N.H.D.C.
15 OCT 2018

20 Echo Hill
Royston
Herts
SG8 9BB
8th October 2018

Planning Officer
North Herts District Council
Letchworth

Dear Ms Tyler

Planning Request for 107 houses opposite Heath Farm ref 18/00747/OP

My previous objections to this project still stand.

The new proposal has raised further objections

1/ The NPPF para 2.5.2 refers to " safe and suitable access to site can be achieved by ALL people". The junction of Briary Lane/Stakepiece Road/Sun Hill has a further increased risk to safety as there is no footpath along the south side of Sun Hill, all existing footpaths in the area are too narrow to accommodate pushchairs and mobility scooters and people are regularly seen travelling along the road. Additional concern would be in bad weather and the use of mobility scooters especially travelling too and from the town, if they lose control on the steep gradients, or run out of power, they could suffer injury.
It is noted that the proposal to install drop kerbs and tactile slabs at various locations has been withdrawn.

2/ Photographs used in the documents are incorrectly identified, the ones referring to Echo Hill are actually Layston Park (Page 12 plate 4, photo repeated on page 18), this gives the incorrect impression of wide roads and footpaths

3/ Design Access Statement Page 22 states ' one bus stop within 400m at Barkway St and several within 800m, the Revised New Plan page 19, 5.3.4 states a distance of 920m to Baldock St and 965m to Bus Station and then on Table 1517/1/A states 1030m to Baldock St and the Bus Station. This is misleading and confusing

4/ Bus timetables changed in July, there is no direct bus to Hertford, the first bus in the morning is 07.53, arrival at Herford after changing at Buntingford is 09.39 and the last bus is at 16.55 from Hertford arriving at Royston at 18.21
The direct bus to Letchworth the first bus from Royston is 07.28 arriving at 08.30 at Letchworth and last bus from Letchworth at 17.30 arriving at Royston at 18.24

Neither service could be considered as a get-you-to-work service

5/ The 'Draft Heads of Terms' states that:-
a/ 'Public Transport will be diverted into site' how will this be achieved as there is no facility on site to turn a vehicle around?

b/ The developer – implying not Gladmans – is willing to make a contribution towards the introduction of a formal pedestrian crossing point on Baldock Road adjacent to the Fire station – Already installed!!

c/ Developer will make a contribution towards the upgrade of surface treatment to nearby Public Rights of Way – no specific right of way stated does this include Bridleways 13 &14???
Bridleway 14 is a protected Green Lane

No further contributions to improving the highway

6/ Arboricultural Report originally proposed the removal of the trees along the bridleway next to the SSSI, but the revised report has identified substantial water services in the bridleway that forms a barrier to the roots, this leaves a very narrow corridor along the bridleway to install all the utility services – gas, electricity, foul sewer, surface water interceptors and soak-aways, cable networks etc., is there enough room, how will the RPA be policed

7/ Design and Access Statement
Page 48 – states ' a short section of existing bridleway will be widened ....whilst retaining the majority of trees along the western boundary with Therfield Heath – this implies that some trees will be cut down – these are on the SSSI how can this be allowed?

Page 7 Figure 4 – The illustration indicates the structures along Echo Hill stand well above the and dominate the site, this is no the case as they are a lot lower

8/ Flood zones have been identified, but Water Protection Zone 1 has been ignored, no risk assessment as to the possible contamination of the towns water supply has taken place, large areas of permeable surfaces are proposed, especially where vehicles are parked, this puts the water supply at risk.

9/ Design and Access Statement Page 61 states that 2 storey buildings will not exceed 8.25m in height excluding finials. On the steeply sloping section this requires the land to be benched so the building complies with this statement. This will lead to excessive noise and dust during construction of berms, large volumes of material transported around site affecting the visual impact of the site.
If this height restriction is ignored, the foundations on the lower side of the structure will be excessively high as the topography of the ground rises steeply, oversites will have extensive brickwork the DPC level and then the 8.25m height will be added.
Either proposal will not only affect the visual impact of the buildings on the escarpment, but will also be an overbearing, intrusive, invasion of privacy to the houses on Echo Hill.

10/Page 50 Density
quote ' higher density of housing would be restricted to the north eastern side with Layston Park etc., no mention of Echo Hill and its exposure to the development

11/Pages 51 &53 Access and Movement
Primary Street – minimal frontages – 1 to 3m
Secondary Street – nominal frontage -1 to 3m

Trees are shown in the garden, diagrams show large trees on their proposed layouts? How big a tree can you get in a 3m (10ft) garden?

12/ Page 67 indicates the affect on Echo Hill, but does not accurately depict the length of the gardens and the gradient of the site, the Echo Hill house is 7.5m deep and garden 11.0m deep, i.e 1.5 times the house depth; the proposed garden is shown as 3 times the depth of the new house on the cross section and only twice the length on the plan – page 62. the cross section shows the trees being approximately 16.5m (50ft) high (twice the height of the building), but these trees are not shown on the plan, as the existing hedge is only shown, this is misleading and confusing.
The affect of these proposals will place the buildings and gardens in Echo Hill in permanent shadow affecting the quality of life in our living room, quality of light and warmth in the house and garden affect our solar panels, and have an overbearing presence. The tree canopy of a 16m tree will over fly our garden and the roots affect our property

13/ The current hedge/trees – cherry plum, are an important asset and screen to our property but also a valued landscape feature, I am concerned that these could be removed by the adjacent private owner causing an overbearing presence to our gardens and living space

