

Blofield Parish Council - Dark Skies Lighting Policy

Date adopted May 2024

Introduction

The Parish Council is the lighting authority for Blofield and Blofield Heath. The Council has a responsibility to review and comment on housing and industrial development and to consider the impact of lighting on the character and amenity value of the village and local areas, from which lighting may be visible after dark.

Norfolk County Council Categories

Norfolk County Council is the Highways Authority whose remit overlaps that of the Parish Council with regard to the need for, and most suitable type and design of, street lighting and visual display regarding directing traffic and signage and the safety of pedestrians and road users in general. The County Council has adopted four zones within which lighting should be considered:

- **E1.** Intrinsically dark areas, (e.g. National Parks, areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or other dark landscapes).
- **E2.** Low district brightness areas (e.g. rural or small village locations).
- **E3.** Medium district brightness areas (e.g. small towns, urban locations).
- **E4.** High district brightness areas (e.g. city and town centres with high levels of night-time activity).

The Council asserts that Blofield falls into zone E2, being a low district brightness area with a distinctly rural character from which the night sky can still be seen and enjoyed with relatively little hindrance from light intrusion and pollution.

The Blofield Neighbourhood Plan Policy Statement

The large majority of streets in the parish are not lit. With the exception of floodlights lit for short periods at Norwich United Football ground and early evening floodlights at the golf driving range, the only significant source of light pollution within the parish is the stretch of the former A47, the Yarmouth Road, which has street lighting. However, the villages experience increasingly intrusive night-time light glow from Norwich and its suburbs. There are still parts of the parish in which the Milky Way and many constellations of stars can be seen. It is intended that the Neighbourhood Plan will help sustain and preserve this experience by ensuring that light pollution and intrusion are properly considered in all future development. The Parish Council currently has a policy of no new street lighting.

The Council is supported in this respect by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at Paragraph 180C

‘By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.’

Conclusion

The Council wishes this essential aspect of the rural character and amenity value of the village to be maintained, and will regard applications for housing and industrial development in that light. The Council intends to continue to seek to reduce light pollution and therefore maintain a ‘no new street lighting policy’.