

Alex Campbell
28 Echo Hill
Royston
Herts

Ben Glover
Senior Planning Officer
North Herts District Council
Gernon Road
Letchworth Garden City
Herts
SG6 3JF

12th August 2025

Dear Mr Glover

Reference – 25/01708/OP Land opposite Heath Farm Briary Lane Royston Hertfordshire.

I object, and I do urge North Herts District Council to refuse this application.

I have lived in Royston for most of my life and in Echo Hill for more than twenty years. Our home, number twenty-eight is immediately affected by the proposed development and the fence at the rear of our small back garden forms the current settlement boundary for Royston. This situation has existed for forty years since when Echo Hill was developed with a very specific contingent that housing beyond this border was considered too far an encroachment into an area of rich farmland and too elevated, it being the highest point around the whole boundary of Royston and at its highest at the water pumping station 123m or approximately 400ft. Any housing built on this land will be very visible to the rest of Royston and an obvious visual blot in an otherwise continuous line of open fields that border the Icknield Way path and the Therfield Heath.

Not all land proposed for development has equal merit and I would hope that the planning committee are not swayed by the google map perspective that is in no way indicative of the potential and likely difficulties resulting from the development of these fields. Access via Briary Lane and Echo Hill have been refused twice (the clue is the names) and this present application is only a little window dressing on the previous attempts. This site is land locked and has no obvious appropriate access. Demolishing one house in Echo Hill to punch a hole into the existing boundary is not a solution that should merit any consideration. Enough has been written by our neighbours and others who would be affected by the ridiculousness of this overwhelmingly bad idea. I suggest the planning committee drive the proposed route from its start point, where Briary Lane meets the Baldock road and then make a judgement; as in the past I feel confident that your conclusions will remain in keeping with those of some of your NHDC predecessors, who for good reason decided the access to be inappropriate.

We are lucky that we live in a part of the County with reasonably low unemployment and in an area that continually attracts new people who want to live in Royston and I would contend that the level of new housing in the last ten years has almost guaranteed that Royston has more than covered a healthy share of the targets and requirements of North Herts. I ask the committee not to be pressured into thinking that these eighty-four houses represent an easy bonus to any existing developments already agreed within the local housing plan. The downsides are considerable and in

my opinion outweigh any gains. The effect on the personal wellbeing of long standing residents within a significant radius of the proposed development are considerable and should not be dismissed as Nimbyism, they are not, they are real, they are heartfelt and they stem from a deep sense of wishing to ensure that speculative developments like these are scrutinised and decisions are consequently made that support reasonable and sensible objection.

In short, this proposal lacks credibility, is ill thought through and not without an element of desperation in seeking to vindicate a wholly inappropriate means of access. I trust NHDC will judge it accordingly.

Yours sincerely
Alex Campbell.