STATEMENT OF CASE

On behalf of:

The Mockbeggars Residents' Steering Group

In respect of:

Mockbeggars Farm, London Road, Budletts Common, Uckfield

Date:

9th January 2024

PINS ref:

APP/C1435/W/23/3330872

Local Planning Authority ref:

WD-2022-0648-MAO

1. Introduction

1.1. This Statement of Case is prepared on behalf of the Mockbeggars Residents' Steering Group ("MRSG"). We are members of the Coopers Green Residents and Neighbourhood Watch Associations, and in addition reflect the views of the 74 residents who wrote to object against the original planning application. We are against the application and respectfully ask that the Inspector refuses the Appeal.

1.2. This SoC **supersedes** the two previous documents already submitted to the Inspector: a) Mockbeggars Appeal ref APP/C1435/W/23/3330872 .pdf, submitted 29th November 2023; and b) Statement of Case PINS ref APPC1435W233330872 Mockbeggars Farm.pdf, submitted 11th December 2023.

1.3. This SoC combines evidence from the previous two documents with additional detail, documentation and arguments.

2. Landscape Character and Visual Impact

2.1. Threat to the existing landscape character is one of the most common threads in the many local objections to the development and is therefore one of the main focuses of this Statement. Central to the argument is that the site falls within the High Weald National Character Area. See Annexe 1; 1.1, 1.2 showing that Mockbeggars Farm is within the High Weald NCA.

2.2. In addition the Mockbeggars site will break the development boundary and heritage rural corridor of Uckfield within the National Character Area 122 High Weald, and is wholly inappropriate for Wealden LP 1998 Policies GD2, EN7, EN8, EN17, EN8, (See CD 14.2).

2.3. In their Statement of Case, the Appellant cites their Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which states that *"the proposals will not result in a significant change to the landscape character or visual environment over the longer term and, as such, it is considered that the proposed development can be successfully integrated in this location and is supportable from a landscape and visual perspective."* Further, the Appellant claims that neither the site nor its immediate setting represents a *"valued landscape with reference to para 174(a) of the NPPF".* This is untrue.

2.4. We refer to CD 14.14 *Character Area Profile – 122 High Weald pages 3, 5. 6,* which describe this area as *"ancient countryside and one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in northern Europe*" and that it "*consists of a mixture of fields, small woodlands and farmsteads connected by historic routeways, tracks and paths*". We refer to the map in Annexe 1.3 which clearly shows Mockbeggars is part of Budletts Common, an important well-preserved Medieval Heritage Landscape which, in turn, historically formed part of Buxted Park, a Grade II* listed and Medieval National Monument.

2.5. The NCA Profile for the High Weald places considerable emphasis on the presence of 'sandrock' (Ardingly Sandstone) outcrops (See CD 14.14 page 9), which form a distinctive part of the landscape character and also help to support much of the area's

biodiversity. Excellent examples of these are present directly adjoining the Mockbeggars Farm site, confirming the relevance of the NCA description, and are instrumental in supporting the continuity of this landscape character in an arc from Lake Wood through Downlands Farm and Budletts Common to Buxted Park (this being an important theme within the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the area). For a list of Geodiversity Rock outcrops please see Annexe 1.4. See Annexe 1.5 for an example of rock outcrops at Durrant House, adjacent to the development site.

2.6. We refer to NPPF para 185 "Conserving and enhancing the Natural Environment". Neither the Appellant nor the Council have assessed the designated and non-designated High Weald landscape, of which Mockbeggar is a part, and provides an arc of biodiversity and geodiversity between Uckfield and Buxted, as part of the countryside gap with Maresfield, which must be retained. See Annex 1.6 for The Wider Ecological Network around Mockbeggars Farm.

2.7. The significance of these features has been completely overlooked by the Appellant and we believe that the proposed development would have adverse impacts upon the landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones, ref NPPF 180 a); 185 a), b), c); 187 a); 188.

2.8. The Appellant claims that Mockbeggars falls under the category of "existing development" and in addition claims that the development of 60 houses on Mockbeggars Farm *"will not result in a significant change to the landscape character or visual environment"* We strongly disagree. The proposed housing estate is completely incongruous with the peaceful and tranquil general landscape character of the site and its surroundings. The topography of the land will mean for example that proposed dwellings will tower over the 14 houses along the North and East sides of the top field.



2.9. The proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to the relevant design and countryside protection aims of policies GD2, EN8, EN27 and DC17 of the Wealden Local Plan 1998 (CD 14.2), SPO1 of the Wealden District Local Plan Core Strategy 2013 (CD 14.1), and the NPPF.

2.10. We draw the Inspector's attention to four local sites that have recently been refused permission upon Appeal. We would respectfully suggest that these decisions (document library in "Development Plan" folder) be given considerable precedential weight in relation to the Mockbeggars Appeal. The decisions (in document library under "Relevant Decisions", and relevant paragraphs, are:

- APP/C1435/W/22/3307820 Land at Bird in Eye Farm, South of Bird in Eye Hill, Framfield, Uckfield, TN22 5HA. (CD14.15, paras 25, 29, 30, 57)
- APP/C1435/W/22/3292552 Mill House Farm, Maresfield, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 2ED. (CD14.16, paras 12, 13, 19, 21, 27, 66)
- APP/C1435/W/19/3228321 Charlwood Manor, Snatts Road, TN22 2AR. (CD17, paras 5, 7, 13)
- APP/C1435/W/23/ Land adjacent Burfield, Maynards Green Road , Maynards Green, Horam, TN21 ODG. (CD14.18, paras 8, 9, 11, 13)

3. Heritage

3.1. Whilst the Appellant commissioned a Heritage Statement by Savills, and the WDC Conservation Officer raised no objection to the development, we maintain that there has been inadequate or non-existent assessments of non-heritage assets and a lack of understanding of the surrounding heritage. This applies both to heritage aspects of the landscape (as noted above) and to built form.

