

From: Planning@horsham.gov.uk <Planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Sent: 03 April 2026 13:26:29 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0322
Categories: Comments Received

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 03/04/2026 1:26 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	Steyning Grammar Upper School Shooting Field Steyning West Sussex BN44 3RX
Proposal:	Part-demolition of existing teaching buildings, MUGAs and all-weather pitch. Construction of replacement 2-storey and 3-storey teaching buildings, flood-lit all-weather pitch and hard surfaced sports courts, with associated access, parking, landscaping and infrastructure.
Case Officer:	Matthew Porter

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address:	Downsview 57 Kings Barn Lane Steyning
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Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Member of the Public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Design - Loss of General Amenity - Other
Comments:	1. Introduction & Interest I am a long-standing member of the local community and an active participant in community sport. I currently use the existing hockey-suitable artificial grass pitch at Steyning Grammar School,

which is the only viable local facility for hockey training and match play.

Because I depend on this pitch for regular sporting activity, I have a direct and significant interest in this application and its impact on community provision.

2. Summary of Objection

I object to this application on the following grounds:

It proposes to remove a hockey-suitable, multi-sport pitch before any equivalent replacement is provided.

It fails to meet Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, specifically Exceptions 1, 3 and 4.

It would eliminate community hockey access for several years with no interim solution.

It introduces environmental risks, including microplastics pollution and poor long-term sustainability of rubber-crumb 3G pitches.

It contradicts the Horsham Local Playing Pitch Strategy (2018-2031), which identifies a shortage of hockey-suitable AGPs and the importance of retaining the existing pitch.

I request refusal unless a like-for-like hockey-suitable multi-sport pitch is delivered before the existing facility is lost.

3. Non-Compliance with Sport England's Policy (Material Planning Harm)

Exception 4 - Replacement Before Loss

The proposal removes the current pitch in or around August 2026, with a replacement delivered much later. Policy requires that any replacement is available before a facility is lost, and that it is equivalent or better in quality, quantity, suitability and accessibility. A football-only 3G pitch is not suitable for hockey and therefore does not meet this requirement.

Exception 3 - Loss of Sporting Provision

Replacing a multi-sport surface with a single-sport 3G pitch reduces overall community sporting capacity and removes hockey provision entirely for several seasons. This represents a clear loss of a community sports facility.

Exception 1 - No Surplus Provision

There is no surplus hockey-suitable provision locally. The existing pitch is the only accessible surface for multiple clubs and users. No evidence has been provided that spare capacity exists elsewhere.

Community Access Guidance

Sport England guidance states that developments must not prejudice community access. The proposed multi-year gap in provision directly harms participation and reduces public amenity.

4. Local Playing Pitch Strategy Evidence

The Horsham Playing Pitch Strategy (2018-2031) identifies a shortage of hockey-suitable AGPs and recognises the existing pitch as essential for meeting both school and community

demand.

It also warns that the loss of any multi-sport AGP would worsen an already pressured supply. This application therefore conflicts with the district's adopted strategic evidence base.

5. Environmental & Future-Proofing Concerns

Microplastics & Pollution Risks

Rubber-crumb 3G surfaces release microplastics and chemical leachates, creating risks to drainage systems, local ecosystems and public health.

EU Regulation (EU) 2023/2055

This regulation bans the sale of rubber-crumb infill from 2031.

Installing a pitch type that is already being phased out across Europe is not future-proof and presents long-term maintenance and compliance risks for the school and community.

6. Personal Impact

The loss of the existing pitch would have a significant effect on my ability to participate in local sport:

Participation risk: Hockey training and matches would stop locally for several years, increasing the likelihood of people-especially juniors-dropping out of the sport.

Travel barriers: Alternative pitches are further away, more costly, and difficult to access, especially for young people, women and girls, and lower-income households.

Loss of community benefit: The existing pitch supports wellbeing, social connections, youth development, and active lifestyles.

Removing it without replacement undermines these benefits.

These impacts are immediate, significant, and reinforce the planning harm associated with the proposal.

7. What Would Make the Scheme Acceptable

I request that the application be refused unless it is amended to guarantee:

1. Replacement First (Phasing Condition)

No closure or demolition of the existing pitch until a hockey-suitable, multi-sport replacement is built, tested, and available for community use.

2. Like-for-Like (or Better) Equivalence

The replacement must be fully hockey-suitable, including appropriate surface specification, shockpad, dimensions, run-offs, lighting, fencing, and ancillary facilities.

3. A Secure Community Use Agreement

Guaranteeing long-term community access with fair pricing and bookable hours.

4. Environmental Safeguards

Avoiding rubber-crumb infill and incorporating design measures that prevent run-off and microplastics pollution.

8. Conclusion

The application, in its current form:

Fails to comply with Sport England's Playing Fields Policy
Removes an essential community sports facility without a suitable replacement
Presents environmental and regulatory risks
Is inconsistent with the Local Playing Pitch Strategy (2018-2031)

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the application be refused unless it includes the delivery of a hockey-suitable multi-sport replacement pitch before any loss of the existing facility.

Kind regards

Telephone:

Email: planning@horsham.gov.uk



**Horsham
District
Council**

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