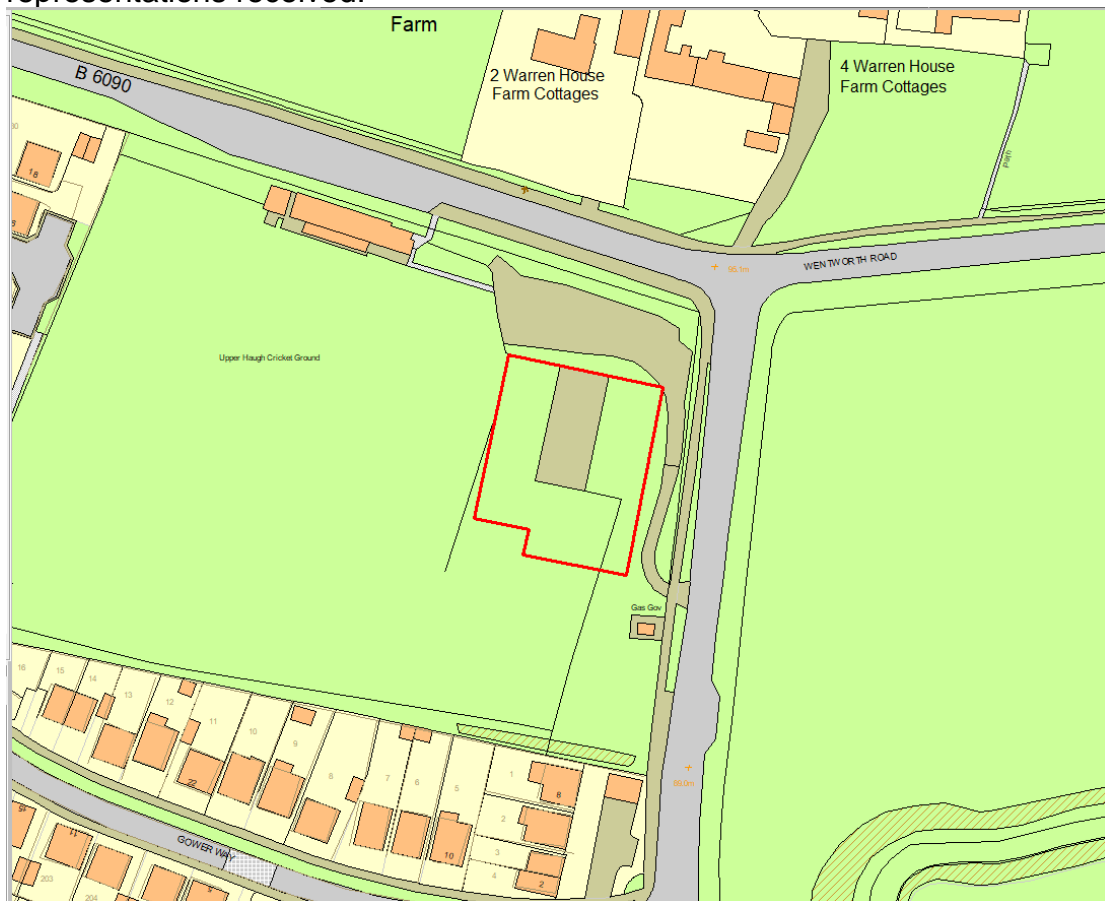


**REPORT TO THE PLANNING BOARD  
TO BE HELD ON THE 25<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

**The following applications are submitted for your consideration. It is recommended that decisions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 be recorded as indicated.**

<b>Application Number</b>	<b>RB2025/1576</b> <a href="https://rotherham.planportal.co.uk/?id=RB2025/1576">https://rotherham.planportal.co.uk/?id=RB2025/1576</a>
<b>Proposal and Location</b>	Installation of 3no. enclosed Padel Courts with acoustic mitigation and floodlighting along with relocation of existing cricket nets at Upper Haugh Cricket Club, Harding Avenue, Rawmarsh. S62 7SL.
<b>Recommendation</b>	Refusal

This application is being presented to Planning Board due to the number of representations received.



**Site Description & Location**

The application site is allocated Greenspace in the Local Plan and forms part of the Upper Haugh Cricket Club.

The site relates to land in the north eastern area of the site, close to the junction with Harding Avenue and Wentworth Road and is positioned away from the main residential areas to the south and west. The specific site area

lies to the east of the cricket pitch and is currently occupied by cricket practice nets which are on a north-south orientation.

The wider cricket club has a total site area of 1.77 hectares. The site area related to this development, including the vehicular access and car parking area comprises an area of land approximately 0.28 hectares in size. The site is broadly level, though the topographical surveys show a gentle slope from north to south and west to east.

Directly along the western and southern boundaries is a residential development known as The Wickets which was constructed in the early 2010s. The southern boundary of the site along Gower Way have neighbouring properties with rear gardens backing onto the cricket club and are at a lower level.

## **Background**

The site is a long established cricket club and has substantial planning history from the 1990s and 2000s.

The most recent application was in 2008 for a new cricket pavilion along the northern elevation facing and fencing (RB2008/1793).

## **Proposal**

The application seeks full planning permission for a new Padel Court development on the site of the existing cricket nets. New cricket nets (2 lane, enclosed) will be constructed immediately to the west of the courts to accommodate the replacement nets.

