



Racquet Space

rdc
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Consultancy

Planning, Design and Access Statement
Full Planning Application (Resubmission) for the
Erection of a Racquet Sports Centre (Padel, Pickleball
and Badminton) with Associated Infrastructure and Car
Parking
Land off Bourne Road, Spalding.

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town planning



landscape architecture



architecture

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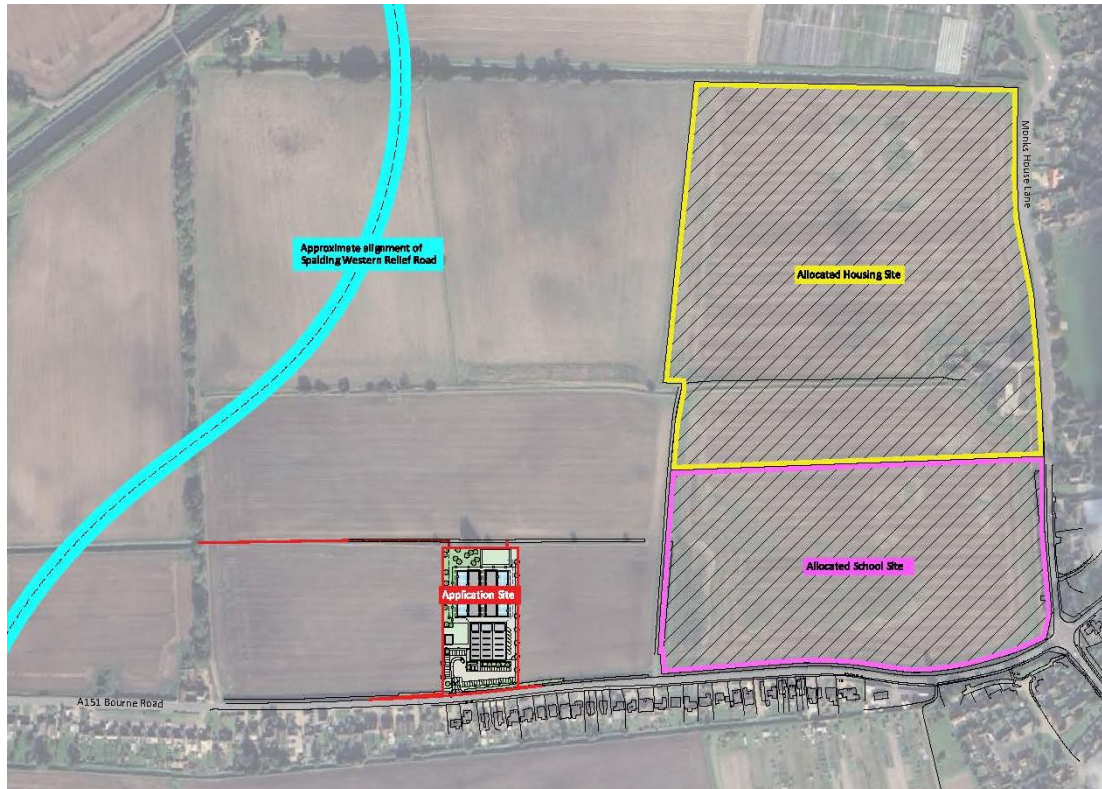
Sequential Review of Suitable locations

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been produced in support of a resubmission of a Full Planning Application for the erection of a racquet sports centre and associated development following the refusal of planning application H16-1022-25 earlier this year.
- 1.2. Following the refusal of planning permission, informal discussions have been undertaken with South Holland District Council which have helped to shape this resubmission, and this revised proposal addresses the reasons for refusal.
- 1.3. The application is supported by all the necessary drawings, a revised Flood Risk Assessment and Sequential Test (within the body of this document), a revised Noise Assessment, a revised Surface Water Drainage Strategy, a Transport Statement (within the body of this document) and the archaeological evaluation carried out for the original scheme. We have also revisited the sequential test justifying the location of the proposal and this considers sites across the district, together with a commentary on the level of support for the proposal from individuals and organisations.
- 1.4. This statement sets out all the material considerations surrounding the consideration of the application and concludes that the proposal is acceptable when measured against the development plan and the relevant guidance in the latest National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2. THE APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1. The proposal is located on the western edge of Spalding off Bourne Road, which is the principal road into Spalding from the west.
- 2.2. The application site consists of the southern part of an open agricultural field on the edge of Spalding. The field has a deciduous hedgerow along the Bourne Road frontage, a field drain to the northern boundary and the remainder of the agricultural field lies to the east and west. The topography of the site is largely flat; however, it lies approximately 1.5m lower than the Bourne Road carriageway. To the southern side of Bourne Road, there is a continuous built-up frontage of predominantly residential development which stretches between Pode Hole and the western edge of Spalding proper. The road has a dedicated footway along the southern side, together with street lighting, and is subject to a 40mph speed limit.
- 2.3. The settlement boundary for Spalding as defined in the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan ("the Local Plan") lies to the east and the application site is within a safeguarding zone identified for the Spalding Western Relief Road. The actual route of the relief road, as confirmed by Lincolnshire County Council, lies to the west of the application site and there is a local plan housing allocation (Mon008), which is the subject of a planning application (H16-0584-25) and this is at an advanced stage in the consideration process. An allocation for a new school lies between the application site and the current settlement boundary.
- 2.4. The proposal, together with the information described above, is shown on the context plan below.



Context Plan: showing the application site and surrounding area

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1. It is proposed to develop a racquet sports centre, together with ancillary facilities, which will become a centre for Padel, Pickleball and Badminton in South Holland where sport and the community meet to create a vibrant and inclusive hub based around state-of-the-art facilities.
- 3.2. The development consists of a main building with three padel courts, a badminton/pickleball court, reception area with a shop and small cafe and welfare facilities. A small cabin for Pilates is also proposed as this is seen as complementary to the racquet sports. Outside and to the north (rear) of the principal building, there will be a further 8 racquet courts, four covered and four uncovered, together with seating areas. To the south (front) of the principal building, there is a car park and space for bicycle storage. Solar panels are proposed for the roof of the principal building for the production of renewable energy.
- 3.3. To the rear of the courts, there will be an area for Biodiversity and a surface water attenuation basin. A track along the eastern boundary will allow access for maintenance purposes to the rear of the principal building. The eastern and western boundaries will be landscaped and the mature hedge to the roadside boundary will be retained.

Background

- 3.4. Padel is gaining national traction as the UK's fastest growing sport, according to LTA Padel's website figures showed that at the end of 2025, 860,000 adults and juniors played padel at least once in the last year, which has more than doubled since 2024, when it was played at least once by over 400,000 people in Great Britain, up from just 15,000 in 2019. The number of courts nationally has swelled to nearly 1,490 with at least one million people in Britain estimated to play padel regularly. Awareness among adults of the sport reached 43% of the population (about 23 million) by early 2025. The rise in popularity can be attributed in part to the fact that, as a non-contact sport, people were able to participate in the sport during the pandemic.
- 3.5. Pickleball England reports a 94.44% club growth and 168% membership growth in the East Midlands in 2025. There was an increase of 10,000 new members in England between 2024 to 2025 according to Pickleball England. Participation is especially strong across all age groups, from schoolchildren through to retirees. The growth is

only at the beginning of an upward curve. In the US, pickleball saw a 311% growth in three years in 2025, with the sport having nearly 20 million participants in 2024 (according to the Sports and Fitness Industry Association).

- 3.6. Both sports have huge international growth with Padel being particularly popular in Spain and Southern Europe and Pickleball in the US and India. Across the rest of the World, both sports are experiencing rapid growth.
- 3.7. Together, both sports share core strengths: they are inclusive, social, provide a hub within a community, easy to learn, and are excellent for physical and mental wellbeing.
- 3.8. Badminton has been played in England since the 1800s and in more recent times there has been an increase in participation numbers with over 1 million regularly playing each month.