3.2. In addition we believe that the development will harm the character of the area as well directly impacting the significance of individual heritage assets or the area as a whole.

3.3. The development is out of scale and the use of inappropriate modern materials will be visually jarring compared to the historic context. This will erode the overall aesthetic cohesion.

3.4. The proposed development would disrupt important views, vistas and skylines that contribute to the historic character but are not formal heritage attributes.

3.5. Traffic, noise or environmental impacts compromise the intact historic ambiance and setting experienced in the area.

3.6. NPPF 16 requires applications are supposed to conserve and enhance the historic environment, and we believe that the proposed development does not deliver an enhancement of heritage assets (quite the opposite), nor does it provide a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of our historic environment.

3.7. These heritage assets demonstrate that there is a pocket of buildings and countryside of great historic interest between Lake Wood and Buxted Park, and the Redline Boundary has not reflected on the heritage impact in this corridor.

3.8. The following is a list of the heritage assets that have not been recognised nor assessed:

Spring Cottage





- **Description:** Known heritage asset recognised by Historic England, and by Wealden Council (see Email from Wealden Senior Heritage Officer to Head of Planning.pdf in "Development Plan" folder, Document Library), the 'moated' property opposite the development site. Traditional roadside cottage 18th/19th century, retaining original form and character. Formerly a nursery school attended by Prince Charles when Royal Family visited South East.
- **Significance:** Architectural, Historic, Aesthetic.
- **Assessment:** None
- **Type of harm:** Substantial: causing severe or more than minor damage to the asset's setting.

Mockbeggars Farm





- **Description:** A former coaching inn and barn of Grade II* Buxted Park estate (which is also a SSSI and a National Monument for its medieval landscape), Mockbeggars Farm shares a boundary to the West of the development.
- **Significance:** Historic.
- **Assessment:** None.
- **Type of harm:** Substantial: development that results in long-term or permanent damage to significant heritage fabric, specifically potential subsidence or features, and causing severe or more than minor damage to the asset's setting.

Durrant House and The Quarry



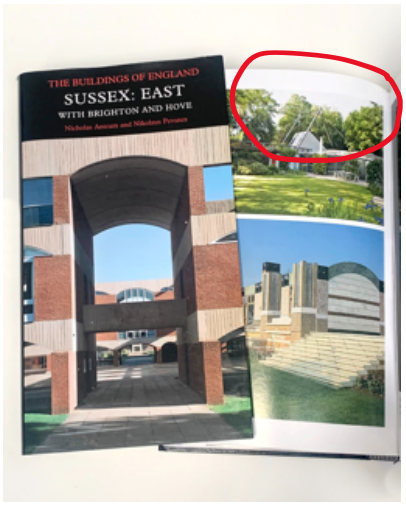


View from Durrant House of the development site.

- **Description:** Durrant House lies directly North of the development site, above the fields at Mockbeggars. Formerly known as The Warren, Durrant House is a highly unusual Arts and Crafts country house built by local master builder Stanley Durrant, in sandstone on the site of a sandstone quarry (The Quarry). Characterised by large Ardingly Sandstone outcrops with associated geomorphological features (ghylls produced by periglacial 'cambering' of the strata) and probable man-made rock shelters from the Mesolithic era. During WWII the house was requisitioned by the Canadian military and an anti-aircraft gun installed on the flat roof to defend against Luftwaffe bombers.
- **Significance:** Architectural, Historic, Aesthetic, Archaeological.
- **Assessment:** None.
- **Type of harm:** Substantial causing severe or more than minor damage to the asset's setting.

Eagle Rock





- **Description:** Located to the North of Mockbeggars is an RIBA Award winning house. Eagle Rock has twice been proposed for listing, and the architect has requested it be listed on his death. It is featured on the cover of the Architects Journal, illustrated in Pevsner's "Buildings of England", and picked as one of the top 100 houses of the 20th century. Along with Durrant House, Eagle Rock hosts

sandstone outcrops and rare Bryophites that are extremely sensitive to changes in air quality.
- **Significance:** Architectural, Aesthetic.
- **Assessment:** None.
- **Type of harm:** Substantial.

3.9. We would respectfully ask the Inspector to review the heritage assets which the Appellant has not assessed – as detailed above – and to come to his own conclusion as to the status of these assets and their significance in the context of the proposed development.

4. Water Environment

4.1. Please see *Evidence on Water Environment - Dr. Alan Thompson.pdf* (CD14.13) for evidence on how the proposed development would unacceptably affect Mockbeggars Farm**.** Dr Thompson's significant concerns can be summarised as follows:

- Concerns relating to various aspects of the water environment at Mockbeggars Farm, including groundwater conditions within and surrounding the site, surface water drainage and flood risk. In particular, there is an inadequacy of information on these matters provided by the Appellant and to the fact that they have consistently failed to address the likely impacts of the proposals on areas beyond the site boundary.

- Concerns relating to the unjustified acceptance of the situation by the Council's Drainage Engineer, who seeks to rely on pre-commencement planning conditions rather than objecting to the outline application.

- Evidence shows that groundwater conditions directly adjacent to the proposed development site are substantially different from those assumed by the Appellant (based on a single borehole much further away) and that these are such that the proposed infiltration solution for dealing with surface runoff from the site is most unlikely to be feasible.

