



NORTHEDGE

Design & Access / Planning Statement

Unit 1, Belfield Hall Farm

Albert Royds Street

Rochdale

OL16

Prepared by:

Northedge Architecture

Date:

Nov 2025

1. Introduction

This Design and Access / Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant in support of the following planning application:

Temporary change of use of Unit 1, Belfield Hall Farm, to an indoor padel sports facility for a period of 3 years, including installation of 10 padel courts (8 doubles and 2 singles), parking, cycle parking and waste storage.

The proposal seeks to bring a vacant industrial building back into active use, providing much-needed indoor sports provision in the Rochdale area. There is currently no indoor provision for padel sports in the area and there is a high demand given it's the fastest growing sport in the UK.

Bringing this service will be a valuable asset to the community.

2. Planning Policy Context

The following planning policies and guidance have been taken into account in the preparation of this proposal:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024
- Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted 2016)
- Rochdale Allocations Development Plan Document (where relevant)
- Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040
- Manual for Streets

3. Community Use

The applicant intends to implement a Community Use Agreement with Rochdale Borough Council, similar to the model used successfully elsewhere in Manchester. This will provide:

- Dedicated community access hours at reduced rates
- Opportunities for local schools, charities, and community groups to book courts
- Provision of equipment to remove barriers to participation
- Support for local health and wellbeing initiatives
- Annual review of community usage to ensure the offer meets local needs

This agreement will ensure the facility delivers clear community benefit alongside its commercial operation.

3. Use

The application site comprises Unit 1 at Belfield Hall Farm, formerly in light industrial/warehouse use (Use Class B8). The building has been vacant for an extended period of time (exact vacancy date unknown).

The proposal introduces:

- 8 double padel courts
- 2 single padel courts
- Reception area
- Café
- WC and shower facilities
- Accessible WC and changing
- Internal seating/viewing areas

4. Appearance

Internally, the courts will use a two-tone blue Mondo turf, installed to SAPCA-approved standards, with high-quality glass and powder-coated steel court structures. These installations are fully reversible.

Externally it will remain as existing but with minor cosmetic improvements.

5. Scale

All works are contained within the existing building envelope. No external changes to massing or structure.

6. Layout

Internal layout includes:

- 8 double courts
- 2 single courts
- Reception
- Café
- Toilets and showers
- Accessible facilities
- Circulation space

External layout includes:

- 28 parking spaces (2 disabled)
- Covered cycle parking
- 1 × 1100L general waste bin
- 1 × 1100L mixed recycling bin

7. Amount

Development is limited to works inside the building footprint.

8. Access

Pedestrian, vehicular, and cycle access remains via Albert Royds Street. Level access is maintained throughout. The site is also accessible by nearby bus routes.

9. Opening Hours

06:00 – 00:00 (midnight), seven days a week.

10. Conclusion

This proposal brings a long-vacant industrial unit back into use, delivering a high-quality indoor sports facility. It supports healthy lifestyles, enhances local leisure provision, improves the site, and aligns with planning policy. The temporary 3-year permission allows the Council to assess the operation of the facility while enabling a valuable community asset.