

From: Nick Hill [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 September 2025 17:24
To: Planning; Jason.Hawkes
[REDACTED]
Subject: Comment on DC/25/1312 - West of Ifield development

Categories: Comments Received

Dear Jason and Horsham District Council

We are the operator of local bus services in the Crawley and Horsham areas including the Fastway Bus Rapid Transit scheme. In the past 24 years an excellent partnership between us and West Sussex County Council, Crawley Borough Council and Gatwick Airport has seen bus use increase by over 150% in the local area, in stark contrast to bus use decline seen elsewhere in the UK. Much of the vision of the West of Ifield continues this but there needs to be some further discussion around practical elements and a need for greater investment in bus priority outside the development itself.

The proposed bus lanes on the main road through the development are excellent, along with the concept of a bus gate on Rusper Road. However, it is vital that the bus lanes are built first and therefore allow buses through the development from the early days to avoid disruption from construction traffic. The concept of having well located hubs along the key route through is a good one and we suggest using the outstanding model of the new Superhub in Manor Royal.

The narrow bus lane arrangement on Rusper Road is a concern and needs to be revisited. The futureproofing of the Crawley Western Link for bus priority is welcome.

The proposal expects a mode share of 20% which is very ambitious and much higher than is achieved virtually anywhere in the country. In order to achieve anywhere near this level it is vital that bus priority is provided at other locations on the proposed routes outside of the development to ensure rapid journey times to tempt residents out of their cars. The proposal refers to general capacity improvements in a couple of locations but priority over other traffic is needed to achieve the required mode share. The development could contribute the cost of these. Small parts of Crawley do have this level of mode share but they are on the Fastway bus service which has sections of bus priority throughout the route. In order to be able to justify branding the new routes as Fastway it is essential that bus priority is provided along the new routes off the development as well as inside it.

The level of service proposed is ambitious but will be very expensive to operate requiring very significant levels of subsidy and may struggle to be commercially viable when this ends. The concept of route B being commercially viable from the outset when there are minimal occupants is unrealistic. However, we are keen to work with the developer to deliver a bus service that links frequently to as many key destinations as realistically possible on a viable basis.

Kind regards

Nick Hill | Commercial Director
Brighton & Hove Buses | [Metrobus](#) | [The Spirit of Sussex](#)



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