- Evidence shows that the risk of surface water flooding directly adjacent to the site is already high and that this is likely to be exacerbated by the development proposals, even allowing for the proposed drainage solutions.

- Concerns relating to the potential impacts of the proposed SUDS schemes on Mockbeggars Farm itself, including the prospects of damaging an area of grazing vegetation which is important to the smallholding and of potentially causing subsidence to the buildings by lowering the local groundwater table.

5. Mockbeggars Farm

5.1. Mockbeggars Farm is situated immediately to the West of, and adjoining, the proposed housing estate, CPH Reference 41/138/0415, Location Map Reference TQ4753323129.

5.2. Please see Evidence on Water Environment - Dr. Alan Thompson.pdf (CD14.13) for evidence on how the proposed development would deleteriously affect Mockbeggars

Farm.

5.3. The impact on the Smallholding will be significant, with anticipated complaints against an existing smallholder who is continuing a documented tradition dating back to at least the 1600's, for keeping farm animals such as pigs, geese, ducks, hens and cockerels.

5.4. We are concerned that contaminated water from the site would diffuse over surrounding woodland.

5.5. The impact on animal welfare and amenity from a perspective of space, grazing, suitable lighting, noise levels, arable and grazing land and interference from humans is of substantial concern.

5.6. Other areas of concern for the owner of Mockbeggars Farm include, but are not limited to, the application of the code of practice for the welfare of pigs, made under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007, and the Animal Health Act 1981 where interference from residents of the adjoining planned housing estate cannot be limited or controlled.

5.7. The proposed housing estate would dominate a rural farmstead, and the high-density housing estate will eradicate the important setting, skyline and landscape within the site which contributes to the heritage setting of the farm. Creating a suburban character and appearance would contrast starkly with the farmyard and agriculture barns and would be unacceptable and incongruous.

5.8. Current screening and SANGS propositions for the proposed site would cause significant harm to the smallholding in terms of land drainage and parchment of grazing land used for livestock, further impacting animal welfare, and causing a substantial increase in operating costs for the current landowner.

5.9. This proposal causes undue harm to the operation of an existing smallholding, it further reduces the existing green spaces and sustainable farming operations locally, and severely impacts the character and appearance of both Mockbeggars Farm and the adjacent Agricultural Stagecoach barn.

5.10. The oppressive and overshadowing effects of the scheme's housing estate, proposed drainage solutions, boundary treatments, from an open field setting, would leave the current owner at a permanent disadvantage, in a historic property built facing the proposed site. Of the 18 windows of Mockbeggars Farm, 14 look out towards the proposed fields. The scheme provides no mitigation for this loss of privacy and seclusion, and indeed it would be impossible to do so.

5.11. We consider the harm to the living conditions of the current owner of Mockbeggars Farm have not been considered, surveyed, nor accommodated, and would also not be satisfactory to the environment or future occupants of the proposed housing estate.

6. Ecology

6.1. The development site forms a key part of the vibrant wildlife corridor linking the Grade II listed Buxted Park (with its Site of Special Scientific Interest) to the Downlands area and beyond.

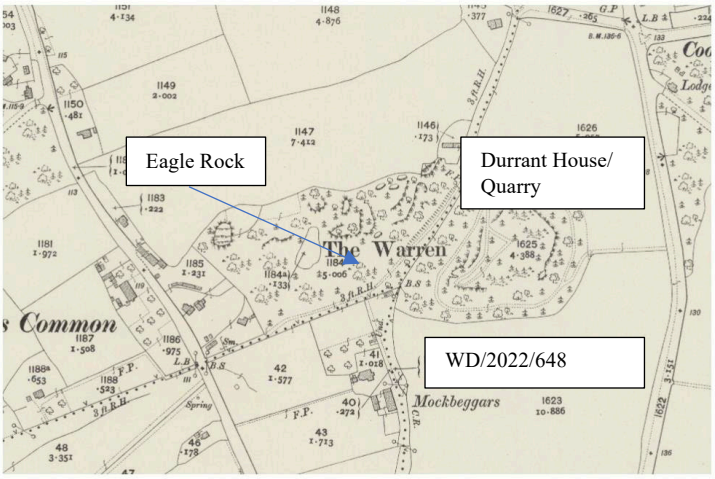


6.2. It borders Ancient Woodland to the South and mature woodland to the North, and the wildlife is richly diverse (Please see Annexe 2.2 for example species list), especially given the significant bat population, which has been acknowledged by the applicant.

6.3. The appellant plans for ground and surface water to flow into Shortbridge Stream, which will affect the water quality generally, and it also represents the danger of a major pollution event if the sewerage system fails, severely endangering downstream freshwater ecosystems including a migration path for the UN Critically Endangered European Eel (CD14.9) and multiple other protected species.

6.4. The appellant has advised that they have achieved a Biodiversity Net Gain in habitat units and hedgerow units. The biodiversity net gain claimed is 0.98%, which is a risible increase and should be discounted as a rounding error, or as an attempt by the appellant to massage the figures to show a positive result, however small. The hedgerow units net gain is claimed to be 68.85%. The removal of a very old hedgerow, which is a rich habitat for multiple species, to facilitate the entrance to the development and the visual splays required, is destruction of a valued biodiversity resource – see NPPF 15. The removal of this hedgerow is required by Highways to overcome the visibility and safety issues surrounding the entrance. The appellant's plan to replant but, as required by Highways to ensure visibility standards, the new hedge will have to be kept permanently to a height of approximately 60cms. This will never represent a viable habitat. The appellant might gain in "hedgerow units", but this is a meaningless figure and cannot outweigh the permanent damage done to the environment, in direct contravention to the NPPF.