The development was initially proposed for 4no. courts, but during the determination of this application has now been reduced to 3no. courts which are located adjacent to each other. The courts will be sited on a broadly east-west axis and will be perpendicular to Harding Avenue. As part of the development some sound attenuation barriers are proposed to try and reduce sound levels at the southern end of the site.

This can be summarised as follows:

- The site area of the proposed padel courts is on an area of existing cricket nets.
- Creation of a high-quality cricket coaching and practice facility. The current cricket nets have been in situ for 20+ years and despite ongoing repair work are no longer fit for purpose. The new facility will be constructed to a high specification and will ensure a safe and pleasant environment for players of all abilities to develop their skills and interest in the game.
- A total of 3no. individual courts are proposed within the padel court structure.
- The courts are each 10m by 20m in size

- The enclosed court structure in total will be approximately 36m by 23m in size.
- The padel court structure will be enclosed with a combination of toughened glass and weld mesh rebound wall and fence panels supported of steel posts fixed to a concrete foundation with a synthetic turf play surface.
- The external court structure will be see through and will be a maximum height of 4m. The courts do not have a roof.
- New lighting columns are proposed to illuminate the development.
- It is proposed to operate the development between the hours of 0800-2100 throughout the week.

### Planning Statement

The application has been submitted by a Planning Supporting Statement which can be summarised below:

- The location of these proposed 3 No. Padel Tennis Courts and ancillary enclosures adjacent the existing Cricket pitch, has been chosen to minimise any disturbance to the nearby existing dwellings, which are surrounding this existing Cricket Club site both from any noise and the use of floodlights.
- Cricket Club, by the nature of the sport, is only being used from between April to September and on Saturdays and Sundays with the occasional Wednesday afternoon.
- We believe that the inclusion of this additional Padel Tennis Sport - which could be open all year round, will benefit not only this Cricket Club but also the surrounding areas.
- The use of these 20m x 10m wide Padel Tennis Courts will not only be for the members of this existing Cricket Club but also will be open to non- members as well.
- Padel is an inclusive sport for players of any ability, offering both physical and social benefits. It is a sport that anyone can enjoy, regardless of ability. Its smaller court size, simple rules, and focus on strategy make it highly accessible.
- The proposed 3 No. Padel Courts will be located on land adjacent the existing Cricket pitch. The topography of this adjacent land is level and therefore these new courts will complement the existing Cricket Club. As the Padel Tennis site was previously an unused area of land but bordered by an existing shrubbed area. This existing shrubbed area will be enhanced with new planting of trees and shrubs to compliment this area.
- Lawn and Tennis Association state the noise levels associated with Padel Court play are not considered to have any relevant impact on the environment outside the parameters of 30m perimeter maximum.
- The proposed opening hours are to be between 8am-9pm (0800-2100 hours) throughout the week.

- The car park and driveway is existing and already hard surfaced, though the entrance is intended to be increased in width, along with the driveway in order to allow for improved vehicular access.

#### More general

- A further income stream would assist in providing additional income to improve the long term viability of the cricket club.

In addition a supporting letter from the Lawn Tennis Association has been submitted and this can be summarised below:

- Padel is a highly accessible sport with a high UK demand.
- These proposals in this location are strongly supported by the LTA.
- The facility can be accommodated in this location without detriment to the surrounding green space or interfere with the cricket club pitch.

RMBC's Sports Development Officer has also confirmed that there is an unmet need for Padel Tennis Courts both within the Rotherham borough as well as the wider Yorkshire region.

#### Noise

A noise assessment was submitted with the original application (January 2026). Following initial objections from the Councils Environmental Health Unit on noise to neighbouring residential properties, a further additional noise assessment/supporting details were submitted (May 2026).

The latest Noise Report (S&D Garritt Acoustic Design, received 19<sup>th</sup> May 2026) can be summarised below:

The applicant proposes three enclosed padel courts (reduced from four) at Upper Haugh Cricket Club. Rotherham Council requested a full noise impact assessment due to the proximity of nearby homes.

This revised report includes:

- Updated modelling for three courts.
- A 4 m high L-shaped acoustic barrier with sound-absorbing lining.
- No operation after 21:00.
- Updated background noise measurements.
- Additional comparator guidance (dog kennels, clay shooting, etc.).

#### **Background Sound Levels**

Measurements (Dec 2025) show:

- Dominant noise source: road traffic
- Typical background levels (LA90):
- **Daytime:** 48–52 dB
- **Evening:** 43–46 dB

These values form the baseline for comparison.

## **Predicted Noise at Nearest Homes (with barrier installed)**

Time-Averaged Levels (LAeq,1hr)

- South / West receptors: 30–33 dB
  - North (Wentworth Road): 39–40 dB
- All are well below the commonly referenced 50 dB LAeq outdoor amenity threshold.

Peak Levels (LAm<sub>ax</sub>,F)

- South / West: 38–48 dB
  - North: 52–57 dB
- All are below the 60 dB target, and mostly below the desirable 55 dB threshold.

## **Comparison Against Guidance**

The report uses a range of relevant UK and international guidance (BS 4142, IEMA, BS 8233, Sport England, WHO, draft dog-kennel ProPG, clay shooting guidance).

