



## SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

PROJECT: PROPOSED OFFICE AND LEISURE FACILITY

AT:  
BRIDGE FARM,  
HOLBEACH ROAD,  
SPALDING,  
PE12 6JP

Project Reference: 25171

Date: 27/10/25  
Written by: J.KNIGHT

# SUPPORTING STATEMENT

AREA: OFFICES

## **South Holland District Council**

### **Planning Department**

#### **Introduction**

We are seeking planning approval to renovate and sensitively convert the existing agricultural barn at Bridge Farm into high-quality office space, alongside the creation of a padel tennis club on the surrounding land.

Our vision is to restore and protect the barn's distinctive rural character while introducing sustainable new uses that will secure its long-term future. Our family is passionate about bringing underused heritage buildings back to life and this will be our fifth project.

#### **Vision and Purpose**

We believe the way people live and work has changed significantly since 2020, with a stronger emphasis on achieving a balance between work, wellbeing, and community connection. As a locally based Financial Services business, we have struggled to find modern, fit-for-purpose office space in the area with many offices being designed for the old way of working.

This proposal offers a solution that not only provides high-quality office accommodation but also contributes to a healthier, more balanced lifestyle through the inclusion of the padel tennis club. Together, these elements will create a vibrant hub where local people can work, socialise, and stay active.

#### **Community Engagement and Local Benefit**

- We are committed to using local tradespeople, suppliers, and design professionals throughout the project, ensuring that investment directly supports the South Holland economy.
- The project is being delivered in partnership with another local business (KCC), with the full support of the landowners and neighbouring properties. We believe combining the skills of ourselves and KCC, it will help deliver a better project and therefore help more local people.
- The padel facility will create a shared community asset, encouraging physical activity and providing a new leisure opportunity that is inclusive and accessible.
- The development will also promote active travel, with pedestrian, cycle, and EV charging access integrated into the design.

#### **Economic and Social Benefits**

- As our family-run Wealth Management business continues to grow, this development will allow us to create and sustain local employment opportunities, including new administrative and advisory roles.
- We are committed to apprenticeship recruitment, supporting young people in developing digital and financial skills that align with South Holland's future economic needs.

- A proportion of the new office space will be available to other local professionals or health and wellbeing services, complementing the padel facility and strengthening the site's community offer.
- At a time when many banks and advisory firms are reducing their physical presence, this project provides a locally accessible, face-to-face service, reinforcing community trust and financial inclusion.

### **Design and Environmental Considerations**

- The design prioritises heritage-led restoration, retaining and showcasing the barn's traditional red brickwork, vaulted roof, and arched openings while removing unsympathetic later additions such as the asbestos shed.
- The layout has been developed to enhance biodiversity, with dedicated green space and native planting to support wildlife. We feel this will also be a nice space for staff to spend time and aid their mental wellbeing.
- We have engaged local environmental experts to guide an ongoing biodiversity enhancement plan, ensuring the site contributes positively to its rural setting.
- Both the office and padel club buildings will follow sustainable design principles, incorporating improved insulation, efficient heating systems, and opportunities for renewable energy generation where possible.

### **Policy Alignment**

We have previously submitted a Pre-application and have ensured that any of the comments and feedback given at the time have been addressed.

We have focused on the key principles of the South Holland Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly in relation to:

- Re-use of existing rural buildings for appropriate commercial purposes.
- Rural diversification supporting economic growth.
- Sustainable transport and access improvements.
- Enhancement of local character and biodiversity.

### **Conclusion**

Our family sees this project as an opportunity to rescue a beautiful but deteriorating building, giving it a sustainable new use that reflects modern working and lifestyle needs.

By combining employment, recreation, and environmental improvement, this proposal delivers tangible benefits for the South Holland community — creating jobs, supporting wellbeing, and preserving local heritage for future generations.

We hope the Council recognises the long-term social, economic, and environmental value of this scheme and supports our vision to bring Bridge Farm back to life.

Kind regards

Graham & Natasha Bowater

## SUPPORTING STATEMENT

AREA: PADEL



South Holland District Council  
Planning Department

77 Leisure  
c/o KCC House  
Scoldhall Lane  
Surfleet  
PE11 4BJ

Dear Sir / Madam

### **Supporting Statement for Planning Approval**

We propose to build three padel courts on this site. Our vision is that this facility will act as a new sporting hub for the local community, filling a gap in provision, raising physical activity, and engaging youth and families. There is currently no known padel facility in the immediate area, meaning local residents must travel significant distance to play. This proposed development would bring opportunity to the local catchment.

