Again, this pool was going to be in an old barn with a limestone floor, this time on the island of Jersey.

But from our perspective, the most interesting feature of this project was the client, Michael. Before coming to us, he had spoken to local architects, but had not been satisfied. Basically, he was a retired gentleman who was keen to follow the whole project through in immense detail from beginning to end. He had made his money from power showers, and was very technically-minded.

We had numerous meetings with him. Sometimes he flew to us, sometimes we flew to him. We did 30 or 40 detailed drawings for him, so he could get a good idea of costs. We set up a regime with him which involved using a local quantity surveyor, a local builder and a local pool company, with Pool Architecture managing the overall project.

One of the things Michael was extremely particular about was the material to be used in his pool. He insisted on having Bath limestone for the columns surrounding his pool, for example, and he wanted to choose the stone himself. He flew up from Jersey specifically for this purpose. We went to the quarry together. He looked at the cliff-face, studied the stone, inspected the saw cutting the stone, and talked to the managers and stonemasons about every detail.
We had carefully drawn the columns with what is known as entasis – that is to say thicker in the middle. It’s a technique invented by the Greeks many millennia ago, and it ensures that pillars look absolutely as they should to the human eye – but it’s actually an optical illusion. When Michael suddenly produced his own vernier gauge to measure the thickness of the columns to the nearest millimetre, the stonemasons got a very clear message that they were expected to do their job properly.

We were also designing a bespoke water feature for Michael’s pool, which comprised a single piece of 10 mm thick bullet-proof frosted glass with faux block lines etched into it. Again, we went together to the blast furnace at Slough to talk about how to get it made and shipped over. The component delivering water down the face of the glass was American, so we had to source that, too. “On yet another occasion, I met Michael in Leicester to go to his favourite ironmonger to pick all the door closures and hinges for the pool building”, says Mark Saxton.

“Basically, Michael’s approach was that he wanted to savour the experience of building the pool as much as he would later enjoy swimming in it. I think he succeeded”.