

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

MAIDENHEAD DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL

2 August 2017

Item: 2

Application No.:	17/00812/FULL
Location:	National Sports Centre Bisham Village Bisham Abbey Marlow Road Bisham Marlow SL7 1RR
Proposal:	Erection of six retractable sports-lighting masts to serve the existing 3G artificial-grass pitch.
Applicant:	Serco Leisure Operating Limited
Agent:	Mr Simon Millett
Parish/Ward:	Bisham Parish/Bisham And Cookham Ward

If you have a question about this report, please contact: Vivienne McDowell on 01628 796578 or at vivienne.mcdowell@rbwm.gov.uk

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposed retractable lighting columns and flood lights are considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt. It is considered that the less than substantial harm to the heritage assets i.e. Bisham Abbey, other listed buildings and the conservation area, is outweighed by the public benefits of the potential increased community use of an existing sporting facility (i.e. the existing Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP)/3G football pitch) .
- 1.2 Given the proposed lighting columns (max height approximately 12 metres) would be retractable (down to approximately 3.2 metres) and the hours of illumination would be restricted to between 4pm and 9pm on weekdays and 4pm and 8pm on Saturdays with no illumination on Sundays, it is considered that the impact on neighbouring properties would be acceptable. The applicants have also put forward a number of proposed mitigation measures including new tree planting to increase screening, provision of neoprene washers to reduce the noise of balls hitting the metal fencing surrounding the pitch, and removal of 4 lighting columns on the lawn area adjacent to Bisham Abbey. These measures are secured by planning conditions 3, 8 and 9.
- 1.3 Overall and on balance it is considered that the proposal is acceptable.

It is recommended the Panel grants planning permission with the conditions listed in Section 10 of this report.
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2. REASON FOR PANEL DETERMINATION

- The Council's Constitution does not give the Head of Planning delegated powers to determine the application in the way recommended; such decisions can only be made by the Panel.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 The site around Bisham Abbey is a mix of open landscape in the Green Belt and development that is associated with the National Sports Centre which partially occupies the site around Bisham Abbey (Grade I listed building). The site is in a conservation area where there are listed buildings, within the floodplain and adjacent to the river Thames. The Artificial Grass Pitch is adjacent to but outside of the site of the Scheduled Ancient Monument.

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL AND ANY RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 It is proposed to erect 6 x 12metre high floodlights retractable to approximately 3.2 metres around the enclosed Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP). The lights will be on a curfew until 9pm on weekdays and 8pm on Saturdays. There is no proposal for use on Sundays. The applicant has advised that the lighting would be required from 4pm onwards. The applicant has confirmed that the finish for the lighting columns will grey (RAL 7001).
- 4.2 The lights will be LED manufactured by Osram Siteco and the lights proposed to be used are FL20 technology. These will be flat lights with the aim of reducing the angle and therefore reducing lighting spill and containing light to the area of use. The proposed lights will be at a maintained level of 202 lux. There is existing chording running from the pavilion to the existing football pitch. This was provided in anticipation of potential lighting and the proposed floodlights will plug themselves into this.
- 4.3 As part of the proposal a mitigation package has been put forward by the applicants, with the following measures proposed:

-It is proposed that neoprene washers will be integrated into the fencing (to isolate the mesh fence from the post) surrounding the AGP, in order to reduce noise pollution to local residents. The applicants are also proposing filling the hollow posts with foam or mineral fibre to dampen sound of balls hitting the fence. (see condition 9)

-In addition, it is proposed to remove 4 existing floodlights to an extinct tennis court, on the edge of the open space immediately adjacent to Bisham Abbey. (see condition 8)

-This application includes the submission of a landscaping scheme which shows intentions to plant additional screening along the rear of the residential properties by the golf course. (see condition 3)

-Other landscape maintenance and refurbishment measures are also proposed to be undertaken around the site to preserve the significance of the open spaces. Part of the refurbishment includes renovating an existing footbridge. (see condition 3)

Ref.	Description	Decision and Date
12/02640/FULL	Demolition of existing accommodation block and outbuilding and construction of accommodation wing to the existing Sports Centre Building (to include 50 bedrooms, dance studio, restaurant and associated facilities) and single storey pavilion. Replacement of existing sports pitch with a 3G sports pitch, coach parking for 4no.vehicles, reconfigured car park and associated landscaping and drainage works.	Permission granted 11/3/2013
14/00814/FULL	Demolition of existing accommodation block and outbuilding and construction of accommodation wing to the existing Sports Centre Building (to include 50 bedrooms, dance studio, restaurant and associated facilities) and single storey changing pavilion. Replacement of existing sports pitch with a 3G sports pitch, coach parking for 3 no. vehicles, reconfigured car park and associated landscaping and drainage work as approved under planning permission 12/02640/FULL without complying with condition 10 amendment of flood compensation and condition 22 amendment of 10 drawing numbers	Permission granted on 23/7/2014
15/00197/FULL	Erection of 6 x lighting masts on 3G Astroturf pitch.	Refused

5. MAIN RELEVANT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 17(Core Principles), Section 7 (Requiring good design), Section 8 (Promoting healthy communities), Section 9 (Protecting the Green Belt), Section 10 (flooding), Section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment).

