

## **East Road Residents' Objections to SGHLT Club's Proposal for 3 New Padel Courts**

We have commissioned two sound consultant companies to assess the St George's Hill Lawn Tennis Club's proposal for three new padel courts. Their reports are attached and form an important part of our submission. We've outlined some key findings below:

### **1. Noise caused by padel activity is significantly louder than noise caused by tennis activity**

An increase of 10 dB is mentioned in the tennis club's own report. Generally a 10dB increase means a doubling of the perceived loudness. This was proved by SGHLT Club itself via the trialling of a padel court in 2021. On attending a neighbour's property (East Warreners) the Tennis Club's representatives agreed the noise was unacceptable.

### **2. The number of hits per minute in a padel game is significantly higher than in a tennis game, causing even more nuisance**

Padel is typically played in doubles and on smaller courts, with balls also bouncing off the walls (similar to squash) which adds up to a much higher number of hits per minute, thereby further increasing the nuisance. The Clarke-Saunders White Paper examines the differences between padel and tennis and identified average hit rates of every 2 seconds for padel versus 3.3 seconds for tennis at the amateur level.

### **3. The 'shot gun' sound character of a padel ball being hit further increases the disturbance**

Acoustically, a padel game hit causes a much sharper peak than a tennis game hit (a steeper rise and fall in intensity). Sounds having this profile are very impulsive and are considered to be significantly more intrusive. In other settings, an impulsive sound typically gets a 'penalty' of an added 6dB to take this particular intrusiveness into account.

### **4. The effectiveness of acoustic fences is unproven.**

No studies have established the effectiveness of acoustic panels around padel courts. Further there is no fence at all on the western side. (One has to question why one side has been left open?) Finally, putting a second wall does not necessarily reduce sound emissions (The glass walls being the first one, the acoustic panels, the second one).

### **5. The sound report provided by the tennis club is flawed**

The report commissioned by the tennis club is based on unsupported and theoretical assumptions, uses data incorrectly and glosses over the differences between padel and tennis sound.

Accordingly, we are in no doubt that the occupants of a number of properties in East Road will suffer substantial and unreasonable interference with their use and enjoyment of their properties, particularly so if the courts are in use by up to 12 players from 7am to 10pm (potentially up to fifteen hours a day!) every day of the year. We also know that the increase in noise will be further exacerbated by the rowdy nature of the game of padel plus potential spectator participation. The Tennis Club has a solid history of hosting tournaments and we have no reason to believe that this tradition would not be continued if the 3 proposed padel courts are constructed. We have nothing against padel itself. We just believe that in the proposed location, it should be completely enclosed in a soundproofed building with roof.

**This summary has been reviewed and approved by Clarke-Saunders Acoustics and JSP Noise Consultants.**

*On behalf of the owners of Kingswood, Dorin Court and Longmoor, East Road and East Warreners, Warreners Lane, St George's Hill.*