



APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION 12/00773/DPP ERECTION OF 12 FLOODLIGHTING COLUMNS (9 SINGLE SIDED AND 3 DOUBLE SIDED) AT PENICUIK PARK AND PLAYING FIELDS, CARLOPS ROAD, PENICUIK

Report by Head of Planning and Development

1 SUMMARY OF APPLICATION AND RECOMMENDED DECISION

- 1.1** The application is for the erection of 12 floodlighting columns around the existing playing fields at Penicuik Park. There have been no letters of representation and no consultee objections. The relevant development plan policies are RP20 and RP30 of the Midlothian Local Plan. The recommendation is to grant planning permission subject to a condition restricting the hours of operation.

2 LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1** The application site is within Penicuik Park and comprises a grassed area containing open space mainly used as football and rugby pitches.
- 2.2** The surrounding areas to the east and west of the site accommodate residential properties. Penicuik High School is also located to the north-west of the application site. A line of mature trees is located along the southern boundary of the park. There are a number of formal pitches set out in the park and enclosed by fencing, including a synthetic surfaced pitch and Penicuik Athletic's football pitch. There are floodlights at each of these pitches.

3 PROPOSAL

- 3.1** It is proposed to erect 12 floodlights around playing areas within the park. Six columns will be erected around the rugby pitch at the southern edge of the park. Although the three most southerly columns will have only single sided lighting units the three columns on the north side of the rugby pitch will have double sided lighting units so as to cast light on to a training area used by the rugby team.
- 3.2** A further six single sided floodlights will be erected around a pitch located at the north end of the park, opposite the High School.

- 3.3 All of the columns are to be 15m high. No details of the materials of the floodlight columns have been submitted.
- 3.4 The applicant states that the double sided lights will be used three times a week, Tuesday to Thursday and that the training pitch will be used on different nights.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Relevant to the application is the previous approval of floodlights on the neighbouring synthetic pitch and training pitch to the north (07/00330/DPP). The approved proposal at the synthetic pitch included six 15m high floodlight columns. However these columns were eventually reduced to 13m high.
- 4.2 In addition to the above, that scheme also proposed the upgrading of other floodlights in the park, opposite the High School.
- 4.3 The applicant and land owner is Midlothian Council. Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Schemes of Delegation and Local Review Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 requires applications which are submitted by the Planning Authority and in their ownership to be considered by the Planning Committee.

5 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 The Council's **Environmental Health Manager** has not objected to the application.
- 5.2 The Council's **Policy and Road Safety Manager** raises no concerns and has no objection to the application.

6 REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 No representations have been received in connection with this application.

7 PLANNING POLICY

- 7.1 The development plan is comprised of the Edinburgh and the Lothians Structure Plan 2015, approved in June 2004, and the Midlothian Local Plan, adopted in December 2008. The following policies are relevant to the proposal:
- 7.2 Midlothian Local Plan Policy **RP20: Development within the Built-up Area** states that development will not be permitted within the built-up area where it is likely to detract materially from the existing character or amenity of the area.

- 7.3 Midlothian Local Plan Policy **RP30: Open space in towns and villages** which does not permit development on important areas of open space within built-up areas. Development is not permitted where it would result in the loss of a visually important open space; or an attractive landscaped area; or area important for informal recreation.

8 PLANNING ISSUES

- 8.1 The primary planning consideration in this instance is whether the proposed development complies with the development plan or, if not, whether there are any other material considerations which would otherwise justify granting permission.
- 8.2 The application is for the erection of floodlighting columns in an existing park and playing field, where there are already formal illuminated playing surfaces and more informal training areas, some of which are also illuminated.
- 8.3 There are already two lighting columns illuminating the rugby training pitch and further lighting columns illuminating the football training area. The proposal involves the replacement of these existing lighting columns with six 15m high lighting columns. Therefore it is important to assess what, if any, additional impact there will be as a result of erecting more columns.
- 8.4 The design of the columns is of a form which is widely used for lighting sports pitches and leisure facilities elsewhere in Midlothian, and is acceptable in this recreational area. Given the presence of other similar structures in the park and the high trees nearby they would have no significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- 8.5 At a height of 15m some of the columns may be visible against the skyline above the tree-tops, depending on where they are viewed from, and the other columns further away from the trees will be more obvious. However, the slender nature of the columns and the lighting units will ensure that they would not be visually obtrusive.
- 8.6 In considering floodlighting proposals it is not only the appearance of the structures that may impact on the area it is also the light which is emitted from the floodlights and the scope that the lights give for use of areas which would previously been unusable due to low light levels. These impacts can have a detrimental impact on neighbouring residential properties and other noise and light sensitive properties.
- 8.7 The park is bounded on a number of sides by residential properties. The closest of these properties to the application site are along Carlops Road, Cranston Street and Jackson Street, which are 35m, 120m and 120m from the closest proposed lighting columns respectively. Despite

the proximity of the houses to the lighting there will not be any significant adverse impact on the amenity of the residential properties. This is due, in part, to the fact that the columns are higher than other nearby floodlights, which allows the lights to be directed down, towards the ground, rather than projecting more horizontally, which would cause the light to spread over a greater distance. In addition, the applicant has submitted a 'light spread' plan. This plan shows that the light from the floodlights should not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residents.

- 8.8 The application site is located in a large public park which is grassed and predominately flat. Although the columns will be visible from the long views within the public park, they will be viewed as part of the existing football pitch at the site.
- 8.9 It would be prudent to attach a condition to restrict the hours the lights can be illuminated. This is consistent with floodlighting provision at other Midlothian sports facilities.
- 8.10 The 12 new floodlighting columns in this area would have a limited impact on the character and amenity of the area as compared to the existing situation and would enhance the potential use of the sports pitches.

9 RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 That planning permission be granted for the following reason:

The proposed development is located within the built up area and does not conflict with Midlothian Local Plan policies RP20 and RP30. The presumption in favour of development is not outweighed by any other material considerations.

Subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to the erection of the floodlighting columns details of the material of the columns shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority.

Reason: *These details were not submitted with the application and are required in order to ensure that the proposed columns do not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area.*

- 2. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the planning authority, the floodlights hereby approved shall not be used between the hours of 10pm and 7am.

Reason: *To limit any impact on the amenity of the surrounding area.*

3. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years from the date of this permission. Prior to the development commencing the planning authority shall be notified in writing of the expected commencement of work date and once development on site has been completed the planning authority shall be notified of the completion of works date in writing.

Reason: *To accord with Section 58 and 27A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended by Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006).*

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Application No:	12/00773/DPP (Available online)
Applicant:	Midlothian Council
Agent:	Midlothian Council Corporate Resources
Validation Date:	22 November 2012
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Background Papers:	