

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 October 2025 11:01:58 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 10/10/2025 11:01 AM.

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: Laburnum Cottage Ifield Green Crawley

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- Other- Overdevelopment- Privacy Light and Noise- Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	<p>Design - the development is unacceptable in terms of it's impact on the local area and environment. Despite the claims of Homes England about landscaping and mitigation no one can believe that building 3000 houses, with associated infrastructure, will fail to have disastrous consequences for the locality. This development, if allowed to proceed, will be a massive blot on the local landscape.</p> <p>Highway, Access and Parking - I am very concerned about the impact of these factors. Homes England practice the usual mantra that residents on the development will walk and cycle to local amenities, This approach is simply impracticable and is pie in the sky thinking designed to try to minimise the impact of the additional traffic which the development will cause with the associated noise and pollution. Human nature being what it is people will use their vehicles in preference to walking or cycling or using public transport. The area is relatively rural in nature and is quite isolated so residents will need to use cars to travel regardless of what promises Homes England make about the frequency of bus services to, and from, the development. The current local roads around the potential development site are minor and rural and were not designed to cope with the volume and level of traffic that the development will create. This particularly true of the construction traffic which the building of the development will involve, With numerous HGV's thundering back and forth to the site accidents and possible fatalities seem to be inevitable as the local roads are already very well used especially in the rush hours.</p> <p>It seems to me that key to the success of the development is the creation of the new Crawley Western Multi Modal Corridor ((CWMMC) road, There are so many questions regarding the creation of this road not the least of which will be who will pay for it's creation. WSCC highways is the authority responsible for roads in the area and has not even bothered to undertake an on-site assessment of the local road network but has done this as a desk exercise. This is unacceptable and means that important decisions are being made without a full appreciation of the local road network and the impact and challenges that the creation of the development will lead to.</p>

Given the above it is essential that the development provides adequate local parking for residents to have their cars and vans parked safely and securely and with easy access to them. Given Homes England's stated desire of discouraging the use of personal transport by residents and encouraging walking and cycling there is a distinct possibility that the houses will be built without adequate local parking facilities leading to on road parking and with the negative consequences that this can lead to.

I am very concerned about the impact of construction traffic on local roads and residents. Homes England, in the planning application, set down a route for the construction traffic to access and exit the building site. They propose "consequences" for HGV's failing to adhere to this preferred route but fail to explain exactly what these "consequences" will be? I suspect that the drivers of these vehicles will be paid on piece rates and will therefore want, and need to, access the site by the quickest and easiest route and will not want to lose time by sitting in traffic queues caused by traffic on the preferred route. This will have an inevitable negative impact on other local residents in terms of both noise and pollution levels becoming even more unacceptable than they are currently.

In addition to this factor I believe that the roads chosen for the preferred route for construction traffic to access and exit the building site, are inadequate for this purpose. They are already very busy and heavily used especially during the rush hours. The additional traffic caused by the building phase will lead to massive gridlock in the local area and will, yet again, impact on local residents and their properties. I understand that the preferred route will also go past a local school which already suffers from parking and access problems during the opening and closing of the school times.

I believe that the proposal to close access to and from the development by private cars by barriers is ill thought out. According to the proposal this local traffic will be forced to use the newly created Crawley Western Multi Modal Corridor ((CWMMC) highway. This will mean that these cars and other vehicles will have to undertake a lengthy diversion to access facilities such as shops, takeaways and Ifield station rather than using the most direct route.

I note the Highways Agency comment on the Homes England planning application as follows - " it is currently not possible to determine whether the application would have an unacceptable impact on the safety, reliability, and operational efficiency of the SRN". The Planning Application should not be determined before 23 December, due to missing information on:

- trip generation and trip distribution diagrams,
 - how information from Gatwick Airport Limited has been
-

incorporated,

- justification/evidence for the very ambitious modal split 'vision', and bus usage assumptions,
- explanation of how the legacy and interim parking ratios have influenced the modal split assumptions later used in the trip generation and highway modelling
- explanation of how assessment affected if other sections of CWMMC are not delivered as modelled,
- explanation of how the 'mitigate and manage' approach would work in practice,

Loss of local amenity - I have already made reference to the negative impact that allowing this development to proceed, will have on the locality. I am very concerned about the loss of a valued local amenity in terms of the Ifield Golf Club. I do not feel that Homes England have adequately assessed the consequences of this closure on what is a popular and much used club that currently caters for the needs of the local community. It is certainly the case that Homes England have made or considered adequate mitigation for the closure of the course and, as is required by planning provisions. The claims and proposals made by Homes England to compensate for the loss of the course by upgrading other local golf facilities are inadequate and ill thought out.

