

<b>APPLICATION NO.</b>	<a href="#">P15/V1479/FUL</a>
<b>APPLICATION TYPE</b>	FULL APPLICATION
<b>REGISTERED</b>	30.6.2015
<b>PARISH</b>	WANTAGE
<b>WARD MEMBER(S)</b>	Charlotte Dickson St John Dickson
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Wantage Lawn Tennis Club
<b>SITE</b>	Wantage Lawn Tennis Club, Manor Road, Wantage, OX12 8DW
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	Proposed four new tennis courts and pavillion, together with associated court fencing, floodlighting and external works. Proposed extension to existing overspill car park area. (Renewal of previous approval: P12/V0354)
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	None
<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	439897/187313
<b>OFFICER</b>	Sarah Green

---

## SUMMARY

- The application is referred to planning committee as the land owner is the Vale of White Horse District Council.
- The application is for 4 new tennis courts and pavilion together with flood lighting and additional car parking. The 2 existing public tennis courts would also be refurbished. The application is identical to a scheme permitted in 2012.
- The main issues are:
  - Impact on character – this is considered acceptable
  - Impact on residential neighbours – it is not considered they would be materially harmed
  - Parking – this is considered acceptable
- The application is recommended for approval

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site forms part of the Memorial Recreation Ground on Manor Road, Wantage which is located towards the southern end of the town. A location plan is **attached** at Appendix 1. The site is outside the North Wessex Downs AONB.
- 1.2 The recreation ground includes two existing tennis courts, a bowling club and a children's play area. The remaining park is largely grass land with trees, amounting to around seven hectares in area.
- 1.3 The application is referred to planning committee as the land is owned by the Vale of White Horse District Council.

## 2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Planning permission was granted in 2012 for the refurbishment of the existing public tennis courts on the site and the construction of four additional courts for Wantage Tennis Club to enable them to relocate from their current site in Foliat Drive. It also include flood lighting for the new courts and a new pavilion and additional car and cycle parking. The existing public courts would remain unlit. That permission however expired in May 2015.

This application therefore seeks a fresh permission for the same development again. Wantage Tennis Club has since secured the redevelopment of their current site and are now in position to move.

Extracts from the application plans are **attached** at Appendix 2.

**3.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS**

3.1 Below is a summary of the comments received to the applications. Full copies can be viewed at the council’s website.

Wantage Town Council	“No objection subject to the advice given previously for application P12/V0354 that the existing 2 courts plus 1 new court will be a play and pay court available to the general public”
Countryside Officer(South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse)	Unlikely to be any significant ecological impacts
Leisure Department (Vale of White Horse DC)	Support. Meet proposed deficit and providing enhanced tennis facilities for Wantage residents and the surrounding areas
Drainage Engineer (Vale of White Horse District Council)	No objections subject to fully detailed sustainable drainage scheme condition
Health and Housing - Environmental Protection Team	No comments to make
Highways Liaison Officer (Oxfordshire County Council)	No objections subject to appropriate conditions
Neighbour Object (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing courts at leisure centre and park seldom used; handing public land to members of a private tennis club quite obtuse</li> <li>• No objection to tennis club moving to new site but strongly oppose the location; memorial recreation ground remains only nearby available green space for some residents; loss of putting green; intrusion of floodlighting on Manor Road residents; extra car spaces will make little difference to inadequate parking area available; large area of level ground across other side of Manor Road; will destroy most of the only suitable toboggan run</li> <li>• No objection to build tennis courts but believe should be sited towards the back of the recreation ground; believe careful thought should be taken about the area of ground which will be lost to the tennis club</li> <li>• Siteing of private tennis courts in open space that has donated for the use of all is against the spirit of this donation. Park should be preserved for growing population of Wantage.</li> </ul>

**4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 [P12/V0354](#) - Approved (24/05/2012)

Proposed 4 new tennis courts and pavilion, together with associated court fencing, floodlighting and external works. Proposed extension to existing overspill car park area.

**5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE**

**5.1** Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011 policies;

DC1 - Design

DC5 - Access

DC6 - Landscaping

DC9 - The Impact of Development on Neighbouring Uses

L8 - Provision of small-scale Local Leisure Facilities

Emerging Local Plan 2031 Part 1 policies

CP1 – presumption in favour of sustainable development

CP37 – Design and local distinctiveness

CP44 – Landscape

Design Guide 2015 SPD

National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Policy Guidance

**6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

**6.1** The main issues to consider in determining this application are;

1. the principle of the development in this location;
2. impact on the character of the area;
3. impact on nearby residential properties; and
4. parking considerations.

