

Proposed Padel Courts

Unsworth Cricket Club,
Pole Lane, Unsworth,
BL9 8LI

March 2026

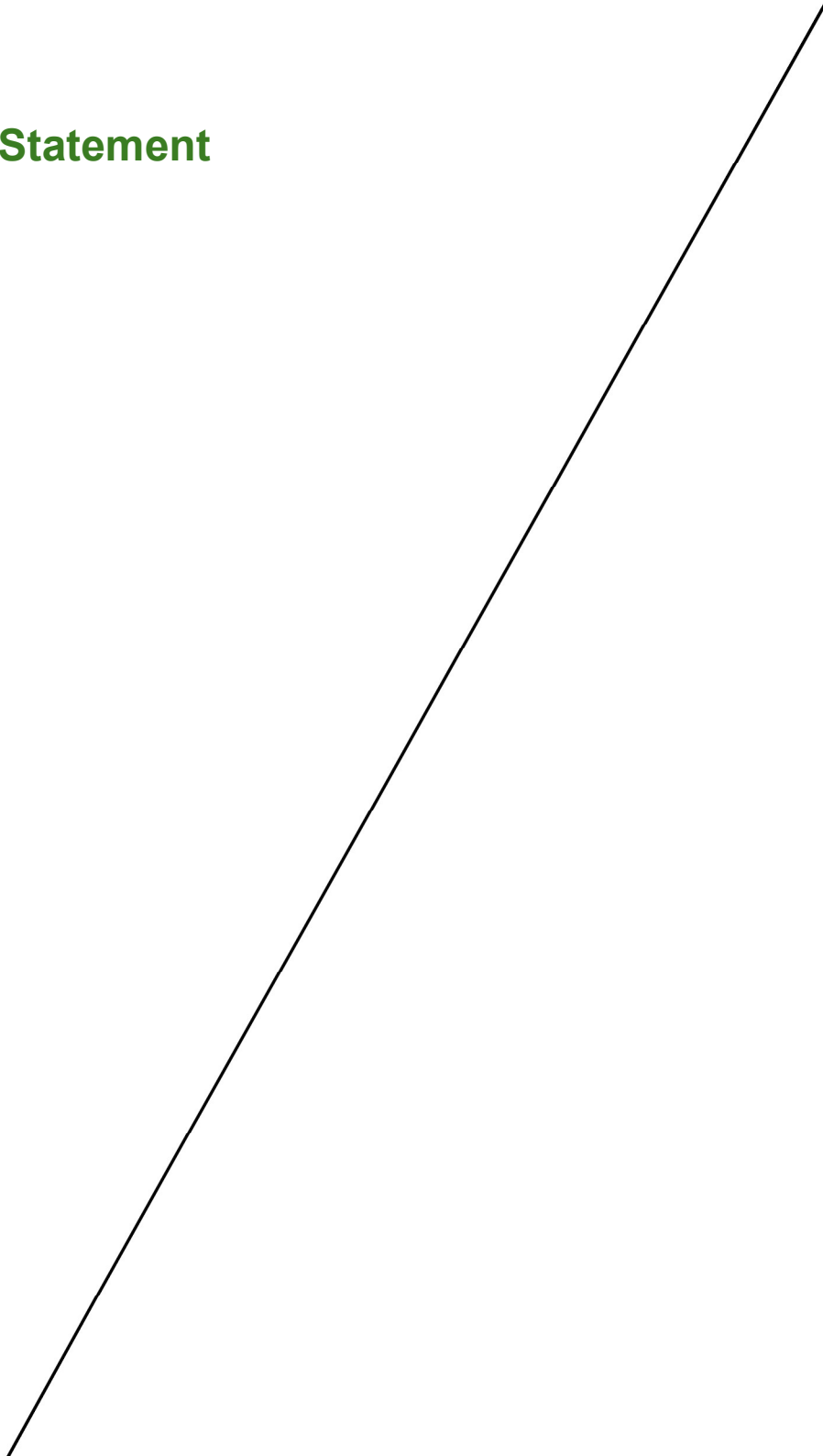
AS893 / DMR / A

Revision B

Prepared on behalf of

On Padel

Design and Access Statement



01 / Introduction

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared by Cube Architecture and Design to support a planning application for the development of five covered padel courts at Unsworth Cricket Club.

