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Making homes happen

West of Ifield – Responding to your questions

January 2021



West of Ifield – Your questions answered

On the **14th December 2020** we held an online update event for our proposals for a new neighbourhood west of Ifield. At this event we presented an update on the feedback we received at the consultation events in January 2020, how this feedback is informing the next stages of design as well as the progress we have made in the development of the scheme.

We would like to thank everyone who attended the session and for their input. For those not able to attend, a recording of the event is available [here](#).

A number of questions were raised during the session. We endeavoured to answer as many as we could within the sessions. However, due to time constraints it was not possible to get through all of the questions. As questions were submitted these were randomly provided to the chair of the events to ask to the relevant members of the team on as many different topics as possible.

We greatly appreciate your feedback and it is important to us that we answer your questions. Thus, we have put together this Question and Answers document to provide answers to any questions that we answered live as well as those we were not able to answer due to time constraints.

As we hold further public engagement events, more questions and issues may arise – especially as our plans will become more detailed. This document will be continuously updated and uploaded to our website www.westofifield.co.uk. Further updates on the progress of the scheme will be posted on our news page [here](#).

Planning Process

1. How will Crawley benefit when these households all pay their council tax to Horsham District Council?
 - a. This proposal will deliver a 25% increase in the size of Crawley how is it that Horsham is the lead authority?
 - b. 88% of the land is Horsham but clearly 99% of the impact will be on Crawley. So why is Crawley not AT LEAST an equal partner in this process?

We recognise that by being located on the border between Horsham and Crawley, the potential impacts (both positive and negative) from any development West of Ifield will support Crawley as well as Horsham residents. We are keen to understand the views of everyone that may have thoughts on the scheme (especially those living closest to the site). This is why as part of our consultation held in January 2020 we hosted a number of events in Crawley to ensure that residents had the opportunity to learn more about the plans.

It is also why we are engaging with both Horsham District Council and Crawley Borough council in relation to our emerging proposal, so that we can understand the issues and potential opportunities for both authority areas. It is our intention to continue to engage both authorities throughout the planning and delivery stages.

As landowner and promoter, we do not have control over how Council Tax is collected or spent and this remains the decision of the local authorities. Should the West of Ifield be identified as a preferred allocation within the Horsham Local Plan, we will champion strong governance arrangements that involve both authorities and ensure that opportunities arising from the development are understood.

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2. Surely this development is subject to planning permission, or is this a foregone conclusion and so will this definitely going ahead?
 - a. If it was at risk of not happening why buy Ifield Golf Course?

Yes, the scheme is subject to planning permission and other statutory planning and consenting requirements, the same as any other landowner, promoter or developer. We are promoting the site as part of the Horsham Local Plan. Any decision as to whether the site is suitable for development will be taken by the Local Authority and tested independently at a Public Examination. As part of this process, should the West of Ifield be allocated for development by Horsham District Council there will be a need to demonstrate that the scheme meets the relevant legal tests and is consistent with national policy. As part of this process, there will be an opportunity for those who wish to comment on the proposed development to do so.

Alongside the Local Plan, it is our intention (if supported by the Local Authority) to submit an outline planning application later in 2021. This will allow us to demonstrate what the site will look like, how it will be delivered and provide greater certainty to the local community about what will happen and when. As with all applications, this will enable residents another opportunity to submit comments on our proposals directly to the Council. The Council will have to consider all comments before making a recommendation on the plans which will be determined by Horsham District Council Planning Committee.

We are confident that our plans will deliver sustainable development and provide significant benefits. The purchase of Ifield Golf Club is part of our wider ambition to demonstrate a commitment to long term investment in Horsham and Crawley and ensure that we can deliver much needed housing at the earliest opportunity.

3. The Government has stated that development must be on brownfield sites and not green field sites. Why is this therefore going ahead then, and why aren't funds being invested on the many areas in and around Crawley that would benefit from improving run down brown field sites?

All local authorities are required to identify how housing needs can be met as part of the preparation of a Local Plan. The final decision on which sites to allocate and are suitable for housing will be taken in line with national planning policy. This doesn't preclude the use of non-brownfield sites if it can be demonstrated that this is necessary.

There is an identified need for more housing across Horsham and Crawley – which can't necessarily be met wholly within brownfield sites. We consider that while not a brownfield site, development west of Ifield provides an unrivalled opportunity to meet housing needs in a sustainable location in way that can ensure that at least 50% of the site can be retained as open space and delivers a biodiversity net gain.