### **Community Engagement & Inclusive Access**

- We have contacted local primary schools in the area to assess interest in free padel lessons during and after school. We aim to allocate several hours per week for free coaching for children, so that cost is not a barrier.
- We are welcoming schools to run groups to participate in paddle sessions during school hours to add something interesting to their physical education.
- Through this, we expect to introduce a new sport to children who might not otherwise access racket sports, fostering long-term health, enjoyment and club membership.
- We commit to offering “come and try” sessions, club taster days, and community leagues so that residents of all ages and abilities can try padel. This will include offering concession discounts for the elderly and tailored sessions. These may include gentle introduction lessons, social play opportunities, and age-appropriate coaching designed to promote physical activity, mental wellbeing, and social connection among older adults. We believe padel can be a fun and accessible sport for all ages, and we aim to ensure that older residents feel welcome and supported in using the facility.



- We will seek to work with local sports development officers and clubs to integrate the facility with other local sports offerings, so that the courts become part of (not isolated from) local provision.
- The facility can host school tournaments, inter-school matches, after-school clubs, and community events (e.g. charity fundraisers, senior sessions, mixed-age social leagues).

### **Growing Popularity & Demand for Padel**

- Padel is one of the fastest growing sports in Great Britain: by the end of 2024, some 400,000 adults and juniors had played padel at least once in the preceding 12 months. ([LTA Padel](#))
- The number of courts in the UK has grown rapidly (893 courts across c.300 venues) to meet rising demand. ([Padel Business Magazine](#))
- The number of adults playing padel “twice monthly” doubled from c.23,000 in 2022/23 to c.51,000 in 2023/24. ([Padel Business Magazine](#))
- Awareness is rising sharply: in 2025, 43 % of UK adults report awareness of padel (c. 23 million people). ([thepadelpaper.com](#))
- Many padel venues across Britain are already engaged in community outreach, school partnerships, free sessions and coaching for underserved groups – so there is no reason as to why we couldn’t be a part of the same. ([LTA Padel](#))
- Given that there is effectively no nearby provision in the target area, we believe unmet demand will be significant.

### **Benefits to Local Community & Wellbeing**

- **Health & Wellbeing:** Padel offers moderate-to-vigorous physical activity, accessible to all fitness levels. Introducing a new sporting option can help reduce sedentary behaviour, obesity, and mental health issues.
- **Social Cohesion:** The courts will provide a space for social interaction for families, friends, older adults, newcomers.
- **Economic / Local Spend:** Users are likely to spend locally (cafés, shops, transport). The facility may attract modest footfall, especially from outside the immediate area. Springfields Outlet is only across the road and is only a short journey into the town centre.



- **Sporting Pathways:** The courts can act as a hub for local talent development in racket sports, possibly feeding into county/regional padel or tennis clubs.
- **Diversification of Leisure Offer Offerings:** The courts will complement existing leisure and sports facilities rather than compete; by offering something new.
- **Affordability and accessibility for beginners:** Padel is a highly accessible sport with minimal equipment requirements. Players only need a racket and balls to get started. To encourage participation, especially among beginners and those new to racket sports, we will provide free loan rackets for introductory sessions and starter lessons. This ensures that cost is not a barrier to entry and supports wider community engagement.

### **Site Design, Mitigation & Considerations**

- In designing the courts, we will ensure appropriate acoustic mitigation (e.g. sound-absorbing fencing, buffer planting, orientation away from sensitive dwellings, limited hours of use) to manage noise. There are no major housing developments nearby.
- To minimize environmental impact and preserve the character of the surrounding area, we will only be lighting the padel courts themselves. Lighting will be carefully designed to reduce glare and light spill
- For the car park and accessible pathways, we will install low-level, solar-backed lighting to ensure safe access while maintaining a low visual footprint. This approach supports sustainability, reduces energy consumption, and ensures the site remains welcoming and safe without unnecessary illumination.
- Access, car parking, cycle parking, pedestrian connectivity, and facility integration (changing rooms, toilets) will be carefully handled to ensure the site is welcoming, safe, and inclusive.
- Management will adopt a bookings / occupancy system to avoid overuse, crowding or anti-social behaviour, ideally by authorised apps for racket sports so that we can effectively manage the hours and bookings.
- A well-run facility with proper oversight, community engagement, and responsive management can typically coexist well with surrounding uses.



- The design of the facility will be carefully developed to reflect and complement the surrounding rural landscape and adjacent farm buildings. Architectural elements will mimic traditional Lincolnshire outbuildings by using materials, forms and finishes. Even the canopy structure will draw inspiration from agricultural buildings such as cow sheds, helping the development blend naturally into its setting. This approach ensures the courts and associated structures sit comfortably within the landscape, preserving rural character.

## **Conclusion**

This development represents an opportunity to bring a new, rapidly growing sport to an area currently underserved. The community engagement plans, free lessons for schools, and inclusive programming help ensure broad local benefit. Given the demonstrable rise in demand for padel nationally, along with the lack of local courts, this proposal meets a genuine need rather than speculative provision. With sensitive design and careful management, the courts can be a positive addition to the local sport and leisure infrastructure.

To conclude, we know 77 Padel Club will offer a new huge benefit to the residents of South Holland.

Kind regards

Summer Casey

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