

# Market Rasen Town Placemaking

## Proposed Vision Statement:

The vision for Market Rasen

We aim to provide an attractive area, in which residents and visitors can live, shop, relish regular activities and relax, enjoying the character and unique heritage of our Town.

This will involve the development of:

- Vibrant and resilient [small] independent retail and hospitality establishments
- Greening public realm spaces in which people can relax, enjoy, and feel safe
- Cultural and active leisure opportunities
- A 21<sup>st</sup> Century digital environment

## Placemaking Challenge

To create a sustainable urban environment that knits together the needs of independent businesses, residents, services, leisure, culture, tourism and the green agenda. There needs to be a synergy in which different activities work together to grow and develop rather than compete against each other. Therefore, it is important all parties sign up to and understand a shared vision creating a common narrative.

the following three factors are required for a successful **'place making/sharing' project.**

*In this order:*

- I. Works Well
- II. Feels Right [safe, comfortable, identifies]
- III. Looks Good.

## What are we looking for:

This is not an exhaustive list it is based on observations and communications around Market Rasen, other Lincolnshire Towns and small communities in the low countries [e.g. Le Buge Dordogne in France]

1. Shared space that works
2. Areas with a variety of integrated uses
3. Signage with the emphasis on informing and user dispersal rather than negative commanding
4. Dwell spaces in the public realm – ensure we design for activity/enjoyment and not the motor vehicle
5. Greenery and decarbonisation
6. Active leisure and cultural activities – for residents and visitors
7. 15 to 20 minute neighbourhood – day to day activities within a 20 minute pleasant green [low traffic!] walk
8. Bike racks etc.
9. Quick stop parking /waiting allowing effective instant shopping activities
10. mobility friendly
11. Make visitors welcome – including cheap well-resourced opportunities for Motor Homes
12. Easy access to local independent shops – away from traffic
13. Improve road and pavement surfaces
14. Planters to bring greenery to build up/concrete areas
15. Low cost market stall provision

16. Visiting and shopping in Charity Shops has become an acceptable and popular task for locals and visitors.

### Market Rasen Retail Provision.

Supermarkets, discount stores and online shopping dominate modern day shopping habits. This has put severe pressure on traditional high streets – leaving business premises empty. The problems are frequently exacerbated by the poor quality and appearance of the buildings. Market Rasen is no exception.

The current shopping provision in Market Rasen comprises of:

#### Out of Town

- Tesco – a supermarket a short distance from the traditional shopping area.
- Gallamore Lane Industrial Estate traditional suppliers to the Agricultural industry on who have diversified to retail provision - Mole [/Equip etc.]

#### In Town

Several retail units primarily in Queen Street, Union Street, Cop/John Street. Including a Coop Supermarket, Post Office, Chemist, Newsagents several independent specialist shops, a number of second-hand / charity shops along with veterinary practices, third sector education, dog groomers, hairdressers, nail bars, beauty shops, solicitors, accountants, estate agents, hospitality and fast food outlets.

Over the years several of the shops have been refurbished and converted to housing. [Mary Ellis, Bermer Carpets, Wolds Antiques?].

Mr Big in their Mary Portas Project [2000] described the retail area of the town as being like a dispersed departmental store – more accurately today it is probably best described as a **dispersed covered market**.

The above has serious implications for the regular Tuesday market. There is **only limited footfall in the town** – reduced in recent years with the decline of agricultural employment in the area, the decline in public transport, shopping habits based on the car. A regular fruit and veg store or pet store on the Market Square for instance would most likely kill off the equivalent shops in town.

### Retail Trading Market Policy in MR

#### Aims:

- to meet the need of residents [and visitors] not their wants
- ensure the safety of the traders and their customers.
- to keep costs to the Council and labour time to a minimum
- income generation focused on The Festival Hall

Market Square Layout: – retain as now with two trading areas.

- Behind the gates centred on the Auction Shed.

- The car free zone along the roadside – delimited by the planters. The size of this zone can be increased if needs be.

#### Market Trading Opportunities:

1. Auction Shed and Frontage - £20 per day. 8 tables and 6 constructed Market Stalls will be available for use by traders.
2. 'Pop Up' Pitches in the designated free space. Traders will be responsible for setting up and taking down their own stalls. There will be a licence charge of £30 for a six-month period – trading as and when.
3. Whole Market Place can be hired to run an event – will need the square to be cleared and shut down closing down etc. Basic Cost £200 for the closure – plus a charge for any Town Council Stalls used – to be determined. **Possible stepped rate £5 per stall for up to the first 10 then £10 per stall up to 20.**
4. Indoor Market Space in The Festival Hall. Hourly charges to apply as for a regular booking.

