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**Sent:**

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17 December 2025 17:50

**To:**

Planning

**Cc:**

[REDACTED]

**Subject:**

OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION D/C25/1312 -WEST OF IFIELD HYBRID APPLICATION

**Categories:**

Comments Received

### FOR THE ATTENTION OF JASON HAWKES

Dear Mr Hawkes

Homes England first announcement in 2020 of their their plans for the development of the land know as 'West Of Ifield' was met with strong opposition from local residents and councils. This has continued in the intervening five years, is well documented and so not necessary to be repeated here. Homes England earlier stated that they would not submit a hybrid planning application but now here we are. However in my experience Homes England have been disingenuous in their dealings with the public since the very beginning.

Home England have admitted that this would be a 'challenging development'. In the circumstances is it surprising then that their outrageous proposals have now been met with so many challenges? While not a complete list, and in no particular order, objections have been raised by;

Local residents    Crawley Borough Council    Rusper Parish Council    Charlwood Parish Council    Colgate Parish Council    Gatwick Airport

CPRE    Sussex Wildlife Trust    England Golf    Woodland Trust    WSCC Flooding

Other organisations which have serous concerns about the impact of this development - as yet unanswered - are:

Sport England    WSCC Highways    Environment Agency    National Highways    Thames Water    Bus Services

and even Horsham District Council's own officers are said to have serious concerns about deficiencies in the plan.

Against this background then enter Charlotte O'Mahoney, Project Director, who states that Homes England wish to continue to work with the community. As part of her so called commitment Ms O'Mahoney has taken the decision to announce the closure of Ifield Golf Course/Club in April 2027 - the year of its centenary. If that is not bad enough the announcement was made in the weeks leading up to Christmas 2025. One must wonder which part of 'working with the community' does she not understand given the timing of both announcements and the effects on ground staff, catering staff, golfing and social members, and residents. I had lunch at the club last Sunday and have to say the atmosphere was far from seasonally jolly with the main topic of conversation being the unseasonal announcement and the fate of the club and course. Much used by golf and social members, as well visiting golf societies/groups, the club house facilities are in much demand for weddings, birthdays, christenings and general celebrations, and sadly the occasional wake. How then does closing this down with fit in with Ms O'Mahoney's public statement of supporting the community?

Homes England have already spent millions of pounds of TAXPAYERS' money on the purchase of the golf course which is central to their plans. Additional TAXPAYERS' money has been wasted on promoting these proposals with roadshows and on 'consultations' (I use the word in its loosest sense) in a vain attempt to persuade opponents that this is a viable development. With such strong local opposition are these plans now millstones around the necks of Homes England staff who promoted these without even considering the local outrage which would follow? In view of her statements and the timing of these, does Ms O'Mahoney feel threatened by the weight of the numerous objections which have been lodged against her project, hence her Christmas bombshell announcement?

A recent article in the Press praised the South Downs National Park for beating its target of planting 100,000 trees by the middle of the decade and its plans to plant 1 million more. This has included planting 3,500 disease resistant elms which provide habitats for threatened species including the white letter hairstreak butterfly. More than 40,000 trees are being planted in Sussex and Hampshire this winter. A spokesman for the national park authority said 'The tree-planting is a mixture of woodland, civic and community planting, hedging and orchards - all providing a range of oxygenating, carbon-storing trees to provide homes for birds, mammals and insects'. Why then are Homes England proposing to destroy a long established golf course which provides a natural haven as described above?

If Ifield Golf Course is to be closed in April 2027, where in Ms O'Mahoney's announcements to the community are the plans for a suitable like for like replacement? I note that the planning application is likely to be considered in Spring 2026, yet some months in advance Homes England's Project Director is setting out in writing how the project will proceed. How can she be so positive of the outcome?

On a wider note, depending on which publication one reads, the UK economy is either fragile, stagnating or very weak.. This is not a political statement but information publicly available in the media and press. Who then is going to be able to afford these houses and business start-ups?

Again I ask that you, the elected representatives, heed the concerns of those constituents who will be severely and dramatically impacted by these proposals, and refuse this hybrid Planning Application and send Homes England and their monstrous proposals packing.

Yours aye



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CC: Horsham District Councillors