

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Ambrose Street and Clayton Lane South, Manchester

Change of use of a warehouse (Use Class B2/B8) to temporary indoor sport use (Use Class E(d)) for temporary period of 5 years



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1 Introduction

Overview

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Padel Plan ('the agent') and is submitted in support of a planning application made to Manchester City Council ('the Council') on behalf of Padel Republic ('the applicant') seeking full planning permission for the '*Change of use of a warehouse (Use Class B2/B8) to temporary indoor sport use (Use Class E(d) for temporary period of 5 years*' ('the proposal') at 39 Clayton Lane South, Manchester, M12 5PG ('the site').
- 1.2 The Planning, Design and Access Statement provides detailed commentary on the application site, its surrounding and the relevant planning history before providing a detailed description of the proposed development. A summary of relevant national and local planning policies and guidance is then provided before presenting an assessment of the proposal in the context of adopted planning policy and other material considerations.

Application Submission

- 1.3 In accordance with the Council's validation requirements the application comprises the following submission documents which should be read in conjunction with this statement. A comprehensive package of plans and drawings prepared by GT Brace CAD Services is also included with the application as summarised below:

Table 1.1 – Application documents

Document Title	Prepared by
Application Form and Ownership Certificate	Padel Plan
Planning Statement (inc. Design and Access)	Padel Plan

Table 1.2 – Application drawings

Drawing Title	Drawing Number
Site Location Plan	PP/AMB/001
Existing Site Plan	PP/AMB/002
Proposed Site Plan	PP/AMB/003

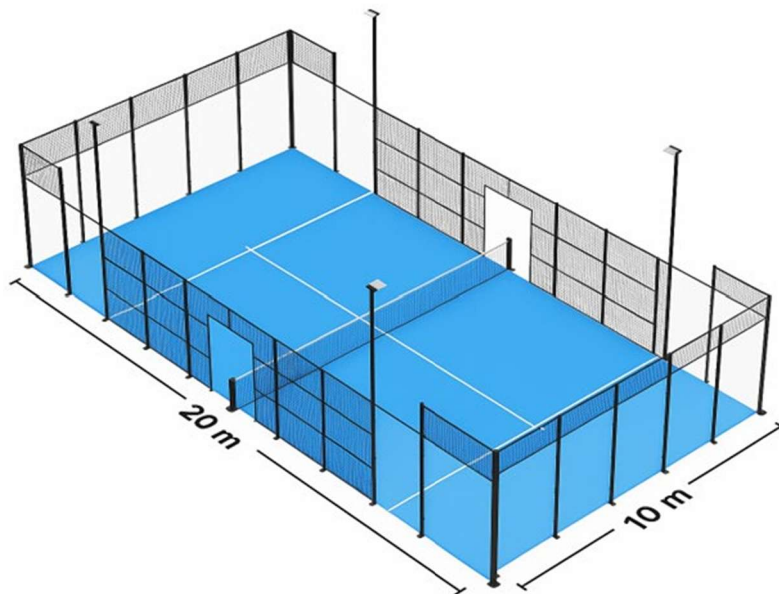
Padel Republic – The Applicant

- 1.4 Padel Republic are established padel operators who currently run two other padel facilities in Preston and Wallasey. These existing sites are currently performing well, indicating a level of demand that has led to them seeking to expand their operation into East Manchester on the site put forward as part of this planning application.

What is Padel?

- 1.5 Padel is described by the Lawn Tennis Association as “the fastest growing sport in the world”, with approximately 890 courts available in 2025 in the UK. It is accessible for all age ranges and abilities which undoubtedly contributes to its popularity.

Figure 1.1 – Typical doubles padel court



- 1.6 Padel is one of the fastest-growing sports in the UK, with its popularity surging in recent years. Originating in Mexico and widely played in Spain and Latin America, padel is a hybrid of tennis and squash, typically played in doubles on enclosed courts. Its rapid rise in the UK is driven by its social, inclusive nature and its accessibility to people of all ages and abilities.
- 1.7 The benefits of padel extend beyond participation numbers. The sport promotes physical and mental wellbeing, offers a highly social and community-oriented environment, and provides an accessible route to sport for those who may be less engaged with more traditional fitness activities. It is particularly well-suited for older players, beginners, or those returning to sport, due to the smaller court size and slower-paced rallies. The sport’s format fosters social connection,

teamwork, and repeat participation, contributing to improved mental health and community cohesion.

