

ADDRESSING THE CONCERNS OVER TENNIS COURTS UP ON THE STANFORD RD
SLOPE: SHARING CRICKET/RUGBY CLUB FACILITIES.

“Building tennis courts will alter the contours of the land such that views of the Folly will be impacted”

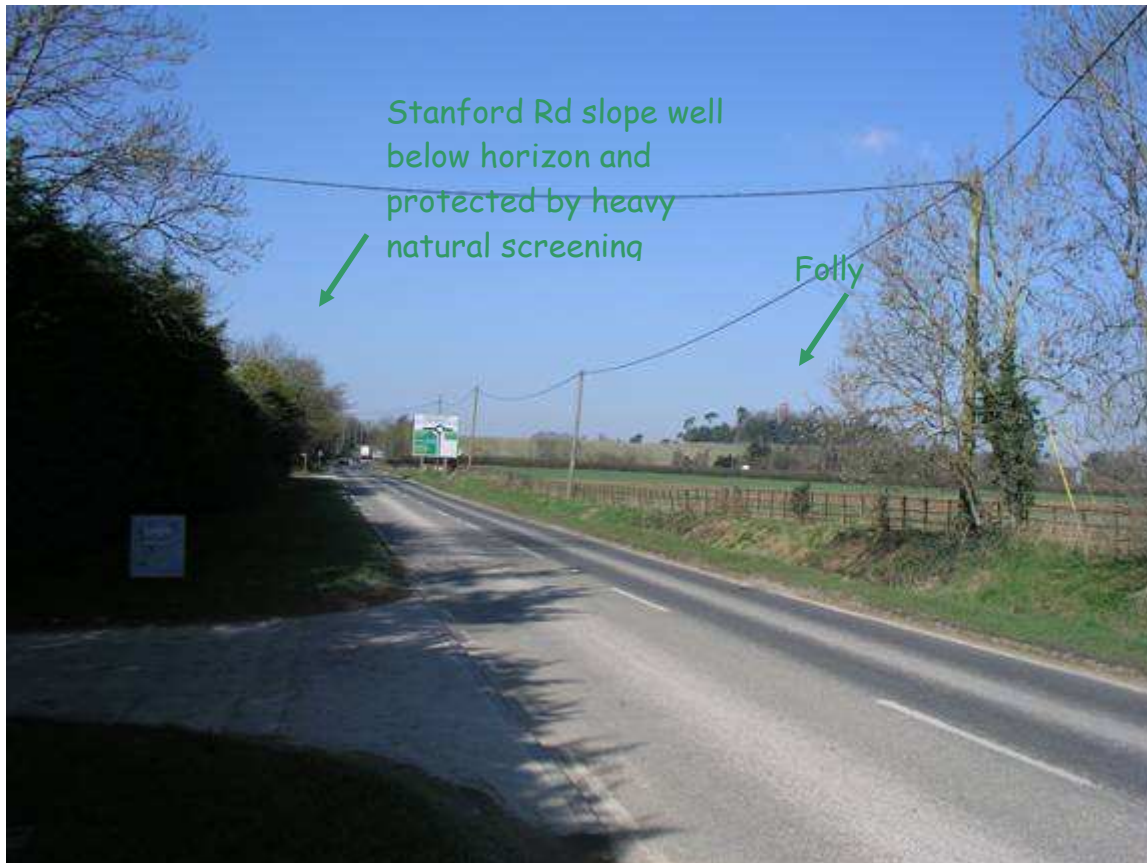
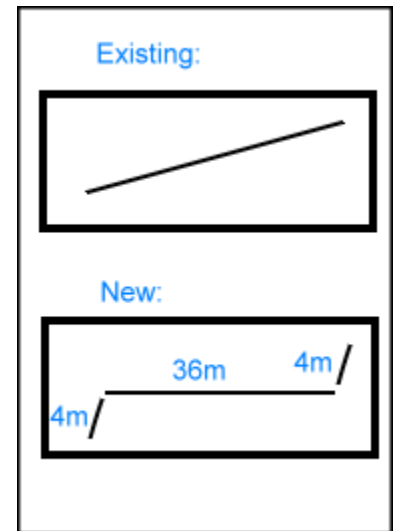
INTRODUCTION

Building four courts on the slope between the new cricket pitch and the Stanford Rd would involve cut & fill.

This cut & fill profile would be clearly visible *from the side* (from the South-East – the direction of the A417 to Wantage).

However – because of the heavy natural screening and the way that the land drops away to the SE, it is not possible to see the courts (or the slope) from this direction.

