

**Supporting Document to agenda item 9b) To receive the response to the initial consultation**

The background to this proposal is unfamiliar to us, in particular the references to 'problems' in the past are something of which we have no knowledge and therefore we find it difficult to be able to fully understand the context in which the proposal has been made. However having carefully read the proposal and following up the references made therein we would like to offer the following observations:

Firstly we wholly endorse the premise that the younger members of our community should be treated with respect with the expectation that they have our (older generations) trust and that we would wish to act in their best interests. Both Pam and I spent a working lifetime with teenagers and believe that they should be listened to and treated with respect.

In terms of a solution to the 'problem', which looks to us to be with of older youths and not necessarily during normal 'Playing' hours and which is acknowledged in the proposal by the assertion that 'we' should provide a safe, lit, public space to be enjoyed by ALL residents then this proposal seems to us to be very wide of the mark. The prospect that lighting in Old Road play area would promote positive social cohesion, be somehow self-regulating and could be self-supervised is at best wildly optimistic and, if one were being cynical, might easily be regarded as empty political rhetoric. It is extremely unlikely that this would promote the mixed generational usage and the self-regulation that this model' would suggest and would more likely be dominated by older children wanting to 'hang-out' to the detriment of younger kids wanting to use the facilities, far from being inter-generational it is highly likely that after-dark usage would be exclusive and even perhaps be a daunting prospect to younger children, certainly of no interest to adult residents.

The Keynsham scheme, which forms a large part of Councillor Chapman's proposal is, of course, an unproven exemplar as it is as yet only a concept with no in-use experience at all, it is very seductive in terms of its claimed Green credentials and Smart capabilities but will they work as well as intended or will they be an embarrassing white-elephant? We fully support the use of technology, well-applied and tested, in creative solutions but would prefer to have some evidence as to its effectiveness in practice. Whilst the systems can be controlled and programmed to give a designed lighting output what we as a community are seeking to achieve is a social outcome which is entirely less predictable. We do not believe that lighting the Old Road play area will have the hoped for effect and that it is best left as it is - a safe environment for children to play in during daylight hours - which in the summer are fairly extensive and in the winter no amount of lighting would make the play area an attractive outdoor venue.

This issue looks to have been brought about by the behaviour of teenage, and older, youths who we as a community have a duty to support and protect, in their turn we would like them to grow up having respect for their community and their environment. If there

is a real problem we would wish to support any positive moves which would address it. We don't however see the lighting proposal as being a particularly convincing solution and feel that it has a number of possible drawbacks and a host of potentially unintended consequences.

From a purely personal point of view, but one which we feel many others would share, we are appalled by the prospect of having more, elevated, public lighting in Kirkbymoorside. The setting of the play area is delightful with its wooded hilly background, lighting poles and additional lights themselves would have a decidedly detrimental effect on that environment. Kirkbymoorside is a special community with a very particular and individual appeal, this proposal would not, in our view, solve the problems to which it is addressed but would merely detract from the environment in which we live.

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I should like to object strongly against the proposal for the installation of lighting in the Old Road play area on the grounds that it is **wholly unnecessary** and will have a **detrimental impact**.

#### **Wholly unnecessary**

- a) **There is not the demand.** Over the last four years we are able to view the play area very clearly from our lounge and the usage is exactly what one would expect and is not limited by the light. During winter there is minimal use either mid-week or at weekends and that which does occur tends to be mid-day and only limited, unsurprisingly, by the temperature/weather – not by darkness. In the summer, the facilities are well used, particularly at weekends, but dies off in the early evening well before the light draws in.
- b) **There is no anti-social behaviour.** As a retired headmaster of a large York comprehensive school, I agree with the police that Kirkbymoorside can be very proud by the behaviour of its young people. There have been a few minor incidents, usually linked with end of examinations or school years, but these have all been quite late at night – well after 9pm.

#### **Detrimental impact**

- a) **Ambience of the play area.** Kirkbymoorside is very fortunate to be sited in such an outstandingly beautiful area and the play area, in particular, benefits from its own topography and splendid immediately adjacent views. The erection of lights in the park would be very obtrusive and greatly reduce the 'country feel' of the space both in daylight and, even more so, when switched on.
- b) **Light pollution/urbanisation.** Kirkbymoorside, thanks to the work of many (the Brass Band, the myriad of volunteers from Kirkby in Bloom to the Library, the Council and its inhabitants) has an enviable rural atmospheric feel and erecting lights would go in the opposite direction.