Royal Borough Local Plan

- 5.2 The main strategic planning considerations applying to the site and the associated policies are:

Design, impact, setting of Thames	Highways and Parking	Green Belt	Flooding	Conservation	Listed Building	Trees
DG1, R8,N1, N2,NAP3.	P4, T5	GB1, GB2	F1	CA2	LB2	N6

These policies can be found at

https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/downloads/download/154/local_plan_documents_and_appendices

Supplementary planning documents

- 5.3 Supplementary planning documents adopted by the Council relevant to the proposal are:

- The Interpretation of Policy F1 (Area Liable to Flooding) Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 2004

More information on these documents can be found at:

https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200414/local_development_framework/494/supplementary_planning

Other Local Strategies or Publications

- 5.4 Other Strategies or publications relevant to the proposal are:

- RBWM Townscape Assessment – view at:
- RBWM Parking Strategy – view at:

More information on these documents can be found at:

https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200414/local_development_framework/494/supplementary_planning

Borough Local Plan: Submission Version

Issue	Local Plan Policy
Appropriate Development in Green Belt and acceptable impact on Green Belt	SP1, SP5
Design in keeping with character and appearance of area	SP2, SP3
Historic Environment	HE1, HE3
Acceptable impact on River Thames corridor	SP4
Manages flood risk and waterways	NR1
Makes suitable provision for infrastructure	IF1

- 5.5 The NPPF sets out that decision-makers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation. The Borough Local Plan Proposed Submission Document was published in June 2017. Public consultation runs from 30 June to 26 August 2017 with the intention to submit the Plan to the Planning Inspectorate in October 2017. In this context, the Borough Local Plan: Submission Version is a material consideration, but limited weight is afforded to this document at this time.

6. EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- i Green Belt
- ii Community use considerations and benefits
- iii Impact on neighbouring properties
- iv Tree considerations
- v Floodplain considerations

Green Belt

6.2 Background

Condition 6 on the original planning permission (12/02640/FULL) and Condition 5 on the subsequent Section 73 (Variation) application 14/00814/VAR states:

'No external lighting/floodlights shall be installed for use in connection with the all weather 3G sports pitch.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the amenities of local residents and to protect the character and appearance of the Green Belt. Relevant Policies - Local Plan DG1, GB2, NAP3.'

- 6.3 In considering the previous application 15/0197/FULL, it was considered that the proposed non-retractable 15m high lighting columns would represent an intrusive form of development in this location. This part of the site is currently unlit and is outside of the more developed southern part of the National Sports Centre, representing the more open part of the site. It was noted that there are no other structures of the height proposed on this part of the site. It was concluded on application 15/0197 that 15 metre high non-retractable floodlights (with illumination until 10pm weekdays and 8pm on weekends, bank and public holidays) would have a significant harmful impact and to the character and appearance of the area. The reasons for refusal were as follows:

1)The proposed lighting columns and flood lighting would represent an intrusive and urbanising form of development which would be harmful to the openness, rural character and appearance of the Green Belt. Furthermore, the proposed development would be harmful to the amenities of local residents by reason of the height of the lighting columns, the lighting itself and the increased use of the pitch during the evenings and at night. The proposal is contrary to saved Policies GB2 A) B) 1)2)3)5)6), R8 and NAP3 of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan Including Alterations adopted June 2003 (Local Plan).

2)The proposed columns and lighting would adversely affect the setting of Bisham Abbey (Grade 1 Listed Building) and be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal would also be detrimental to the setting of the River Thames. The proposal is therefore contrary to saved Local Plan policies CA2, LB2 and N2.

3)In the absence of an arboricultural method statement for the installation of underground cables or details of the route of proposed electricity cables, it is not possible for the

Local Planning Authority to conclude that there would be harm to mature trees on the site. The proposal is therefore contrary to saved Local Plan policy N6.

6.4 Current proposal

This current proposal is for 6 x 12 metre floodlight columns, retractable down to approximately 3.2 metres around the enclosed Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP). The floodlights would be mounted above the lighting columns.

6.5 The site is located within the Green Belt where most development is considered to be inappropriate. Local Plan policy GB1 sets out when development within the Green Belt can be considered acceptable. 'Essential' facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation are listed in GB1 as one of the appropriate forms of development where they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it.

6.6 GB1 C) allows engineering and other operations which maintain openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

6.7 Local Plan Policy GB2 does not permit new development or the redevelopment, change of use or replacement of existing buildings within the Green Belt if it would:

A) Have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes of including land in it than an existing development on the site.

6.8 In terms of Policy GB1 considerations, it is considered that the proposed floodlighting is not an essential facility for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation. However, Paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that a Local Planning Authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt exceptions to this include :
-provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land in it.

6.9 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also advises at paragraph 90 that certain other forms of development such as engineering operations, are not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt.

6.10 The NPPF identifies the main purposes of the Green Belt. These are to restrict urban sprawl, prevent major towns from merging into one another, to safeguard the countryside from encroachment, to preserve the setting and character of historic towns, and to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

6.11 Commenting on the NPPF in a recent appeal decision at Priors Field School, Hurtmore, Godalming, Surrey – Ref APP/Y3615/A/14/2214615 (dated 18 June 2014), the Inspector at Paragraph 6 states; 'The Framework provides that new buildings within the Green Belt are inappropriate development unless, amongst other things, they relate to appropriate provision for outdoor sport and preserve the openness of the Green Belt. Given that the lighting columns would be directly related to the use of the all weather pitch I consider that they would satisfy the exception criteria and would not amount to inappropriate development'.

6.12 Although the proposed lighting columns and floodlighting may then be considered as an appropriate facility to support outdoor sport; it is still necessary to consider whether any harm would arise to the character and appearance of the conservation area, nearby listed buildings, setting of the river Thames and Area of Special Landscape Importance. These matters are discussed in the next section of this report.

Impact on the character of the surrounding area including the conservation area and nearby listed buildings.

- 6.13 Paragraph 131 of the NPPF (under the heading 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'), states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness'.
- 6.14 Paragraph 137 of the NPPF states that the Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.'
- 6.15 Policy CA2 of the Local Plan states that in respect of Conservation Areas the Borough Council will: 1) Require that any development will enhance or preserve the character or appearance of the area. Policy LB2 of the Local Plan states that the Borough Council will have special regard to the preservation of Listed Buildings and their settings and will:
5) Ensure that development proposals do not adversely affect the grounds and/or setting of listed buildings.
- 6.16 The Council's Conservation Officer has commented on the application. Historic England was consulted and do not wish to offer any comments – instead they defer to the specialist advice of the Council's conservation and archaeological advisers. The Council's archaeology consultant has raised no objection.
- 6.17 The site is within a Conservation Area. Bisham Abbey is a Grade I listed building – which itself sits within its own area of grass to the south west of the AGP. The nearest proposed floodlight would be approximately 90 metres from Bisham Abbey (the building itself). There is a strong band of mature trees separating the AGP from Bisham Abbey and its surrounding grass area. During the summer months these trees provide a very good visual screening. It is considered that the proposed retractable flood lights with the restricted hours of illumination proposed together with the removal of 4 existing flood lights to an extinct tennis court (on the edge of the grassed area surrounding Bisham Abbey) would result in less than substantial harm in terms of the setting of Bisham Abbey.
- 6.18 There is already a strong contrast on the site between the historical rural setting of Bisham Abbey and ongoing modern 21st century developments of the National Sports Centre. There are currently 10 x 10 metre high floodlighting columns serving the eastern most block of 4 tennis courts. These tennis courts are in the order of 130 metres from Bisham Abbey (the building itself). It is noted that the clay tennis courts, immediately adjacent to the lit tennis courts (mentioned above) are unlit and are approximately 70 metres from Bisham Abbey (the building itself).
- 6.19 The floodlights to the tennis courts are higher in lux (luminance) and intensity (in terms of numbers) than the proposed lighting to the AGP. It is noted that the permitted hours of illumination (under application 02/39644) for these tennis court flood lights is between 09:00 and 22:00 on week days and between 09:00 and 21:00 on weekends and bank holidays (i.e. longer hours than proposed under the current application 17/00812). As such, it can be argued that the existing lighting creates a higher level of harm to the Grade 1 Abbey, than the proposed lighting to the AGP.
- 6.20 There are several listed buildings within the village fronting Marlow Road, with back gardens that share a boundary with the National Sports Centre. There is an area of approximately 90 metres and currently used as part of a golf course, that separates these dwellings from the existing Artificial Grass Pitch (surrounded by fencing) and the proposed flood lighting.

