

Sequential Assessment and Employment Land Evidence Statement

Proposed Change of Use to Indoor Padel Courts (Class E(d))
Units 11 and 12 . Darton Business Park, Barnsley Road, Darton , Barnsley,
S755QX

1. Introduction

This statement has been prepared by **Top Play Enterprise Limited**, to support a planning application for the change of use of an existing industrial unit (B2/B8) at Darton Business Park to an indoor padel court facility (Class E(d)). It responds directly to officer requirements for: (i) a sequential assessment of alternative sites; and (ii) evidence to justify the loss of employment use.

2. Sequential Assessment (Alternative Sites)

The sequential approach requires consideration of sites within the existing town centre or other defined Industrial/light industrial sites, followed by edge-of-centre locations, and then accessible out-of-centre locations. This section demonstrates the process undertaken and confirms why no suitable and available sequentially preferable sites exist.

2.1 Assessment Criteria (Operational Requirements)

The proposed indoor padel facility requires, as a minimum:

- Approximately 25,000 sq ft of floorspace (single level and open plan)
- Sufficient internal height clearance to accommodate indoor padel courts, ideally 7-8 m.
- A configuration capable of accommodating courts, circulation, and spectator / ancillary areas without excessive structural constraints.
- Suitable customer access and parking provision.
- Flat and true structural ground floor

2.2 Town Centre and Edge-of-Centre Search

A proportionate review of available premises within Barnsley town centre and edge-of-centre locations has been undertaken using publicly available commercial property listings and market evidence.

No units have been identified that are both suitable and available to meet the above requirements.

In summary:

- Available premises in sequentially preferable locations are typically smaller floorplates (often below 10,000 sq ft), and/or are subdivided retail/office formats that do not provide an open plan sports layout to accommodate a Padel Court arrangement.

- Where larger premises exist in the town centre (e.g. former retail department store units), these are generally retail-led formats, can be multi-level/subdivided, and are not typically suitable for indoor court provision which is highly dependent on open span space and height clearance.

2.3 Out-of-Centre Locations

Out-of-centre industrial and logistics opportunities within Barnsley have also been considered. The market evidence indicates that available accommodation at strategic employment locations tends to be logistics-scale (30,000 sq ft and above) and is frequently promoted on a build-to-suit basis. This is not appropriately scaled for a circa 25,000 sq ft leisure conversion and may not be deliverable within the applicant's intended timescales.

2.4 Sequential Test Conclusion

On this basis, the sequential assessment demonstrates that a proportionate search has been carried out across town centre, edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations and that no suitable and available sequentially preferable sites exist. The application site at Darton Business Park is therefore considered to be the most appropriate and deliverable location for the proposed indoor padel facility.

A detailed area survey has been carried out to list the currently sites available within the borough set out above are as follows –

- **Former M&S retail premises**
located in the heart of Barnsley town centre close to the new Glass Works.
This Building is not appropriate for change of use for Padel Court open plan redevelopment.
The existing heights Structural subdivision and multi level layout does not offer the Open plan footprint required to accommodate Padel Court design. On site car parking preference for this facility .
Padel courts booking are generally on a hourly turn around.
- **Unit A, Fallbank Industrial Estate, Barnsley, S75 3LS 3716m2**
Located on the outskirts of town .
This Building is not appropriate for change of use to Padel Court sports facility
The existing heights to ridge and eaves and Structural supports not offer the Open plan footprint required to accommodate Padel Court design. On site car parking preference for this facility .
- **Unit A, Capitol Way, Barnsley, S75 3FG 7095m2**
Located on the outskirts of Barnsley.
The building is very high quality modern building too large for our proposals and budget . It also incorporates a large two storey fully fitted out office area within the building footprint which would not be required for a Padel facility change of use.

- **Unit 5, Interchange 38, Darton, Barnsley, S75 5NH 13062m2**

Located on the out skirts of Barnsley.

The building is very high quality modern building too large for our proposals and budget .

It also incorporates a large two storey fully fitted out office area within the building footprint which would not be required for a Padel facility change of use.

3. Loss of Employment Use (B2/B8)

We have received certain criteria from the agent regarding the existing usage and employment.

The existing unit which is currently empty and previous usage employed and that the site has become available mid 2025 .

The space was previously warehouse and distribution and therefore minimal amount of jobs have been lost .

The change of use to Padel Facilities will provide the following employment.

Our initial aim is that the proposals will contribute to the local employment opportunities offering the following positions available. 6 full time staff, 1 site manager, 2 Padel coaches, 2 part-time cleaning and maintenance.

3.1 Marketing Evidence

Additional space remains on the site and next door has availability.

Barnsley have a 53,000 sq ft unit that has been on the market for 3 years plus and not to mentioned the Barnsley 340,000 sq ft unit that has a similar void period.

Padel operators require industrial units given the eaves height requirements and therefore the calculation is simple in that padel occupiers can't operate out of town centre locations due to the restrictions.

This unit and the neighbouring units are empty with Kingspan in administration. We have been marketing these for 12 months now. They are still available and therefore no firm interest.

3.2 Local Market Context (Agent Evidence / Listings)

Current listing evidence indicates that the available industrial market in Barnsley is characterised by: (i) smaller units typically below the floorspace required for a viable padel facility; and (ii) larger logistics-focused opportunities (30,000 sq ft+) often delivered as new build or build-to-suit at strategic sites. This supports the conclusion that the application proposal is seeking to re-purpose a unit for a leisure use where continued B2/B8 demand for the specific premises has been limited.

4. Overall Conclusion

This statement provides a sequential assessment consistent with officer requirements and sets out the employment evidence needed to support any loss of employment use case.

It concludes that, based on operational requirements (circa 25,000 sq ft and sufficient internal height), no suitable and available sequentially preferable sites have been identified, and that the applicant has provided above evidence marketing history and local B2/B8 market conditions to justify the proposed change of use.