#### **Suggested Strategy**

Tuesday – Auction and Pop-Up stalls as now.

MRTC to encourage commercial and fund-raising groups to use the Festival Hall for occasional markets. Observation shows that provided that a two-to-three-hour well-advertised trading period can be very successful.

MRTC in conjunction with organising partners [Lions, Matthew from Advocate, Rasen Environment Group] to run 3 or 4 specialist markets in the Square or Playing Fields. Christmas, Food Fayre, Easter Craft, Cultural [Literacy/Drama/Music] Gardeners Market.

**Action Point: To explore the possibility of MRTC [in conjunction with WLDC?] setting up a standing group to help bring about organising these markets.**

**The 'Cultural Event' could be based on a Trinity Arts Centre on Tour production in the auction shed – supplemented by local writers [adults and schools] performing pieces of their work, local bands covering music associated with Market Rasen – 'Thriller', Saturday Nights for Fighting' & James Dring's writing for Blur and Gorilla. Alongside the performance there would be appropriate stall holders selling their wares.**

#### **Stalls**

The construction, putting away of stalls is expensive in terms of time and labour. The following measures to be adopted to help keep costs to a minimum.

- 6 Stalls 4 with roofs and 2 without permanently stored in the Auction Shed area – can be carried on and off the Square easily.
- 2 to 4 stalls to be constructed and stored along the rear wall in the Church Yard – again these can be easily carried in and out of the square. Permissions will need to be negotiated with the church.
- To investigate the possibility of purchasing 5 heavy duty 3m by 3m gazebos – these are easy to put up and down – they have the advantage of side walls – can be hired out, with limited handling support, to stall holders for a small charge.

## **BUILDING DEVELOPMENT**

After what seems a lifetime the regeneration work on various buildings around the marketplace has at last started.

Work is being done above Chris Waugh photographers Market Place, Former HSBC and Nat West Banks. Financed from the Shop Frontage Schemes and the £220K from WLDC. Some money remains for the former Lloyds bank or another project. If all goes well these will be completed by the end of 2023.

The banking hub is due to move into the Lloyds or former HSBC bank building by Dec 2023 – although there could be slippage.

**Action: Explore funding streams to undertake work on further buildings in King Street and Queen Street**

### **Rase House: Building and Land**

Rase House has been bought out by ACIS Housing Association. The initial plan is to convert the main building into 'Assisted' Independent Living Units for those in need. There are suggestions that the outbuildings will be developed into workshops and education rooms for the 'residents' and day centre 'students' – based on horticultural, carpentry, craft and other day to day living skills. These would be delivered and managed by CLIP – who are also owned by ACIS.

MRTC and WLDC need to encourage this proposal and push for it to have wider 'community' involvement. Some of the empty land on the grounds could be set up as a community garden, allotment or orchard – along the lines of the Rock Foundation in Caistor – where The Caistor Lions and volunteers work along side the residents and trainers to run a very successful allotment. The produce is consumed by those who work on the project with any surplus sold to provide funds for future garden and wider Rock Foundation projects.

**ACTION POINT:** Meeting with ACIS and input on the Rase House public consultancy day – September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023

### **West Lindsey Sport Centre**

This is an underused site. Both the building, outdoor courts and grounds could be used further for community sporting and non-sporting events. Car Rallies, Markets, Cultural productions etc. A hurdle that needs to be overcome is the costs charged by Everyone Active – the operators. The high rates put people off. They do not seem to be understanding that a reduction in cost would increase throughput that may well see an increase in revenue.

**ACTION POINT:** Negotiations are required on their charging and use policy. Moving away from break even budgeting to social led 'economic' decision making.

For instance, a reduction in the cost of sports club training could well get more families through the door – enticing them to return at other times.

The catering arrangements need to be reviewed – a full café may not be a commercial viability but there must be something more customer friendly than the current two independently vending machines.

**The car park and toilets are publicly owned buildings and so can be used by members of the public.**

There is a constant call for a **SWIMMING POOL** in Market Rasen. The business case for an indoor pool is not easily made without substantial input of capital and revenue money from either Local, Regional or National Government. However, a more viable case for an open-air lido can be produced. Opening would be restricted to the summer months. Wild swimming in an artificial pond is also a possibility – this would likely increase the opening period to more of the year.