6.5. According to Vivienne Blandford, a local Landscape Archaeologist "Adjacent to the development site are substantial Ardingly sandstone outcrops. Best visualised in the early Ordnance survey map of 1908 (below), these are massive sandstone outcrops with overhangs and splits in the rocks which are not dissimilar to those found locally at Rocks Nature Reserve in Uckfield and slightly further afield at Eridge Rocks. No archaeological investigations have taken place here, and the possibility of pre-historic, and more specifically Mesolithic, activity is high." (CD14.12)



1908 map showing Durrant House (formerly the Warren) and the extent of rock outcrops adjacent to planning site.

6.6. Specifically, this development would make an environmental island of Durrant House and The Quarry, which will effectively destroy the wildlife corridor, between Lake Wood, Budletts Common, Mockbeggar Farm, Durrant House and the Buxted Park SSSI, It must be pointed out that the development site to the West of Five ash Down has diminished but not closed the corridor to Buxted Park. Please see Annexe 2.1.

6.7. The Appellant has made no attempt to assess the damage that will be caused to this and other adjoining areas, which are of biodiversity, geodiversity and historical importance (see Heritage and Archaeology section below). We respectfully request that the Inspector before or during the hearing carries out an accompanied or unaccompanied visit of Durrant House and the Quarry, Budletts Common, Budletts Common Rocks, Triscombe and Eagle Rock.

6.8. The Council's Biodiversity officer has accepted plans for a "bat corridor" linking existing woodland parcels on either side of the development. We strongly dispute this proposal. There has been no bat assessment of the woods and rock formations at Eagle Rock LWS or Durrant House and The Quarry, and we are deeply concerned about the methodology applied as we feel that there are significant unassessed bat habitats which will be fragmented and isolated. Whilst it is the wrong time of year to make bat assessments, such assessments should have been carried out by the Appellant at the relevant time. We are in conversation with the Sussex Bat Conservation Society to obtain their input on this matter. Given the timing, we will endeavour to submit additional information prior to the Hearing if possible, if that is acceptable to the Inspector.

6.9. We believe that the survey carried out by the Appellant was seriously inadequate. Please see CD14.11 for a commentary on the survey and Ecological Assessment carried out by Aspect Ecology. Please see CD14.6 for the Ecological Assessment itself. The Appellant's Bat Survey Map shows the presence of Barbastelle, which are likely to be using the corridor of Paygate, Mockbeggar, Durrant House and also the LWS of Budletts Common Rocks to the North. In addition, it appears that the Myotis species mentioned in the survey may include the very rare Myotis Bechstein bats. Bechstein are recorded,

increasing the possibility they may be in or around the North Uckfield biodiversity corridor. Further study is urgently needed before any development is contemplated.

See Annexe 2.4,2.5, for known Barbastelle and Bechstein bat distribution and CD14.7, CD14.8. This is supported by Sussex Wildlife (CD14.11).

7. Principles of Development

7.1. The Appellant claims that the appeal site falls within a sustainable location and represents a sustainable form of development.

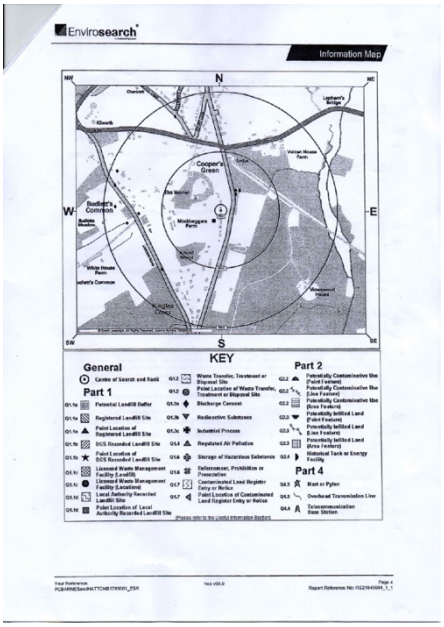
7.2. The site, which the Appellant claims will reduce the need to travel by car, will predominantly be car-reliant based on the community's long experience of the area. Current residents close to Mockbeggars still have to use their cars to access the key nearby services. It is a drive to buy a pint of milk at the Village Shop at Small Tesco (Browns Lane) Maresfield or Five Ash Down, or the Waitrose garage at Blackdown Roundabout. The Doctors' surgeries are a car journey away, as are the supermarkets, primary and secondary schools, work in the area is a drive which is often out-commuting, childrens' clubs are also a drive. Inclement weather and dark nights will exacerbate this issue. Given the development is on a very busy and fast main route out and into Uckfield, the volume of traffic on London Road is unpleasant and dangerous (5,000-10,000 cars per day noted in SUSTRANS, 2018), and is not conducive to regular walking or cycling, especially for families with young children, and the elderly.