I feel that Horsham District Council (HDC) are partly at least culpable in the loss of the golf club. Their failure to designate Ifield Golf Club as a valued local community asset, when they did so for Rookwood golf course is a decision which is fundamentally wrong and needs to be logged as such.

I do not accept assertions made by Homes England and Horsham District Council that Ifield Golf Club is surplus to requirements and feel that this has been completely refuted by research undertaken by some club members. In addition to its use for golf the club and course is used by walkers because of its serenity and beautiful landscaping. The club house is used by local residents and is the base for a range of social events. The club also organises charitable events.

The site of the proposed development is one of the few local access to countryside left in Crawley and, as such, should be protected and valued. The area is currently much used by local residents for a variety of leisure activities. Much research has been undertaken on the positive impact that access to the countryside has on well being and mental health of residents. The proposed mitigation put forward by Homes England for access across the development to green spaces are inadequate and unacceptable and will merely lead to additional footfall which will impact on the quality of the area,

I consider that there will also be negative impacts on the Ifield

Village conservation area arising from the proposed development. I do not feel that this aspect has been fully considered, or mitigated for, by Home England and could have potential negative consequences on sites within the conservation area?

The landscape to the west of the 13th century church and the conservation area reflects the rural scattered community of the past. Agricultural land with farm buildings, meadows and woodland formed the ancient parish. This historical setting to the east of the conservation area has been lost; now is a last chance to preserve it to the west.

The landscape is currently a patch work of small fields with native trees evident in stretches of woodland, and in hedgerows between the fields. Small streams run through it. The intimacy of this landscape will be lost to houses, roads and more traffic. Views of gentle rises across the flat land will be blocked by houses.

The proposed development will have a negative effect on biodiversity in what is a wildlife rich area with threatened species such as Bechstein's bats, greater crested newts and longhorn beetles. The claims of a net gain in biodiversity are a curtain to hide the impact that the development will have on local wildlife. I understand that The Sussex Wildlife Trust objects in principal to this planning application because it proposes to develop a large green-field site supporting numerous recognised wildlife sites and natural capital assets, such as wetlands and ancient woodlands. The Trust is particularly concerned at the direct loss of important wildlife sites such as part of the River Mole but also the indirect effects of intensified recreation and human disturbance on sensitive habitats and species, and the impact on the District's wider ecological network

The local infrastructure is not in place to meet the needs of current. let alone future residents especially if, as I anticipate, the development will ultimately increase to 10000 houses.

Other - there are a number of objections that I would like to raise under this heading.

Ifield station - the first is with regard to Ifield station. The station is currently very busy during peak commuter travel times. The platforms become very congested at such times and this is exacerbated by the short platforms that are a part of the station. I do not understand how the station can be expected to cope with a major influx of new passengers and feel that this happening will lead to yet more overcrowding and the potential for accidents to occur. I do not believe that the mitigations that Homes England are proposing for the station are sufficient to resolve this problem.

Water resources -the south east is already in the grip of a severe water shortage and this has, in many areas, impacted on potential

housing development. Again Homes England have proposed mitigation measures including extracting water from boreholes sited around the development site. I understand that the Environment Agency has made the following comment regarding this plan - " On water supply from boreholes: "Yields were relatively small and only tested at low rates from exploratory boreholes. Variation in the litho logy and strata thickness limits the reliability of data, and there are concerns about the achievability of the projected yields. Further tests of multiple larger-diameter boreholes would be needed to provide confidence that the projected demand could be supplied from a private system located near the site."

If the borehole extraction plan therefore proves unfeasible the proposed development of what may prove to be an initial development of 3000 will place further strain on already tested water resources. No doubt Homes England will claim that residents on the development will be encouraged to be "water wise" so as to use as little water as possible. Regrettably for them research proves that such appeals to the public have little effect or impact on the average family's consumption and use of water.

Sewage - from the development will have to be treated at Thames Water's Crawley sewage treatment works. This site is already operating at, or near, full capacity. This site may also have to cope with the demand created by additional passengers using Gatwick Airport as a result of the expansion of the airport which has been approved by the government. At times of inclement weather the Crawley treatment works have been known to cause discharges of raw sewage on to footpaths and land around the works.

To underline this point Thames Water have identified that the existing foul water network does not have sufficient capacity to support the proposed development. They have stated "as such, we request that the following condition be attached to any planning permission granted: The development shall not be occupied until confirmation is provided that either [upgrades are delivered or a phasing approach is used."