New Homes

1. How will you ensure they are affordable as most sites don't deliver the required number of real affordable homes?
 - a. You talk about affordable housing - can you define that?

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- b. What is your definition of affordable housing? Every development I have seen in the local area have starting prices that people and couples on average salaries are unable to afford.

As the Government's Housing Agency, we are here to deliver opportunities for people not only to own their own home but also to start on the housing ladder in an affordable home.

Affordable housing are homes that are available to buy or rent below market values. There is no set price for affordable homes and there are a number of different affordable home products that will help many people access housing who might otherwise not be able to do so. Different affordable housing types include social rented housing, shared ownership, affordable rent and new products such as the recently announced First Homes. We will work with a range of providers to ensure the widest range of different affordable housing types are provided within the site to ensure as many people as possible have access to the new homes.

Affordable housing needs are identified in the North West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2019) which covers Horsham, Crawley and Mid Sussex. The exact requirements will be confirmed by Horsham District Council through the preparation of their Local Plan Review We will work with Horsham District Council as the Local Planning Authority and affordable housing providers to ensure that the identified needs are met.

2. How much social housing will be available and will Crawley be able to use that housing for people on their homeless list?

There is a requirement for both Horsham and Crawley Councils to work together on meeting housing needs for both authorities and we feel that this scheme plays a sustainable part of that. We are working with both authorities to understand how any affordable and social housing provided on site can benefit the residents of both Horsham and Crawley wherever possible.

3. We have seen many developments throughout the South East where homes are clearly aimed at large-portfolio landlords. What assurances can you give that developers will build suitable homes for local demographics and what proportion of homes will be aimed at the buy-to let market?

As Homes England is a Government Agency, we will be delivering a policy compliant scheme that responds to the most up to date evidence on local housing need and meet the local authorities' ambitions in terms of the projected growth for the area and the types of houses that are required. We are working closely with both Horsham and Crawley Council to identify the housing requirements for the area and ensure that it is suitable and available for local people.

4. Is there allowance or compensation for neighbours bordering the development disrupted during the construction of the development?

We will not provide compensation to neighbours bordering the development during construction. We are considering detailed construction phasing to ensure that impacts are kept to a minimum and are committed to preparing a Construction Environmental Management Plan and Code of Construction

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Practice (CoCP) which will set out the standards and procedures to which a developer or contractor must adhere in order to manage the potential environmental impacts of construction works.

As part of the planning application, construction impacts will be fully considered and if necessary, mitigation will be implemented to ensure that any potential impacts on nearby properties are minimised.

5. Are Homes England saying that Ifield Golf Club is surplus to requirements if so what provisions are being made to replace with equivalent or better facilities.
 - a. Given that golf has for many this year been a life saver (in terms of mental health as well as keeping people fit), and indeed courses are a source of biodiversity with lakes and wooded areas, have you considered at any stage Ifield Golf Course as a valuable community asset to be incorporated as part of the 50% open space?
 - b. The government has unveiled a roadmap to better fairer farming from 2021 which includes introducing the **Environmental Land Management** scheme to incentivise sustainable farming practices, with creation of habitats for nature recovery and establish new woodland to help tackle climate change, Ifield West is in a good position to offer this - why build 30,000 houses on that land?

In demonstrating that the land to the West of Ifield is suitable for development, it will be necessary for us to show that relevant national policy requirements can be met. While we recognise that Ifield Golf Course has been used by Members for many years, we consider that the necessary policy tests can be met and we will publish further evidence through the planning process.

It is not possible to retain Ifield Golf Course, but as part of our proposals for 3,250 homes as part of a new neighbourhood to the West of Ifield, we will be able to provide a wide range of community facilities, increase in public accessibility to open space overall as well as new sports facilities. We are also committed to demonstrating how any development can achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity of at least 10% and that overall, our plans will deliver significant benefits for both existing and future residents.

6. It is apparent that this government's plans for changing the national planning system and building more houses in the south-east are now discredited and in urgent need of revision. Are Homes England prepared to review / revise their plans for building c10,000 new homes on land west of Ifield in the light of this?

