

Examination of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031)
Examination hearing sessions
Statement of North Hertfordshire District Council

**Matter 10 – The housing allocations and the settlement boundaries: The Towns
Royston**

Question 10.16 Are all of the proposed housing allocations deliverable? In particular, are they:

a) confirmed by all of the landowners involved as being available for the use proposed?

1. All landowners of the proposed allocations at Royston have confirmed that their sites are available for residential development. Table A indicates the representations to the Regulation 19 consultation indicating availability for all sites.

Table A: Confirmation of Site Availability.

Site	Name	Representation to Reg.19 consultation	Deliverability summary
RY1	Land west of Ivy Farm, Baldock Road - 279 homes	Representor reference 16163	Site available and deliverable. Planning application submitted February 2016 [16/00378/1]. This will be considered by the Council's Planning Committee on 17 January 2018 and is recommended for approval
RY2	Land north of Newmarket Road - 330 homes		Site available and deliverable. Outline planning permission for 330 homes granted December 2016 [14/02485/1]. Applications submitted for creation of access and new roundabout [17/02470/1] and Phase 1 reserved matters for 88 homes [17/02627/1].
RY4	Land north of Lindsay Close Split site - 40 homes - 60 homes	Representor reference 14046 [part of site]	Site available and deliverable. Planning application submitted for part of site with access approved. Access can be obtained to remainder of site.
RY5	Agricultural supplier, Garden Walk - 20 homes		The site is available and deliverable. Planning Committee approved reserved matters for 19 homes in August 2017. This site is counted in the 'supply' in ED3.

Site	Name	Representation to Reg.19 consultation	Deliverability summary
RY7	Anglian Business Park, Orchard Road - 48 homes	Representor reference 16083	The site is available and deliverable. Capacity increase to 60 homes is requested by the scheme promoters and NHDC agree to this change as a modification.
RY8	Land at Lumen Road - 14 homes		The site is available and deliverable. Planning Application for 15 homes submitted June 2017 [17/01129/1]. Currently not determined.
RY10	Land south of Newmarket Road - 300 homes	Representor reference 16152	The site is available and deliverable. Planning Application for up to 325 homes submitted February 2017 [17/00110/1] Currently not determined.
RY11	Land at Barkway Road - 18 homes		The site is available and deliverable. Planning application approved for three dwellings on part of site [16/0115/1]

b) supported by evidence to demonstrate that safe and appropriate access for vehicles and pedestrians can be provided?

2. Each of these sites has been part of the plan preparation process and has been considered by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). Each site is accessible to the highway and HCC has raised no objections to any of the sites on highway grounds. The majority of the sites have been appraised as planning applications by HCC.
3. The sites either have existing highway frontage allowing for vehicle and pedestrian access to be directly taken from and connected to the highway network, or provide the opportunity to create such access connections.
4. The Council's Transport Strategy (ED14) aims to reduce car traffic volumes and identifies a suite of potential projects and mitigation measures across Royston to ensure the continued operation of the highway network for which reasonable contributions will be sought.

c) deliverable, having regard to the provision of the necessary infrastructure and services, and any environmental or other constraints?

5. Yes. All sites have been considered through the SHLAA and are considered suitable locations for development having regard to potential constraints (HOU9, see Appendix

3, p.26 and Appendix 4, p.45). This is expanded upon in answer to Issue 10.12 below. Table B below identifies the relevant SHLAA site references.

Table B: SHLAA site references for allocations in Royston

Local Plan site reference	Name	SHLAA site reference(s)
RY1	Land west of Ivy Farm, Baldock Road	218
RY2	Land north of Newmarket Road	085N
RY4	Land north of Lindsay Close	R/r11
RY5	Agricultural supplier, Garden Walk	R/r06
RY7	Anglian Business Park, Orchard Road	217
RY8	Land at Lumen Road	R/e2
RY10	Land south of Newmarket Road	346
RY11	Land at Barkway Road	358

6. The sites have been subject to consultation with a range of statutory providers. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (TI1), feedback from key infrastructure providers and the Local Plan Viability Assessment Update (TI2) show that these developments are deliverable in infrastructure planning terms and that the development would be profitable such as to support a package of infrastructure measures.
7. The likely significant environmental affects of allocating the sites have been considered through the Sustainability Appraisal (LP4, Appendix 6, pp.520-522 and pp.625 - 639)¹.
8. No fundamental constraints to development have been identified. Site-specific infrastructure and / or mitigation measures for these sites are identified as policy measures in the plan (LP1, p.200-202).
9. The current planning application on site RY1 makes provision for a new school. This will provide additional capacity that will ensure other allocations can be delivered.
10. These measures will be supplemented by the generic development management policy requirements that apply to all sites in relation to issues including (but not limited to) affordable housing, housing mix, transport, design and heritage.
11. A modification to the supporting text in the Royston section of Chapter 13 of the Plan (LP1, para 13.301, p.204) is proposed to more effectively address transport infrastructure and reflect the aims of the completed transport strategy:

In its role as Highway Authority, Hertfordshire County Council has recently developed a new county-wide transport model, 'COMET'. ~~This will be used to identify transport mitigation schemes in the Royston Area.~~ **This has identified that a number of improvement schemes will be required in Royston by 2031. Particular congestion points identified included:**

- **A505/ A10 Roundabout;**

¹ Page references in LP4 are to the "NHDC Page Number" in the top-left hand corner

- **A505/ A1198 Roundabout; and**
- **A10/ Newmarket Road/ Melbourn Street Roundabout**

In line with the Transport Strategy, development in Royston will be required to consider the implications of their schemes on these locations and make reasonable contributions towards improvements and / or other schemes improving walking and cycling in Royston which aim to influence mode share. These will be reflected in future iterations of the Infrastructure Development Plan.