Flooding - the area proposed for this housing development is known to be prone to flooding at various times of the year. As a result the golf course, which is the focus of the first phase of building, has been closed for use on many occasions due to flooding making play impossible. Homes England's planning application proposes various mitigation measures to cope with the flooding. The problem with this is that it is impossible to know if these will work until the development is built which will obviously be too late. The proposed mitigation measures may merely move the flooding problem on to other local areas that are not currently affected? Can one have any certainty that climate change may impact on, and possibly neutralise the planned mitigation measures?

Power supply - it is a well known fact that the National Grid is already operating at or very near full capacity and is at braking point at peak times. Power cuts in the near future seem inevitable especially in the winter months. The proposed development will clearly require a large amount of power supply to be viable and this will put yet further strain on local and national resources with inevitable consequences for the integrity of future supply.

Healthcare provision - are already under strain in both Crawley and Horsham and can barely cope with demand from existing residents. GP appointments are difficult to secure and some GP surgeries have had to temporarily close new patient applications. Homes England proposes establishing a healthcare facility on the development site but one has to question how this will be staffed given current recruitment difficulties in obtaining suitably qualified and experienced healthcare professionals.

The Homes England planning application does not make reference to hospital facilities which is a major omission. Neither Crawley or Horsham hospitals have a A&E service. Indeed Crawley Hospital's Urgent Treatment walk in Centre is currently closed overnight due to difficulties in sourcing healthcare professionals.

It is inevitable that the residents on the proposed development will therefore be dependent on East Surrey Hospital in Redhill for A&E services and more complicated treatment. This hospital is already operating at breaking point and has had to declare a temporary halt to some services in the past due to excessive demand. Even currently 14% of patients have had to wait for more than 12 hours for treatment at East Surrey Hospital's A&E department. How much longer will these waiting times need to be extended once some near 10,000 new potential patients start making use of the hospital's services as a result of this development being allowed to proceed?

Ambulance service - is already under extreme pressure within the south east. Barely a day goes by when local media does not carry a report about residents needing an ambulance and having to wait for an unacceptable and possibly fatal timescale for help to arrive. This can only be exacerbated if this development is allowed to proceed.

Pharmacy services - the points made above are equally true for this area. Pharmacies within the catchment area for the proposed development are already struggling to meet demand. This has been exacerbated by the closure of some local pharmacies and the fact that many others are considering reducing their opening hours. This process can only be hastened if the planning application is approved. There can be little doubt that residents on the West of Ifield development will need to use existing Crawley

pharmacy services to meet their needs and this will only increase the pressure on the current facilities.

In their unconfirmed minutes from the meeting of the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board held on 18 September 2025 they comment that "Housing and planning developments influence the demand of pharmacy services in local areas."

Dentistry services - are also under extreme pressure within the area with the likelihood of existing residents finding an NHS dentist being extremely remote and becoming even more so by the day. There is no indication if the proposed healthcare facility on the development will include a dental service? If not and yet again it is probable that residents on the development will use existing Crawley based dentistry services to meet their needs with all of the additional pressure that this will create.

Crawsham - if permitted the planning application and the consequent development will further erode the gap between Crawley and Horsham ultimately leading to the unification of the two towns. This process is already underway with existing developments and can only be hastened if this planning application is allowed. Regrettably the current proposed reorganisation of local government with the possibility of a new unitary authority consisting of Crawley and Horsham combined may risk exacerbating this possibility.

The wrong housing in the wrong place - the development provides for "affordable" housing whatever this means? It is certain what it does not mean and that is houses that that can be afforded by the local population as it is highly likely that the price of the houses will be well beyond the means of most families and individuals already residing in the area and looking to purchase their first home. The proposed development does not provide for any social housing which is what the area really needs. The development does not contribute to meeting Crawley's housing need and demand which is urgent due to the constrained geography of the borough. It is highly likely that the majority of the houses built will therefore be attractive to purchasers looking to move out of London, buy to let landlords and foreign buyers anxious to capitalise on the buoyant and attractive British housing market. The development is in the wrong place as a cynical add on to Crawley. Homes England have made no secret of the fact that they see West of Ifield as part of Crawley at the price of downplaying the Horsham involvement.

Speculative Planning Application - I am extremely disappointed that Homes England have chosen to submit a speculative Hybrid Planning application at this point in time'. Homes England have previously stated that they "follow the same planning process as any other developer or landowner and require the Local Plan to have completed its examination and planning permission to be

granted before we can start building the scheme" (Homes England's Frequently asked questions dated July 2023).