- 1.8 A key aspect of padel's UK growth has been the adaptive reuse of vacant or underused industrial buildings. These structures, often centrally located, well-serviced, and with generous internal space, offer ideal conditions for covered padel courts, allowing year-round play in all weather. Repurposing such sites has breathed new life into redundant industrial assets, transforming them into vibrant, multi-use leisure destinations.
- 1.9 This trend not only addresses demand for indoor sporting space but also supports urban regeneration by reactivating empty or disused premises. Former warehouses, hangars, and light industrial units have been successfully converted into padel centres, providing much-needed recreational infrastructure without the need for new-build development on greenfield land. These conversions align with wider sustainability goals by promoting efficient land use, supporting local employment, and reducing the environmental impact of constructing new leisure buildings from scratch.

2 Site Context

Site Description

- 2.1 The site is located 3.7km southeast from the centre of Manchester, located within East Manchester, at the south end of Ambrose Street, comprising of an industrial warehouse. The site is accessed from Ambrose Street and Clayton Lane South, with the immediate surroundings comprising industrial warehouses and similar business uses. The total development site area is approximately 1,250m².
- 2.2 The nearest residential properties are located approximately 80 metres to the south of the proposed padel court facility. Given this separation distance, it is considered that the development would not give rise to any adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents.
- 2.3 An aerial site plan is shown in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1 – Aerial Site Plan



Designations

- 2.4 The nearest listed building is approximately 330 metres to the southeast of the site, a Grade II* listed building. Owing to the separation distance and intervening landscaping and built form the

proposed padel courts are not considered to affect the setting or significance of these heritage assets.

- 2.5 In addition, the site lies within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3 as identified on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning and therefore ranges from a low to high risk of flooding, a detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will accompany this application.
- 2.6 The site is not located within any specific designation identified in the Local Plan.

Planning History

- 2.7 The most relevant planning history relating to the site that is accessible on the Council's planning portal is summarised in the table below:

Table 2.1 – Site Planning History

<i>Application Ref</i>	<i>Description of Development</i>	<i>Decision / Date</i>
114235/FO/2016	Erection of two storey extension to form ancillary offices to an existing industrial unit (Class B2)	Approved Dec 2016
F07422	Use of existing commercial vehicle garage, storage unit and offices for similar purposes but as part of the adjoining site occupied by the applicants, who are chemical manufactures and suppliers.	Approved Nov 1977
F05992	Single-storey extension to factory to form storage for steel tubing.	Approved Mar 1977

3 Proposed Development

Application Proposal

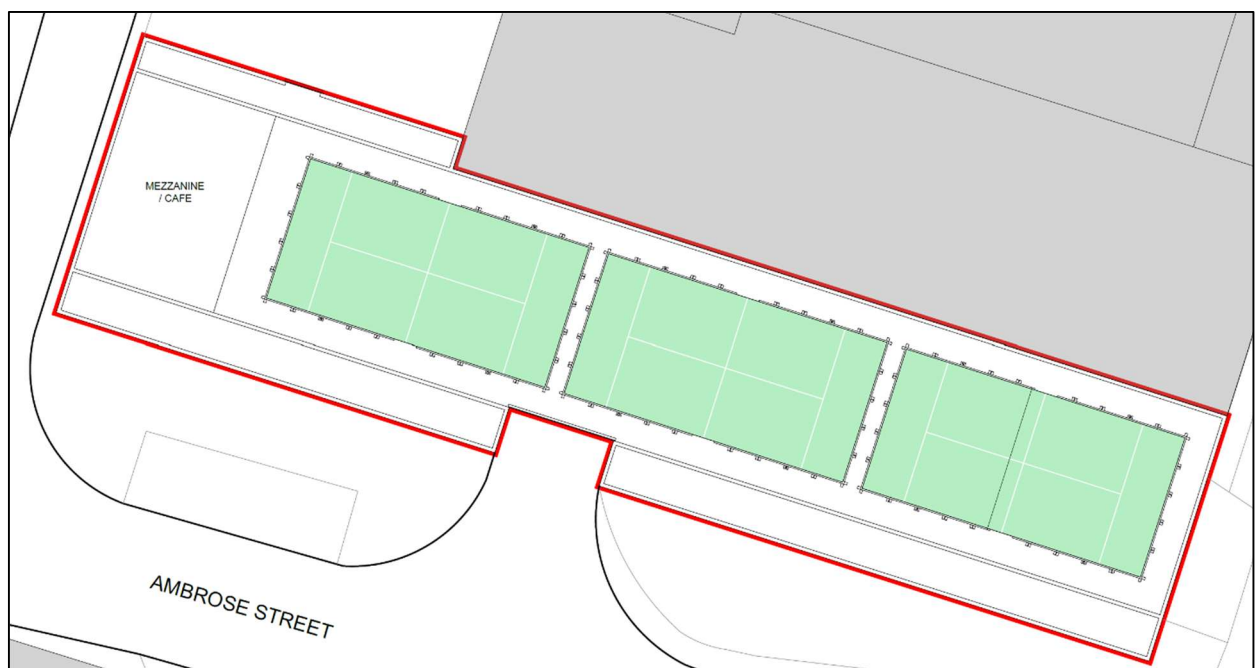
- 3.1 The proposal is for the change of use of a warehouse (Use Class B2/B8) to temporary indoor sport use (Use Class E(d)) for temporary period of 5 years.
- 3.2 It is proposed to erect three padel tennis courts within the building with an associated café and mezzanine floor at the west end of the building. The main physical changes to the building will be internal.
- 3.3 The proposals include the creation of a mezzanine floor at the western end of the building. This will provide a seating and viewing area for players and spectators using the facility, together with an on-site café. In addition, changing and toilet facilities will be provided within the warehouse to support the operation of the development.
- 3.4 The proposed development comprises a high-quality indoor padel facility accommodating three padel courts. Each court will be constructed using a combination of glazed panels and wire-mesh enclosure, consistent with standard competition-grade padel court design. The playing surfaces will consist of specialist artificial turf suitable for indoor padel use, providing appropriate grip, performance and durability.

