
Placemaking Strategy for Nailsea Vision Workshop, SUMMARY

14th September 2021

Venue: MIZZYMEAD RECREATION CENTRE, Mizzymeade Rise, Nailsea, BS48 2JJ

Summary of the key points that recurred across the vision workshop;

- An opportunity to develop the identity of the town, recognising the need to develop a long-term vision for the town centre and to significantly improve cultural/recreational and evening destinations.
- A valuing of community resilience and its expression in different spaces in the town such as No 26 and 65 and a question about how this could be extended in the stewardship and occupation of spaces in future.
- A recognition that ease of walking and cycling should be improved - to deliver better quality green streets and spaces and better serve older people and children. A focus on the town centre should be linked to residential neighbourhoods.
- An agreement about the poor legibility and greyness of parts of the town centre and the need to change this further to improve the quality of place.
- A need to diversify and intensify land use to generate more affordable and/or diverse kinds of workspace and housing.
- The opportunity to better link to the station and make the town a more attractive destination/commercial centre.
- The opportunity to continue to develop the celebration of the town's built and industrial heritage and its landscape character.

What three words describe the town?

- up and coming/ potential/ opportunity
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- community/supportive
 - lack of sense of arrival/too many backs/ needing identity/ disjointed/insular/grey
 - tranquil/ pretty
 - commuter town/housing estate
 - 80's/tired/static/empty
 - green and verdant (but underused space)
 - feeling insular/slow to adapt to new ideas
 - glass/ heritage/charity shops
 - fun/accessible/activities
 - connectivity +ve/-ve

What do you know about Nailsea - where are the special places, buildings and landscapes?

- El Paradiso/Café 119/Costa/ Waitrose/coop
 - Coates House (Pub)
 - The Royal Oak
 - The Grove/Tithe Barn/ Ring O Bells
 - Festival Way
 - Nailsea Dinosaur
 - Scotch Horne Leisure Centre
 - Lion's Green Memorial
 - No 26 & No 65
 - Drs Surgery
 - The Library
 - Nailsea School
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- Glassworks – sculpture and cottages
 - Village Green
 - Nowhere Woods (see Heritage Trail)
 - Middle Engine Coal pit
 - Millennium Park and Skate Park
 - Backwell Lake (Sports and Leisure)
 - Morgan's Hill
 - Train Station
 - Wessex Water (240 employees)
 - Industrial Estates e.g. Southfield Road

Imagine a Nailsea Citizen in 2038 – who are they and how would the place support their lives?

- Young families – would need – work and commerce, social activities, sport and leisure, a mix of environmentally friendly housing (affordable and social rent and buy), school places and childcare, sport and leisure, local jobs, co working spaces (like Engine Shed), more play areas and trails in the woods.
- Young professionals – co-working spaces – cafes – activities/arts – culture and entertainment
- School kids/teens – places to meet, safe routes to school – safe spaces – youth café (Portishead example)
- Older generation – residential/care homes, appropriate housing, mobility and accessibility?
- Universal – theatre and arts centre - improved transport links – links between high street and station – electric charging – better use of car parking sites in town centre – *an improved/pedestrianised high street* – more dining out opportunities – small scale maker/industrial units – *more useful green spaces*.

What's been achieved already in terms of placemaking?

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- No 65 High Street is a triumph – needs to be more widely known about
 - No 26 Somerset Square - Nailsea Community Larder
 - Tithebarn – note use as memory café David Francis
 - Skatepark
 - Little Theatre Union Street/Kings Hill
 - Costa and play space as is attractive to families
 - Protecting/keeping the library
 - Glassworks park as derelict before
 - Village Green
 - Famers market/eat festival
 - Heritage trail
 - Secondary school – but amenities underused?
 - Nailsea in Bloom
 - Stewardship example - Friends of Nowhere woods
 - Generally successful partnership/cooperation/collaboration
 - But is too piecemeal ‘patching things up’ time to make some bold decisions

If you could animate a place or street with new activity here would this be?

- Pedestrianise or reprioritise the High Street.
 - Narrow ‘ring roads’ around town centre - make room for trees and cycle lanes.
 - Improve links to the train station – create a convenient shuttlebus service
 - Consider how to improve ‘rear areas’ of Crown Glass shopping centre
 - Join former petrol station island back into town centre.
 - Calm traffic on Queens Road (Hannah Moore).
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- Identify 'neighbourhood centres' and opportunities for community gardens.
 - Improve mobility – wayfinding strategy for all footpaths, more frequent zebra crossings to link town centre, more seating for older people.
 - Reboot/relaunch a new kind of Chamber of Commerce? Create a hot desking community café – work hub /social centre - make opportunities/give more freedom for businesses/people to take initiatives – e.g. with street licencing rules.
 - Create a cultural hub around the library – reshape the library and former college site together – build new library first then decant existing.
 - Open up back of **Scotch Horne** to park. Use Scotch Horne's as an art gallery. Move Zumba classes so theatre/auditorium can be used for theatre.
 - **Intensify use of Millennium Park** – outdoor performance space.
 - **Make/give shape to town centre gateways** ; lodge Lane, Station Road and Clevedon Road.
 - **Carry out a proper parking study to understand need/use** – takes up a lot of land and some is underused.

What are the main challenges?

What responses should the Placemaking Strategy generate?

- Need to be bolder and more strategic about long term opportunities - needs to structure the place feeling more dynamic more of the time?
 - Town centre turns it back on the town and lacks clear gateways - make more welcoming.
 - Pedestrian links to the town centre or across the town are hidden and underused - consider wayfinding sign posts and seating en-route use Penant Stone - note popular health walks.
 - Poor public transport - improve cycle routes, bus services - consider lighting.
 - Low density development in and immediately adjacent to centre not always using land effectively - identify (phased) development opportunities.
 - Lack of nightlife - market what exists (think about safe night time routes).
 - Empty high street and 'precinct' at night - markets/programming space/events?
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- Lack of affordable commercial space - co working consider variety of scale/provision.
 - Lack of digital infrastructure.
 - Too many charity shops/ Lack of right space for *shedders* repair shop? - difficulty of persuading landowners to allow meanwhile use.
 - Lack of activities for young people?
 - Demographic too old and ageing - need to attract/retain young people - encourage young people/families - provide affordable and co-housing opportunities?
 - Health service provision - to combine/consolidate.
 - Leisure and culture provision disjointed, inflexible and in conflict with one another at times.
 - Lack of control over land/ownership - need to work with different owners and articulate benefit to them. Especially key town centre landowners.
 - *Need to make into a desirable destination attractive to people from outside Nailsea?*
 - Lack of overnight accommodation (hotel/b&b) opportunity as near airport - pubs with rooms?
 - NSC previously lacking focus - use strategy to be more prepared/directed.
 - Ongoing management and maintenance - think about stewardship
 - Lack of public engagement - needs exciting forms of engagement
 - Finance - develop a viable business plan for new uses like workspace or arts centre.
 - Important to visualise opportunities.

What sites should be prioritised for development?

- Scotch Horne and interface with Millennium Park
 - Library and former college site
 - Crown Glass in the long term and individual shop units spaces in the short term
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- Gateway sites to the town centre
 - The need for or value of large car park sites should be more precisely understood.
 - Mizzymead – is this site underused/hidden?
 - The Grove Centre – to rebuild/expand rugby club/all weather stadium needed?

21 people attended the workshop
