



March 2021

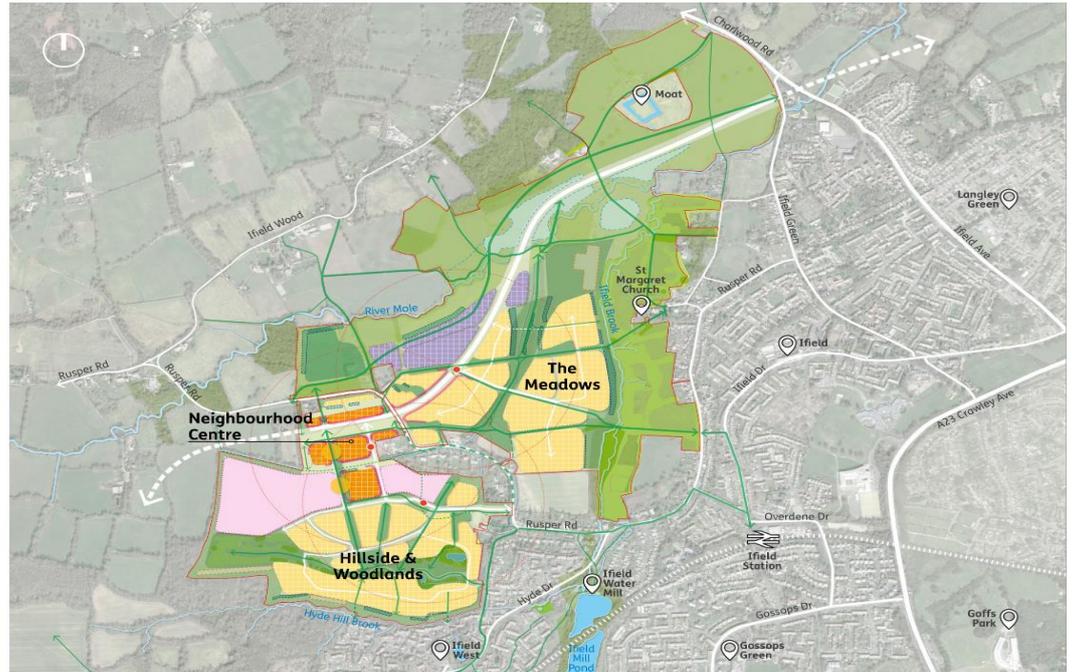
Homes England – West of Ifield March 2021 Public Engagement Events INTERIM UPDATE

WEST OF IFIELD

A new neighbourhood
with three character areas

-  Residential
-  Neighbourhood Centre mixed-use
-  Schools
-  Employment
-  Potential active frontages
-  Walking + cycling routes
-  Vehicular streets
-  Western Link

#MakingHomesHappen



The following update is an immediate snapshot of feedback from the three online public engagement events Homes England held over the course of three days from 18th to 20th March 2021. A more comprehensive consultation report will follow once the consultation has closed and the information has been analysed.



This second round of public engagement and consultation gave residents and other members of the community an opportunity to see and discuss the draft masterplan for the site, which is being promoted through the Horsham District Council Local Plan as a new neighbourhood containing up to 3,250 homes, schools, green spaces, and community infrastructure. We were not consulting on the need for or principle of development as this is a decision for the respective Local Plan process. Further information can be found here <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/local-plan>.

The draft masterplan was developed following input received from the community during the first series of public engagement events held in January 2020. Through these earlier sessions Homes England consulted on the principles of development.

At the latest events, Homes England presented the draft masterplan to the community and asked for feedback through a series of online workshop sessions. The sessions provided opportunities for round table discussion and will inform the final masterplan, so that it meets the needs of both existing and future residents.

The events were advertised in the West Sussex County Times and the Crawley Observer w/c 8th March. A Facebook advertisement at the same time attracted 1,865 page views leading to 261 engagements with Homes England. Some 4,948 local residents received a letter inviting them to an engagement event. We also notified parish councils and invited local councillors to make people aware of the event.

The sessions were well attended with over 70 people taking part in the online workshops and sharing their views.

The main issues raised in relation to the draft masterplan, were:

- **Community Infrastructure** - the public asked questions about the proposed new schools and the impact on existing schools, health facilities, and the loss of a golf-course.

"What guarantees do we have that infrastructure will be delivered?"

"What's happening about health facilities? Where are the doctors going to come from?"

"I love the position of the new primary school."

"Can the loss of the Ifield Golf Club be justified?"



- **Open space and landscaping** - concern was expressed about the loss of wildlife biodiversity, especially in the Ifield Brook area, and negative implications on the surrounding environment. Attendees were also concerned with the potential loss of access to the countryside and existing open spaces and the effect this could have on mental health and wellbeing.

"We're concerned that we're losing our only outlet to the countryside via Ifield."

"Are the parks you're planning going to have car parks, or are they for people to walk to?"

"The golf course is an asset as a green space."

"Crawley Parks Management is excellent."

- **Connectivity/Transport** - there was discussion around the adequacy of nearby public transport facilities, the existing capacity issues of local roads and the need for and purpose of the Western Link Road. Attendees highlighted concern for safety when walking and cycling in the area, and the need for sustainable modes of transport. Commuters from Ifield Station were keen to highlight that the station is already at capacity and asked how this would be improved.

"The Link road needs to connect to the major roads."

"I'm concerned that construction traffic will come along Rusper Road."

"Will the Western Link Road extend to Faygate?"

- **New homes and neighbourhoods** - people raised questions about the number of homes being proposed, and the percentage that would be affordable. Several people also questioned the need for additional housing post-Covid.

"How can we be sure about the 35% affordable housing and the quality of the build?"

"Will the housing be available to Crawley residents?"

"It's nice to see the three different areas. It's interesting to see more variety."

Following the events, more than 1,000 people have visited www.westofifield.co.uk to share their thoughts and find out more information. **There is still an opportunity for people to leave their comments online before 5pm on Tuesday 6th April 2021.** The presentation that was given at the event is on the website along with full details of the proposals and a comprehensive Q&A document and a recording of the main presentation.



In the meantime, we would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who participated in these events and have given feedback on the website.

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Headline figures

- 70 people took part in ten workshop sessions.
- To date 1,311 people have visited the www.westofifield.co.uk website allowing people who were not able to attend an event, to share their thoughts and find more information.
- 237 comments have been made so far through the website.
- 261 people has engaged with the consultation through Facebook.