



Newsletter January 2024

Which of these do you want?!

Looking NE across the 3,000 site from Ifield Golf Course. Gatwick in the distance.



Homes England's vision from the same point.



It's time to respond to Horsham's Local Plan – Officially – to stop the 3000 house West of Ifield build!

On 11th December HDC Councillors voted their draft Local Plan to the next stage of the process. As expected the Plan includes the 3,000 house West of Ifield development.

The next stage of the process is the official public consultation (Regulation 19) from 19th January to 1st March 2024. Whether you've never written about West of Ifield, or if you've written loads of letters and emails, now is the time that objections REALLY count. **Please respond to the Consultation.**

All responses to the consultation will be read and considered by a Planning Inspector who will judge whether the Local Plan, including the West of Ifield site, is 'sound' and should go forwards. SWOI believes that HDC's Plan is not sound or sustainable. It lacks the detail we see in other Local Plans, it glosses over huge issues like water shortage and lack of sewage processing capacity, and it uses the West of Ifield development as a political fix to save the rest of the District from development.

The 'evidence' used to justify putting West of Ifield in the Plan is seriously flawed and now is the time for all of us to make sure the Inspector knows about all the problems it will cause – not least huge increases in traffic and air pollution, loss of Ifield Golf Club, damage to ancient woodland and loss of protected species, and all the issues with water – supply, treatment, flooding and the River Mole water quality which is already Poor. More information on these topics here: <https://www.savewestofield.co.uk/>

Make sure your voice is heard!

Details provided by HDC on how to respond to the consultation are not clear, so Save West of Ifield are seeking clarity. Please keep an eye on the Save West of Ifield's (SWOI) website for further details: <https://www.savewestofield.co.uk/>

Need help with responding? SWOI is running a session to help people respond – on **8th February at Ifield West Community Centre, 1A Dobbins Place, Crawley RH11 0SZ**. The aim is to make sure everyone knows how to submit responses on-line, email, by post, etc. And to provide detailed guidance on key topics and the Plan in general. Please drop-in anytime between 7.30 and 9.30. Do also feel free to email SWOI with questions. savewestofield@gmail.com
We also understand that Rusper Parish Council is planning an Extra Parish Meeting dedicated to Horsham's Local Plan, on Tuesday 13th February at Rusper Village Hall from 7.30pm. All members of the public are welcome to attend. Full details were not available at time of writing so please keep an eye on the Parish Council website, the village Facebook, etc.

What are we fighting against?

- 3000 more houses and a dual carriageway covering Ifield Golf Course and the fields to Ifield Avenue
- A huge increase in **traffic** on roads that can't support it:
 - The only new road will be from Rusper Road to Ifield Avenue through the new development. No other new **road infrastructure** is planned. Plus Rusper Road will be 'closed off' from roughly the golf course to Hyde Drive roundabout, forcing traffic to and from Rusper to take a circuitous route
 - 3000 houses will likely mean 4200 extra cars on our road, meaning the '**rat-running**' on residential roads in Langley Green, Ifield and Rusper will get even worse. Plus increased traffic on the A264, at Cheals Roundabout, and on the M23. Rusper and Charlwood villages will see significant increases in traffic flows through their centres.
 - A **15 minute neighbourhood** is proposed by Homes England to mitigate extra traffic. However this is set to fail as the infrastructure, such as town cycle paths needed to make it viable, does not exist
- The catastrophic and permanent loss of our **green space and wildlife**
 - Over 30 ha of '**ancient woodland**' on the site or immediately adjacent to it, plus another 30 ha of 'priority woodland'. That's why 75% of the site is identified as Biodiversity Opportunity Area. But all extremely threatened
 - **Ifield Brook Meadows** – Local Wildlife Site – will be sandwiched between the densest part of West of Ifield and the urban edge of Crawley. Homes England plans to cover it with cycleways and footpaths, and maybe even convert it into a park and playground. This means catastrophic biodiversity loss from this LWS
 - The West of Ifield site is Crawley's only remaining '**rural fringe**' and should be protected for Crawley residents, just as Chesworth Farm is for Horsham residents. It's inconsistent and ruthless to take away from Crawley residents what Horsham is so carefully protecting for its own
- More pressure on our water network:
 - **Water supply** is under pressure. Neutrality requires water demand in new builds to be offset against reduction of water use elsewhere and by the repair of leaks. The timetable and finances to deliver this offsetting are uncertain
 - **Sewage**. Without extensive improvements the Crawley wastewater treatment works will not be able to take further sewage. Thames Water's timetable and finances for improvements or extensions are uncertain
 - **Flooding**. Crawley, Horley and Gatwick are subject to flooding and more tarmac in the Ifield area in place of green fields will make the situation worse.
- More pressure on a **health** system that already cannot cope
- More **pollution**, in our air, rivers and ears, directly impacting our health
- The loss of **Ifield Golf Course**, a valued and well used community asset
- **More building that just meets developer greed not local need**



Can you help to win the fight? Save West of Ifield continue to need and seek expert professional advice to enable us to provide the best possible response to HDC's Local Plan. This is obviously very expensive. If you are able to donate to help meet these costs it would be very much appreciated – Account name: Save West Of Ifield, Number: 55426514 Sort code: 53-50-39. It's a Business account. **THANK YOU!**