View of Folly from A417 (Side profile of proposed courts):



Further down A417 (halfway to Stanford in the Vale):



Therefore - it is the views *from the front* (South through to South-West) - where the Stanford Rd slope and the Folly are both in the same line of sight – and these are the views that could be impacted by building tennis courts on this site.

From the front – the new cut & fill contouring will be very difficult (if not impossible) to make out, and with green-painted courts, green fencing, and green landscaping, I believe that the tennis courts on this location would have minimal impact on the views of the Folly.

VIEW OF FOLLY FROM FARINGDON AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING AREA TO SOUTH WEST (where proposed courts & Folly are in the same line of sight)



HILL over to Fernham blocks SW views until you reach Downs

Land drops away. Stanford Rd is no longer visible until Shellingford-Fernham Rd

Land drops away

MAP SHOWING PHOTO POINTS FROM WHERE FOLLY IS VISIBLE.

Yellow dots represent points from where the Folly is visible (through gaps in the houses for example). Red dots represent those positions from where the proposed tennis courts would be visible – and where there was a photo taken. Red hatching represents the AREAS from where the Stanford Rd slope is at present mostly visible. The slope is not visible from unhatched areas – apart from the few isolated red dots shown.



Points to note:

- Apart from the rugby/cricket pitch itself, the nearest point from which the tennis courts would be visible is approx 700m away (near the roundabout) .
- The A420 bypass is raised, and the land drops down on both sides. Therefore the slope is not visible immediately south/south-east of the A420.
- The largest hatched area is opposite the Esso garage – where the new housing is planned. Assuming similar housing density & visibility points as Marines Drive, Town End Road, and New Bloors Estate: the Folly and slope will then only be visible by looking through gaps in the housing. Therefore that red hatched area largely disappears.
- The Folly is also visible from certain points in Berners Way and Lansdown rd, but no photos were taken because the Stanford Rd slope is entirely hidden by Tuckers Rd & Nursery View.
- The best view of the slope is from Wicklesham drive.

P1: Bottom of Leamington Drive.



P2: By CostCutters.



P3: Top of Tucker Park. Slope is just visible from one corner of Tuckers Park.



P4: Top of Marines Drive



P5: Halfway down Marines Drive. Folly can be seen through the odd gap in the houses.



P6: Butts Rd



P7: A420 – 400m from roundabout (coming from Swindon). Slope comes into view:



P8: 300m from roundabout. Still in view - before it disappears behind hedge:



P9: Approaching Roundabout. Back in view. New clubhouse now visible:



P10: 50 Metres Beyond Roundabout. Slope still in view. Clubhouse behind trees:



P11: 100 Metres beyond Roundabout. Slope now also hidden from view:



P12: New Clubhouse through hedge:



P13: End of Park Rd :



P14: Park Rd – heading into town - just before Esso Garage:



P15: Entrance to new Bloors Home Estate:



P16: Volunteer Way. Folly can be seen through a few gaps:



P17: Heading towards Folly Park:



P18: Bottom of Folly Park:



P19: Above the Folly Park Sculptures:



P20: Walking towards Stanford Rd. New Clubhouse roof coming in to view. Courts would not yet be visible:



P21: Coming up over the ridge of the new rugby pitch. Slope now clearly visible :



P22: Bottom of Sands Hill:



P23: Further up Sands Hill. Slope coming in to view:



P24: Top of Sands Hill. Slope now visible:



P25: College playing fields:



P26: Back of Sports Centre. Slope just visible from this corner of playing fields:



P27: Bottom of Marlborough Gardens:



P28: Along Park Rd:



P29: Further along Park Rd – heading into town:



P30: Bromsgrove:



P31: Southampton St:



P32: Further down Southampton St:



P33: Into new Bloors Home estate:



P34: Folly visible through the odd gap:



P35: Top of new Estate:



P36: Beginning of Wicklesham Farm driveway:



P37: Wicklesham Farm Drive. New Clubhouse & slope now clearly visible:



P38: Approaching Wicklesham Farm before Slope disappears behind trees:



P39: From Wicklesham Farm to dog kennels (A417) (Folly just visible!):



P40: Further along same path. Tall person needed to take photo:



P41: Continuing along same path – before path begins to dip:



P42: Path from Little Coxwell to Wicklesham; approx 300m before Wicklesham. Distance to Stanford Rd slope is approx 1500m:



P43: Continuing along same path, towards Wicklesham, looking across quarry. Slope & new clubhouse now visible a certain points along the path:



P44: More typical edge of same path. Photo taken by tall (6'2") person:



VIEWS FROM FURTHER AWAY

The Folly tower is a landmark that can be seen from the SE & S from as far away as the White Horse. Yellow dots below represent gaps in the hedge from where you can see the Folly. However, because of the natural cover (trees, hedges) , it is not possible to see the Slope below the Stanford rd that faces the SW .

