

DENTIST Robert Ayre has been given the go-ahead to begin operating a NHS surgery in Royston.

After seven years of searching for appropriate premises and submitting at least three planning applications his latest bid has been accepted.

Members of North Herts District Council's Royston area committee approved a scheme to convert a disused shop in Queens Road, Royston, into a dental surgery.

Speaking for the surgery, Joan Yates said: "After all that has happened in the past, it's a bit stunning to actually have the plans accepted.

"Now the hard work will really begin," she said.

Part of the hard work will be lobbying the North and East Herts Primary Care Trust to recognise the need for NHS services in Royston.

Cllr F John Smith told members of the area committee that proposals for the Queens Road premises seemed "satisfactory".

Cllr Peter Burt said an NHS surgery was much-needed. "They have persisted with planning applications and getting somewhere suitable," he said.

Planning Officer Tom Rea said that he believed parking problems in the area would be overcome.

Mr Ayre had an application to convert a disused shop on the corner of Barkway Road and Priory Lane, Royston, turned down several years ago.

Then negotiations over setting up a surgery at the disused Victorian schoolhouse in Market Hill were abandoned.

He has run a NHS surgery at the Royston Health Centre for the past six years, but its success meant it can no longer take on new patients.