

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** held in the Heritage Hall at the Town Hall, at 7.30pm on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

PRESENT: Councillor Beardwell (Chair)  
Councillors Freeman, Langdon, Lockett and Squire-Smith

In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk  
Town Councillor Michael Harrison  
County Councillor Fiona Hill  
District Councillors Cathy Brownjohn, Ruth Clifton and Sarah Lucas  
34 members of the public

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and reminded those present to be mindful of the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency declared by Royston Town Council when making decisions on behalf of the council.

The Chair notified everyone that the meeting was being recorded.

**247/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Six members of the public spoke about item a) on the agenda, Land off Barkway Road. They detailed their objections to the application on the following grounds: the land is not allocated for development in the Local Plan which the NPPF states is still relevant; North Herts Council have deliverable allocated sites elsewhere which could easily be increased by the required 10%; the infrastructure cannot cope with the increase in population, in particular the NHS which has stated that it has no more capacity in Royston; schools are oversubscribed and there is no sixth form; the bus service is inadequate and not suitable for commuting; the railway station is in excess of the recommended walking distance; the transport assessment does not consider the single lane (due to parked cars) at the bottom of the Barkway Road which gets congested and leads to more congestion on the gyratory; the NPPF section 115D states congestion must be considered; the transport assessment has not been updated since 2020; supermarkets are not accessible by walking or cycling; the negative impact on Green Walk Plantation by the creation of a cycle path through it. The Chair thanked the members of the public for speaking and all the members of the public for attending.

**248/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies were received from Councillors Adams, Haugh and Jani.

**249/25 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.

**250/25 APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES:**

Members **RESOLVED** to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024 (minutes 196/25 to 201/25) and Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024.

The minutes were signed by the Chair.

## 251/25 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

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

Members raised **A STRONG OBJECTION** again to this application on the following grounds:

Local Plan:

- The application site is not allocated for development in the local plan.
- Other land is available within the North Herts District local plan.

Traffic:

- This development would cause 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 gyratory system, which regularly becomes gridlocked and does not seem to have been adequately considered.
- There are no planned pedestrian controlled crossings for people who will need to cross the Barkway Road to access schools.

Transport:

- The application states that the station is a 20 minute walk away but many people would require longer, especially to walk back up to the development.
- Only one of the bus stops is set back from the road, the other will cause even more congestion.

Sustainability:

- The houses will be built to 'maximise solar gain' which is only the bare minimum that could be expected.

Infrastructure:

- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care Board have stated that existing care services don't have the capacity to cope with more people.
- The hospital now has very few services and cannot be considered a health facility.
- Schools are oversubscribed particularly at secondary level and there is no sixth form provision in Royston meaning more children have to travel to school.
- Leisure facilities are not adequate to cope with the additional number of people.

Members agreed that, in the event that planning permission were to be granted, the following mitigations must be put in place:

- Bus services must be improved before people move in, to discourage car use.
- A turning circle for buses should be provided within the estate.
- A pedestrian controlled crossing should be installed on the Barkway Road to facilitate those walking to schools.
- Houses should have solar panels, air source heat pumps and no gas.
- Bird boxes, hedgehog holes and bat boxes should be provided.

This does not prejudice the Town Council's position and their fundamental objection to any development on this land.

b) 24/02696/FP – The Old School House, 4 Market Hill, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9LJ  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

- c) 24/02656/S73 – Land East of Garden Walk and North of Newmarket Road, Garden Walk, Royston, Hertfordshire  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

Cllr Squire-Smith declared an interest in this item, left the room and took no part in the debate or vote. This meant the meeting became inquorate therefore the Chair and Vice-Chair made the decision on the following item:

- d) 24/02729/FPH – 8 Rosecomb, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9FJ  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

Cllr Squire-Smith then returned to the room for the remainder of the meeting.

- e) 24/02715/FP – Unit 1, Carrington Court, 37 Upper King Street, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9AZ  
Members raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

**252/25 REPORT TO MEMBERS THE DECISIONS MADE BY THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR ON THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS:**

- a) 24/02397/FPH - 2 Cedar Crescent, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5BP  
Members of Royston Town Council raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application but, if possible, would like to see swift bricks, bat boxes and hedgehog friendly fencing used at the property. Also, any outside lighting should be downward facing.
- b) 24/02153/PIP - 38 Heathfield, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5BN  
Members of Royston Town Council raised an **OBJECTION** to this application as it is an overdevelopment of the site.
- c) 24/02500/FP - 23 High Street, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9AB  
Members of Royston Town Council raised an **OBJECTION** to this application for the following reasons –
- There is no disabled access into the shops and a ramp should be provided
  - The waste disposal facilities for the shops are inadequate
  - There is minimal natural light and ventilation in the basement flat and it is unsuitable for use as habitable accommodation
  - Rear windows on the property are not in-keeping with neighbouring properties
  - Bat boxes and swift bricks should be installed at the property to aid biodiversity
  - Bike storage is inadequate for 7 flats
  - There appears to be a room at the front of the basement flat and its intended use is not shown in the plans.
- d) 24/02501/LBC - 23 High Street, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9AB  
Members of Royston Town Council raised an **OBJECTION** to this application – see 24/02500/FP
- e) 24/02478/FP - 4A Kneesworth Street, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5AA  
Members of Royston Town Council raised **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

**253/25 UPDATED LIST OF PLANNING DECISIONS:**

Members noted the updated list of planning decisions.

Date of next meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.25pm.

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_