Internal Layout

- 3.5 The internal arrangement of the building has been carefully designed to ensure efficient circulation, accessibility and a high-quality customer experience. The building will contain:
 - Reception and lobby area located at the principal entrance off Ambrose Street, providing a welcoming arrival point with direct visibility over the courts.
 - A mezzanine floor will be created at the west end of the warehouse, which will be accessible via a dedicated internal staircase and positioned to overlook the court area, creating natural surveillance and an enhanced spectator environment.
 - Cafe and servery/shop area, providing refreshments, light food and retail items for players will be located on the mezzanine floor. The food and beverage offer is ancillary to the courts and will be only set up to meet the requirements of those playing in the facility.
 - Male and female changing rooms, each equipped with showers, lockers and W/C facilities.

- 3.6 A key aspect of ensuring that a building can operate as a padel venue is ensuring that there is adequate internal roof clearance to ensure that there is no interference in-game when shots are played, in particular lobs.
- 3.7 The applicant has undertaken a detailed assessment of the internal roof heights at the site. However, to summarise, it shows that the roof area at the site has a clear height of over 8m which is in line with guidance of the LTA for indoor padel venues.

Figure 3.1 – Proposed Floor Plan



4 Planning Policy

Decision Taking

- 4.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ('the 1990 Act') states that where an application is made to a local planning authority for planning permission, the authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application. The development plan in the instance is the Manchester Local Plan ('MLP'). This sets out local policies which relate to specific issues and objectives as well as the wider development strategy of the area.
- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ('the 2004 Act') requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 ('NPPF') and Supplementary Planning Documents are material considerations.

National Planning Policy Framework – December 2024

- 4.3 The NPPF sets out the Government's overarching policy framework for planning and is a material consideration in the determination of applications. The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. To achieve sustainable development, the NPPF states that economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life.
- 4.4 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', which for decision-taking means "approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless: any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits..."
- 4.5 Paragraph 39 of the NPPF is clear that "Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way". In accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, LPAs should "work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area..."

Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”.

- 4.6 Paragraph 96 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should “enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs – for example through the provision of ... sports facilities”. Paragraph 103 goes on to outlines that “Access to...opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.”