Why Spalding Needs This Venue

- 3.9. Spalding has an estimated population of between 31,000 and 37,000 residents; with the wider area of South Holland having a population of 98,000. Despite recent investments in sport and leisure at the Castle Sports Complex, there are currently no dedicated indoor or outdoor (covered) Padel or Pickleball facilities within South Holland area.
- 3.10. It is hoped that the facility will become a premier sports venue for the whole of the east of the country; being one of the first to offer Padel (the first in South Holland) and dedicated Pickleball courts; attracting locals for recreational and competitive play, and visitors from further afield.
- 3.11. Racquet Space offers a new type of recreation hub for residents, not only expanding sports access for young people and adults, but also helping improve public health, reduce inactivity, and support local social infrastructure. It aligns with the district council's goals around community resilience, health promotion, and economic uplift.

Community & Economic Benefits

- 3.12. We anticipate the proposal will bring the following benefits:

- Local employment: We estimate that 5-7 full-time staff positions year-round will be created, plus seasonal work for school camps.

- Use of local trades and suppliers: Wherever feasible, the construction and engineering teams, materials and services will be sourced locally.
- Community programming:
 - School partnerships and afterschool clubs
 - Accessible offering for older adults and disabled participants
 - Disability friendly coaching and inclusive access
 - Social events, mixed aged sessions and leagues - for example, weekend open play and “match social” evenings
 - Summer camps, and beginner programmes designed to boost local participation across all age groups.

Sporting Strategy & Partner Engagement

- 3.13. The applicant has secured letters of support from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and Pickleball England, who endorse the vision and support the application. The letters from the Lawn Tennis Association and Pickleball England are reproduced as **Appendix A**. The proposals align closely with the LTA’s Padel development goals: increasing awareness, doubling regular participation, expanding courts across the country and growing the coaching capacity from 40 to 700 activators.
- 3.14. Over 75% of Padel venues in the UK now engage in school outreach, free sessions, and subsidised coaching for underserved groups. The venue is designed with that same mission: spreading the benefits of racket sports to all sections of Spalding’s community.
- 3.15. We have carried out a consultation exercise to understand the support for the project and the results of this can be found at **Appendix B**.
- 3.16. Behind the proposal is a fourth-generation Lincolnshire farming family, with a long history in the local area. Having run successful businesses in agriculture, retail and online, the family is passionate about building community through sport.

- 3.17. The aim is to create a venue that feels welcoming, inclusive, fun, and rooted in local values: where neighbours meet, children learn, older adults stay active and people discover racquet sports for the first time.
- 3.18. This proposal brings together two of Britain's fastest growing racquet sports - padel and pickleball, together with badminton and pilates, in a modern, accessible, facility that will benefit the wider Spalding community. It supports economic development, job creation, and increased sporting participation, while also strongly aligning with national and local objectives.

4. THE LOCATION OF THE PROPOSAL– SEQUENTIAL REVIEW

- 4.1. The application site lies beyond, but close to, the settlement boundary for Spalding off Bourne Road, which is the principal route into the town from the west. The west of Spalding accommodates a significant amount of residential development and the local plan allocations will bring residential development ever closer to the application site. In addition, there is an allocation within the local plan for a new school on the Bourne Road/Monks House Lane junction and, in time, the Spalding Western Relief Road will lead to further development between it and the town.
- 4.2. Indoor recreation is defined as a town centre use and, therefore, we have looked at reasonably available sites within the defined centres of Spalding and Pinchbeck, Holbeach, Crowland, Donington, Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge. Beyond the defined centres as set out in the South East Lincolnshire local plan inset plans, we then considered other land and buildings within the defined settlement boundaries before looking at a countryside location.
- 4.3. The design of the proposed building is bespoke in that it needs a specific minimum height to eaves (8m for Padel and 6m for Pickleball), an unsubdivided interior, together with a floor area in excess of 1,360 sqm. In addition, there is a requirement for space to develop outside courts in an environment conducive to sports and recreation. Following discussions that were carried out after the first application was refused, it was agreed that development of land and buildings allocated for employment uses would not be appropriate as the allocated uses on the employment park do not permit sport and recreation uses. This is even more pertinent now that the proposal includes external courts.
- 4.4. As mentioned earlier, some intensive indoor sports provision can be considered to be a town centre use, where a 'town centre first' sequential approach should be adopted. However, accommodating both a new building and outside courts within town centres is difficult in the context of South Holland. A review of the internet-based property websites (taken at the point of submission of this application) indicated that there were no reasonably available areas of land, or land with buildings within either the defined centres or the wider settlement boundaries, that are capable of accommodating the proposal.

- 4.5. The results of the search are set out at **Appendix C** and, not unsurprisingly, there is no reasonably available land or land and buildings to accommodate the proposal within the settlement boundaries of Spalding/Pinchbeck, Holbeach, Crowland, Donington, Sutton Bridge or Long Sutton
- 4.6. The agricultural land between the application site and the allocated school site is not within the applicant's control and not available for this development.
- 4.7. The application site off Bourne Road is close to the western fringe of Spalding, which is characterised by existing residential development, and which forms the location for further growth in relation to the Spalding Western Relief Road. To the east is the housing allocation Mon008, currently the subject of a hybrid application for 434 dwellings (LPA ref H16-0584-25), the applicant for which is local housebuilder Seagate Homes Ltd. Subject to the grant of planning permission, the consideration of which is well advanced, work is due to start on the development in the near future.
- 4.8. In addition to the housing allocation Mon008, there is also land allocated directly to the south for a new school. The application site lies within walking distance of a sizeable residential population and one which is continuing to grow. A new school close to the application site will, in time, allow for additional use of the proposed centre and, conversely, it will also broaden the sports offer for the school within walking distance.
- 4.9. To the west of the application site, there is the route of the Spalding Western Relief Road. The route agreed by the County Council does not lie within the safeguarding area identified in the local plan. Pre-application discussions with the County Council as highway authority has confirmed that the route we have shown to be largely correct and this, together with the allocations mentioned above, are shown on the plan at paragraph above.
- 4.10. Overall, the location of the proposal is in close proximity to the settlement boundary and it lies within an area which is and will experience growth in the future. The site is within easy walking distance of a significant amount of residential development and the town centre of Spalding, also assisting in providing better sports provision for the local population.

