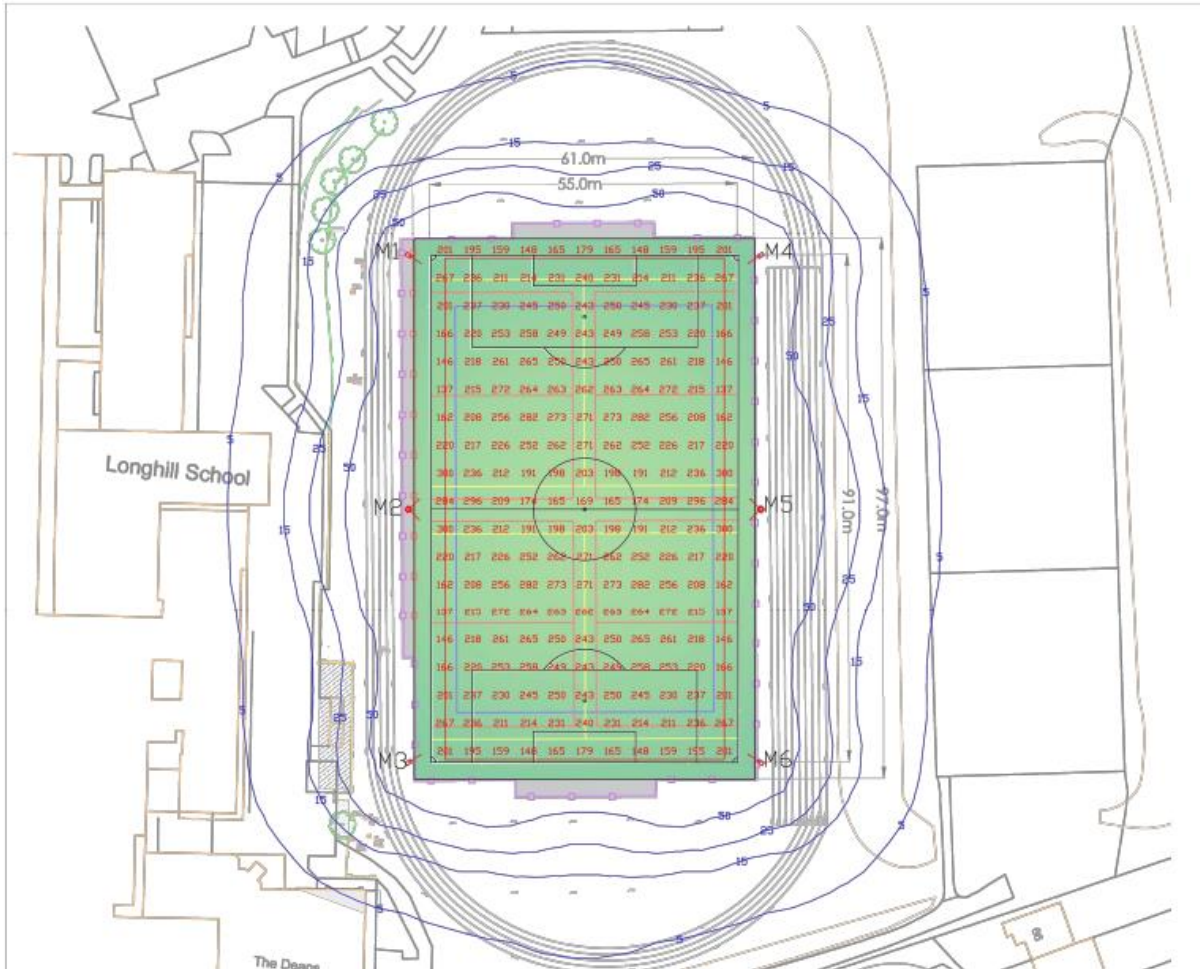


## FAQ 3 G Football Pitch Development – Updated 20/11/2024

1. How does it change the use of the school field during break times? I.e., will children have unreserved access or will they be limited to the areas outside the 3G pitch? Pupils will have supervised access to the 3G pitch during breaktimes. This will be beneficial to other pupils who do not wish to be disturbed by sporting games.
2. Why was the centre of the school field chosen over for example the offsite pitches north of The Vale? The topography and location with regard to facilities, would have made the pitch too expensive to build.

