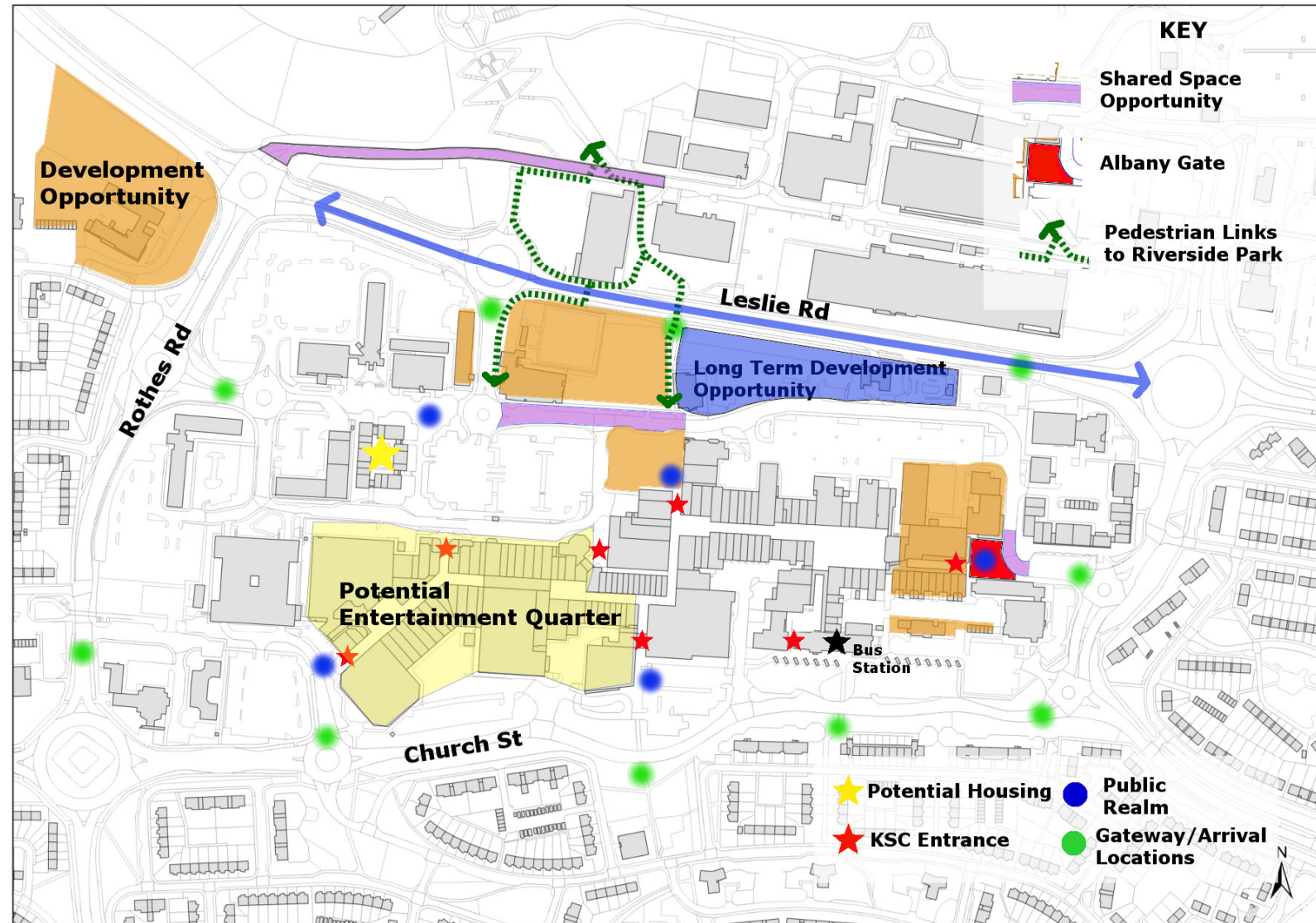
Introduce green spaces into the public realm to soften the urban landscape and provide attractive 'linger' spaces.



Create clearer, more visible and attractive entrances to the KSC.



Potential for the creation of an Entertainment Quarter within the KSC – based around Rothes Halls, and including a concentration of other leisure orientated uses such as pubs, bingo, cinema, restaurants for example. I.e. creating a destination for leisure and evening uses, opening up part of the KSC which will also provide north-south movement links in the evening.



