

Section '3' - Applications recommended for PERMISSION, APPROVAL or CONSENT

Application No : 14/01131/FULL1

Ward:
Farnborough And Crofton

Address : Newstead Wood School For Girls
Avebury Road Orpington BR6 9SA

OS Grid Ref: E: 544671 N: 165209

Applicant : Mrs June Riley

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Installation of 16 x 8m tall floodlighting masts to 4 existing tennis courts.

Key designations:

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area
London City Airport Safeguarding
London City Airport Safeguarding
London Loop
Local Distributor Roads
Sites of Interest for Nat. Conservation

Urban Open Space

Proposal

Erection of 16 x 8m high floodlighting masts to 4 existing tennis courts. The four tennis courts are located to the rear of the school. They are lined by buildings to the southern and eastern boundaries and mature vegetation to the western and northern boundaries.

The need for new floodlighting has arisen as Bromley Tennis Centre will no longer be able to accommodate the netball posts necessary for floodlit evening events, requiring the school to make its own arrangements.

The floodlights will enable increased after school activities and clubs at the school and inter-school competitions. It will also enable increased activity for Bromley Tennis Centre additional coaching and after school 'satellite clubs' as part of Sport England's project to increase participation for 14-25 year olds and for casual playing for local people in the area.

It is proposed that the courts will be used up to 21.30 each week day night and 21.00 at weekends.

The applicants have submitted a Bat Survey Report to accompany the application.

Key designations:

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area

Urban Open Space

Adjacent to Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation

London City Airport Safeguarding

London City Airport Safeguarding Birds

Location

The Bromley Tennis Centre is in the grounds of Newstead Woods School, Avebury Road, Orpington, owned by the school and operated in partnership with the Kent Lawn Tennis Association. The school is located adjacent to a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation.

Comments from Local Residents

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and the following representations were received:

- the erection of these lights are not on the tennis court but at the back of the school overlooking the woodland which is a nature reserve and as such the lights will have a grave impact on local wildlife.
- proposed floodlight masts are too high Newstead Woods are a critical feature of the neighbourhood and an area of natural beauty. It is critical that nothing competes with the height of the trees in the wood. The proposal should have light masking so that no light from the masts falls on the woods.
- the proposal is deleterious to the neighbouring landscape and public amenity.

Orpington Field Club has also objected to the proposal on the basis that the area labelled 'playing field' on the location plan map is in fact 'Newstead Meadow' part of Darrick and Newstead Woods Local Nature Reserve and site of Importance for Nature Conservation. Bats forage along the boundary edge which separates the proposal from Newstead Meadow. Orpington Field Club objects due to the negative impact of the floodlighting on bats which forage along the meadow edge. Some bat species actively avoid lit areas and artificial light significantly disrupts feeding and breeding patterns. Artificial light also delays bat emergence causing them to miss the peak of invertebrate abundance, just after dusk.

Comments from Consultees

The Council's Highways Officer raises no objections to the proposal.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer raises no objections to the proposal.

Natural England (NE) advises that whilst the site is located in close proximity to the Crofton woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). NE is satisfied that the proposed development, if it is carried out in strict accordance with the details of the application, will not damage or destroy the interest features for which the site has been notified and does not represent a constraint to determining the application.

Natural England has not assessed the site in terms of protected species.

Planning Considerations

The application falls to be determined in accordance with the following Unitary Development Plan policies:

- BE1 Design of New Development
- C7 Educational and Pre-School Facilities
- C8 Dual Community Use of Educational facilities
- G8 Urban Open Space
- L1 Outdoor Recreation and Leisure
- NE5 Protected Species

London Plan policies 5.12 and 5.13

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 is also relevant.

Planning History

There is extensive planning history on the site. The planning history with most relevance to this proposal is summarised below:

02/02198 and 03/01513 - Approval of the reserved matters in respect of 01/01861 for the construction of the all weather tennis facility.

