

REPORT OF THE CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER – 4 DECEMBER 2023

APPLICATION NO:
P/2023 /0495

LOCATION:
NORTH WALES REGIONAL TENNIS
CENTRE PLAS COCH ROAD
WREXHAM
LL11 2BW

DATE RECEIVED:
12/07/2023

COMMUNITY:
Rhosddu

CASE OFFICER:
TF

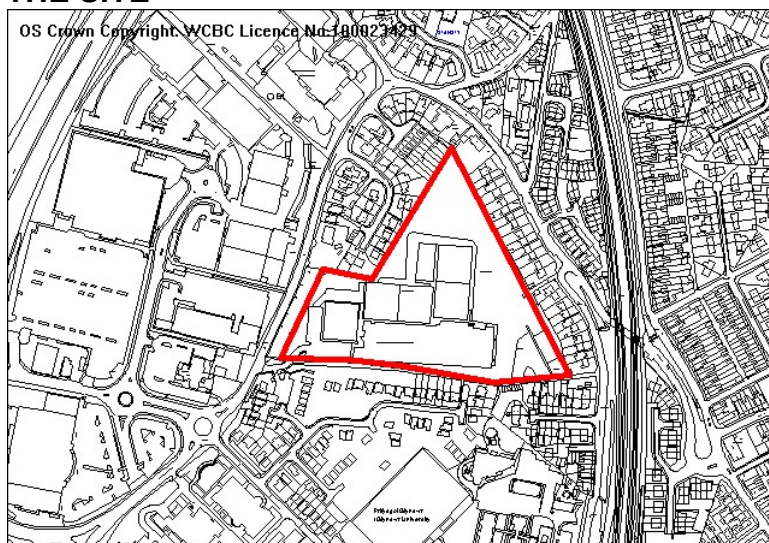
WARD:
Grosvenor

DESCRIPTION:
DARPARU TRI CHWRT TENNIS
PADEL WEDI EU GORCHUDDIO
RHOI WYNEB NEWYDD I'R CYRTIAU
TENNIS PRESENNOL,
LLIFOLEUADAU LED, MYNEDFA AR
YR OCHR, ADDASIADAU I'R TO A'R
CANOPI, NEWID FFENESTRI A
DRYSAU, PANELI SOLAR A
GORSAFOEDD PARCIO TRYDAN. /
PROVISION OF THREE COVERED
PADEL TENNIS COURTS
RESURFACING OF EXISTING
TENNIS COURTS, LED
FLOODLIGHTS, SIDE
ENTRANCE, ROOF ALTERATIONS
AND CANOPY, REPLACEMENT
WINDOWS AND DOORS, SOLAR
PANELS AND ELECTRIC PARKING
STATIONS

AGENT NAME:
LAWRAY ARCHITECTS
MR CRAIG BAINES

APPLICANT(S) NAME:
MR JON AINGE
WREXHAM TENNIS CENTRE

THE SITE



PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the provision of 3 covered padel tennis courts in place of two existing tennis courts, the resurfacing of existing tennis courts, the erection of LED floodlights, a canopy over the main entrance, alterations to existing windows and doors, together with the installation of solar panels and electric parking stations.

Permission was also initially sought for two additional tennis courts. However, amended plans have subsequently been submitted omitting them from the application.

HISTORY

No relevant planning history.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Within a defined the settlement limit in both the Unitary Development Plan and draft Local Development Plan.

UDP policies GPD1 and T8 are relevant.

Draft LDP policies DM1 and CF3 are relevant.

CONSULTATIONS

Community Council

Objects, expressing the following concerns:

- A reduction in the amount of open space available to the public;
- LED lighting could cause a nuisance and would be incompatible with Wrexham's policy on artificial lighting and the night sky.

Local Member

Notified. No comments received.

Highway Officer

Raises no objections. Advises that the development proposed is not consider likely to generate a significant increase in traffic. Recommends a Car Parking Management Plan be implemented, financial contributions secured by Planning Obligation to improve the tactile dropped kerb crossing points across the main access, measures be taken to prevent lighting spill from the proposed flood lights on the highway and the implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan.

