

MINUTES of the meeting of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held virtually via Zoom at 7.30pm on Monday 13th July 2020

PRESENT: Councillor Phillips (Chair)
Councillors Coll, Davison, Inwood, Leggett, Perry, FJ Smith, P Smith, Squire-Smith and Stanier

In attendance: Town Clerk
District Councillors Green and Hunter and County Councillor Hill
56 members of the public.

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and informed those present that the meeting was being recorded.

16/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

A member of the public spoke objecting to the application at Land Opposite Heath Farm, Royston. Some of the points raised included; the development site is not identified in either the existing or emerging Local Plan, the development site is fundamentally unsustainable due to its location, the development site lies in a "Source Protection Zone 1" therefore at high risk from contamination and there is no capacity within the local primary school for the number of units proposed. The Chairman thanked the member of the public for their presentation.

17/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

There were none.

18/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS:

Members were advised to declare any interests at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. No requests for dispensations were received.

19/21 APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES:

It was **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Committee meeting held on Monday 2nd March 2020 (minutes 328/20 to 333/20).

20/21 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

- a) 20/00744/OP – Land opposite Heath Farm, Briary Lane, Royston, Hertfordshire.
Councillor Stanier declared an interest in this item and was removed to the waiting room and took no part in the debate or vote.
Members raised a **STRONG OBJECTION** to this application for the following reasons:
1. The previous application with access via Briary lane was refused in January 2019 and this application is not very different to that, with the exception that access is via Echo Hill.
 2. The application site is not allocated for development either in the existing or emerging Local Plans and lies within the countryside, beyond defined settlement boundaries.

3. The additional footfall from the proposed development of 99 residential dwelling houses in proximity to Therfield Heath would further increase the detriment to the SSSI.
4. The site is not close to schools, shops or the station as implied in the application. Government guidance states that all occupied areas of a development should be no more than 400m walking distance from a bus stop. Barkway Street is 750m; Baldock Street is 980m. It would be impossible for buses to access the site via Echo Hill or Briary Lane. Tannery Drift school is a 1250m walk – Gladman quote 15 minutes to walk to this – in reality this would be at least 20/25 minutes. Gladman quote a 3 minute cycle ride – not with small children!
5. The proposed new vehicular access, which involves knocking down an existing home, is unacceptable for this size of development because of its narrow width, position and difference in height to the site. The required retaining structure would have a significant and negative impact to the neighbouring houses and on the existing street scene.
6. The access roads serving this site are inadequate and extra traffic would be to the detriment of public and highway safety. Echo Hill and Briary Lane are both narrow roads with many parked cars that reduce them to a single carriageway in many places. There could potentially be around 200 additional vehicles; such an increase of traffic would be unacceptable in this location. Pedestrian access along Echo Hill and Briary Lane is not particularly suitable for people with mobility impairments.
7. There is a proposed pedestrian improvement scheme, which will involve widening a stretch of path along Sun Hill where there are large mature trees. If the roots of these trees are damaged it may make the trees unstable and possibly destroy them.
8. Construction vehicles would cause a considerable risk to pedestrians using the narrow paths on the Sun Hill junction with the A10.
9. The planned emergency vehicle entrance makes use of Royston Bridleway no.13, which has no right of way for vehicles. The Bridleway is part of the Icknield Way, which is a nationally recognised historic route.
10. The site is in an elevated position and would be visible from long distances. Because of its prominent position and the topography of the site, the proposed development would be likely to result in significant adverse impacts on both the character of the area and views.
11. The application should once again be refused as the negative impacts of the development would significantly outweigh the benefits in the area and would result in the permanent loss of high quality agricultural land.
12. If this was to be approved Royston Town Council would comment that the application is not accompanied by a valid legal undertaking (in the form of a Section 106 obligation) securing the provision of 40% affordable housing and other necessary obligations.
13. Although not a planning consideration, one of the Councillors commented that in the 50 years that he has been on planning this is the worst application that he has seen.