Horsham District Council and Crawley Borough Council have to meet the housing targets identified through their Local Plans. With the population of West Sussex forecast to grow by 20.4% over the next 20 years, current evidence demonstrates the need for Crawley to deliver 10,500 new homes by 2035 and Horsham to deliver 15,000 homes by the same year. This means that this area is subject to acute housing need – something which is reflected in rapidly increasing house prices which can leave local families unable to stay in the area. This is still the case following revision to the standard method for housing need. West of Ifield is one of the potential sites which could help the local authorities meet their local housing requirements and reduce the housing pressure in the South East.

Environment

1. Why is “urban sprawl”, which damages the environment (loss of green space, impact to local flora & fauna, flood risk) being considered rather than town centre regeneration?
 - a. What are the buffer zone and open space plans, especially for Phase 1?

All local authorities are required to identify how housing needs can be met as part of the preparation of a Local Plan. There is an identified need for more housing across Horsham and Crawley – which can’t necessarily be met wholly within brownfield sites.

We consider that while not a brownfield site, development west of Ifield provides an unrivalled opportunity to meet housing needs in a sustainable location in way that can ensure that at least 50% of the site can be retained as open space and delivers a biodiversity net gain. Furthermore, the strategic location of West of Ifield can help support further town centre regeneration by bringing additional investment and connectivity and therefore is complementary to the existing town centre strategies – for example the Crawley Town Centre Regeneration Programme:

(https://investcrawley.co.uk/sites/default/files/2019-11/crawley_town_centre_regeneration_programme.pdf)

Delivering new sustainable neighbourhood is at the heart of our plans. We are committed to taking a landscape led approach to development, protecting the most sensitive environments (including Ifield Brook Meadows), ensuring at least 50% of the development is dedicated open space and that we achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity (see below for more detail on this). We are exploring options for the long-term stewardship and community ownership of opens spaces so that these spaces are protected in perpetuity.

2. Please explain PRECISELY what is meant by, and how you will achieve “10% biodiversity net gain” by replacing hedgerows, trees etc with concrete?
 - a. How is a 10% gain of biodiversity any good when you can allow a 50% loss to build. Does that mean it will be an overall a 40% loss?
 - b. Have you considered the huge loss of biodiversity and wildlife that is already happening and how much pressure this will cause?
 - c. Can you please explain the logic of promising 50% green space and 10% biodiversity gain and then planning to build a ‘first phase’ of 3,500 houses on Ifield Golf course with its ancient woodland and rich wildlife?

A biodiversity net gain means ensuring there is more nature on site after development than before. This requires an assessment of the current value biodiversity value of a site in its existing pre-development condition, then the value post-development. A 10% biodiversity net gain requires a 10% improvement in biodiversity value over the existing situation following the development. This is determined by an independent Natural England biodiversity calculation tool.

We appreciate that the idea of developing a site may appear counter intuitive to improving biodiversity value. However, a site such as West of Ifield comprises a wide mix of greater and lesser areas of biodiversity value. The areas of lesser value such as simple, species poor grassland can be enhanced and improved by habitat management to develop into a species-rich grassland with far greater biodiversity benefits. Further enhancement measures could include creating new ponds, woodland, wetland areas or

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a whole variety of different habitats. This is the method used to 'balance' the biodiversity loss from proposed buildings and roads on-site.

The approach to biodiversity 10% net gain will be agreed with relevant ecological groups and supported by a long-term habitat management plan.

3. How will you protect existing wildlife on site?

- a. Over the course of a year, we often hear woodpeckers, owls and see bats, deer, foxes and rabbits. How would you protect their environment so that they don't have to leave their homes?
- b. The government has unveiled a roadmap to better fairer farming from 2021 which includes Introducing the Environmental Land Management scheme to incentivise sustainable farming practices, with creation of habitats for nature recovery and establish new woodland to help tackle climate change, Ifield West is in a good position to offer this - why build 30,000 houses on that land?

The existing wildlife on site will be protected as part of our plans. We have undertaken a significant number of detailed ecological surveys, protected species surveys and habitat surveys to understand what wildlife uses the sites and the important habitats that need to be protected or provided for within our plans.

From these surveys we know that there are areas of low biodiversity value on site including cropped areas and agricultural areas. Our aim is to ensure that these areas of low value are predominantly where the new homes will be built subject to planning permission and that any existing habitats and connectivity between habitat (e.g. hedgerows) are retained.

