

**Monthly Update May 2024**

**Our Future**

The battle is on for the future of our area. The Wealden Local plan is just wrong for our future and we have to stop it now.

There is no point in moaning a few years down the line that Greater Uckfield has been built and we don’t like it.

If the unnecessary Owlsbury Farm development goes ahead with 2000 houses on 410 acres or 167 hectares in addition to the barely started Ridgewood site opposite, then the population of Uckfield is predicted to increase by 78% by 2040.

The 77 acre Ashdown Business Park extension is both unnecessary and environmentally disastrous. We do need more business units and there have been new units built in recent years but this is the wrong proposal in the wrong place. The Ridgewood approved site has an allocation for business units and that should have priority.

The calculation of new employment space is a decision for Wealden Council. It is not nationally prescribed.

There are 3 ways to determine requirements for employment units.

One is by Labour demand based on potential economic growth which suggests a need for 0.3 to 0.6 hectares of new space.

The second is Labour supply based on housing growth giving a figure of 8.7 hectares.

Lastly there is the ‘Past Take Up’ measure based on commercial completion rates from 2011 to 2020 giving a requirement of 48.3 hectares.

Without any clear logic, Wealden Council have opted for the highest number with the Past Take Up method.

The whole Plan is flawed and I hope everyone will join in opposing it.

**East Sussex County Council.**

This is a good opportunity to let you know that on May 7th I was elected as Chairman of East Sussex County Council. This is a purely ceremonial role like the local mayor but it does mean I have to give up other County jobs in order to be seen as impartial and neutral. It does not impact on my role as local Councillor but my focus has to be on representing East Sussex as a whole.

**Roy Galley**

**May 2024**

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