- 6.21 The proposed flood lights would be sited in a part of the National Sports Centre that is currently unlit and open. It contrasts with the more developed part of the site to the south on the opposite side of the access road through the site. To the west of the AGP and football pitches there is a large and open expanse of grass with tree planting, which fronts onto the River Thames.
- 6.22 Numbers 16-28 Marlow Road will be most affected as they are closest in location. Their significance is as follows: These early C17th and mid C18th cottages are listed for their picturesque group interest and architectural features. The time period at which they were built denotes that the area would have been surrounded by an even more rural and light sensitive landscape. Although there is now a road to the east of the buildings at the front, the rear of these properties is still characterised by the rural landscape that they were built in and originally set in.
- 6.23 The conservation officer has advised that the rural significance of the buildings to the rear should be maintained as much as possible. The proposed lighting masts would be set at approximately 3.2 metres during the day and 12 metres during night time usage. Whilst extended and illuminated the proposed floodlights and columns will have an immediate urbanising affect to the area behind these properties at night time. However, the illumination of the floodlights will be on a curfew until 9pm on weekdays and 8pm on Saturdays with no illumination on Sundays. Drawing HLS01213/12m shows the light spill will not exceed 0.5 lux in the region of the listed buildings.
- 6.24 On balance, it is considered that the effect on these listed buildings would result in less than substantial harm.
- 6.25 The previous application refused under 15/00197/FULL proposed non-retractable lighting columns 15 metres in height with illumination until 10pm on weekdays and 8 pm on Saturday, Sunday and Bank/Public Holidays. The previous application therefore was for significantly taller lighting columns and for longer hours of illumination, than the current application.
- 6.26 All Saints Church is to the north west of the National Sports Centre site and is a Grade ii* listed building and is adjacent to the river Thames. Any concerns over the impact on this church building are confined to night time views from this river frontage setting. It is considered that given the rows of mature trees between the church and the AGP, and the large expanse of intervening space, users of the church will not be able to readily discern the proposed lighting from this vantage point. It is considered therefore that there will be no harm caused to this listed building.
- 6.27 Bisham Abbey Conservation Area is a significant mix of architecture ranging from the Norman period to present day. The area is characterised by its trees and open spaces. Trees are plentiful along the edge of the river bank. They are also common in forming screens around properties and open spaces within the village to enhance the feeling of privacy and seclusion.
- 6.28 The architecture is not affected by the proposed lighting columns and flood lights. Given their location behind the row of cottages, fencing and trees, it is considered that the lighting columns and floodlights will not be particularly noticeable from Marlow Road.
- 6.29 The area can be classified as an E2 Environmental Zone: 'A rural area with low district brightness in a relatively dark outer suburban area'. During the night time the fully extended lighting columns flood lights could be perceived as increased urban sprawl. Nevertheless, given the restricted hours of operation which can be controlled by condition and given that the applicants are also proposing to remove 4 existing flood lights adjacent to Bisham Abbey, it is considered that this less than substantial harm is outweighed by the by public benefits through enhancement of existing sports facilities on the site.
- 6.30 The main focus of the impact is therefore on the historic rural character of the area. The whole site exists in a fine balance between public amenities and rural identity. Development of the site as a whole is common; however there is a lack of development on this more rural part of the site. The flood lighting columns themselves during the day – retracted down to approximately 3 metres will have an insignificant impact on the rural character of the area.

- 6.31 The site also lies within an area of Special Landscape Importance as defined in the Local Plan. Within such areas the Council seeks to resist proposals that would adversely affect both long distance and local views within these areas (Local Plan Policy N1). The Council also seeks to conserve and enhance the setting of the Thames and Policy N2 does not permit development which would adversely affect the character and setting of the river in both urban and rural locations. It is considered that the proposal does not conflict with these policies.

Community use considerations and benefits

- 6.32 Paragraph 73 of the NPPF states that access to high quality open space and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well being of communities. It advises that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.
- 6.33 The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan – April 2016, identifies an under provision of 3G football pitches within the borough and recognises that there is an absence of floodlighting on the AGP at Bisham Abbey. One of the objectives of this document is to encourage greater provision of 3G/AGP throughout the borough. The provision of flood lighting at the National Sports Centre will increase the usage of an existing facility and help to alleviate the general shortfall in provision, within the borough.
- 6.34 The proposed flood lights would allow the potential extension of hours of use of the AGP during winter months. The AGP is used primarily by the FAB (Football at Bisham academy). This provides football coaching for girls and boys (6-16 years old). The applicant advises that 40% of the attendees are from the Windsor and Maidenhead area. The clubs they play for include Maidenhead Magpies, Windsor Youth, Ascot Boys, Taplow United, Maidenhead boys and girls FC, and Cookham Dean FC. The applicants advise that FAB (operating on 3 nights a week) has 400 junior players from U6 to U16, from over 60 junior clubs within the community. It is understood that 100 children remain on the waiting list.
- 6.35 The applicants advise that many junior academy players go on to join the FAB scholarship programme at Bisham – with the 1st, 2nd and 3 year scholars (81 boys) registered with Charters School for their education.
The FAB academy is a potential route for players to be signed by professional football clubs.
- The days and times FAB currently uses the 3G pitch are as follows:
-Monday 6pm – 8:30pm (120 children)
-Wednesday 6pm – 9pm (180 children)
- Friday 6pm – 7:30pm (100 children)
- 6.36 FAB does not block book Saturdays but does occasionally uses it. FAB expects these days and times to remain similar once floodlights are installed. The applicant's agent has recently advised FAB does not intend to use the AGP on Tuesdays and Thursdays should the floodlights be installed, leaving these evenings, Saturday evening and the times after FAB have finished on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays open to other clubs, schools and organisations.
- 6.37 It is noted in the original supporting statement submitted by FAB, it suggests that the floodlighting will enable FAB to run 2 more evening training sessions during the week – so they can provide sessions on 5 nights a week.
- 6.38 Currently, the FAB academy uses the flood lit all weather 3G hockey 3G pitch when a lack of daylight requires them to do so – normally from time in September. It is understood that these hockey pitches are not really suitable for football training (they are a harder surface and more slippery surface than the football AGP pitch). The training time on these pitches has to be shared with hockey players – who also use the pitch on a number of evenings during the week. Freeing up time on the hockey pitches would allow for greater use of these pitches for hockey purposes and allow the site to increase its community aspect of hockey.