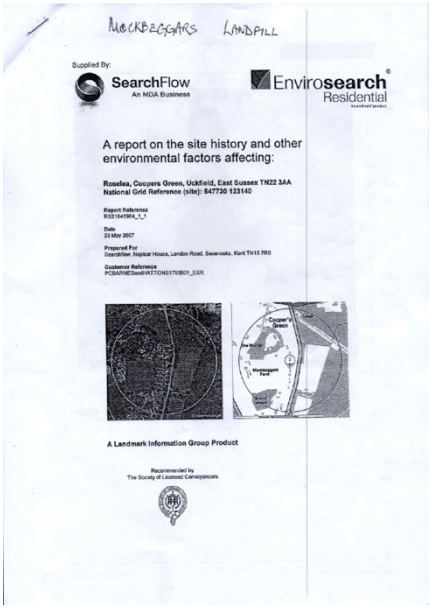
7.3. The NPPF actively encourages cycling as a form of transport. NPPF 17 (Core Principles) provides that planning should actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of cycling (as well as public transport and walking). Sustainable development now includes provision of cycling routes for which no safe routes have been offered. With more than 5000-10,000 daily cars on London Road, SUSTRANS recommends, for safety reasons, the provision of a cycling route 3m wide and separate from traffic and pavements. This is not deliverable between Budletts Roundabout and Ringles Cross. The appellant claims safe cycling as an argument for sustainable development. This is clearly incorrect. Property has not been given to cycle and pedestrian movement (NPPF 35). Proper and safe cycle provision, in line with national and local policy, has not been provided for as part of the Appellant's proposals.

7.4. One of the NPPF's social objectives is to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities. It will be demonstrated that this development does not integrate into the local community at all. In fact, with only one entrance on London Road, the development is completely isolated within its own bubble, with no immediate access to the local communities of Coopers Green, Five Ash Down and Snatts Road.

7.5. Section 6.2.5 of the Statement of Case states that "…the site is acceptable in principle for residential development." We cannot find in any of the Appellant's original application

documents nor in the Statement of Case any mention of the landfill site that is located on the East side of the development site (see below). Has this indeed been raised as a potential issue, or is it a further indication that the Appellant either ignores inconvenient evidence or simply that they have not fully researched in a professional and diligent manner the myriad issues which argue against this application?





8. Overall Planning Balance

8.1. Planning Practice Guidance sets out that "public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework" at paragraph 8. It states that "public benefits should flow from the proposed development" and "be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit". (NPPG,18a-020-20190723). Any such benefits must then be assessed against the harm that would be caused by the proposed development – this being the planning balance

8.2. We have numerous concerns with regard to the proposed development and these have been outlined in this statement. We consider the development does not accord with the development plan, and due to the heritage, ecology, landscape and visual and water environment harm, that would be caused, it does not represent a sustainable form of development at this time. The proposed benefits of the development – principally financial SANG contribution and providing housing supply, are not substantial enough in any way to outweigh the material harm that would be caused.

8.3. We do not consider that the development benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF. We have considered the potential benefits of the development, and do not consider that these would outweigh the harms associated with the development. We therefore recommend planning permission for the development

should be refused.

9. Conditions

9.1. It is our firm opinion, as evidenced in this Statement, that the Appellant's proposals can in no way become acceptable in planning terms by the imposition of conditions. The Appellant's underlying assessments are flawed and incomplete and the impacts on matters such as landscape, water environment and heritage are too significant to outweigh any public benefit. Notwithstanding this, we would understandably wish to be involved in the discussions around proposed planning conditions to ensure that our concerns are reflected in the Inspector's consideration of these. Points of particular concern to us include:

- Sufficient and appropriate soundproofing on all properties adjacent to the existing smallholding, inclusive of double or triple glazing following noise assessment, and appropriate building insulation, to limit noise complaints and disruption to new residents.

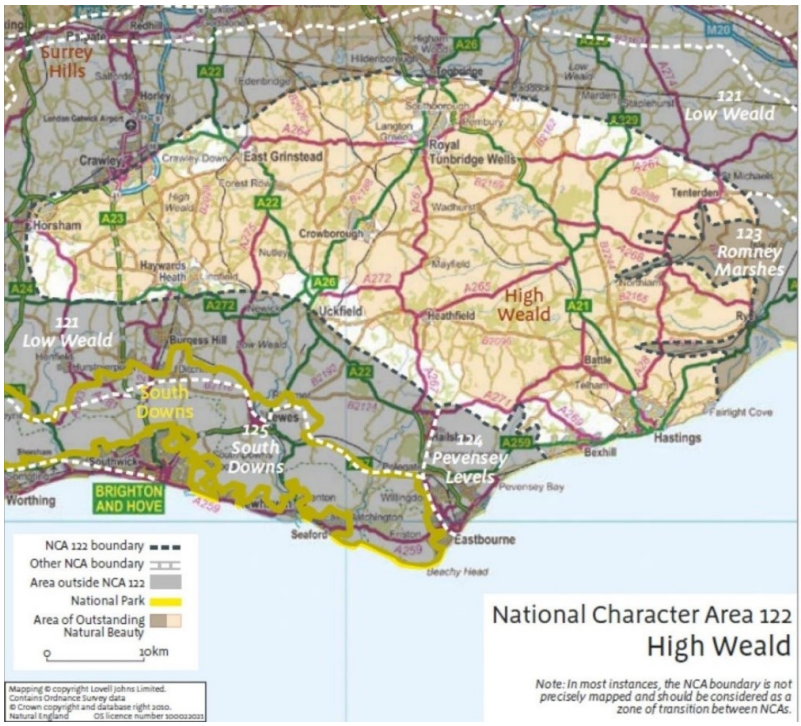
- Erection of appropriate boundary fencing to limit access to animals from neighbouring residents, whilst not impacting, light, visibility or ground water.

- Boundary zone to be established alongside adjacent small holding property to ensure no interference by residents with existing and future livestock, and limit complaints regarding noise, smell, or outlook.