It was also agreed that a s106 request form should be submitted which would include; £1,000 per dwelling for management of the Heath, a lump sum of £100,000 for facilities for the Heath and a lump sum of £200,000 for community facilities, for consideration if the application is approved.

Councillor Leggett left the meeting at 7.56pm.

Councillor Stanier re-joined the meeting at 7.57pm.

- b) 20/00744/OP Land Surrounding Burloes Cottages, Newmarket Road, Royston, Hertfordshire.

Members **RESOLVED** to defer consideration of this application whilst information is sought regarding the decision on the infrastructure application for the site.

- c) 20/01305/FP - King James Academy Senior Site, Garden Walk, Royston, Hertfordshire
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.
- d) 20/01017/FP – Land South of Durham Way, Royston Gateway, Royston, Hertfordshire
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application but the Council repeated their previous comments for consideration –
- More cycle parking is needed on site. It is good to see the provision of cycle parking and a separate car park access for these, but a good proportion of the workers/customers could come from within Royston and we do not believe that what is planned to be provided is sufficient.
 - The nearby surrounding developments have considerably more green space in their car parks and surrounds than this one does. It appears that only a small grassy strip is included in these plans and it would be good if some smallish trees could be added to the site.
- e) 20/01347/FP – 52 Green Street, Royston, Hertfordshire
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.
- f) 20/01395/FPH – 10 Lankester Road, Royston, Hertfordshire
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.
- g) 20/01413/FPH – 55 Newmarket Road, Royston, Hertfordshire
Councillor Stanier declared an interest in this item but as it was not a disclosable pecuniary interest or an ‘other’ interest under the code of conduct she took part in the discussion and vote.
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

21/21 REPORT TO MEMBERS THE DECISIONS MADE BY THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN ON BEHALF OF ROYSTON TOWN COUNCIL, ON THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS:

- a) 20/00458/FPH - 1 Byron Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7DP
NO OBJECTION, however the roof lights to the south elevation may be considered as overlooking the neighbouring property. Members would like the Planning Officer to consider this.
- b) 20/00264/FPH - 58 Hawthorn Way, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7JS. **NO OBJECTION.**
- c) 20/00565/FPH - 29 Stamford Avenue, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7DD. **NO OBJECTION.**
- d) 20/00574/FPH - 10 Aintree Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9JE. **NO OBJECTION.**
- e) 20/00434/FP - 22-24 High Street, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9AG.
OBJECTION: It is an overdevelopment of the site and the proposed apartments do not meet the Technical Housing Standards. Also, the plans show 2 x 1 bed apartment and 1 x 2 bed apartment but the description says 3 x 1 bed apartments so clarification is required.

- f) 20/00435/LBC - 22-24 High Street, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9AG. **OBJECTION:** It is an overdevelopment of the site and the proposed apartments do not meet the Technical Housing Standards. Also, the plans show 2 x 1 bed apartment and 1 x 2 bed apartment but the description says 3 x 1 bed apartments so clarification is required.
- g) 20/00597/FPH - 44 Icknield Walk, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7JY. **NO OBJECTION.**
- h) 20/00639/FPH - Rowan House, The Green, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7AL. **NO OBJECTION.**
- i) 20/00637/FP - Flint Hall Farm, London Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9LX. **NO OBJECTION:** provided that up to date bat surveys are undertaken and all the conditions applied by NHDC to the previous application (ref 16/02487/1) are adhered to, in particular "None of the trees to be retained on the application site shall be felled, lopped, topped, uprooted, removed or otherwise destroyed or killed without the prior written agreement of the Local Planning Authority. Reason: To safeguard and enhance the appearance of the completed development and the visual amenity of the locality."
- j) 20/00687/FP - 3-4 Church Lane, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9LG. **NO OBJECTION.**
- k) 20/00688/FP - Tey House, Market Hill, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9JN. **NO OBJECTION.**
- l) 20/00713/FP - 3 Angel Pavement, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9AS. **NO OBJECTION.**
- m) 20/00754/FPH – 19 Palace Gardens, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9AD. **NO OBJECTION.**
- n) 20/00775/FPH - Eagle Tavern House, Barkway Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9NB. **NO OBJECTION.**
- o) 20/00809/FPH - 14 Princes Court, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9FG. **NO OBJECTION.**
- p) 20/00850/FP - Eagle Tavern House, Barkway Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9NB. **NO OBJECTION.**