- 6.39 During the lighter evenings FAB does not need to use the hockey pitches and instead uses the AGP and one of the grass pitches.
- 6.40 The applicants have expressed a willingness to enter into a community use agreement for the use of the AGP. However, it is considered that this is not necessary or reasonable in this instance, for an existing pitch. This application relates to the provision of floodlights and it is noted that the existing AGP does not have a community use agreement. Sport England's National Sports Centre provides facilities for members of the public as well providing a training centre for top sports people. The main user of the AGP i.e. FAB academy provides a facility for young people within the borough.

Impact on neighbouring properties

- 6.41 Local Plan Policy R8 permits development for public or private recreation use except where such development would result in significant environmental or highway problems or where it would conflict with any other policies of this plan.
- 6.42 It is important to note that in the explanatory text to R8, at 3.2.21 it states: 'Although recreational facilities will generally be encouraged, the Borough Council will need to have regard to any adverse environmental effects, particularly in the Green Belt and adjacent residential areas.....Consideration will be given to any possible harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties when assessing proposals which are likely to result in excessive noise or traffic generation or which require floodlighting.'
- 6.43 Under the core principles of the NPPF in paragraph 17 bullet point 4 it states that planning should: 'Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings.'
- 6.44 The existing AGP has no restrictions on the hours of use and therefore could potentially be used all day and everyday of the week (daylight permitting). During the winter months use of the pitch is naturally restricted by limited daylight hours.
- 6.45 The current proposal seeks to limit illumination hours from 4pm-9pm during the week and 4pm – 8pm on Saturday. No illumination is proposed on Sundays. The boundaries to the nearest residential properties are approximately 90m metres away from the edge of the AGP. The flood lights are designed to reduce light spillage.
- 6.46 To mitigate for any additional noise and disturbance to nearby residents the applicants are proposing to install neoprene washers into the fencing of the AGP to isolate the weld mesh panels from the posts, in order to reduce the noise of balls hitting the fence. This is a welcome measure and could be secured by condition on the planning application. The applicants are also proposing filling the hollow metal posts with foam or mineral fibre as a further noise damping measure. These noise mitigation measures can be secured by condition. See condition 9 in Section 9 below.
- 6.47 The applicants are also proposing additional landscaping and tree planting to provide screening along the rear of residential properties by the golf course. This is also a welcome and could be secured by condition on the planning application. See condition 3 in Section 9 below.
- 6.48 It is considered that it would be difficult to justify a refusal of this application on the basis of additional unacceptable additional noise and disturbance to local residents during the evenings during winter months. The Environmental Protection Team has not raised an objection, suggesting an informative for the lighting to be turned off by an automatic time clock during the hours the area is not in use and by light sensitive switch when natural light is available. It is considered that a conditions rather than informative should be imposed. It is considered beneficial that the switching off of the lights is controlled by a timer. The installation of a light sensitive switch is not considered necessary if the lights are not required to be used in the mornings. The times of illumination and the times when the lighting columns need to be fully retracted can be controlled by conditions. See conditions 4, 5 and 6 in Section 9, below.