## **Padel Noise vs Background**

Padel noise is:

- 10–19 dB BELOW background at southern/western homes
  - 6–13 dB BELOW background at northern homes
- This meets the ideal target (padel noise not exceeding background).
- 4.2 Change in Ambient Sound (IEMA)  
Increase in total ambient noise:
- 0.0–0.4 dB
- IEMA defines <3 dB as “not significant”.
- 4.3 Absolute Levels  
All predicted levels are:
- 10–20 dB below the 50 dB LAeq garden guideline
  - Below peak limits (55–60 dB)
- Character Corrections  
Even if a +6 dB penalty (for impulsiveness) is applied:
- Padel noise still remains at or below background.

## **Car Park Noise**

Assumes worst-case:

- All players arrive/leave separately
  - Overlapping arrivals/departures
- Predicted car-park noise:
- 17–36 dB LAeq depending on receptor
  - Always lower than padel noise
  - Included in cumulative assessments

## **Mitigation Measures**

Required measures

- 4 m high acoustic barrier to the south and west of Court 3
- Sound-absorbing lining on the court-facing side
- Operation limited to 07:00–21:00
- Three courts only

Optional (not required for compliance)

- Additional northern barrier
- Would reduce noise by 7–8 dB for some sources
- Not necessary to meet guidance
- Could be added if the council requests further mitigation

### **Overall Conclusion of the Report**

The revised 3-court proposal:

- Meets all identified noise targets
- Produces low noise impact
- Is not expected to cause adverse effects or loss of amenity
- Shows improved performance compared with the original 4-court scheme (2–6 dB reductions at most receptors)
- Noise impact is acceptable, subject to installation of the recommended southern acoustic barrier.

### **Additional Noise Report – Applicant**

The applicant has commissioned a further Noise Statement (ref Memo Upper Haugh Padel Courts, 12 June 2026, Jonathan Rigg, RP Acoustics Ltd) from a new consultant which can be summarised below:

#### General

- Overall the consultant indicates argues that Environmental Health's objections misunderstand padel noise, ignore key research, and overstate potential disturbance. The consultant concludes that only a southern acoustic barrier is justified, a western barrier is unnecessary, and a northern barrier is not required due to dominant road noise from Wentworth Road.
- The consultant quotes directly from the Institute of Acoustics indicating that:
- Padel is 6 dB louder than tennis at the net, but the same noise level as tennis at the baseline.
- Noise escapes far more from the sides than the glass ends (12 dB difference).
- Noise propagation is strongly affected by court structure.
- *“The padel court propagates noise at a higher level through the side... by a factor of 12 dB.”*

#### Noise Barrier Requirements

- South barrier: Needed, but 2.75 m is sufficient, not 4 m.
- West barrier: No justification.
- North barrier: Could provide screening, but not required because Wentworth Road traffic dominates.

### Comments on EHO's earlier consultation responses

- The consultant goes on to indicate that Environmental Health's concerns are overstated.
- Residents already experience high ambient noise from Wentworth Road.
- People seeking quiet would naturally sit near their house, not at the far end of their garden.
- Padel noise is not comparable to gunfire, motorcycles, or barking dogs.

### Measurements

- Using two Class 1 sound level meters, the measured padel bat strikes were as follows:
- <60 dB LAFMax at Gower Way
- <60 dB LAFMax at Wentworth Road
- Padel strikes were faintly audible or inaudible
- Cricket bat strikes were louder

### Conclusions

- The consultant disagreed with the conclusions of the EHO.
- The consultant quoted an Environmental Health Officer from another Council around an unrelated padel court development which was completed in October 2024. This indicated that no noise complaints regarding use of the padel courts has been received to date.

### **Additional Noise Report – Residents**

In addition a further Noise Report (ref MW Acoustic Consultants, ANIA0621v1.1, received 17<sup>th</sup> June 2026) was commissioned by residents and this has been summarised as follows:

### Overall Conclusion

- The independent assessment finds that the proposed three outdoor padel courts at Upper Haugh Cricket Club would create significant adverse noise impacts for nearby residents—particularly those on Gower Way and Wentworth Road. The report concludes that noise levels would be high enough to:
- Disrupt use of gardens for relaxation
- Force residents to keep windows and French doors closed, preventing natural ventilation
- Result in a material reduction in quality of life

Because of this, the report recommends refusal of the planning application due to unacceptable noise impacts. This conclusion is explicitly stated: *“impact noise levels at the facade of nearby properties is significant... this would prevent the residents from opening these doors for ventilation... The proposal was recommended for refusal due to noise issues.”*

### Padel Noise Characteristics

The research shows that padel generates frequent, sharp impulse noises, including:

- Ball hitting the bat
- Ball striking the glass walls
- Ball striking the metal mesh

These impacts are louder and more intrusive than tennis. The report notes: *“In padel, impact noise of ball on; bat, glass boundary and metal grille tend to be the most intrusive impulse noises.”*

#### Key acoustic findings

- At 5m from the court, padel is ~6 dB louder than tennis (≈50% louder).
- Noise from the sides of the court is significantly higher due to reflections from the glass walls.
- Boundary and grille strikes create sudden, high-energy noise peaks (LAMAX).
- Club-level players generate frequent impacts—one every 4.5 seconds on average.
- 

#### Impact on Local Residents

##### Predicted Noise Levels

Using the consultant’s padel noise model, predicted noise levels at nearby homes show:

- Significant adverse effects on gardens and outdoor amenity
- Disruption to indoor environments, especially where French doors face the courts
- Residents would need to keep windows closed to avoid intrusive noise

This aligns with the NPPF’s “Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level” (SOAEL), where noise causes material changes in behaviour, such as avoiding outdoor spaces or keeping windows shut.

The report states: *“...this would prevent the residents from opening these doors for ventilation due to noise, which is unacceptable.”*

#### Policy & Guidance Context

The assessment references:

- NPPF & NPPG – requiring avoidance of significant adverse noise effects
- BS8233:2014 – recommending ≤50–55 dB LAeq for gardens
- Sports England & LTA guidance – requiring careful siting of noisy sports facilities
- IEMA guidelines – emphasising cumulative and character-based noise assessment

The report concludes that the predicted noise levels exceed acceptable thresholds for residential amenity.

#### Proposed Mitigation

A potential noise barrier is shown in the updated site plan, but the report does not indicate that mitigation would sufficiently reduce impacts to acceptable levels.

The consultant concludes that:

- Noise from the proposed padel courts would be intrusive, frequent, and disruptive.

- The development would cause significant adverse effects on nearby residents.
- The planning application should be refused on noise grounds.

### **Development Plan Allocation and Policy**

The Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on the 10th September 2014 and forms part of Rotherham's Local Plan together with the Sites and Policies Document which was adopted by the Council on the 27th June 2018.

The application site is allocated as Greenspace in the Local Plan. For the purposes of determining this application the following policies are considered to be of relevance:

CS3 'Location of New Development'  
 CS19 'Green Infrastructure'  
 CS20 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity'  
 CS21 'Landscapes'  
 CS28 'Sustainable Design'  
 CS29 'Community and Social Facilities'

SP26 'Sustainable Transport for Development'  
 SP32 'Green Infrastructure and Landscape'  
 SP37 'New and Improvements to Existing Green Space'  
 SP38 'Protecting Green Space'  
 SP39 'Design and Location of Green Space, Sport and Recreation'  
 SP52 'Pollution Control'  
 SP55 'Design Principles'

In addition the advice within the NPPF is also relevant, though earlier specific paragraphs around noise issues have been deleted from the current December 2024 issue.

### **Other Material Considerations**

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) - On 6 March 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched this planning practice guidance web-based resource. This was accompanied by a Written Ministerial Statement which includes a list of the previous planning practice guidance documents cancelled when this site was launched. It was last updated on 17th September 2018.

The NPPF states that "due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with this framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)."

The revised NPPF came into effect in December 2024. It states that “Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”

The Local Plan Policies referred to above are consistent with the NPPF and have been given due weight in the determination of this application.

## **Publicity**

The application has been advertised by way of press notice, a site notice and individual letters to neighbouring properties in January 2026. Following the amendments, alterations and clarifications made to the application including the reduction of the development to 3no. courts all original neighbours along objectors/supporters/observers were again formally consulted on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026 and given a further 14 days notification.

A total of 115 representations (as of 27 May 2026) have been received and can be summarised below:

### Letters in opposition

- These courts will generate high levels of noise which will have a significant impact on local residents immediately adjacent to the site.
- The noise with frequent pulses of high impact energy when balls collide with reinforced glass will be similar to gunshots.
- This will be exacerbated by shouting and emotional responses from players.
- This noise profile will be significantly different to that of cricket. The noise from cricket is seasonal, intermittent and familiar.
- Additional noise generated by players, general activity and associated vehicle movements would introduce a level of disturbance entirely different in character from the existing seasonal cricket use.
- Intensified noise during competitive play.
- Padel Courts are better suited to industrial sites or within large sports centres.
- The Padel Courts approved at Hellaby had a condition that external doors to the facility be kept closed.
- Close proximity (approx. 40m) to dwellings.
- European locations have separation distances of 100m. This is 35-45m away from residential properties.
- Secondary noise generated from slamming of car doors, turnover of players which will be high.
- Car parking in the area is very limited.
- This proposal will result in significant volumes of extra traffic.
- Is the entrance sufficient to cope with the additional traffic demands.
- The floodlighting will be significantly disruptive for local residents.
- Hours of use are excessive and this will be particularly severe in the summer months.
- Impacts on sleep (including night workers)

- Detrimental impact on wildlife, particularly birdlife.
- Other Councils have refused these developments and this should be refused in this case.
- Insufficient notification to local residents took place.
- The people supporting the proposal do not live in the area.

Specific details of a recent planning appeal at Havant Council have been submitted. This was for a Padel Court proposal of 2no. courts which was refused and then subsequently dismissed at appeal.

Following the re-notification a number of objectors have again re-iterated that the reduction from 4no. to 3no. padel courts will have a limited reduction in overall noise levels.

- The original objections still stand.
- The reduction from four courts to three and the proposed mitigation measures may reduce the predicted impact on paper, but they do not overcome the fundamental issue that this is an intensive and impulsive recreational use proposed immediately adjacent to established residential properties.
- Padel noise described as: impulsive, repetitive, continuous and arising from:
  - ball impacts on glass
  - rackets
  - player activity
- Long duration of use (13 hours/day, 7 days/week).
- Cumulative effect of multiple courts.
- Evening and weekend disturbance.
- Inability to escape noise (gardens/windows open)
- Criticism that reduction from 4 to 3 courts does not materially reduce noise impact.
- Acoustic mitigation proposed is insufficient.
- The revised report also confirms that there is currently no adopted UK standard or assessment methodology specifically relating to padel noise. The conclusions therefore rely heavily on selected comparator guidance, modelling assumptions and professional judgement.

#### Letters in support

- This will be a great asset for the club and the area.
- This will be a useful facility to the young people in the area.
- Expectation that the courts would be well used by the community.
- Padel considered:
  - Inclusive and accessible
- Contribution toward creating a local sporting hub alongside existing cricket facilities.
- Proposal complements existing cricket use (junior, senior, women's teams).
- Viewed as helping establish a year-round multi-sport facility.

- Rawmarsh is deficient in sports facilities.
- Looking forward to the use of the facilities.
- The existing cricket club is well managed.
- Reinforces the club's family-friendly and social environment

Following the re-notification a number of supporters have again re-iterated their earlier comments:

- The noise is not as significant as claimed.
- Cricket noise can be equally or more noticeable.
- Confidence is expressed that design mitigation and conditions/controls could assist in reducing the impact on neighbours.
- As of early 2026, there are over 1,500 Padel Courts across approximately 559 venues in the UK with fifteen either available to play or in construction in South Yorkshire. In addition, Padel Courts are now increasingly being integrated into residential areas, including housing developments, as a social amenity, allowing residents to have courts on their doorstep.
- The facility will provide an economic benefit and will provide increased opportunities for physical activity, social interaction and improved wellbeing.

The ratio of object/support is broadly 50:50 though the objections are generally more detailed than those in support.

The majority of the objectors live in the immediate proximity of the site and in particular along Gower Way and Trueman Drive. The majority of the supporters live further afield and not in the immediate vicinity. However, there are also supporters who live within the Wickets residential estate.

A total of 5no. supporting letters have been submitted at the time of the original application submission. These are from Local Ward Councillors and indicated that they were in support of the proposal. Other Local Ward Councillors have expressed concern from the proposal.

A total of 8no. Right to Speak requests have been received which include three from Local Ward Members, four from residents and one from the applicant.

## **Consultations**

RMBC Transportation Infrastructure Service – no objections, subject to condition

Environmental Health – objections and refusal recommended on noise grounds

Drainage Officer – no objections

Ecologist – no objections, subject to conditions

Sports Development Manager – no objections

Tree Officer – no objections, subject to conditions

## **Appraisal**

Where an application is made to a local planning authority for planning permission.....In dealing with such an application the authority shall have regard to -

- (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application,
- (b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and
- (c) any other material considerations. - S. 70 (2) TCPA '90.

If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise - S.38 (6) PCPA 2004.

The main considerations in the determination of the application are as follows:

- The principle of the development
- Noise and impact on the nearby residential areas
- Design, Appearance and Visual Impact on the surroundings
- Transportation issues
- Landscape matters
- Trees and Ecology

### Principle of development

The application site is allocated for Greenspace in the Local Plan.

Policy CS 20 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity' states The Council will conserve and enhance Rotherham's natural environment.

Policy CS29 'Community and Social Facilities' states that "The Council will support the retention, provision and enhancement of a range of community and social facilities in locations accessible by public transport, cycling or on foot which enhance the quality of life, improve health and well-being and serve the changing needs of all of Rotherham's communities"

In land use terms the principle of having this form of recreational development within a Greenspace allocation and co-located with an existing and long established sports facility is acceptable in land use and policy terms. It is accepted that this proposal will potentially provide another income stream for the cricket club, though this is likely to attract additional players who are not currently members of or associated with the existing cricket club.

The design and impact upon the surroundings, in particular noise impact on residential properties, will be considered in more detail below.

## Noise and impact on the surroundings

SP52 'Pollution Control' indicates that development proposals that are likely to cause pollution, or be exposed to pollution, will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that mitigation measures will minimise potential impacts to levels that protect health, environmental quality and amenity. When determining planning applications, particular consideration will be given to the detrimental impact on the amenity of the local area.

The NPPF in earlier versions of the policy had specific references to noise details, however in the current version (December 2024) these have been omitted from the document.

The NPPG in relation to noise states that: *“Noise needs to be considered when new developments may create additional noise” It adds that: “The subjective nature of noise means that there is not a simple relationship between noise levels and the impact on those affected. This will depend on how various factors combine in any particular situation. These factors include: - the source and absolute level of the noise together with the time of day it occurs. Some types and level of noise will cause a greater adverse effect at night than if they occurred during the day – this is because people tend to be more sensitive to noise at night as they are trying to sleep.”*

All of the objections received have raised concerns with the impact of noise on immediately surrounding residential properties and it is considered that noise issues is the most significant issue to be considered in this application.

### Lawn Tennis Association Guidance

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) has issues guidance on installation of Padel Courts and with reference to distances between nearby residential properties. A number of the objections have quoted European specified distances which are in excess of 100m. However, the LTA does not set a minimum distance between padel courts and residential properties. This is due to padel noise having a high level of variation for a 'One-Size-Fits-All rule'. A fixed distance would potentially be over-restrictive in some cases and insufficient in others.

The LTA recognises that padel noise is dependent on local conditions, and this includes court design and enclosure type, use of acoustic fencing, ground levels and topography, existing background noise (e.g., traffic) as well as distance and orientation to homes.

