

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 14 October 2025 08:53:25 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 14/10/2025 8:53 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:	Ash Cottage Tweed Lane Crawley
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Comments Details

Comme
nter Member of the Public
Type:

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reason
s for
comme
nt:

- Highway Access and Parking

Comme Objection to West of Ifield Development (DC/25/1312) - Traffic and Car Ownership
nts: Assumptions

I wish to formally object to the West of Ifield development on the grounds of traffic impact, road suitability, and flawed car ownership assumptions. The following points are supported by real-world data and prior council assessments:

1. Flawed Assumptions on Car Ownership

The applicant's assessment of local car ownership per household is unrealistic. Using Maidenbower, a comparable, completed residential neighbourhood within Crawley, provides a robust real-world benchmark:

- Population and households: 2021/22 Census - 9,300 people, 3,700 households. Reference: Office for National Statistics, Maidenbower Custom Profiles.
- Vehicle ownership: 5,955 vehicles recorded. Assuming that 30% of "3 or more cars" households have 4 cars, this equates to 1.61 cars per household, not 1.2 as per "West of Ifield Transport Strategy" section 8.4.
- Scaling for West of Ifield: The proposed development has 3,000 households. Using the same ratio yields 4,841 vehicles, not 3,600.

This calculation is grounded in actual census data rather than theoretical assumptions. Any projection based on lower cars per household is therefore not credible.

2. Unsuitability of Charlwood Road and Rusper Roads as access points

2.1 Charlwood Road

The proposed access route for traffic from the development is Charlwood Road, which is designated a C-category rural road. Evidence from prior planning assessments confirms its limitations:

- WSCC/041/19 (1 July 2019): The council rejected a proposal to increase HGV movements along Charlwood Road. Key points noted:

"...routes are accessed from the site via Charlwood Road/Ifield Avenue, a C category road which runs immediately adjacent to and between the residential neighbourhoods of Ifield and Langley Green. Charlwood Road is a single carriageway serving a rural area and it is considered that the traffic movements proposed are likely to create an unacceptable level of activity eroding road verges and hedgebanks in a countryside location and also impacting minor residential roads within the urban area of Crawley."
- WSCC also noted potential highway safety issues, erosion of road verges, and visual impact of urban fringe uses.

The construction phase alone will likely cause significant damage to this road, before accounting for daily traffic from residents.

2.2 Rusper Road

Given that eastern Rusper Road is a C-class rural road, the policies outlined in the WSTP are applicable. The road's limited capacity and the potential impact of increased traffic on local communities and the environment align with the considerations highlighted

in the plan. Therefore, any proposed developments that would significantly increase traffic on this section of Rusper Road has failed to carefully evaluate the impact against the WSTP's guidelines and are inconsistent with the plan's objectives.

3. Misleading Commuting Assumptions

The planning assessment assumes that residents of West of Ifield will commute using public transport, especially railway links, however this is unsupported by local transport infrastructure, especially when compared to Maidenbower:

- Maidenbower: Served by Three Bridges station, a category C1 station, with fast train services to e.g. London and Brighton, estimates of Station Usage April 2023 to March 2024, Office of Rail and Road, are 1,878,000
- Ifield: Served by Ifield station, a category D station, a "stopper" station, estimates of station usage in the same period are 50,000 (2.7% of Three Bridges traffic). BBC News report from September 2025 stated that Ifield ranks top in the country for train cancellations. The assumption that residents will use it in comparable numbers is therefore unrealistic.

4. Traffic Volume and Congestion

- Using the realistic projection of 4,841 vehicles, exiting onto Rusper Road and Charlwood Road. Both are C-class highways lacking illumination, and serving rural or suburban areas with lower traffic volumes. This represents a substantial increase in traffic on a road not designed for high volumes.
- The surrounding road network has limited capacity, with alternative routes already experiencing congestion near key junctions at certain times of day, based on Google historical traffic data.
- There are no foot paths, nor cycle routes on these roads.
- The added traffic will significantly worsen congestion For Charlwood Road, entering Crawley, or travelling north up Bonnets Lane; or for Rusper Road into the village of Rusper creating safety and environmental concerns.

5. Summary

In summary, the West of Ifield development:

1. Relies on flawed car ownership assumptions not supported by census data.
2. Uses Charlwood Road and Rusper Road, both rural C-category roads, as the primary access, which is unsuitable for the projected traffic volume.
3. Assumes commuting patterns inconsistent with the local rail infrastructure.
4. Will result in 4,841 additional cars, significantly increasing congestion and road damage.

Given these factors, the proposal is unsustainable in terms of local traffic impact and should be reconsidered or amended.

References:

1. Office for National Statistics (ONS) Census 2021/22 - Maidenbower: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/#E05012920>
2. West Sussex County Council Planning Decision WSCC/041/19, 1 July 2019: C category road assessment and HGV restriction.
3. Horsham District Council Local Plan Transport Assessment: https://iawpa.horsham.gov.uk/PublicAccess_LIVE/Document/ViewDocument?id=C5A1A9908D0246D09D32D2222AE3831E
4. BBC report on worst performing stations <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgl1ze9ppdpo>
5. Office of Rail and Road, Table 1410 <https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/media/1907/table->

1410-passenger-entries-and-exits-and-interchanges-by-station.ods
6. Horsham District Council Planning Committee Report
<https://horsham.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s28761/09%20DC-23-1806%20Report.pdf>
and Rusper Planning Council <https://www.rusper-pc.gov.uk/shared/attachments.asp?f=7ce02847-b660-4675-bef0-0fe2cfcac835.pdf&o=J-Milne-HDC-LP-270923.pdf>
7. West Sussex Transport Plan 2022 to 2036
<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/17428/wstp.pdf>

Kind regards

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**Horsham
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