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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

I am vehemently opposed to this proposed development of 424 houses on Downlands Farm.

These agricultural fields fields are inches from and adjoin an Ancient Woodland, Lake Wood, and regenerating Ancient Woodland. Once this Woodland is gone, it's gone. You can't go out and buy more. It has taken thousands of years to work as it does. It is fragile and precious. It is home to the Hazel Woodland Dormouse, an endangered species. The developers have carefully and illegally removed Ancient Woodland from their map and the woodland adjoining the A22 road. 424 new houses could mean upwards of 1696 people plus dogs and cars. A little further down the A22 we already have 1000 houses being built which could mean 4000 more people and 2000 more cars plus dogs. Just between these two developments (and there are 3 other developments locally as well). All these people need doctors, dentists, hospitals, schools and services. The schools are full. The doctors' and dentists' lists are closed and there is not the infrastructure to cope with this building mania that we are being subjected to. The A22 comes to a grinding halt several times a day as it is (a traffic accident snarls up the traffic for miles around if it closes the A22)and another two roundabouts with harmful lighting are only going to make matters worse.

South East Water clearly cannot cope. We already have a hosepipe ban at the time of writing. There is simply not enough water. We cannot take any more water out of the River Ouse, it is already suffering. Added to which, South East water has an appalling and shameful record of discharging raw sewage into the rivers and the sea. It clearly can't cope with all the new houses being proposed.

It makes no sense to build all these houses on perfectly good farmland when we desperately need to grow more food to feed the current and burgeoning population. If Brexit, Covid and now the Ukraine war have taught us nothing else, we clearly need to be more resilient where food and power supplies are concerned. The Government needs to be more proactive in encouraging youngsters to go into farming and food production and we NEED the land for that. Once it is concreted over, it's gone forever. That is criminal.

Lake Wood is home to the endangered Hazel Woodland Dormouse. You might not think this matters but it does. Lake Wood has a delicate ecosystem which has developed over thousands of years. The Dormouse needs extended foraging and breeding grounds which it has at present but any building along the A22 will wreck this and it will die out in a generation. They need to be able to move from tree to tree, which they can do at present; they can move all the way to Budletts Common. To start carving roads through for vehicles and emergency access would be fatal and the death knell to these and other important creatures like skylarks, hawfinch, lesser spotted woodpecker and curlew; 14 species of dragonfly and over 150 different moths and butterflies. There are bats, such as the Barbastelle (scarce in Sussex), rare invertebrates, reptiles, e.g. adders, grass snakes, lizards, slow worms; also amphibians such as frogs, toads and newts. Add the network of ghylls, conjoined with Shortbridge Stream (part of the migration stream for critically endangered European Eels). Pure greed will be responsible for their demise. We should be looking after our wildlife, protecting and nurturing it. Humans are part of the problem and part of the whole eco infrastructure.

Wealden District Council, Uckfield Town Council, numerous Parish Councils, The Woodland Trust (who own Lake Wood), the Sussex Wildlife Trust, Downlands Action Group, Dr Martyn Stennyng, the Ecologist, and Vivienne Blandford M.A., the Landscape archeologist, are all opposed to this development and know the irreversible harm it could do.

This application MUST be refused AGAIN. It has already sensibly been turned down once. It is development in quite the wrong place.

Yours sincerely
[redacted]