

Sent:
To:
Subject:

22 September 2025 13:19
Jason.Hawkes
IFIELD SOCIETY OBJECTION TO HOMES ENGLAND'S SPECULATIVE WEST OF IFIELD PLANNING APPLICATION - DC/25/1312

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Dear Jason Hawkes

As Ifield Society's co-founder, I am writing to strongly object to Homes England's speculative West of Ifield planning application [DC/25/1312] for the following 7 primary reasons:

1. DC/25/1312 prevents Horsham District Council from fulfilling its Duty to Cooperate - 'engage constructively' - with Crawley Borough Council, thus preventing a sound and legally compliant Horsham Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate.
2. DC/25/1312 is undemocratic - making Horsham District Council very vulnerable to a future Judicial Review.
3. DC/25/1312 shockingly ignores the evidence in the following specific cases

[a] 1999 - 'Strategic Gap' - The Ruling of the Judges
In 1999, Horsham District Council spent a considerable amount of local taxpayers money going to the Appeal Court to protect the so-called 'strategic gap' between Crawley & Horsham from development - what is now called 'West of Ifield' [including the 'West Of Ifield Rural Fringe'].

"Counsel for Horsham, Rhodri Price Lewis, had argued that where land such as Ifield Court Farm was an integral part of the open countryside between the towns and that to allow development of it would seriously undermine the aims of the planning policy.

Lord Woolf said that Horsham was under a duty to prevent coalescence between the two towns and had been entitled to take the view that exclusion of the land from the gap could have a tendency to encourage such coalescence. The planning inspector had been entitled to take the view that redesignation of the land, without very strong justification, could trigger off 'the very real danger of cumulative erosion'".

[b] 2018 - "Not Currently Developable" - SHELAA

West of Ifield - which later included the legally questionable Golf Club 'Land Grab' - was judged to be "Not Currently Developable" by the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment [SHELAA].

[c] 2020 - 'Subsidence' Warning - Historic England and Specialist Archaeological Advice

Historic England warned of "subsidence" if any large-scale development took place - especially around Ifield Brook Meadows, St Margaret's Parish Fields and Ifield Court Farm Heritage & Scheduled Monument Site within the ancient Parish [see map below].

"We think it essential that an integrated landscape approach to assessment of heritage assets [both designated and undesignated] is undertaken and translated into the report. The assessment should also take account of the potential impact which associated development activities [such as construction, servicing, maintenance , and associated traffic[might have upon perceptions, understanding, and appreciation of the heritage assets in the area. The assessment should also consider the likelihood of alterations to drainage and water patterns that might lead to in situ decomposition or destruction of below ground archaeological remains and deposits, and can also lead to subsidence of buildings and monuments"

3. DC/25/1312 astonishingly disregards the ancient Parish of Ifield and its boundary, the Ifield Brook Biodiversity Opportunity Area [BOA] and the Crawley Millennium Greenway at Ifield Brook Meadows Local Green Space [LGS] - one step down from a Local Nature Reserve [LNR].

4. DC/25/1312 offers no effective mitigation to the serious adverse impact in Ifield Brook Meadows within the ancient Parish, thus creating a potentially catastrophic environmental and ecological emergency at Ifield Brook. This would raise national security issues relating to public safety within the local communities and beyond.

5. DC/25/1312 is unclear, inconsistent and ambiguous whether or not Ifield Brook Meadows is inside or outside the development boundary ['the red line'] - thus raising a legitimate question as to the viability of Homes England's insane masterplan.

6. DC/25/1312 insultingly ignores the warning of the late Councillor Liz Kitchen who represented Colgate and Rusper, and who said about the 3000 houses submission just before her death: "unacceptable...would endorse the next stage" - of 10,000 houses.

7. DC/25/1312 is seriously deficient regarding sewage, water supply, flooding, biodiversity, affordable/social housing - and traffic. This would also raise issues of national security relating to public safety.

For the reasons stated above, and others, Horsham District Council must defer, refuse or withdraw Homes England's speculative planning application for West of Ifield at the earliest opportunity.

