

Examination of the Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040

Hearings: week 1 - April 2026

Rusper Parish Council Hearing Statement

Rusper Parish Council stands by all of its previous submissions submitted at all consultation phases of the Horsham Local Plan process.

Matter 4: Business and industrial needs

a. Whether the plan makes sufficient provision for business, industrial and logistics needs

As stated in our supporting letter to attend this session, Rusper Parish Council made no comment specifically in relation to the business and industrial needs, as we feel that generally the proposals identify sufficient provision for this. However, in relation to the location of the proposed sites, the West of Ifield proposals fail a wide range of issues with respect to the allocation of any provision at this site. All of these concerns are covered in our earlier submission, but may give the appearance that they only relate to housing provision at this location.

Our careful consideration clearly indicates that business and light industrial provision at this site would only be viable if a full western relief road existed to provide suitable access to the main A and B road network. The proposals within the current proposed Local Plan, show that access to this site would only be provided via C class country lanes and further access to A and B roads would involve passing through existing Crawley neighbourhoods again on C class roads.

It is our view that any medium or larger scale business or industrial development should be restricted to sites adjacent to the major road network, ideally at least an A road, or with a specific road link to that network without passing through residential areas.

The North Horsham (Mowbray) development is a clear indication of the type of access that should be provided for all business and industrial developments, where a separate direct access onto the A264 is being provided.

Our concerns about environmental issues also apply to the West of Ifield proposal and these should be a clear part of the Local Plan for any commercial development. Given the inclusion of the West of Ifield site, it would appear that the overall plan in relation to such issues is flawed, or at least the Horsham District Council interpretation of the policies set out in the plan have not not been applied correctly, which leads to serious concerns about the viability of the plan overall.

Additionally, the inclusion of the West of Ifield site, highlights that the Local Plan policies in relation to commercial sites, is flawed in failing to ensure that sites are only allocated where the infrastructure provision is in place, or already planned, to meet the needs of the development. It has been established that the water supply network is not in place to meet existing developments and the waste water provision for the West of Ifield site is already over capacity leading to frequent direct foul water release into the river Mole. Any development should only be permitted to fit with the timescales being prepared to improve these provisions. It should not be possible to develop a site before those provisions are identified.