We will also be carrying out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as part of the planning process to look at the impacts of the development on site, predict what would happen if the site was to be developed and how mitigation can be put in place to reduce the impact of development where possible. Further details on how we will assess and approach environmental considerations is set out in our EIA Scoping Report. More detail on any mitigation will be made available as part of the planning permission once the surveys have been completed, the full impacts assessed and following further discussion and agreement with the relevant bodies.

4. Are you taking into account the pollution from Gatwick airport when building near the airport?

We understand the concerns that people have with regards to the site's proximity to Gatwick Airport. However, we are working with Gatwick Airport, local authorities and other statutory bodies to ensure that the necessary environmental impacts are fully understood and addressed through the design of the scheme. This includes safeguarding against any future potential expansion of the airport at a later point in time.

We are confident that our proposals will ensure that the future community at West of Ifield is safe and helps improve the health and wellbeing of residents. Our final proposals will be supported by the necessary environmental surveys and Health Impact Assessments to demonstrate this will be the case. These will be submitted in support of a future planning application.

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5. On the basis that construction accounts for 37% of emissions and you have an airport also doing the same how will this reduce environmental impact?
 - a. How will Homes England mitigate the environmental pollution caused by the excess traffic their development causes, along with the associated health issues?

Potential impacts on air quality at both the construction and occupation stage will be assessed as part of our Environmental Impact assessment. The assessment will take account of existing conditions as well as impacts from the proposed development. Further information is available in our EIA Scoping Report.

As part of any mitigation package that may be required, we will agree a Construction Environmental Management Plan to ensure that construction impacts are minimised.

6. What will happen to the public rights of way crossing the land being developed during the construction phases?
 - a. What is the long term plan for any public rights of way across the land being developed?

All existing rights of way will be maintained during construction as far as possible. While it may be necessary to temporarily close, limit or divert some of the existing rights of way, we will seek to minimise this and provide alternative provision wherever possible.

As part of our commitment to ensure that at least 50% of the proposed scheme is accessible open space, there will be opportunities for the community to have greater access to the site than is currently possible. It is too early at this stage to determine what type of access arrangements will be in place (for example whether it is rights or way or other permitted access arrangements) as this will depend on the final delivery and management strategy. Further detail on the long-term management of the open space and publicly accessible areas will be made available as part of the planning process.

7. National Planning Policy requires existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless: a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements or b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.

In demonstrating that the land to the West of Ifield is suitable for development, it will be necessary for us to show that relevant national policy requirements can be met.

It is not possible to retain Ifield Golf Course, but as part of our proposals for 3,250 homes as part of a new neighbourhood to the West of Ifield, we will be able to provide a wide range of community facilities, increase in public accessibility to open space overall as well as new sports facilities. We are also committed to demonstrating how any development can achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity of at least 10% and that overall, our plans will deliver significant benefits for both existing and future residents.

8. Why are you building in an area of 'high radon' risk with certain parts of that area within the 3-5% range? already people looking to buy property in this area are being told in their surveys of the risks involved in buying certain properties, and subsequently putting new buyers off. Where is the benefit to deliberately build further houses in this 'at risk' area?

Radon levels within the proposed development are no greater than the surrounding area. All environmental risks will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment and if necessary appropriate mitigation will be implemented.

Flooding & Water

1. Please address flood risk and mitigation – the proposed site does flood seasonally, with the River Mole, Hyde Hill Brook and Ifield Mill stream all within EA Flood Zones 2 & 3. What hydrological studies have been carried out and what were the conclusions? Did these studies take into account the long term effects of climate change leading to increasing rainfall in the UK?
 - a. What are the mitigation plans for surface and fluvial flooding risks to existing neighbourhoods?

Flood risk is an important issue. We recognise that part of site is within Flood Risk areas. These areas will not be built on and we are discussing with the Environment Agency about the appropriate modelling to ensure we have an up to date understanding of the potential flood risks – including the potential effects from climate change.

As part of the planning process, we will need to meet a number of very strict tests to demonstrate that the allowance we make for flood risk areas takes into account considerable flood events and do not increase flood risk elsewhere. Any future planning application will include detailed proposals around water management and sustainable urban drainage which will be checked independently by the Environmental Agency and West Sussex Council as Lead Local Flood Authority.

2. Southern water stated that they cannot meet the current customer demand for water in April what are you doing to address this?

We are actively working with utility providers – including Southern Water, to ensure the necessary infrastructure can be provided.

