

# Draft Nelson Plan – Frequently asked questions

## Light

### **Why does the Council manage the use of artificial outdoor lighting?**

Artificial outdoor lighting enables night-time work, rural productive activities, recreation activities, sport, entertainment activities, transportation and public health and safety. The Council has an obligation under the Resource Management Act to maintain and enhance amenity values, with one of those values being protection from the adverse effects that excessive levels of lighting may have on adjoining residents.

Under the current Nelson Resource Management Plan (NRMP), the management of artificial lighting is dealt with within each zone chapter. The new National Planning Standards require resource management plans to include a separate chapter relating to the management of artificial outdoor lighting. Although the light standards are held within the Light chapter, different levels of light spill are permitted in different zones, depending on the sensitivity of the environment they represent. For example, the standards are stricter for Residential zones than they are in Industrial zones.

The Council is interested in your comments and feedback regarding whether the Council adequately manages the impact of light.

### **How is light measured?**

Light is measured in 'lux'. A digital lux light meter is used to measure lux, which simulates how the human eye perceives brightness and gives a 'lux' reading. The glare and lux spill from light are measured and assessed as per AS/NZ Standard 4282:2019.

### **Are there exemptions?**

The following activities that generate glare or light spill are exempt from the rules within the Light chapter:

- Street lights
- Navigation lights or aids
- Traffic signals or aids
- Reflected light or glare from structures, vehicles or vessels
- Glare from the lights of vehicles or vessels
- Temporary lighting for emergency response or public safety
- Light relating to signs is covered in the Signs chapter

### **What are the rules about artificial outdoor lighting trying to protect?**

The rules and standards provide for artificial outdoor lighting for night-time activities and public health and safety while managing its intensity, timing, duration and direction in a way that:

1. Avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects of light spill on the rest, relaxation or privacy of residents; and

2. Does not interfere with the safe operation of the transport network through the creation of glare.

**Does the Council manage light to help protect ‘dark night skies’?**

The Nelson-Tasman Land Development Manual sets the minimum standards for lighting on roads and footpaths. The Manual supports the dark night skies concept and enables new development to install lighting that minimises glare or light spill. In practice, this means more remote or rural developments may have minimal lighting, particularly in areas that are valued for their dark night skies.

Separately, Council has reduced the total urban light-spill from roads when it replaced its street lighting with LED lights during 2018-2020.

**My neighbours have very bright security lighting that is a nuisance to us. Is there anything in the Draft Nelson Plan that might address this?**

In the Residential zones, there is a limit on lux spill of ‘3 lux’ allowable as a permitted activity, when measured at the boundary of the receiving property. If the lighting you are experiencing measures above this level then, under the Draft Nelson Plan, this could be addressed as a compliance issue. Current NRMP rules contain the same standard within the existing Residential Zone rules. If you are concerned about this current situation, you should contact the Council to determine if there is an existing compliance issue.

**Links to the Draft Nelson Plan**

This ‘frequently asked questions’ sheet addresses a few of the key provisions in the Draft Nelson Plan. It should not be used as a definitive representation of content. To view actual Draft Nelson Plan content, please go to [shape.nelson.govt.nz](http://shape.nelson.govt.nz).