

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 15 September 2025 12:27:14 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/25/1312
Categories: Comments Received

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 15/09/2025 12:23 PM.

Application Summary

Address: Land West of Ifield Charlwood Road Ifield West Sussex

Proposal: Hybrid planning application (part outline and part full planning application) for a phased, mixed use development comprising: A full element covering enabling infrastructure including the Crawley Western Multi-Modal Corridor (Phase 1, including access from Charlwood Road and crossing points) and access infrastructure to enable servicing and delivery of secondary school site and future development, including access to Rusper Road, supported by associated infrastructure, utilities and works, alongside: An outline element (with all matters reserved) including up to 3,000 residential homes (Class C2 and C3), commercial, business and service (Class E), general industrial (Class B2), storage or distribution (Class B8), hotel (Class C1), community and education facilities (Use Classes F1 and F2), gypsy and traveller pitches (sui generis), public open space with sports pitches, recreation, play and ancillary facilities, landscaping, water abstraction boreholes and associated infrastructure, utilities and works, including pedestrian and cycle routes and enabling demolition. This hybrid planning application is for a phased development intended to be capable of coming forward in distinct and separable phases and/or plots in a severable way.[cr]

Case Officer: Jason Hawkes

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: 219a Crawley Road Horsham

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Design- Highway Access and Parking- Loss of General Amenity- Overdevelopment
Comments:	<p>To: Jason Hawkes & F.A.O Jo Edwards Horsham District Council, Planning Department Albery House, Springfield Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2GB</p> <p>Objection to Planning Application DC/25/1312 West of Ifield</p> <p>I object to planning application DC/25/1312 West of Ifield for the following planning reasons:</p> <p>1. Loss of Ifield Golf Course, Non-Compliance with NPPF Paragraph 99, and Sport England's Role The closure of Ifield Golf Course would represent a devastating and irreversible loss of sporting and recreational provision in an area that is already severely underprovided.</p> <p>In recent years, our region has suffered the closure or reduction of multiple golf courses:</p> <p>Closed: West Chiltington, Rusper, Redhill & Reigate, Effingham Park, Horsham Golf and Fitness (approved for closure).</p> <p>Reduced: Mannings Heath and Cottessmore (both cut down in number of holes).</p> <p>Pending: Gatton Manor has applied for change of use.</p> <p>In total, 117 golf holes have already been lost across our area. This development would worsen that deficit dramatically.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraph 99 states:</p> <p>"Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or(b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location."<p>Homes England has failed to meet either requirement:</p>

Ifield Golf Course is not surplus to requirements. Demand for golf is rising nationally and locally, while supply is collapsing due to closures.

Mitigation proposals are wholly inadequate. Investment in Tilgate, Rookwood, and Goffs Park does not come close to replacing what will be lost:

Tilgate is in poor condition, with widespread public access causing antisocial behaviour and danger to the public.

Rookwood Golf Course is similarly affected by public access issues and is often used more by dog walkers than golfers, undermining its suitability as a serious sporting facility.

Goffs Park has not functioned as a proper golf facility for over a decade and is now largely a footgolf course. Again, full public access makes it inherently unsafe for higher golfing use.

In addition, the financial figures in the mitigation report are redacted, leaving no transparency over whether the proposals are viable. Even if the reported £5m investment were committed, experts agree that at least double this amount would be required to bring these facilities to the standard of Ifield Golf Course. Even then, our area would still be 18 holes worse off than before.

This loss adds to the other 117 golf holes that have already been lost in the area, at a time when the population continues to rapidly increase. The number of available golf holes is therefore declining sharply relative to population, and it is not unfeasible to say that this ratio will continue to deteriorate dramatically once another 3,000 homes are added and yet another course is removed.

With thousands of new homes already being delivered at Kilnwood Vale, Mowbray/Bohunt, Forgewood, Highwood Mill, Heathy Wood in Copthorne, and Woodgate in Pease Pottage, the removal of vital recreational land is reckless and unsustainable.

