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09 January 2026 06:40

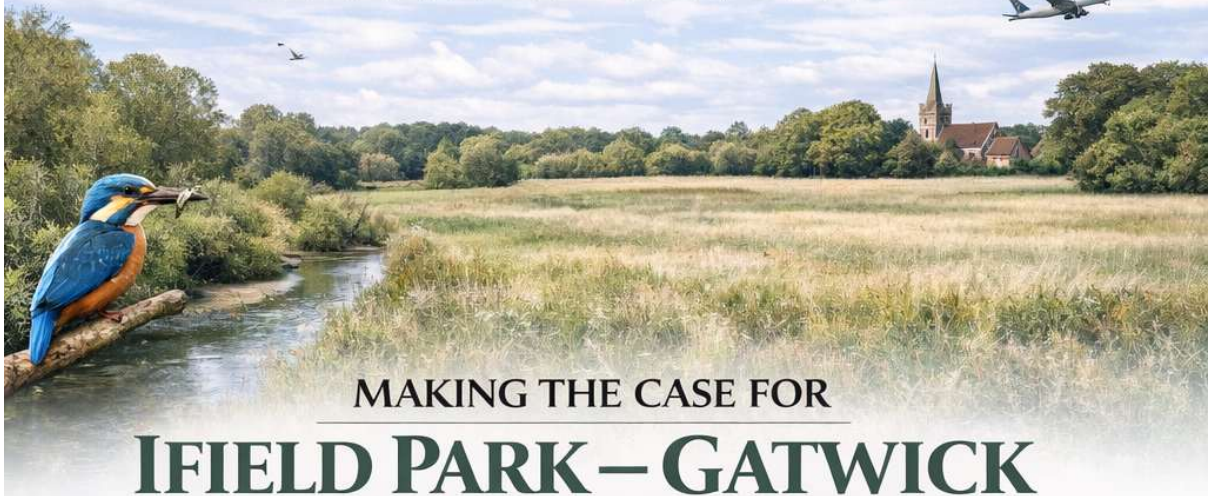
Subject:

[REDACTED]
CALL FOR CBC TO HOST INTERNATIONAL PLANNING CONFERENCE - MICHAEL JONES LETTER

Categories:

Comments Received

CRAWLEY CAN LEAD



MAKING THE CASE FOR IFIELD PARK – GATWICK

A DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE TO WEST OF IFIELD

— (*Ifield Brook Meadows*) —

An International Conference Proposal

Why Crawley Borough Council Should Host

1. Restore Public Trust

By opening the planning conversation, not closing it.

2. Demonstrate Democratic Leadership

At a moment when confidence in planning is under strain.

3. Elevate Crawley Nationally

From local dispute to international best practice.

4. Promote Council-Led Alternatives

Not developer-led outcomes.

5. Strengthen Cross-Boundary Cooperation

Crawley · Horsham · West Sussex · Gatwick

6. Reframe Ifield Brook Meadows

As a shared ecological and heritage asset.

7. Create a Lawful Pathway Forward

Without pre-judging any planning decision.

A Serious Conference · A Credible Alternative · A Democratic Solution

Hosted by Crawley Borough Council

In partnership with local authorities, experts, and communities

Dear Councillor Michael Jones,
Leader, Crawley Borough Council,

I am writing to invite Crawley Borough Council to host an international conference entitled:

Making the Case for Ifield Park – Gatwick:

A Democratic Alternative West of Ifield (Ifield Brook Meadows)

This would be a serious, policy-focused conference addressing democratic planning, environmental protection, and cross-boundary governance, using West of Ifield as a case study of national and international relevance.

Below are seven clear reasons why Crawley Borough Council is uniquely placed—and well advised—to host this conference.

1. Democratic Leadership at a Moment of Public Concern

Public trust in the planning system has been visibly eroded. By hosting this conference, Crawley Borough Council would demonstrate democratic leadership—showing that when confidence is strained, the answer is more transparency, more dialogue, and higher standards, not less.

2. A Council-Led Alternative, Not a Protest Platform

This would not be a protest event, but a council-hosted, professionally curated forum examining lawful, democratic alternatives to speculative development. Hosting signals that Crawley is committed to evidence-based planning rather than developer-led fait accompli proposals.

3. Reframing West of Ifield as a Model Case of National Significance

The West of Ifield issue raises questions that go far beyond Crawley:

- democratic consent,
- cross-boundary planning,
- environmental limits,
- and the role of communities in shaping growth.

Positioning Crawley as host places the Borough at the centre of a national and international discussion on best practice, not merely a local dispute.

4. Strengthening Cross-Boundary Cooperation

The conference would explicitly involve Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, West Sussex County Council, and Gatwick Airport Ltd. Hosting it in Crawley signals a commitment to joint planning solutions rather than fragmented decision-making.

5. Showcasing Ifield Brook Meadows as an Asset, Not an Obstacle

Ifield Brook Meadows is a strategic ecological, hydrological, and heritage asset for Crawley as well as Ifield Parish. Hosting the conference allows Crawley to help reframe the area as part of a positive green infrastructure solution—such as Ifield Park – Gatwick—rather than a constraint to be overcome.

6. Enhancing Crawley's National Reputation

Councils that host serious international policy discussions are seen as confident, outward-looking, and responsible. This conference would position Crawley as a borough willing to lead on democratic planning reform, at a time when such leadership is notably rare.

7. A Constructive Pathway Forward

Crucially, hosting the conference does not pre-judge any planning outcome. Instead, it creates a structured, lawful pathway for exploring alternatives should the current application fail, be withdrawn, or require reconsideration. That is prudent governance, not opposition.

In short, this conference offers Crawley Borough Council the opportunity to restore trust, raise standards, and lead the national conversation on democratic planning—while protecting its long-term interests and reputation.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal with you and your team at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,



The Ifield Society

2 Lychgate Cottages

Ifield Street, Ifield Village

Crawley, West Sussex

RH11 0NN



IFIELD PARK – GATWICK

A democratic alternative to Homes England's masterplan



1 STOP PREMATURE DEVELOPMENT

Refuse or withdraw the unsound West of Ifield masterplan.



2 RESTORE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

Councils convene a joint planning forum with the parish.



3 PROTECT THE LAND NOW

Safeguard recreation, ecology, and floodplain function.



4 DESIGNATE A LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

Secure Ifield Brook, meadows, and landscape corridors.



5 CREATE A HERITAGE & ECOLOGY CENTRE

Celebrate parish history, water, wildlife, and learning.



6 WORK WITH STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Align with aviation safety, biodiversity, and climate duty.



7 ADOPT THROUGH FORMAL POLICY

Lock the Park into Local Plans or a Joint Action Plan.

Protecting the Parish. Restoring Trust.

This proposal restores public trust, protects an ancient parish, and delivers a lawful, democratic future for West of Ifield.