The Development Plan

- 4.7 The development plan is the starting point for the consideration of planning applications. As set out above, the development plan for Manchester City Council consists of the Manchester’s Local Development Framework – Core Strategy (CS) (adopted July 2012) and Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) (adopted March 2024).
- 4.8 The Plans set out the Council’s planning and land use policies and the following policies are considered relevant in the consideration of this application:

Table 4.1 CS Policies (extracts only)

Policy	Summary
<i>SP1</i>	Spatial Principles
<i>EC1</i>	Employment and Economic Growth in Manchester
<i>EC2</i>	Existing Employment Space
<i>EC5</i>	<i>East Manchester</i>
<i>C4</i>	<i>East Manchester District Centres</i>
<i>C10</i>	<i>Leisure and the Evening Economy</i>
<i>EN11</i>	<i>Quantity of Open Space, Sport and Recreation</i>
<i>EN14</i>	<i>Flood Risk</i>

Table 4.1 PfE Policies (extracts only)

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Summary</i>
<i>JP-S1</i>	Sustainable Development
<i>JP-S4</i>	Flood Risk and the Water Environment
<i>JP-P6</i>	<i>Health</i>
<i>JP-P7</i>	<i>Sport and Recreation</i>

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 4.9 SPDs are a material planning consideration. At the time of writing, the Council has 10 adopted SPDs. However, none of these are considered to be relevant to the proposal on this occasion.

5 Planning and Design Assessment

5.1 Taking into account the characteristics of the site, the nature of the development proposal and the planning context, it is considered that the key issues to be assessed in the determination of this planning application are as follows:

- Principle of Development;
- Employment Land and Change of Use;
- Design;
- Flood Risk; and
- Highway Safety and Access.

Principle of Development

5.2 The proposed development seeks to change the use of the existing warehouse to an indoor padel facility (Use Class E(d)). The remainder of the warehouses attached to the property will remain in their current operation, which fall within Use Classes B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution). The site is located within a small area of warehouses dedicated to storage and distribution uses. The site is not subject to any specific policy designations. As such, the proposed change of use is considered to represent a beneficial use of the site.

5.3 It has increasingly been demonstrated that warehouses, such as the proposed site, provide the ideal conditions for padel facilities, offering generous ceiling heights and substantial floor areas. There are already examples of similar warehouse conversions within the Council's boundary. The change of use of this warehouse to a padel facility will provide employees within the business park with a recreational outlet, while also offering residents and the wider community of East Manchester access to a high-quality sporting facility. This aligns with both local and national policy objectives which encourage active lifestyles and enhance the range of leisure opportunities available to local communities.

5.4 The proposed change of use to an indoor padel facility presents a beneficial re-use of the site, making more effective use of an existing building while diversifying the local economy. The Council is generally supportive of proposals that provide indoor sport and recreation facilities particularly Policy EN 10 of the CS which states that the Council will support "*proposals that improve the quality and quantity of accessible open space, sport and recreation in the local area.*" Given that padel is one of the fastest growing sports in the UK, the introduction of this facility in East

Manchester would contribute to the enhancement of local recreational opportunities, promoting health, wellbeing, and community engagement.

- 5.5 Based on the above it is considered that the Proposed Development meets the overarching aims and objectives of the development plan and NPPF and should be deemed acceptable in principle.

Employment Land and Change of Use

- 5.6 The site is located within East Manchester as such, Policy EC5 is applicable. The policy expects East Manchester to provide approximately 80–50 hectares of employment land, with the policy identifying the Openshaw area, in which the site is located, as offering opportunities for small-scale, mixed-use local employment. The surrounding area is primarily characterised by industrial and storage uses.
- 5.7 A key emphasis of Policy EC5 is to ensure that the area supports a diverse mix of employment-generating uses while also integrating effectively with the surrounding East Manchester neighbourhoods. The proposed padel development aligns closely with these objectives. In addition to contributing to the area's economic function through job creation and associated activity, the scheme introduces a high-quality leisure use that will serve both local residents and the wider catchment. This will help to foster stronger links between the site and the surrounding communities, encouraging greater activity, natural surveillance, and social interaction. As a result, the development will not only complement the employment focus of the area but also play a meaningful role in creating a more vibrant, inclusive and well-integrated local environment, fully consistent with the aims of Policy EC5.
- 5.8 The proposal seeks to change the use of the existing warehouse, currently in industrial and storage use (Use Class B2), to an indoor padel facility (Use Class E(d)). In this context, the development would retain the wider adjoining warehouse in employment use whilst contributing to a more diverse range of local economic activities.
- 5.9 As the existing use falls within Class B2, Policy EC1 of the Core Strategy is applicable. Policy EC1 prioritises economic growth through the delivery of combined social, economic, and environmental regeneration. The proposed development aligns with this objective by supporting the diversification of the local economy and contributing to the regeneration of the area.
- 5.10 PfE supports long-term economic growth. Policy JP-J1 places emphasis on maintaining a high level of economic diversity across the region. The proposed padel facility would contribute to this

objective by introducing a complementary leisure use, broadening the area's economic offer, and generating employment opportunities, including coaching and facility management roles.