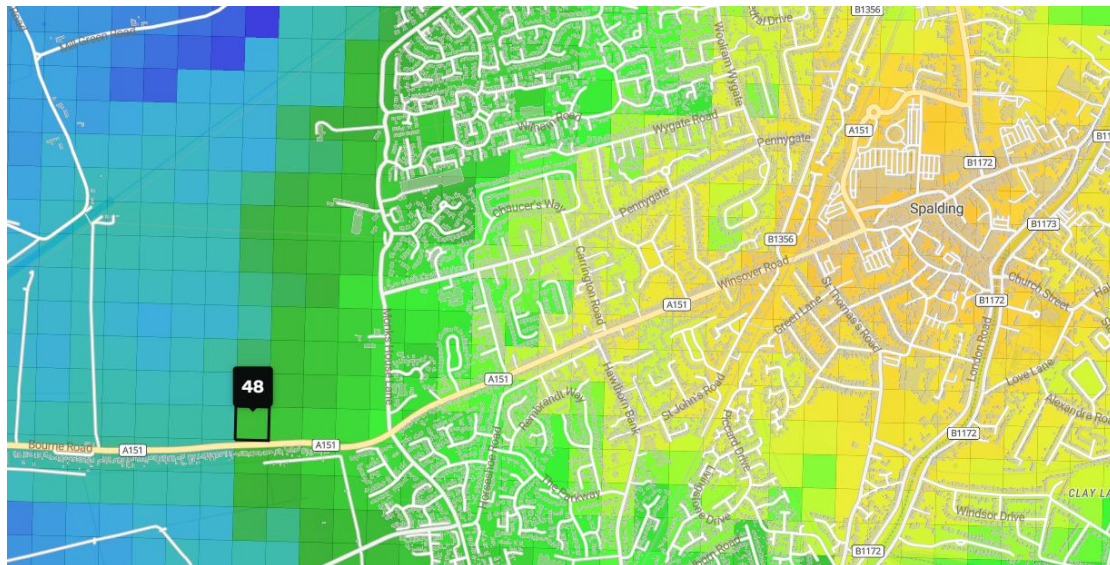
5. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that, "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."
- 5.2. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the following
- South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) (Local Plan).
 - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 5.3. Spalding is identified as a 'Sub-Regional Centre' in the Local Plan where development will be permitted that supports its role. Policy 1 sets out that in the countryside (beyond settlement boundaries) **development will be permitted where it is necessary to meet the sustainable development needs of the area in terms of economic, community or environmental benefits**. Clearly the proposal will assist in meeting the community needs of the town by adding to the sports and recreational facilities.
- 5.4. Policy 2 and 3 are development management policies, which set out the considerations that need to be satisfied, and these include size, scale, layout, density, impact on amenity, sustainable drainage and flood risk. The proposal has been designed to meet the requirements of the racquet sports that it will accommodate, whilst ensuring the visual impact is kept to a minimum. Matters relating to design are set out in the Design section of this document.
- 5.5. Policy 4: Approach to Flood Risk, requires applications be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment covering all sources of flooding and include the impacts of climate change. The development is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, which demonstrates that the site is safe from flooding and will not lead to flooding elsewhere, and a sequential test demonstrating that there are no reasonable alternative sites in areas with a lower flood risk has been included in this application.

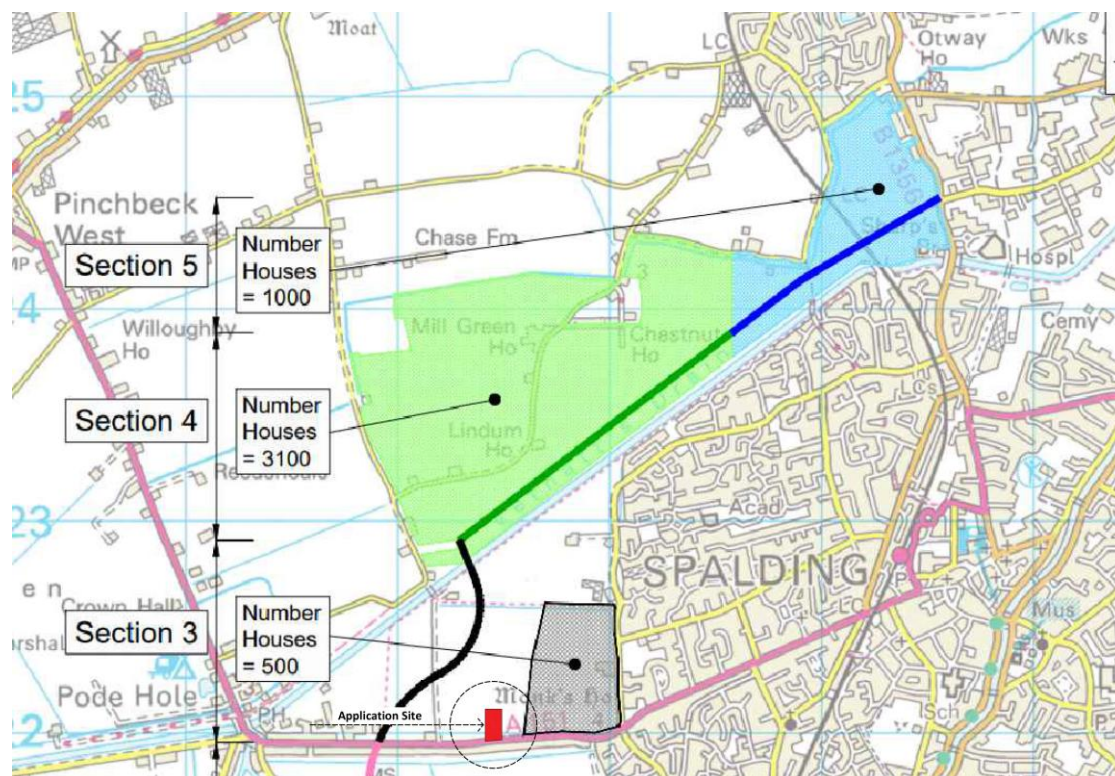
- 5.6. Policy 9: Promoting a Stronger Visitor Economy. It was suggested that the original proposal failed the aims of this policy. However, the proposal is not a tourism development: it is designed primarily to meet the health and wellbeing requirements of the local population. Whilst the proposal will attract participants from across the district, it is not a tourism attraction that falls to be considered against the aims and objectives of policy 9.
- 5.7. The previous refusal of planning permission stated that the proposal did not accord with Policy 24: The Retail Hierarchy. We have, therefore, expanded the area of search to the main settlements in the district and demonstrated that there are no reasonably available sites within settlement limits. This is not unsurprising given the area of land required, coupled with the specific requirements for the building and the relatively compact nature of the settlements in South Holland District.
- 5.8. Policy 28: The Natural Environment. The application site is currently in agricultural production and, therefore, of limited ecological interest. As per the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain regulations, the proposal is required to achieve at least a 10% post-development enhancement. The statutory metric has been completed, and it is likely that, whilst we can provide an element of biodiversity enhancement on site, the remainder will be off-site or through the purchase of credits. The proposal is, therefore, in accordance with Policy 28.
- 5.9. There is a high level of archaeological interest on the western side of Spalding. In accordance with Policy 29: Historic Environment applications in sensitive areas must be supported by an appropriate assessment of the impact on heritage issues. Early engagement with the County Council prior to the submission of the first application, resulted in geophysical surveying followed by a scheme of evaluation in the form of trial trenching. The results from the first archaeological evaluation are submitted again as part of this application and this represents a reasonable and proportionate evaluation of the site in archaeological terms. There are no other designated or non-designated heritage assets close to the application site that will be impacted upon by the proposal.
- 5.10. Policy 30: Pollution. Having regard to the nature of the proposal, we have prepared an updated Noise Assessment, and this is submitted as part of the planning application. The assessment concluded that " The

site can be considered suitable for the proposed development, as acceptable noise impact in accordance with planning guidelines and established acoustic criteria will be met". The proposal, therefore, complies with Policy 30.

- 5.11. Policy 32: Community, Health and Well-being. The proposal will lead to wider community use and, not only reduce health inequalities, but will also improve health and well-being, especially as the proposed racquet sports provided are so accessible. The latest iteration of the NPPF sets out at policy HC4 that proposals for new community facilities and development which makes a demonstrable contribution towards promoting good health, reduces health inequalities or supports social interaction in the local community should be given substantial weight.
- 5.12. The proximity of the proposal to the western side of Spalding, together with allocated housing sites and the allocated school site, means that it will have a customer base located nearby with easy access to the facilities.
- 5.13. The Connectivity Tool provided by the Department for Transport combines both land-use and transport data to measure how well each location in England, which is represented by a 100 metre by 100 metre grid resolution, is connected to key destinations such as schools, jobs, shopping and healthcare. This includes a calculation of accessibility and travel times via public transport, walking and cycling. As displayed on the Connectivity Tool map below, the score assigned to each area is colour coded and varies from the highest scoring areas in red to the lowest scoring areas in black. The tool identifies that the location of the proposal has a connectivity score of 48 out of 100. This is shown on the graphic below and indicates that the site has a medium level of accessibility. However, it should be noted that Spalding town centre has a connectivity score of only 77 out of 100 and overall, these levels of accessibility have to be viewed in the context of this part of Lincolnshire, where public transport in particular is infrequent. The plan below shows the application site in relation to Spalding.



