

Padel Court Noise

Ivy House Cafe & Padel, Ivy House Farm, Broad Lane, Markfield

Application reference: 26/00691/FUL **Our reference:** CADE 26-31 **Date:** September 2026

1. Purpose of this statement

1.1 This statement addresses the potential for noise arising from the proposed padel courts at Ivy House Farm, and is submitted in support of the planning application. It sets out the recognised guidance applicable to padel noise and explains why the characteristics of this site place the proposal comfortably within acceptable guidelines to prevent any loss of amenity to surrounding users.

1.2 This is a supporting noise context statement rather than a formal noise impact assessment.

2. Guidance context

2.1 There is at present no UK-specific assessment methodology or numerical standard for noise from padel courts. In the absence of one, UK practice has settled on two recognised reference points, both of which are applied below.

Dutch padel noise guidance (2023)

2.2 The Netherlands has published the first national guidance document on padel noise anywhere in the world. It presents both distance planning and fixed sound criteria that may be appropriate for new padel courts in rural and built-up areas, together with a representative sound power level for modelling a court. Given that the equipment to be installed and used is identical across countries, this approach is applicable to the UK.

2.3 For a rural or quiet residential area the background noise levels are taken to be 45 dB(A) daytime, 40 dB(A) evening and 35 dB(A) night. For a mixed area the equivalent figures are 50 / 45 / 40 dB(A).

2.4 The guidance gives a representative sound power level of 91 dB LWA for a single padel court.

Sport England and World Health Organisation guidance

2.5 The Sport England design guidance note on artificial grass pitch acoustics (2015) draws on the WHO Guidelines for Community Noise (1999). Taking an internal daytime target of 35 dB LAeq and

allowing 15 dB attenuation for a partially open window, it derives an external daytime figure of 50 dB LAeq measured approximately one metre from the facade of a habitable room. The same guidance notes that where a new source does not exceed the existing noise climate by more than 3 dB, then the change is not perceptible.

3. Site characteristics at Ivy House Farm

3.1 Three features of the application site are material to the assessment of padel noise.

Separation distance

3.2 There is no residential property fronting or immediately adjoining the proposed court area. The nearest dwellings lie at a substantial remove from the courts, across intervening open land and established planting. The Dutch guidance presents distance planning alongside its fixed sound criteria, reflecting that separation is the single most effective control on padel noise: under standard ISO 9613 propagation, sound from a source of this type ***falls by approximately 6 dB for every doubling of distance***, before any account is taken of ground absorption or shrubland screening.

Intervening screening and vegetation

3.3 The proposed courts are screened from all surrounding residential property by mature trees and dense established hedging, with a substantial block of woodland lying between the site and the adjacent school car park. Planting of this depth provides a measurable attenuation in its own right, and in combination with the ground absorption afforded by the intervening soft landscaping it further reduces levels below the free-field figures set out in Section 4. Best estimates used indicated that tree belts reduce noise levels by around 10 dB.

3.4 Equally importantly, the screening removes the line of sight between the courts and any dwellings, which is well established as reducing the reported disturbance associated with a given noise level.

3.5 Finally, the proposed courts will be enclosed by reinforced glass screens. This will block noise at its source, reducing its horizontal dissipation over the surrounding area.

Adjoining land use

3.4 The land immediately adjacent to the proposed courts is the South Charnwood High School car park, separated from the site by the woodland belt described above. A car park is not a noise-sensitive receptor. The courts are consequently sited against the least sensitive available boundary, on land that falls away, placing it lower than the noise receptors to the north.

3.5 The car park is not limited to school hours. It remains in active use into the evening for sports event, with vehicles arriving and departing until approximately 22:00. Engine noise, vehicle manoeuvring, door closures and associated pedestrian activity are therefore an established and recurring feature of the noise climate at this boundary across both the daytime and evening periods, and are audible at the surrounding properties.

3.6 Padel activity at the separation distances set out in Section 4 would introduce sound levels below those already arising from this existing evening use. Where a new source does not exceed the existing noise climate, the resulting increase will be no more than 3 dB, which is the smallest change normally perceptible. The contribution of padel play to the evening noise climate at this boundary is therefore expected to be marginal.

4. Indicative noise levels

4.1 Applying the representative sound power level of 91 dB LWA given in the Dutch guidance to the courts, and calculating free-field propagation over a reflecting plane, gives the indicative levels set out below. These figures deliberately exclude ground absorption over soft ground, screening, and the attenuation of the woodland belt, each of which would reduce them further (a context/mitigation off scenario). They should be read as a conservative upper bound.

Separation distance	Indicative level, LAeq (dB)	Against rural daytime guide value of 45 dB
100 m	43	Below guide value
150 m	39	Below guide value and below evening guide of 40 dB
200 m	37	Below guide value and below evening guide of 40 dB
250 m	35	Below all three day, evening and night guide values
300 m	33	Below all three day, evening and night guide values

4.2 On this basis, and assessed against the stricter rural guide values rather than the mixed-area values, the daytime guide value of 45 dB(A) is met at separations of 100 metres and above, before any allowance is made for ground absorption or for the screening described in Section 3. The separation between the proposed courts and the nearest residential property at this site is just over 60m, which on this basis suggests a level of 55 dB without any mitigation or consideration of its setting.

- 4.3 Factoring in the intervening tree belt in place at the school site, this would reduce noise levels by 10 dB. Any additional tree planting and soft landscaping on the application site would potentially further reduce this level. Assuming a no-mitigation arrangement, this would deliver a scheme in line with the necessary 45 dB(A) levels to prevent any audible disturbance above expected background levels. Given the provision of the school car park adjacent to this property, ambient noise levels will already be higher than a standard rural environment.
- 4.4 As part of the proposal, the glass enclosure around the courts will consist of acoustic glass. It has been indicated that for 4m high screens, this can reduce noise levels beyond the court by up to half that without any mitigation. Glass screens of 3m are included as part of this proposal, so the reduction would be less than half, but any reduction would clearly have a measurable effective at reducing the levels considerably below those noted above, placing them comfortably within acceptable levels.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The application site benefits from substantial separation between the proposed courts and the nearest residential property, from mature trees and dense established hedging screening the courts on every approach, and from a non-sensitive adjoining land use in the form of the school car park, which itself generates vehicle movements throughout the daytime and evening. Assessed against the stricter rural guide values, the indicative levels fall below the daytime guide value with a comfortable margin, once the environment is considered. Any further reduction from the acoustic glazing will ensure that levels sit below the recommended WHO guidelines, and the noise already arising from the adjoining car park in use.
- 5.2 The proposal is therefore expected to present a low risk of adverse noise impact at all nearby receptors, and no additional mitigation is considered necessary.

References

Handreiking Padel en Geluid, 2023. Een praktisch handvat dat partijen kan helpen bij een juiste afweging en inpasbaarheid.

Sport England, 2015. Design Guidance Note: Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) Acoustics — Planning Implications.

World Health Organisation, 1999. Guidelines for Community Noise.