

Sent: 12 October 2025 16:28
To: Planning
Subject: Objection to Planning Application DC/25/1312 - West of Ifield Hybrid Application

Categories: Comments Received

Application Reference number - DC/25/1312

Our Details

Address: 6 Drughorn Way, Ifield West, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 0GE

Dear Mr Hawkes,

My wife and I live directly opposite Ifield Golf Club; we attended Homes England consultations regarding their proposed West of Ifield development as this proposal will impact us directly.

I am writing to object to planning application DC/25/1312 - West of Ifield for the following planning reasons:

Housing Needs

Although this planning present application is for 3,000 houses, Homes England were clear in April 2025 that the full 10,000 houses proposal joining Crawley and Horsham is a "future opportunity" that is being kept under review.

What this means is if this initial phase of 3,000 houses is approved then Homes England will start planning for the additional 7,000 homes. Hence in effect the 3,000 is the first phase of a much larger 'strategic plan'.

Horsham Council should be considering the impacts and the infrastructure needs of the full 10,000, not just the first phase in isolation.

Water Supply

Homes England have presented various ways in which they believe they can achieve water neutrality, however there are too many uncertainties with all of them. Such a significant large issued should have been resolved before application.

Homes England believe they can meet the water neutrality requirements by harvesting rainwater and extracting groundwater through boreholes, but the Environment Agency has yet to report on whether this is feasible and sustainable, and whether they will grant a licence for the groundwater extraction. This matter should have been sorted pre-application.

Sewage

The application has not taken into account that Crawley sewage treatment works are almost at capacity, and that Crawley Council and Thames Water have raised this as a concern. Homes England's various documents contradict each other about whether Thames Water have been consulted. This inevitably poses a huge risk of more sewage overspills polluting the River Mole.

Traffic

We remain concerned that the negative impact on local traffic hotspots will be severe even with the suggested mitigations of traffic lights, chicanes and speed bumps.

As a consequence, we will see:

- More congestion and delays on Ifield Avenue
- Rat-running through Langley Green, Ifield Green and Ifield Wood, with associated safety issues
- Congestion and cyclist and pedestrian safety concerns at Tangmere Road, Overdene Drive, Ifield Drive, Ifield Train Station junction, especially as this will be the route for construction traffic (being near The Mill School).

According to Home England the construction traffic will exit the A23 Crawley Bypass into Gossops Green and from there into Overdene Drive, Tangmere Road, and Rusper Road. These are residential streets nor suitable to such traffic and the route takes vehicles past a busy garage, Ifield Train Station and The Mill School.

We also believe that the impacts on nearby villages such as Rusper, Faygate and Charlwood have been underestimated.

We welcome Homes England's aspiration to move to more sustainable travel, but we are concerned that the models may be overly optimistic about the extent to which residents will shift away from car usage towards walking, cycling and using public transport. The models assume that this shift will also apply to existing Crawley residents.

The Rusper Road closure, will mean much longer journeys for existing Ifield residents to reach Rusper, and for existing Rusper residents to reach Ifield Train Station. Homes England has specifically mentioned Ifield Wood and Ifield Green as suitable routes for the diverted, and hence additional traffic.

Golf

Homes England still maintain that despite the loss of another 18 holes at Horsham Golf and Fitness there is sufficient other local provision to meet the needs of Crawley's golfers. Also, that their plans for minor improvements to Tilgate Golf Course, Rookwood and Goofs Park pitch and putt are sufficient mitigation, and that a like-for-like facility is not needed.

We wholly disagree.

As a well-established member's club with a carefully maintained 18-hole course, Ifield is distinct from municipal, short-course, or mixed-use venues. It has a thriving junior section and offers affordable membership and coaching. Ifield provides both high-quality golf experiences for all, as well as playing an important community role.

The claim that displaced members could be absorbed by other local clubs is unfounded. Clubs like Copthorn and Mannings Heath are already at capacity or have high costs and joining fees that many golfers cannot afford.

Biodiversity

Homes England's own ecological surveys show that the site is of high biodiversity value. Many rare, threatened and priority species for conservation that are legally protected from harm have been recorded.

However, the habitats that support these species will be damaged by the development and it is inevitable that some of these important species will be lost from the area, particularly during construction phases. Mature trees and established hedgerows that provide wildlife habitats and corridors will be removed. The new road will isolate the important wildlife of Ifield Brook Meadows from the wider countryside.

Flooding

The sites of the proposed development have always been prone to flooding, as we the local residents witnessed all too well again last winter.

There seems to be no acknowledgement of the impact this development will have on existing sewage treatment, water supply, and rainwater drainage.

The large-scale felling of established trees (which absorb rainwater) to accommodate large-scale housing development will only intensify the drainage problem and inevitably result in local flooding. Homes England have not addressed the problem of how and where this water will go.

Heritage

The rural setting of Ifield Village Conservation Area will be lost, along with the historic link between the village, Ifield Court Farm, Ifield Wood and the rest of the ancient parish of Ifield. Ifield Green, a village street within the conservation area, is designated in the plans as a route for the additional and diverted traffic.

Housing Needs

It is claimed that the houses are needed for Crawley residents. But there is no mention of any of the social housing (40% cheaper than market price or rent) that Crawley Council needs.

Crawley Borough Council stress emphatically that they do not want this development, being well aware of the unwelcome impact it will have on the town and surrounding area. Crawley Borough Council's Local Plan requires the character of the countryside surrounding the town to be protected.

Secondary school

One of the main justifications for the site development is that it delivers a secondary school, however, is this really needed? It should be noted that the numbers of primary school pupils are now falling, which will obviously affect future secondary numbers.

Health Care

There has been no mention by Homes England regarding GP surgeries, dental practices, and other welfare facilities.

How will Homes England meet these requirements considering the strain on the existing medical practices, which are operating at full capacity?

The initial proposal of 3,000 houses will exacerbate the problems and put a further strain on already overstretched NHS resources.

For all of the above reasons we respectfully ask you, the elected Horsham District Council representatives, please heed our concerns and refuse this hybrid Planning Application.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards.