

# Dim view as club floodlights rejected

By Paul Dale

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A decision to refuse planning permission for floodlighting at the Birmingham birthplace of lawn tennis was last night branded a "disgrace".

Bob Holland, secretary of the Edgbaston Archery and Lawn Tennis Society, said he could not understand why the city council development control committee turned down a request to build 17 25ft-high lighting columns at the club's Westbourne Road headquarters.

Committee members unanimously rejected the application yesterday, without commenting, on the grounds that the lighting would be "incongruous" and spoil the views



The Botanical Gardens

across the Botanical Gardens and Westbourne Road Leisure Gardens.

According to Mr Holland, it was too early to say whether the club would appeal against the decision.

"I shall be having a meeting with my chairman to decide what to do but because the application has been turned down on visual grounds there may be nothing we can do," he said. "We could just be wasting our money."

Pointing out that it had taken the council 21 months to make a decision, Mr Holland said the committee's performance was a disgrace, adding: "I would have to question a report that tall floodlighting columns would appear 'incongruous... adversely affecting the rural outlook'.

"The lie of the land, height of the columns and the tree-lined nature of the site mean that there would be minimal impact above the skyline. This is not some sort of enormous motorway-style lighting project.

"I am at a complete loss to understand why it should have taken so long for the planners to arrive at a recommendation that our proposal would spoil the view."

A report by planning officers recommended turning down the request, pointing out that the Edgbaston conservation area had been strengthened in recent years.