Tree considerations

- 6.49 The Council's Tree Officer has commented that no arboricultural information has been submitted to support this application. However, most of the proposed new lighting masts are located away from the trees on the site and it should be possible to install all the individual masts without a detrimental impact on the adjacent trees if suitable tree protection measures are implemented.
- 6.50 However the lighting masts on the eastern side of the pitch are located close to a line of semi mature trees that could be impacted by any trenching work required to provide power to these lamps (FL01 and FL06 on the Sports Lighting Block Plan P4226 – 114 Rev C).
- 6.51 The Sports Lighting Block Plan P4226 – 114 Rev C shows a line of underground ducting leading to the pitch, however the route for the cabling around the pitch has not been shown. The Council's Tree Officer has recommended that details for the cabling around the pitch are provided. If additional underground cables are necessary he has recommend that the cabling is not installed on the eastern edge of the pitch to avoid the root protection areas of the adjacent trees.
- 6.52 If trenching is proposed on the eastern edge of the pitch the following information in accordance with table B1 ('Delivery of tree-related information into the planning system') from the current British Standard 5837: 2012 trees in relation to design, demolition and construction will need to be provided:
- Tree survey
 - Tree retention/removal plan (finalized)
 - Retained trees and RPAs shown on proposed layout
 - Arboricultural impact assessment
 - Tree protection plan
 - Arboricultural method statement– heads of terms
 - Details for all special engineering within the RPA and other relevant construction details
- 6.53 The Arboricultural Method statement should include the full details for tree protection during the installation of the underground ducting in accordance with 7.7 of BS5837.
- 6.54 Section 7.7.2 of BS5837 states that where underground apparatus is to pass within a trees root protection area detailed plans showing the proposed routing should be drawn up in conjunction with the project arboriculturalist. In such cases, trenchless insertion methods should be used. The standard also notes that wherever possible, apparatus should be routed outside the trees root protection area.
- 6.55 If no trenching is required on the eastern boundary of the site the Council's Tree Officer would have no objection subject to a Tree Protection Condition being imposed. See Condition 2 in Section 9 , below.
- 6.56 The applicant's agent has advised in an email dated 7 June 2017 that narrow trenches following the boundary of the existing fence will be required linking cables to each column. The lighting company has confirmed that cabling could be omitted from the east side in order to avoid the digging of the trench. The omission of trenching along the eastern side could be controlled by condition. See condition 7 in Section 9, below

Highway considerations

- 6.57 The proposed lighting will be approximately 140m from the nearest section of adopted highway. The existing access and parking arrangements are adequate. Therefore there will be no direct highway implications. However given the proximity of rear gardens of the nearest residential properties along Marlow Road and given that the area is not a street lit zone the views of the Boroughs Street lighting section have been sought.

- 6.58 The street lighting team considers the design seems in order. Their only concern would be about excess light spill, but according to the report this should be contained within the boundary. They also comment that due to the nature of the area which does not presently have any road lighting, there will probably be concerns from the residents due to the change in light levels.

Floodplain considerations

- 6.59 The LPA is not required to consult the Environment Agency on this type of development. The site is within Flood Zone 2. As the lighting columns are all slim structures with minimal footprint, it is considered that there would not be any significant reduction in flood storage capacity or obstruction to the flow of flood water. As such there is no conflict with Local Plan Policy F1.

Other material considerations

- 6.60 In making this recommendation, consideration has paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area, as required under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Council has also had special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of nearby listed buildings, as required under Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; it is considered that the proposals preserve the setting of the nearby listed buildings so the statutory test is met and also comply with Policy LB2 of the Local Plan.

7. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

Comments from interested parties

45 occupiers were notified directly of the application.

The planning officer posted a notice advertising the application at the site on 29 March 2019 and the application was advertised in the Maidenhead Advertiser on 30th March and 6th April 2017.?

16 letters were received **objecting** the application, summarised as:

Comment		Where in the report this is considered
1.	Concerns about bright illumination in the middle of an existing dark sports field in a conservation area which has no street lighting. The site already causes light spillage. The hockey pitch lighting and car park lighting already dominates the skyline and causes glare and a halo effect.	Paragraphs 6.13-6.30
2.	Not in keeping with the area and not acceptable to residents. The masts would be taller than most houses.	Paragraphs 6.13-6.30 and 6.40-6.47
3.	Loss of amenity to local residents. Lighting will cause nuisance to local residents. It is ludicrous to claim that curtains will be drawn so people won't see the flood lights. Also it is ludicrous to say no one will use the Thames Path when the lights are on. People do walk around an hour before sunset and immediately after sunset.	6.13-6.30 and 6.40-6.47
4.	Incorrect characterisation of Bisham conservation area. It is not rural E2. This is an area of Special Landscape Importance. The appropriate classification is Class E1 – National Parks, AONB rather than 'village of relatively dark outer suburban locations'.	Noted. See paragraphs 6.13-6.30 and 6.56-6.57
5.	The offer to remove existing lighting: This lighting is no longer used for its intended purpose. As a blot on the landscape they should be removed in any event.	Noted.
6.	No confidence that lights will be switched off at the designated times nor that the lighting columns will be retracted. There is currently a lack of consistency in the control of the hockey pitch lighting. These have	The times will be controlled by condition. See