The statement outlines the context of the site, the rationale behind the design approach, and the principles that have informed the proposed development. It has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and follows the guidance set out in Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them.

The proposals seek to introduce a complementary recreational use within an established sporting facility, enhancing year-round activity and broadening the range of sports provision available on site. The development represents a modest intensification of the existing recreational use and does not result in any change to the primary function of the site as a cricket club.

The proposals do not result in a material change of use, with the site remaining in recreational use.

This statement should be read alongside the accompanying drawings and supporting technical documents submitted as part of the planning application.

02 / Site Location & Context

The application site is located at Unsworth Cricket Club, accessed from Pole Lane. The site comprises an established recreational facility centred around a cricket pitch and associated clubhouse, with surrounding areas of managed grassland and ancillary uses.

The proposed development is positioned within the north-eastern corner of the site, beyond the cricket outfield. This area is functionally separate from the primary playing field and is currently maintained but underutilised in comparison to the main cricketing activities.

The wider context comprises the M66 motorway corridor to the east and residential areas to the west, beyond the cricket field and on the opposite side of Pole Lane. Land to the north forms part of Unsworth Academy and includes outdoor sports facilities, notably a full-size, artificially lit 4G football pitch in regular use until approximately 22:00.

Vehicular and pedestrian access is taken from Pole Lane, which benefits from footways on both sides and connects to the wider network. The site is also accessible by bus services along Parr Lane, with stops within walking distance.

The site is not located within a Conservation Area and is not subject to any statutory heritage or landscape designations.