The planned location of the 3G Pitch means

- easy access to changing room
  - easy access to toilets
  - better accessibility for those with disabilities
  - a better location for Longhill Sports Centre who will manage the use of the pitch
  - a better location in terms of electrical supply for the floodlights
  - a better location in term of security for when Longhill Sports Centre is closed
3. Why have we chosen a full-size pitch and not a smaller one (9, 7 or 5 a-side)? The football pitch has to be compliant with Football Foundation specifications in order to be funded. The size of the pitch will also mean that multiple training/games can take place at the sometime.
  4. What evaluation and/or mitigation has been made for light and noise pollution? There have been improvements to floodlighting which will mean that now adays light pollution will be less than in the past. The light spill levels from the new floodlighting systems were required to be less than 10 lux at the site of the boundary. The design of the lighting has been carefully designed to minimise the lux level spills with our neighbours in mind.



There are planting schemes as part of the plans to reduce the visual impact for our immediate neighbours.

The 3g Pitch Noise Impact Assessment page 9 2. Management and Mitigation recommendations include:

- Use of quieter whistles for staff and referees
- Rebound boards are of a solid construction.
- Back of goal nets should be fabric mesh which does not rattle
- Use of facilities during school times should always be supervised to avoid unruly behaviour
- Use of radios, public announcement systems should not be permitted
- Responsible use is particularly important in the evenings when community use is more likely. Signs should be displayed at the entrance 9s0 to the pitch reminding users of the proximity to the residents.
- Reference to noise abatement in letting agreement with those hiring the facility.

5. How has the aesthetic impact been considered? Is there an artist's impression available? There is not an artist's impression as the school has limited resources and the cost was significant.

The design of the pitch fencing kick boards etc will be green and designed to merge into topography.

6. What are the benefits for the school and community? The school and community will benefit because the pitch will be available for longer as availability will no longer be limited by light or flooding. The plans include engagement with all of our community whatever the age/gender, disability or sexual orientation. Woodingdean Wanderers have out grown their present playing field and this development will allow them to continue and expand their delivery of football within Woodingdean.

7. What material is the 3G pitch made of?

The pitch specification is as per the Football Foundation specification:

### **3.6 Pitch Construction**

#### **3.6.1 Subbase/Base Layer**

The pitch construction shall consist of the excavation of the existing grassland area to a depth of approximately 350mm to new pitch formation where a new Geotextile layer will be installed. The pitch construction shall consist of 300mm of modified type 1 stone which is overlaid approximately 40mm of open texture base layer. The new pitch area is to then have a new shockpad applied, approximately 20mm thick, thereby providing a level surface to meet the required design tolerances.

#### **3.6.2 Shockpad**

A performance shockpad shall be laid over the new engineered base layer. The shockpad provides a solid platform on which the synthetic turf shall be laid while providing further shock absorption properties to prolong the life of the synthetic system.

#### **3.6.3 Synthetic Turf**

A minimum 40mm 3G synthetic turf system is proposed. The 3G turf system consists of synthetic turf filled with sand and SBR to provide the required performance characteristics. This shall provide a system suitable for full-size football to FIFA Quality and multiport use and meet the laboratory and performance testing requirements of BS EN 15330.

8. Will there be an alternative space for pupils to play whilst the building work takes place?

Yes, the pupils will be supervised to use the field to the north of The Vale.



9. With the EU ban on rubber infill coming in force in 2031, has there been any consideration around organic infill?

The school acknowledges that there are concerns around the environmental costs of 3g pitches at the moment. Research and development is currently under way to find an alternative.

The question at the moment is do the health and wellbeing benefits of a 3G pitch out way the environmental costs. The school believes they do. Whilst the Football Foundation and others work towards an alternative it is about containing the rubber crumb.

The school is working in partnership with the football foundation which means that we have to demonstrate that we are investing in a sinking fund to replace the pitch which has a limited life span of 10 years. This will mean that we will

be in a better place to replace the surface if legislation requires or an alternative becomes available.

There is a statement available from Sports England relating to 3G pitches which you can see

<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport/position-statement-on-3g-pitches#:~:text=Recognised%20as%20durable%2C%20safe%2C%20year,of%20around%201%2C400%20playing%20opportunities.>

The statement reads:

*Joint statement from Sport England, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), sportscotland, Sport Wales, the Grounds Management Association, Football Foundation, The Football Association, Cymru Football Foundation, Welsh Rugby Union, Rugby Football League, Sports and Play Construction Association and England Rugby.*

Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) provide a high-quality surface that are an integral part of modern community sport.

Recognised as durable, safe, year-round playing surfaces, they're able to withstand intensive use and all kinds of weather.

