

Sent: [REDACTED] 12 October 2025 19:36
To: [REDACTED] Planning
Subject: [REDACTED] Objection to Planning Application DC/25/1312—West of Ifield Hybrid Application
Categories: [REDACTED] Comments Received

Dear Case Officer,

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

Scale of Development

Although the current application is for 3,000 houses, it is clearly the first phase of a wider 10,000-house plan. The full scale and cumulative impacts must be assessed now, not later.

Biodiversity

The site supports many protected and priority species. Habitat loss and fragmentation from development will cause irreversible ecological damage, making true biodiversity net gain unachievable.

While biodiversity measures the sheer number of species, bioquality evaluates the ecological value of those species — their rarity, conservation importance, and role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. Protecting bioquality ensures that conservation efforts prioritise habitats supporting rare or threatened species, rather than simply counting more common or resilient ones.

In the context of West of Ifield, it is not enough to claim that “biodiversity net gain” can be achieved by creating new habitats or planting trees. What matters is the *bioquality*; the ancient, mature, and complex ecosystems that have evolved over centuries and cannot be replicated artificially. A newly planted woodland cannot replace centuries-old meadows, ancient and semi-ancient woodland, and hedgerows that support rare species.

Water Supply

Homes England's proposed water neutrality solutions rely on unconfirmed methods such as rainwater harvesting and groundwater extraction. These remain speculative and unresolved pre-application.

Sewage

Crawley sewage treatment works are near capacity, and Thames Water's position is unclear. This poses a serious risk of future overspills into the River Mole.

Traffic

The development will significantly worsen congestion, rat-running, and safety risks in Ifield and nearby areas. Proposed mitigations are inadequate, and sustainable transport assumptions appear unrealistic.

Golf

The loss of Ifield Golf Club cannot be mitigated by improvements to other sites. Ifield provides a valued community facility that cannot be replaced by municipal or short-course venues.

Flooding

Homes England's drainage and flood mitigation plans are overly optimistic given climate uncertainties and the area's natural hydrology. The loss of natural water movement and increase of non-permeable ground, leading to run off into waterways is concerning.

Hyde Hill brook already experiences seasonal water heights at the limit of its capacity. Living alongside the brook, this is a major concern.

Democratic Process

Submitting this application outside the Local Plan process is speculative and undermines democratic planning principles.

Planning Documentation

The planning submission is overloaded with complex documents, creating barriers to proper public scrutiny.

Accordingly, Horsham District Council should refuse this hybrid planning application.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
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