Archived: 16 October 2023 14:22:07
From: [redacted]
Sent: 15 October 2023 20:28:34
To: planning
Subject: 3321978 Downlands Farm, Uckfield - Amended plans
Sensitivity: Normal

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Good afternoon,

As a resident of Snatts Road and long term user of the Downlands Farm area I would like to share some of my thoughts on the amended plans:

1) Boardwalks and detailed hard/soft landscaping

The proposed 2.3km footpath goes through an area of purple orchids (northern entrance to ancient woodland).

The open nature of the current field means it is very much used for activities such as football, kite jumping, kite flying, picnics, watching the sunset - to name but a few. It allows people of all ages to be out in nature being active, cementing friendships and making friends. The loss of this area (is proposed woodland on the map) and associated opportunities is a loss for the people of Uckfield.

The people who use this area like the fact that they can walk from Snatts Road to Lake wood and have plentiful views of nature, and not a lot else. There will no longer be the option for this walk - even though it has been submitted by the community as a proposed footpath/right of way. Further more, whilst an "important view" towards Ashdown forest is indicated the other "important view" - from the south west of the proposed development toward the South Downs - will be lost. In fact the whole - being in nature - magic of the area will be lost if the development is allowed.

2) Proposed SANG access and pedestrian crossing from Snatts Road

The proposed car park is adjacent to an area of the road which is very prone to black ice. I myself have seen a car flip on to its back there. Cars turning in/slowing down for others to do so would be more at risk of slipping and getting into danger.
Also, as pointed out in the updated EIA (7.245) the car park will adversely affect the native reptile population.

3) Proposed emergency access

This would involve disrupting the woodland area adjacent to the A22 and should not be allowed as the continuous nature of the wood is important from an ecological perspective.

I would also like to make a comment on the environmental report:

I am not an ecologist but I do have a degree in Biochemistry and I know enough about reptiles to understand that assessing reptile mats needs to be done once the day has started to warm up. I, and others, often saw personnel from Aspect Ecology out before 9am, looking under mats that the sun had not yet reached. Further more, using the historical temperature data the temperatures reported in the EIA do not tie in with the temperatures during the earlier hours of those days. And does not take into account the fact that some of the mats were not even in the sun. For example, on 5th May 2023 the Aspect team were seen out at 7am, and the temperature they reported (oddly on the 4th) was 17 degrees Celsius but the temperature was more like 10 or 11 at this time of day https://www.timeanddate.com/weather/uk/uckfield/historic?month=5&year=2023 Similarly on the 25th April - the temperature they report is not the temperature when they were seen inspecting the mats. This is one small detail I am aware of, whether there are others in the report I do not have the time to investigate.

Lastly, I would like to say that Joshua Mellor, in his 10/10/2023 summary states:

a. Delivery of new public open spaces in excess of local standards which should be afforded **moderate weight as a benefit** of creating new spaces for formal and informal recreation within walking distance of new homes and existing residents of Uckfield

Does he not understand that taking 3 fields of open space which the public use, building on 2 of them and creating car oarks to invite more people to the third one

does not support his statement. I appreciate the fields are not legally “public” but the signage in them “private shooting estate… “ etc doesn't actually deter anyone. Furthermore, if he thinks people will walk to the SANG why create car parks???

There has been far too much new information late in the day and whilst it is great it is so accessible to eveyone it is also stressful to think that the person in the street can have a say that might have an impact when really we can’t talk the language of the planners/developers and just want to have our beautiful bit of East Sussex maintained.

Thank you for reading,

Kind regards,

[redacted], PhD