



16 March 2026

Unit N, Chelworth Industrial Estate, Cricklade Proposed change of use to indoor Padel Courts Planning Statement

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Harwood Savin Planning Solutions Limited (HSPS) has been instructed by Padel People Ltd to submit a planning application to Wiltshire Council, for the following:

‘Change of use from classes E(g) (iii), B2 and B8 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1987 Use Classes Order (as amended) to a proposed mix use comprising classes E(c) to E(g), B2 and B8 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1987 Use Classes Order (as amended), to facilitate the use of the building for indoor sport and recreation.’

At Unit N, Chelworth Industrial Estate, Cricklade.

- 1.2 This Statement provides an overview of the proposals in the context of presiding planning policy and guidance and provides a justification for the scheme in planning terms.

2 Background

What is Padel?

- 2.1 Padel is a mix between Tennis and Squash which was invented in Mexico in 1969. It is usually played in doubles on an enclosed court surrounded by walls of glass and metallic mesh. The court is one third of the size of a tennis court.
- 2.2 The ball can bounce off any wall but can only hit the turf once before being returned. Points are scored when the ball bounces twice in the opponents’ field.
- 2.3 In excess of 2,500 padel clubs opened across the world in 2023, rising from a total of 9,994 clubs in 2022 to 12,651 clubs at the end of 2023. Approximately 111 courts were built every week and further growth is expected for 2024.
- 2.4 Spain and Italy are the leading countries in terms of the total number of courts. As of January 2024, the total number of courts reached 16,126 and 8,347 respectively. Currently there are 489 courts in Britain, which leaves significant potential to expand the number of padel tennis facilities.
- 2.5 Padel can be played by anyone, regardless of age, gender, socioeconomic level, or physical condition, making the sport more inclusive than other endurance activities or strenuous sports. Padel offers the opportunity to exercise but also to socialise, and this unique combination has been a core reason for the growth in popularity.

- 2.6 Padel People was started as a result of the founders' love for the sport and the fact that there are very few locations in the UK to play padel. Their aim is to work in partnership with schools and charities to bring opportunities to participate in padel to the grassroots level within the local community and make it available to all.

The Site and Surroundings

- 2.7 The application site, which lies to the south-west of Cricklade, comprises a vacant building with a lawful use for classes E(g) (iii), B2 and B8 which extends to some 1,335.4 sqm and with areas of unmarked parking, on the south-eastern side of Chelworth Industrial Estate.
- 2.8 The application property falls outside of any settlement boundary and is not allocated for any specific relevant use within the adopted local plan. The site lies within flood zone 1 and is not subject to any fluvial or surface water flood risk. It is not within a conservation area and none of the neighbouring properties are listed or comprise designated heritage assets. Access to the site is via Braydon Lane.

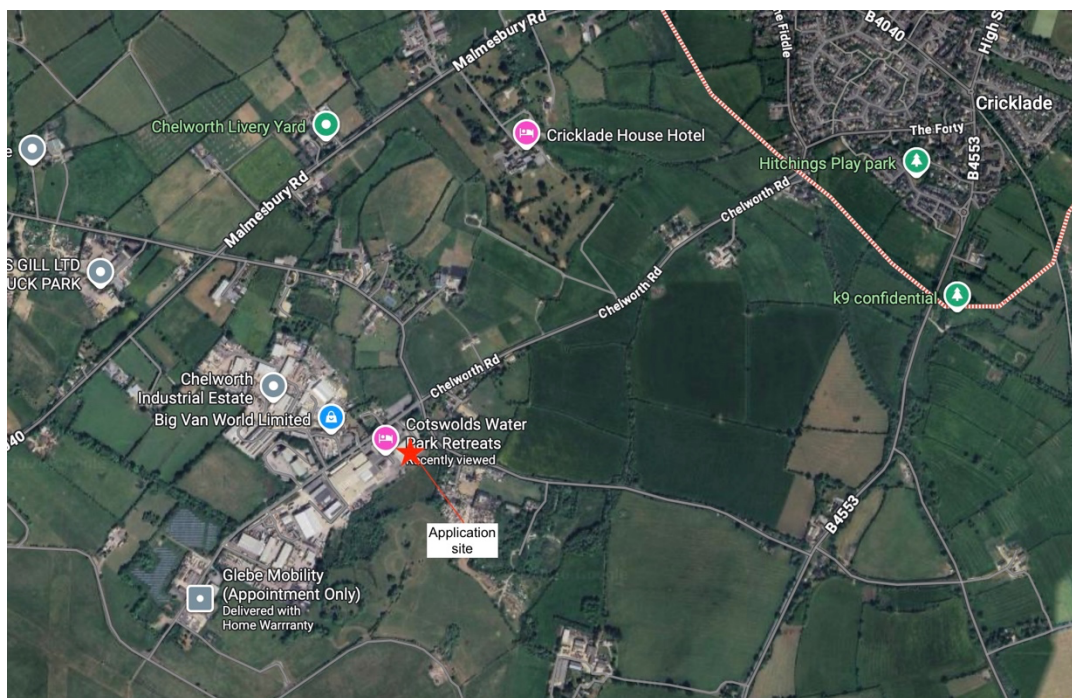


Image 2.1: Site Location (indicative)

3 The Proposal

- 3.1 The proposed development comprises the expansion of the use of the existing building within Class E to accommodate three doubles and one single padel courts. No external alterations are proposed. The scheme will provide for 21 marked parking spaces, with additional ad hoc parking, if required, to the rear.
- 3.2 In terms of ancillary facilities, players will use changing and toilet facilities within the building where refreshment or clubhouse style facilities will be provided.