To help ensure there is sufficient water supply we will include a number of sustainability measures within our plans to reduce the water consumption and maximise its reuse wherever possible. Potential measures currently being considered include:

- Water efficiency measures combined with household education to improve water use. Water efficiency measures could include water efficient fittings such as taps, dual flush toilets, low flow shower heads and efficient washing machines.
- Using a rainwater harvesting systems to provide water for domestic use. Rainwater can be used for non-drinking needs such as toilet flushing and gardening.
- The installation of a 'grey water' recycling system for water. This is water generated from domestic processes such as washing dishes, laundry and bathing.

Further detail on the preferred solution will be set out in the planning application as part of our wider sustainability commitments.

Movement & Transport

1. Please inform us of the transport infrastructure proposals and your plans regarding the Western Link?
 - a. Is there going to be a relief road put in place for this big housing development before it is built or will it just be left as it is?
 - b. Where will the link road go? Can you send a map to everyone?
 - c. Will Homes England commit to traffic calming measures along Hyde Drive to make it safer?

Our overall transport strategy is based on reducing the overall reliance of the car and promoting the use of sustainable transport modes. Our approach will seek to reduce the need to travel by providing not just homes but the infrastructure necessary to live including new schools and shops.

Where people do need to travel we want to ensure that they have a choice to use sustainable transport modes including walking, cycling, the use of public transport or newer methods of travel such as e-bikes or e-hire scooters.

Where this is not possible, we will accommodate for the use of cars. Through the design of the scheme we will be enabling a section of the Western Link to be delivered. The proposed location of this will be presented to the community at our next round of consultation.

Our intention as a Government Housing Agency is to ensure that enabling infrastructure is delivered as early as possible in the development process to make sure that the impact of new development is appropriately mitigated.

Our transport assessment, informed by technical modelling will look at the impact of the site and the wider area and will inform the extent of the Western Link, when it will be built and whether a wider suite of offsite highway measures are required to address the impact of the development.

2. If you are saying that this development will use Ifield Station this is a small station with limited access and trains. Beside that all traffic to this will come via Rusper Road which is not capable already of handling existing traffic so how can it cope?
 - a. You mentioned better access to Ifield station. The area around the station is already overburdened with commuter traffic and cars. Plus the presence of the primary school. What's your initial thoughts about what form that access will take?

By delivering a new sustainable neighbourhood, we are not trying to encourage a significant level of commuting out of the development and want to ensure that people can access day to day services within the development as much as possible – for example by providing the necessary facilities to live and work on site.

We understand that there will be people who will travel to Ifield Station. To ensure that this has a minimal impact on the existing road network we will encourage those who need to travel to use sustainable methods such as walking, cycling and public transport.

3. If existing roads already suffer with congestion, the impact of 10,000 new homes is unimaginable and that will be from the get go, because construction traffic will cause a problem immediately. How will you mitigate this?
 - a. I still can't see how you propose to allow an extra 15 to 20,000 cars to flow into the area?

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- b. Do you expect us to put up with years of Heavy Goods Vehicles thundering through Ifield and Rusper Road?
- c. You think people will use their cars less if they are in walking distance of local amenities. How many local people drive to the Tesco Express or shops at Ifield Parade? Are you aware that some owners of locally new built houses have already modified their frontage so that they can park an extra car?
- d. What vehicle access is planned?
- e. Will the development include integrated cycle lanes, and will there be suitable secure storage for cyclists for all houses?

By delivering a new sustainable neighbourhood, we are not trying to encourage a significant level of car use from the development and want to ensure that people can access day to day services within the development as much as possible – for example by providing the necessary facilities to live and work on site together with high quality provision for sustainable transport modes. This will include segregated and integrated cycle provision as well as allowing for new emerging technologies. We will also ensure that the design of the new neighbourhoods encourages a reduction in car use – such as designing residential areas that reduces the importance of the car and makes it easier to access facilities by alternative travel modes.

Access to the site is being developed as part of the emerging masterplan and informed by detailed transport modelling. To understand potential highway impacts and ensure that these are addressed, we will test the potential impact of the development on the highway network as part of our detailed transport modelling and transport assessment. This will be for both the construction and operation stage and we will use the delivery of new infrastructure – such as part of the Western Link – to provide alternative construction access.

Further information will be made available as we continue to develop our proposals through 2021.

