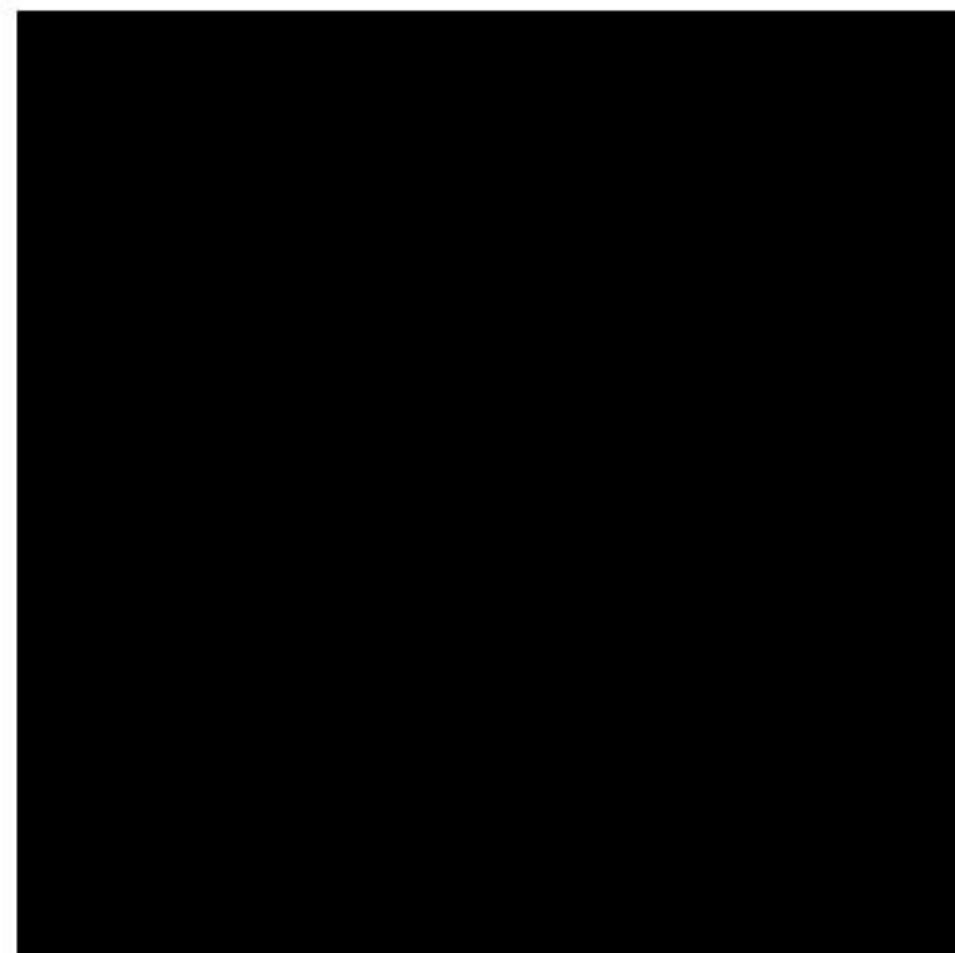




Planning application LW/26/0262

Dear Mr.Smith

A House of Commons Research Briefing, dated 8th July 2025, titled Future water resources mentions, *“The Environment Agency has made it clear that securing future water resources is a significant challenge, and one that will increase with time. It estimates that by 2050 there will be a shortfall of nearly 5 billion litres of water per day. This is equivalent to over a third of the current water supply available for public consumption.”*

*“In some areas, water supply shortfalls are already being felt. Within water-poor regions, such as Sussex, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Norfolk, both housing and business growth have been affected by water supply availability and ageing or inadequate water infrastructure. The Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management has published research that estimates water scarcity could cost the UK economy £25 billion over the next five years due to halted housing developments, as there may not be enough water to supply new homes in water-scarce areas.”*

*“The EA assesses that climate change will impact water use and behaviour, with UK Water Industry Research (UKWIR) finding that unconstrained demand for water has been found to increase 20% or more when temperatures exceed 26°C, driving an increased demand in water for individual consumption as well as for irrigation and cooling.”*

A reputable broadsheet published, *“Water shortages threaten to derail the building of more than one million new homes, ministers have been warned. Rising demand on Britain’s network means three quarters of the 1.5 million new homes promised by Labour are at risk of being blocked because the country is running out of water. In the past week, water companies told the Government that there were only supplies to serve an extra 420,000 homes without risking shortages. Their analysis warned that official assumptions about water consumption and leak reductions were unrealistic and failed to take account of rising demand from data centres. It also said unnecessary red tape was holding up the construction of reservoirs that could help to fix the problem. Water UK, the industry body, said this meant there was not enough water to support 1.1 million of the homes scheduled to be built by 2030.*

*David Henderson, the chief executive of Water UK, said: “We desperately want to be able to provide enough water for new housing but are being held back by a regulatory system that makes building new reservoirs much slower than it should be and unrealistic optimism about how much water people will use in the future. “The fix is in the Government’s gift and most of it doesn’t need new legislation.*

*Water-related issues are becoming a growing barrier to new housing in certain parts of the country, particularly in Sussex, East Anglia, the Midlands, the North West and Yorkshire.”*

In view of the above and that Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, which is not one of the locations listed above, were told by South East Water earlier this year that Regulation 18 requirements could not be met. Would it therefore be prudent for Lewes District Council to seek assurance from South East Water regarding future water supply demand in 2031. Failing that, a condition could be imposed that no units shall be occupied until such time that a sustainable water supply is guaranteed.

