



Mr L Osborne
Knowsley Borough Council
Planning Department
Municipal Building
Archway Road Huyton
L36 9UX
By email

Date 1st March 2021
Our Ref LIVE01/04

Dear Lee

AXA Training Ground, Northwood, Kirkby

Further to our telephone conversations last year please find enclosed a planning application on behalf of Liverpool Football Club (LFC or 'the Club') for new floodlighting to Pitch C of the first team training ground.

The application comprises the following information:

- Site location and layout plan
- Lighting design analysis – Musco
- Light Impact Assessment – Neil Johnson Sports Lighting Consultants
- Lighting column elevations – Dwg no.CC9892

It has been submitted via the Portal (ref: 09566276) and the requisite application fee of £234 paid on line.

Background

In September 2017 the council granted a hybrid planning permission for a new first team training ground for Liverpool Football Club and improved facilities at the existing LFC Academy and community sports facilities (LPA ref: 17/00324/HYB). All parts of that development are now complete and in use.

The Development

When the training ground opened floodlighting was provided around two of the training pitches (Pitches A and B) and the goal keeper training area; a third training pitch (Pitch C) was not floodlit at that time.

The Club has now identified a requirement for Pitch C to also be floodlit, optimising its use and that of the training ground to accommodate the full training needs of the first team.

Temporary floodlights were installed around the pitch in December 2020 (see my letter of 22 December) and have been in use, as necessary to meet first team training requirements, since that time. The current application now proposes the installation of permanent floodlights to the sides of Pitch C comprising 6 x 20m high galvanised steel masts (3 on each side) each mounted with LED lights arranged in clusters on boards fitted with external hoods designed to reduce upward and horizontal light spill. An image of the floodlights is shown in the photograph below.



The floodlights are similar in appearance to those already installed around Pitches A and B with the exception that the masts will be 20m in height rather than the existing 16m masts.

Appraisal

The application proposes the erection of additional floodlights as part of the existing training campus for Liverpool FC. It is required to optimise the use of the training ground for the LFC first team. The development does not raise any issues of principle, and the only matters to consider are those relating to visual and general amenity.

Development Plan

In this case, the only relevant development plan policy is DQ1 of the adopted Unitary Development Plan. That policy is informed by the strategic objective of the plan to, inter alia, ensure that new development provides for good levels of amenity and does not cause harm to amenities that ought to be protected in the public interest. The first part of the policy, under the sub-heading of 'surrounding area' is of most relevance to the current proposals; it expects new development to:

- (a) Respond to and, where appropriate, enhance the characteristics of the immediate surrounding area through the use of appropriate scale, density, massing, height and building lines;*
- (b) Preserve or enhance views of important landscape features / buildings in surrounding areas;*
- (c) Protect the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.*

The proposed floodlights will not be out of character with the area. The lights are entirely appropriate to the use of the site as a training ground for a Premiership football club and identical in appearance to floodlighting that already exists at the site. The key difference in this case, is that the masts supporting the floodlights will be an additional 4m in height. This is necessary following detailed analysis of the existing lighting which shows that optimum conditions will be achieved through the scheme currently proposed which will provide improved uniformity and glare rating on the pitch and reduced floodlight elevation and lower spill values at nearby properties.

The taller lighting columns will be more visible from public vantage points, including Simonswood Lane and the residential areas to the west of the site. However, they will be set back and partially screened behind existing landscaping and, due to their slender construction, will be barely discernible in views other than when they are in use.

There are no views of important landscape features or buildings that will be affected by the proposals.

The accompanying technical reports demonstrate that, when in use, the floodlights will not have any adverse impacts on the residential or general amenities of the surrounding area, or on road users. Those reports confirm that:

- The vertical spill levels and source intensity values of the floodlights are considerably lower than required for compliance with maximum recommendations for an environmental zone E3 (suburban area).
- The highest value of source intensity is just 750 candelas and no residential property has vertical light spill values higher than 0.1 lux against the maximum recommended post-curfew standard of 2lux.
- The maximum increase in glare for road users on Simonswood Lane would be 2% and significantly below the 15% threshold where impact of increased glare might result in visual impairment for drivers.

Conclusion

The proposed floodlights are required to optimise the use of the training ground for Liverpool FC's first team. The development is entirely appropriate and in-keeping with the use of the site and existing floodlights around other pitches.

The proposals do not raise any issues of principle. The floodlights will be partially screened by existing landscaping and while the upper parts of the lighting columns will be visible from public vantage points, any visual impact is likely to be limited to those times that the lights are in use. The lighting is high specification and designed to focus light intensity on the pitch with minimum spill or glare. The accompanying technical reports clearly demonstrate that there lighting impacts on nearby residential properties and road users will be barely discernible. Consequently, there are no planning policy or other reasons to reject the application and we look forward to receiving planning permission as soon as possible.

I trust that you have all of the information required to enable you to validate and determine this application and I look forward to receiving your decision in due course. In the meantime, if you do have any queries or require any further information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area of the letter.

Sam Ryan MRTPI

Director

Ryan & May