Infrastructure

Working

- 9. What jobs will be created?
 - a. The impact of COVID-19 on Crawley cannot be overstated. Many think it will be one of the worst hit in the UK. You talk about creating jobs - how, where, what?
 - b. The job losses at Gatwick tend to be customer service roles ...does that fit in with the construction industry?
 - c. Thousands and thousands of people are losing /have lost their jobs ... it sounds as if Homes England are unaware of the impact of all the job losses at Gatwick Airport ... this was the original reason for choosing this site ? so why are you no longer looking at the dramatic change in this area?
 - d. Clearly there will be jobs in delivering the project, but in the longer term, Crawley is losing huge numbers of jobs in the aviation sector and related industry. With respect, delivering employment 'floor space' is not the same as delivering jobs.

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- e. You state that “Horsham & Crawley [’s...] housing need is acute”. Please could you evidence this and compare with the analysis you have carried out regarding job losses and population, both during and projected post Covid-19?
- f. Given that part of the rationale for Homes England to build c10,000 new homes on land west of Ifield was to accommodate housing need for the future growth of Gatwick Airport employment are they prepared to review / revise their proposals in the light of the impact of coronavirus on the airport’s growth plans?

Any development of this size will be designed to provide opportunities for new jobs on site. This will include not only the construction jobs created the development of the site but will also see the creation of new areas of employment on site that can be enjoyed by both new and existing residents.

Within the new neighbourhood, there will be opportunities to accommodate a range of jobs close to the new homes, including those in schools, shops and community facilities as well as specific employment areas. There will be a wide range of jobs created for flexible working to support modern lifestyles, including opportunities for start-ups, smaller businesses and social enterprises.

In terms of the floorspace provided for employment we not creating fixed types as we would like the scheme to be flexible to respond to change in economic conditions. We will provide the floor-space but not fix its use so that by the time that the scheme is delivered it is the right employment space and can support the need for jobs at that time.

It is therefore not possible at this stage to set out exactly what jobs will be provided, but we will ensure that the neighbourhood centre uses and any dedicated employment areas are sufficiently flexible so that they can respond to future demands.

The site is also strategically located at the heart of the Gatwick Diamond, with strong links to existing employment centres such as Manor Royal, Gatwick Airport, Horsham and Crawley Town Centre and the proposed neighbourhoods are well placed to help support the future growth of these areas. By connected new homes to major employment areas we can help provide confidence to new employers moving into those areas that they have homes for their staff nearby and can confidently invest in the wider Crawley and Horsham areas.

We have been working with the Coast to Capital LEP and we feel that this scheme forms a crucial part of their strategy to allow the area to diversify and provide a number of new opportunities for local and national businesses.

We are aware of the current economic uncertainty that has arisen as a result of COVID-19. The impact of COVID-19 and the potential response is a matter for the Local Authorities to consider and we would expect this to be tested in more detail through the preparation of their Local Plans.

However, we consider that the land West of Ifield could have an important role in the COVID response and will help support a sustainable economic recovery by supporting significant job creation and providing a range of homes that meet local needs. Homes England will be undertaking further engagement with local authorities, communities, employers and other interested parties throughout the design and planning process to ensure that the potential to support the COVID recovery is maximised.

Living

10. Seeing how COVID-19 has impacted society in various ways (e.g. entertainment/cinemas, pubs/restaurants, shops etc) what changes and aspects and facilities are you now implementing to enhance living for residents in the general area?
 - a. Your proposed new housing development with its “vibrant new community” is directly neighbouring current communities. How would you look to improve the existing community to help curb anti-social behaviour which is increasing as the housing density in this area continues to rise?
 - b. Who would police a development in this area?

By creating a new sustainable community, we will provide a range of community facilities and local services alongside new housing that will help meet the needs of both existing and future residents of all ages. This will either be provided directly within the scheme or secured through Section 106 contributions following discussions with the Local Authorities and other service providers.

At this stage, as with our approach to employment we are ensuring that our plans are flexible enough to accommodate a range of uses that best meet the needs of future and existing residents at the time at which they are built and that enables the neighbourhood centre to evolve over time. While we know what is likely to be required in terms of schools, libraries and other essential community facilities, there is less certainty about leisure and retail facilities and that is why we will make provision for a range of uses that can best meet needs at a future point in time. This is a similar approach to that we are taking on our new community currently being developed at Northstowe, with more available information available [here](#).

