

Horsham District Council

FAO: Alice Johnson

03.06.2026

By email

**Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England)
Order 2015**

Application Reference: DC/26/0655

Site: COLLYERS (COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER), 82 HURST ROAD RH12 2EJ

Proposal: Installation of temporary single storey office building and a single storey double classroom building.

Sport England Reference: PA/26/SE/HO/73915

Dear Alice,

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the above application.

Sport England – statutory consultee role and policy

We understand that you have consulted us as a statutory consultee in line with the above Order. Therefore, we have considered the application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in particular paragraph 104, and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, which is presented within our 'Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document': www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy

Sport England's policy is to oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or prejudice the use of:

- all or any part of a playing field, or
- land which has been used as a playing field land remains undeveloped, or
- land allocated for use as a playing field

unless, in the judgement of Sport England the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions. The exceptions are provided in the Annex to this response.

As part of this assessment, Sport England has consulted the relevant National Governing Bodies for Sport (NGBs). The relevant NGBs for this proposal are the Rugby Football Union (RFU) whose comments are summarised below:

The college has a long standing positive relationship with Horsham RUFC and use of the RFU Rugby 365 AGP at the rugby club.

The development should allow for the rugby pitch to be compliant with World Rugby Law 1 and the associated dimensions. If this is not possible, investigation into movement of the pitch should take place to facilitate World Rugby Law 1 compliance.

Should the pitch in question no longer be able to cater for the existing level of competition, there is a concern that additional demand may be placed upon the facility at Horsham RUFC. The club is currently in discussion with the RFU as to how to expand floodlit and wider pitch capacity to cater for existing demand and additional, imported demand may exacerbate the situation.

Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF

The proposal does not accord with Sport England's policy or with the NPPF. However, having considered the nature of the playing field and the location of the building set back against the existing temporary structure, it is not considered that the development would reduce the sporting capability of the site. As noted above, there is significant use of the site for Rugby provision and any impact to the existing rugby pitches would impact on the demand for Horsham RUFC and the wider community. The temporary buildings do not appear to impact on the use of the rugby pitches, but Sport England would like to ensure that the walkway as shown in the local plans do not impact on the existing rugby pitch. Consideration should be given to minor movement of the pitch temporarily to ensure it is compliant with World Rugby Law 1. There should be no impact or prejudice of use of the Rugby pitches during development.

It should be understood however, that Sport England's statutory role applies to the whole of the playing field and not just those parts that are currently marked out as pitches. Areas of the field that are not formally marked out provide capacity to relocate and rotate pitches to prevent excessive wear and to mark out new ones to meet changes in demand. Sport England would object if the temporary development of this area were to become permanent.

Sport England has considered that the proposal is for temporary use only and the proposed classroom and office building will be removed following a period of 156 weeks.

Sport England's position

Given the above, Sport England raises **no objection** to the application subject to the following condition being attached to any grant of planning permission.

The temporary buildings hereby permitted shall be removed following a period of 156 weeks from the time they are installed, the land will be fully restored to its previous condition and use as grass playing field within 3 months or within a different timescale that has first been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Sport England.

Reason: To protect the playing field and ensure its restoration in accordance with development policy.

If you would like any further information or advice, please the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Cunningham MRTPI

Planning Manager

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Annex

The Five Exceptions to Sport England's Playing Fields Policy

Exception 1	A robust and up-to-date assessment has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of Sport England, that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.
Exception 2	The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.
Exception 3	The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not: • reduce the size of any playing pitch; • result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas); • reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality; • result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or • prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.
Exception 4	The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field: • of equivalent or better quality, and • of equivalent or greater quantity, and • in a suitable location, and • subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.
Exception 5	The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.

The full 'Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document' is available to view at:
www.sportengland.org/playingfieldspolicy