

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 November 2025 20:44:38 UTC+00:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/25/1312
Categories: Comments Received

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 23/11/2025 8:44 PM.

Application Summary

Address: Land West of Ifield Charlwood Road Ifield West Sussex

Proposal:

Hybrid planning application (part outline and part full planning application) for a phased, mixed use development comprising: A full element covering enabling infrastructure including the Crawley Western Multi-Modal Corridor (Phase 1, including access from Charlwood Road and crossing points) and access infrastructure to enable servicing and delivery of secondary school site and future development, including access to Rusper Road, supported by associated infrastructure, utilities and works, alongside: An outline element (with all matters reserved) including up to 3,000 residential homes (Class C2 and C3), commercial, business and service (Class E), general industrial (Class B2), storage or distribution (Class B8), hotel (Class C1), community and education facilities (Use Classes F1 and F2), gypsy and traveller pitches (sui generis), public open space with sports pitches, recreation, play and ancillary facilities, landscaping, water abstraction boreholes and associated infrastructure, utilities and works, including pedestrian and cycle routes and enabling demolition. This hybrid planning application is for a phased development intended to be capable of coming forward in distinct and separable phases and/or plots in a severable way.[cr]

Case Officer: Jason Hawkes

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: 8 Bridgelands Copthorne

Comments Details

Commenter Type: Member of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for comment:

- Design
- Highway Access and Parking
- Loss of General Amenity
- Other
- Overdevelopment
- Privacy Light and Noise
- Trees and Landscaping

Comments: Environmental and Heritage Concerns

- Loss of open countryside:

This proposal would remove productive farmland and long-established green fields, including the entirety of Ifield Golf Club. The area currently provides an essential stretch of open land separating Crawley from Horsham. Building here would effectively fuse the two distinct towns together.

- Irreplaceable habitat destruction:

The scheme would result in the loss of ancient woodland, hedgerows and other key habitats within a highly valuable Biodiversity Opportunity Area. Claims of achieving a 10% biodiversity gain are unrealistic-veteran trees and ancient woodland ecosystems cannot simply be recreated. Sussex Wildlife Trust has already objected to the plans.

- Harm to wildlife and protected species:

Ifield Brook Meadows, a designated Local Wildlife Site, would be subjected to greater human presence, lighting, and recreational pressure. The site also supports a rare population of Bechstein's bats-an internationally protected, red-listed species. This area should be safeguarded as a Special Area of Conservation, not put at further risk.

- Threats to nearby heritage:

Historic England has warned that the development will cause "less than substantial harm" to nationally important heritage features, including the Grade I St Margaret's Church and the medieval moated site at Ifield Court.

- Loss of historic landscape:

Archaeological investigations indicate that the land contains significant remains from the Late Bronze Age/Roman era, as well as possible artefacts from the early iron industry. Surrey County Council's archaeological specialists have repeatedly asked for more research before any development progresses.

Infrastructure and Local Services Concerns

- Strain on healthcare:

Local medical services are already severely overstretched. GP surgeries cannot take more patients, and East Surrey Hospital runs at full capacity. Previous developments such as Forge Wood demonstrate that new GP practices do not automatically attract staff, and some promised facilities-like the surgery at Heathy Wood-have yet to materialise.

- Traffic congestion and unsafe access routes:

Road infrastructure proposed for this scheme is wholly inadequate for the thousands of extra vehicles expected. Nearby lanes are narrow, winding and unsuitable for increased traffic, especially the volume of horse riders, cyclists and walkers who use them regularly.

Stopping Rusper Road at Furlong Farm would remove direct access to Ifield station, forcing residents onto lengthy detours. Directing development traffic along Charlwood Road into Ifield Village-a Conservation Area with speed humps and significant congestion-will inevitably push drivers onto small rural lanes through Rusper, Charlwood, Faygate and Lambs Green. Construction traffic routed via Overdean Drive, Tangmere Road and Rusper Road poses major safety risks. Rusper Road's pavements are extremely narrow, making it hazardous for children, families, and anyone walking or cycling.

- Water supply and sewage concerns:

Questions remain about how water neutrality would be achieved. Borehole testing has already raised concerns about chemical levels, and no permit has yet been sought. Crawley's sewage treatment works are at full capacity, and Thames Water's financial difficulties heighten concerns about river pollution, particularly affecting the River Mole.

- Flooding risks:

The site naturally functions as a floodplain for Ifield Brook and the River Mole. Covering it with hard surfaces will increase both the likelihood and the severity of flooding events.

- Limited public transport options:

The suggestion that cycling would be the main mode of travel is unrealistic given the location. Families cannot reasonably depend on bikes for school runs, weekly shopping, or commuting to the station.

Bus proposals are vague and appear untested.

- Ifield train station issues:

Ifield has been ranked as the worst station in the country for cancellations. It has no room for drop-offs, minimal space, and is surrounded by a busy junction, petrol station and primary school. Its platforms are narrow, meaning the idea of adding cycle storage is impractical. At peak times, trains are already full before reaching the station.

- Air and noise pollution:

More traffic, years of construction activity and the looming possibility of Gatwick expansion will all worsen already high local pollution levels.

Social, Economic and Planning Concerns

- Unrealistic housing numbers:

Housing targets exaggerate local needs and seem designed to benefit developers rather than address genuine affordability issues. Much of the proposed housing would not be within reach for local residents. Crawley Borough Council has repeatedly stated that this is the wrong location for such a large project, and the plans include no clear commitment to social housing.

- Questionable job availability:

There is no solid evidence that enough well-paid jobs exist locally to support a development of this scale. Predictions for employment growth around Gatwick are uncertain, especially as automation continues to increase.

- Loss of valued community facilities:

Ifield Golf Club-approaching its 100-year anniversary-would be demolished. It is a well-used community resource that cannot be adequately replaced by the limited facilities proposed by Homes England.

- Conflict between local authorities:

The land lies within Horsham District, yet most of the negative consequences will fall on Crawley. Both Crawley Borough Council and local MP Peter Lamb have formally opposed the proposal.

- Large-scale expansion hidden within the plans:

The initial 3,000 homes are only the first stage of a much larger plan-up to 10,000 homes in total. However, infrastructure planning has only been carried out for the initial phase, ignoring the far greater long-term impacts.

Kind regards

Telephone:

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**Horsham
District
Council**



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