

For the attention of Horsham District Council Cabinet and Councillors,

Dear Sirs,

West of Ifield site

I would confirm that I object to planning application DC/25/1312_for West of Ifield for the following planning reasons.

DUTY TO COOPERATE

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a statutory planning document required by law for local planning authorities to outline how they will involve the public, businesses, and other key organizations in the preparation of planning policies and the decision-making process for planning applications.

Thus far, this does clearly not appear to have been the case!

There has been no community involvement by HDC regarding the building on Ifield Golf Course and adjacent fields.

The area is adjacent to Crawley so it is their residents who should have been included in any community involvement.

As advised in SCI para 1.11, HDC have also failed to encourage Homes England to engage **meaningfully** with communities and stakeholders as soon as possible at pre-application stage.

This is a cross-border issue which has not been dealt with by procedure which means HDC are not legally compliant with SCI paras 2.20/2.21.

2.20 the Council needs to take into account the neighbouring council's policies and proposals. This work falls under the 'Duty to Co-operate' legal process. This duty ensures that the Council works with nearby councils and other public bodies to plan effectively for sustainable development that extends beyond our own administrative boundaries.

2.21 The Government expects councils to work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that 'cross border' issues are co-ordinated effectively and clearly reflect the policies of each of the councils affected.

The Localism Act 2011 requires Authorities to work together and engage constructively with neighbouring Councils on planning issues.

There is a **Duty to Cooperate** to identify cross boundary shared interests such as actual housing needs, highways, transport and general infrastructure.

As the development would impact negatively for the most part on Crawley's population and infrastructure, Horsham District Council have an obligation to treat Crawley's views with particular respect.

However, it seems that Horsham District Council are disregarding their obligation to engage constructively with Crawley.

Crawley Borough Council has confirmed that it does not support this proposed site, especially because of the unplanned, disastrous effect on the existing infrastructure, including roads, doctors' surgeries, hospitals, water supply etc.

The CBC Local Plan requires the character of the countryside surrounding the town to be protected. This development site is the last remaining area of Crawley with direct access to the rural landscape acting as a 'green lung'.

But unfortunately, it seems that Horsham District Council have simply disregarded Crawley Borough Council's strongly held view on the development, i.e. that CBC simply does not want it!

Crawley councillors have repeatedly spoken out against the proposed development.

Crawley Borough Council leader Michael Jones has said that councillors had been 'far from silent' on the matter, pursuing it through Duty to Cooperate discussions with Horsham, 'which is the appropriate route'.

HDC has clearly failed to take into account the disproportionate damage that the proposals by Homes England would have on the land west of Ifield, which is largely within Crawley Borough Council's demise.

Clearly Horsham District Council have not complied with their Duty to Cooperate obligation.

BIODIVERSITY

Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT) told HDC in 2020 that 'the Local Plan should **not** be taken forward as the significant effects on biodiversity remain unquantified and poorly understood. ... the lack of sufficient up to date information on the district's ecological assets and particularly the wider networks exacerbate this issue'.

Homes England claim to be "creating" around 247 acres of "**accessible public open space**".

They claim that their "River Valley Park and Meadows Park, will provide a "*beautiful landscape for walking and recreation*".

HE would love to be able to assure us that "their draft masterplan has been designed to respond "**sensitively**" to the existing landscape.



They claim that "over 50% of the masterplan area is to be retained as accessible open space and new habitats plus a 10% net gain of Biodiversity".

At the moment, the farm fields and the Golf Course support deer, foxes, birds of prey (Red Kite, Buzzards. Kestrels and Sparrow Hawks), Yellowhammers, Little Egrets, Tawny Owls, etc.

HE is proposing to cover 50% of the site with school buildings, flats, warehouses, offices, redundant playing fields, shopping precincts and a 35 metre wide estate road.

HE proposes to destroy all of this land and overshadow Ifield Wood Nature Reserve, Ifield Brook Meadow and Ifield Conservation Area.....