01/01861 - Outline planning permission was granted for the construction of an all weather tennis facility comprising 6 indoor tennis courts, 4 outdoor floodlit tennis courts, in August 2001

86/02057 - Planning permission was granted for the use of the field as an all weather pitch and with floodlighting in October 1986.

Conclusions

The main issues to be considered are the impact of the proposal on Urban Open Space, the adjacent Site of Special Scientific Interest for Nature Conservation, protected species and the amenities of the surrounding residents.

The installation of floodlights is not considered to impact on the openness of the site as it is already surrounded on three sides by buildings and is therefore well screened by these buildings and existing vegetation. The floodlights are also considered to significantly enhance the opportunity for the usage of the existing

tennis courts, particularly during the winter months, without any impact on openness.

With regard to the impact on the amenity of occupants of nearby residential properties, the courts are well screened on three sides by existing buildings. The western boundary of the courts is also screened by existing trees and vegetation. Due to the extent of existing screening and the distance of the tennis courts from the nearest residential properties it is considered unlikely that the proposal will have any impact on residential amenity due to noise or light spillage. It should be noted that there is already evening activity at the school from other activities.

A Bat Survey Report has been submitted to accompany the application. The bat report recommends the use of finned visors to the front of luminaries to ameliorate the impact of the light spillage onto vegetation. It also suggests that it may be necessary to erect closeboard fencing/black netting on the fence facing the wood if the levels are thought to be beyond the tolerance of brown long-eared bats, (given the nature of the woodland in this location). The report also recommends that the conifers along the front of the Music Block should be extended towards the western boundary, as far as is practicably possible. This will create a light shield between the bat feeding area and the tennis courts, and recognise the importance of the trees as a night roost for birds.

If the identified mitigation measures are implemented the Council is of the view that the lighting will not have an adverse effect on this sensitive area. However, it is recommended that a monitoring visit should be carried out post implementation to assess whether the light spill conforms with the lighting assessment and that bat activity remains consistent with that recorded earlier this year.

A condition is recommended to secure this monitoring assessment which would include the opportunity to consider additional mitigation measures if required. Having regard to the above it is considered that the installation of floodlights will not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt, the amenities of nearby residents or the local wildlife in the vicinity. As such it is recommended that permission be granted.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on the file ref. 14/01131 and those set out in the Planning History section above, excluding exempt information.

as amended by documents received on 25.07.2014 14.08.2014 18.08.2014

RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION

Subject to the following conditions:

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| 1 | ACA01 ACA01R | Commencement of development within 3 yrs A01 Reason 3 years |
| 2 | ACK01 ACC01R | Compliance with submitted plan Reason C01 |

3 The floodlights hereby permitted shall not operate before 09.00 and after 21.30 on weekdays or before 09.00 and after 21.00 on Saturdays and Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Reason: In order to comply with Policies BE1 and NE5 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the visual amenities of the area.

4 Closeboard fencing (1.8m in height) will be provided along the western boundary of the site of the tennis courts with Newstead Wood, a plan showing the precise siting and length of this fencing is to be submitted to and be agreed by the Local Planning Authority. The fence is to be installed prior to the first usage of the floodlights and be permanently maintained thereafter.

Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the amenities of the area.

5 Details of additional conifer planting along the front of the music block is to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The additional conifer planting will be installed prior to the first operation of the floodlighting and be permanently maintained as such.

Reason: In order to comply with Policies BE1 and NE5 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interests of the amenities of the area.

6 The floodlight columns will be painted dark green, and be permanently maintained as such thereafter.

Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the amenities of the area.

7 The floodlight fittings will be Phillips 1Kw projector fittings, with Philips Optivisors fitted, no alternative fittings or visors are to be used unless agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the amenities of the area.

