



Planning, Design and Access Statement

Replacement of existing floodlights with LED floodlights to the West Astro

Hurstpierpoint College, College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex BN6 9JS

Applicant: Hurstpierpoint College Limited

Date: 30/01/2025

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Application Type: Full Planning Permission

1. Introduction

This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the replacement of the existing floodlights serving the West Astro at Hurstpierpoint College with modern LED floodlights.

The proposal is straightforward. The application is limited to the replacement of the existing floodlight units on the established floodlighting infrastructure serving an existing all-weather sports pitch within the college campus.

The purpose of the proposal is to modernise the existing installation, reduce energy consumption, reduce maintenance requirements and provide a more efficient and better controlled lighting arrangement.

This statement should be read alongside the application form, drawings, lighting design information and supporting product literature.

2. Site and Surroundings

Hurstpierpoint College lies to the north of Hurstpierpoint village in a rural setting surrounded largely by farmland, playing fields and associated educational development. The college campus is a substantial and long-established educational site which has evolved over time and contains a mix of historic and more recent buildings, together with sports pitches, access roads, parking and ancillary infrastructure.

The main college buildings are Grade II listed and form the historic core of the campus. They are of architectural and historic interest and their setting is an important material consideration in the determination of this application.

The application site comprises the existing West Astro, an established all-weather sports pitch with existing perimeter fencing and floodlighting columns. The site is already in active use as part of the college's sports provision. The proposal therefore relates to the improvement of existing operational infrastructure within an established educational campus, rather than new development on a previously undeveloped site.

3. Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the replacement of the existing floodlights to the West Astro with new LED luminaires.

The submitted lighting design information confirms that the proposal comprises the removal of the existing 18 metal halide floodlights and their replacement with 18 Philips LED floodlights mounted to the existing columns. The existing 12m column positions remain unchanged.

The proposal includes associated electrical upgrading works required for the new installation, including replacement operating gear and associated cabling, while retaining and reusing the existing switchgear infrastructure and controls where suitable.

The key elements of the proposal are as follows:

- replacement of existing floodlight heads only, with the existing columns retained;
- removal of 18 existing metal halide floodlights;
- installation of 18 new LED floodlights;
- internal louvres to reduce glare and light spillage;
- 0 upward light output;
- warm white lighting to reduce glare;
- lighting design suitable for hockey use at maintained average horizontal illuminance of approximately 350 lux with uniformity of approximately 0.7;
- reduction in installed load from approximately 51kW to approximately 27.11kW, representing a direct energy saving of approximately 47%.

The proposal does not seek any increase in the number or height of columns, any change to the pitch enclosure, or any extension to the operational role of the facility.

4. Planning History and Background

The college site has a long planning history associated with its established educational use and the ongoing improvement of its buildings and sports facilities.

Of direct relevance is the recent planning permission granted for the Southern Astro for the replacement of existing floodlights with LED floodlights under planning reference **DM/24/1602**. That application was granted planning permission by Mid Sussex District Council on 8 October 2024.

That decision is a highly relevant material consideration. It confirms that the principle of replacing existing floodlights at Hurstpierpoint College with modern LED luminaires is acceptable where the works do not materially alter the appearance of the columns, do not worsen light spill, and preserve the setting of the listed buildings.

The officer's delegated report for the Southern Astro is particularly relevant because it records that:

- the proposal involved replacement luminaires on an existing floodlit pitch;
- Environmental Protection raised no objection;
- the Conservation Officer accepted that there would be no harm where the appearance of the columns and the lighting impact remained broadly similar to the existing situation; and

The present proposal for the West Astro is comparable in nature. It is likewise a replacement lighting scheme for an existing floodlit sports pitch within the established college campus.

5. Planning Policy Context

The development plan includes the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 to 2031 and the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework is also a material consideration.

The most relevant Mid Sussex District Plan policies are considered to be:

- **DP24:** Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Activities;
- **DP25:** Community Facilities and Local Services;
- **DP26:** Character and Design;
- **DP29:** Noise, Air and Light Pollution;
- **DP34:** Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets; and
- **DP38:** Biodiversity.

The most relevant neighbourhood plan policies are:

- **HurstC1:** Conserving and Enhancing Character; and

- **HurstC5:** Hurstpierpoint College.

These policies support development that sustains and improves educational and community facilities, protects amenity, responds appropriately to local character and preserves heritage assets and their setting.

6. Design and Access

6.1 Design

The design approach is restrained and proportionate. The proposal retains the existing columns and existing pitch layout and replaces outdated floodlight heads with modern LED units that are more energy efficient and better controlled.

In visual terms, the development is minor. There is no meaningful alteration to the overall form of the site. The principal design issue is therefore the quality and control of the artificial lighting rather than built form.

The proposed LED fittings have been selected specifically to reduce glare and limit unwanted light spill. The use of warm white luminaires and internal louvres is a positive design response in a rural and sensitive setting.

6.2 Access

There is no change to pedestrian access, vehicular access, parking provision, servicing arrangements or general circulation within the site. The pitch will continue to be accessed via the existing college campus routes.

The proposal has no adverse implications for accessibility.

7. Planning Assessment

7.1 Principle of Development

The proposal relates to an existing sports facility within the established Hurstpierpoint College campus. This is not a proposal for a new pitch or a new floodlighting installation on undeveloped land. It is a modest upgrade to existing infrastructure in support of the ongoing operation of the college.