....and still, miraculously, achieve a 10% net gain.

Unbelievable!!



Unfortunately, Homes England's "accessible" **open space**

layout and **beautiful landscape** doesn't allow for their inelegant four-lane highway, ploughing its way through the middle of the last remaining open countryside.

The report also fails to acknowledge the non biodiverse road crossings and Highways Standard safety lighting.

The highway lighting will illuminate a path through the countryside and impact on Ifield Brook Meadow and Ifield Conservation Area. These would also be affected by the proposed illuminated routes for e-bikes and e-scooters.

Inevitably, the existing freely roaming wildlife will no longer be free to roam!!

All in all, this proposal flies in the face of the Government's intentions.

HE fails to protect the landscape.

It fails to recognize the character and beauty of the countryside, including trees and woodland.

It fails to prevent harm to wildlife-rich habitat and to restrict development in open countryside.

It fails to direct homes to where they are better served by suitable infrastructure and therefore protect our countryside and environment.

The National Planning Policy Framework outlines that the character and beauty of the countryside, including trees and woodland, should be recognised in the planning of future developments.

It would appear from the Homes England's presentations that there is little hope of them seeking to satisfy any of these criteria.

Ifield Brook Meadows – designated Local Wildlife Site – will be sandwiched between the densest part of West of Ifield and the urban edge of Crawley.

A major biodiversity loss for this LWS

LOSS OF GREENFIELDS

The existing farmland is surrounded by thick hedgerows and areas of woodland, supporting free roaming deer, [REDACTED] little egrets, birds of prey and countless other wildlife.

These would all be lost.

The countryside west of Crawley remains the only part of the town with direct access to the rural landscape rather than a firm boundary.

But a firm boundary is exactly what the proposed 4 lane highway will be.



This substantial engineering structure would fundamentally alter the character and green infrastructure of the area.

Homes England's graphic clearly shows how their "elegant" highway carves its way through the farm fields and the meandering stream of the River Mole.

Ifield Brook Meadow would be greatly affected by the proposed illuminated routes for e-bikes and e-scooters and highway lighting spilling out across the brook

The West of Ifield site is Crawley's only remaining 'rural fringe' and should be protected for Crawley residents, just as Chesworth Farm is for Horsham residents.

It's inconsistent and ungenerous to take away from Crawley residents what Horsham is so carefully protecting for its own.

IFIELD GOLF COURSE

Reference NPPF - September 5, 2023

104. Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields and formal play spaces, should not be built on unless:

- 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; or
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

We can see no evidence that HE satisfies any of these criteria.

Homes England have claimed that



"The draft masterplan has been designed to respond "sensitively" to the existing landscape"

However, most of the golf course trees outlined red will have to go to make way for the schools; the shops and the blocks of flats.

Many of these trees date back to 1927 as seen on the course opening photograph

Every one of the 100 year trees that HE cuts down releases carbon into the atmosphere.

SHAME ON THEM!



It would be an act of mindless vandalism to replace mature trees with Homes England's surplus to requirement schools and blocks of flats!!

Photos taken from Homes England's "Commonplace" – Ifield Golf Course site "Neighbourhood Centre".

It would be an act of mindless vandalism to replace a thriving golf course and environmentally valuable trees with Homes England's totally out of character "Neighbourhood Centre".

Their proposals clearly show no respect for the enormous social and historical value and design quality of Ifield Golf Course.

Ifield is not a farmland course to be casually abandoned in exchange for developer's profit.

It was designed and built nearly 100 years ago by golf club architects Fred Hawtree and John Henry Taylor, architects for the re-modelling of Royal Birkdale Golf Club.

Taylor was five times Open Champion. He was made an honorary member of The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews in 1949 and was made president of Royal Birkdale! He went on to design more than 100 fabulous courses, including Aldeburgh Championship course and Royal Mid Surrey Golf Club.

