

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Application for a change of land use and construction of a hard surfaced tennis court and an inground swimming pool with pool hut at Adderbury Hill Barn, Milton Road, Adderbury, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX17 3HN.

On behalf of Eric Dier

June 2022

Mark Jarman
Planning for Tennis

Tel: 01608 811692
Email: jarmanm@aol.com
Web: www.planningfortennis.co.uk

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Application for a change of land use and construction of a hard surfaced tennis court and an inground swimming pool with pool hut at Adderbury Hill Barn, Milton Road, Adderbury, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX17 3HN.

Introduction

This Design and Access Statement provides information in support of an application to seek planning permission for the construction of a hard surfaced tennis court, inground swimming pool and pool hut at Adderbury Hill Barn, Milton Road, Adderbury, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX17 3HN. This statement covers the relevant information with respect to the issues required in the National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) adopted on 6th March 2014.

The Proposal

It is proposed to construct a hard surfaced tennis court, inground swimming pool and pool hut within an area that is currently designated as an equestrian manege. Adderbury Hill Barn is a large detached property situated in a countryside location about one mile to the west of the village of Adderbury in Oxfordshire. The owners of the property are not horse owners and therefore have no use for the equestrian manege area.

Development Area

The location of the proposed development within the grounds of Adderbury Hill Barn is shown in the attached location plan (see Figure 1). The introduction of the proposed tennis court, swimming pool and plant hut will take place entirely within the redundant manege area. It is proposed that all of the manege is subject to a formal change of land use (from equestrian to domestic) to enable the development of the tennis court, pool and pool hut to take place as shown in Figure 2. The manege dimensions are approximately 60m x 26m which therefore covers an area of 1560sqm.

Location Details

The manege is situated to the south of the house and outbuildings as shown in Figure 1. The distance between the manege and the house is 80 metres.

The redundant manege location benefits from being enclosed by two metre high timber panel fencing around the entire perimeter of the area. It is therefore proposed that all of the manege perimeter fencing should remain in place to screen the tennis court, pool and pool hut. Further planting is proposed in and around the area as explained below.

Design Issues

(i) Tennis Court

The boundary of the playing area will be enclosed by open mesh fencing which will be two metres high at each end and dropping down to just 0.9 metres high along both sides (see Figure 3). The tennis court fencing will therefore not exceed the height of the existing timber panels that currently enclose the manege area and which will remain in place.

The tennis court fencing will be based on a high specification post and chain link system with all steel work galvanised and painted black. The use of black will help to ensure that the limited areas of open mesh fencing around the court are inconspicuous against the backdrop of the black manege fencing and the soft landscaping proposed around the court.

The tennis court will have a 175mm limestone base with a further porous layer of macadam and a green painted surface. The green coloured surface will include the court lines marked in white (see Figure 4). The porous surface will allow the court to drain quickly to avoid any surface water problems.

(ii) The Swimming Pool

The proposed 13 x 5 metre pool will have a depth which ranges from 1.2 metres at the north end to 1.8 metres at south end (see Figure 5). The pool will incorporate a waterproof concrete shell with a ceramic mosaic tile finish, limestone surround paving and a safety cove. The pool will be heated by an air source heat pump. Further design details are provided in Figure 6.

(iii) Pool Hut

A small hut is proposed to house the pool plant equipment and also provide a changing facility. The pool hut dimensions will be 3.6m x 3.6m with 2m high flat roof (down to 1.9m). The bespoke design involves a timber frame and mud walls (with lime and straw added) on a brick base as shown in Figure 7a.

The mud walls of the pool hut will be finished with a lime wash (to match the house). A green oak timber frame will support a sedum wildflower flat roof as shown in Figure 7b.

Visual Impact

In terms of screening, the court, pool and pool hut will be fully screened by the existing timber panel fence around the perimeter of the manege area (see Figures 8 photos). The sensitively designed tennis court incorporating open mesh fencing at a maximum height of two metres will be screened by the existing two metre high manege fencing. Similarly the pool hut with a two metre high flat roof will also be screened by the manege fencing. Overall, the development would not be visible and have no impact on the local setting or longer distance views.

Proposed Soft Landscaping Scheme

There is some existing soft landscaping beyond the manege area in the form of native hedgerow but it is proposed that this should be enhanced by additional planting both within and outside the manege fencing. A comprehensive soft landscaping scheme is set out in Figure 9.