Question 10.17 Are all of the proposed housing allocations justified and appropriate in terms of the likely impacts of the development?

12. Yes. All of the proposed housing allocations in Royston are justified and appropriate. The justification and appropriateness of the allocations are discussed below.
13. In broad terms, each allocation in the plan is justified by (see the Council's Statements on Matters 5, 7 and 9):
- The need to seek to meet the Objectively Assessed Needs (OAN) for housing as far as is consistent with the policies set out in the NPPF in a district that is currently highly constrained by Green Belt and other considerations;
 - The 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' and plan-making requirements set out in Paragraph 14 of the NPPF. Potential adverse impacts and specific policies in the Framework which indicate development should be restricted have been properly considered. Mitigation measures have been identified to address key issues. A balanced planning judgement has been made on the benefits and impacts of each individual site.
 - The significant majority of the deliverable and developable sites identified in the SHLAA (HOU9) being required for allocation if the District is to be able to meet the OAN;
 - No preferable, deliverable alternative sites existing which would allow OAN to be met over the plan period in a substantively different way;
 - There being no reasonable prospect of other authorities in shared housing market areas being in a position to assist under the Duty to Co-operate should North Hertfordshire have resolved not to meet its OAN in full.
14. Royston is a primary settlement within the district settlement hierarchy (Policy SP2) and as such is expected to provide a significant proportion of the development needs of the district over the plan period. All of the proposed allocations lie within or adjacent to the existing urban area and no sites are within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The likely impacts of development for each of the sites for which planning permission has not already been granted are shown in Table C.

Table C: Impacts of development of allocations in Royston

Site	Name	Impact of Development
RY1	Land west of Ivy Farm, Baldock Road	Adjacent to Therfield Heath SSSI which also contains priority habitats, a local nature reserve and heritage assets. Adjoining railway line and areas of surface water flood risk within site.
RY4	Land north of Lindsay Close	Site adjoins A505 bypass and is in relatively close proximity to wastewater treatment works.
RY7	Anglian Business Park, Orchard Road	Previously developed site currently in employment use. Site lies at edge of Royston's largest employment area and adjoins railway means residential amenity considerations will be important.
RY8	Land at Lumen Road	Previously developed site adjoining employment uses and with risk of contamination from previous uses. Site within setting of listed building.
RY10	Land south of Newmarket Road	Much of site bounded by mature vegetation. Topography of site will need to influence design. Areas of surface water flood risk.
RY11	Land at Barkway Road	Site immediately adjoining existing residential edge of Royston.

15. The issues listed in Table C are all addressed in the site-specific criteria identified for each of the sites (LP1, pp.200-202). These have been guided by responses received from key consultees as the Plan has been developed. Any impacts can be managed through the application of the site-specific criteria, appropriate detailed design and the application of the detailed development management policies of the Plan.
16. The Housing and Green Belt Background Paper summarises the reasons for the selection of these sites as housing allocations in the Plan (HOU1, Appendix 2, p.57). The allocation of these sites will make a substantial contribution to the overall housing numbers that are achievable through the Plan and are critical to achievable levels of five-year housing delivery as Royston is the only town that is not reliant upon Green Belt boundary amendments in order to deliver extensions to the existing settlement.

Question 10.18 Are all of the proposed allocations the most appropriate option given the reasonable alternatives?

17. HOU1 shows that all but one of the reasonable alternatives in and adjoining Royston are carried forward for allocation in the plan. The site included in the Preferred Options consultation as site RY6 (Royston Football Club) was dismissed because no replacement site or facility has been identified for the existing use.

Question 10.19 Is the proposed settlement boundary:

a) consistent with the methodology for identifying the settlement boundaries?

b) Appropriate and justified?

18. The justification for changes to the boundary relate to meeting the OAN, the lack of urban capacity, the settlement hierarchy and the availability of sustainable sites.
19. The boundary amendments to Royston are driven in large part by the proposed development allocations around the town and to reflect new housing which has been permitted and implemented since the last review of the Local Plan. Taking these matters into account, the northern edge of the A505 bypass (which also forms the administrative District and County boundary) is used as a permanent and recognisable defensible feature to define the settlement boundary around much of the town.
20. A map showing the existing and proposed settlement boundaries for Royston is attached to this Statement as Appendix A to aid interpretation.

Appendix A: Current and proposed settlement extent of Royston