National planning policy requires councils to assess noise impact in context, not by fixed separation distances. The LTA acknowledges that acoustic barriers, absorptive linings, and enclosed court designs can reduce noise dramatically.

The LTA indicates that if a neighbouring property is within 30 metres, sound attenuation may be required. This is not a minimum distance. It is simply a prompt for councils to request an acoustic report.

#### Assessment of submitted Noise Report

Environmental Health have considered the supporting Noise Impact Assessment (ref S. & D. Garritt Ltd, dated 12th January 2026 updated 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026 and the Lighting Impact Assessment undertaken by Lightable, dated 5th January 2026). They note that the site is an existing recreational ground currently used by the Cricket Club. There are residential receptors located to the north, south and west of the site with the busy B6090 located to the north. The applicant is proposing to use the padel courts between the hours of 08:00-21:00 Mondays to Sundays.

The updated and revised Acoustic Survey Report (May 2026) concludes the applicant proposes three enclosed padel courts at Upper Haugh Cricket Club, operating no later than 21:00. A full acoustic assessment has been carried out using industry-standard methods. The revised scheme includes stronger noise controls than the original four-court proposal.

In terms of the predicted noise from the padel courts, the assessment assumes worst-case conditions: all courts in continuous use with no breaks. With the proposed mitigation in place padel noise expected to remain below background levels at all nearby homes.

#### Assessment by Environmental Health Officers

The Environmental Health Unit agree that there is no specific guidance for use of padel courts when considering noise impact on nearby sensitive receptors. They have indicated “...*There are various guidance documents that we can draw upon for advice, however due to the different criteria within these documents it becomes difficult to agree an acceptable approach as the suitability and applicability of each guidance document can be argued either way. Since the previous noise impact assessment, the applicant proposes reducing the number of courts from 4 to 3.*

*However, according to the noise impact assessment this appears to make very little difference in terms of noise levels at receptor locations. This is evident at Wentworth Road where average and maximum noise levels have reduced only slightly as a result of this.*

*It is mentioned in the revised noise impact assessment that the proposed closing time has been reduced to 21:00 from a previously proposed 22:00. However, the original application was for an opening time up to 21:00. A closing time of 22:00 has never been included in the application.*

*It is noted that background sound levels for the evening period in the table in section 4.1 (typical existing outdoor sound levels) have increased from 42dB in the previous noise impact assessment to 43dB in the revised noise impact assessment in relation to all dwellings apart from Wentworth Road, and from 45dB in the previous noise impact assessment to 46dB in the revised noise*

*impact assessment for dwellings located on Wentworth Road. We are unsure as to why the background sound levels measured previously have increased for the evening period.*

*The noise barrier has now been modified to an increased height of 4m, positioned in a 'L' shape so that it extends towards the north in order to provide additional protection to receptors located to the south and south-west. It should be noted that the extended barrier does not protect the dwellings located in the north (Wentworth Road) from noise. The noise barrier is proposed to have an absorbent layer to the sides facing the padel courts to help absorb the noise and reduce reflections.*

*The above has been predicted to have the impact of reducing specific noise levels (average noise level (LAeq)) from the padel courts to below background sound level at all receptor locations except for those located to the north (Wentworth Road). It is also predicted to have the effect of reducing the maximum noise levels (L<sub>Amax,f</sub>) at all receptor locations except Wentworth Road, where the slight noise reduction in this location is due to the removal of one of the padel courts (and not the installation of the barrier). The introduction of the upgraded barrier together with the slight reduction in noise from the reduced number of courts has resulted in all specific noise levels being below background sound level during the day, evening and weekend at all locations. However, the maximum noise levels still exceed background sound levels in the evening periods at all locations, in addition the maximum noise levels at Wentworth Road also exceed background sound level in the daytime and weekends. The table below shows how the maximum sound levels from the use of the padel courts exceeds background sound levels in the evening period at all receptor locations:*

<b>Receptor</b>	<b>Background Sound Level (L<sub>A90</sub>) (dBA)</b>	<b>Maximum Sound Level (L<sub>Amax,f</sub>)(dBA)</b>	<b>Difference (dBA)</b>
<b>South East, front onto Harding avenue</b>	42	46.9	+4.9
<b>South, Gower way</b>	42	44.8	+2.8
<b>Gardens to the South, Gower Way</b>	42	45.9	+3.9
<b>South West with line of sight, Gower Way</b>	42	48.4	+6.4
<b>West, Trueman Drive</b>	42	47.6	+5.6
<b>North, Wentworth Road</b>	45	54.8	+9.8
<b>Gardens to the north, Wentworth Road</b>	45	56.6	+11.6

*The noise exceedances above background sound level shown in the above table will be audible to receptors living in the area particularly at dwellings on Wentworth Road. It is the introduction of a new noise source/type to the area that will make it even more noticeable to receptors and is very likely to result in disturbance and complaints. It is our opinion that the proposal will interfere with local residents quiet enjoyment of their gardens as this is to take place seven days a week, offering them little respite from noise, given that the current use of the site as a cricket club is seasonal only and activity on that*

*land is currently much less frequent and as is not occurring over such a long duration”.*

