



CDMHS Sports Fields Light Test

The Newport Mesa Unified School District is completing the Corona Del Mar High School Sports Field project. Our HOA was invited to attend a light test on January 20 between 5:30 and 8:00 pm. This report is to share our observations and conclusions. Representatives of the HOA to observe the test were director Tom Meng, former director Don Slaughter (BOD member who worked on EIR review and mitigation measures), and myself. Photos taken by the inspection team and homeowners are included in this report.

The Eastbluff Homeowners Community Association (EHOA) opposed all sports field lights throughout the 2-year design and EIR process of the Sports Field project. The school district finally adopted a compromise design called the "Two-Field Option" with lights on both fields. As part of the EIR review process, mitigation measures were agreed upon. They included:

- No varsity football games;
- Limited days and hours for the use of lights;
- Required shutoff times after practices and events;
- No Sunday use of field lights;
- Reduced seating;
- Elimination of visitor stands on the north side of the main field;
- No amplification sound system;
- No press box;
- No concession facility;
- Construction of the main field in the same location as the existing field to avoid a later conversion to a stadium;
- Installation of fencing to prevent entrance from the Eastbluff Dr. side of the sports field;
- Prohibition of field rental; and
- Various noise, traffic, and parking restrictions.

The lights for the new sports fields were also required to be designed to focus light downward to the fields and to include shields to reduce light flow outside the fields. The type of light to be installed was to be a softer white light to reduce glare from a distance across the field at night.

The question for which we sought an answer during the light test was whether the district conformed to the light design measures included in the EIR?

During the light test, we viewed the lights from both on the field and from homes in Eastbluff. It was our conclusion that the primary field lights and the second field lights did conform with the light design measures we expected.

We found the lighting was directed at the field as described in the EIR mitigation measures. While the lights do provide the required candlelight power on the fields for athletic activities, the "light direction" of the lights is downward and the lights include "shades" which are engineered to minimize light spill from the fields.



The main field lights are on 80-foot poles and the smaller middle field lights are on 70-foot poles. The lights of the main field did not cause any over-spill to the Eastbluff homes across Eastbluff Drive and over-spill was minimally visible when standing 100 to 150 yards away. The direction and shades on the lights are not adjustable (which is good) and the lights are designed to be dimmed for post-activity clean-up and vacating premises.

There are additional lights on lower poles which are off the field and are for pedestrian walkways and grandstand lighting. These lower poles and lights are not visible from Eastbluff homes but are visible from the Bluffs condos across from the field. Some of these lights are attached to utility poles for security lighting and remain on after the main field and secondary field lights are turned off. We recommended to district staff that they consider lower watt lights and shades for these smaller lights to reduce glare and motion detectors to reduce light glare visible by the Bluffs condos.

We heard from various Eastbluff residents on our A and B streets that the lights are very visible from their homes when looking across the sports fields. This problem was, of course, the main reason the HOA objected to lights for the new CDM fields. The project does indeed harm a number of our HOA members' homes and the views from their homes.

While this most unfortunate result was expected, we believe the installed lights emit less glare than the traditional sports field lights we have observed at Costa Mesa, University, El Toro, Santa Ana high schools, and the Costa Mesa dog park. The lights are in plain view but do not emit a completely offensive bright glare. From the sidewalk on Eastbluff Drive across from our A streets homes, the normal streetlights were brighter on the ground than any light being generated by the new sports field lights. It is most certainly a bad result for the impacted homeowners but, we believe, not as bad a result as it could have been.

The most significant problem with the lights which we heard about was for homes on the west sides of Aralia and Arbutus which face the field and on upper Aleppo.

The homeowners at 2339 Aralia, Tom and Kelly Foley, provided photos and a description of the glare from fields into the windows on the balcony of their home. When the lights were turned on, their evening view of sunset in the direction of the ocean was essentially wrecked. Kelly Foley also noted the lowest level set of lights on two of the main field's 80-foot light poles seem to radiate a higher level of glare towards the Eastbluff community. She asked if the light hoods on these poles can be adjusted more in the downward position similar to the same lights on the post near the main field stands which are pointed more in the downward position. This observation will be shared with NMUSD officials.

After the 8:00 pm test concluded, the district was not able to turn off all the lights. The lower-level lights for the bleachers and walkways would not turn off and stayed on all night. I contacted school officials, as did the Foley family. The staff explain the problem, was apologetic, and verified the lights were NOT supposed to be left on past the 15-minute allotted time. This mechanical problem has been repaired.

Our conclusion is the school district did install lights that were softer white light, variable wattage from 400 W to 1400 W, directed towards the field as agreed upon. The lights appear from ground-level



to not result in significant off-field light emission. There is visibility of the 80-foot main field light and, to a lesser degree, the 70-foot secondary field lights which negatively impact sunset views from Eastbluff homes and cause glares into windows facing the field. The problems experienced reported by the Foley family will be reported to the District to see if any adjustments can be made in the lights causing the most glare.

These sports field lights were included in the Final EIR and mitigation measures were proposed and accepted by the HOA Board as a compromise. The restrictions on days and hours of use and no varsity football games are significant mitigation measures (see exhibit A). Also, seats were reduced from proposed 2,000 + to maximum of 644 on main field and 200 on the secondary field. A permanent amplified sound system is prohibited, and primary sports field parking is on the school parking lot area behind the sports field near middle school building. Other restrictions include field use limited to school athletics and the school is not permitted to rent the field or track to outside groups, both nonprofit and commercial. Fencing prevents entrance from Eastbluff Drive and will discourage parking on residential streets.

