

What concerns me most is not simply this application in isolation, but the growing cumulative impact of repeated development proposals on our rural environment. It feels as though scarcely a month passes without another application arriving through residents' letterboxes, each presented as a standalone project, yet collectively placing an ever-greater burden on our countryside, landscape, biodiversity and local community. Supporters of these schemes frequently cite climate change as justification, yet this summer has demonstrated that climate change brings very real environmental risks of its own. Prolonged periods of heat and drought are increasing pressure on rural habitats and wildlife, whilst also heightening concern about fire risks associated with large-scale infrastructure in open countryside. These changing conditions should encourage greater caution, not less, when considering the long-term resilience of such developments. More importantly, our local wildlife is already in a precarious position. The steady loss and fragmentation of habitat across the countryside means that every further encroachment matters. When planning authorities consider applications individually, they risk overlooking the wider picture: the gradual erosion of the natural environment through a succession of developments which, taken together, have a far greater impact than any one application alone. Residents are not opposing progress, nor are they blind to the challenges posed by climate change. However, climate action should not come at the expense of the very landscapes, habitats and species that we are seeking to protect. There comes a point where the cumulative effect of repeated development fundamentally alters the character of an area and places unacceptable pressure on local biodiversity. I therefore urge the decision-makers to consider not only the direct impacts of this proposal, but also the wider and cumulative consequences for the countryside, local wildlife, landscape character and the wellbeing of the communities that are being asked to absorb an ever-increasing number of such developments. Once these natural assets are lost or degraded, they cannot easily be restored, and future generations will rightly question whether enough weight was given to their protection.