

Public Document Pack

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING CONTROL COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 4TH SEPTEMBER, 2025

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Please find attached supplementary papers relating to the above meeting, as follows:

Agenda No	Item
-----------	------

- | | |
|----|---|
| 6. | <u>21/00765/OP LAND OFF BARKWAY ROAD AND NORTH OF FLINT HALL, BARKWAY ROAD, ROYSTON, HERTFORDSHIRE</u> (Pages 3 - 6) |
|----|---|

REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION MANAGER

Outline Planning Application for Residential Development of up to 280 dwellings (including affordable housing) green infrastructure including public open space, landscape boundaries and SUDS with all matters reserved except for access which is to be taken from Barkway Road (as amended 22 April 2025).

This page is intentionally left blank

ITEM NO: 6	Location:	Land Off Barkway Road And North Of Flint Hall Barkway Road Royston Hertfordshire
	Applicant:	Woolsington One Ltd
	Proposal:	Outline Planning Application for Residential Development of up to 280 dwellings (including affordable housing) with all matters reserved except for access which is to be taken from Barkway Road, green infrastructure including public open space, landscape boundaries and SUDS
	Ref. No:	21/00765/OP
	Officer:	Peter Bull

Report addendum

Clarifications

In response to queries from a councillor, a number of clarifications are set out below.

Existing power line to western parcel

The developer has confirmed –

“Initially the discussions with UK Power Network have been about diverting/retaining the lines through the site and then as part of the masterplan here has been consideration to burying the power lines. We have been pursuing quotes for doing both options over the years and these works have been taken into account though the development’s delivery trajectory. Either method is capable of being undertaken alongside the planning and delivery of the site, particularly as it relates to the western land parcel which will be the later phases and allow for the initial eastern parcel to be developed. The 132Kv power lines are for local power distribution that are supported on wooden poles, which are visible from Barkway Road, so are not equivalent to pylons that would be more of a constraint. The power lines in situ are very much the type of utility constraint that housebuilders deal with all the time and factor into their timelines and costs. The extent of power line that will be affected by the development is approximately 250m, that will require a 6m easement if retained above ground or 3m easement for below ground. This has been taken into account through the design of the Masterplan and identified the route of the electricity line in the document by a green corridor east to west across the western parcel, providing a green pedestrian route that is capable of accommodating either option for the power lines, underground or surface poles. I hope this provides sufficient reassurance that the electricity line has been taken into account and will not delay the delivery of the development, whilst all factors have been taken into account regarding the potential to bury the power lines that will be dictated by UK Power Network at the end of the day, along with Central Government policy.”

Project Board

The Masterplan was presented to the Project Board in May 2022 which endorsed the masterplan approach subject to the pedestrian and cycle accessibility measures being confirmed and illustrated in the document.

Accesses

The developer has confirmed that at different stages of the pre and application processes, the possibility of a vehicular connection from the western parcel site into the existing adjoining residential development (Worham Road and/or Kingston Vale) was explored. Officers can confirm that there are ransom strips between the application site and the public highway. The developer has confirmed that the owners of the ransom strips were approached, and the level of money requested was untenable and exceeded the amount that applicant as a strategic promoter could cover, particularly at outline stage. There was therefore no certainty these connections could be delivered and therefore they are not relied upon as part of the proposal.

Highway related documents

Links to the following application documents to aid discussion on highway matters -

Transport Assessment Addendum (2025)

https://documentportal.north-herts.gov.uk/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=E8E2E9C7EC354F2381350D66B0D58049

HCC Highways consultation response (2025)

https://documentportal.north-herts.gov.uk/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=BB52A44D6C3142D381CFFD84099E6FAB

Objection by Mayer Brown on behalf of third-party objector

https://documentportal.north-herts.gov.uk/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=02CF3ABFE4844974BFA258C1798255CD

Representations and press notices

Neighbours – the total number of objections is 437. A total of 2 representations were received supporting the proposal. A recently received email restates previous objections to the proposal on the grounds that the application site is not allocated for development in either the current Local Plan and lies within the countryside, beyond defined settlement boundaries and it would set a precedent for further inappropriate development.

Press notices - when the application was received in 2021 it was advertised in the Comet. The more recent advertisements placed in 2024 and 2025 however were in the Royston Crow. The statutory advertisement in the Royston Crow placed 31 July 2025 did not result in any additional representations being received.