Public Protection Officer

Raises no objection subject to conditions to require an external lighting scheme and to limit noise levels as well as informative notes regarding construction impacts.

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Welsh Water

Raises no objection subject to a condition being imposed to require that no surface water and/or land drainage connects directly or indirectly with the public sewerage network

Natural Resources Wales

Raises no objection subject to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal being listed as an approved document.

Advises that based on the information provided, the proposed development does not have the potential to increase the amount of phosphates entering the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC catchment.

Contaminated Land Officer

No comments to make.

Neighbours

The owners/occupiers of 24 nearby properties notified 14.9.2023 and again subsequently following the submission of amended plans.

4 objections received to the plans initially submitted raising the following concerns:

- Loss of green space;
- Light pollution;
- Noise pollution;
- EV charging points potentially increase the need for additional spaces;
- Tennis courts are usually empty, no need for an extension;
- Archaeological interest;
- The land beneath the new courts is key to the water supply for the area; and

Anti-social behaviour.

The owners/occupiers of the same properties were notified on 21/11/2023 about a change to the description of the development to include specific reference to the proposed padel tennis courts.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of Development: There is no specific policy in the UDP regarding development within existing sports facilities.

The Wrexham Tennis Centre is identified as a Regional Sports Stadia by draft LDP policy CF3. The policy supports development that would enhance existing facilities.

The development would improve the existing tennis courts and diversify the offer of the site by the provision of 3 padel tennis courts. The principle of development is therefore acceptable and in line with the objectives of draft LDP policy CF3.

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Visual Impact: The alterations to the building would not materially alter its appearance and would not detract from the appearance of the site or the wider locality.

The conversion of 2 tennis courts to 3 covered padel tennis courts would be the most significant alteration to the site. The courts would be covered by a roof supported by columns and enclosed by 3m high glass screen walls. They would be set back approximately 40m from the highway and largely screened from view by the existing mature trees along Plas Coch Road. Nevertheless, limited views of the enclosures would be possible from the site entrance onto Plas Coch Road. However they would be viewed in the context of the existing tennis centre building and car park. Moreover, they would replace existing tennis courts enclosed by mesh fences approximately 3m in height. The design and appearance of the enclosures would be in keeping with the character of the site as a sports venue and would not detract from the wider locality.

Images 1 and 2 below show the appearance of the proposed padel tennis enclosure.



Image 1

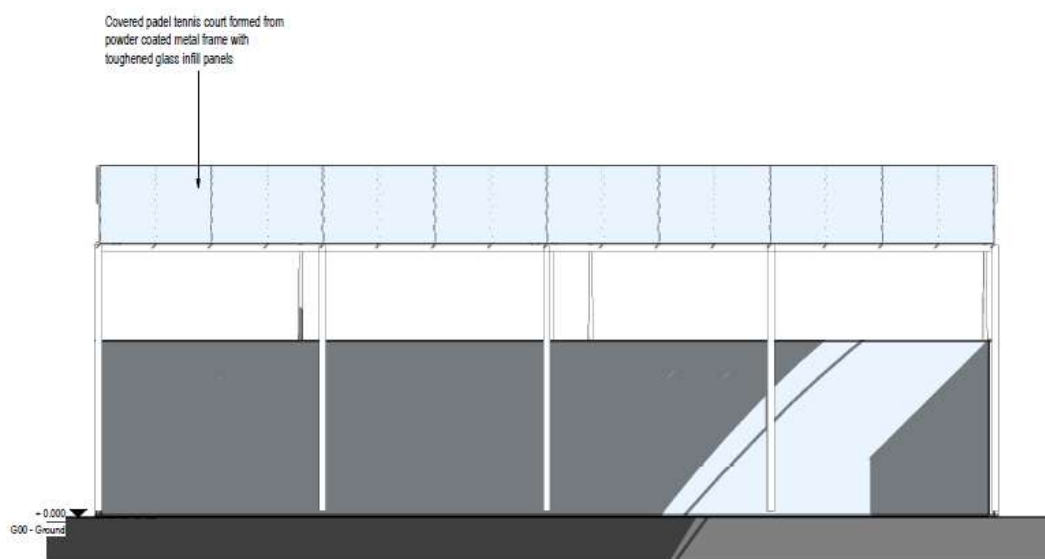


Image 2

The flood lighting columns would not, by themselves, be unduly prominent and would be similar in appearance to existing lighting columns within the site.