14/The mitigation proposed in the Landscape and Visual Assessment would take a minimum of 15-20 years, on the assumption that the residents do not remove the trees or they die, the time for this suggested mitigation to reduce a significant impact to moderate is unacceptable

15/ In private ownership the trees could be removed or poorly maintained, this could affect our privacy or our safety should such large trees so close to our property fall

16/ The screening afforded by these trees is only effective during spring/summer as they are not evergreen, therefore in winter months our properties will fully visible within the confines of the site and the site will be clearly visible on the escarpment

17/The Urban Design Assessment for Royston identifies that the town is located in a shallow bowl of East Anglian chalk escarpment that slopes down to the lower lying Cambridge plain. This development stands on the rim of the bowl, proposed feature buildings of render and ship-lap acting like beacons above Royston, this will adversely affect the escarpment - see attached

18/ To ensure the proposed development meets the Secure by Design requirements, a fence or wall would have to be erected at the rear of my property this would be in an elevated location and would have an overbearing and dominating effect on my property, the construction of the fence could also lead to the destruction of the existing hedgerow and trees

19/ There appears to be a lack parking on site, with frontages limited to 5.5m and the width of some buildings 3.0 to 3.5m wide, road width of 5.5m will have the same parking problems as Briary Lane

20/ There is a proposal to construct a car-park to replace the current one on the Bridleway for use by people using the Heath, with the lack of parking and the narrow road (5.5m) it is foreseeable that the owners and tenants on the new development will park their vehicles there long term to the detriment of people using the Heath

21/ Footpaths through the site,are taken through hedgerow, at two locations the hedgerow is protected and the hedgerow of Bridleway 13 is on a bank with a drop into the field and forms part of an ancient droveway. The Draft Heads of Terms states that a contribution would be made to improve the surface of Public Rights of Way, Bridleway 14 is a protected Green Lane and would not benefit from improvement.

22/ Drawing reference GLD/01220/201/P3, cross sections on drawing incorrectly referenced

23/ Very poor line of sight for personnel/drivers/cyclists for pedestrians crossing Briary Lane from Stakepiece Road into Sun Hill

24/ No allowance for crossing the new road from Therfield Heath onto the footpath on east side

25/Speed ramp at chainage 190 on 11.7% gradient, gradient of ramp when going up hill will be excessive and will be difficult to negotiate in icy conditions

26/Current diversions for surface water currently existing along the bridleway could be blocked off, leading to a cascade of water running down the brideway and Briary Lane and into the town

27/Surface water drainage not addressed, this is an ongoing problem in Briary Lane gully pots and pipes are blocked regularly with debris, no drainage/soakaways with interceptors are indicated on the drawing below the farm entrance

28/A long term closure of the road south of Sun Hill can be expected for the installation of utility services in the road, this is already difficult due to the number of water pipes installed to supply Royston with potable water. Access to Wicker Hall Reservoir will be interrupted

29/The line of sight for motorists turning north out of Sun Hill into Briary Lane is very poor, with vehicles travelling at 40kph this is very dangerous.

30/The pavement on west side London Road (A10), south of Sun Hill is dangerous for all pedestrians and children, it is extremely narrow (0.75m at Bay window) and there is a high risk of being hit by a LGV wing mirror, this should not be considered as a safe access into town

31/Local Cycling and Walking Plans April 17 identifies route selection tool to include directness, gradient, safety, connectivity, and comfort, Briary Lane has a gradient upto 11.7% and not over 5% for 100m, the dynamic envelope is not wide enough for a vehicle to safely pass a cyclist and the T junction onto Baldock Street does not have a level section before the junction making it difficult to stop on a cycle. Cyclists cannot be safely overtaken whilst riding up Brairy Lane as width of road is too narrow.

32/Very poor line of sight for cyclists when travelling north along Briary lane; seeing pedestrians coming off the Heath and out of Stakepiece Road

33/ Cycling Isochrones, 2KM incorrect as there is no public access to Greys Farm and cycles are not allowed on Therfield Heath

34/HGV's travelling along Sun Hill would mount the pavement when passing vehicles, putting pedestrians at risk and damage the pavement

35/There is no information on construction traffic and its volume

36/An 89% increase over the 2023 projected figure, in the LGV traffic due to this development is unacceptable

37/ The proposed development is outside the settlement boundary

38/ The proposed development not on the local emerging plan

39/Attached is a photograph of Briary Lane north of the Sun Hill/Stakepiece Road junction highlighting the dangers of the junction – Blind corners left and right, pedestrian crossing point from Stakepiece Road on far side of road across to grassed area

40/ Attachment 2 Gladmans Plan with comments indicate
a/ where the photographs were taken on Layston Park
b/ where the photograph was taken on Briary Lane,
c/ the miss representation of 16m high trees on section BB page 67
d/ the protected green lane,
e holes made in the green lane hedgerow
f/ where featured houses appear on the escarpment and could stand out as beacons on the escarpment
g/no footpath along Sun Hill on the common land

41/ Attachment 3 Photograph taken from the steps of Wimpole Hall, a grade 1 listed building, the fields where the proposed development is indicated, but it also shows how Royston is built in a hollow and cannot be seen, this unique feature is destroyed by this development

Yours faithfully

D.R.S. BUBBINS.

3 ATTACHMENTS ENCLOSED

Briary Lane, south end at the junction of Sun Hill and Stakepiece Road.
Little line of sight turning left and right at junction difficult to use footpath on right hand side – narrow & elevated

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Photograph taken from the Steps at the front of Wimpole Hall



LAND OFF BRIARY LANE, ROYSTON.
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT.