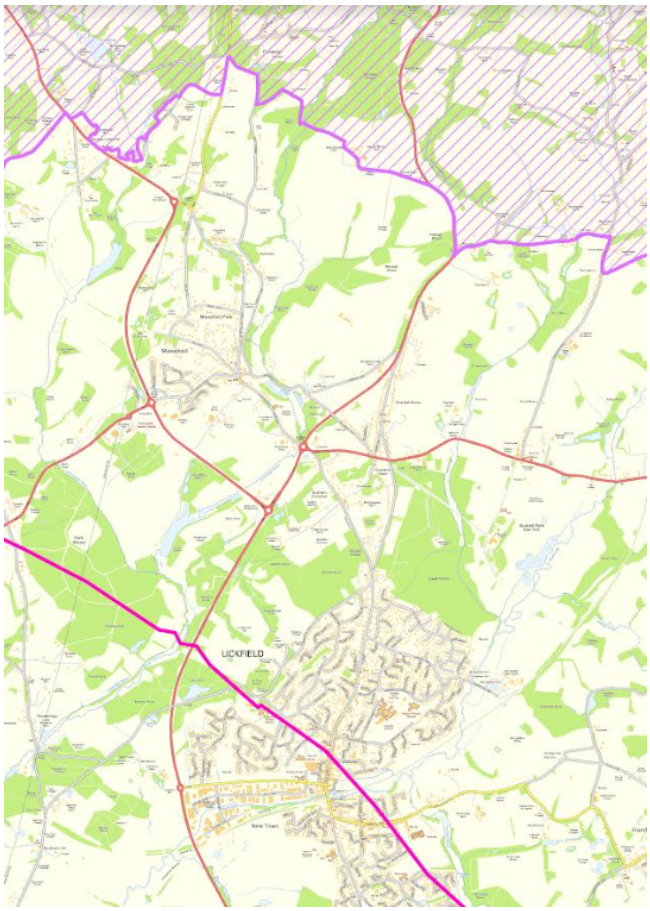
- Appropriate water management solution to be identified, along with agreed maintenance plan.

ANNEXE 1

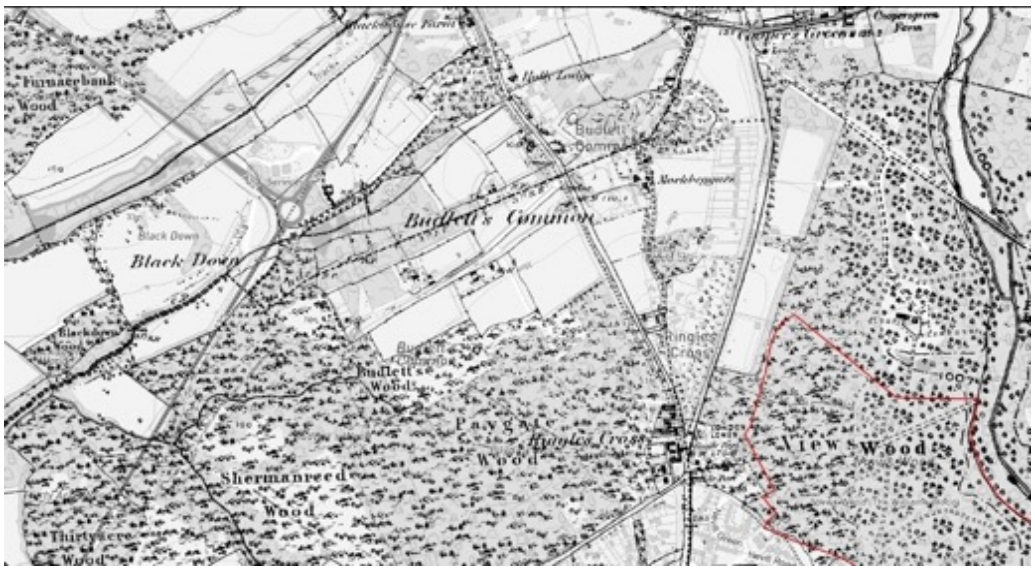
1.1 Mockbeggars Farm, Budletts Common, North Uckfield is <u>within</u> the NCA122 High Weald as per the boundary map below. (Map source NCA122 pdf NE508). Budletts Common is an attractive and valued environment providing an important countryside gap and historic environment between Buxted, Maresfield and Uckfield.



1.2 The following map is plotted from the GIS system downloaded to confirm the official NCA Boundaries from Natural England. The attached map shows the result - pink line is the NCA boundary; shaded area = the AONB. Budletts Common and Mockbeggars Farm are in the High Weald and therefore policies protecting, conserving and enhancing the High Weald should apply.