The result is a significantly better sport field solution for Eastbluff homes than the football stadium concept first proposed.

On another subject, the CDMHS swim stadium light produce glare that is a significant long-standing problem for Eastbluff A street homes. These lights need to be replaced with lower wattage, downward directed, and shade protected lights. Also, the night-time limits when the lights must be turned off needs to be enforced.

The NMUSD Trustees accepted the negotiated settlement for the sports fields at their January 23, 2018 meeting. In that meeting, the Superintendent indicated the District would work with the City to develop a plan to replace the swimming pool lights at a 50%/50% cost sharing. The prior Newport Beach City Manager approved this concept.

I had a follow up conversation with District's Facilities Development, Planning and Design Manager, Ara Zareczny, and asked about status of replacing lights at the swim stadium. She reported no progress has been made and recommended we revisit this issue after the sports field project is completed. I have asked the NMUSD to contact City officials and start the discussion on how to proceed.

Our HOA will now take the following action which will be coordinated with Ara Zareczny.

1. The Eastbluff HOA Board will file a "Sports Field Light Test" report with the NMUSD. We will ask the District to look into the feedback received about glare on specific lights into Aralia street windows to see if any adjustment can be made in direction, shading, or wattage.
2. We requested that utility field, storage building, pool, and pathway lights be reduced in wattage, include shades to direct the light downward, and be activated only by a motion detector switch after 9 pm.



3. We reminded the District that our HOA needs to be included in any testing prior to implementation of any PA Announcement device noise testing. We need to know what is scheduled and when.
4. We wish to monitor initial CDM sport field events for the parking, traffic, and noise limitations required by EIR mitigation measures. What is scheduled and when?
5. The Board wishes to participate in discussions with City and School district officials concerning swim stadium light replacement commitment by the prior Superintendent when the Sports Field Final EIR was approved.

I have included photos from the night of the test to report results from various viewpoints.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

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Exhibit A USE OF ARTIFICIAL TURF FIELDS

MONDAY - THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
School in Session:	School in Session:		
7 am - 8 pm (Practice)	7 am - 8 pm (Practice) 7 am - 9 pm (Games)	9 am - 8 pm (Practice) 9 am - 9 pm (Games)	10 am - Dusk
School not in Session: 8 am - 8 pm (Practice)	School not in Session: 8 am - 8 pm (Practice) 8 am - 9 pm (Games)		
*Use of Lights: Practice - until 8 pm	Use of Lights: Practice - until 8 pm Games - until 9 pm	Use of Lights: Practice - until 8 pm Games - until 9 pm	NO USE OF LIGHTS

PLEASE NOTE:

No private outside use--only public agencies are allowed to use artificial turf fields within the approved times if they are available. After practice, the lights would be on at approximately 40% of full level for fifteen minutes for cleanup. After games the lights would be at approximately 40% of full level for one hour for clean-up, except for clean-up for Homecoming, Battle of the Bell, and Battle of the Bay.

Public Address systems are only to be used for games and special events, such as opening day for sports teams, track meets, or graduations. Public Address systems will be turned off after the final announcement asking everyone to leave the facility. The Superintendent may allow occasional use outside these hours. Requests must be made at least 60 days in advance.

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Exhibit B – Photos of Light Test Wednesday January 20, 2021



Ground level view of main track and field.



Ground level view of main track on viewing stand side of field.



Looking across main field in direction of score board.



Looking in direction of Eastbluff Drive from main field.

Eastbluff
Homeowners Community Association



Looking from main field towards Eastbluff homes



View of field From Buckeye St.



View of field From Buckeye St.

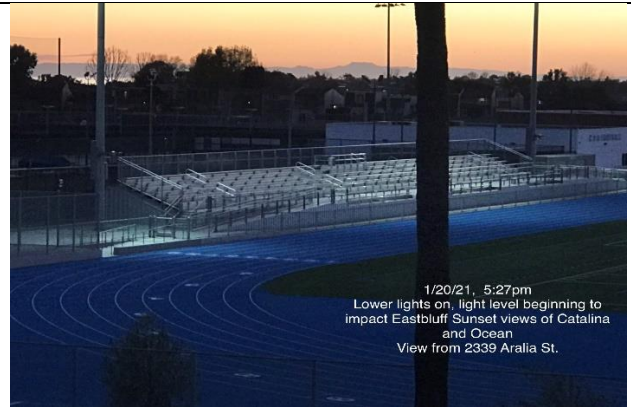


View from Aralia St across from sports field.



View from Aralia St across from sports field. The brightest light is a streetlight.

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Close up View from Aralia St of lower lights on seating and pathway at sunset.



View at ground level of Middle field 70-foot light poles.



View at ground level of pathway between fields and Middle field 70-foot light poles.

Eastbluff
Homeowners Community Association



View across field from Vista del Oro Street in Bluffs of utility buildings. Lights are on all night and result in significant glare for residents. We request the District review this lighting and any future utility building or pathway lighting to required lower light poles, low wattage light bulbs, to aim lights in downward direction, and to utilize motion detector switches for nighttime security lights.