**6.2** Principle

Policy L8 allows for small scale sport and recreation facilities within settlements provided they meet a local need and are not harmful to the character of the area or ecology. The application site and adjoining land are currently an area of leisure and recreation and include two existing public tennis courts, a bowls club and a children's play area in addition to around seven hectares of informal public open space. The tennis courts, which are proposed adjacent to the existing courts, would constitute an appropriate use in this recreational area. Concern has been expressed over the fact that the courts would result in the loss of public recreation land for the provision of a private club. However, although the tennis club is a members club, membership is open to all sectors of the community and visitors are welcome all year round. In addition, the existing courts will be refurbished and managed by the tennis club which will also provide a pay and play facility for the public. The courts will result in the loss of only a small proportion of this park but will provide an enhanced facility for the tennis club and better quality public courts. The existing tennis club site in Wantage is inadequate for the club's growing membership and there is therefore a local need for better tennis facilities. The council's leisure team support the proposal. The principle of the development in this location, therefore, is considered acceptable.

**6.3** Character

Policy DC1 seeks that developments to not adversely harm the character of the area. The proposed courts would be located adjacent to the existing courts in an area of the park away from the roadside boundary and where the land is flattest. This helps to ensure that the extent of the ground works required to level the site are kept to a minimum and therefore reduces the impact on the character and appearance of the area. It is accepted that the fencing around tennis courts has to be a certain height, however the fence is proposed with a green finish and would be set against the slope of the park and behind the existing courts and, therefore, would not appear overly

prominent. The proposed club house is modest in size and low in profile with a green living roof which again will be set against the hill when viewed from the road.

6.4 The application includes floodlighting for the new courts. However, the lighting columns are six metres high, therefore much lower than those required for football. In addition, the lighting design includes box lights which direct the light onto the courts and so minimise glare. Given the location of the courts well away from the roadside boundary and neighbouring properties and the appropriate design of the floodlights, the impact on the character and appearance of the area is not considered to be harmful. The previous permission required tree protection measures to be submitted to ensure that the existing trees within the ground are not harmed during the construction phase. This same condition is suggested again.

6.5 Impact on residential amenity

Policy DC9 seeks to protect the residential amenity of neighbours from adverse impacts. The location of the new tennis courts is set away from neighbouring properties. The closest new court would be over 65m away from the residential properties along Manor Road. Therefore it is not considered that any noise or general activity arising from the use of the courts would not be harmful to residential amenity. The previous permission had conditions requiring the details of the floodlights, including the number of lights on each column and the intensity of illumination to be agreed and a condition requiring them to be switched off between 10pm and 7am Mondays to Saturdays and between 9.30pm and 8am Sundays and Bank Holidays. These same conditions are suggested again for this permission.

6.6 Parking

Policy DC5 seeks developments to not cause harm to highway safety. The application proposes an additional 23 parking spaces constructed in a grass grid to maintain the green appearance of the site. These would be located adjacent to the existing overflow parking area. The highway officer has no objected to the scheme and recommends that this proposal is subject to the same conditions as the previous approved one. This application also proposes parking for 8 cycles, which is double that proposed in the 2012 application.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 The proposal would provide a new facility for Wantage Tennis Club and would ensure the refurbishment and future management of the existing public tennis courts. The proposal would not appear prominent or out of place within this area which is already utilised for recreational purposes. The site is considered to be set far enough away from the road and neighbouring properties so as not to have a harmful impact on residential amenity in terms of noise, disturbance or floodlighting. Parking provision and access to the site are considered acceptable. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

8.1 **To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Commencement of development – three years.**
2. **List of the approved drawings.**
3. **Car parking in accordance with plan.**
4. **Landscaping scheme (submission).**
5. **Landscaping scheme (implementation).**
6. **Tree protection.**
7. **Materials for club house (samples).**
8. **Drainage details (surface and foul).**

9. Details of floodlights Installation.
10. Floodlights switched off 10pm-7am Monday - Saturday and 9.30pm-8am Sunday and Bank Holidays.
11. Details of cycle parking to be submitted.
12. Perimeter fencing around courts to be dark green colour.

**Contact Officer:** Sarah Green

**Contact No:** 01235 540546

**Email:** sarah.green@southandvale.gov.uk