In addition, although the monies are not huge, I would feel there are many areas where financial support would be much valued. The play area is clearly a major facility for our community and, should the Council feel able to enhance it, I would suggest firstly additional items for the children to actually play/climb on and, secondly, as there are a number of 'keep-fit' groups that meet regularly in the park then maybe the erection of 'fitness machines' that many parks around the country have installed to enhance the fitness of all ages could be considered.

Thank you for reading this and I would, of course, be willing to address the Town Council should you feel it necessary.

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Thank you for your letter re the proposal for the installation of lighting in Old Road play area. As owners of the above property with six windows overlooking the site, we are totally opposed to this proposition on a number of grounds.

Firstly, the additional lighting proposed will intrude on the residential amenity in the area causing stress and anxiety to those of us effected. The increased brightness due to the light source could cause glare and light trespass. Furthermore, this obtrusive artificial lighting will destroy the local character by introducing a suburban feel to the area.

In addition, the current low level of light pollution in the area of Old Road and its surrounds, means that it is perfect for stargazing. As amateur astronomers, this unique feature of our local area is of particular importance and something that is not replicated in many other areas in the UK (the North York Moors National Park is one of the best places in the country to see the stars). Why would Kirkbymoorside, which promotes itself as "The Gateway to the Moors", want to jeopardize its dark skies at night (by putting up artificial lights) when they are one of the 'special and intrinsic qualities of its rural landscape'? Perhaps the council could also clarify what it means by 'so these new lights are not intrusively bright'. What would be the level of brightness in terms of lumens/lux? How much light will spill beyond the boundary of the play area? What effect will the glare have on motorists using Old Road?

Secondly, the levels of noise pollution will undoubtedly increase. This is unacceptable to families with young children, the elderly and those of us that enjoy the peace, tranquillity and associated feelings of security that come with low levels of noise. It is not right to subject the large community around the play area to noise up to nine o'clock at night (especially in winter) when everyone has made and continues to make such an effort to preserve the peace and quiet of the neighbourhood.

Furthermore, the council proposes that the lights come on at dusk – just the time when local wildlife appears in the skies. Owls and bats are regular visitors in the sky over the park while creatures such as small mammals, moths, and birds (reptiles?) abound in the woods abutting the play area. It is scientifically proved, that artificial light causes a disorientation in many species and structural-related mortality as well as effecting the light-sensitive cycles of many species. Why would the council want to decrease the rich biodiversity of the area, an aspect that makes Kirkbymoorside a special place to live? Most councils, the length and breadth of the country, are trying to implement schemes that will attract wildlife. Why are we proposing to do something that will have a negative impact on local animal and plant populations? I presume the council will undertake/has undertaken a scientific study to ascertain which plant and animal species will be adversely affected by their proposed installing of lights and ensure that none are on the endangered list.

Has the council considered that in summer time, the busiest period in terms of play area usage, the lights will not be needed at all? At 9pm it is still light outside and therefore there is no need for additional lighting. Over the winter, the 'play' facilities were little used in the afternoon by any age group. With no lighting required in the summer, it could be that additional lighting is put in for only a handful of users. What has the council done to ascertain whether this lighting is really needed? Has the council undertaken a feasibility study to look at who the current users of the park are by age and season, what facilities they use and how many extra (bone fide) people would use the play area/facilities if the lights were installed? Surely this information is required before any outlay is made and the associated expenditure (maintenance, 'supervision systems'/policing, refuse collection...) agreed to. And just how is the council proposing to fund these ongoing costs?

Additionally, where is the evidence that anti-social behaviour in Kirkbymoorside is such a problem that the individuals concerned need to be encouraged to meet in one place? Furthermore, it is not clear how anti-social behaviour will decrease by encouraging perpetrators of such behaviour to

congregate in the play area. For the council's information, young people do use the play area at night, on occasions, to consume drinks and indulge in loud sometimes loutish behaviour. However, it is not consistent and when they do go into the park, the very darkness means they move on very quickly. And those of us in the area that have seen what these individuals can do in terms of noise, unruly behaviour, increased levels of litter, vandalism, urinating in the street and so on, do not want to see levels of such behaviour increase by encouraging more individuals, who display such behaviour, in the confines of the play area. Lighting up the play area could have the reverse effect that the council intends namely an increase in anti-social behaviour and a reduction in the attractiveness of the play area for other users – young children, walkers, runners, dog walkers – who probably make up the majority of the play areas current users.