Perhaps I should not be surprised about this, when, by submitting a speculative application, Homes England are bypassing the core intention of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in the first instance - that the planning system is plan-led and not developer-led - and most importantly bypassing the proper professional expert scrutiny of a government planning inspector. However, and for whatever reason Homes England's actions are unacceptable and should result in Horsham District Council rejecting this speculative and ill thought out Planning application.

Overdevelopment - I recollect that, at one of their so called public consultations a couple of years ago, Homes England had the temerity to show a video highlighting what they thought the final development would look like. This seems to have been removed because, I suspect, it showed mile upon mile of unattractive concrete structures including what looked like small factory units. The image has remained in my mind like a bad dream or nightmare because of the sheer scale and horror of the images displayed. Whoever created the video did their best to try to often the impact of the final result by including the inevitable landscaping with the inclusion of some greenery and the occasional tree. However this did little to assuage the sheer horror of the scale of the completed development and it's impact on the local environment. The final scene on the video was of St. Margaret's church in the conservation area of the village looking like a relic from the past and sticking out like the proverbial sore thumb amidst a sea of featureless concrete. I reiterate that the sheer scale of this proposed development is vast and totally unacceptable because of it's impact on the local area.

Crawley border - the development proposed in the Homes England planning application is within Horsham District Council's area of responsibility but is on the border of Crawley, This effectively means that all future revenues from rates from the development will go to HDC but that the impact will be on Crawley's infrastructure and services. It also means that Crawley residents, it's Council and it's MP will have no say, input or influence over the development. This is one of the reasons that both CBC and it's MP are opposing the development and I feel that this should be noted, and taken into account by HDC in it's consideration of the Homes England planning application. HDC has already been publicly criticised by a Government Planning Inspector because of it's failure to liase and consult with other neighbouring local authorities so I would urge HDC to carefully consider the objections of both CBC and it's MP and to the development and the reasons behind it.

Privacy, Light, and Noise - given the size and scale of the proposed development I consider that privacy for residents will prove to be an issue. There is no doubt that modern housing developments largely consist of featureless and identical houses that are packed in to the highest density available to developers, Why would this development be any different? There will also be negative impacts arising from this on current residents in the area and who will be impacted by the development.

I am convinced that light pollution will be one of the many negative consequences arising from the development. There is already considerable light pollution in the area due to Gatwick Airport and this development will simply add to and, increase it with a negative impact on both residents and wildlife.

Noise - the development will suffer from unacceptable levels of noise arising from it's proximity to Gatwick Airport. The noise levels have the potential to exceed the levels set down by both HDC and CBC in their comments at an early stage of the development plan. Noise levels from the airport are already intrusive and are having a negative impact on the health and well being of local residents who have the misfortune to live near the airport. This can only be expected to increase with the proposed expansion of the airport and the massive increase in traffic that will arise from the use of the emergency runway on ma fulltime basis. Unlike Heathrow, Gatwick does not have a ban on night flights and this will also have a negative effect on residents on the development who will suffer from sleepless and interrupted night repose.

Air pollution - the quality of air in, and around, Crawley is known to be already poor due to road traffic and aviation pollution. Both of these will increase with the increase in road traffic caused by the development and the increase in aviation pollution caused by the increase in flights arising from the expansion of the airport.

I consider that the development is contrary to adopted planning policy, both at the national and local level (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): The development appears to fail to comply with Paragraph 135 of the MNPPF, which requires development to deliver high-quality places that provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. It also contradicts Paragraph 196 of the document which requires proposals to be appropriate to their location, taking account of their effect on health, living conditions and the environment.

Trees and Landscaping - Homes England's planning application provides for mitigation and supposed safeguarding for trees and landscaping on the development. One wonders how effective this will be in practice given the scale of the development and it's potential impact on the area. Building a development of 3000 houses is basically incompatible with protecting the countryside -

the two are mutually exclusive. The first, and major, impact of the development will be on the Ifield golf club and its course. Some years ago the Forestry Commission planted some 8000 trees around the course and these are now in a mature state and are contributing to both the local environment and ecology. If these are destroyed as a result of the development Homes England's mitigation will provide for saplings to be planted which are clearly not a reasonable or acceptable replacement as it will be many years until these reach maturity and contribute positively to the environment in the same way that the existing trees do. Much of the proposed development site consists of ancient woodland and hedgerows designated as a Priority Habitat by Natural England .

For all of the above reasons I would urge Horsham District Council to reject this speculative and potentially devastating Planning Application

Kind regards

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**Horsham
District
Council**

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