It is a privilege to have the work of such a golfing giant in our midst and how bizarre would it be if Horsham District Council was the first Authority in the UK to permit the destruction of such a precious piece of golfing history!!

As a Horsham ratepayer I do not want my council to commit such an offence on my behalf!!

Homes England have not managed to demonstrate, in accordance with NPPF 104 clause a), that Ifield Golf course is clearly surplus to requirements.

Indeed, it is clearly required by the more than 500 members of the only membership club in Crawley and by the 1485 society players and 3940 green fee golfers who played last year.

Just a glance at the crowded club car park every morning gives the lie to it's not being required.



Ifield Golf Club car park - Typical day

It is clearly needed as a quality golf course which is confirmed by the number of visitors shown above.

It is required as the most accessible golf course in the area because you can get there by car, bike, foot, bus and train.

All of this is available to non-golfing social members.

By comparison, Tilgate Forest Golf Centre has sat alongside Ifield GC for 50 years and despite having a driving range and until recently a lovely 9 hole par golf course, its membership last year was only c120.

Ifield Golf Course has prospered because of the accessibility quality and desirability of the course.

In a desperate attempt to satisfy NPPF 104 clause c) HE puts forward alternative uses that offer benefits outweighing the loss of Ifield Golf Course.

They promote some sports and recreation provision in their West of Ifield proposals.

Their first offering is a new sports hub comprising 3G and grass pitches.

However, the Crawley Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy says that there is currently 32% spare capacity for 3G pitches in Crawley.

HE also offers a field athletics facility but this is already splendidly provided by Crawley Athletics Club at K2 Leisure Centre.

Finally, they propose 4 new tennis courts / multisport facilities.

But Crawley BC PPS Stage 'C' says that there is currently 53% spare capacity for tennis courts in Crawley.

Homes England are, therefore, seeking to satisfy Clause 104 c) by offering a redundant running track and redundant sports pitches in place of a thriving, historical golf course which has taken nearly 100 years to develop!

The proposals are therefore not deliverable.

Horsham District Council's own **Golf Supply and Demand Assessment**, December 2022 states in its summary:--

“Supply is currently deemed to be sufficient to meet demand, however, it is also clear that **each facility is meeting a need due to current membership and usage levels**

Potential future demand provides further evidence that **each existing facility is required**.

It is unlikely that any loss of provision could be supported without appropriate mitigation being secured due to **capacity pressures that would be created,...”**.

Homes England are clearly unable to provide evidence that IGC is surplus to requirements or demonstrate that their proposed alternative leisure/recreation facilities could compensate for the loss of the course.

In summary, Homes England simply suggest that all of Ifield Golf Course’s players would need to relocate if IGC is lost.

Let’s look at Homes England’s generous offering!!

Copthorne has only 50 vacancies,

Cottesmore is almost full and only offering country club membership.

Goffs Park Pitch and Putt and “Foot Golf” - say no more!!.

Tilgate golf course, with c120 members, has not satisfied the needs of Crawley residents to date and has made no inroads into Ifield’s membership after 50 years and despite IGC being under Homes England’s threat recently. Can Tilgate be expected to take on an additional 500 member golfers and approximately 5500 additional golf rounds!!!

Furthermore, availability of facilities is exacerbated by on-going golf course closures in our area at West Chiltington, Rusper, Redhill and Reigate, Effingham Park and the approved closure of Horsham Golf and Fitness.

Additionally there is ongoing reduction of holes at Mannings Heath and Cottesmore and Gatton Manor has applied for change of use so yet another closure is imminent.

In total this represents the closure of 117 holes of golf in an area already under provided.

WHERE ON EARTH ARE IFIELD’S C500 MEMBERS AND C5400 CASUAL PLAYERS SUPPOSED TO GO TO?

HERITAGE

Heritage Assets are historical features that are valued. West of Ifield is an intrinsic part of the old parish of Ifield, of which Ifield Village is the centre.

In character the village and the development site are an organic whole.

The building of the proposed development does not take account of “the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring” (NPPF 190 b).

