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PRESS RELEASE: Uckfield and surrounding villages threatened by deluge of greenfield development

- *Major threat to environmental sites*
- *Applications for nearly 1,500 homes waiting for decisions*
- *Further application for 2,000 homes in the pipeline*
- *Campaigners fighting on multiple fronts*

Uckfield and its surrounding villages are being threatened by a deluge of inappropriate development – all of it on greenfield sites.

The 2019 Wealden Local Plan, which has since been withdrawn, did not allocate any new housing sites for Uckfield or its surrounding villages.

Instead, the proposed development boundary was wrapped tightly around the existing development area, including sites for just 153 ‘windfall’ homes by 2028.

Despite this, 367 homes have already been approved since 2020 and major applications for a total of 1,449 houses are waiting to be decided.

“These major applications are all on greenfield land,” said Nick Daines from the CPRE Sussex Wealden North group.

“This continued assault on our precious countryside is bad news for all residents in the Uckfield area plus those who will be impacted by additional congestion on our inadequate road system.

“CPRE Sussex supports sustainable housing which meets a genuine local need. We need low-cost housing for first time buyers and renters, but this is not being provided by these developments.”

The applications currently going through the planning process include housing developments in Little Horsted, Framfield, Uckfield and Five Ash Down, plus 60,000sqm of employment space in Maresfield.

Previous incarnations of two of the developments – Bird in Eye, Framfield, and Downlands Farm, Uckfield, – have already been turned down by the Secretary of State.

To make matters worse, an application for 2,000 homes at Owlsbury Farm is also under preparation.

“If you have concerns regarding the forthcoming developments and haven’t already done so, we urge you to submit an objection to Wealden District Council,” said Nick.

“With elections in May, we suggest you ask the candidates where they stand on these developments before deciding how to vote.”

Objections to the planned developments should be sent to planning@wealden.gov.uk. All emails should contain the objector’s name and address.

Action groups have already been set up against the Downlands Farm, facebook.com/groups/1678399768974104, and Horstedpond Farm, horstedpondfarm.org, developments.

Residents can also write to their local councillors or MP and work with local parish councils to raise their concerns.

Find out more about what CPRE Sussex is doing to fight greenfield development and promote planning reform at cpresussex.org.uk/what-we-care-about/what-gets-built-and-where

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For press inquiries and interview opportunities contact sheena.journalism@gmail.com.

Notes for editors:

About CPRE Sussex

CPRE Sussex is shaping a greener future for Sussex. Our priorities are:

- Beautiful landscapes, rich in nature and greener towns and cities
- Countryside and green spaces which are accessible to all, enriching lives and health
- Sustainable development for thriving communities
- Effective responses to the climate emergency

We engage with decision makers, influencing them and challenging them to protect the Sussex countryside and green spaces. We inform on environmental issues and empower individuals and communities with robust evidence to defend and enhance the green spaces they love. We believe in collaborating with others to ensure a greener future for our county. We research and provide advice on planning issues. Together we can shape a greener future for Sussex.