

35 Layston Park
Royston
Herts
SG8 9DS
15 August 2025

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

Dear Mr Glover

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

I write in connection with the above planning application. I have examined the plans and know the site well. I wish to object strongly to the development of houses in this location.

This is a speculative proposal for a site that is not allocated for development in the North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2031 and lies outside the adjusted settlement boundary.

I consider the site to be unable to contribute to NHDC's housing land supply due to its problematic location, its constrained access and steep topography. Royston is already contributing a significant number of properties towards the NHDC 5-year housing land supply.

My property backs directly onto the site and so I know the location very well and the landscape impact remains unjustifiably harmful from this proposal, a fact that was correctly acknowledged in previous, failed applications. This important, local environment would be subjected to severe and irrevocable visual change due to the elevated and prominent position, particularly from the vantage points of the Therfield Heath SSSI. The elevation of the site means that existing properties will be overlooked impacting on our privacy. Existing trees and vegetation on the perimeter of the site are deciduous and do not provide screening. I am also concerned that disturbance to the surrounding soil will have a negative impact on the protected trees within this perimeter including an increased risk of toppling established beech trees which have shallower root systems.

The intended site access via Echo Hill is a constricted access point. Echo Hill is steep and the access is proposed via one existing residential property. Covenants are in place that challenge the viability of the proposed demolition of the house at number 24 to gain access to the site. Steep access does not encourage walking and cycling to access the site rather than by vehicles. In addition, winter weather would cause significant difficulties to vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians entering and exiting the site.

The surrounding highways infrastructure on Sun Hill and Briary Lane is already congested with parked cars, single-track sections, low-visibility corners, and a one-way system. There is already difficulty exiting both of these roads onto the A10 and Melbourn Street respectively. Construction traffic negotiating both this and Echo Hill would have a huge impact on existing residents, as would the ongoing increased traffic from the proposed new site. The pavements on these routes are also quite narrow.

The site lies above a major aquifer and local water supply and this area is also classified as a *Source Protection Zone 1* making it of higher risk for ground contamination. The site topography increases the flood risk to properties downstream from the site.

The proposed site is also adjacent to the Therfield Heath SSSI and as such will have a significant impact on at risk and protected species.

Royston has already been and is currently being subjected to significant development that has placed substantial pressure on our Health, Educational and other social services. A further development will further exacerbate this real issue that is having a detrimental effect on those of us living in the town.

Finally, it is worth noting that this is not the first application for planning permission from the same developer. All for what is practically the same scheme and with none of the issues that have resulted in previous applications being rejected, having been addressed.

Yours sincerely

Simon Timms