Neither does it take account of the role that this plays in local people’s wellbeing (NPPF 92).

People from all over Crawley and, the West of Ifield area of Horsham, flock to the fields early morning, after work evenings and with families.

Young and old are able to walk on the edge of Crawley.

Without the fields, there would be nowhere to go other than *pack up the car* and drive to Tilgate or Buchan Parks.

Without the fields, Crawley people have no direct access to countryside.

- Ifield Court Farm (surrounded by Wol) is a heritage asset of local historic interest, the fields of which will be lost.

It has been farmed since at least the 14th century as have adjoining farms.

The network of ancient footpaths linking the farms and neighbouring settlements is a heritage asset much valued and much used by people today.

- The pattern of small fields, thick hedgerows and patches of ancient woodland are typical of the historical landscape fashioned for centuries by agricultural practice in the low weald. The field shapes of Ifield Court Farm coincide, with few exceptions, with those of the tithe maps of 1841 and are probably much older: the hedgerows are therefore ancient and rich in biodiversity.

Many would be lost!!

- Ifield Village for many centuries lay at the centre of a rural parish. The village, now a conservation area, retains evidence of its rural routes by adjoining Ifield Court Farm.

To replace the farm with an extensive modern housing estate and a multimodal road through it is to remove that part of history

- Nearly 100 year old Ifield golf course, was commissioned by the then Lord of the Manor, Sir John Drughorn, and constructed by architects Hawtree and Taylor.

It is a particularly well designed course which took account of the natural features; many more trees were planted at the Millennium.

It has social, cultural, sport and health benefits for hundreds of people.

- Town within the country – Ifield remains the one location in Crawley where the New Town concept of a town within the country is a reality. This is a heritage asset to be retained
- Archaeological assets are likely to be abundant as the land has been occupied since Anglo-Saxon times or even earlier. Geophysical data suggests “the remains of a probable large settlement site spanning from the Late Bronze age to the later Roman Period as well as a number of other possible Prehistoric/Roman enclosures”. It’s also likely that an archaeological survey would reveal artefacts from the flourishing iron industry of the 15th and 16th centuries or even of the Civil War skirmishes that resulted in the destruction of Ifield forge in 1643.

Extracts from Historic England letter dated 24/09/2025

Ifield Court

The CWMMC road passes, at its closest, 15 meters from the southern side of the moated site (the side where its moat was flamboyantly extended).

This would harm its significance through erosion of its designed position and rural setting. It would make it harder to appreciate the moated manor’s historic purpose and status, the rural setting it was set within, and its strategic position within this landscape.

The Parish Church of St. Margaret

The area immediately surrounding the church would be retained as open space, protecting the buried archaeology here and retaining an immediate sense of openness.

However, construction of modern housing close to the church (c.25 meters) would lead to erosion and disconnect of the church with its wider rural setting.

Ifield village represents the rural edge of development in this area, with the church standing alone at its western edge. The open space beyond the village and around the church, provides an opportunity to understand that rural connection.

The encroachment of urban development into this area is likely to result in erosion of this quality and represent a cumulative loss of significance, particularly in relation to the church.

Historic England notes that this application would lead to harm to nationally important assets and recommends that the issues outlined in their advice should be considered in order for the application to meet the requirements of the NPPF (paras 77, 208, 212, 213, 215 and 219).

In determining this application, hopefully you would also bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have **special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting**.

HIGHWAYS - TRANSPORT

We believe that the West of Ifield development is undeliverable without first building suitable additional infrastructure, and that the policy requirements in Chapter 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Promoting sustainable transport) are clearly not met.

Chapter 9 Paragraph 109. Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals. This should involve:

- a) making transport considerations an important part of ***early engagement with local communities***;
- b) ensuring patterns of movement, streets, parking ***and other transport considerations*** are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places.
- c) understanding and addressing the ***potential impacts of development on transport networks***;
- d) realising opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage – for example in relation to the ***scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated***.
- e) identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use; and
- f) identifying, assessing and taking into account the ***environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure*** – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains.