With reference to the submitted acoustic mitigation detail the EHO goes onto indicate “...*The noise consultant has indicated that a 4m high acoustic barrier could be erected to the north of the courts facing Wentworth Road. However, since the dwellings to north are at a higher elevation, due to topography, than the proposed courts by approximately 7m, a northern barrier would not be as effective at this location. There is a line of sight from the dwellings to the proposed padel courts that cannot be easily overcome. This will result noise travelling over the barrier and therefore it is unlikely that the installation of such a barrier would see reductions in maximum noise levels so that the noise is not clearly audible at this receptor location.*”

The EHO goes onto further indicate “...*It is our opinion that the location for the proposed padel courts is inappropriate given the close proximity to nearby residential receptors and the high likelihood of noise disturbance. ‘ProPG: Planning & Noise Supplementary Document 2 - Good Acoustic Design’ (May 2017), is relevant in this case. This details that first and foremost in the hierarchy of noise management measures, spatial separation of noise source(s) and receptor(s) should be maximised and should be given the highest consideration when identifying an appropriate site. Although this guidance is applicable to the construction of new dwellings, the fundamentals of this hierarchy remain the same in that noisy developments should be placed away from residential dwellings. Due to the high maximum noise levels associated with Padel, the location needs to be carefully considered and where the padel courts cannot be located within a building where noise breakout can be effectively controlled, then it is best that they are located in areas well away from residential dwellings, such as rural areas with no sensitive receptors located nearby, or within industrial zones which already have high background sound levels.*

The EHO concludes that “*This site is in our opinion not suitable for the proposed use*”.

The additional memo received on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2026 (ref JR Acoustics) from the applicant in support of the proposal has also been noted. Whilst the EHO has not issued a further rebuttal against this submission, the EHO does not agree with the conclusions reached and mitigation proposed. The EHO remains of the view that future noise levels from this development are likely to result in disturbance to the nearest residential properties.

Also the additional Noise Report received on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2026 (ref MW Acoustics) from residents in objection to the proposal has also been noted. Again the EHO has not formally commented on this and remains of the view that future noise levels from this development are likely to result in disturbance to the nearest residential properties.

Overall therefore and having regard to Local Plan Policy SP52 ‘Pollution Control’, it is not considered that the proposal can conform with the aims of this

policy and the mitigation proposed is insufficient to restrict noise to the nearest sensitive receptors. The application is therefore recommended for refusal on noise grounds.

### Lighting

Objectors have also raised concerns with the lighting impact on nearby residential properties.

The Lighting Impact Assessment takes into consideration the Institution of Lighting Professionals Guidance – Reduction of Obtrusive Light Guidance Note 01/21 for a suburban location (E3 Zone). The applicant proposes to only use the floodlights when the Padel Courts are in use between the hours of 08:00-21:00hrs Mondays to Sundays.

The Lighting Impact Assessment concludes that if the lights are installed as detailed within the lighting assessment (Appendix 2 and 3) it will comply with this guidance in terms of maximum Lux levels at sensitive receptor locations.

Environmental Health

Concur with the findings of the report, subject to conditions.

There is also the potential for disturbance to nearby sensitive receptors as a result of noise and dust and artificial light during the construction phase.

However, overall it is not considered that there are any grounds for refusal of the Lighting Scheme in isolation.

### Design, Appearance and Visual Impact on the surroundings

Policy CS28 'Sustainable Design' states, in part, that: "*Proposals for development should respect and enhance the distinctive features of Rotherham. They should develop a strong sense of place with a high quality of public realm and well-designed buildings within a clear framework of routes and spaces. Development proposals should be responsive to their context and be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.....Design should take all opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.*" This seeks to ensure that all developments make a positive contribution to the environment by achieving an appropriate standard of design.

Policy SP55 'Design Principles', states, in part, that: "*All forms of development are required to be of high quality, incorporate inclusive design principles and positively contribute to the local character and distinctiveness of an area and the way it functions. This policy applies to all development proposals including alterations and extensions to existing buildings*".

The site is visually prominent from the surrounding areas due to limited boundary screening. The existing land levels where the cricket nets are located are relatively flat and do not involve any significant engineering operations in order to create a level surface. No import or export of soil is

proposed. The land levels are slightly elevated compared to the surrounding residential areas, particularly to the south. The location of the courts is sited away from the cricket pitch and will not interfere with the playing surface of the cricket pitch. The re-located practice nets are also clear of the existing cricket pitch.

Existing landscaping features at the northern end of the site helps screen the existing site area. Additional landscaping around the perimeter of the site will also assist with visually screening the site. The structure itself will be significantly more see through, being comprised on reinforced glass, than would be anticipated from a solid building structure. This will also assist in mitigating the potential visual impact on openness of the surroundings when viewed from a distance.

Overall the design of the padel courts is understood to be a standardised design for this form of recreational use. The facility would use modern materials and may have a moderate utilitarian appearance but it is not considered that the design can be easily amended to reflect bespoke sites. However, the clear glazing allows for light to pass through it which will reduce the visual prominence when viewed from a long distance. The siting of the facility in close proximity to the existing clubhouse building, and positioning at lower ground levels is further considered to reduce the visual prominence when viewed from the more sensitive southern part of the site.

The design is considered to have a neutral appearance with modern materials and overall considered to satisfy policy SP55 'Design Principles'.

### Highway issues

SP26 'Sustainable Transport for Development' states development proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposals make adequate arrangements for sustainable transport infrastructure; local traffic circulation, existing parking and servicing arrangements are not adversely affected; the highway network is, or can be made, suitable to cope with traffic generated, during construction and after occupation; and the scheme takes into account good practice guidance.

