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Sent:

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27 January 2026 13:10

To:

Jason.Hawkes

[REDACTED]

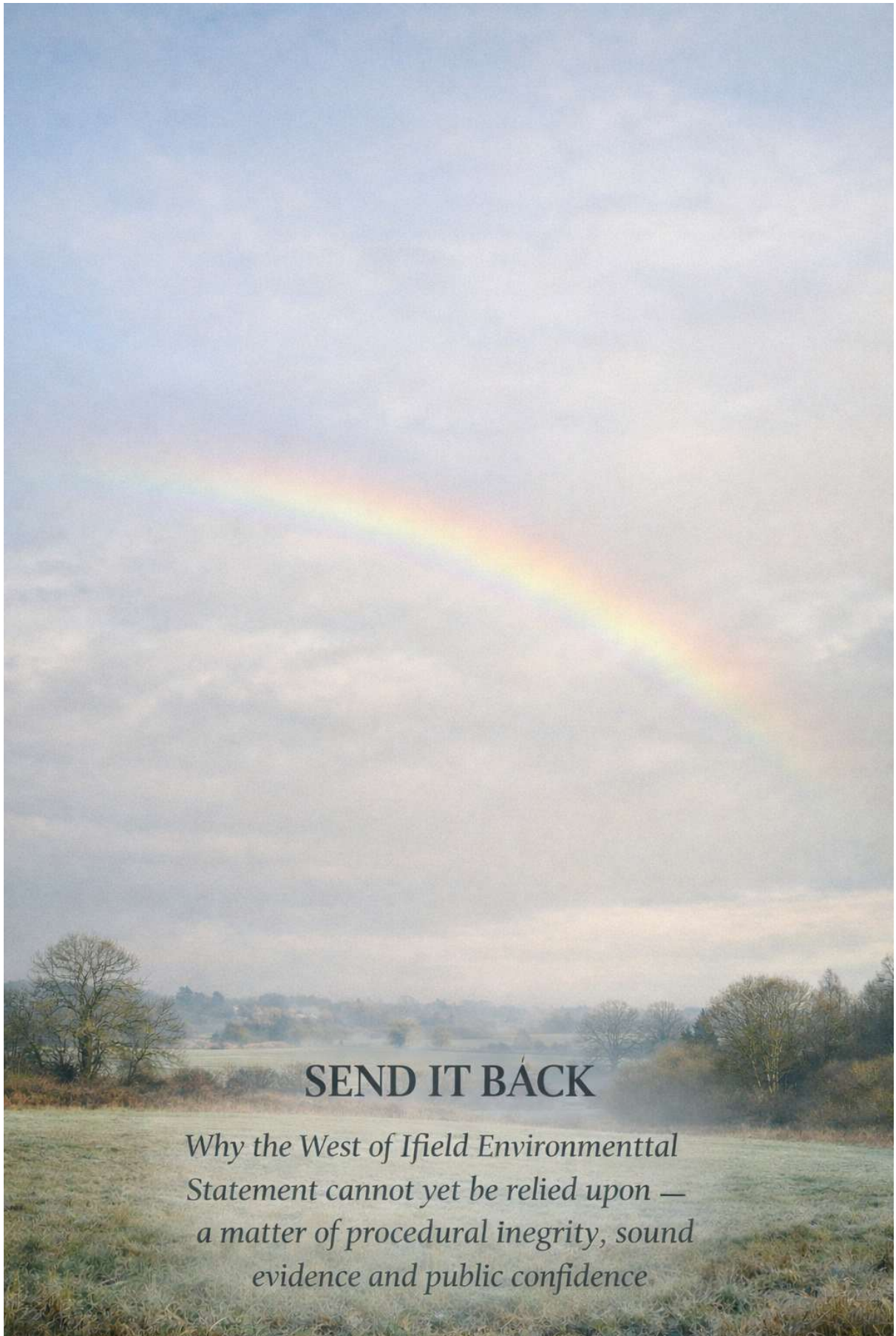
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Subject:

SEND IT BACK: HOMES ENGLAND'S WEST OF IFIELD ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT [ES]

Categories:

Comments Received



SEND IT BACK

*Why the West of Ifield Environmental
Statement cannot yet be relied upon —
a matter of procedural integrity, sound
evidence and public confidence*

SEND IT BACK: why the West of Ifield Environmental Statement cannot yet be relied upon

Dear Jason Hawkes

Before the Horsham Local Plan Examination proceeds any further — and before 26 February — Horsham District Council and the Planning Inspector should pause and send it back: the Environmental Statement, and associated documentation, submitted by Homes England for its West of Ifield proposal.

This is not a call for delay.
It is a matter of procedural integrity, sound evidence, and public confidence.

An Environmental Statement must provide a clear, stable and lawful evidence base on which decision-makers and the public can properly rely. In this case, it cannot yet be relied upon. The West of Ifield proposal remains speculative, the Horsham Local Plan has not been found sound, and key policy assumptions remain unresolved. Yet the Environmental Statement appears to proceed on the basis that strategic acceptance is already assured.

That is the difficulty.


Environmental assessment cannot lawfully assume the very outcome it is meant to inform. Nor can cumulative impacts be robustly assessed against a moving policy baseline. Where alternatives, phasing, infrastructure delivery and mitigation all depend on decisions not yet taken, the resulting documentation is necessarily premature.

Proceeding on that basis risks placing both Horsham District Council and the Planning Inspector in an exposed position — relying on evidence that is not yet capable of supporting a reasoned and legally robust conclusion. That would undermine confidence in the process itself.

The proportionate and sensible course is therefore clear. The Environmental Statement — and related supporting material — should be sent back to Homes England so that it can be corrected, properly grounded, and resubmitted in a form that can be relied upon.

This is not opposition for its own sake. It is simply a request that democratic planning proceeds on the basis of sound evidence, procedural integrity, and public confidence.

Yours sincerely


The Ifield Society

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