

Planning application WD/2022/1637/MEA - comments from the Manor Park and Hempstead Fields Residents' Association

These comments are submitted by the Manor Park and Hempstead Fields Residents' Association.

The Association exists to support and represent those living on Manor Park and Hempstead Fields which together comprise over 1400 homes in north Uckfield.

Our residents enjoy visiting Lake Wood, which adjoins the proposed development site, and greatly value the remarkable variety of flora and fauna that it supports. The prospect of a major housing development abutting this ancient woodland and the inevitable damage that will arise to its ecology is a cause of great concern.

The Association's concerns can be summarised as follows:

1. The proposal would see the removal of the natural buffer that the existing meadows provide which help to protect Lake Wood.
2. The proximity of over 420 new homes adjacent to Lake Wood will see a huge increase in footfall and human activity within the Wood which will result in an adverse impact on its ecology.
The Wood currently supports over 70 species of birds, mammals such as badgers, dormice (including the endangered hazel dormice), deer, voles and foxes, reptiles and insects including over 150 different butterflies and moths - this scientific information provided by the local qualified ecologist who supports and advises the Association (University tutor in ecology and ornithology).
3. The absence of any wider plan to improve the town's infrastructure which is already under pressure due to the other new major housing developments that are being built around Uckfield.

The Association notes that following a planning inquiry in 2009 a previous similar planning application was refused.

Peter Griggs
Secretary, The Manor Park and Hempstead Fields Residents' Association.