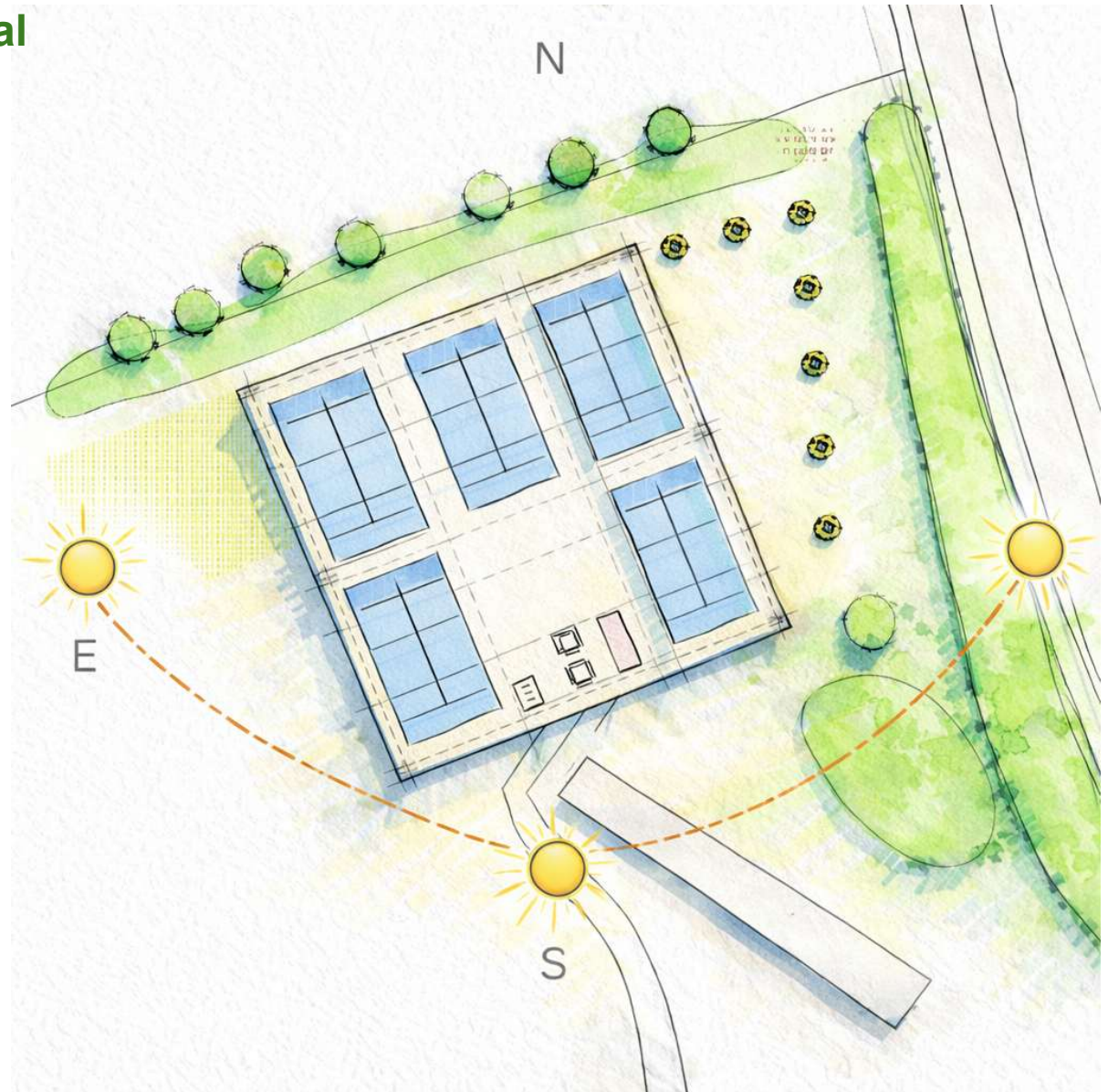
03 / Design Principles and Proposal

Proposed Use and Layout

The proposed development comprises five covered padel courts located within the north-eastern part of the site at Unsworth Cricket Club. The design has been informed by a clear set of principles to ensure the development integrates appropriately within its context while responding to operational and environmental considerations

The courts are arranged in a 3-sided courtyard configuration, creating a defined, semi-enclosed, central space that accommodates an outdoor seating area with a small food and beverage hut. This arrangement promotes a cohesive and sociable environment, enhances the usability of the facility, and allows for efficient circulation and supervision of the courts.

The layout has been carefully positioned outside the active cricket outfield, ensuring that the primary sporting function of the site is preserved. By utilising an area that is currently underutilised, the development represents an efficient use of the wider site without compromising existing activities. The courts will be accessed via an existing footpath leading from the clubhouse, which will be extended as part of the proposed works to provide direct and convenient access to the padel court area.



All courts are oriented on a north–south axis, which is the preferred arrangement for racket sports, minimising the impact of low sun and ensuring consistent playing conditions. The provision of canopy structures further assists in controlling glare and maintaining a high-quality playing environment.

In terms of visual and spatial impact, the development is contained within a discrete part of the site, with separation from the main cricketing areas and significant distance from surrounding residential properties, which are located over 180m away. This ensures that the development does not give rise to adverse amenity impacts. The structures themselves are lightweight in nature, comprising glazed and steel enclosures with canopy covers, resulting in a visually permeable form that reduces the perception of built mass and allows views through the site.

Overall, the design responds positively to its context, integrates with the established recreational use of the site, and delivers a well-considered and functional sporting facility.

Amount

The proposal comprises:

- 5 no. covered padel courts
- associated circulation space
- small food and beverage facility with outdoor seating area

The development does not result in the loss of any primary cricketing facilities and does not reduce the usability of the existing playing field.

Scale

The scale of the development is dictated by the functional requirements of padel courts and their associated canopy structures.

The proposed canopy heights are:

- 7.0m to eaves
- 10.05m apex to outer bays
- 10.7m apex to central bay

These heights are typical for covered padel facilities and are necessary to accommodate safe play and appropriate clearances.

Despite this, the structures remain modest in scale when considered within the wider context of the open cricket ground and surrounding infrastructure

Massing and Appearance

The courts comprise:

- glazed panels
- steel mesh enclosures
- lightweight canopy structures

This results in a visually permeable form of development that avoids the appearance of solid built mass.

The use of transparent and lightweight materials ensures that:

- views through the site are maintained
- visual impact is reduced
- the development reads as a recreational installation rather than a building

The canopy structures are simple and functional in design, with a recessive appearance appropriate to the sporting context.

04 / Arboricultural, Ecology and Landscaping

There are existing trees and hedgerows within the vicinity of the application site which contribute to the established green character of the wider recreational setting. The proposed development has been carefully positioned to avoid any direct impact on these features, ensuring that they are retained as part of the scheme.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been undertaken to inform the design and layout of the proposed development. The assessment confirms that the proposals can be accommodated without the need for any tree removal, and that existing vegetation can be retained and protected throughout the construction process.

