

Design and Access Statement

Proposed Community Padel Facility

Land Adjacent to the A71, Loudoun Estate, Galston, East Ayrshire

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the development of a two-court community padel facility on land adjacent to the A71 at Loudoun Estate, Galston, East Ayrshire.

The application is being promoted by Galston Community Development Trust as part of its objective to improve local sporting and recreational opportunities for the wider Irvine Valley community.

The proposal comprises:

- Two outdoor padel courts
- LED floodlighting
- Access paths and perimeter fencing
- Ancillary storage provision
- Automated gate access and online booking infrastructure

The facility will operate as a community sports venue open to both members and non-members through an online booking and pay-and-play system.

The proposal has been informed by the “Padel in Galston – Feasibility Study” prepared by Advantage Sports Consultancy Ltd (Rev May 2026).

2. About Padel

Padel is widely recognised as one of the fastest growing participation sports in the UK and internationally. The sport is governed in the UK through the LTA and combines elements of tennis and squash in an accessible and highly social format.

Padel is suitable for all ages and abilities and is particularly attractive because it is easy to learn, inclusive and family-friendly. The sport contributes positively to physical and mental wellbeing and encourages regular participation in physical activity.

The feasibility study identified significant unmet demand for padel facilities within Galston and the wider Irvine Valley catchment, with no comparable facilities currently available locally.

3. Site Analysis

The application site is located adjacent to the A71 on Loudoun Estate on the eastern approach to Galston, beside the Scottish Paintball Centre.

The site previously operated as a floodlit sports area and benefits from an established recreational character. The proposal therefore represents the continued use of the land for outdoor sport and leisure purposes.

The site benefits from:

- Excellent visibility from the A71 corridor
- Existing vehicular access arrangements
- Existing parking provision
- Good accessibility from Galston, Newmilns, Darvel and Kilmarnock
- No residential properties in close proximity
- Existing leisure and recreational uses nearby

The proposed courts are positioned within an existing surfaced area capable of accommodating the development with minimal site alteration works.

The feasibility study confirms that the site is physically suitable for the proposed development and offers strong accessibility and operational advantages.

4. Design Proposal

The proposed courts have been designed in accordance with International Padel Federation (FIP) and LTA/SAPCA guidance.

Each court measures 20m x 10m and is enclosed by galvanised steel framework infilled with clear toughened glass and open mesh panels. The courts are designed to create a visually lightweight and open appearance appropriate to the leisure setting.

The proposal includes:

- Two padel courts on a flexipadel metal decking
- Artificial grass playing surfaces
- Toughened glass wall panels
- Powder-coated galvanised steel structure

- LED floodlighting mounted directly onto the courts
- Automated access gate and booking controls

The courts will be installed on Flexipadel metal decking bases, reducing permanent ground disturbance and allowing a more flexible and sustainable construction solution.

The development makes efficient use of an existing sports and leisure site while delivering a modern community sporting facility.

5. Access

The facility will operate through an online booking and remote access system allowing both members and non-members to book and access the courts.

The proposal is intended to maximise community access and participation and is not restricted to any private membership group.

Vehicular access will utilise the existing entrance arrangements serving the wider site and existing parking provision will accommodate anticipated usage levels.

Pedestrian access will be provided via routes from the parking area to the courts.

The development has been designed with inclusive access principles in mind and includes:

- Level access routes
- Accessible court entrances
- Safe circulation around the courts
- Automated access arrangements

The location is highly accessible from surrounding Irvine Valley communities via the A71 corridor.

6. Landscaping

The proposal involves limited landscaping works associated with the immediate court surroundings.

Any planting introduced around the courts will be low-level and intended to soften views of the development while maintaining visibility and site security.

The wider character of the site and surrounding leisure environment will remain unchanged.

7. Construction

The proposal has been designed to minimise construction impacts and site disturbance.

The use of modular Flexipadel court bases removes any excavation requirements and limits construction traffic movements compared with traditional construction.

Existing access arrangements and infrastructure will be utilised wherever possible.

8. Operational Management

Hours of Operation

The courts are proposed to operate between:

- 8:00am and 10:00pm daily

These hours are considered appropriate for a community sports facility and consistent with the surrounding leisure context.

Floodlighting

LED floodlights will be controlled through the online booking system to ensure lights operate only during booked sessions.

The lighting system will:

- Minimise light spill beyond the site boundary
- Use energy-efficient LED fittings
- Be mounted directly to the court structures
- Automatically switch off at the end of bookings

The site has a history of floodlit sports use.

Noise and Amenity

Padel generates moderate levels of player and ball impact noise associated with normal recreational activity.

The site benefits from limited nearby residential development and adequate separation distances from neighbouring properties.

The modest scale of the proposal, combined with controlled operating hours and the existing recreational character of the site, ensures that amenity impacts remain limited and appropriate.

9. Merits of the Proposal

The proposed development will deliver significant public and community benefits including:

- Provision of a new and inclusive sport facility
- Increased participation in physical activity
- Enhanced health and wellbeing opportunities
- Junior coaching and community sports development
- Improved recreational provision within the Irvine Valley
- Increased use of an existing leisure site
- Positive social and community impacts

The feasibility study identified strong local demand and demonstrated the long-term operational sustainability of the facility.

The proposal aligns with local and national planning objectives supporting community wellbeing, sport participation and active lifestyles.

10. Conclusion

The proposed two-court community padel facility represents an appropriate and sustainable form of recreational development on land adjacent to the A71 at Loudoun Estate, Galston.

The proposal will create a high-quality and accessible community sports facility serving Galston and the wider Irvine Valley, addressing a clear gap in local sporting provision while delivering substantial health, social and economic benefits.

The development makes efficient use of an existing recreational site, benefits from good accessibility and limited amenity constraints, and is considered suitable and appropriate in this location.

The proposal is therefore considered to merit support from the planning authority.