

LIGHTING & FLOODLIGHTING

The LBRuT Adopted Development Management Plan Nov 2011, Policy DM DC 5 Neighbourliness, Sunlighting and Daylighting and Policy DM OS 9 Floodlighting are relevant.

Policy DM DC 5

“6.1.30 ...The aim is to protect existing occupiers as far as possible from the unreasonable impacts of new development. Adverse impact on neighbouring properties, including... pollution from noise or light and overpowering or obtrusive development.”

Policy DM OS 9 Floodlighting

“4.1.32 Floodlighting can enable the full use of outdoor sport and leisure facilities, but

consideration must be given to any demonstrable harm to biodiversity, residential amenity and local character.

4.1.33 Factors which will be taken into account when assessing proposals for floodlighting will be:

- Effect on residential amenity and local area of the lighting: effect and impacts when lit in terms of sky glow, glare, light trespass, noise and disturbance from users; the appearance of the installation when switched off;*
- Any planned mitigation measures such as restriction on lighting levels and hours of use.*

4.1.34 It is important that floodlights are designed to be as unobtrusive as possible when unlit, in terms of number, height, width, design, colour and siting. Light pollution should be minimised to protect biodiversity as well as residents, passers by ...

4.1.35 If permission is granted, conditions or an agreement may be imposed to restrict the lighting levels and times of use, or to implement other measures to minimise possible adverse effects such as post-installation requirements and monitoring, both within the site and on adjoining land. “

We object to the application on the grounds that it is contrary to a number of articles in these policies.

By “floodlighting”, we mean the high-intensity security lights that effectively light up a wide area and remain switched on throughout the night.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Prior to January 2011, there was only low level security lighting on the single storey classrooms. In January 2011, new high intensity lighting was installed both on the front and north end of Jubilee Hall and the lighting on the single-storey classrooms was replaced with much brighter lights.

The high-level, high-intensity lights on Jubilee Hall are used as floodlights for the sports pitches in late afternoon and after school hours. Neighbours in Scotts Drive have complained to the School on a number of occasions this year about the new bright lights. The lights literally light up the bedrooms of the homes on Scotts Drive and cause disturbance to sleep. Two homes facing the site on Scotts Drive have young children who go to bed in the early evening. Both families have been affected by the effects of light trespass and the children's sleep has been disturbed. The houses in Wensleydale Gardens are also affected by glare as the lights from Jubilee Hall are such that they shine straight across into the bedrooms and gardens. During summer the trees provide some screening, but the line of trees is incomplete and the trees are deciduous.

After a number of occasions when the high-level, high-intensity lights were left on all night, some neighbours complained and the School agreed to switch off the lights facing the sports pitches after school hours. However, the other lights (on Jubilee Hall and on the classrooms) remain on all night. Whilst they are not floodlights as such, they still emit a very strong glare that causes disturbance to some homes on Scotts Drive. These are very shallow, approximately 5 metres deep so light easily reaches the buildings.

The high-level lighting on the north-facing wall of Jubilee Hall also causes disturbance to some homes in Gloucester Road.

WHAT THE DNA SURVEY SAID:

Eight residents commented on the problems caused by security lights, with the Jubilee Sports Hall being mentioned in particular.

Sample Comment: "High intensity security lights are positioned all around the buildings. These shine all night every night: whether in term time or not (they are not linked to motion sensors). Standard curtains/blinds are unable to shield all the light and annoying light shines into bedrooms".

EXTRACT FROM PLANNING HISTORY

2006/3514 Continued use of temporary classroom

Detailed Informatives:

U21525: "The applicants are requested to investigate ways to minimise light pollution caused by security light added to the west elevation of the building."

Note that neighbours' complaints about screening and security light prompted the second condition and informative.

THE PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENT

The planning application does not reveal detailed plans for lighting on the re-developed site. We can only assume that the greater height and scale of the building will require a concomitant increase in lighting, potentially exacerbating the problem of light pollution and trespass.

The proposed building's elevation view from Gloucester Road and proximity to homes on Wensleydale Gardens and Gloucester Road would mean that even more homes on Gloucester Road would be affected by light trespass, not only from security and floodlights but also lights from upper floor windows.

The proposed development of all-weather MUGA pitches to the south end of the site would suggest that the high-level, high-intensity lighting (or floodlighting) would be required to be switched on after school hours for after school clubs and inter-school competitions. This would cause disturbance and light trespass to neighbours in both Wensleydale Gardens and Scotts Drive.

We submit that the existing lighting contravenes policy already and this would be made worse because of the location and increased size of the building.