Wealden District Council Planning Application number WD/2022/1637/MEA at Downlands Farm, Uckfield.

Proposed 424 houses to be built on green fields north of Uckfield town

Appeal reference APP/C1435/W/23/3321978

Objections to this application

My wife and I have lived not far from the site for the proposed development subject of this planning application for forty one years and we, our children and grandchildren love to walk around this area and also at Lake Wood. My wife and I **strongly objected** to the original proposed planning application and also wish to comment on the appeal against the refusal of Wealden District Council to grant approval on the following grounds:

Destruction of diverse habitat

The area subject of this application is home to over 70 species of birds, mammals and insects and it is also home to endangered dormice and bats. The fields in this area is formed from old grasses and hay meadows, surrounded by irreplaceable ancient woodland, including rare wet woodland and sandstone rock outcrops. The fields are annually cut for hay providing lush animal feed with a mixture of grass and wild flowers. Wildlife are being cornered by the destruction of their environment at every turn. Climate change is a major threat and yet government is allowing developers to alter the natural balance of eco systems.

Woodland Trust Nature Reserve

The proposed site abuts the Woodland Trust Nature Reserve, Lake Wood which is a sensitive area with a number of rare species inhabiting it. The proposals threaten a piece of Uckfield history with the wonderful Mesolithic rock shelters, lake and beautiful woodland under threat if this application is granted.

Impact on local area

Uckfield and many neighbouring towns and villages are already being ravaged by developers for profit with a number of proposed developments under consideration, all of which will add to the strain on the infrastructure. We have real concerns about the increased traffic between Uckfield and Maresfield and the impact on local infrastructure.

The infrastructure in East Sussex and Wealden District Council is already at breaking point with poor road surfaces which are crowded with vehicles. The NHS are under considerable strain, particularly in this area where it is extremely difficult to get an appointment with a GP. There are insufficient schools, particularly as Holy Cross Primary school is due to close in December 23 and at secondary level where the capacity of Uckfield College is not likely to be increased. Water supply is already a problem, particularly during hot summers and dry spells and the impact of another 424 houses being built will add to the problem.

It is interesting that at the Ridgewood Farm development, building appears to have stopped and that further phases have been put on hold. Why do we need a further

development of this size in beautiful countryside?

Applications for Downland Farm have previously been refused as far back as 1957 and the timing of this latest application comes during the summer holidays when most people are unaware of the case. This area has never been zoned for development in the Local Plan. The reasons for refusal in 2007/8, after a public inquiry, apply just as much now as they did then. The inquiry found that this was an unsuitable site for a major development.

The application described the creation of a SANGS but there is already beautiful countryside on the site to which the public have ready access. If this SANGS follows the example of the SANGS situated at Little Horsted, then the public will be provided with another ugly barren desert like area. This may improve in time but it will take many years. Let us leave this beautiful site as it is for everyone to enjoy.

Footpath and cycle access from Snatts Road

Snatts Road is already very busy with vehicular traffic which at times travel very fast down this narrow road. The proposed access for pedestrians and cyclists being sited near to Buckswood Grange appears to be very dangerous and may well add to the risk of serious injury or death.

In conclusion, we both re-state our strong objections to this planning application.

[redacted]

6th July 2023

For official use only (date received): 06/07/2023 15:46:02

The Planning Inspectorate

COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)

Please note that comments about this case need to be made within the timetable. This can be found in the notification letter sent by the local planning authority or the start date letter. Comments submitted after the deadline may be considered invalid and returned to sender.

Appeal Reference: APP/C1435/W/23/3321978

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference	APP/C1435/W/23/3321978
Appeal By	GLEESON LAND AND JOHN ALISON LAND AND RESEARCH LTD
Site Address	Land at Downlands Farm Uckfield TN22 3PU Grid Ref Easting: 546619 Grid Ref Northing: 122026

SENDER DETAILS

Name	[redacted]
Address	[redacted]

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- ☐ Appellant
- ☐ Agent
- ☑ Interested Party / Person
- ☐ Land Owner
- ☐ Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- ☐ Final Comments
- ☐ Proof of Evidence
- ☐ Statement
- ☐ Statement of Common Ground
- ☑ Interested Party/Person Correspondence
- ☐ Other

COMMENT DOCUMENTS

The documents listed below were uploaded with this form:

Relates to Section:	REPRESENTATION
Document Description:	Your comments on the appeal.
File name:	Downlands Farm - Appeal to WDC planning application number WD2022 1637 MEA.pdf

PLEASE ENSURE THAT A COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED WHEN POSTING THE ABOVE DOCUMENTS TO US