	often been left on after 22:00 and sometimes have been shining at 02:00am and 04:20am	conditions 4,5,6, in Section 9, below.
7.	There comes a time when noise and vehicle movements in and out become excessive and unacceptable. Facilities open at 6.00am each morning with bin lorries accessing the National Sports Centre during the night. Concerns about the capacity of the carpark and extra parking on roads. The access with extra traffic is dangerous. The parking survey carried out from 3 rd - 8 th October 2016 is too short to be meaningful.	Paragraphs 6.56 -6.57.
8.	Sport England has outgrown its site.	Noted.
9.	It was dishonest of the applicants to apply for 3G pitch without lighting and then to subsequently realise they need it.	Noted.
10	Lighting will give rise to more congestion at the junction of Marlow Road. There will be more noise on and off the pitch,	See paragraphs 6.40-6.47 and paragraphs 6.56-6.57.
11	The fence to the rear garden of No 17 is 70 metres from the AGP. Previous applications were refused to protect the amenities of local residents and the character of the Green Belt. These objections still stand.	Noted.
12	Intrusive/urbanising form of development harmful to the openness, and rural character of the Green Belt, by reason of intensive block of light and increased use in winter months between 5pm and 9pm. – less than 100 m from a Listed Building. The dark field is a significant element in the setting of the Grade I listed Abbey. This was acknowledged at the time the application for 3G pitch was determined.	Paragraphs 6.2 -6.30.
13	Increased level of use of the 3G pitch. Residents subjected to more disturbance including shouting noises associated with the football games. Noisy sports should stop at 5pm.	Paragraphs 6.40 -6.47
14	Residents value short and long views and dark skies. They don't want more tree planting	Noted.
15	The applicant states that public meetings held and only a few people attended, none of whom objected. This is untrue. Applicant cancelled the meeting and as far as is known did not arrange another one.	Noted.
16	The offer of a unilateral undertaking to secure and encourage use by RBWM residents, is laughable. No further details have been advanced as to furtherance of the undertaking. To be of value there needs to be clear objectives, benchmarks and penalties for non-compliance with the undertaking	Paragraph 6.39
17	The extent of community use on the AGP/3G pitch has not been qualified. How will the lighting increase community use of the pitch. FAB (Football at Bisham) is implied to be community organisation but it is a private organisation that provides the services. What is the availability for the general public ?	Paragraphs 6.31 -6.39
18	Floodlights are required for SERCO's financial gain. Bisham Abbey is used for weddings and events for commercial revenue.	Noted.
19	Why is the application submitted by SERCO rather than Sport England. Serco has entered into an agreement to provide services for Sport England. Agreement needs to include Sport England and relevant Government Department.	The LPA can not control who submits applications.
20	If allowed, this development will set a precedent for further lights on adjacent pitches.	Noted.
21	New fencing blocks view of the Grade I listed building.	Noted.

4 letters were received **supporting** the application, summarised as:

Comment		Where in the report this is considered
1.	The use of the pitch all year is a good thing and will increase the training facility all year round. The AGP is better and a kinder surface than the hockey astro pitch which is unsuitable for football training. Training all year on the AGP will reduce the incidence of injuries. The facility is already a centre of excellence for many sports and with added resources (floodlights) can also develop into an independent centre of excellence for football.	Paragraphs 6.31 – 6.39

Statutory consultees

Consultee	Comment	Where in the report this is considered
Highways	No objections. The existing access and parking arrangements are adequate. No direct highway implications. The Highway officer has sought comments from the Council's street lighting team. See below.	Paragraphs 6.56 -6.57
Street Lighting team	The street lighting team considers the design is acceptable. Their only concern would be about excess light spill but the comment that according to the report this should be contained within the boundary. Due to the nature of the area which does not presently have any road lighting, they comment that there will probably be concerns from the residents due to the change in light levels.	Paragraph 6.57
Council's Tree Officer	<p>The lighting masts on the eastern side of the pitch are located close to a line of semi mature trees that could be impacted by any trenching work required to provide power to these lamps (FL01 and FL06 on the Sports Lighting Block Plan P4226 – 114 Rev C).</p> <p>The Council's Tree Officer has recommend that details for the cabling around the pitch are provided. If additional underground cables are necessary he has recommend that the cabling is not installed on the eastern edge of the pitch to avoid the root protection areas of the adjacent trees.</p> <p>If no trenching is required on the eastern boundary of the site the Council's Tree Officer would have no objection subject to a Tree Protection Condition being imposed.</p>	Paragraphs 6.48 -6.55
Bisham Parish Council	The Council OBJECTED to the proposal, stating that it was highly inappropriate and against the interests of the community. It was also felt that the lighting would overlook dwellings, and have an adverse effect on their amenity by spoiling the outlook from them. Furthermore, it was noted that the 3G pitch was only initially approved on the basis that there would be no flood lighting installed, and that this application contravened that. Additionally, that whether the lighting was retractable or not it still caused significant light pollution to the surrounding area, which was located within the Green Belt and Conservation Area. The surrounding area also included listed buildings, which would suffer from the detrimental impact, including the added noise due to extended usage of the site. The proposal would also increase traffic due to the greater volume of users of the site; the site car park was often insufficient in terms of capacity, and this pushed cars on to external roads such as Marlow Road, with many residents faced with blind spots as a result.	Paragraphs 6.2-6.57