Operation

- 3.3 In terms of the operation of the proposals, the following is proposed:
- Opening hours – 5am to 11pm daily;

- Courts to be booked through an online booking platform;
- Coaching available through the operator;
- Maintenance undertaken by the provider;
- Lighting is operated on a time switch basis when the courts are in use;

3.4 3 no. doubles courts and 1 singles court would be able to accommodate a maximum of 14 players at any one time.

4 Planning Policy Background

4.1 This proposal has been formulated in the context of pressing planning policy and guidance, including the following:

- National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)
- Planning Practice Guidance
- The Development Plan comprising:
 - Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)
 - Supplementary Planning Documents as appropriate

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

4.3 Relevant objectives include:

- Supporting economic growth and productivity (Section 6)
- Promoting healthy and safe communities (Section 8)
- Achieving sustainable development (Section 2)

4.4 Paragraphs within the NPPF emphasise the importance of accessible sports and recreation facilities, noting that planning decisions should enable and support opportunities for sport and physical activity.

4.5 The Framework also encourages the effective use of previously developed land and existing buildings where appropriate.

Wiltshire Local Plan (2015)

4.6 The adopted development plan comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015). Relevant policies include:

- Core Policy 1 – Settlement Strategy - Supports sustainable development within existing settlements and established employment areas.
- Core Policy 13 – Swindon and Wiltshire Functional Economic Area - Encourages economic development and diversification within existing employment sites.
- Core Policy 34 – Additional Employment Land - Supports development within existing employment areas where it contributes to economic activity.

- Core Policy 48 – Supporting Rural Life - Supports development that meets the needs of local communities including recreational opportunities.
- Core Policy 50 – Recreation- Supports the development of new indoor and outdoor sports facilities where they are accessible and appropriate to their location.

5 Planning Considerations and Assessment

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Planning Authorities to determine proposals in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Principle of Development

- 5.2 The site is located within an established industrial estate, where commercial and employment uses are the defining character. The proposal would retain the existing employment use classes B2 and B8, whilst introducing an indoor recreational use which is compatible with the industrial estate environment.

- 5.3 Indoor sport uses are commonly located within industrial buildings due to their:

- large floorplates
- high ceilings
- availability of parking.

- 5.4 The proposal therefore represents a compatible and appropriate diversification of use within the estate.

Economic and Community Benefits

- 5.5 The proposed padel facility would have a number of key economic and community benefits, including:

- Provide a new sports facility for the local area
- Support health and wellbeing objectives
- Create employment associated with the operation of the facility
- Increase activity within the estate.

- 5.6 The proposal therefore aligns with the NPPF objective of promoting healthy communities.

Amenity Considerations

- 5.7 The site is located within a commercial/industrial environment, where activity and vehicle movements are expected. There are no immediately adjacent residential developments or other sensitive uses in close proximity to the existing property.

- 5.8 Indoor padel courts are contained within the building and therefore:

- Noise impacts are limited
- Lighting impacts are negligible
- There is no external disturbance.

- 5.9 The use is therefore compatible with surrounding industrial activities.

Highways, Access and Parking

- 5.10 Chelworth Industrial Estate is designed to accommodate vehicle movements associated with employment uses. The proposal would utilise existing access arrangements and parking provision would comprise 21 marked spaces.
- 5.11 A transport statement has been prepared by Vision Transport Planning. Having assessed relevant matters relating to highways and transport it is concluded that:
- *“The proposed development is provided with an appropriate access strategy;*
 - *The development proposals are provided with a level of car parking that will fully accommodate anticipated ‘future’ car parking demands;*
 - *The development proposals are provided with an appropriate parking strategy;*
 - *The development proposals are provided with an appropriate servicing strategy;*
 - *The development proposals will give rise to an overall positive impact in respect to transport impacts and traffic attraction associated with the site (with an identified material decrease in traffic attraction);*
 - *The development proposals will not result in any negative impacts in respect to the operation of the site accesses or the wider highway network; and*
 - *The development proposals will not prejudice the free flow of traffic or condition of road safety within the neighbouring highway.*

In summary it is concluded that the development proposals accord with the guiding principles of the NPPF and accord with relevant transport policy. On the basis of the assessment carried out it is clear that the proposals can be accommodated without detriment to the operation of the local highway network. As such, it is concluded that there is no reason why the development proposals should be resisted for reasons relating to highways or transport.”

Design, Landscape Character and Visual Impact

- 5.12 The proposals do not involve external alterations and there is no impact in terms of design, landscape character or visual impact.

Trees, Ecology and Biodiversity

- 5.13 The proposals do not involve external alterations and there is no impact on trees, ecology or biodiversity.

6 Concluding Comments

- 6.1 The proposal comprises the ‘Change of use from classes E(g) (iii), B2 and B8 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1987 Use Classes Order (as amended) to a proposed mix use comprising classes E(c) to E(g), B2 and B8 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1987 Use Classes Order (as amended), to facilitate the use of the building for indoor sport and recreation and the use of the existing building for 4no. indoor padel courts.
- 6.2 The scheme will assist in bringing this parcel of underutilised property into beneficial use.
- 6.3 An assessment of the proposals and appropriate technical analysis demonstrates that the proposed development is acceptable in planning terms.

6.4 On this basis the Council is respectfully requested to granted planning permission.

v.1 – 16 March 2026