Plan showing the application site (48) in relation to the centre of Spalding following use of the Department of Transport's Connectivity Tool map.



A section of the Spalding Western Relief Road route plan displaying the allocated housing site, with the proposed application site indicated in red.

6. DESIGN AND ACCESS

Design

- 6.1. As mentioned in earlier paragraphs, the principal building needs to be at least 6m to the eaves for Pickleball and 8m to the eaves for Padel. This dictates the external mass of the building and in order to reduce the overall scale of the original scheme, we have reduced the number of courts within the building to 4 and, instead, it is proposed to construct 4 covered courts and 4 uncovered courts to the north (rear).
- 6.2. An entrance into the building on the south west corner leads into a reception with office, shop and small cafe and seating. The welfare facilities are located towards the northern end of the building where they are as accessible as possible for those using both the internal and external courts.
- 6.3. The building measures 38.7m x 37.0m and consists of a main element where the padel courts will be accommodated, plus a lower lean to 'extension' where the pickleball/badminton court etc will be located. The eaves height is 9.8m (max) and 12.2m (max) to the ridge. These proportions are very much in keeping with the character of agricultural buildings seen across the district and the lack of windows and view visible doors adds to this character. As is now commonplace, there will be photovoltaic panels on the roof to ensure the most is made of renewable energy production.
- 6.4. The building will be clad in modern profile sheeting, which is again characteristic of agricultural buildings and the likely use of a two-tone grey finish will assist in breaking up the appearance of the building when viewed from Bourne Road.
- 6.5. To the north of the proposed building there will be 4 covered courts which sit largely behind (north) in relation to the main building, these courts have a Dutch barn type canopy over each one, which measures 8.2m to the top of the canopy. These are designed to keep out the worst of the weather enabling play to carry on year-round. Each court, including the 4 open uncovered ones, will be lit with specialist lighting that is designed to ensure there is no light spill and, therefore, light pollution beyond the site boundaries.

- 6.6. To the west of the main building there is a small wooden cabin, where it is intended to create an area where Pilates and other activities, complementary to the racquet sports, can be carried out. This cabin will sit behind a hedge and within the secure fenceline and will largely go unnoticed from beyond the site. North of the cabin will be the package treatment plant and an area of biodiversity net gain beyond that.
- 6.7. To the front of the building there will be a permeable car parking area, large enough to serve the anticipated number of players and staff. The boundaries of the site will be delineated with a green weldmesh fence, which will provide a secure environment, together with scrub and tree planting as shown on the proposed site plan.

Landscape Impact

- 6.8. Bourne Road from Pode Hole to the Monks House Lane/Broadway junction forms a transition between open countryside and the town proper. At Pode Hole there is development on both sides of the road and up to the junction with Monks House Lane/Broadway there is a continuous built-up frontage along the southern side of Bourne Road, together with a footway, street furniture, some street lighting in the vicinity of the site and a 40mph speed limit. The character of this part of Bourne Road is predominantly urban and, having regard to the planned development in the area, this urban character will only increase.
- 6.9. The proposed building is now considerably smaller than the first proposal and is set some 31m back from Bourne Road, which is 1.5m above the existing site levels. Having regard to the drop in levels from Bourne Road into the site, together with the retention of the roadside hedge, the impact will be reduced to that of views of the proposed roofscape as people drive by.
- 6.10. Views into the site from Monks House Lane will shortly be altered significantly by the new residential development currently under consideration (and eventually the proposed school).

Transport Statement

- 6.11. Bourne Road is a wide and well-lit road with good visibility in both directions and is subject to a 40mph speed limit. The necessary 2.4m x 90m visibility splays are indicated on the site plan. The location of the

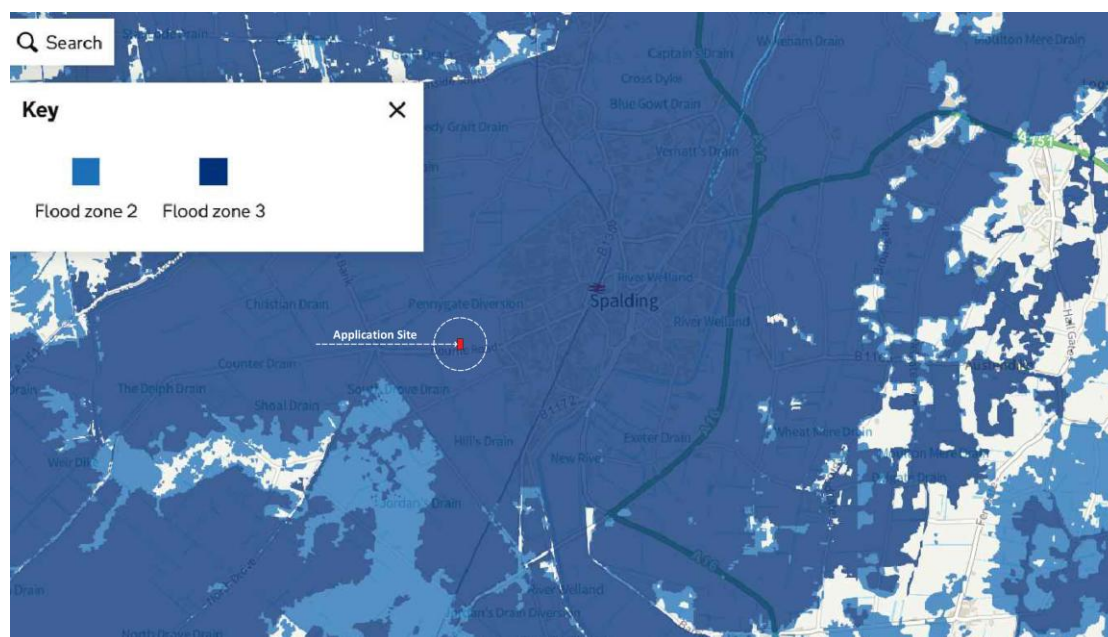
site provides a well surfaced and safe cycling route into the residential areas of the western side of the town in particular.

- 6.12. The southern side of Bourne Road has a footway linking Pode Hole with a pedestrian crossing at the Broadway junction with Winsover Road. The town is easily accessible on foot from the site along the southern side of Bourne Road.
- 6.13. Early consultation with the local highway authority on the first planning application concluded that the principle of the development in this location was acceptable, subject to detailed consideration.
- 6.14. An existing field access into the site will be upgraded to Lincolnshire County Council standards and there is a proposed tactile crossing point to lead people to and from the site onto the footway on the southern side of Bourne Road.
- 6.15. There will be 5-7 full-time members of staff, and a maximum of 48 people can play at any one time. It is highly unlikely that all 12 courts will be in use at the same time and attendance levels will vary through the day. Some of those attending the site will inevitably car share and so vehicle movements to and from the site will also vary throughout the day. Having regard to the proximity of the site to Spalding, there will be those who choose to walk and cycle and there is cycle store proposed on site.
- 6.16. It is, therefore, proposed to provide 50 car spaces, (plus a staff parking/overflow parking of 7 spaces) 2 disabled spaces, together with EV car charging provision.
- 6.17. The premises will be open from 7am to 11pm, 7 days a week.

