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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

YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

continuation of statement :-
updated
There is a bus service at the end of our drive and in 30 years we have not once used it due to the rural nature of Uckfield, family pressures, time or commuting. I cannot see that a bus service will provide much of an advantage to Downlands as I am sure many families will be like ourselves.

Much as I walk and cycle with our children where practical, over 20 years of primary and secondary education we also had to be safe , practical and time efficient around school runs and after school activities. I do not consider the plan presented will adequately promote walking or cycling to the majority of parents at Downlands or in this area due to its location, safety, gradients and lack of ease of use (especially during inclement weather)

Downlands area between Lake Wood and Budletts is an unlit countryside area and the dark skies can see the milky way and the stars at night are stunning. We are extremely concerned about the impact of light across Lake Wood and all the ancient woodlands, especially the rare bats and dormouse. The introduction of light for Downlands Farm development will have a profound effect on dark skies, quiet dark woodlands and the ambiance of the woodlands. The bypass at this section is not lit and the A22 car lights are hidden by the woodlands surrounding the A22. I feel the dark sky and no lights in these woodlands and fields is a material.

Visitors to the area trying to access the SANGS car park and the woodland will create a huge volume of cars and thousands of visitors which will severely impact the ecology of the woodlands through impact of access, footpaths created when navigating wet field and wet woodlands, cycling in the woodlands where previously there has been none. The car park off Snatts Road is inconsiderate to the needs of existing residents, the dangers the extra traffic will promote from the Rocks Road junction, Snatts Road to the Ringles Cross junction is ill conceived and unnecessary. The woodland path to Maresfield and the footpath from Snatts Road to Lake Wood is quietly enjoyed by walkers from Uckfield without the need of a car park. In addition, a SANGS car park will promote thousands of cars and walkers and therefore thousands of dogs a month in formerly a quiet accessible walk . The ecological impact on this environment is ill conceived and inconsiderate to the residents of Snatts Road and Ringles Cross.

Walking : as a family in the same area as Downlands Farm , whilst we would have liked to, our reliance has been on our cars for 30 years including access to shops, services, schools, work and children's clubs. Whilst it is lovely to be out walking, In my opinion, the location of Downlands Farm only promotes use of the car especially for families accessing services within Uckfield simply because it is too long to walk to the town and back (each way, with shopping and or children) it is unrealistic to think otherwise and some of the route is far from attractive or difficult in inclement weather.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, I consider that the proposals for walking and cycling will not be as efficient and well-used in practice as the Appellants promote.

The physical constraints of the Downlands Farm site; the harm to ancient woodlands promoted by 424 houses, a SANGS car park for thousands of walkers and dogs, accessible ancient woodland for cycling, lacks justification for development and the cycle route itself; will all add to the reluctance of occupants to leave their cars at home.

Thus accessibility by public transport, walking, and cycling will not be so great as estimated by the Appellants, and the subsequent increased reliance upon the car will be in conflict with those planning policies aimed at reducing such use.

I am also very concerned that the considerable size of this estate is very close to the Ashdown Forest

just at Maresfield. Even with harming the ancient woodland access with large numbers of estate walkers and visitors to SANGs car parks, the number of people driving from the Downlands Farm estate will definitely increase the number of visitors using Ashdown Forest as the site is very close to the forest and within the distance walkers have stated in visitor surveys that they use the Forest, between 2-5 km

The impact to the woodlands between Lake Wood, cutting through woodlands for two roads and cycling, and the damage which will be brought to Lake Wood and its lake filling from flowing water from the fields when it rains, and the history of Lake Wood to Buckswood Grange, I feel should ensure that the Downlands area is not developed to protect the wildlife and woodlands.

For all these reasons, I ask that this Appeal should be DISMISSED.