**ACTION POINT:** pursue consultations and negotiations with the public, WLDC and Everyone Active regarding the possibilities of outdoor swimming facilities in Market Rasen

### **Safer Streets – CCTV**

The UK Shared Prosperity Investment Plan includes funds to make the streets and community of market Rasen a safer place. The existing 7 locations will be upgraded with a higher spec 360 degree camera. A further 15 cameras will be installed in locations around the town deemed to be high risk for the public and high risk of crime – including drug taking spots. An engagement event will be held before the final decision on the location is made.

See appendix document attached

### **Additional Support for the Visitor Economy**

**A Central Heritage Exhibition and Tourist Information Nucleus [HUB]** to operate during the spring and summer 2024

#### **Full Partners:**

Rase Heritage Society, Market Rasen Town Council, Jockey Club – Market Rasen Racecourse

#### **Associates Partners:**

Asis / Clip, Lincolnshire County Council – Library and Heritage Services, West Lindsey District Council and Forestry Commission

#### **Proposal**

To open a Heritage Centre in an empty shop building in Market Rasen for a period from Easter to the October half term. Days and Times to be negotiated.

#### **Functions:**

- to promote tourism and active leisure in the area by providing details of the various walks, cycle rides, town trails and active leisure in the Rasen Area
- to act as an exhibition area for the various artefacts held by Rase Heritage Society. This could be extended out to a 'Portas inspired' street gallery.
- To co-ordinate MR Churches Festival and Heritage Weekend Events
- To work with Racecourse on their centenary – an 'art' work in Market Square. Trail around racecourse at the community meeting – to be relocated around town and area during the summer.
- To develop and promote local 'free' or low-cost venues/activities for families residing/visiting the area.

In short to create a lasting legacy that will promote the town and areas story – encouraging visitors to use Market Rasen as their base and main 'fueling' point.

Car Park signage and ease of access will play an essential part in this as well as publicising material.

A local resident is planning to use her retirement writing a **book on the hidden secrets** of the Lincolnshire Wolds. She intends to produce a chapter for each location and to put forward various tours for visitors. WLDC are working with the resident on this project. The Heritage Nucleus would provide an opportunity to promote and help with this project.

### **Funding**

Rase Heritage Society to approach WLDC Capital Action Fund for a grant to cover rent, running costs, material preparation – including photography [vinyl/boards] – that can be used in future years in various locations around town.

### **Staffing**

To be successful a strong dedicated, committed leader/group will be required. Volunteers will be required to keep the office open and to prepare display material – this could be the same team.

#### **Action:**

**Discussion required with Rase Heritage Society and other groups on how best to carry forward.** RHS have put in an expression of interest form for WLDC community funding.

### **Telling the Town & Area Story**

Look at ways of promoting and publicising the various town trails, walks and cycle routes.

### **Major Challenges**

**1: The A631 and HGVS through the centre of Town.** The volume of traffic is of major concern – it adds to pollution and restricts movements for pedestrians. Delivery vehicles cause major blockages in the town for through and local traffic. Instead of seeing the architecture and services on offer in the town people see traffic jams and pollution.

#### **Actions:**

- **A full traffic survey involving speed and type of vehicles.**
- **A thorough review of the air quality data**
- **Pursue possibilities of support through the UK Government Air Quality Grant Scheme**
- **Consider ring road possibilities.**

**2: Car Parking** – The car parks are poorly signed and therefore not easily picked up by visitors. Also, the car parks are down narrow roads or have entrances with poor visibility.

#### **Actions:**

- Improved signage
- Encourage use of Sports Centre Car Park as a park and stride for the town or park and ride/walk for active leisure activities.

### 3: State of the Roads: Litter, Weeds, Pigeons

The state of the pavements and roads is very poor and an eyesore.

#### Actions:

- WLDC to reintroduce the mechanical pavement sweeping service to the town
- MRTC to work with WLDC on how we can increase the number of hours allocated to cleaning the streets in the town
- To work on an annual weed reduction programme

### 4: Inbuilt Inertia

5: The different approach of the generations - There is an inbuilt bias to the older generations having more influence over the future that they will not experience

6: Conservation can get in the way of moving projects forward and slow things down - bringing about negativity

## Green Space Policy

### Possible actions for development/inclusion

1. *Market Square as heart of the town. Three possible options.*
  - a) *Return to free for all parking.*
  - b) *Car Free – can we currently organise enough events to justify leaving the space empty.*
  - c) *Hybrid – Dwell Zone at centre front [large enough for market stalls], short term parking designed for customers for the business, set parking bays – including disabled slots, one-way entrance and exit, cycle infrastructure*
2. *Creation of 20mph – HGV restricted zone*
3. *Pop Up Museum – Tourist Centre –*
4. *Active Leisure Centre for town trails, country walks and cycle rides*
5. *Open Air Swimming*