

From:
Sent:

[REDACTED]
04 November 2025 14:18

Subject:

WEST OF IFIELD HABITAT AND LANDSCAPE PLAN – A GATWICK PLEDGE WORTH
RENEWING - CALL FOR CRAWLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL TO MAKE IFIELD BROOK
MEADOWS A LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

Attachments:

thumbnail (76).jpg; thumbnail (77).jpg; thumbnail (78).jpg; thumbnail (79).jpg

Categories:

Comments Received



WEST OF IFIELD HABITAT AND LANDSCAPE PLAN – A PLEDGE WORTH RENEWING

Gatwick's 2014 ecological commitment – and Horsham's 1999 legal stand – show a clear precedent for protecting the ancient Parish of Ifield.

Dear BBC Team,

We look forward to Gatwick Airport Ltd taking a lead role in mitigating ecological and environmental damage within the ancient Parish of Ifield and beyond [“...Gatwick nature reserve and heritage park proposal – to prevent ecological emergency,” Crawley Observer–Sussex World, Letters, Oct 31].

“Planned developments include... ecological mitigation and new landscaped public open space,” according to Community Matters (Crawley Observer–Sussex World, Oct 29), regarding the Northern Runway Project now approved with compulsory land acquisition powers.

It is worth recalling that in November 2014, Gatwick Airport Ltd put forward, as mitigation, a Habitat and Landscape Plan to the Airports Commission (Gatwick Airport Limited – Response to Airports Commission Consultation – Appendix 13 – Development of an Indicative Habitat and Landscape Plan – Figure 1: A3 fold-out plan).

“We have shown a new facility west of Ifield... the farm centre at Ifield Court would remain as such, but could be developed further. For instance it could

- provide an operational centre to manage the habitat areas;

- provide a visitors' centre to display archaeological finds from the area developed for the airport, and provide for the combined heritage interpretation and education regarding nature conservation objectives.”

That original 2014 plan – parts of which are clearly visible on historic maps (including the attached section west of Ifield, between the River Mole and Ifield Brook) – illustrates that Gatwick once envisaged a coherent green buffer, habitat corridor, and public open space network to offset development pressures.

Equally important is the legal and moral precedent set in 1999 when Horsham District Council went to the Appeal Court, at considerable public cost, to protect the same landscape – then described as the “strategic gap” between Crawley and Horsham, now known as West of Ifield (including the West of Ifield Rural Fringe).

“Counsel for Horsham, Rhodri Price Lewis, had argued that where land such as Ifield Court Farm was an integral part of the open countryside between the towns and that to allow development of it would seriously

undermine the aims of the planning policy.”

That legal argument remains valid today. The ecological, cultural, and historical continuity of this landscape – the ancient Parish of Ifield – has long been recognised as worthy of protection.

Let us therefore hope Gatwick’s commitment to ecological and environmental protection within this ancient parish remains as strong now as it was in 2014 — and that Horsham’s legal defence of this land in 1999 will not have been in vain.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
The Ifield Society

2 Lychgate Cottages,

Ifield Street, Ifield Village Crawley, West Sussex

RH11 0NN

CALL FOR CRAWLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL TO MAKE IFIELD BROOK MEADOWS A LOCAL NATURE RESERVE - TO PREVENT AN ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY





**GATWICK LOCAL
NATURE RESERVE
AND HERITAGE
PARK - IFIELD
A PROPOSAL**