However, as a new neighbourhood, with significant investment in new infrastructure close to established town centres, we believe that long term commitment to creating a new community West of Ifield will provide a certainty to local retailers and businesses that will give them the confidence to invest and help support existing regeneration and investment strategies such as the Crawley Town Centre Regeneration Programme.

Health

1. Homes England confirmed during the consultation period at the beginning of the year that the one question every single person asked was 'Are you building a new hospital first'? We were promised that this would be looked at as clearly we do not even have a large enough hospital to cope with the population of Crawley as it currently stands. What is the outcome of your studies into that subject?

We are aware of the concerns locally around the provision of health facilities and we have committed to make opportunities available to the NHS Commissioning Groups where they are needed. We do not have direct control over the delivery of these facilities so instead we need to work in partnership with the NHS providers to make sure that the space is there for the development of new health care facilities should they feel that these are necessary.

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2. You have mentioned that a sports facility is included in the vision. What sports would that support and what scale would it be?

We are continuing to work with the local authorities and Sports England to understand what the sports needs are in the local area and will identify opportunities for these to be incorporated within the new neighbourhood or by improving existing provision.

3. On NHS web site “people living within 6 miles of an airport have higher asthma, lung and heart problems, worryingly these affects were observed at a lower level of carbon monoxide”. Horsham Council in its search for sites have 450 plots of land large and small that have been put forward for residential development. Would it not be wise to consider alternative healthier sites then West of Ifield?

All local authorities are required to identify how housing needs can be met as part of the preparation of a Local Plan. The decision on which sites are most suitable for development will be determined by Horsham District Council and will be tested as part of an independent examination. Homes England is aware of the National and Local Government guidelines around health and the environment. Any strategic allocation and subsequent planning application will have to meet both National and Local Government guidelines on health (e.g. air quality, noise etc.) to ensure residents are not adversely impacted. Horsham District Council will take into account the guidelines and limits when allocating a site in its Local Plan and determining any subsequent planning applications. Furthermore, the site will be going through a rigorous local plan process which includes examination by an independent Planning Inspector.

Consultation

1. When you be holding another round of consultations instead of another update?
 - a. Crawley people generally have no idea yet about these proposals to increase the size of our town by 25%.

Ongoing community engagement is a vital part of shaping our plans. We want to create an environment where everyone can have their say and genuinely inform our future development proposals. We held a series of public engagement events in January 2020 and received feedback from over 500 residents, we have compiled all the responses into a report which highlights what is important to local residents the key concerns and opportunities to deliver wider benefits through the proposed scheme.

We will to continue to actively involve and speak with the community; we will hold further public engagement events in Spring 2021 and continue this conversation through the planning and delivery stages. In the meantime, we will be publishing more material through social media and online at www.westoffield.co.uk starting with the recent update event which can be watched online now.

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We are briefing elected members representing the wards most affected by the scheme and will continue to engage with your representatives throughout the process. Where possible, we aim to work with local schools/colleges, heritage and civic groups, resident's groups, faith groups, transport groups and business groups to ensure that all perspectives and needs are considered throughout the development of the proposals for the site.

If you have further thoughts on how we should engage and involve you and the wider community in our plans for West of Ifield, please get in touch.

2. It amazes me that Homes England are completely oblivious to the strength of opposition to these proposals in the community.
 - a. A petition signed by over 1300 people don't want Ifield golf course to be developed. how do respond to this petition?

We understand that there are some within the community those who feel that the proposals are not appropriate, but there are also people who welcome the opportunity to increase home ownership. We consider that our plans for the West of Ifield present a sustainable long-term solution to housing needs locally, while also providing significant investment that can benefit both the existing community and new residents. We want to use our consultation to make sure that if West of Ifield is developed, we understand local concerns and ensure that we create a new neighbourhood that is fit for purpose. That is why we started our consultation with the local community early and are continuing consultation with them.

While any final decision on whether or not development should take place West of Ifield sits with the local authorities, there are opportunities for local resident to make their views known as part of the ongoing Local Plan process.

If you have any further questions regarding the development or any queries about the information provided, please do not hesitate to contact us:

- **Telephone:** 07735 136371
- **Email:** westofifield@homesengland.gov.uk
- **Website:** www.westofifield.gov.uk

We are still in the early stages of the proposal and as more information and details become available, we will share this with you. As previously stated, community engagement is a vital part of this process and we hope that this document has the answers to any questions you have.