No consideration seems to have been given to the devastating impact that will be placed on the surrounding road network!!

The HDC Transport Report concedes that “New development which takes place in the district will have an impact on the transport network” and so, “a detailed transport assessment of the local plan has been undertaken”

The report has concluded that there are likely to be some significant impacts on the road network... “..including delays or safety issues occurring at a number of junctions” but it side-steps the fact that the roads into Crawley at the junction of Crawley Avenue, Ifield Avenue and Ifield Drive are already massively overloaded.

Construction traffic, future bus services and school pick-up parent parking, would flood onto Rusper Road, a **4.9 m wide** country lane adjacent to the development. As can already be seen, large vehicles can not pass on such a road without illegally driving onto and ultimately destroying the existing footpaths and drains.

In summary, the report suggests ‘showstopper’ problems can be addressed! But ***that does not confirm who will be addressing the problems nor does it justify creating the problem in the first place!!***

New Roads

The only new road (Crawley West Link) will be from Rusper road to Ifield Avenue through the new development, exiting roughly opposite Bonnets Lane.

No other new road infrastructure is planned.

However, Rusper Road will be ‘closed off’ from around Furlongs Farm to Hyde Drive roundabout, forcing the massively increased vehicle movements to and from Rusper to take a circuitous route, ultimately descending onto Ifield Avenue, which was never built to cope!



Junction 1 on the adjacent drawing shows the link between the new Crawley West Link (CWL), the Rusper road (west section) and the access to the 860 new houses located to the south of the CWL.

Subject to HE coming up with something very clever, there is nothing to stop the “860” from going straight through to Rusper.

The alternative circuitous route, for the 3000 houses would be along the Crawley West Link, left towards Charlwood, left on to Ifield Wood, right to Rusper

That would put a major stress onto the Rusper Road and Ifield Wood country lanes.

Homes England has simply taken all the disastrous infrastructure problems and left them on someone else’s plate.

Extra cars

3000 houses could mean c4200 extra cars and an ever increasing number of delivery and commercial vehicles discharging onto Charlwood Road, Bonnets Lane, Rusper Road, Ifield Green and Ifield Avenue. These are country roads which already struggle to cope with existing traffic levels.

There will be a significant number of extra trips a day including school runs, getting to work, shopping, leisure etc. leading to a huge increase in traffic on roads that can’t support it.

Rusper and Charlwood will inevitably suffer significant increased traffic flows though the lanes and village centres.

Buses

Theoretically, the bus is an ideal mode of transport for West of Ifield but in practice it will struggle to deliver.

Even if new services and routes are opened the buses will simply join the existing and increasing traffic congestion.

The existing recent developments (Summerwood and The Maples) are typical in that, whilst youngsters cycle or power cycle and parents walk to take juniors to or from school, all other traffic is by car to Horsham, Crawley town centre, Ifield/Crawley/Three Bridges Stations, supermarket shopping etc.

The Horsham District Council’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2023, Page 28 confirms that, in Horsham District, 76% of journeys to work from residences tend to be taken by car.

15 minute neighbourhood

The 15 minute neighbourhood proposed by Homes England to mitigate extra traffic seems as a marketing device like a clever solution to traffic problems. However, this is set to fail as the infrastructure, such as town cycle paths to Gatwick, Manor Royal, K2, The Hawth etc are needed to make it viable, and **these do not exist.**

Ifield station is too far from the development to encourage most people to walk, and there is little provision for cycle parking.

We can't see any evidence of where cycle paths might be provided to relieve car traffic and bicycles are not well suited for large shopping in Crawley.

But, in any case, Crawley does not have the significant funding necessary to provide or improve these routes on behalf of Homes England and it does not appear that Horsham District Council expect to fund them!

