

16 Echo Hill

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

14th August 2025

Dear Mr. Glover,

Reference: 25/01708/OP Land Opposite Heath Farm Briary Lane Royston Hertfordshire

I am writing to express my strong objection to the above planning application. Having thoroughly reviewed the plans and being well-acquainted with the site, I believe that the development of houses in this location is highly inappropriate.

This site lies outside the adjusted settlement boundary and has not been designated by the council in either the current or emerging local plan. The NHDC carefully determines where new housing is needed based on the town's needs and its residents, rather than external parties with questionable motives.

The emerging Local Plan and its policies should be given significant weight and considered by the planning officers during their assessment.

Visual Impact: The visual impact remains largely unchanged from the initial application, and thus, the previous decision of the planning officers should still apply.

The site poses a risk to the water supply due to its location above a major aquifer. The flood risk has not been adequately mitigated, posing a threat to residents of Echo Hill, Sun Hill, and Briary Lane.

As a resident bordering the proposed site, I am concerned that the elevated development will result in a loss of privacy and overshadowing, negatively impacting my residential amenity.

Access: The proposed access via the demolition of an existing property on Echo Hill is unfeasible. As a father of two young boys, I am deeply concerned about the increased traffic and the associated danger to pedestrians, including my sons, especially given the already constrained access to the local primary school. Echo Hill is already at capacity, and adding more houses relying on Echo Hill, Sun Hill, and Briary Lane is impractical.

Ecology: The ecological impact remains unchanged from the initial application, and the previous decision of the planning officers should still apply. New reports from other areas indicate that similar developments adversely affect neighbouring SSSIs, which has not been adequately assessed.

We would like to make you aware of restrictive covenants which are in place in Echo Hill and which we as a resident(s) of Echo Hill have the benefit of, and we reserve the right to take enforcement action if these covenants are breached.

The covenants were wrongly dismissed by NHDC planning during the previous determination of planning application 20/00744/OP.

The enforcement of the covenants would be a lengthy legal process possibly taking several years to be resolved. A tribunal action would therefore significantly delay the deliverability of the development. This factor therefore means that the possibility of a lengthy delay to implementation will become a material planning consideration in the decision-making process.

You are aware from the previously refused applications for this site the strength of feeling against this development from the community of Royston and the significant impact this development will have directly to the residents of Echo Hill. A letter from an Appointed Solicitor was issued to both Gladman and Number 24 Echo Hill during the previous application of 20/00744/OP, regarding the breach of the covenants and the intention for enforcement action, this remains the case for this latest application and Echo Hill residents will pursue this going forward for this latest application.

In addition, if the community is successful with enforcing the covenants and preventing the demolition of Number 24, both the construction traffic and main site access would not be able to enter the site via Echo Hill, the alternative would be to

use the bridleway and therefore the reasons for refusal in the 2018 application associated with the negative impact to the neighbouring SSSI would still stand.

Therefore, due to the protective covenants in place, which residents of Echo Hill will enforce, it cannot be guaranteed that Gladman will be able to deliver this site and therefore this site cannot contribute towards the 5-year NHDC housing supply.

To summarise, in considering all the above points, I strongly urge the council to reject this damaging and unsustainable planning proposal.

Yours faithfully,

Simon Atterton