

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	25/01708/OP
CASE OFFICER:	BG
APPLICATION SITE:	Land Opposite Heath Farm, Briary Lane, Royston Hertfordshire
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Erection of up to 84 dwellings with public open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) following demolition of No. 24 Echo Hill with all matters reserved save for access.

RECOMMENDATION:

I raise **NO OBJECTION** on the basis that the proposal does not impact directly upon listed buildings or their setting or the character or appearance of the Royston Conservation Area. Therefore, the provisions of Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, do not apply.

SHORT SUMMARY:

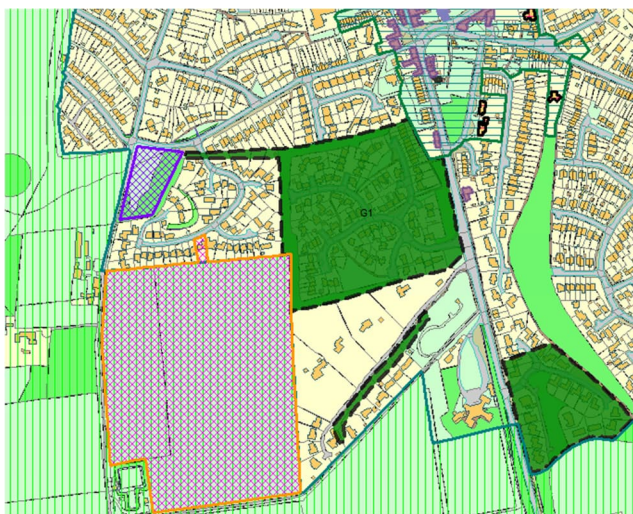
Impact on the setting of listed buildings and the Royston Conservation Area (RCA)

The proposal will have no direct impact.

SITE CONTEXT:

As stated at 1.6 of the submitted Heritage Statement:

The Site is an agricultural field, to the south of the main settlement of Royston, adjacent to Briary Lane and on the edge of the town's urban development. There is no recorded alternative use with the land other than agricultural use and is shown to have historically held multiple plots and a variety of ownerships. The Site includes a single dwelling and plot fronting onto Echo Hill.



DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Under the subheading 'Identification of Heritage Assets' the extent of designated heritage assets falling within 500m of the site are noted. However, there are no heritage assets on site or directly abutting the site and several listed buildings and the RCA are located some distance away to the north-east.

With respect to the RCA, at page 11 of the Heritage Statement under the subheading 'Contribution of Site to Setting' it states:

4.8 The Site makes no material contribution to the setting of the Royston Conservation Area due to its physical separation from the village by surrounding urban development and the distance from the historic core. As such, the Site forms part of a wider rural landscape, with no direct visibility or strong connection to the conservation area. Overall, the field's role in enhancing the setting of the Royston Conservation Area is none material, serving as one of many typical agricultural fields in the broader rural landscape.

With respect to listed buildings, at page 13 of the Heritage Statement at 4.19 and 4.20 under the subheading 'Contribution of the Site' it states:

4.19 The Site comprises open, undeveloped land on the periphery of Royston and lies outside the core of the historic settlement. While located within proximity (within 500m) to a number of listed buildings, the Site makes no material contribution to their setting.

4.20 The setting of these assets is generally defined by the built-up context of the town centre, where streets such as King Street, High Street, Market Hill, and London Road form a coherent and historically layered streetscape. Many of these buildings sit in tight urban grain, with strong building lines and a sense of enclosure that contributes to their character. In contrast, the Site is physically and visually separated from this core by modern development and infrastructure, including roads and intervening buildings, which reduces any direct visual or spatial association. There are no direct visual links between the Site and key heritage assets within the historic core of the town.

The proposal would not impact upon any non-designated heritage assets such as Buildings of Local Interest and I would normally comment upon the impact of development on the setting of scheduled monuments, so I leave this to others. On the latter, I see that Hertfordshire LEADS has stated:

This office commented on a similar proposal to develop this site, 20/00744/OP. It is quoted below:

"It should be noted that this office does not comment on the implications of the proposed development regarding the setting of the Scheduled Monuments on Therfield Heath. We recommend that Historic England are consulted..... An archaeological geophysical survey and a trial trenching evaluation comprising a 3% sample of the site were carried out prior to the determination of previous planning application 18/00747/OP. No remains of archaeological significance were identified in either.

It is therefore apparent that, despite its proximity to Therfield Heath, the site has a very low potential for surviving below-ground remains of archaeological significance. Therefore, we have no comment to make on this application. I consider that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest."

I also note that there are no heritage-based reasons listed amongst the bullet point list of objections from Royston Town Council on 5 August 2025.

HERITAGE POLICY ASSESSMENT:**Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:**

No sections applicable

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031:

No heritage policies applicable.

NPPF (December 2024):

Chapter 16 not applicable.

CONCLUSION:

Unobjectionable.

OFFICER: Mark Simmons**DATE:** 24/09/2025