Sport England's statutory role is also critical here. As a statutory consultee on applications affecting playing fields, Sport England's policy is clear: they object to any loss of sports facilities unless full and equivalent replacement provision is secured. Homes England's proposals do not satisfy this requirement and therefore run counter not only to the NPPF but also to Sport England's protective remit.

In short: the mitigation report is fantasy, the proposed alternatives are unsafe and inadequate, and this application is in direct conflict with both NPPF Paragraph 99 and Sport England's statutory protections.

2. Water Supply and Sewage

Southern Water has acknowledged serious supply and treatment constraints. The addition of 3,000 homes will overwhelm resources and increase the risk of sewage overflows.

3. Traffic and Transport

The A23, A264, and surrounding roads are already at breaking point. Current morning commutes on the A23 are routinely gridlocked between 7:45-8:45am, largely due to extra pressure from ongoing large-scale developments such as Kilnwood Vale and Mowbray. Adding another 3,000 homes will make this situation significantly worse. The impacts will not only affect commuters but also the wider public, who will suffer from increased traffic congestion, longer journey times, and harmful levels of air pollution.

4. Biodiversity and Green Space

The site provides valuable habitats and forms part of the crucial green buffer between Horsham and Crawley. This year alone, two families of badgers (a protected species) were observed living on Ifield Golf Course. It is a criminal offence for the public to disturb or damage their habitat - yet Homes England's proposal would destroy it entirely. The permanent loss of such habitats will irreparably damage biodiversity.

5. Flooding

The land plays a critical role in natural flood prevention. Development will increase flood risks locally and downstream, with inadequate mitigation for long-term climate challenges.

6. Heritage and Landscape

Ifield's rural and historic identity will be irreparably damaged by this speculative urban sprawl.

7. Housing Tenure and Secondary School Provision

The housing mix is not aligned to local needs, fails to guarantee affordability, and omits confirmed secondary school provision, despite overstretched capacity in existing schools.

8. Undemocratic and Speculative Nature of the Application

The local community has consistently raised strong objections to this scheme. If the voices of residents were genuinely being listened to, this application would have been withdrawn long ago. Instead, despite widespread and ongoing opposition, the process continues.

Meanwhile, Homes England stands to make an inevitable profit of many millions of pounds from this development - profits large enough for them to casually offer £5m towards upgrading unrelated facilities while still retaining vast financial returns. This raises a critical question: is this application truly about meeting housing needs, or is it about generating tens of millions in profit for people who have never visited, let alone lived in, the area

surrounding Ifield Golf Course?

This demonstrates a deeply undemocratic and speculative approach, in which profit is prioritised over community, environment, and sustainability.

Summary

This application is fundamentally flawed. It breaches NPPF Paragraph 99 by removing Ifield Golf Course without proving it is surplus to requirements or offering equal or better-quality replacement. The so-called mitigation proposals to invest in Tilgate, Rookwood, and Goffs Park are wholly inadequate: Tilgate is poorly maintained and plagued by antisocial behaviour, Rookwood is more a public walking space than a serious golf course, and Goffs Park has not been a functioning golf facility for over a decade and is now mainly a footgolf course. These are not equal replacements for a full 18-hole course like Ifield, and to suggest otherwise is misleading.

It also fails Sport England's statutory test, intensifies traffic gridlock and pollution on the A23, threatens protected badger habitats in breach of wildlife law, and is clearly profit-driven rather than community-driven.

Taken together, these failings make the proposal unsustainable, unlawful in parts, and overwhelmingly against the interests of the local community.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge Horsham District Council to refuse this hybrid planning application.

Name: Thomas Dugdale
Address: 219a Crawley Road, RH12 4ET
Application Reference: DC/25/1312

Kind regards

Telephone:

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Telephone: 01403 215100 (calls may be recorded) www.horsham.gov.uk Chief Executive: Jane Eaton