- q) 20/00850/FP - 26 and 28 Old North Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5DT. **NO OBJECTION.**
- r) 20/00823/FPH - 46 Tannery Drift, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5DT. **NO OBJECTION.**
- s) 20/00563/FP - Coombes Community Centre, Burns Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5PT. **NO OBJECTION.**
- t) 20/00908/FP – Land between 24 and 26 Cedar Crescent and 92 Green Drift, Royston, Hertfordshire.
OBJECTION: it is an overdevelopment of the site. The proposed development would cause material harm to the living conditions of neighbouring properties by reason of noise.
- u) 20/00909/FPH – 15 Priory Lane, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9DX. **NO OBJECTION.**
- v) 20/00913/FPH – 15 Skylark Place, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7XN. **NO OBJECTION**
- w) 20/00942/FP – Edgely, Grange Bottom, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9UQ. **NO OBJECTION.**
- x) 20/00959/S73 – 33 Melbourn Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7DE. **NO OBJECTION.**
- y) 20/00990/FP – Johnson Matthey Plc, Orchard Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5HE. **NO OBJECTION**
- z) 20/01017/FP - Land South Of, Durham Way, Royston Gateway, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5GX.
NO OBJECTION: but the Council would like to bring the following points to the attention of the developers to consider: more cycle parking is needed on site. It is good to see the provision of cycle parking and a separate car park access for this, but a good proportion of the workers/customers could come from within Royston and we do not believe that what is planned to be provided is sufficient. The nearby surrounding developments have considerably more green space in their car parks and surrounds than this one does. It appears that only a small grassy strip is included in these plans and it would be good if some smallish trees could be added to the site.
- aa) 20/01066/FP – Royston Methodist Church, Queens Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7AU. **NO OBJECTION.**
- bb) 20/01073/S73 – 29 Priory Close, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7DU. **NO OBJECTION.**
- cc) 20/01089/FPH – 11 Tynan Close, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5PX. **NO OBJECTION.**
- dd) 20/01116/FPH – 28 Princes Mews, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5PX. **NO OBJECTION.**

- ee) 20/01143/FPH – 41 Quail Walk, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7XL. **NO OBJECTION** provided that: 1. There is a satisfactory agreement with Anglian Water that the manhole cover can be moved. This will not be straight forward as the manhole is over an almost right angle bend in the foul sewer and it may prove impractical to reroute sewers. Approval should be withheld until Anglian Water agree that the manhole can be moved.
2. That there is also an agreement with the neighbour as there is no gap between the proposed development and the neighbour's garage wall. There should be either a party wall agreement or a gap left between the extension and neighbour's garage. 3. The plans show a gate to be made into the alleyway behind the property. Clarification should be sought as to whether the applicant can use the alleyway for access as it serves numbers 26, 28, 30 and 32 Quail Walk who maintain it. Do these properties own the alleyway?
- ff) 20/01159/FPH – 8 Towne Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5FR. **NO OBJECTION.**
- gg) 20/01119/FPH – 43 Sassoon Drive, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5FR. **NO OBJECTION.**
- hh) 20/01202/FP – Johnson Matthey plc, Orchard Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5HE. **NO OBJECTION.**

22/21 APPEALS:

Members noted the following appeal: APP/X1925/X1925/W/20/3
19/02887/FP - Land at 15 and 17 Mill Road, Royston, Hertfordshire.

23/21 UPDATED LIST OF PLANNING DECISIONS:

Members noted the updated list of planning decisions.

Date of next meeting: to be advised.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.24pm.