Ifield Station

Platforms at Ifield Station are narrow and very crowded at peak times. Train services from Ifield are infrequent, meaning some people from West of Ifield will need to travel to Crawley and Three Bridges stations, further increasing congestion in those areas. Considering the already nightmarish congestion at peak times, would Three Bridges cope with a potentially vast influx of additional users.



Ifield Station at about 7.30 am.

There is already hardly enough waiting room for passengers, some of whom already end up crossing the yellow safety area because of the congestion. There is no room for Homes England's additional passengers and no room for their additional cycle storage, car parking or car drop-off. It is standing room only for commuters who board the trains during peak times at Ifield.

Traffic Queues

Traffic that already suffers from significant congestion around Tangmere Road/Ifield Drive/Overdene Drive at school run and peak times already operates at maximum capacity.

The current proposals would discharge additional traffic from 3000 houses, schools and commercial vehicles onto Charlwood Road, Bonnets Lane, Rusper Road and Ifield Green. These are country roads which already struggle to cope with existing traffic levels.

This would in turn surcharge the junction at Ifield Avenue/Crawley Avenue/Ifield Drive.



Approx 550m. traffic queue at about 8.30 am, from Ifield Drive to NW of Stagelands, Langley Green.



Approx. 500m. traffic queue at about 8.30 am, from Ifield Avenue, to beyond Lady Margarets Church,

Homes England does not seem to have established a workable transport policy but in any case, experience tells us that additional trade vehicles and car traffic will inevitably be generated either bringing parents to the new schools or catering with the new residents accessing Crawley's shopping centres, workplaces or train stations.

HOUSING

Housebuilding numbers

Homes England has submitted a planning application for a development of up to **3,000** dwellings, of which **35%** (approximately 1,050 units) may be considered to be "affordable housing".

Assuming that the affordable provision will be shared on a **50/50** basis, Horsham District Council and Crawley Borough Council **would each receive around 525** of the "affordable" units.

Whilst rates vary with every development, average discounted prices seem to be, say, Affordable Housing 20% discount and Social Housing 50% discount.

Although it has presumably not yet been decided, assuming that the provision would be further split say 70% affordable rent/sale and 30% social rent, **then Horsham and Crawley would each receive approximately 157 social rent homes.**

Recently completed houses sell for [REDACTED], so, at that rate, even many of the "affordable" renters will struggle to achieve the 35% affordable provision?

Clearly, housebuilding here has very little to do with satisfying a local need.

Instead, the buildings we get satisfies the developers' need for profit.

A small return for **decimating the last remaining green areas, destroying a historic golf course and erosion of the Conservation Area, in return for high price and not needed houses.**

In May 2021, Sir Roger Gale MP wrote that 'There are a million unused planning consents for houses waiting to be built and brownfield sites available for housing construction and empty inner-city commercial properties that can be tastefully converted into new homes before we need to touch another blade of green grass for development'!!

HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

Clearly, the local health infrastructure network is already under significant strain and will struggle to cope with the impact of another 3000 houses in the area. Policies set out in Chapter 2 & 8 of the NPPF September 2023. are not adhered to by the HDC Local Plan.

- Policy HA2 requires the delivery of local healthcare facilities which as a minimum, meet the needs of the new occupants of the development which may include the appropriate provision of land, buildings and/or financial contributions and this is not accounted for in the viability study so is not deliverable
- There is uncertainty on the possible provision of healthcare facilities on the West of Ifield development and, if provided, how they will be staffed given the national shortage of medical professionals?
- There is already difficulty in accessing existing GP services with some surgeries having been unable to accept new patient registrations. GP'S can't be found for new surgeries, new neighbourhoods such as Forge Wood and Kilnwood Vale have minimal medical facilities thereby creating additional pressure on other surgeries.

It's virtually impossible to find dentists taking NHS patients on in the area and pharmacies continue to close in Crawley.

- East Surrey Hospital is frequently operating at maximum capacity with no available beds for patients requiring admission.