Beyond the manege fencing, the scheme includes a small orchard area on the north side along with Field Maple, Bird Cherry, Holly and Hawthorn and a new native species hedgerow alongside the manege fence panels. Within the area enclosed by the manege fencing, the scheme includes a new Yew hedgerow alongside the tennis court as well as tree planting throughout the area.

The proposed tree and hedgerow plants will be planted in the first planting season following the commencement of the development.

Biodiversity Implications

The introduction of the proposed soft landscaping scheme, as set out in Figure 9, will provide a substantial increase in the numbers of trees and hedgerow plants in and around the development area.

Overall, the introduction of the proposed soft landscaping scheme will help to ensure that the development of the proposed tennis court, pool and pool hut will deliver a substantial biodiversity benefit.

Policy Framework

The planning policy framework that provides the basis for determining this application is set out in a variety of local and national planning documents. At the national level, the main reference is the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF was first published in 2012 when it realigned the framework against which planning applications are determined by introducing a general presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The more recent revised versions of the NPPF (July 2018, February 2019 and July 2021) reaffirm the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

In the latest version of the NPPF (July 2021) Paragraph 10 states *“So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development** (paragraph 11).”*

In looking at the detail of the Framework, there are a number of statements within the document which are of direct relevance to the determination of this application:

(i) Paragraph 92 emphasises the importance of the planning system promoting healthy communities and includes reference to the benefits of sports facilities. The proposed development of a new tennis court and swimming pool would provide a sports facility which would help to enhance the health and well being of the users.

(ii) Paragraph 98 also refers to the need to provide opportunities for sport and physical activity. The proposed development would provide a sports facility and thus accord with this policy objective.

(iii) Paragraph 130 sets out the need for high quality and appropriate design that is sympathetic to the surrounding built environment and landscape setting. The proposed development would incorporate high quality design that would minimise the visual impact and help the tennis court, swimming pool and pool hut blend in with the surroundings.

(iv) Paragraph 154 explains how new development should be planned for in ways that can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. One of the benefits that the tennis court and swimming pool would bring would be to reduce the need for the applicant's family to travel away from the property for leisure purposes. This reduction in car travel would help to reduce CO2 emissions.

Local Policies

The National Planning Policy Framework states that the policies in the Framework are material considerations that should be taken in to account but that the local planning authority can also continue to use local plan policies in so far as they are consistent with the NPPF. The policies which apply in this case are ESD15 (Built and Historic Environment) from the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031 and saved policies C28 (Layout, Design and Appearance) and C30 (Design control) from the Council's Cherwell Local Plan 1996.

It is considered that the proposed tennis court, swimming pool and pool hut comply with the above policies in that there has been careful attention to the siting and design with the proposals including green coloured court surfacing and reduced height fencing and a pool hut with a flat roof and inconspicuous design. The sensitively designed development would also be screened by existing wood panel fencing around the development area as well as a comprehensive soft landscaping scheme (which will provide a biodiversity benefit).

The development would not have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the local landscape and no visual impact on the wider countryside setting. In summary therefore, the proposed development complies with the requirements of the national and local policy framework.

Principle of domestic tennis courts in the countryside

In the period since the Government introduced the NPPF there is very significant evidence to show that domestic tennis courts and swimming pools have been allowed in situations where these have replaced redundant manege areas. A list of examples of tennis courts and swimming pools which have been allowed in similar circumstances is provided in Figure 10.

Conclusions

This statement has shown that the proposed tennis court, swimming pool and pool hut will be located within a redundant manege that is already enclosed by two metre high wood panel fencing along the perimeter of the area. The tennis court, swimming pool and pool hut have been designed to ensure that they will be screened by the existing manege fencing. In addition a comprehensive soft landscaping scheme is proposed to provide further screening and a biodiversity benefit. The sensitive design will ensure that the development is inconspicuous and that there is no material adverse impact on the local setting or the wider landscape.

The national and local planning policy framework provides support for recreational and sporting development in countryside areas as long as the development is designed sensitively and does not harm the local setting or character of the open countryside. Recent precedent since the introduction of the NPPF confirms that domestic tennis courts and swimming pools are an acceptable form of development within the countryside.

The Government's National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

It is clear that the proposed development will bring benefits and have no material adverse impacts and is consistent with the policy framework. On this basis, it is respectfully requested this application is approved.

Mark Jarman
Planning for Tennis
June 2022