As such, the development will not result in any adverse arboricultural impacts, and the retention of existing trees and hedgerows will continue to provide visual screening and contribute positively to the character and setting of the site

The proposed development is located on an area of managed grassland within the wider recreational site, which represents a low ecological baseline. A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment has been undertaken using the statutory metric to quantify the existing baseline and inform the proposed enhancements.

The assessment confirms that the development can deliver a measurable uplift in biodiversity, with on-site enhancements incorporated into the landscaping strategy achieving in excess of the 10% BNG requirement. As such, the proposals will not give rise to adverse ecological impacts and will deliver a positive contribution to biodiversity in accordance with current policy objectives.

05 / Designing Out Crime and Amenity Considerations

The proposed development has been designed to ensure that it does not give rise to unacceptable impacts on surrounding amenity while maintaining a safe and secure environment for users. Padel is a low-impact recreational activity, typically involving small numbers of players per court, and the courts are located over 180m from the nearest residential properties. This separation distance ensures that any noise associated with the use of the courts will dissipate over distance and will not adversely affect residential amenity.

The proposals include artificial lighting to enable year-round use. The lighting scheme has been designed to minimise light spill, with luminaires directed inwards towards the courts and controlled to avoid impacts on surrounding areas. A detailed lighting assessment has been submitted in support of the application, demonstrating compliance with relevant standards and guidance. The proposed hours of use (07:00–22:00) are consistent with typical recreational uses and align with the established pattern of evening use associated with adjacent outdoor sports facilities.

The layout of the development supports natural surveillance and site security, with courts arranged around a central shared space providing clear sightlines and avoiding areas of concealment. Access is taken via an extended footpath from the existing clubhouse, ensuring a clear and legible route through the site. There is no existing or proposed vegetation along the western and southern boundaries of the site that would obstruct visibility, ensuring that natural surveillance is maintained from Pole Lane and the associated residential properties, which will act as an effective deterrent to anti-social behaviour. The design has been informed by Secured by Design principles, and overall the proposals will maintain a safe, secure, and well-managed environment for users.

06 / Access

Sustainable Transport

The site is accessible by a range of sustainable modes, including walking and cycling routes, nearby bus services, and wider public transport connections, reducing reliance on private vehicles. In addition, the proposals include the provision of three Sheffield cycle stands (six spaces), further supporting and encouraging cycle use to and from the site.

Vehicle Access and Movement

The site benefits from an established access via Pole Lane, with existing vehicular and pedestrian routes serving the cricket club. No new access points are required.

Traffic Impact and Parking Provision

The development is expected to generate a modest level of additional traffic, estimated at approximately 21 two-way vehicle movements during peak periods. This equates to a very low level of traffic generation and will not result in any material impact on the surrounding highway network.

The site currently provides approximately 49 car parking spaces. As set out in the accompanying Transport Statement, peak demand can be accommodated within the existing provision, with any occasional overspill capable of being managed within the wider site.

Accessibility

Level access is provided to the building at ground-floor level, with accessible welfare facilities located within the existing accommodation. The first-floor accommodation does not contain any unique or essential facilities that are not already available at ground-floor level.

07 / Inclusive Design

The development has been designed to be inclusive and accessible to all users.

Level access is provided to the courts, and the layout allows for clear and legible movement throughout the site.

Padel is an inherently inclusive sport, suitable for a wide range of ages and abilities, and the proposals support wider participation in sport and recreation.

08 / Sustainability

The development represents a sustainable form of development through:

- the reuse and enhancement of an existing recreational site
- minimal ground disturbance
- lightweight and efficient construction methods

The proposals support active lifestyles, contributing to health and wellbeing, and provide year-round use of the site.

09 / Conclusion

The proposed development of five covered padel courts at Unsworth Cricket Club represents a well-considered and appropriate enhancement of an established recreational facility.

The proposals:

- complement the existing use of the site
- are sensitively located away from the primary cricketing area
- maintain appropriate separation from residential properties
- do not give rise to unacceptable impacts in terms of noise, traffic, or visual amenity

The development makes efficient use of underutilised land, supports community sport and health, and aligns with the principles of sustainable development.

Overall, the proposals represent an appropriate form of development and are aligned with national and local policy objectives.