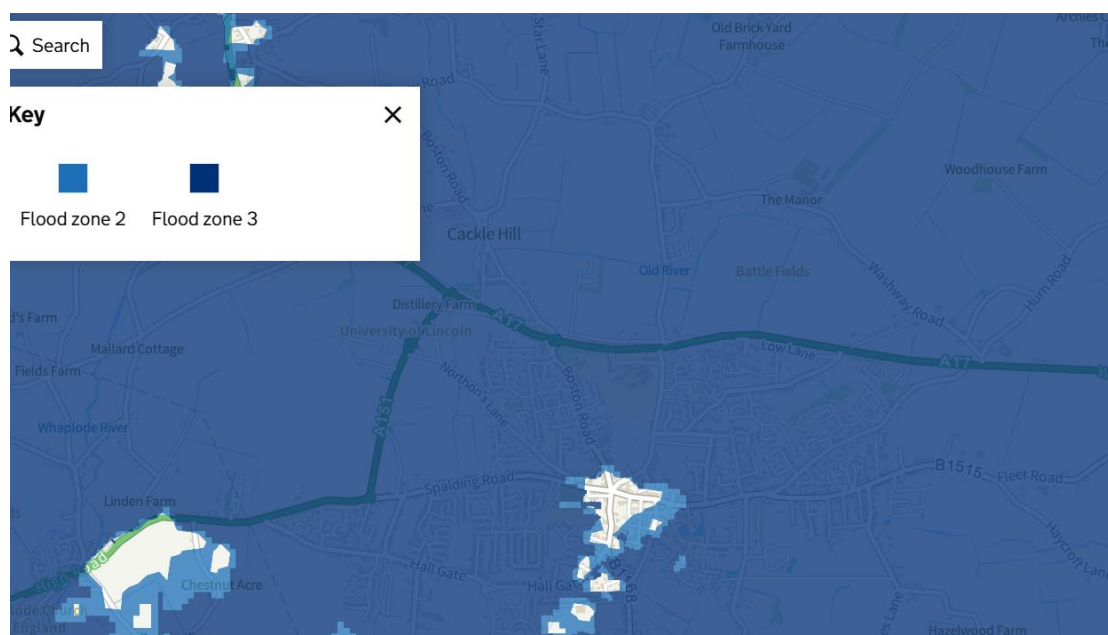
Flood Risk and Sequential Test

- 6.18. The application is accompanied by an updated Flood Risk Assessment, which indicates that the site is at a medium risk of flooding from rivers and sea with no risk from ground water.
- 6.19. It is recommended that the finished floor levels be raised by 500mm.
- 6.20. In sequential terms, the site lies within Flood Zone 3 and is classified as 'Less Vulnerable' development.
- 6.21. The entirety of Spalding and Pinchbeck within the settlement boundary is also within Flood Zone 3, and those areas around both settlements

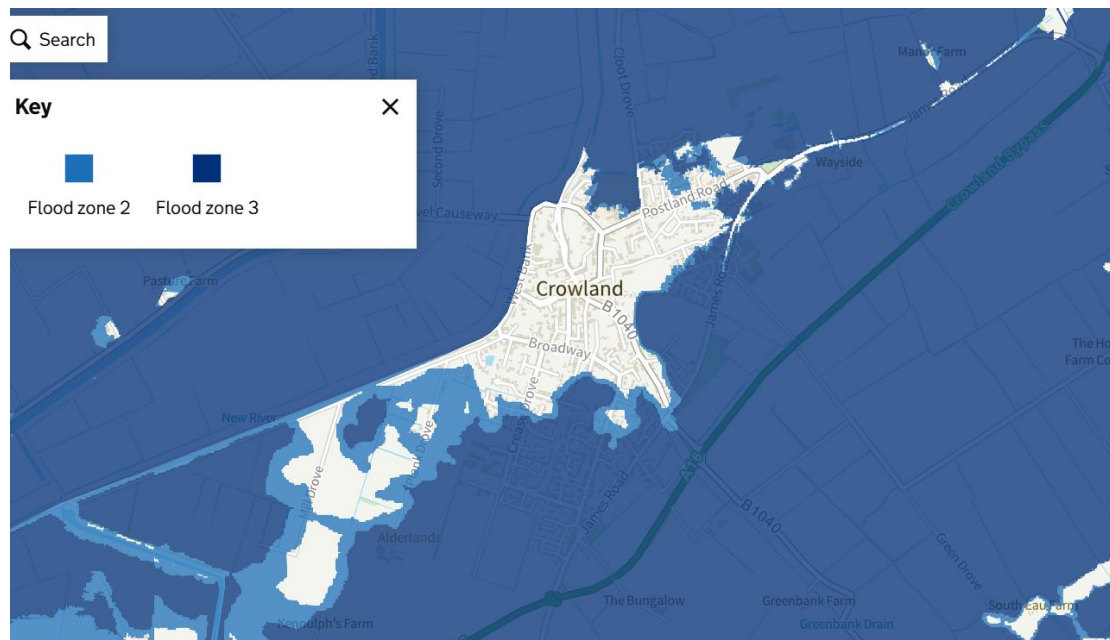
which are at a lower risk of flooding are also within the open countryside and, therefore, would fare no better against wider planning considerations.



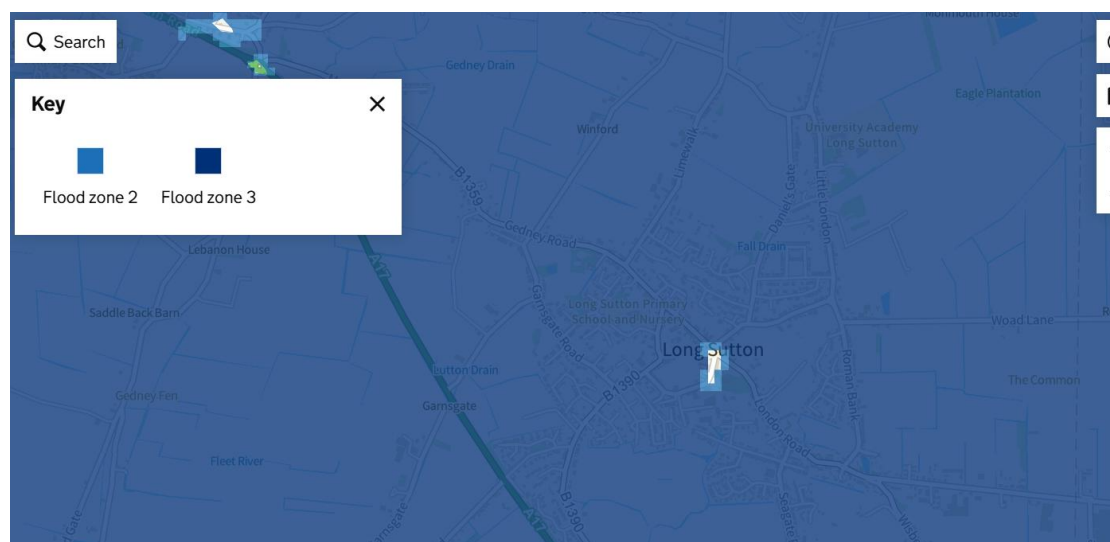
6.22. Similarly, Holbeach town is largely within Flood Zone 3, other than for the historic core, which has no sites or buildings available for the development. Again, sites in areas of lesser flood risk lie beyond the settlement boundary and are, therefore, no better in flood risk terms than the location of the proposal.



6.23. Crowland centre and some land along Crease Drove lie outside the Flood Zones 2 and 3, however, all this land is developed and, therefore, not available for the development. Beyond the settlement boundary all the land is again within Flood Zone 3.

