



Cricklade Town Council

First Town on the Thames

The Council Office
Ockwells, 113 High Street, Cricklade Wiltshire SN6 6AE
Telephone: 01793 751394
E-mail: admin@crickladetowncouncil.gov.uk
Website: www.crickladetowncouncil.gov.uk

Cricklade Town Council's Planning, Conservation and Transport Committee 7th April 2026

PL/2026/01432 **Site:** Unit N Whitehall Site, Chelworth Industrial Estate, Chelworth Road, Cricklade
Proposal: 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, to facilitate the use of the building for indoor sport and recreation.
Applicant: Padel People Limited
Closing Date: 15th April 2026

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, accommodating a maximum of 14 players at any one time. No external alterations are proposed. Players will use changing and toilet facilities within the building where refreshment or clubhouse style facilities will be provided.

The application requires a 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.

In terms of the operation of the proposals, the suggestions are:

- Opening hours are 5am to 11pm daily.
- Courts to be booked through an online booking platform;
- Coaching available through the operator;
- Lighting is operated on a time switch basis when the courts are in use;

The application site will accommodate a total of 21 car parking spaces (including 2 disabled car parking spaces). Of these spaces, 16 (visitor/customer) car parking spaces will be accommodated to the front of Unit N, whilst a further 5 (staff) car parking spaces will be accommodated to the rear of Unit N.

The planning application estimates that peak car parking demands associated with the proposed padel facilities will occur between 19:00 and 20:00 hours. During this 'peak' period it is estimated that this will give rise to a peak parking accumulation of 12 vehicles parked on-site.

The 'net' traffic impact implications of the development proposals (change of use) have been assessed and this is presented within Section 5 of the Transport Statement. The transport consultant has concluded that the proposed change of use from the established 'industrial' land use to a 'leisure' land use, is anticipated to give rise to a material decrease in daily traffic attraction associated with the site.

Secure cycle parking can be accommodated on-site or within Unit N. The provision of secure cycle parking is a matter that can be secured via an appropriate planning condition.

We have some concerns about the reliability and suitability of the data presented in the Transport Statement. The facility is proposed to be open from 5am yet the traffic movements from the generic database do not begin until 8am. The industrial baseline against which traffic numbers are assessed is a high level generic one so does not necessarily represent traffic movements associated with the prior use of the specific site nor movements associated with an alternative future use were this application to be refused. Industrial traffic movements would likely occur during and immediately before or after the normal working day, whereas the leisure traffic movements are concentrated in the evening. The site comparator used for the Padel

Courts is a large predominately tennis complex in Aylesbury with a population of 20-25,000 living within a mile of it and with bus stops right outside the centre with a 2 per hour service frequency. It seems to us likely this comparator will have proportionately lower traffic movements associated with it than the Chelworth site.

Members looked at the location plan and the proposed court layout. Standing Orders were SUSPENDED to allow any member of public to talk in favour or against this application. There were none and so Standing Orders were REINSTATED to allow councillors to discuss the application before voting on a decision.

The site lies fully within the Chelworth Industrial Estate. Notwithstanding our concern at the number and timing of traffic movements, the proposed new use will change the composition of traffic movements from industrial/commercial to passenger vehicles and **may reduce overall HGV traffic movements through the town**. Policy B5 of the existing Cricklade Neighbourhood Plan states: "Insofar as planning permission is required proposals for the conversion or change of use of existing buildings within the defined Commercial Area to other commercial uses **will be supported where the resulting new uses would have a reduced visual impact on the rural environment and would generate a lower level of commercial and/or HGV traffic.**"

The facility appears to have adequate parking and can make provision for cycle parking, which is a viable transport option from Cricklade. We also note that a padel facility at Chelworth would add to the leisure offering within the Cricklade area.

The recommendation suggested was to Support with Conditions that secure cycle parking is made available.

Members discussed the application. Questions raised were:

- 1) Whilst it would make a change to the type of traffic, there is a concern of the timings of operations from 5am to 11pm. Application says most traffic will be evening, but why start from 5am? If it was approved, would that condition change something that is already in place if the place returns to industrial again, would that inadvertently extend industrial hours of operation from 5am?
Unsure if customers will be there from 5am but more likely for staff for cleaning and setting up the courts. For Industrial purposes, there may be a time limit for people to not attend site before 7am and CTC would not want to lose that. If there was a change of use back to industrial, the timing would have to apply to go back? They're expanding the change of use, and so could go back without another planning application.
- 2) Hasn't WC been saying they're short of land use for industrial purposes?
- 3) Sustainability: no one will walk there, people will mostly drive and possibly cycle too.
- 4) Out of hours traffic going down the narrow lane of the Forty during winter evenings (presume traffic mainly coming from Swindon) it adds to the danger being out on that road.
- 5) Traffic complaints are mainly from HGVs going to this site, not car traffic and this reduces that.

Members voted to SUPPORT with Conditions (1 abstention) that secure cycle parking is made available.