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Improvement of the bus station environment to create a more attractive and welcoming environment

Identify potential for residential opportunities within the town centre, including a regenerated Albany Gate area and other development opportunities.

Arrival or gateway locations and environments to the town centre should be identified and offer attractive and distinctive locations that clearly signals the town centre arrival. This should not rely on signage, but should include hard and soft landscaping, traffic calming/pedestrian priority, lighting, public art, new buildings and their orientation to provide activity and interest to the street.



Create a network of civic spaces across the town centre – creation of identity, legibility, and useable space.

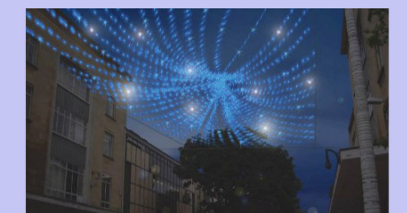


Rothes Halls appears to be underused and offers the potential for intensifying the use of its smaller rooms/halls for people-attracting uses/events – eg workshops, arts/crafts events, or pop-up shops for example.

Improve the external pedestrian environment – lights, space, signage, activity, active building fronts, green space. Removal of oppressive planting and hard landscaping that creates shadows and uncomfortable enclosed spaces.



There is an opportunity to create a stronger identity (or brand) for the town/town centre – one that looks forward to the future rather than trying too hard to hang onto an aspect or its (short) history.



GLENROTHES TOWN CENTRE: ACTION PLAN

1. Design study for the general pedestrian environment. Identify a scheme of improvements, through materials, lighting, public art enhancements, introduction of green spaces for example, to facilitate safe and pleasant movement, help foster a strong sense of identity and maximise connectivity options between Riverside Park and the town centre, to and through and around the Kingdom Shopping Centre. This would have the objective of encouraging people to use the pedestrian spaces and any other function offered within this area, creating active and busy places.



8. Social Spaces/Visual Markers - the identification, design and implementation of a series of clear, attractive, functional and easily accessible social spaces, with strong visual markers to signal and attract users. There may be an opportunity to create new social spaces, as well as enhance/upgrade existing ones.



2. Scheme to modernise and uplift the existing Multi Storey car park, with the aim of improving this facility and providing a visual marker for this area.



9. Shared Space Crossings - enhancing key pedestrian crossing points to: reduce car dominance, encourage pedestrian movement between the outlying areas and the Kingdom Shopping Centre. Shared space crossings enhanced through signage, lighting, street materials and/or art installations to help provide identity and character to the street.



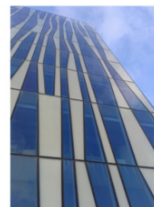
3. Design study to create clearer, more visible and attractive entrances to the Kingdom Shopping Centre, including their external public realm setting.



10. Existing Surface Car Parks - creation of a programme to enhance their local environment - removing/replacing overbearing boundary treatments, within a general scheme of improvements to surface material and landscaping, with the aim of making these spaces, open, attractive, and easily accessible.



4. Identify major development opportunities and prepare appropriate level of design guidance for key sites.



11. Creation of design principles for vacant land/buildings to encourage future development that can contribute positively to the character, life and activity of the town centre.



5. Public Realm enhancements to the fronts of key buildings, on key pedestrian routes and in principal areas of public realm. Taking advantage of potential shared space opportunities, this project can identify key buildings (existing and future), and spaces, and provide design guidance on enhancing the setting of these buildings, with the potential to enhance the public realm, encouraging people to use the space/building and facilitating wider access through the town centre and on to other social spaces and beyond.



12. Town Centre Arrival Space - Design/Development strategy to assess options for creating a stronger sense of welcome for people arriving by car and bus, to create an attractive, comfortable space for pedestrians to commence their journey into the wider town centre and beyond.



6. Feasibility study for the creation of an "Entertainment Quarter" based on the Rothes Halls, but facilitating internal use of the Kingdom Shopping Centre to provide additional evening uses and appropriate connections to other facilities such as the Bingo, Cinema etc.

7. Creation of a strong brand for the town centre: not just the Shopping Centre but the wider environment and its offer.

13. Study to investigate the potential, and physical requirements to reduce the speed of traffic on Leslie Road, creating a more pedestrian friendly town centre and facilitating links towards Riverside Park.





Prepared by:

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