No new hospitals are planned

- There is evidence of ambulances having to wait outside the A & E department at East Surrey Hospital to transfer patients. There is frequent vehicle queuing to get into East Surrey Hospital car parks making people late for appointments and there are long waiting times for non-urgent hospital operations and treatment

Pressure on A&E services and beds at East Surrey hospital has already led to an unacceptable level of service being offered to residents and patients.

The proposed 3000 house development would impose another 10,000 people on the area's already struggling health service. The impact of an additional 10,000 house development can hardly be imagined!!

Where are the doctors, nurses and paramedics going to come from who would be necessary to operate any new facilities.

Best not to forget that it can take around 10 years to train as a GP and 14 years to train as a surgeon.

SCHOOLS

West Sussex County Council's document "Planning School Places 2023" confirms that, with the opening of the 2FE Kilnwood Vale primary school in 2019 there is unlikely to be a basic need for additional places in Crawley NW at present or in the longer term.

Bohun School, Rusper Road, Horsham is progressively opening to take 1620 students, aged 4-16

It would seem that the Homes England's school proposals are redundant.

SEWAGE TREATMENT

Managing wastewater treatment and river quality for the application site are already problematical.

Existing problems will be worsened by increasing the population in the area and building on a greenfield sit.

Without extensive improvements the Crawley wastewater treatment works (WwTW) will not be able to take further sewage. Thames Water's timetable and finances for improvements or extensions are uncertain but existing treatment works do not have the capacity to accommodate this development.

Thames Water is already unable to cope with current discharge rates.

The River Mole will be the river that increasingly suffers. Much of it is already classified as of poor or moderate quality. Climate change will increase the likelihood of intense rainfall and frequency of combined sewage and storm water overflows into its water.

Thames Water is struggling to get on top of problems now but with no realistic likelihood of success.

Local treatment works do not have the capacity to accommodate this development and Thames Water is already unable to cope with current sewage discharge rates.

STRATEGIC POLICY HA2: LAND WEST OF IFIELD

Policy HA2 refers to the proposed strategic site for land West of Ifield in the Horsham District Local Plan, which allocates land for a significant number of new homes and some employment.

The allocation is not proved to be deliverable.

I understand that Campaign to Protect Rural England, Sussex objects to Strategic Policy HA2, Land West of Ifield as follows:--

The proposed scale of development would result in the loss of a considerable area of countryside in which there are habitats of principle importance, including designated Ancient Woodland, a designated Local Wildlife Site, and an extensive network of hedgerows providing vital biodiversity connectivity across and beyond the site.

SUMMARY If the West of Ifield application were to be given objective consideration, the numerous fact-based arguments with which the local authority has been bombarded ought to put this option straight out of court.

These arguments include:--

- The Campaign to Protect Rural England response dated 30 Mar 2020 advised that the scheme is not sustainable and should be rejected.
- The development is not contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape and townscape character features would not be maintained and enhanced, which is contrary to Policies 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework.
- Crawley Borough Council stresses that it does not support additional development on its border that would unfavourably impact pressure on its roads, town centre and other facilities.
- Wildlife-rich habitat will be decimated by the relief road.
- The Relief road will be surcharging unsuitable Crawley and Rusper minor roads.
- Detrimental environmental effects on Ifield Brook Meadow/Ifield Conservation Area.
- Hospitals/doctors - inadequate infrastructure.
- Loss of a 100 year old golf club, a thriving sporting facility and a piece of local history in defiance of NPPF Clause 104.
- Unacceptable Airport noise and exhaust pollution.

The NPPF expects local authorities to not only protect landscapes, soils and sites of biodiversity but go further by enhancing these valued surroundings.

The Framework also outlines that the character and beauty of the countryside, including trees and woodland, should be recognised in the planning of future development.

Clearly this has not been the case with West of Ifield!

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

[REDACTED],
Pinewood, Rusper Road,
Ifield,
West Sussex,
RH11 0LR,
[REDACTED]