A number of the objections have raised concerns with parking issues and the potential increase in the number of visitors to the site and associated congestion.

The applicant has indicated that there will be some re-surfacing of the access road will take place, along with the widening of the internal access road proposed. It is noted that the site already has a car parking area which can accommodate in excess of 20no. cars.

The Transportation Unit note from the submitted, details that if approved, 3no new padel courts will be constructed and an existing cricket practise net relocated. They also note that the existing vehicle access taken from Harding

Avenue, will continue to be used to gain access to the site, but will be widened to accommodate two-way traffic. The internal access road will also be widened in conjunction with the proposed amendments to the car park.

The existing car park whilst unmarked, appears to accommodate approximately 20 to 21no vehicles. The proposed car park will accommodate 27no vehicles, though it should be noted that the car park will facilitate both cricket and padel participants, potentially at the same time. The Highway Officer is of the view that it appears that additional car parking space within the site, may be available to accommodate more vehicles than shown on the submitted plan. It should also be noted that the Councils parking standards are a maximum standard and as such, the Transportation Unit have not raised any objection to the level of parking provision proposed.

The Highway Officer has also consulted internally with colleagues within the Councils Transportation Unit, and they have confirmed that they are not aware of any existing parking issues associated with the operation of the cricket club.

Overall therefore, the Transportation Unit conclude that there are no objections to the granting of planning permission in a highway context subject to standard conditions. These include surfacing of the car parking area and formally marking out car parking spaces. Subject to this the proposal is considered to meet the requirements of policy SP26 'Sustainable Transport for Development'.

#### Ecology and Biodiversity

SP33 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment' indicates that:

*Development should conserve and enhance existing and create new features of biodiversity and geodiversity value. Where it is not possible to avoid negative impact on a feature of biodiversity or geodiversity value through use of an alternate site, development proposals will be expected to minimise impact through careful consideration of the design, layout, construction or operation of the development and by the incorporation of suitable mitigation measures....or provide an adequate level of compensation. The aim of mitigation and compensation should be to respond to impact or loss with something of greater value; the minimum requirement will be to maintain 'no net loss'.*

In this case the proposal requires Biodiversity Net Gain assessment as the development results in more than 25sqm loss of existing landscaping.

A total of 0 habitat units will be created within the padel court perimeter with a net loss of -0.41 units which provides a -33.94% net loss. However, the site is located within a greenspace area and the revised metric indicates that planting of thirty-six small trees of moderate condition throughout the retained grassland areas would address this. Replacement of grassland parcel D on the west of the drive, to moderate condition scrub habitat, or offsite mitigation

would meet the requirements within SP33 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment'.

There are no objections on BNG grounds, subject to future conditions.

### Landscapes and Trees

CS19 'Green Infrastructure' states: *"Rotherham's network of Green Infrastructure assets, including the Strategic Green Infrastructure Corridors will be conserved, extended, enhanced, managed and maintained throughout the borough. Green Infrastructure will permeate from the core of the built environment out into the rural areas... Proposals will be supported which make an overall contribution to the Green Infrastructure."*

There are a number of shrubs and small trees adjacent to the site area, and two of which are proposed to be removed as part of the development. The Tree Officer notes that two trees will require removal to facilitate this development. However, when taking into consideration the close proximity of the trees to the proposed development, and that the trees fall into retention category 'C' with minimal loss of amenity when removed, then their removal is seen as acceptable with a condition that a tree planting mitigation plan is implemented.

Overall and subject to a final condition for a revised tree planting plan, this element of the proposal is considered to meet the criteria highlighted CS19 'Green Infrastructure'.

### **Conclusion**

Overall the principle of an extended recreational facility in this Greenspace location is considered appropriate in land use terms and its co-location to support the viability of a long established cricket club is considered acceptable.

However, the noise issues expected to be generated by the facility are considered to be excessively high, particularly during evening periods. Environmental Health Officers do not consider that the mitigation proposed would be sufficient to reduce anticipated noise to an acceptable level.

The Transportation Unit have accepted the plans and consider that subject to the internal access road widening and additional parking, this will be sufficient to accommodate any increase in parking demand.

No objections have been received on the loss of some landscaping, or Biodiversity Net Gain issues.

It is therefore concluded for the reasons set out above the application is recommended for refusal on noise grounds.

## **Reasons for refusal**

01

The Council considers that the 3no. padel courts is likely to have an unreasonably high noise impact on the amenity of nearby residential properties. The mitigation measures identified within the supporting noise report (ref S. & D. Garritt Ltd, dated 12th January 2026, updated 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026) are not considered sufficient to prevent undue disturbance to nearby sensitive receptors, particularly during evening periods when background noise levels are lower. Accordingly, the Council does not consider that the applicant has submitted sufficient evidence to demonstrate that this padel court development in this location can operate in accordance with the requirements of Local Plan Policy SP52 'Pollution Control'.

## **POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT**

The applicant did not enter into any pre application discussions with the Local Planning Authority. Discussions during the determination of the application have requested additional information and clarifications which were submitted. However the mitigation measures proposed are considered insufficient to prevent undue disturbance. This was not considered to be in accordance with the principles of the Local Plan and resulted in this refusal.