

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0393
Valid 07/01/2025

LEEK BOWLING CLUB
BEGGARS LANE
LEEK

REPLACE THE EXISTING LIGHTING WITH LED, THIS WOULD INCLUDE REMOVAL OF THE OLD WOODEN COLUMNS INSTALLED, INSTALLING NEW FOUNDATION FOR THE COLUMNS. THE NEW COLUMNS ARE GOING TO 8M GALVANISED BASE HINGED COLUMNS DATASHEET TO BE SUPPLIED.

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Design
- Residential amenity

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site consists of the Leek Bowling Club, bowling green, clubhouse, carpark and surrounding curtilage. The site is approximately 0.5 ha, and is in a suburban setting, approximately 530 metres north west of the A53. Currently, the site has four wooden floodlight posts which are similar to telegraph poles in both height and appearance, standing at 7.85 metres, with between three and five lights on each post at various heights.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission for the preplacement of two of the wooden posts on the northern edge of the site (while the two posts on the southern side will remain as they carry cables to the Army Cadet Building, however the lights will be removed), and floodlights, to be replaced with four metal posts, standing approx. 8 metres in height, with two LED lights per post. The applicant advises that the lights will only be required between March to the middle of May and from the middle of August to the end September, up until 10pm.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS5 Leek Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 -14, 47, 131, 135.

Section(s) 4 – Decision making, 12 – Achieving well designed and beautiful places.

Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/G):

- Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands
- Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD
- Space About Dwellings SPD

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

- MD/1996/0148. (OLD REFERENCE: 96/00881/OLD). DESCRIPTION: ATC/ACF H.Q. BUILDING (DEVELOPMENT BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT NOTIFICATION). DECISION: APPROVED

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: Expired

Neighbour consultation period ends: Expired

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

Three comments, neither objecting or in support, but with comments relating to light pollution, into neighbouring properties.

Town / Parish Comments

No objection. Leek Town Council Planning Committee asked if the concern of the neighbour about light ingress could be noted.

Environmental Health

Environmental Health have no objection to the proposed development subject to the following conditions.

1. Construction & Demolition Works: Time of operations

Unless prior permission has been obtained in writing from the Local Planning Authority, all noisy activities shall be restricted to the following times of operations.

- 08:00 - 18:00 hours (Monday to Friday);

- 08:00 - 13:00 hours (Saturday)
- No working is permitted on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

In this instance a noisy activity is defined as any activity (for instance, but not restricted to, building construction/demolition operations, refurbishing and landscaping) which generates noise that is audible at the site boundary.

Reason: *To avoid the risk of disturbance to neighbouring dwellings from noise during unsocial hours.*

2. Lighting Impacts (proposed condition)

The hereby approved floodlighting shall not be operated outside the hours 08:00am to 10:00pm.

Reason: *To protect the local amenities of the local residents by reason of excess of illuminance during unsocial hours.*

Staffordshire County Council Highways

Acceptance.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

In accordance with Policies SS1 and SS2 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan the Council expects all new development to make a positive contribution towards the sustainability of communities and to protect and where possible enhance the environment. The development is within the Leek Development Boundary and therefore acceptable in principle.

Design

SMDC Policy DC1 requires development to be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area; and be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, character and appearance.

Paragraphs 131 and 135 of the NPPF outline what is expected of good design and required for the development of high quality, beautiful places, and provides for a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The design of the lighting will be similar in appearance to the existing lighting arrangement, although the replacement lighting posts will be metal rather than timber. The floodlights are replacing the existing, and there will be little visual change to the site, and will remain looking like a typical bowling green. Therefore, in terms of design, the proposal is considered acceptable.

Amenity

Paragraph 135 f) of the NPPF seeks to secure a high standard of amenity for all

existing and future occupants. Local Plan Policy DC1 requires development to achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjacent development and to not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts on local character and amenity.

The proposed lighting is predicted to impact residents to some extent compared to lights of and on, but there is existing floodlighting already in use at the site so there is no significant change to existing lighting levels in the area during nighttime play. The premises is attributed an E3 zone maximum LUX limit of 10 which is relevant to the area (also ref. Institute of Lighting Engineers – Guidance Notes on Obtrusive Lighting). The lighting impacts are predicted to be achieved at all properties according to the lighting impacts plan. In order to mitigate impact on neighbours, the proposed latest timings for floodlight use will be made a condition of development.

Environmental Health also note that there is no record of complaint against the premises in the previous 6 years to application on our records.

It is noted that a number of residents raise concerns about the flood lights, however as noted by the EHO the submitted lighting plan demonstrates that there will be no any additional harm to surrounding residents, when compared to the existing situation. Moreover, the applicant advises that the lights will only be used during limited months during the year. This can be controlled by an appropriate condition. As such it is considered that the development will not cause undue harm to the amenities of surrounding residents.

Highway Safety

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places. Policy T1 seeks to provide safe and sustainable access and ensure that development does not lead to an increase in on street parking. Due to the nature of the development – replacing existing lights – the proposed development would have no impact on highway safety. The existing access will not be altered.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The site qualifies for the De Minimis exemption as less than 25m² of habitat would be affected. This is because it is the siting of four new lighting poles in an area of hardstanding.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of design, amenity and highway safety. Conditions will be added to the permission to ensure an acceptable standard of amenity for neighbouring properties. Therefore, the recommendation is to approve, subject to conditions.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE, subject to conditions.

Case Officer: Reuben Berriman

Recommendation Date: 05/03/2025

X 

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council