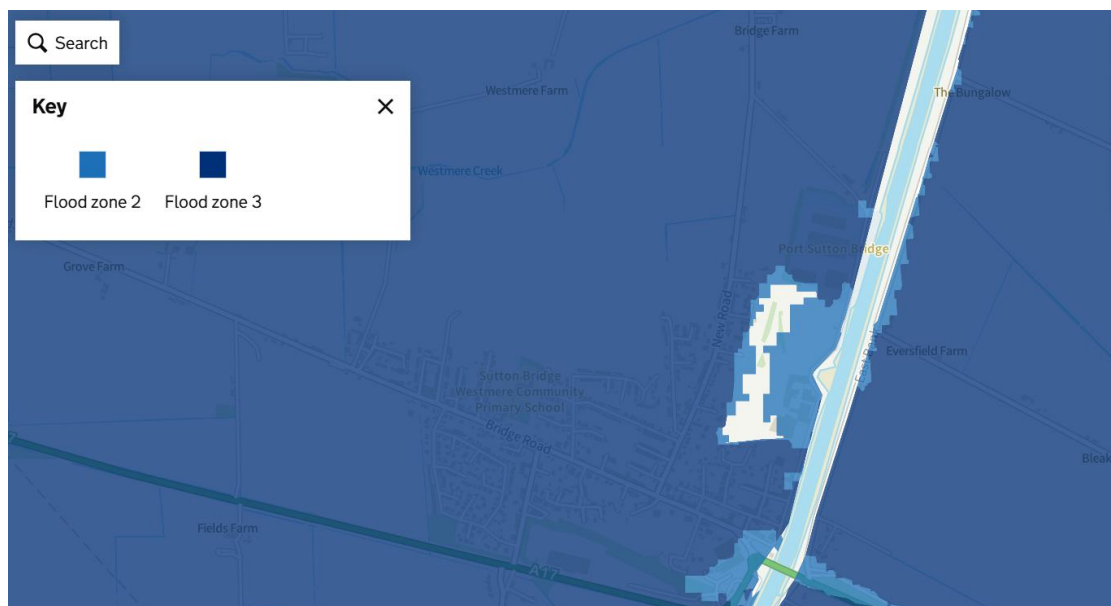


6.24. Long Sutton centre is also in an area at a lower risk of flooding, but, again, this area represents the historic core of the town and there are no buildings or land available for development. Beyond the core of the settlement, all other land is at the same Flood Risk as the application site.

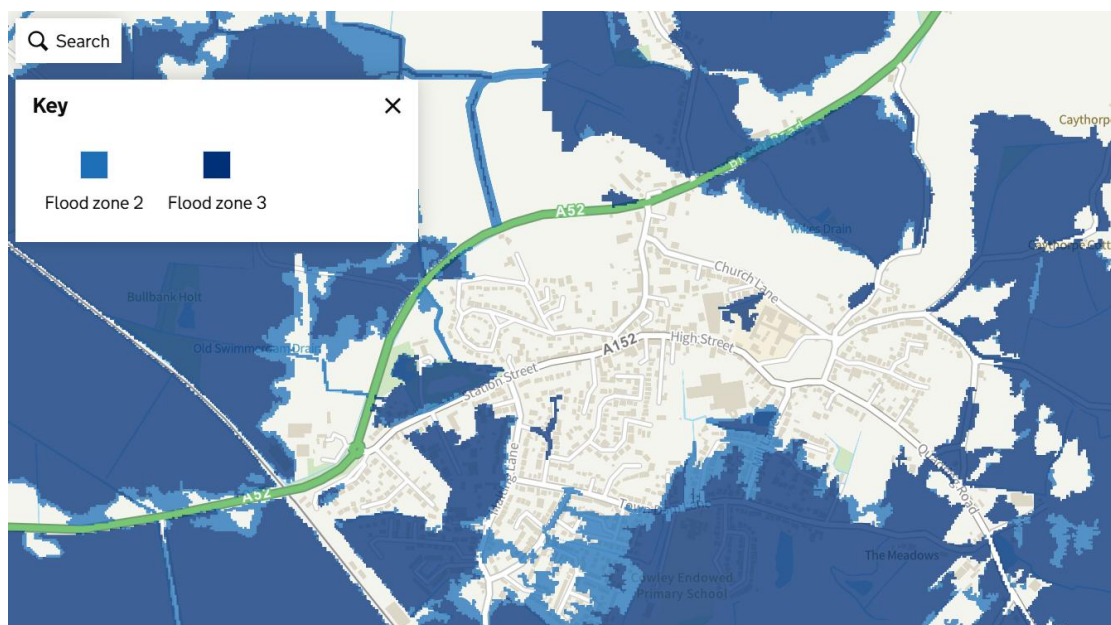


6.25. Sutton Bridge lies within Flood Zone 3, other than a thin area of Flood Zone 1 which is actually the Sutton Bridge golf course and, therefore, not available for development. Beyond the settlement boundary all the

land is within Flood Zone 3 and, therefore, not sequentially preferable to the application site.



6.26. Donington, to the north of the district, has areas of land at a lower risk of flooding but a search revealed that there was nothing reasonably available. Although Donington is a Main Service Centre its growth is limited to the service needs of the settlement and other local communities and does not perform as a sub-regional such as Spalding where there is a greater population to draw participants from.



6.27. Policy F5 of the NPPF sets out that "The aim of the sequential test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Where the test applies, development proposals should not

be located in areas at risk of flooding where alternative sites, **appropriate for the development, are reasonably available in areas with a lower risk of flooding.** The area to which the test is applied **should not be greater than the anticipated catchment of the development in terms of its likely occupiers or users."**

- 6.28. The principal area of search has been limited to the sub-regional centre of Spalding and the Main Service Centres as this will form the majority of the catchment area and it is evident that there are no areas of land that area available at a lower risk of flooding.
- 6.29. Development classified as Less Vulnerable does not need to pass the Exception Test.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1. It is proposed to construct a Padel and Pickleball centre in response to the significant rise in popularity of these accessible and inclusive racquet sports.
- 7.2. The Bourne Road site is close to the settlement boundary and within walking distance of the main residential areas of the town.
- 7.3. A review of reasonable available sites within the settlement boundary reveals that few are available, and, of those that are available, none are suitable or meet the requirements of the project.
- 7.4. The western side of the town is seeing significant housing development, and the allocated school site and proposed relief road will see further change in the coming years.
- 7.5. A revised Noise Assessment indicates that the proposal will operate without detrimental impact on residential amenity, and the Flood Risk Assessment concludes that the site is safe from flooding and the Sequential Test concludes that there are no alternative sites which are available or suitable at a lesser risk of flooding.
- 7.6. The proposal will contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community and add to the sporting provision within the town in accordance with local plan policy 32 and policy HC4 which places significant weight on proposals which promote good health and community well-being.
- 7.7. When measured against the prevailing policies in the development plan, the proposal is acceptable and, when exercising the planning balance, the location of the proposal just beyond the settlement boundary is also acceptable.

APPENDIX A

Letters from the Lawn Tennis Association and Pickleball England

Tom Mapp
Delivery Manager
Lawn Tennis Association

18/08/2025

Dear Sir / Madam

RE: Support for Padel & Pickle Ball Installation

I am writing to formally express my strong support for the proposed padel and pickle ball installation to the west of Spalding along the Bourne Road (52°46.89762'N, 0°10.99062'W)

This initiative aligns closely with the Lawn Tennis Association's (LTA) strategic priority to develop strong, healthy communities through accessible, inclusive sports opportunities.

Padel is a rapidly growing sport that appeals to people across all ages and abilities, providing an excellent platform to encourage physical activity and social engagement within the local community. The chosen location near Spalding will enable widespread access, fostering inclusion and bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds.

This development promises to enhance local sports provision and promote wellbeing, contributing positively to the quality of life for residents. I fully endorse this project and the significant community benefits it will deliver.

Yours sincerely,
Tom Mapp
LTA Delivery Manager





PickleballEngland
The Oaks, The Street, Selmeston, East Sussex BN26 6UD
[REDACTED]@pickleballengland.org [REDACTED]
<https://www.pickleballengland.org>
@pickleballengland

14th September 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Pickleball England to express our strong support for the development of the proposed new **pickleball and padel facility** installation to the west of Spalding along the Bourne Road (52°46.89762'N, 0°10.99062'W).

Pickleball England is the national governing body for pickleball in England, and we represent a fast-growing community of players, clubs, coaches, and volunteers across the country. We are at a critical inflection point in our growth. Over the past few years, we have seen an exponential rise in interest in pickleball. This demand has been met largely through the adaptation of existing multi-use spaces – leisure centres, tennis courts, community halls – which have been instrumental in supporting the sport's initial development.