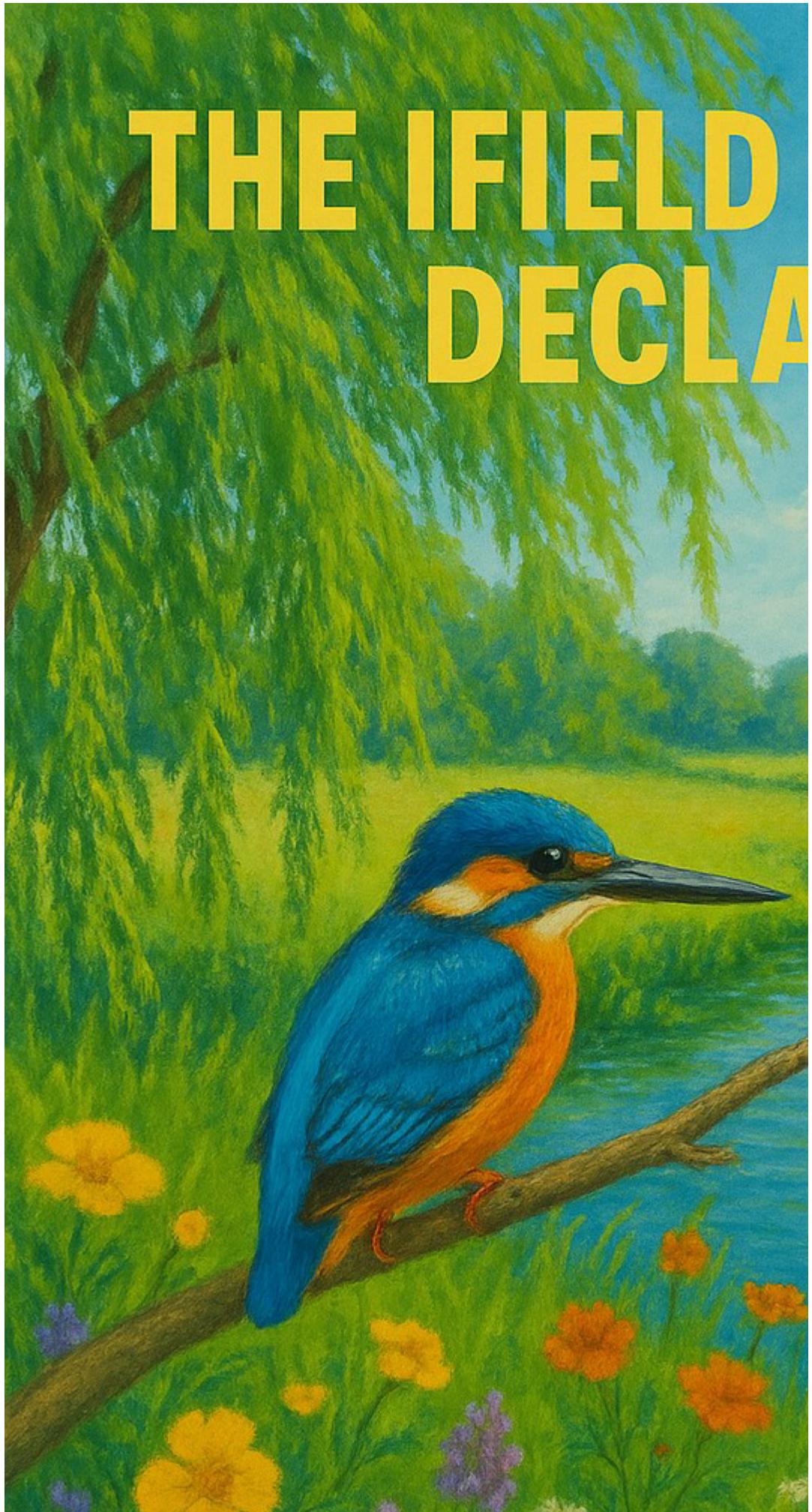
Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
The Ifield Society

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