Horsham District Council

FAO: Shazia Penne
By email

22 November 2024

Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
Application Reference: DC/24/1410
Site: Roffey FC, Bartholomew Way, Horsham
Proposal: Installation of ball stop netting on two pitches. Erection of new dugouts and relocation of existing dugouts (retrospective)
Sport England Reference: PA/24/SE/HO/69127

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 103, 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. A summary of the exceptions is provided in the annex to this response.

The Proposal and its Impact on the playing field

The proposal is as described in the description of development.

Assessment against Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and NPPF

The application is for ancillary facilities to support the principal use of the playing field and is therefore to be assessed against exception 2 of our playing field policy.

In assessing the proposal, I have consulted with the Football Foundation that has commented,

The Football Foundation and Sussex FA are supportive of the proposal. Roffey FC play senior football at Step 5 of the National League System. At this level they must meet Ground Grading requirements. Dugouts form part of these requirements, so would be requirement to ensure they can play in that league, the proposed dugouts are bigger and will provide a more modern option. The Ball Strike Netting will help protect the trees and area behind the goals from balls flying into the area and people keep going in to retrieve them.

Sport England's Position

In light of the above support from the Football Foundation and Sussex FA, Sport England has no objection to the proposal. The development is not disproportionate to the scale of the playing field and its use and supports and does not adversely impact on the use of the playing pitch.

Given the above, Sport England raises **no objection** to the application because it is considered to accord with exception 2 of our Playing Fields Policy and paragraph 103 of the NPPF.

Please notify Sport England of the outcome of the planning application.

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

Yours sincerely,

Jo Edwards
Planning Manager

She/her

[redacted]

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