

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held in Room 11, Town Hall, Royston at 7.30pm on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Phillips (Chair)  
Councillors Beardwell, Davison, Inwood, Leggett, Perry, P Smith and Squire-Smith

**In attendance:** Town Clerk  
Town Councillor Bylett  
County Councillor Hill  
District Councillor Green

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

**271/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

There was none.

**272/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

There were none.

**273/22 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.

**274/22 APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES:**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January minutes 227/22 to 232/22. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

**275/22 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

a) 21/00765/OP – Land off Barkway Road and North of Flint Hall, Barkway Road, Royston, Hertfordshire.

Members raised a **STRONG OBJECTION** to this application for the following reasons:

**Local Plan:**

- The application site is not allocated for development in either the current or the emerging Local Plan and lies within the countryside, beyond defined settlement boundaries.
- Councillors were very disappointed to even have to discuss this application, as there is good reason why this is not included in any Local Plan. NHDC must not agree to this application.
- If this aggressive type of application from developers was to be allowed it would set a precedent for further inappropriate development threats. It shows how important it is for our emerging local plan to be finalized and it is regrettable that this has been so delayed.
- The Covid pandemic has had a huge effect on our town centre and it is probable that retail and office space will be increasingly used for housing, as we are already seeing in the town. There is no further need for additional dwellings on this site.

**Traffic:**

- Traffic surveys were carried out during lockdown when many people were working from home or furloughed. The data in the application therefore cannot be valid.
- This development could potentially add five hundred extra cars. This is an unacceptable increase in traffic to the narrow and busy pinch-point on Barkway Road where permanently parked cars make the road into an already dangerous single carriageway.
- There would be further congestion on the town's one-way system, which regularly becomes gridlocked. Queuing will cause further pollution for nearby houses.
- The proposed development has no provision for sustainable travel measures in order to achieve a significant switch to walking, cycling and public transport. We must avoid a car-centric development on the edge of town.

**Walking and Cycling:**

- The proposed development has no provision for sustainable travel measures in order to achieve a significant switch to walking, cycling and public transport.
- Facilities such as the town centre, schools and medical centres would realistically be too far to walk to – this will further impact on traffic levels.
- The indicated walk circles, in the Design and Access statement, do not take into consideration walking with small children or the elderly, or the fact that is uphill from Royston.
- Cycling along Barkway Road would be dangerous, especially for school children.

**Environment:**

- The proposed development would have a negative impact on the character of the area, the natural geography and the skyline.
- The proposed development would be a destruction of good arable land and local wildlife habitats; it would lead to the inevitable destruction of more trees.
- Busy internal roads would cut through the existing bridleway and footpath. The UK needs to be more self-sufficient and produce more food locally; this proposal would result in the permanent loss of agricultural land. Once there are bricks and mortar on our countryside it will be lost forever.
- The additional footfall would also increase the harm to the nearby and already fragile Therfield Heath, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- Existing residents will be subjected to a lengthy period of construction noise and inconvenience, especially those on the north boundary of the land.

**Drainage:**

- We have already seen the consequences of building on steeply sloping chalk land in Royston, which caused flooding issues for neighbouring properties.

**Infrastructure:**

- There is insufficient infrastructure in the town. Doctors, dentists and schools are already under pressure from numerous recent developments.

In conclusion, the negative impacts of the development would significantly outweigh the benefits in the area.

Royston Town Council requests that North Herts Council undertakes an independent review and evaluation of the data produced on 21st December 2021 to ascertain the effect that this development has on the modelling and whether or not it causes a severe impact on traffic and highways.

- b) 21/02957/FP – Land on the South West side of Barkway Road, Royston, Hertfordshire.  
Members raised an **OBJECTION** to this application for the following reasons:
- The development is overbearing on existing houses and is too close to the boundary of Shepherd Close.
  - There will be shadowing and loss of light to existing properties.
  - Mature trees on the site will be removed.
  - There is a risk of flooding due to the gradient of the site.
  - Access is onto Barkway Road which is already severely congested and which becomes a single lane road due to parking provision.
- c) 21/03516/FP – Former 92, Green Drift, Royston, Hertfordshire.  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.
- d) 22/00021/FPH – 6 Pightle Close, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5AZ.  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.
- e) 22/00037/FPH – 7 Woodlands, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7EX.  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.
- f) 21/03435/FPH – Crofton, Dog Kennel Lane, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7AB.  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.
- g) 22/00104/FPH – 6 Charding Crescent, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5HB.  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.
- h) 22/00145/FPH – 35 Barkway Road, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9EA.  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.
- i) 22/00148/FPH – 4 Garden Close, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 7HX.  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.
- j) 22/00247/FPH – 17 The Brambles, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9NQ.  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

#### **276/22 PLANNING S106 CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM:**

Members agreed on the following projects to be included for consideration for S106 contributions for planning application 21/00765/OP – Land off Barkway Road, and North of Flint Hall, Royston, and planning application 21/02957/FP – Land on the South West side of Barkway Road, Royston:

- 4 acres of land for Allotments to be equipped with water, electricity, access and a hard standing car park for at least 20 vehicles.
- General upkeep of the Heath site.
- Refurbishment of the kitchen and bathrooms at Market Hill Rooms.
- An upgrade to the local skate park.

Members agreed that the proposals and costings for each project would be worked on individually by members and the Town Clerk rather than as part of a working party.

#### **277/22 APPEALS:**

Members noted the following appeal:

APP/X1925/W/21/3284014 Land at Evangelical Church, York Way, Royston,  
Hertfordshire, SG8 5HJ.

**278/22 UPDATED LIST OF PLANNING DECISIONS:**

Members noted the updated list of planning decisions.

Date of next meeting: 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.14pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_