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Ben Glover
Senior Planning Officer
North Hertfordshire District Council
Council Offices
Gernon Road
Letchworth Garden City
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Date: 5th August 2025

Dear Mr Glover,

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

I'm writing to object to the above planning application. Having reviewed the plans, I am shocked and have serious concerns about the proposal.

For one, the site isn't included in the Local Plan and doesn't need to be developed to meet housing supply targets. North Herts already has enough land allocated to meet housing demand, so this feels like an unnecessary and speculative attempt to build on land that should stay undeveloped.

Building here would completely change the character of this part of Royston and specifically this area - currently it's open countryside and a clear edge to the town. If houses go up, it'll have a big visual impact, especially from the public footpaths nearby. It would just sprawl out into the countryside. The area is also on a very large gradient hill on a quiet cul de sac- this is not an area to build on.

Traffic is another concern. Briary Lane and the surrounding roads is already very busy especially at peak times, and more cars from this development will make things worse. The access road isn't suitable for the extra traffic, and it could be a safety issue for pedestrians and cyclists. The trucks and heavy machinery are not going to be able to access the road without mounting kerbs, causing obstructions or damaging the verges that currently exist.

There are environmental concerns too. This site supports local wildlife, and I along with other residents have plenty of evidence of this. With so many species under pressure, any new development should be going above and beyond to boost local nature - this one doesn't.

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 neighboring 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.

Overall, I think this development would be catastrophic – to the landscape, to the community, and to the environment. I hope the council will take all these concerns on board and refuse the application.

Yours sincerely,

Ambir Mann