I would like to raise an objection to the intend housing development on the area known as Downlands Farm (WD/2022/1637/MEA) Appeal Reference APP/C1435/W/23/3321978

I have two main concerns about this proposed development that relate to the Ecology and Infrastructure. We (the population) are the Stewards of the Landscape and have a Duty of Care for maintaining the landscape and protecting wildlife.

Ecology:

The plans submitted clearly indicate that the precious belts of woodland, that act as homes and corridors for safe movement wildlife, will be broken and irreparable damage caused.

The proposed development takes place adjacent, to the 'ancient woodland' of Lakes Wood, and yet there is no statement given as to how the northern boundary (of Lakes Wood) will be improved to prevent unintended entrance by (people), and how that ancient woodland can be safeguarded.

The whole of the Downlands Farm is surrounded by 'ancient woodland' and houses many examples of protected Flora, and the removal of the 'woodland' (in parts) would totally destroy these habitats.

Cartographical evidence exists mapping the location of endangered species, such as 'dormice', and this development would have a devastating impact on such wildlife.
No indication can be seen in the Application of any attempt to survey such important and endangered species.

Currently there are several water channels, or 'ghylls', and storm water rivulets that drain, and infiltrate through, the Wealden Sandstones north westwards and form 'feeders' to the Shortbridge Stream, which itself is a tributary to the River Ouse. The development of housing is going to impact these waterways, and in turn affect the water wildlife, and species such migratory ells, and spawning fish. On the 20th July 2022 the Government published plans to reduce water pollution with the aim of protecting wildlife and create new habitats for nature. These should be foremost in the eyes of any potential developer.

The Sustainable Surface Drainage Systems (SUDs) - that now have to be part of any development of this scale - only offer partial lessening of surface water problems and drainage. They require to be established with infiltration and natural treatment aspects that can be monitored. Water is a resource that should be treated with a lot more concern

Preservation and Protection have to be the greater concern for an area such as this which harbours areas that are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and

historical routes, such as three hundred year old carriage drives, that were once part of eighteenth century way of life. Setting aside land as Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) is of no consolation. SANGS can not compensate for the loss of ancient woodlands and the damage of development. To become areas that are ecologically friendly takes decades, and within that continuing time frame further attenuation and protection is required. The application contains no mention of evaluating and maintaining the SANGS.

It is essential that our Guardianship of the Ecology requires us to prevent development on this Farm.

Infrastructure:
Within the local Wealden development plan (and this application) where are the plans to ensure that the growing population of the Uckfield area (TN22) is catered for with regard to the likes GP surgeries and Education facilities for both Primary and Secondary school education? Palming this problem on to other authorities is sidestepping the issue – 'where' and 'how' has to be resolved.

The application plan shows the development of an Access Roundabout in a location on the A22 / A26 that affords poor visibility from both directions and slap bang in the centre of an ancient woodland corridor. It also impacts, on the western side, to Butcher's Wood that will have a detrimental affect upon both the flora and fauna, and in addition to interfering with the stream meadows that have surface waters draining into the Shortbridge Stream (previously mentioned).

Foul Water Treatment is already a great concern for Uckfield. With the development of the 1000 homes on Ridgewood Farm underway; the 424 home Application on Downlands Farm; the proposed development of 400 homes at Horstedpond Farm will all place the current overworked Southern Water Treatment Plant under considerable strain. However, there is no mention of 'where and how' this growing problem could be resolved.

Fresh Water Supply. My greatest concern relates to Water Supply and how South East Water can possibly meet the massive increase to current Water Supply and Demand. As far as I am aware Uckfield's Water comes from two sources. A borehole (pumping station) in Hempstead Lane adjacent to Hempstead Mill – this has always been a limited supply source by nature of the borehole and can only supply water to a small percentage of Uckfield's northern houses. The main source of water is from Barcombe Water Treatment Station B, which stores water in a Bankside Reservoir with water abstracted from the River Ouse. The amount that can be abstracted (relates to the natural flow of water in the Ouse) is dictated by the volumn of water available from Ardingly Reservoir as determined by the river's Environmental Agency.

Based upon Wealden's population statistics for Uckfield Town and using the information available from South East Water and Water.org.com The average

water consumption of Uckfield is some 2,340,000 litres of water per day – that equates to the amount of water it takes to fill an Olympic sized swimming pool. The current development at Ridgewood will mean an estimated average demand of 460,000 litres of water per day, add the Downlands Farm development an additional demand of 196,736 litres of water per day will be required. That's a total increase 656,736 litres of water per day.

There is a finite amount of Water that can be abstracted from the River Ouse, and the housing development of the area south east of Haywards Heath, in Mid-Sussex, and Newick, in Lewes District Council, has already caused a large increase in demand on the Water Supply from Ardingly Reservoir.

Water is an essential demand of people, and South East Water's ability to meet the demand in the Uckfield Area, I feel, is unsustainable purely because the water is not available in the quantity demanded. Add to equation the other proposed developments of Horstedpond Farm (400 homes) Mockbeggers Farm (60 homes) and a further daily demand of 212,600.00 litres is added – an impossible amount to readily secure.

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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

COMMENT DOCUMENTS

The documents listed below were uploaded with this form:

Relates to Section: REPRESENTATION
Document Description: Your comments on the appeal.
File name: 2023 Appeal Downlands.doc

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