A properly maintained AGP can sustain up to 80 hours of use a week, providing an average of around 1,400 playing opportunities. This compares favourably to a good quality grass pitch, which can sustain just six hours a week, accommodating an average of around 100 playing opportunities.

This means many people are able to engage in sport and physical activity regardless of the weather when otherwise matches would be cancelled.

AGPs therefore enable more people to experience the benefits of being active, such as improved physical health and mental wellbeing and improved confidence.

They're used for playing many different sports, including football, hockey and rugby; and provide safe spaces for people to come together and connect, helping unite communities.

It's critical that our sports facilities are flexible and resilient to reflect the real everyday requirements of users and meet societal changes.

However, concerns have been raised about the environmental impact of these pitches. These have mostly related to microplastics in the form of rubber infill

getting into the ecosystem and the need for greater focus on the end-of-life recycling of pitches. We understand these concerns and are taking them very seriously.

In September 2023 the European Commission completed the adoption of the EU REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) restriction on the sale of intentionally added microplastics onto the European market, which includes rubber infill for 3G AGPs.

The Commission has confirmed an eight-year transition period before the new restriction becomes effective and from October 2031, you'll no longer be able to purchase rubber crumb within the EU.

The ruling does not prevent the continued use of this material for AGPs, nor does it prevent the construction of new pitches with rubber crumb infill before 2031 – but it may make the maintenance of these pitches after this time difficult.

The transition period is important because it allows the 3G AGPs that are in widespread use by communities across Europe, to continue to be used and maintained until they reach their end-of-life.

Replacement surfaces are very expensive, and many communities would simply be unable to afford to do so before the end of the transition.

Following the UK's exit from the EU, the regulatory framework for these matters now sits at a UK level (except for Northern Ireland, which continues to follow EU REACH requirements).

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) recently commissioned an evidence project to review emissions of intentionally added microplastics in the UK, including rubber infill.

The project is expected to report in spring 2025 and will inform any future regulatory actions in Great Britain.

The Sports Councils – Sport England, Sport Wales, sportscotland, Sport NI – and leading sport bodies continue to work together and with respective governments to understand what the EU ban will mean for the stock of 3G AGPs in the UK, and the timings for any legislative decisions.

As stakeholders, in the community sport landscape we're committed to exploring alternative artificial pitch systems, more sustainable infill products and increasing recycling capacity available to sports providers nationwide.

This commitment is reinforced through Sport England's Sustainability Strategy 'Every Move'. Sport England will work with partners and stakeholders,

including the Football Foundation, to explore viable alternatives to the rubber infill used in third generation 3G AGPs and improved recycling opportunities and processes, given concerns about plastic pollution and waste.

Examples of this include the Football Foundation's significant investment in its own 'test hub' to research alternative infill materials.

Many of the alternatives to rubber crumb are new to the market, and little is known about their performance, durability, availability, lifecycle cost and importantly the impact on player experience.

We are entering a period where there will be choices to make and it's important that data exists to help future AGP owners make the right choice for their pitch.

Until we have a clearer understanding of these alternatives, we believe that the adoption of containment measures is an important and responsible approach to prevent the migration of microplastics.

The Football Foundation has followed European Technical Guidance since 2020, installing containment measures on all its funded pitches.

We know from studies around Europe that good design can reduce infill loss by 98%.

In partnership with the Football Foundation, Sport England is also undertaking research on the efficacy of containment measures and we're committed to making the research available as soon as possible.

We acknowledge the difficulty in trying to balance the health and well-being benefits that come from the use of 3G pitches with environmental sustainability factors. However, it is also important to note that there are currently no widely available alternative infill products with proven durability on the market that are as effective, suitable for all UK weather conditions and deliver the required performance standards.

We'll continue to work with partners across the UK and Europe to research and reduce the spread of microplastics into the environment.

More information will be published as discussions progress.

10. Will the proposed pitch just be used for football, or will there be options for use for other sports (hockey, rugby etc)? The pitch design incorporates shock pads that allow rugby to be delivered too. The school felt this was important not only to continue to deliver rugby as part of our school curriculum but also because two matches in the Women's Rugby World Cup are being played in

Brighton & Hove in 2025 at the Amex just up the road from Longhill High School <https://www.rugbyworldcup.com/2025/en>

Our plans include a relationship with Lewes Rugby Club – please see Longhill High School and Woodingdean Wanderers Football Club 3G Statement October 2024