In conclusion, we oppose this proposal on the grounds of the increased light pollution; the increased noise pollution; the future costs to the community in terms of supervision systems/policing, maintenance, increased levels of refuse; a possible increase in the amount of anti-social behaviour and the paucity of information regarding the actual numbers of people who will benefit from the proposal. We are concerned that Kirkbymoorside, marketed as the 'Gateway to the Moors' will look and feel like every other suburban area and lose all that makes it unique for those who live and visit it namely the beauty of its clear skies, its rich wildlife, the low levels of noise and light pollution, the sense of community and traditional values.

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Further to your letter of 25 March, how will lighting the playing field "reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour". Presumably the lights will only be used during the winter months of darkness when the weather is cold and wet. As I am writing this email at 7.05 pm there is no-one using the playing field and it is cold and windy. How many children will want to play during bad weather whether the lights are on or not. Surely they should be at home under these circumstances.

For the last 9 years that I have lived at [REDACTED] the only anti-social behaviour I have had to contend with is from teenage children using the playing field late at night who are very loud, shine laser lights through my windows, tip the bin over, smash glass bottles and play very loud music. When I ring the police they say they do not come out to noise disturbance. Perhaps putting the lights on after 9pm would be a better idea and deter this kind of behaviour.

Perhaps the money could be better spent on more equipment for the children who want to use the playing field for the purpose it was so generously given to the town for.

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You seem to be creating a solution to a problem that doesn't exist? In the summer, when it is warm and dry, there is no need for lighting as there is day light in the evenings. In the winter, when it may be cold, wet and icy, why would you want to provide lighting when the area will not be used, and if it was used may lead to injury?

I think you have far better things to spend public money on. (Parking on and the state of Church Street for one)

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Dear Members of Kirkbymoorside Town Council,

Further to your recent letter of 25-03-19 regarding the proposed erection lighting in the Old Road play area, I write on behalf of my wife and I.

We reside at [REDACTED] Kirkbymoorside which is adjacent to the play area and we strongly oppose the proposal, for the erection of lighting.

The play area is largely used during daylight hours, throughout Spring, Summer and Autumn, with Winter use restricted to the weekends during daylight hours. The only use of any of the play area during the hours of darkness are for a social gatherings by a very small number of young teenagers using the area for smoking, drinking and eating food, which then usually results in litter being left behind for others to clean up.

Lighting columns of any size would be unsightly and significantly diminish the view and feel for local residents and when lit would create a sportsfield atmosphere rather than a local play area. This would be extremely disturbing and obtrusive.

Therefore there is no valid reason in the Council spending substantial sums of money on a scheme which provides very limited benefit to the Town.

The recent introduction of new street lighting in the Howe End/Old Road area, with very high lumen levels has already created a significant feel of floodlighting, with the front of our house being lit up at night and light coming in to our house.

We do not need any more high levels of light in the area.

The town is starting to appear more like a City Centre rather than a rural market town.

There are far greater needs for money to be spent in the town, such as the control of traffic in residential areas.

Having now created the Ravenswick race track every morning between the hours of 7.00 -8.00am and 4.00 -5.00pm with traffic rushing through the streets, especially Howe End, Old Road and Swineherd Lane, the Town Council would be better spending money to control the heavy traffic in the town.

We trust we have made our objection to this idea, strongly.

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We have not been able to form a clear idea, from the information available, of what the proposed lights would look like. You mention "multi-wheeled" but surely they would not be moveable - a recipe for disaster. You also mention four meter poles, somewhat suggestive of a prison camp. And the lights are movement sensitive: does this mean they would be set off by wildlife either on the ground or in the air? And if they will go off automatically at 9.00pm, when it is still light in the summer, for what part of the year would they actually be useful?

Be all that as it may, we are opposed to the provision of lighting in the Play Area on the following seven grounds.