Having regard to the above, the development would accord with policy GDP1 of the UDP and DM1 of the draft LDP.

Residential Amenity: The alterations to the existing building would not result in any additional impacts to the living conditions of nearby occupiers.

The padel tennis enclosures would be approximately 25m from the garden boundaries of the nearest residential properties. This is sufficient degree of separation to ensure they would not have an overbearing impact on the occupiers of those properties.

The development is unlikely result in any material increase in noise given the extensive outdoor areas already used as tennis courts.

A plan showing the impact of the proposed flood lighting has been submitted. The Council's Public Protection Officer has been re-consulted and comments are awaited.

Subject to Public Protection Officer confirming no objections to the proposed external illumination, the development would comply with UDP policy GDP1 and draft LDP policy DM1.

Open space: The Tennis Centre is surrounded by public open space. Whilst the application initially proposed the use of part of this area to provide two additional tennis courts, these have now been omitted from the scheme. The development would therefore not result in the loss of open space.

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Highway safety: The introduction of 2 E.V. car charging stations would not result in the loss of any parking provision.

The conversion of 2 tennis courts to 3 padel tennis courts is unlikely to significantly increase the number of people on site at any one time. It is therefore considered this change would not lead to a material increase in demand for parking, traffic to/from the site or individuals walking to/from the site. A condition to require a Parking Management Plan and contributions towards off-site footway improvements are therefore not considered necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

Having regard to the above, the development would not give rise to highway safety concerns. In such terms it accords with UDP policies GDP1 and T8 and draft LDP policy DM1.

Ecology: The application has been accompanied by an Ecological Appraisal. The development would take place on areas that are already hard surfaced and therefore of limited ecological value.

The provision of the padel tennis courts would require the removal of an existing evergreen hedge. The hedge is of limited ecological value.

Having regard to the above, the development avoids impacts upon species and habitats and therefore accords with the Step-Wise approach outlined in Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales 11. In accordance with Chapter 6 of PPW11, the development would also need to deliver a net benefit to biodiversity. There is sufficient space within the site to undertake tree and hedgerow planting that would fulfil this requirement. This could be secured by a suitably worded condition.

Other matters: Concerns relating to anti-social behaviour relate to the behaviour of individuals using the site. This is a matter for the operators of the site to address or the police. The proposed development is unlikely to increase the risk of such behaviour in the area.

Should there be any utilities beneath the site, the applicants will need to ensure they liaise with the provider to ensure construction works do not give rise to damage. However this is not a material planning consideration.

Whilst noting the objections received, no evidence has been submitted to demonstrate the site is of archaeological interest or that the development would pose a risk to any archaeological interests.

The UDP and draft LDP do not have any policies that specifically prevent the installation of flood lights. The Planning for Dark Night Sky Supplementary Planning Guidance Note aims to protect the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty from light pollution. However it does advise against flood lights or other lighting installations in the City of Wrexham. Moreover, the application site is in an area that is already

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illuminated at night by street lights and security lighting. The use of the proposed flood lights would not harm the character of the area at night.

CONCLUSION

That the Chief Officer Economy and Planning be given delegated authority to grant planning permission subject to the Council's Public Protection Officer confirming no objection to the additional external illumination and to finalise the form and content of appropriately worded conditions to secure the following:

- Standard 5 year time limit for commencement of development;
 - The development be carried out in accordance with the submitted plans and Preliminary Ecology Appraisal; and
 - A scheme of planting and net benefit to biodiversity.
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