	The Council stated that if the proposal was to be accepted then it would be vital to enforce strict hours of operation to minimize the negative effects of it. However, the Council concluded that the proposal was largely incongruous with the semi-rural character of the area, and advised that it should not go ahead. The Cllrs requested that the application be called in.	
Berkshire Archaeology	The all-weather pitch has been subject to archaeological investigation when it was constructed. Although buried remains may yet survive below the pitch, the below ground impacts of this proposal are minimal and therefore a watching brief is not justified.	Paragraph 6.16
Historic England	On the basis of the information available to date, we do not wish to offer any comments. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers, as relevant. It is not necessary for us to be consulted on this application again, unless there are material changes to the proposals.	Paragraph 6.16
Council's Ecologist	Any comments received from the Council's ecologist before the panel meeting will be reported in the panel update report.	It is noted that there was no reason for refusal relating to ecology, on the previous application 15/00197.
Environmental Protection Team	The Environmental Protection Team has no raised an objection, suggesting hours of illumination limited to an informative for the lighting to be turned off by an automatic time clock during the hours the area is not in use (e.g. 22:00 and 07:00) and by light sensitive switch when natural light is available	Paragraph 6.47.

8. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

- Appendix A - Site location plan and site layout
- Appendix B – plan and elevation drawings

9. CONDITIONS RECOMMENDED FOR INCLUSION IF PERMISSION IS GRANTED

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 2 Prior to any equipment, machinery or materials being brought onto the site, details of the measures to protect, during construction, the trees shown to be retained on the approved plan, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved measures shall be implemented in full prior to any equipment, machinery or materials being brought onto the site, and thereafter maintained until the completion of all construction work and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been permanently removed from the site. These measures shall include fencing in accordance with British Standard 5837. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, without the written

consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect trees which contribute to the visual amenities of the site and surrounding area. Relevant Policies - Local Plan DG1.

- 3 No development shall take place until full details of new tree planting and any new hedgerows (as outlined on drawing 553-02-01B) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved within the first planting season following the substantial completion of the development and retained in accordance with the approved details. If within a period of five years from the date of planting of any tree or shrub shown on the approved landscaping plan, that tree or shrub, or any tree or shrub planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, or becomes seriously damaged or defective, another tree or shrub of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted in the immediate vicinity, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its prior written consent to any variation.
Reason: To ensure a form of development that maintains, and contributes positively to, the character and appearance of the area. Relevant Policies - Local Plan DG1, CA2.
- 4 The floodlights hereby approved shall be illuminated only between the hours of 16.00 -21:00 hours on Mondays to Fridays and only between the hours of 16:00 and 20:00 on Saturdays. The floodlights shall not be illuminated outside of these hours. The floodlights shall not be illuminated at any time on Sundays, Bank Holidays and Public Holidays.
Reason: In the interests of the amenities of nearby residential properties and in the interests of the setting and appearance of the Conservation Area. Relevant Policies - Local Plan DG1, NAP3, CA2.
- 5 The telescopic/retractable lighting columns shall be fully retracted down (i.e. to approximately 3 metres overall height) outside of the permitted hours of illumination (as set out in Condition 3 above) and shall be extended to full height only when the lights are illuminated within the permitted hours of illumination.
Reason: In the interests of the setting and appearance of the Conservation Area and nearby Listed Building. Relevant Policies - DG1, CA2, LB2.
- 6 At any time when the pitch is not in use the flood lights shall be switched off.
Reason: To ensure that there is no unnecessary illumination in this area, in the interests of the character of the area and amenities of nearby residential properties. Relevant Policies - Local Plan GB1, GB2, CA2, LB2, DG1.
- 7 No trenching work shall take place along the eastern side of the pitch.
Reason: To ensure that there is no damage to tree roots. Relevant policies - Local Plan N6.
- 8 The existing 4 no. lighting columns (on the former grass tennis area as identified on the submitted plans) shall be completely removed from the site, prior to the new flood lights (hereby approved) are first brought into use.
Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the area and to minimise the overall amount of lighting at the National Sports Centre. Relevant Policies- Local Plan , DG1, CA2, LB2, NAP3.
- 9 Prior to the installation of the new lighting columns hereby approved, full details of the noise reduction measures for the existing metal fencing surrounding the Artificial Grass Pitch, shall be submitted for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved noise reduction measures shall be installed prior to the initial use of the flood lights and maintained as approved.
Reason: To minimise any noise and disturbance to local residents through the additional evening use of the pitch. . Relevant Policies - Local Plan NAP3.