However, for pickleball to continue its upward trajectory and to fully realise its potential, we now need a new generation of **dedicated, purpose-built or converted facilities**. These facilities not only meet the specific needs of the sport, but also foster community engagement, provide consistent access for players of all ages and abilities, and enable clubs to thrive and grow.

The few independent pickleball facilities that have already launched in this country have demonstrated just how powerful this model can be. They have quickly become **vibrant community hubs**, drawing in new participants, offering high-quality coaching and social play, and hosting competitive events. With demand continuing to outstrip supply, there is an urgent need to scale this success by enabling the creation of many more such venues. We also support the inclusion of **padel** alongside pickleball, recognising the shared appeal and complementary nature of both sports. Together, they offer compelling opportunities to attract diverse audiences, encourage physical activity, and enhance the local sporting landscape.

We therefore strongly support the proposed development and encourage planners, funders, and stakeholders to recognise the **significant sporting, social, and health benefits** it will deliver.

If we can provide any further information or data to support your application, we would be happy to do so.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Karen Mitchell
Chair & Co-Founder
Pickleball England

APPENDIX B

Individual and Community Support Correspondence

Letters of Support

Introduction

As part of the preparation of this planning application, a range of local organisations, businesses, schools and community stakeholders were invited to review the Racquet Space proposal.

The letters contained within this appendix demonstrate support for the proposed development and recognise the potential benefits that Racquet Space could bring to Spalding and the surrounding area, including increased opportunities for participation in sport, improvements to health and wellbeing, community engagement, youth development and economic investment.



Your Ref: 1 SHEARD

Our Ref:

Contact: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Date:

12th June 2026

@sholland.
gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

As District Councillor for Monkshouse Ward and County Councillor for Spalding Elloe, I am writing to express my full support for the proposed indoor racquet sports facility to provide dedicated courts for pickleball and padel in South Holland.

Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the UK and is particularly accessible for residents aged 50+. Padel appeals to all ages. Both tackle inactivity, loneliness and improve mental and physical wellbeing which are key priorities in South Holland health and wellbeing strategy.

We currently have no dedicated indoor padel courts and limited indoor space for pickleball in the district. Residents are travelling to Peterborough or Boston. This project would keep activity and spend local.

Pickleball is low impact and small court size makes it ideal for older residents, those with mobility issues, and juniors. Padel is social and easy to learn. Together they widen access beyond traditional tennis or squash.

The facility has the potential to create jobs, attract visitors should there be an ambition to expand the reach of the sport at a later date, and increase footfall into Spalding supporting our town centre and leisure economy.

The site is well placed with parking. An indoor hall provides all weather use and reduces noise compared to outdoor courts, addressing typical resident concerns. The project aligns with SHDCs Corporate Plan objectives: 'Your Place' and 'Healthy Lives'.

I urge officers and members to support this application. It delivers real social value, meets proven demand, and future proofs leisure provisions in South Holland.

Yours,

[REDACTED]
Cllr Ingrid Sheard
South Holland District Council
Monkshouse Ward, Spalding Elloe

To whoever it may concern,

I write in support of a new community based local Spalding project being promoted.

My name is Paul White Partner at Brown & Co a Lincolnshire based firm and keen racket sports player.

I am aware of the local Spalding family who are attempting to gain planning permission to develop a racket centre on the edge of Spalding called Racquet Space I think.

The centre proposed will be a modern indoor racquet sports venue, including padel, pickleball, and badminton all forming part of the facility. But there intention is to develop much more than that and incorporate other activities for both adults and children.

The family are I know trying to create something that will genuine benefit Spalding and the surrounding area, incorporating racket sports with a welcoming community venue where people of all ages and abilities can become more active, improve their health and wellbeing, whilst creating opportunities for businesses, schools and community organisations to also come together.

There will be a significant number of new jobs created for the area and a space where people will come to improve not only their health but wellbeing as well.

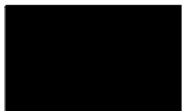
Their plan will be to try to involve both local business, organisations, community initiatives, including school partnerships, after-school clubs, holiday camps, inclusive coaching, beginner programmes and work experience opportunities for young people.

As they prepare for the planning application, organisations across the area are being consulted to understand how Racquet Space can best support both the local community and local businesses.

Knowing the family behind this I am happy to lend my support to the project and I hope they are successful in obtaining planning permission required to allow this to go ahead.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this, please contact me if I can be of any more help.

Kind regards,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Paul White.

Paul White
Partner
Brown & Co

A solid black rectangular box used to redact contact information, likely a phone number or email address.

Community Questionnaire Responses

Introduction

As part of the community engagement undertaken during the preparation of this planning application, Racquet Space invited members of the public to complete an online questionnaire to better understand local demand for the proposed development.

The questionnaire sought feedback on the proposed facilities, preferred sports, community programmes and the wider benefits that residents believe Racquet Space could bring to Spalding and the surrounding area.

The following pages summarise the responses received and demonstrate the level of local interest and support for the proposal.

Help Shape Racquet Space

We'd love your thoughts

Racquet Space is being designed for the people of Spalding and the surrounding area, so before we submit our planning application we'd really like to hear what you think.

Your feedback will help us shape the venue and, with your permission, your comments may also help demonstrate community support as part of our planning application.

It only takes a couple of minutes.

First name	Mel
Last name	
Email	
1. Which best describes you?	Local Resident
2. If Racquet Space opened tomorrow, which sports would you be most interested in?	I'd like to try all of them
3. How likely would you be to use Racquet Space?	Likely
4. Which activities would interest you most? (Select all that apply)	Casual court bookings, Cafe & social space
7. Do you think Racquet Space would be a positive addition to Spalding and the surrounding area?	Yes
9. We'd love to use your comments. Would you be happy for us to quote your feedback (using your first name only) within our planning application and future project updates?	Yes

Every response helps us build the best possible facility for our community and demonstrates the level of local support for the project. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts.

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It only takes a couple of minutes.

First name	Sean
Last name	
Email	
1. Which best describes you?	Local Business Owner
2. If Racquet Space opened tomorrow, which sports would you be most interested in?	Pickleball
3. How likely would you be to use Racquet Space?	Very Likely
4. Which activities would interest you most? (Select all that apply)	Casual court bookings, Social sessions, Cafe & social space, Leagues
5. What excites you most about Racquet Space?	Having somewhere local to play one of the fastest and popular sports .
6. Is there anything you'd particularly like us to include?	As many courts as possible to produce a venue that people will come from all over the uk to play.
7. Do you think Racquet Space would be a positive addition to Spalding and the surrounding area?	Yes
8. If yes, we'd love to know why.	As above
9. We'd love to use your comments. Would you be happy for us to quote your feedback (using your first name only) within our planning application and future project updates?	Yes

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It only takes a couple of minutes.

First name	Ashley
Last name	
Email	
1. Which best describes you?	Local Resident
2. If Racquet Space opened tomorrow, which sports would you be most interested in?	Padel
3. How likely would you be to use Racquet Space?	Very Likely
4. Which activities would interest you most? (Select all that apply)	Casual court bookings, Leagues
5. What excites you most about Racquet Space?	A venue being close to home rather than travelling to Boston or spalding
6. Is there anything you'd particularly like us to include?	Food/drink facilities
7. Do you think Racquet Space would be a positive addition to Spalding and the surrounding area?	Yes
8. If yes, we'd love to know why.	Another option for sports in the community
9. We'd love to use your comments. Would you be happy for us to quote your feedback (using your first name only) within our planning application and future project updates?	Yes

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It only takes a couple of minutes.