Policies DP24 and DP25 support the retention and enhancement of leisure, sporting, educational and community facilities. Policy HurstC5 specifically supports appropriate development within the environs of Hurstpierpoint College where it does not detract from the special architectural character and setting of the college and where it enhances the role of the college as a school and employer.

The proposal clearly meets that test. It improves an existing facility, reduces energy demand and does not materially alter the physical character or operational role of the site. The principle of development is therefore acceptable.

7.2 Character and Appearance

The site already contains a floodlit all-weather sports pitch with lighting columns and fencing. The surrounding area is therefore already characterised in part by sports infrastructure associated with the college.

The proposal does not materially alter that character. The columns remain in place, the pitch remains unchanged and there is no additional enclosure or built form. During daylight hours, the visual impact of the proposal will be negligible.

In night-time terms, the proposal is an improvement rather than an escalation. The use of modern controlled LED fittings with internal louvres and zero upward light output is a more disciplined lighting solution than the existing installation. The proposal is therefore consistent with policies DP26, DP29, HurstC1 and HurstC5.

7.3 Amenity, Glare and Light Pollution

Policy DP29 requires development to avoid unacceptable light pollution and safeguard local amenity. That is a central issue for this application.

The proposal has been designed to maintain an appropriate lighting level for hockey use while reducing energy demand and improving control. The submitted lighting design confirms average maintained levels of approximately 350 lux at a uniformity of approximately 0.7. The proposal therefore replaces the existing installation with a modern equivalent suitable for the established use of the pitch.

The proposed luminaires include internal louvres, use warm white lighting and produce no upward light. These are material benefits in planning terms. The works do not increase the number or height of the columns and do not alter the established use of the pitch.

The Southern Astro decision is again relevant. In that case, the Council's Environmental Protection Officer confirmed that the LED replacement would not make the light spill situation materially different, and no objection was raised. The same principle applies here. This is a replacement scheme for an existing floodlit facility and not an intensification of use.

Subject to the submitted lighting drawings and specification, the proposal is acceptable in amenity terms and accords with policies DP26 and DP29.

7.4 Heritage Impact

Hurstpierpoint College contains Grade II listed buildings which form the historic and architectural core of the campus. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their setting.

The proposal does not introduce a new structure into the setting of the listed buildings. Nor does it alter the position or height of the existing floodlighting columns. The application is limited to the replacement of existing luminaires on an existing sports pitch within a campus that has evolved over time.

The relevant heritage question is whether the proposed replacement luminaires would cause harm to the setting of the listed buildings through increased visual intrusion, glare or light spill.

They will not.

The following factors are important:

- the floodlit sports pitch already exists;
- the columns remain unchanged in number, position and height;
- the proposal is designed to improve light control, not to increase spillage;
- the luminaires have internal louvres and 0 upward light output; and
- the proposal forms part of the modern operational college campus rather than the historic core itself.

The reasoning applied by the Council to the Southern Astro is directly relevant. There, the Conservation Officer accepted that replacement luminaires would preserve the setting of the listed buildings where the physical appearance of the columns was not materially altered and the light spill remained comparable to the existing situation. The same conclusion should be reached here.

The proposal preserves the setting of the listed buildings and complies with Section 66(1), policy DP34 and policy HurstC5.

7.5 Highways and Access

There is no change to access arrangements, no increase in pitch capacity and no operational intensification giving rise to material traffic effects. The proposal has no highway implications.

7.6 Flood Risk and Drainage

The proposal is limited to replacement lighting equipment on an existing developed sports facility. There is no increase in impermeable area and no change to drainage arrangements. No flood risk or drainage concern arises.

7.7 Biodiversity

The proposal relates to replacement lighting infrastructure on an existing developed sports pitch. No habitat loss of any significance arises from the works. The proposal is therefore expected to fall outside any requirement for biodiversity net gain, subject to confirmation within the application form.

8. Conclusion

This application seeks permission for a modest but worthwhile upgrade to the existing West Astro floodlighting at Hurstpierpoint College.

The proposal is sensible and proportionate. It retains the existing columns, pitch and enclosure, replaces outdated floodlights with modern LED luminaires, improves energy efficiency, reduces maintenance demand and provides a more controlled lighting arrangement.

There is no credible planning reason to resist the scheme.

The proposal:

- supports the continued operation and improvement of an established educational and sporting facility;
- reduces installed electrical demand by approximately 47%;
- improves lighting control through warm white luminaires, internal louvres and zero upward light;
- causes no material change to the appearance of the site;
- gives rise to no unacceptable amenity, highway, drainage or biodiversity impacts; and
- preserves the setting of the Grade II listed buildings at Hurstpierpoint College.

The proposal complies with the Development Plan when read as a whole and with the other material considerations relevant to the application. Planning permission should therefore be granted.

Appendix 1, Suggested Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and supporting lighting design documentation.
3. The lighting installation shall be carried out in accordance with the approved lighting specification, aiming details and spillage contour drawing.

Appendix 2, Submission Documents

- 726 AL100, Location and Block Plan
 - 726 AL101, Existing and Proposed Plan
 - 726 AL102, Existing Elevations
 - 726 AL103, Proposed Elevations
 - SJB-26-05-01, West Astro spillage contour layout
 - 26005, West Astro lighting design and quotation information
 - Luminaire product literature
 - This Planning, Design and Access Statement
 - Heritage statement
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