

Dear Narinder,

Thank you for consulting Sport England on the application for the discharge of conditions 8 (Surface water drainage scheme), 15 (Playing Field Reinstatement), 29 (Construction Lighting) and 33 (Site Compound Details for Phase 2b).

Sport England has consulted the RFU on the application and we have received the following comments.

1. In relation to condition no.8 (surface water drainage scheme), the RFU comments that the scheme suggests throughout that both the compound areas and haul roads will be constructed from 'permeable aggregate underlain by a permeable geotextile membrane'. What measures are in place to ensure all aggregate is safely removed from the playing field site on completion of the scheme?
 - The geotextile membrane serves as a separation layer between the aggregate and surrounding ground during the works and ensures these can be removed cleanly following completion.
 - Inspections during and after removal works will also check for remaining aggregate, to be removed mechanically or manually where needed.
 - See Section 13 Para 10 for sieving requirements.
 - Section 19 also lists required performance standards, with "loose stones" one of the metrics required to be approved by the independent Agronomist.
2. The RFU adds that the document suggests throughout that the compound and haul road construction will allow surface water to drain freely via existing drainage measures and will not negatively contribute to existing levels of surface water. What measures are in place to monitor an adverse effect of construction on the adjacent playing field areas outside of the red line boundary of the scheme? The RFU comments that it is suggested that the issues above will be monitored via a weekly inspection by the Site Manager. Can a weekly liaison or reporting mechanism with Havant RFC be built in to ensure collaborative efforts throughout to protect the adjacent playing surfaces?
 - As suggested, any impacts to the surrounding playing fields will be captured in a weekly photographic site inspection carried out by the Site Manager, alongside ongoing health, safety and environmental audits and inspection by other members of the pipeline project teams.
 - Current communication channel is between the pipeline project team and the landowner (Havant Borough Council). Any HRFC reporting or concerns are required to be communicated via the landowner – however we aim to respond promptly and work collaboratively with all key stakeholders.

3. In relation to condition no.15, the RFU welcomes the reference to the agronomy report carried out in August 2024 and the intent to return the surface to existing or better quality. The RFU considers that many of the key task are included but reads more like a tender document for appointing a contractor.

- The document is intended to provide a clear scope of works for reinstatement as assessed by the independent Agronomist (both the reinstatement document and agronomy report carried out by the same turfgrass specialist), and details the key stages where work is to be supervised and assessed to set standards, in line with returning the surface “to existing or better”.

4. The RFU would like to see more detail around the works that will take place, using what specification of materials and at what time of year. Some indicative timelines for the reinstatement period to take into account different start points in the year and various growing periods would be of value, ideally presented as a Gant chart.

- The material specification is set out by the Agronomist within the reinstatement scheme, see Section 20 Appendix 1, with the baseline set using the referenced agronomy report carried out in August 2024. See also Section 9.1, Section 13 Para 3 and Para 13 (with requirements set out for as-dug material, topsoil, seed, fertiliser etc. throughout).
- For timelines, reinstatement is bound by the conditions of planning (Condition 15), extract below from Section 7.1 Para 2: “The works/compound must be removed from the site within 3 months of completion of the works on the playing field. Within 3 months of, or in the first planting season following, the removal of the works/compound the playing field land must be reinstated in accordance with and comply with the approved reinstatement scheme and ensure a suitable timeframe for bedding in before use is commenced”
 - The current construction programme requires works to begin circa Summer 2026.
 - A section of open-cut pipework installation through the playing fields adjacent to St Thomas More’s School is restricted to take place only during the school summer holidays.
 - The section of open-cut work parallel with the northern touchline of Pitch 3 is only to be undertaken in the HRFC off-season.
- Seeding of the pitch is recommended to take place between August and September (Section 15.1 Para 2).
- High level Gantt chart of reinstatement activities included in final page below.

5. Drawing No. HTR -ATK- PL- XX -DR- L- 0003 is stated as showing the areas to be reinstated but this does not show the area known by the club as Dingley Dell which is identified for the southern compound. Can it be confirmed that this area will also be reinstated as part of the scheduled works?
 - This area is included within a separate drawing (also included within the full planning approval) HTR-ATK-PL-XX-DR-L-0002. This area is also to be reinstated to its existing condition or better as part of the schedule of works.
6. Section 13 references contractor liability for settlement issues limited to 12 months – what is the provision for any ongoing settlement issues beyond this timeframe?
 - 12 months following certified completion is a standard defect liability period, and follows grow-in, possible topdressing to remedy short-term settlement, and ongoing agronomic visits/supervision and final agronomic assessment. Any key settlement issues as a result of the works would be expected to occur and be remedied within this period. Beyond this period, issues would need to be raised with the landowner (Havant Borough Council).
7. Section 15.1 – suggestion that irrigation will be required during the grow-in period – who will be responsible for meeting the irrigation obligations and which organisation will be responsible for the associated cost of water required?
 - The Contractor is responsible for meeting the irrigation obligations laid out in the reinstatement scheme. The provision of water and its associated cost during the grow-in stage (defined in the reinstatement document) is to be the responsibility of Portsmouth Water.
8. Reference made throughout the document to Key Stage monitoring and handover – it is recommended that an independent agronomist is appointed to monitor the key stages and sign-off the reinstatement prior to handover.
 - The reinstatement document has been authored by an independent agronomist (European Turfgrass Specialists Ltd), referred to as “The Engineer” throughout, with the key stages identified showing when this specialist is required to be on site to supervise and approve the relevant stages (e.g Section 12, 14, 15.4, 16 “KEY STAGE”).

Sport England notes the comments from the RFU and we welcome further information from the agent on these points above before conditions no. 15 and 8 can be discharged.

Many thanks

Owen Neal (MRTPI)

High Level Reinstatement Timeline																					
			No Usage During Grow-in Period																		
Jul - Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
*		Agronomist Inspection	Pre-seed	Seeding		Overseeding			Agronomist Inspection												
		Veg clear	Fertiliser			Fertiliser	Fertiliser		Possible Herbicide				Possible Herbicide								Handover
		Surface level	Wetting Agent			Soil Conditioner			Possible Aeration				Possible Aeration			Agronomy Assessment					
					Watering	Soil Sample				Topdressing			Topdressing								
						1st Cut & Roll			2nd Cut & Roll			3rd Cut & Roll									
*Assuming full completion & removal of work areas between July prior and April shown, prior to pre-seeding works																					