Conservators Therfield Heath and Greens – a response from the conservators was originally received September 2024 although is not referred to in the published report. This set out a number of potential projects which they would seek contribution towards. A further letter was received September 2025 objecting as the requested financial contribution has not been secured. Paragraph 4.3.166 of the published report provide some information around this matter, and this is supplemented by additional explanation which is set out below.

Key Issues

Open Space (update)

The Conservators to Therfield Heath and Greens have requested a contribution of £1000 per residential unit be secured as part of the application. Projects identified by the Conservators included *1. land purchase to obtain non SSSI land/land Exchange land and/or mitigation*

projects 2. Heath Management 3. Heath Visitor Facilities. The contribution of £1000 sought by the Conservators is taken from a case study set out in the Mitigation Strategy. The Mitigation Strategy is not part of the adopted local plan and therefore not policy. It is a technical document which is intended to guide developers and officers on how to approach mitigation issues. Each site is different and need to be considered on their merits. In this instance the site is not directly located adjacent to the Heath and therefore there is less likely to be directly impacted by new residents. The proposal will not result in the loss of Public Open Space with the existing treed bridleway retained. As previously set out, the proposal will 'over provide' for allotment space where there is a significant deficit in the Town. This together with a wider level of over-provision comprising a new parkland alongside connected green corridors and plays spaces throughout the development and other new and improved active travel routes linking to existing adjacent footpath networks is secured through the masterplan. Approximately 55% of the site (10.16ha) will be used as Public Open Space with formal spaces such as the park and allotments as well as informal natural spaces such as the bridleway and retained woodlands. Officers consider that the balance of onsite public open space benefits set out in the published report and summarised above together with the financial contribution agreed with the applicant, is a fair and reasonable form of mitigation for this development.

Sports facility impacts (update)

Hockey facilities - in relation to hockey the emerging Playing Pitch Strategy explains the current playing arrangement for Royston HC and acknowledges that there is a clear strategic need for the development of additional hockey provision across the three authorities - North Hertfordshire, East Hertfordshire and Stevenage – which the Strategy covers. It recommends that at least one new sport-lit pitch be delivered within either of the three authorities should be explored. It goes on to say that the exact location of this pitch is to be determined through a future feasibility study, conducted in partnership by all three councils in collaboration with hockey partners and supported through the Active Partnership and Sport England. Currently there is no specific identified project to serve Royston HC. As set out in the report at 4.3.199, statutory tests for contributions must be (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; (b) directly related to the development; and (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Until such a time as a specific project serving the Royston catchment is identified, officers consider that a contribution towards hockey would not meet tests (a) and (b). In the circumstances, officers do not recommend a contribution can be sought. Officers in the council's Strategic Planning Team have been alerted to the need to consider hockey needs set out in the emerging Strategy as part of the local plan review.

Cricket facilities - Sport England has confirmed that consultation with the English Cricket Board (ECB) and Herts Cricket did not identify any capital projects for cricket in the Royston area. The emerging Playing Pitch Strategy has assessed local cricket sites such as Therfield Recreation Ground and Heath Sports Club but has only recommended improvements to maintenance on both sites. Officers consider that the use of developer contributions towards funding ongoing maintenance would not meet CIL Regulations and tests.

Section 106 matters

Sport England has confirmed that the rugby union contribution already set out in the published report should be amended to reflect the recommendations in the emerging Strategy which was not available when the previous consultation response was provided. The revised wording is

- **Rugby Union** - £58,011 (capital cost to meet match play/training demand and changing room demand combined): Royston Rugby Club, Heath Sports Club, Therfield Heath - projects to increase capacity in terms of pitch quality, changing facilities/social space or towards the delivery of new playing pitches and/or ancillary facilities for Royston Rugby Club in the Royston area.

Recommendation

Conditions

9. This is the site wide design code condition. The precise wording of this condition is to be amended to ensure that only details not set out in the masterplan are secured and should be provided as part of future Reserved Matters applications. Discussions between officers and the applicant's planning consultant are ongoing. The recommendation seeks delegated powers for officers to make amendments to the wording of conditions as necessary.

29. For preciseness, this is to be amended to include reference to other off-site highway works as illustrated on submitted drawings –

*Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the accesses (pedestrian, cycle and vehicle), **refuge island, new bus stops and other associated highway works** as illustrated on drawing numbers (J32-5129-PS-008 Rev A and Access & Movement Plan Rev D) shall be completed in accordance with details and specifications to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the highway authority.*

Reason: To ensure satisfactory access into the site and avoid carriage of extraneous material or surface water from or onto the highway in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).