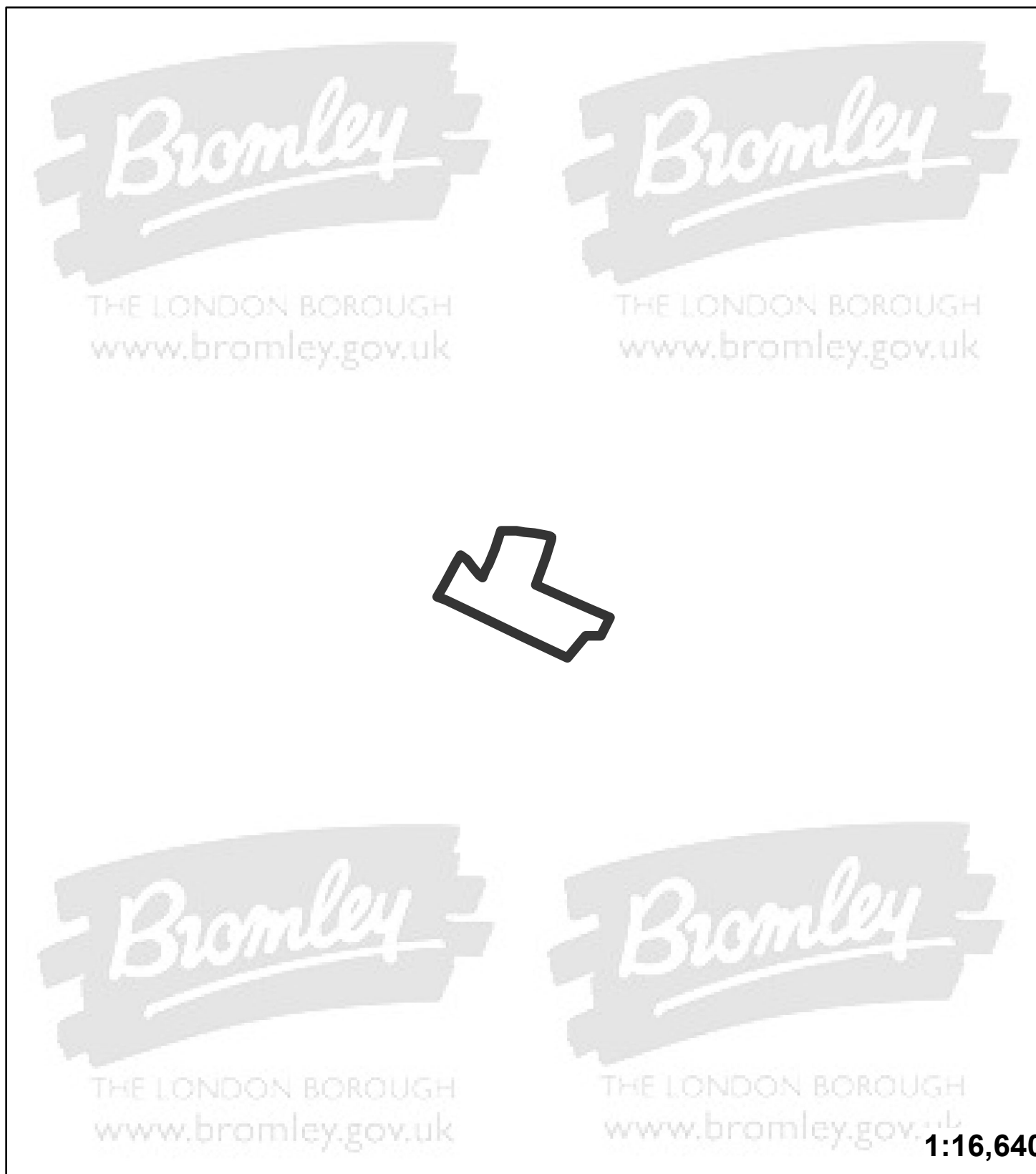
8 A report setting out the findings of a monitoring visit (before the end of the first bat activity season after the installation of the floodlights) shall be submitted to and approved the Local Planning Authority. Details of any further mitigation measures recommended by the report shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and installed within 3 weeks of approval and permanently retained thereafter.

Reason: In order to comply with Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the amenities of the area.

Application:14/01131/FULL1

Address: Newstead Wood School For Girls Avebury Road Orpington BR6 9SA

Proposal: Installation of 16 x 8m tall floodlighting masts to 4 existing tennis courts.



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