

Alexander Prosser-Snelling

6 Mallard Road

Royston

SG8 5DG

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

Thursday, August 7, 2025

Dear Mr. Glover,

Re: Planning Application 25/01708/OP – Outline for Land Opposite Heath Farm, Briary Lane, Royston

I am writing in response to the above planning application. Having reviewed the plans and technical documents, I am familiar with the site and strongly object to this development for several reasons:

1. Housing Supply and Local Plan

The proposed site is not included in the current North Hertfordshire Local Plan and lies outside the settlement boundary. Royston has already met its housing allocation, and this site poses engineering challenges, including difficult access and steep topography. Therefore, it cannot contribute to the District's 5-year housing land supply. The development would negatively affect the area's character and conflict with the adopted Local Plan.

2. Landscape and Visual Impact

Previous applications (2018 and 2020/21) for this site were rejected due to its detrimental visual and landscape effects, including its prominent location, steep terrain, and adverse impact on local landmarks like Therfield Heath (SSSI). The current proposal fails to address these concerns and conflicts with several policies in the Local Plan.

3. Living Conditions

The proposed access and development will significantly impact neighboring properties (Numbers 23 and 25), creating issues with privacy, overshadowing, and a sense of being overlooked. These concerns were not properly addressed in earlier applications and remain valid.

4. Highways and Transport

The site's location makes it unsustainable in terms of access to local services and transport networks. The proposed road access, including Echo Hill and Briary Lane, is inadequate and conflicts with safety regulations. The steep topography further complicates pedestrian and vehicular movement, increasing reliance on cars and adding strain to the already constrained local infrastructure.

5. Ecology

The development threatens protected species and wildlife, with insufficient ecological surveys conducted. The biodiversity net gain calculations are inadequate, and the proximity to Therfield Heath SSSI increases the risk of harm to local wildlife. The project fails to meet necessary ecological standards.

6. Flood Risk and Water Quality

Due to the site's steep incline, surface water runoff poses a significant flood risk to neighboring properties. Additionally, the site lies over a major aquifer, presenting a risk of groundwater contamination. The current drainage plans are insufficient, and the existing sewage infrastructure cannot handle the increased demand.

7. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

It is unclear whether an EIA has been conducted for this application. Previous applications indicated a likely significant environmental impact, particularly regarding Therfield Heath SSSI, and this proposal should also undergo a detailed EIA.

8. Health Capacity

Local health services are already under strain and cannot accommodate the additional residents from this development. This could negatively impact the health and wellbeing of the existing community, and the site should be reconsidered due to these concerns.

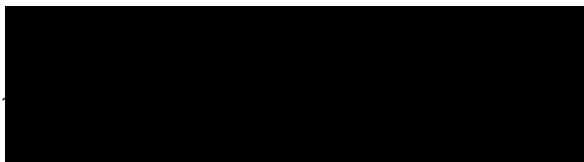
9. Agricultural Land

The development will result in the loss of high-quality agricultural land, which should be preserved for food production.

Conclusion

Given the numerous significant issues outlined above, I strongly urge the Council to reject this development proposal. The negative impacts far outweigh any potential benefits, and the objections raised by local residents are well-supported and justified.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of the person writing the letter.