First name	Josh
Last name	
Email	
1. Which best describes you?	Local Resident, Parent / Guardian
2. If Racquet Space opened tomorrow, which sports would you be most interested in?	Padel, Badminton
3. How likely would you be to use Racquet Space?	Very Likely
4. Which activities would interest you most? (Select all that apply)	Casual court bookings, Social sessions, Leagues
7. Do you think Racquet Space would be a positive addition to Spalding and the surrounding area?	Yes
9. We'd love to use your comments. Would you be happy for us to quote your feedback (using your first name only) within our planning application and future project updates?	Yes

Every response helps us build the best possible facility for our community and demonstrates the level of local support for the project. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts.

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It only takes a couple of minutes.

First name	Clive
Last name	
Email	
2. If Racquet Space opened tomorrow, which sports would you be most interested in?	Badminton
3. How likely would you be to use Racquet Space?	Maybe
4. Which activities would interest you most? (Select all that apply)	Corporate events
5. What excites you most about Racquet Space?	Being able to play with others
6. Is there anything you'd particularly like us to include?	Wisbech club has a night for bagminton and you ramdamly get your parnters drawn out
7. Do you think Racquet Space would be a positive addition to Spalding and the surrounding area?	Yes
8. If yes, we'd love to know why.	Most clubs are full with waiting lists
9. We'd love to use your comments. Would you be happy for us to quote your feedback (using your first name only) within our planning application and future project updates?	Yes

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It only takes a couple of minutes.

First name	Angie
Last name	
Email	
1. Which best describes you?	Local Resident
2. If Racquet Space opened tomorrow, which sports would you be most interested in?	Padel, Pickleball, Badminton, I'd like to try all of them
3. How likely would you be to use Racquet Space?	Very Likely
4. Which activities would interest you most? (Select all that apply)	Casual court bookings, Beginner coaching, Social sessions, Leagues, Walking sports, Cafe & social space
5. What excites you most about Racquet Space?	A place to play racquet sports with like minded people. To socialise and meet new people within the area. A chance to play new sports
7. Do you think Racquet Space would be a positive addition to Spalding and the surrounding area?	Yes
8. If yes, we'd love to know why.	As above
9. We'd love to use your comments. Would you be happy for us to quote your feedback (using your first name only) within our planning application and future project updates?	Yes

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It only takes a couple of minutes.

First name	Izabela
Last name	
Email	
1. Which best describes you?	Local Resident
2. If Racquet Space opened tomorrow, which sports would you be most interested in?	Badminton
3. How likely would you be to use Racquet Space?	Maybe
4. Which activities would interest you most? (Select all that apply)	Beginner coaching, Casual court bookings, Social sessions, Family activities
7. Do you think Racquet Space would be a positive addition to Spalding and the surrounding area?	Yes
9. We'd love to use your comments. Would you be happy for us to quote your feedback (using your first name only) within our planning application and future project updates?	No

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It only takes a couple of minutes.

First name	Melanie
Last name	
Email	
1. Which best describes you?	Local Resident
2. If Racquet Space opened tomorrow, which sports would you be most interested in?	I'd like to try all of them
3. How likely would you be to use Racquet Space?	Likely
4. Which activities would interest you most? (Select all that apply)	Social sessions
7. Do you think Racquet Space would be a positive addition to Spalding and the surrounding area?	Yes
9. We'd love to use your comments. Would you be happy for us to quote your feedback (using your first name only) within our planning application and future project updates?	Yes

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APPENDIX C

Sequential Review of Suitable locations

Sequential Review of Suitable locations

Spalding and Pinchbeck:

Site	Site details	Height to eaves	Unsubdivided interior	Floor area in excess of 1400 sqm	Pros	Cons
Wardentree Lane	A 21-acre site offering freehold plot sales or bespoke design-and-build packages through the Lindum Group. It is surrounded by established business and major transport links.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes (8.094 hectares)	Site is 8.094 hectares in area	Site is allocated in the SELLP for employment purposes and discussions with LPA have indicated that the sports use would not be suitable within the allocated area for B1 (now E G) iii)

Holbeach:

Site	Site details	Height to eaves	Unsubdivided interior	Floor area in excess of 1400 sqm	Pros	Cons
Land at Holbeach Drove Gate, Holbeach	A triangular parcel of land extending to approximately 2.75 acres.	N/A	N/A	Yes (2.75 acres)	Enough floor space to provide for the needed 3000 sqm	No nearby services or public transport Not in close proximity to any employment or housing site. Property directly to the north would have residential amenity affected by the development Open countryside development, possibly unacceptable under Policy 1.
Roman Bank , Holbeach Clough	Plot of land with Full Planning Permission in established residential area-Site area approx. 270 sqm-BNG requirement fulfilled on adjacent land	N/A	N/A	No (270 sqm)	Surrounded by 3 sites identified as potential housing sites (Hob036, Hob043, Hob054)	Unsuitable to be used as it is below the 3000 sqm threshold needed to accommodate the development. Not close to any designated employment sites

Crowland:

Site	Site details	Height to eaves	Unsubdivided interior	Floor area in excess of 1400 sqm	Pros	Cons
Former Wyevale Garden Centre, Postland Road, Crowland	3 units ranging from 6,740 to 57,130 sq ft on a 13.45-acre plot.	4.89 sqm maximum which is insufficient for the intended use.	Yes	Yes	Directly opposite housing allocation Overall site is 13.45 acres with the main site being 4.069 acres (16466.659 sqm). this is well above the required 3000 sqm Outside of settlement boundary Within close proximity to the A16 Crowland by-pass	The eaves height is not sufficient enough to accommodate the proposed development
Hereward Way, Crowland	Land available with provisional planning permission for two residential plots.	N/A	N/A	Land only	Biodiversity fees have already been paid	Housing site not large enough for the proposal

Site	Site details	Height to eaves	Unsubdivided interior	Floor area in excess of 1400 sqm	Pros	Cons
Crowland Car Wash	Included in the local Brownfield Land register, this site presents smaller-scale commercial development or retail potential.					building and site not large enough

Long Sutton:

Site	Site details	Height to eaves	Unsubdivided interior	Floor area in excess of 1400 sqm	Pros	Cons
Spring Gardens	A site within an established residential area extending residential area to about 560sqm, which includes 13 existing garages with scope for alternative development.	N/A	N/A	No (560sqm)	Close to the housing allocation of Los015	Site not large enough

Site	Site details	Height to eaves	Unsubdivided interior	Floor area in excess of 1400 sqm	Pros	Cons
Former Butterfly and Wildlife Park	A 15.6-acre site planned for large-scale residential development. Previous Schemes included outline approval for an 87-unit residential scheme, with larger proposals submitted for up to 150 units	N/A	N/A	N/A	Large site capable of being developed with a bespoke proposal	Allocated housing site with extant planning permission for housing

Donington:

Site	Site details	Height to eaves	Unsubdivided interior	Floor area in excess of 1400 sqm	Pros	Cons
A52 Donnington Bypass Site	Approximately 2.5 acres (1.01 Hectares) of freehold agricultural land situated adjacent to the A52 trunk road and Park Lane.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Sufficient space for a bespoke development Within walking distance of the primary shopping area. Outside of the settlement boundary and partly in	Potential for impact on residential amenity due to the adjacent residences on Park Lane. Site outside settlement boundary and therefore no better sequentially than the application site.

Site	Site details	Height to eaves	Unsubdivided interior	Floor area in excess of 1400 sqm	Pros	Cons
					Flood Zone 3 identified in the SHLAA for housing	
Gleed Avenue	A former local authority garage site in Gleed Avenue, Donington (PE11 4UF). It is accessed via a gravel track.	N/A	N/A	No (1,000 sqm)	Within walking distance of Primary Shopping Area, Established Employment Sites, and Housing Commitments	Access via a relatively narrow gravelled entrance track is not suitable Unsuitable to be used as it is below the 1400 sqm threshold needed to accommodate the development or indeed any associated servicing or biodiversity net gain.

A design consultancy specialising in
Town and Country Planning,
Landscape Architecture and
Architecture