#### 1. Environmental concerns

Although lighting is proposed for a limited period only each day, it will still be detrimental to nocturnal wild life. There are owls in the area now, and bats, and no doubt other smaller creatures of the night whose natural patterns of activity are disrupted by artificial light. Yes, there is already street lighting, but that is not an argument for making matters worse. It was ironic that when the lighting proposal was first reported on the Town Blog, (January 22) it followed immediately on another item which announced "the first public screening in the UK of a thought provoking documentary highlighting the enormous impact of light pollution on the world's population, wildlife and the environment."

#### 2. Dark Skies

This same blog item also talked about the success of the National Park in obtaining "Dark Sky" status, and the pleasure to be had in star-gazing in the area by amateur astronomers, both local and visitors, and indeed to one of us [REDACTED]. This is a unique attraction in the area, but does require some attention to the amount of light the community gives off.

#### 3. Who wants lighting?

What evidence is there that the provision of lighting will encourage the safe use of the Play Area after dark? Is it not likely that it will simply drive the young people to other areas? There was recently some publicity about the installation of a basketball hoop, which young people were alleged to want, but we have only seen it used once: we don't of course sit looking out of the window all day, but would nonetheless have expected to see this equipment in greater use if the youngsters actually wanted it as much as we were told.

#### 4. Maintenance

A grant will cover purchase and installation; and there will be no running costs, but is this equipment really without cost? Does it not need to be maintained? Cleaned? Repaired? Replaced? Who will pay for this?

#### 5. There is currently almost no anti-social behaviour

One of us [REDACTED] has lived in this house for over 20 years, and the other [REDACTED] for 13, and in that time, we have seen the whole gamut of anti-social behaviour in and around the Play Area. Littering and overturning the bins are endemic. We have been awoken at night by drunks with limited vocabulary shouting abuse at each other, and disturbed during the day by 'boy racers' (the corner of Old Road and Howe End is an accident waiting to happen). We have observed damage and attempted damage to the play equipment. There was a (mercifully short-lived) vogue for loud radio music. We have had four or five windows broken, and others daubed (bizarrely) with ice cream. Windows and other parts of the house have been sprayed with sticky drink. There have been three incidents of theft from our garden, which ceased when we installed CCTV. Returning late one evening we found a young man urinating on our front door; urinating on cars parked outside the Play Area was a common occurrence at one time. We have had food, drink, litter and vomit deposited on the doorstep and whole range of things tossed into the garden, from cast-off clothing, a whole cake, a full can of Coke, and neatly packaged dog poo to a small white salt cellar in the shape of a sheep, presumably stolen from a local eating place. BUT not all these problems occur at once, but rather seem to come in waves, and curiously, at the moment, it has all stopped, except for littering and overturning the bins.

#### 6. If anti-social behaviour resumes, who will police it?

There is of course the possibility that some new or revived form of nocturnal fun will occur in the future, and be more visible if lit. If it does, who is going to report it? There is virtually no police presence in Kirkbymoorside. We see what goes on and, I'm ashamed to say, do nothing about it, amid concerns about reprisals. On one occasion we took photographs of a youth kicking down the fencing surrounding the tots' area, in which the culprit was identifiable, and decided not to show them to anyone. Not our finest hour, I admit, but you can only endure so many stones aimed at the windows, things tossed into the garden etc before opting for a quiet life.

## 7. Other uses for money

We do of course understand that the £5000 grant would be available for this project and no other, but we are constantly depressed by the apparent willingness of the Council to spend money on a tiny proportion of the community rather than on activities that would benefit all or at least many of us, for example street cleaning, dealing with dog fouling and littering, mending potholes, and helping the harassed residents of West End with their traffic problems.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

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THE SIGNS ADVISED THAT PARENTS SHOULD SUPERVISE  
YOUNG CHILDREN SO HOW CAN THEY BE 'BANNED' AS YOU CLAIM  
DOGS ON ROADS ARE ACCEPTABLE  
MY OPINION 'SCHOOL AGE' IS UP TO 18 yrs or AGO  
Supporting information to Old Road play area considerations  
[sic]

### SIGNS SHOULD NOT BE REMOVED

1. I request that immediate steps are taken to remove the misleading "advisory" sign from Old Road park and the skate park.

