Hello, I am [redacted] here to support my neighbours as a Budletts Common resident of Thirty years.

I am deeply concerned about the potential impact of Mockbeggars on a medieval environment and also on the corridor of species that may not be in evidence. I had the opportunity to attend the recent four-week Downlands Farm Inquiry in Uckfield. During this inquiry, Dr Stenning, an eminent ecologist and a University of Sussex lecturer, highlighted the importance of the connected arc for biodiversity between Buxted, through Budletts to Lake Wood. This wildlife corridor is crucial for the movement of various species, including bats and in the NPPF stepping stone habitats are normally protected.

While others will discuss the bats in detail, I felt it necessary to bring to your attention the importance of this link from a non-expert perspective. Various species lists were made available during the Downlands Farm inquiry, which concluded in December, with the outcome still pending. I have brought a link to the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre species list, which was within the inquiry and the same wildlife corridor that this Mockbeggars appeal sits within.

During the Downlands Farm Inquiry, I listened to the evidence regarding bats and heard first-hand Surrey Wildlife Trust advice on Myotis sp. This species should have been investigated with further study. It was also in evidence that no one knew where the Barbastelle and Myotis sp were coming from. Being rare, it was of note and not to be ignored. The late Tony Hutson of Sussex Bat Conservation advised me personally that Bechstein are recorded in the area and needed more in-depth study. To date, this has not happened.

The Budletts LWS citation is moss lichen bryophytes, so it is likely no one considered the prime unrecorded priority and rock habitats for the bats. I hope the inspector will see this on his site visit and conclude that further studies should have been carried out.

[redacted], I can attest to the fact that it is car-dependent. Even for simple tasks like popping up to Tesco Express for supplies, or a primary school or Uckfield college, we drive because of the unpleasant road environment and time to access facilities. Cycling as a family is unsafe and dangerous due to the hill and volume of cars. It is rare to see a family cycling in Uckfield at school time.

Our personal safety is at risk turning into the lane. We have to be incredibly careful turning across London Road, as cars overtake while we wait to turn. This is increasing as the traffic increases. I have personally seen cars speeding downhill and overtaking at

speed. I am extremely concerned about personal safety due to unexpected bollards in the road and speeding cars racing on this stretch of road at night.

Finally, it might not be obvious, but because of the woodlands and hedgerows, this area is incredibly dark at night. It is a joy to watch the stars. Light spilling from the estate, higher in the landscape than the surrounding area, will spill light into this dark area.

Observations on Little Horsted SANG

- Little Horsted SANG, designed to offset a 1000 development, is a crucial green space.
- However, the development is not built out by 750 and the SANGS already sees a monthly car traffic of 3000-4000.
- However, the current car park often reaches capacity, causing cars to turn away.
- With only 250 of the 1000 developments built, my personal concerns are that the SANG has already reached capacity not by measurement of population but by physical use.
- There's also anecdotal evidence of increasing dog waste, which is detracting from the walking experience, and visitors returning to Ashdown Forest to avoid the dog waste at the SANGS.

Natural England's SANG Policy

- Natural England's policy on SANGs is national and provides guidelines for their design and management.
- However, there are concerns that the policy needs to be reviewed in light of local observations and findings from the Office for Environment Protection (OEP).
- I support the policy but feel it could now be improved and reviewed for Ashdown Forest.

Office for Environment Protection (OEP)

- The OEP has reviewed the Habitats Regulations and published a report on the effectiveness of environmental assessments, they raised concerns and a link to their assessments is provided.

Personal Observations

- I personally prefer to visit Ashdown Forest rather than the SANG, [redacted] and a beautiful ,stunning landscape.
- I believe that the weight attached of a financial contribution to the SANG in relation to the Mockbeggars site needs to be reconsidered, as I do not think it will be effective in this particular instance.
- There are concerns about the impact at Ashdown Forest, where visitor numbers have increased to around 1.6 million.

Aerial Image

- I have been given a copy of an aerial image, which clearly demonstrates the area is outside Uckfield town and in an open rural environment.

Land at Mockbeggars Farm in Budletts Common



Image 1 – Budletts Common High Weald well-preserved medieval heritage landscape

Links

to Downlands Farm inquiry case file

- https://www.wealden.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/land-at-downlands-farm-document-library/
- Including
- CD1/36 SxBRC Summary (same corridor and the 0.5km area includes Mockbeggars farm area)
- CD1/37 SxBRC Species List Summary document

OEP link to reports
https://www.theoep.org.uk/report/environmental-assessments-are-not-effective-they-should-be-due-practical-barriers

spoken made changes during reading above

Please visit Spring Cottage

I'm an Uckfield Town Councillor for Ridgewood, the other side of town and a new link role as Ashdown Forest, I am also a District Councillor for a different ward in Uckfield as Ridgewood and Little Horsted with development of 1000, 90 approved of which 250 underway and several small developments of 9s.