

Objection 1

Reference DC/25/1312 - Infrastructure and Transport

The additional development of 3,000 has not considered the impact on local infrastructure fully and the disruption to the local community.

The Horsham District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2023

Horsham District Council | Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2023 Key Issues & Future Considerations page 26, states that

“The assessment of the impacts of the Local Plan on the SRN, has indicated that the A23 is already over capacity within the Reference Case model and this traffic is resultant from background growth of traffic not related to the Horsham District Local Plan.

The Horsham Transport Study recommends that further discussion is held with National Highways to quantify impacts that would specifically arise from the Local Plan and potentially explore options for mitigation in the next Road Improvement Strategy (RIS).”

Any works traffic and rerouting of local traffic needs to be considered before plans are approved; and additional surrounding strategic sites are not included in the assessment of the traffic modelling for the West of Ifield development. And therefore the local Plan is negligent by not giving attention to these matters to ensure the Rusper Road network has the capacity to safely carry the expected additional density of traffic stemming any approved building allocations to Rusper Parish and its immediate locality.

The planned closure of Rusper Road beyond the Ifield Golf Club in the direction of Rusper, is not viable; vehicles that exit the new planned estate on the golf course, vehicles on the school runs and the addition of proposed bus routes will make Rusper Road to the Hyde Drive roundabout will cause extreme congestion at the Hyde Drive roundabout, and surrounding roads.

The roads connecting the site to Crawley or to any major roads are not up to standard to allow for the heavy vehicles that will be utilised for the development. This is contrary to both the NPPF sections 106 and 110.

Rusper Road(to Rusper) and Charlwood Road / Ifield Avenue, which are already dangerous and at capacity are rural, and further vehicles from a large estate will make these roads over capacitated and not fit for purpose. It is apparent that the traffic modelling has been 100% desk-based and is seriously inadequate:

The baseline is current traffic volumes, and additional volumes are then predicted. But current congestion is proof that previous modelling hasn't worked, as these roads are already overused.

To state that people will no longer use their cars and cycle or walk is preposterous. The roads are too narrow and downright dangerous, especially in view of the heavier traffic which will be caused by the new estate. Rusper Parish currently has only C class roads and all are narrow country lanes, Rusper Road is 4.9m wide or less, with a lack footpaths and are heavily used by agricultural machinery, cyclists and equestrians. There are several rat-runs through the parish at peak times, which can be very dangerous to residents.

In the case of the North Horsham development, the 'rat running' evidence base demonstrates drivers have a preference at peak times to avoid congestion on the southern approaches to Crawley by using Rusper's road network and this 'rat running' preference is likely intensify with the convenience of a new multi carriageway road through the West of Ifield estate. In the case of the West of Ifield development, traffic to and from a southerly or westerly direction will have no alternative to using Rusper's road network and traffic to and from an easterly or northerly direction will have no alternative to using urban residential roads in Crawley Borough.

There would appear at this state to be no direct link into Crawley from the proposed HA2 strategic site, meaning that all West of Ifield traffic will be forced to use the existing minor rural roads around the development to access Crawley, Horsham, Gatwick, the A264, A23 and other major routes.

Improvements to buses, rail and active travel

The proposed Fastway bus service will be impacted by Rusper Road congestion, and again the roads are not sufficiently wide enough for buses to pass each other safely, on some part of the road. The Horsham District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2023 Horsham District Council | Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2023 Page 28 states that, *“Bus travel plays an important role in improving sustainable transport, reducing the number of private vehicles on the road, and thus reducing congestion. In Horsham District, 88% of households own at least one car compared with a regional average of 81% and a national average of 74%. 76% of journeys to work from residences within the district tend to be taken by car.”*

Rail travel

There is no car park attached to Ifield train station. Residents already have complained about not being able to get parked outside or onto their driveways. There is also the issue of the school adjacent to the train station which already causes huge traffic jams during school mornings and afternoons. There is limited cycle parking and the platform length and widths do not support additional passenger capacity. Additionally, the Network Rail timetable is already operating at maximum capacity for train services on this section. Passengers will need to travel to Crawley or Three Bridges adding to the congestion on the local road system.

Objection 2. Reference DC/25/1312 - Infrastructure – Sewage

The application ignores the fact that Crawley sewage treatment works are almost at capacity and has already been red-flagged by Thames Water. Crawley Council and Thames Water have raised this as a concern over the past two years. But Homes England, and Horsham Council, appear to have done no planning to mitigate the risks.

The application documents contradict each other about whether Thames Water have even been consulted. This failure is a strong basis for objecting and could be a legal breach.

Simon Collins of the River Mole Watch states. *“The development proposal is fundamentally unsound because it fails to acknowledge the woeful status quo. There is a real risk that the delicate and nascent progress to reduce sewage spills by Thames Water, already floundering under existential threat from financial mismanagement, will be submerged in a torrent of additional pressure brought upon it by climate change impacts exacerbated by increased urban cover, more housing, increased population, inevitable urban creep and vulnerable water supply.”*

It is also well known that this area floods when there is heavy rainfall, and further development of this area will only make things worse.

Furthermore, it is acknowledged that Thames Water are in severe financial difficulties and would not be able to fund any improvements required to allow the speculative plan to proceed.

Objection 3. Reference DC/25/1312 - Golf

Homes England have submitted a speculative plan to Horsham and District Council in the absence of an approved local plan, to build 3,000 new homes on Ifield Golf Course.

Homes England have been unable to demonstrate that Ifield Golf Course is surplus to requirements in accordance with NPPF paragraph 104 and they have failed to offer adequate mitigation in supplying equal or better-quality alternative facilities.

Furthermore, since the initial plan was submitted there have been further closure and planned closures of local golfing facilities in our area at West Chiltington, Rusper, Redhill and Reigate, Effingham Park and the approved closure of Horsham Golf and Fitness. Moreover, there has been a reduction in 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 which is going to be under provided.