

From: Ed Carpenter [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 December 2025 08:41
To: Section 62A Applications Non Major
<section62anonmajor@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: Email for support relating to Section 62A Planning Application:
S62A/2025/0132 Cotham School, Cotham Lawn Road, Bristol, BS6 6DT

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please find my attached supporting statement in relation to the Section 62A Planning Application: S62A/2025/0132 at Cotham School, Cotham Lawn Road, Bristol, BS6 6DT

Supporting Statement – Installation of Floodlights at Cotham School MUGA and All-Weather Pitch

Introduction

This statement is submitted in support of the proposed installation of floodlighting to the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and all-weather pitch at Cotham School. The development will deliver substantial benefits to student health, well-being, and educational enrichment, while also enhancing community engagement and contributing to the school's long-term financial resilience. The proposal represents an important improvement to a sports facility which is used by both students and the local community, ensuring it can be accessed safely and effectively throughout the year.

Enhancing Student Health, Wellbeing, and Participation in Sport

Regular physical activity plays a central role in the physical, emotional, and cognitive development of children and young people. Numerous studies demonstrate that active students experience improved concentration, reduced stress, enhanced mood, and better overall academic performance. The provision of floodlighting will allow the school to extend safe, structured sporting opportunities beyond daylight hours, particularly during autumn and winter when daylight is limited.

Childhood obesity continues to pose a significant public health challenge. Public Health England (2024) reports that around 21% of children aged 10–11 in England are classified as obese. With national guidance recommending at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day, accessible and high-quality school sports facilities are vital in helping young people achieve these targets. Floodlit pitches ensure that worsening seasonal daylight does not restrict students' ability to be active.

Additionally, concerns about excessive screen time and sedentary behaviour among children and adolescents are growing. By enabling consistent access to enjoyable, organised physical activity after school, the proposal encourages healthier habits and supports students' mental wellbeing, social development, and resilience.

Community Use and Wider Social Benefits

Cotham School's sports facilities are well-established community assets used by local clubs, organisations, and residents. The introduction of floodlighting will allow these

groups to continue using the facilities safely during evening hours throughout the whole year. This supports inclusive participation in sport, promotes intergenerational activity, and helps strengthen community ties.

The proposal aligns with local and national public health strategies aimed at increasing opportunities for people of all ages to engage in regular physical activity. It also contributes to local community development by offering a safe, well-managed space for sport in an area where demand for such facilities is high.

Financial Sustainability and Responsible Use of Resources

With school funding under sustained pressure, educational institutions are increasingly required to generate their own supplementary income. The enhanced flexibility provided by floodlit facilities will allow Cotham School to increase and better manage external hires, creating a stable income stream. This revenue can be reinvested into teaching resources, extracurricular programmes, facility maintenance, and other priorities that directly benefit students.

Minimal Impact on Parking, Traffic, and Local Amenity

The proposal will have a negligible impact on local parking or residential amenity. Students already remain on-site for after-school fixtures during darker months, and the majority walk to school. Visiting school teams typically travel by minibus, as is current practice.

External hires take place outside of school hours, and hence hirers use the school's own car park after 5pm, by which time most staff have left the site. This arrangement will continue unchanged. Many community users live locally and already walk or cycle to the school. As such, the proposed floodlighting will not generate additional vehicle movements or increase pressure on neighbouring streets or Residents' Parking Zones (RPZs).

Modern LED floodlighting systems are designed to minimise light spill, glare, and environmental impact. The use of directional, energy-efficient luminaires ensures that lighting is contained within the pitches and does not adversely affect neighbouring properties.

Additional Benefits

- **Safety and Security:** Improved visibility reduces the risk of accidents and enhances the overall safety of users during evening hours.
- **Inclusivity:** Floodlit facilities allow students of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds to participate fully in physical activity.
- **Support for Competitive Sport:** Extended access enables school teams to train consistently and compete in local and regional leagues, fostering teamwork, discipline, pride, and aspiration.
- **Environmental Efficiency:** Modern LED lighting is highly energy-efficient, low-maintenance, and designed to minimise light pollution, supporting the school's environmental commitments.

Conclusion

The installation of floodlights at Cotham School's MUGA and all-weather pitch offers clear and wide-ranging benefits. It will enhance student health and wellbeing, promote active lifestyles over sedentary behaviours, support valuable community use, and contribute to the school's financial sustainability. With negligible impact on local parking, traffic, or residential amenity, and with modern lighting technology ensuring minimal environmental impact, the proposal represents a responsible, well-considered, and beneficial improvement to an important community facility. It is therefore strongly supported on educational, health, and community grounds.

Kind regards,



Ed Carpenter

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