The confusing and unenforceable sign, presently advises young people to not use the park, (implies that non school age children/ dog walkers and parents should not use the park) and invites intergenerational distrust without a proven need.

I suggest we can do better, and in future I would like us to support fully informed advice and regulation.

RUBBISH!

Cllr Brampton has advised me that KTC has only 'play areas', not parks, I propose we equate parks and play area in our discussions, and avoid any confusion.

(See supporting document for more details about the importance of, and a mechanism for, considering positive community cohesion in local government decision making)

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"Those most affected by this ban often do not have easy alternative safe community places to be, so they now go up on the hills, into Manor Vale and into the churchyard, or just wander round town.

"We already have protections for the parks, we have other rules (drinking/smoking/anti-social behaviour), so why must we have this absolute ban?

*or RUBBISH NO 'ABSOLUTE BAN' IN FORCE A COMPLETE*  
*https://www.gazetteherald.co.uk/news/17407927.anger-over-kirkbymoorside-*  
*youth-park-ban/*

*OVER REACTION ON YOUR PART*

Regards  
Cllr Derek

I LIVE ADJACENT TO THE PARK & AM  
PRACTICALLY HAPPY FOR SOLAR LIGHTING (AS OUTLINED  
IN THE COVENANT LETTER) TO BE INSTALLED

Thank you.

We are happy with the proposal for street lighting in the park. In the summer it is not dark at 9pm, so it is not an issue. Plus we have street lights around, so not a 'dark' place.

We do have a concern & worry that encouraging people to use the park will increase the amount of litter & broken glass around; which makes the park unsafe for children.

Also loud music late at night would not be welcome.

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As parents of young children, we feel that Kirkbymoorside's children and younger generation are vital to our town and providing them with facilities is very important to us. However we are initially against the proposal to install lighting in the Old Road play area for the reasons outlined below.

We share Cllr Chapman's view that the great majority of Kirkby youth are good kids and deserve respect, and equally understand that they need a place to gather with their friends away from parents and elders. However, we wonder if there is a demand from Kirkby children for the play area to be lit after dark? If the lights are to be turned off at 9pm they would only be in operation between the months of September and April – months that are likely to be cold and wet. Would the young people rather not have an indoor facility to congregate?

Having observed the park over the week since the clocks changed, the numbers of people there between 6 and 7:30pm when there is reasonable light are in single figures – probably no more than are there during the hours of darkness. Do the young people want lighting or do they prefer the anonymity of a dark, relatively unlit space to hang out?

Your letter states that lighting would reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour – we would be interested to know how? We visit the park frequently with our young children and 90% of our visits involve litter picking and, sadly more frequently, picking up broken glass from smashed beer bottles. Our son cut his leg on a shard of glass on one of the skate board ramps and we know of one other child who was injured by broken glass at the toddler area. Our worry is that by lighting the park it will encourage more use and therefore more litter and anti social behaviour. If lighting were to be installed, would there also be monitoring of litter/anti social behaviour put in place?

You compare lighting proposed for the Old Road play area with that installed by Keynsham Town Council. Keynsham is an urban area with a population some four times that of Kirkbymoorside. Reading the supporting documents we note that there was a long campaign by the young people of Keynsham for lighting at the skate park – we are not aware of a similar campaign in Kirkbymoorside. Similarly, Keynsham park provides a route between housing areas and the town's railway station; lighting was deemed a way of increasing safety and reducing fear for those walking between the two. The Old Road play park does not have such a thoroughfare. Keynsham Town Council was also looking at installing CCTV alongside the lighting – would Kirkbymoorside Town Council be looking at doing the same?

You mention that the next step would be to undertake a broader consultation. We would urge that this involve a proactive consultation with the young people of Kirkbymoorside about whether lighting is what they really want when alternatives could be offered e.g. ask them what they would like to see funding used for rather than asking if they would like lighting.

If there is money to be spent on the play area or on young people in Kirkbymoorside, perhaps there is something else they would rather have – additional play equipment (our children would love to see a zip wire installed at the park for example) or an indoor facility/youth club perhaps. From current observations it would seem that the park isn't well-used in the lead up to the time the lights would be switched on; it would be a shame if money was spent on lighting if it is not wanted and if there is something else the majority of young people would rather have.

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