

Dark Skies and Tranquillity Policy

1. Paragraph 185 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or wider area. This includes identifying and protecting tranquil areas and limiting the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
2. The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan Policy CE5 seeks to increase the areas of dark skies in the Cotswolds and requires proposals to avoid and minimise light pollution.
3. Darkness at night is one of the key characteristics of rural areas and it represents a major difference between what is rural and what is urban. Satellite maps of England's light pollution, released by CPRE in 2016, have shown that Cotswold District (which constitutes 44% of the Cotswolds AONB) is ranked 13th out of England's 326 districts in terms of the darkness of its night skies.
4. Light pollution can impact on wildlife, such as foraging bats. The three main types of light pollution are:
 - a. Sky glow - the orange glow we see around urban areas caused by a scattering of artificial light by dust particles and water droplets in the sky;
 - b. Glare - the uncomfortable brightness of a light source when viewed against a darker background;
 - c. Light trespass - light spilling beyond the boundary of the property on which a light is located.
5. There is no street lighting in the village. Adequate security lighting can be provided without compromising the principle of retaining dark skies.
6. Accordingly, Chedworth Parish wishes to retain the dark skies as much as possible so that any decisions it makes will take account of any light pollution issues raised and all development proposals with the potential for light pollution should demonstrate how the dark skies environment will be protected by the submission of appropriate analysis and documentation.
7. Tranquil areas such as Chedworth Parish are likely to be relatively undisturbed by noise from human sources that undermine the intrinsic character of the area. It may, for example, provide a sense of peace and quiet or a positive soundscape where natural sounds such as birdsong or flowing water are more prominent than background noise, e.g. from transport.
8. Tranquillity of the Parish should also be preserved and any Design and Access statement for planning applications should provide reassurances that new development will not result in increased noise levels once development is complete. Planning proposals which could impact on tranquillity will be resisted.