Theoretically, it *should* be possible to see the Stanford Rd & Slope from the Downs (for example White Horse Hill) – but not with the naked eye.



P45: Just leaving Shellingford – heading south West towards Fernham. Folly visible through gaps in hedge. Stanford Rd slope is 1.6 miles away:



P46: Slightly further along same rd:



P47: The About to disappear behind hill one mile before Fernham:



P48: The Challow-Baulking Rd. Folly is 3.6 miles away:



P49: Further along same rd:



P50: Further along :



P51: From White Horse Hill:



IN SUMMARY

The Folly Tower and Folly Hill are clearly very special. The woods and the slopes leading up to the Folly are also an important part of this iconic symbol of Faringdon - that can be seen from miles around. It is vital that we protect not only the Tower & the Hill, but also the views of the Tower & Hill – both for Faringdon residents and for anyone enjoying the countryside around Faringdon.

For this reason –the slope between the new cricket pitch and the Stanford Rd can only be used if it can be demonstrated clearly that this use would not detrimentally impact the views of the Folly.

Building tennis courts on a slope involves cut & fill. The stepped profile *would* be visible from the side – or from relatively close by. The cut & fill would be much less visible from the front – particularly through the use of sympathetic use of landscaping and planting. Views from the side in this case are not possible mainly because of natural screens & the lie of the land. Views from the front are also controlled by the natural contours of the landscape (and the existence of the new rugby/cricket pitches). The slope in question can only be seen if you are a minimum of 700 metres away (unless you are actually on the cricket/rugby pitch itself) . From this distance it would already be quite difficult to see the tennis courts cut into the slope.

VIEWS FROM FARINGDON ITSELF: The impact would be minimal for views from Faringdon itself. There are just a few spots from where the Stanford Rd slope can be seen (eg top corner of Tuckers Park) .

VIEWS FROM THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE NEARBY:

- Cars travelling north-east along the A420 will be able to see the Stanford Rd slope through gaps in the hedge as they approach the roundabout at the end of Park rd – and briefly as they leave the roundabout again.
- The private drive to Wicklesham Farm is higher up and has the best view of the Stanford Rd slope .
- The area between Sand Hill and the A420 rises up naturally, and has a reasonably good view of the slope at the moment. However, there is housing planned for this land, in which case it is likely that views of the slope will be restricted mainly to gaps between houses – meaning that the Folly and the slope are unlikely to be in the same field of vision (as is also the case with other housing developments in Faringdon).
- There is a bridle path that runs from the Fernham Rd to Wicklesham Farm and then on to the Stanford Rd. There is one short stretch along this path (where you are looking through fencing and over the Quarry) from where the Stanford Rd slope is visible. At this point, the walker would be approximately one mile away from the proposed tennis courts.

In the above four cases, the viewer would be looking at the slope directly face on, and at distances ranging from 700m minimum up to 1500m. With sympathetic landscaping and planting, this would make it very difficult for the viewer to see that the slope has been altered in any way.

**PUTTING THE TENNIS CLUB ON THE SAME SITE AS THE CRICKET/RUGBY CLUBS:
BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Faringdon Tennis Club needs a new site. Every site has issues & impacts. The Stanford Rd site would clearly be better if it were flatter – and the potential visual impact needs to be carefully assessed and minimised . However, there are very significant advantages in putting the tennis club on this site:

- Shared facilities: primarily Club house, & car park – saving costs and benefiting the viability of ongoing activities such as shared Creche, Café, Bar, cleaning, & social events.
- Extensive synergies in coaching & training: particularly for younger people
- Shared security & safety
- Single centre for sporting excellence, with a high profile and a strong identity – a Centre that the town and the district can be proud of
- Inter-club activities – leading to a stronger community and more sport for all
- Good use of a piece of land that would otherwise need separate District Council maintenance

There *will* be a visual impact. However, the natural contours and screens that are part of the surrounding landscape will mean that the Stanford Rd slope will only be visible from a minimum distance of 700m, and can only be viewed head-on, which means that the cut & fill can be well camouflaged. On balance, I believe that using this site brings very significant benefits for the town and district, and will not significantly compromise the views of the Folly.