



London Borough of Southwark Technical Guidance Note for Environmental Amenity

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1.0 Introduction

This technical guidance note for environmental amenity provides details of expected standards in relation to environmental impacts on amenity.

This guidance relates to planning controls on:

- artificial light
- odours from commercial cooking
- drainage
- refuse

Separate technical guidance documents have been produced for noise, air quality and construction and where relevant these are referenced in this guidance.

This guidance is intended:

- To help ensure consistency in the approach to dealing with environmental amenity and planning in Southwark;
- To provide guidance on measures that can be implemented through the planning process to mitigate amenity impacts from common sources of environmental complaint;
- To provide guidance on necessary technical standards and the circumstances under which these will be required

2.0 Environmental Amenity Guidance and Standards

2.1 Light

All exterior lighting should be designed so as to prevent obtrusive light from affecting any sensitive receptor. A sensitive receptor is any receptor that may be adversely affected by light spill. This will include residential dwellings and gardens, schools, hospitals, parks and ecologically sensitive sites.

Details of how to design lighting installations to minimise obtrusive light can be found in the Institute of Lighting Engineers (ILE) *Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01:2011* available at:

<https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/obtrusive-light/>

Page 7 of the guidance contains an extensive list of further sources of guidance and information on best practice in relation to good lighting design.

Where developments may involve a significant impact from lighting, a lighting assessment should be submitted for consideration before the application is determined. This would usually be expected for major developments involving ten or more dwellings, larger commercial sites, or any development with significant lighting such as car parks or sports pitches.

Lighting assessments must include full details of the lighting installation and lighting spread plans with illuminance contours.

Facilities which contain floodlights (such as sports pitches), or which are expected to involve significant external illumination, may have restrictions placed by planning condition on the times of lighting operation.

The existing character of an area may influence to some extent what level of lighting it is considered appropriate to permit.

Illuminated signs should comply with ILE Guidance PLG05 available at:

<https://www.theilp.org.uk/resources/ilp-technical-reports/plg05-the-brightness-of-illuminated-advertisements/>

Artificial light can amount to a statutory nuisance under S.79 (1) (fb) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Failure to adhere to ILE guidance can in some cases result in enforcement action. Details of how to report a problem with nuisance lighting can be found here:

<http://www.southwark.gov.uk/noise-and-antisocial-behaviour/how-to-report-a-noise-problem>

Details of good practice in the lighting of construction and demolition sites can be found in the Southwark Council '*Technical Guidance for Demolition and Construction*' available here:

<http://beta.southwark.gov.uk/assets/attach/1477/Technical%20Guidance%20for%20Construction%20-%202016.pdf>

2.2 Odour and Kitchen Extraction Systems

Developments must be designed so that they do not create odours which cause nuisance or harm amenity. This is most commonly a consideration in applications for A3 restaurants and A5 hot food takeaways but would also be relevant to some manufacturing processes and waste treatment or transfer sites.

For restaurants and takeaways, full details of a suitable extraction system should be submitted for consideration as part of the planning application.

The necessary detail will include:

- Floor plans including ductwork locations, kitchen layout and surrounding uses
- Elevations showing ductwork and discharge point
- Section plans showing cooking arrangement and extraction hood
- Full technical specification of extraction system including fans, odour abatement and noise control
- System maintenance requirements

If submitted plans and technical details are absent from the application or are insufficiently detailed or clear then the Environmental Protection Team will recommend that the application is refused.

The extraction system should terminate unimpeded in a vertical direction at least 1m above the eaves level of the building. In cases where there are windows above this height, or other higher buildings in the locality, it may be necessary to terminate 1m above the ridge line of the highest building within 20m of the building housing the commercial kitchen. Low level extraction discharge is not accepted in Southwark.

All kitchen extraction systems should include suitable odour abatement plant such as carbon filters, electrostatic precipitation and UV/Ozone treatment in addition to readily cleanable course and fine filters. Further details are available in the DEFRA '*Guidance on the control of odour and noise from commercial kitchen exhaust systems*' available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-the-control-of-odour-and-noise-from-commercial-kitchen-exhaust>

In order to remain effective, all methods of odour abatement in kitchen extraction systems require regular cleaning, maintenance and replacement of components (such as UV lamps or carbon filter units). In some situations a condition may be applied to planning permission relating to maintenance of the extraction system and keeping of records to demonstrate compliance.

Kitchen extraction systems are also a source of noise and a common subject of noise complaint to the Council. For details on Southwark's noise standards, assessment and control please refer to the technical guidance for noise available on the Council's website.

The whole of Southwark is designated as a smoke control area under the Clean Air Act. Where commercial kitchens use solid fuel cooking methods, such as cooking over charcoal or using wood fired pizza ovens, it is important that cooking appliances and fuels comply with smoke control requirements. Further details are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/smoke-control-area-rules>

The majority of Southwark is within an Air Quality Management Area. Developments utilising solid fuel cooking methods would also need to produce an air quality impact assessment as part of the application. Full details of air quality requirements are available in the Technical Guidance for Air Quality available on the Council's website.

Where applications are made for other commercial sites which may be likely to harm amenity (for example some manufacturing or waste processes), an odour assessment including odour dispersion modelling should be submitted as part of the application. Applications for placing residents or other sensitive receptors near to existing such sites would also require assessment.

2.3 Commercial Drainage

Applications for relevant uses such as restaurants and takeaways should include details of drainage and means of protecting the drainage system.

All drainage systems serving commercial food premises should be fitted with a fat-trap of appropriate size to be determined by the maximum potential demand that will be created by the commercial kitchen.

Commercial kitchens should have appropriate waste contracts to deal with recycling and disposal of waste fats and oils.

Further advice and information on drainage is available on the Thames Water website at the following location:

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/help-and-advice/drains-and-sewers>

2.4 Refuse

Developments should include suitable and secure refuse storage areas and receptacles which will prevent impacts on amenity such as odours and attack by pests.

Full details of expected standards for new developments are available at:

<http://www.southwark.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling/waste-strategy-and-policy/waste-storage-in-new-residential-developments>

Details of standards for commercial waste storage and collection and are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/waste-duty-of-care-code-of-practice>

<https://www.gov.uk/managing-your-waste-an-overview/your-responsibilities>

Details of Southwark Council's waste strategy for the Borough are available at:

<http://www.southwark.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling/waste-strategy-and-policy/waste-strategy-for-southwark>