1.3 This map illustrates that Mockbeggars is part of Budletts Common, a well-preserved medieval landscape

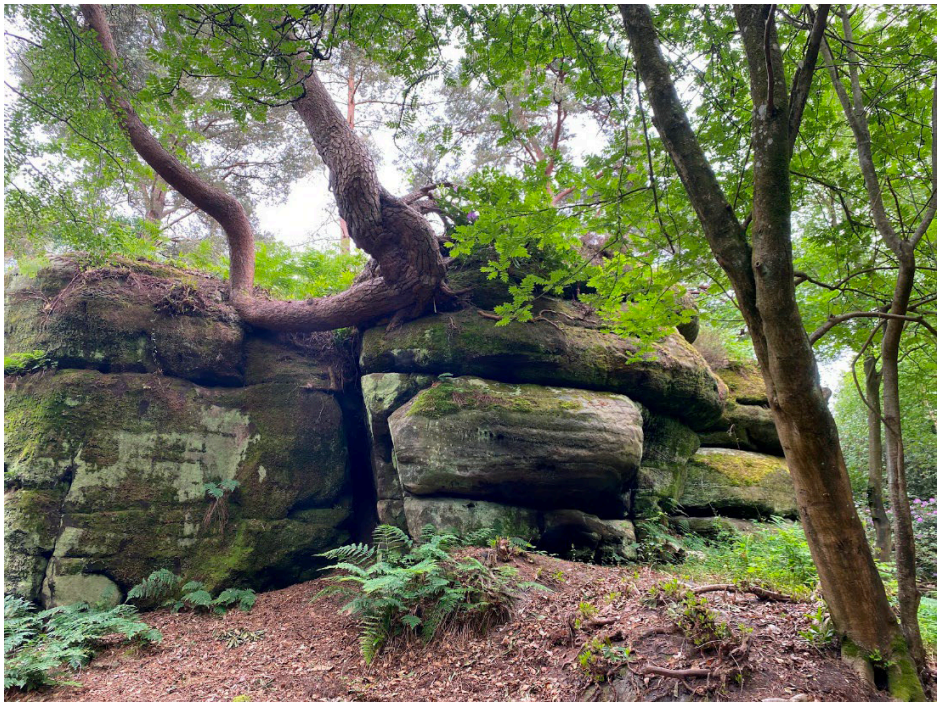


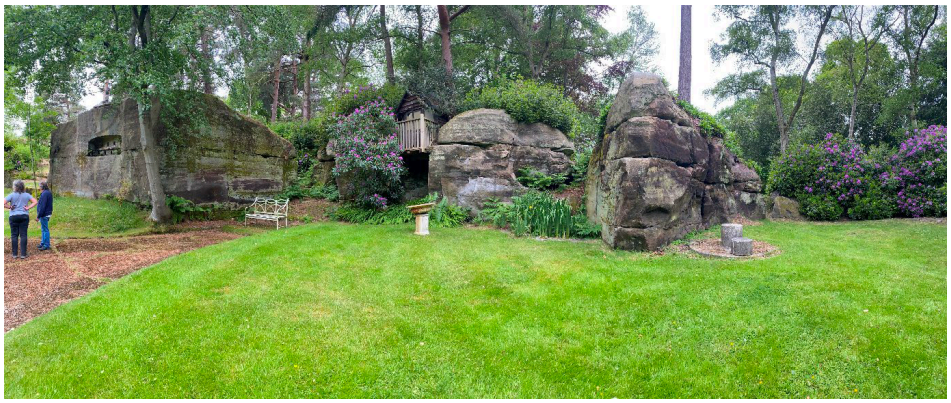
1.4 The following identifies the rock outcrops in the High Weald corridor, from Downlands, through Budletts Common to Mockbeggars, most of which can be seen on a site visit.

- Durrant House, (LWS applied for) adjacent to the development site
- Eagle Rock LWS, adjacent to the development site
- Budletts Common Rocks LWS
- Budletts Cottage
- Old Keepers House
- Budletts Wood
- Longwood Gill
- Lake Wood LGS
- West Park LGS
- Butchers Wood LWS
- Shortbridge Stream escarpment

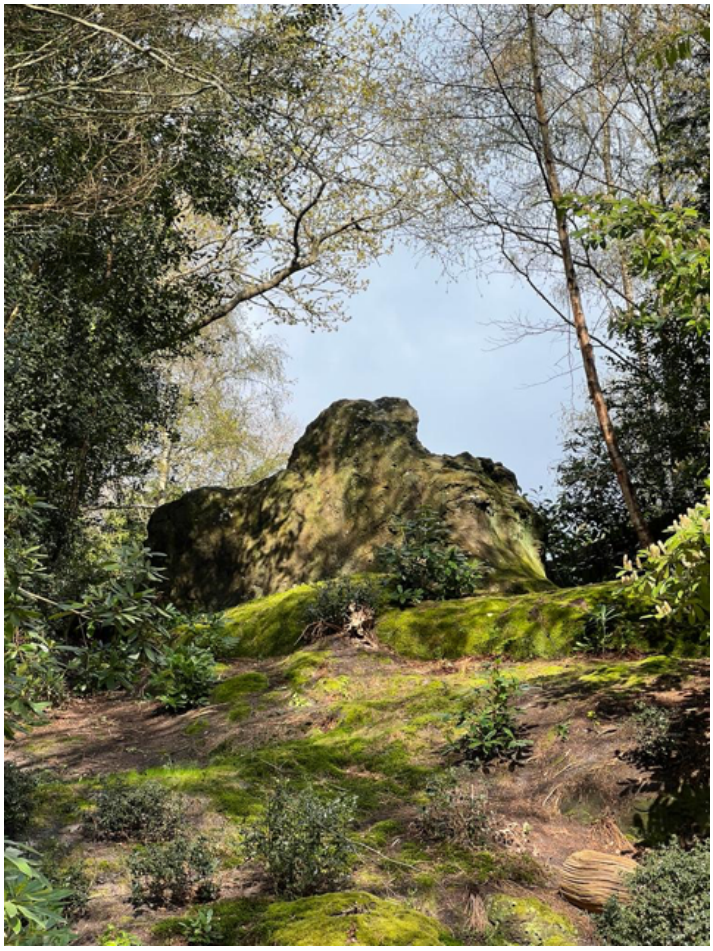
1.5 Rock outcrops

Durrant House





Eagle Rock



1.6 The Wider Ecological Network of North Uckfield, Budletts and Buxted,(including designations where appropriate) of which Mockbeggars is a key component, is broadly identified as follows:

