

Sarah Valentine

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 September 2025 15:04
To: planninginfo
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Objection to Planning Application DM/25/1185

The Penthouse,
24 Cavendish House,
Southdowns Park,
Haywards Heath
RH16 4SL

4th September, 2025

Dear Sirs

Re: Planning Application DM/25/1185

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Temporary (36 months) permission for change of use of existing tennis courts to padel courts and associated works (Acoustic report received 21.08.2025)

I wish to object to the proposed Planning Application's Noise Assessment report and would comment as follows:

As a resident at Southdowns Park, the whole nature of the Southern elevation is of three sides facing the proposed development. It acts like an amphitheatre with sound travelling up from the South Downs, particularly with the prevailing southerly winds. Presently, it has a tranquil nature and you can enjoy the gardens peacefully. If the Application is granted we will lose all of this, and resident's health and sleep patterns will be adversely affected.

Page 4 - claims that the noise would be similar if the tennis courts were reinstated. Elsewhere in the report it accepts that tennis is a much quieter game and I would be in favour of the courts going back to being in a playable condition for tennis.

Page 4 - the report states that predicted external sound pressure levels were assessed and infers that the results give "a reduced internal criterion for the daytime period" but no evidence is included.

Para. 2.1 Refers to "during daytime hours of 07:00 to 22:00. In the Application Form submitted to the Council on 7/5/2025 they stated that "the hours of opening" were not relevant to the Application. Yet, to property owners surrounding the proposed site, it is relevant.

Para. 2.4 states "the assessment overcomes the concerns of the Environmental Health Department." There is no such submission from the EHD submitted with this report.

Para. 2.5 refers to background noise (music) being introduced potentially at a later stage. This Application covers 15 hours per day for 7 days of each week without any music noise assessment having been included.

Para. 2.9.2 In view of BS 8233 : 2014 the authors accept that "Padel Tennis might not necessarily be appropriate." **This is an important admission that the proposed siting of the courts "might not necessarily be appropriate.** (Also, to avoid confusion, Padel is a distinct sport that is a hybrid of tennis and squash, not a variation of tennis. The correct and most common name for the sport is "padel".)

Para. 2.9.3 refers to 10 events above 55dB per night. They don't define the hours of "night" or refer to the existing use of the football grounds as being one of the events.

Para. 2.9.4 subheading 187(e) refers to noise pollution, which this undoubtedly creates. Lighting will also be a further source of pollution.

Para. 2.9.4 subheading 198(a) requires planning policies to ensure applications "mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impact resulting from noise." The applicants have not suggested using noise reducing glass walls or creating an effective noise barrier between the road and the courts or to their immediate neighbours at the bowling green. A thick hedge as envisaged is not going to grow to 3 metres high during the initial 3 years of the site.

Para. 2.9.4 subheading 198(b) requires planning policies to ensure applications “identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason.” This Application does not meet this criteria.

Para. 2.9.4 subheading 200 states “Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established.” The Bowling Club adjacent to the tennis courts would be severely impacted by granting this Application.

New Section: Planning Noise Advice Document Sussex (November 2023)

Point. 3 The Sound Survey at Southdowns Park was taken at 1.8 metres above ground level. This would be the most protected position due to line of sight to the tennis courts being to the upper part of the existing fencing. As the building has a height of some 25 metres with the first and second floors having line of site to the floor level, this would produce higher levels of noise pollution than stated in the report. Also, the property is Grade II and double glazing it not allowed.

Point. 5 Due to children playing at The Triangle and other background noise, the authors state they were unable to take Padel noise readings on their one and only visit. Why did they not return or were any readings they did take indicating noise well above the 3dB mark?

Figure 14. Shows a significant noise increase for the surrounding areas. It should be noted that increases in decibel levels are not on a linear scale, they are on a logarithmic scale. This means that each increment of a certain number of decibels corresponds to a multiplicative increase in sound intensity rather than a simple addition.

Point 7. The existing louder noises are primarily when the football ground is in use which is restricted. Most matches start at 19:00 and finish at 21:00 unless extra time is called. Their lighting is much further away from Southdowns Park and therefore less obtrusive. The Padel courts, when in use, would be from 07:00 to 22:00.

Point 7.1 Should tennis be reintroduced, the authors actually downplay the noise by using the phrase “would generate some sound.” No attempt has been made to provide sound readings for tennis as a comparison.

Point 7.3 accepts that the worst noise would be in the early mornings and late evenings. Southdowns Park has many elderly residents; Gatwick shift workers and hospital shift workers whose health may be adversely affected.

Point 9 Conclusion states “The predicted external sound pressure levels in terms of both LAeq, and LAm_{ax} have been considered against the measured site soundscapes and do not exceed the ambient noise levels for the majority of the time.” **Therefore the authors accept that the ambient noise levels will be exceeded some of the time.**

Noise Impact Assessment & Noise Management Plan for Hurstwood Padel Club

The introduction now suggests the operating hours are 06:00 to 22:00, an hour earlier than previously stated.

No noise assessment has been included for ball machines which are often louder than players hitting with a bat.

They are already including background music in the guidelines. Is this a foregone conclusion?

They accept there will be “an absence of existing or proposed sound barriers.” This appears to be a cost consideration.

They suggest they will “only minimise vocal volume during sensitive hours” rather than at all times.

Similarly, signage will be present to “avoid profanities.”

You will also have up to 12 playing and 12 waiting to go on court and socialising in the cafe at any one time plus 2 staff members. This will be a monumental task to control.

The authors have not taken steps to site the Padel courts in an area that would be away from housing and appear unwilling to increase their costs by including comprehensive sound barriers and sound absorbing materials in their Application or siting them close to the football pitch.

Kind regards