- 5.11 Furthermore, the introduction of a leisure facility in this location would enhance access to health and wellbeing activities, supporting active lifestyles within the local community. Padel is an increasingly popular sport, attracting participants from a wide range of locations, and therefore has the potential to generate additional footfall and support surrounding businesses.
- 5.12 The site is also well-connected and accessible to local residents, making it a sustainable location for such a use and supporting its successful integration within the surrounding area.
- 5.13 Overall, it is considered that the proposed change of use from Class B2 to Class E(d) would retain the site in an employment-generating use whilst introducing a more diverse and complementary form of development within the area. As such, the development is considered to comply with relevant policies within the PfE and the MLP CS.

Design and Residential Amenity

- 5.14 Given that the immediate surrounding area is predominantly industrial and consists of business and commercial uses, it is considered that the operation of a padel facility at this location would not have any adverse impacts on neighbouring businesses. Also, taking into account the distance between the site and the nearest residential properties being over 80 meters, it is concluded that the proposal would not result in any unacceptable impact on residential amenity in terms of noise, disturbance, or general activity associated with the padel facility.
- 5.15 No external alterations are proposed to the existing warehouse building. The development will be limited to internal works required to facilitate the change of use, including the installation of three padel courts and associated ancillary facilities. These will comprise a reception area, changing facilities, and a mezzanine level accommodating a café.

Flood Risk Impact

- 5.16 The site is located within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3, as such policy EN 14 applies the policy requires that proposals must demonstrate that the level of flood risk associated with the site is acceptable. As the site is already a developed warehouse which has been in place for many years the impact on flood risk from the proposed development would not have any impact. As such it is considered that a flood risk assessment is not required for this change of use.

- 5.17 Overall, the change of use from a storage facility to an indoor padel facility would not have any detrimental impact on the flood risk of the site and is compatible with the policy framework for flood risk.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.18 The Environment Act 2021 now requires the vast majority of development to demonstrate the delivery of a 10% net gain in biodiversity. However, as the padel courts are to be located in an existing warehouse and they will impact less than 25m² of existing habitat and therefore the development is considered to fall under the de minimis exception outlined in the Environment Act 2021 and the requirement to demonstrate a 10% net gain is no longer applicable.

Highway Safety and Access

- 5.19 The site benefits from a range of transport options including train, bus, car, and cycle access. The site is located approximately 250m from the Ashburys Train Station regular services to the wider area, bus stops are also located along Pottery Lane, which also provide regular services to the wider area. Car parking and bike storage will be provided at the entrance of the site on Ambrose Street. This connectivity makes the site easily accessible for visitors and supports sustainable modes of transport.
- 5.20 Access to the site will be via Ambrose Street and Clayton Lane Street, which is considered safe and appropriate for the anticipated level and nature of traffic associated with the proposed development. Traffic generation is expected to be limited and infrequent, in line with the scale and recreational use of the facility. Visitors to the padel courts will make use of the dedicated on-site parking spaces located at the front of the warehouse. Therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of highway safety, access, and overall transport impact.

6 Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has demonstrated that the proposed change of use of the warehouse Ambrose Street, to an indoor padel facility represents a well-considered, sustainable and policy compliant development that will deliver clear economic, social and community benefits for East Manchester.
- 6.2 On all planning matters, including residential amenity, access and parking, noise, and flood risk, the proposal has been shown to be acceptable. The change of use will generate significantly fewer large vehicle movements than the lawful B8/B2 use, reducing potential conflict with neighbouring businesses and the nearby residential area. Noise impacts are minimal due to the indoor nature of the activity and will be further managed through the design of the internal space. The development supports sustainable travel through cycle storage access to bus and train travel, and it is considered that the change of use will not impact upon the Flood Risk of the site.
- 6.3 Compliance with all other relevant MLP policies with regard to design, residential amenity, drainage, and highway safety has been demonstrated and thus it is considered that the proposed development is also acceptable with regard to all other material planning considerations.
- 6.4 On the basis of the above, it is respectfully requested that Officers support the application, and permission is granted at the earliest opportunity.