- Buxted Park SSSI, RPG, Medieval National Monument, GII*
- Woodland Trust Views Wood (Saxon Woodland)
- Budletts Common Rocks LWS (requires stepping stones for connectivity)
- The Quarry Budletts Common (LWS applied for)
- Durrant House rock outcrops Budletts Common (LWS applied for)
- Roundwood Ancient Woodland
- Malling Budletts, Budletts Common (medieval landscape)
- Paygate Wood Ancient Woodland
- Uckfield Cemetery LWS
- North Uckfield Ancient Woodland corridor and Incised ghyll landscape
- Budletts Common, Budletts Wood alder carr, Shermanreed Wood ghyll, Longwood Gill, Lake Wood Ghyll
- Heath and U1 and U4 acid grasses Budletts Common (2006 Downlands WD/2006/2855)
- Whitehouse farm traditional Hay Meadows in summer, sheep grazing in winter
- Lake Wood LWS and LGS for Earth Science
- West Park Local Nature Reserve and LGS

- Water Framework Directive Shortbridge Stream river salmonid and cyprinid headwater catchment, one of most important for sea trout spawning and European Eel Migration (ponds at Budletts recorded on SxBRC with eels)
- Butchers Wood LWS
- Shortbridge Meadows LWS

ANNEXE 2

2.1 Land West of Five Ashdown WD-2020-1088-MAO_Block Plan Illustrative Site Layout.pdf. This illustrates that there is still a wildlife corridor available from Mockbeggars Farm, through Durrant House and the Quarry into Buxted Park, via the South segment of the Land West of Five Ashdown new development.



2.2 Example species list: Fallow and Muntjac deer use the Mockbeggars fields as a corridor. There are at least two breeding pairs of Tawny Owls (Amber listed Bird of Conservation Concern) in the Ancient and mature woodland abutting the site; Starlings (Red listed Bird of Conservation Concern) feed amongst the sheep on Mockbeggars; Sparrowhawks (Amber listed Bird of Conservation Concern) hunt in the woodland on either side of the proposed site and use Mockbeggars to move between the two; Bullfinches (Amber listed Bird of Conservation Concern) use the wildlife corridor, especially in the Spring; Red Kites (Amber listed Bird of Conservation Concern) hunt over the area. In addition there are Buzzards, Greater Spotted Woodpeckers, Jays, Long Tailed Tits, Wren, Great and Coal Tits, Dunnocks (Hedge Sparrows), Thrush, Heron, Mallards, Robins and Sparrow Hawks.

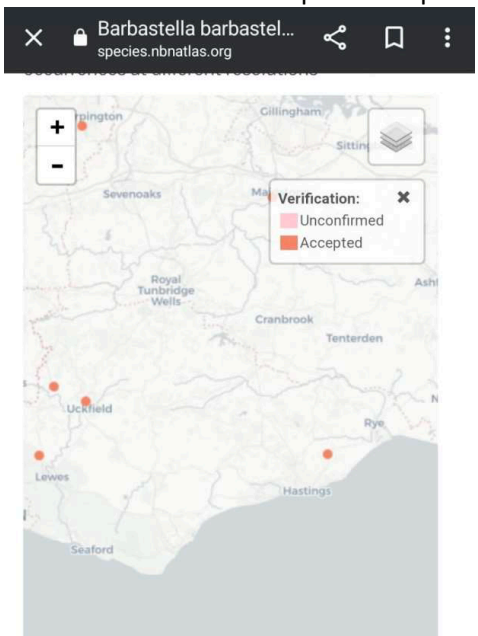
2.3 Bats: Reference is made to the Determined Report lodged March 2022 being the Aspect Ecological Assessment of January 2022. The report covers the surveys done in May 2021 into the movement of Bats over the two fields of Mockbeggars Farm. The surveys were only done for Summer and Autumn of 2021, there being no survey for Spring that year because of late instructions.

The report indicates that there were two faults in the equipment, a static microphone failed at the end of June and a Hand held counter failed after 30 minutes. The report at 2.3.7 states that there was no proper recording of Myotis or Pipistrelle bats.
The tables under para 5 are of extreme interest and should be read in conjunction with the appendix graph plan 6212/EC04 showing the results from static and walked surveys.
Interestingly there was no static recording on the North or East side where Hand held devices showed increased activity. This fact is borne out by residents sightings at the top field edge who marvel at the evening displays. 5.3.8 comments that the flight paths are predominant in the North, East and South East so why no static counter. Comments at 5.3 say there is no roosting on site but the surveyors would not be aware of the considerable roosting in the Sandstone rocks in the Quarry to the North plus of course adjoining woodland.

In spite of this the graph shows total call registrations of Central 2401 and West 1226. Looking at the Tables at 5.2, just on the day of 29.7.21 there were 207 recordings at the Western location and on the day of 30.7.21, 535 recordings. By any accounts this is a significant evidence of Bat numbers and para 5.3.9 confirms the Site is of local value.

We have always been aware that the area contains certain types of bats that are on the endangered list and this aspect was confirmed in the Downlands enquiry. That the Lake Wood/Downlands area is linked by the Green Corridor that runs round the north of Uckfield linking with the SSSI site in Buxted Park shows the importance of preserving this nature area. Paragraphs 6.1.5 indicate that as two years have now passed since the original survey a further survey should be done if the planning application were to progress. Comment at 6.1.6 states that in the view of the significant bat numbers ideally there should be no lighting. As an aside, measurements taken recently at the nearby Five Ash Down site, showed that Bat movement had increased since their original reports.

2.4 NBN Barbastelle Bat species map 7th January 2024 – shows rarity of Barbastelle in Sussex



NBN Explore Map Atlas, 7th January 2024 – Bechstein Bat species map – rarity of Bechstein in Sussex. Genus of Myotis Sp. Group.

