
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 January 2026

by **B Phillips BSc MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6th February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/F1610/D/25/3370073

Paxford House, Paxford, Blockley, Chipping Campden GL55 6XQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Robert Gillon against the decision of Cotswold District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/01231/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a Padel Court.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Applications for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Robert Gillon against Cotswold District Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. Paxford House is Grade II* listed. As such, in reaching my decision, I have considered the statutory duties under section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 (the Act).
4. I have removed wording from the banner above which does not describe development.

Main Issues

5. The main issues in this case are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of nearby dwellings, with respect to noise;
 - whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Paxford CA and its effect on its setting; and
 - whether the proposal would conserve and enhance the natural beauty and special qualities of the Cotswold National Landscape.

Reasons

Living conditions

6. The padel court would be sited within the substantial rear garden of the appeal property. It would sit a significant distance from the nearest neighbour, Long House. This property also has a substantial garden.

7. The submitted Noise Assessment¹ (NA) includes baseline noise assessments in order to determine the prevailing ambient noise levels at positions representative of the nearest noise sensitive receptors, in this case, Long House and its garden and the dwellings to the south west of the Village Hall.
8. Against this, the assessment compares the source noise levels with Sport England guidance through noise mapping bespoke to the appeal site. Based on the information before me, I find that the information submitted (including the additional technical memorandum) to be based on sound methodology, robust, logical and sufficient to establish the effect of the proposals on nearby residential amenity levels. This includes the measured Padel Tennis court noise levels at another site which provides an appropriate base level for padel court activities.
9. The Sport England guidance quoted in the NA is relevant to padel courts, and I see no reason why it should not be used as a base for assessment.
10. The assessment concludes that, whilst in general the noise levels would meet Sport England guidance and noise levels would typically be in line with (or lower than) peak noise events at the noise sensitive receptors, this would not be the case for the garden area/patio of Long House, where the calculated noise level is 2 dB higher than required.
11. As such, the NA recommends that in order to reduce noise propagation from the proposal to the garden area of Long House, an acoustic barrier should be positioned along the northern boundary of the site between the two properties. This would reduce LAFmax levels to an acceptable limit.
12. Whilst initially a 9m long 2m high acoustic barrier was recommended, this was based upon noise levels at the centre of the garden of Long House. In order to reduce noise propagation from the proposal to the closer patio areas of Long House, the updated NA recommends a 14m long 2.4m high acoustic barrier.
13. Given the submitted Amended Noise Propagation Contour Map to the patio area, I am satisfied that such a barrier could be effective. However, no elevational details of such a barrier are provided on the submitted drawings. There is a lack of clarity in this regard therefore, and I cannot be certain of the visual effect of such a substantial structure, or if suitable planting to soften its appearance would be necessary or possible.
14. This is highly undesirable in general terms but especially given that Paxford House is a Grade II* listed building of national importance.
15. I note the fallback position of the approved tennis court² in the same position; however, from the information before me it is evident that this does not include/require an acoustic barrier. Whilst I consider it likely that this would be built if permission was denied for the proposal in front of me, the fallback does not therefore represent a comparable effect in this regard.
16. I conclude that it has not been demonstrated that the proposal would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of Long House, with respect to noise. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policy EN15 of the of the Cotswold District

¹ By Parker Acoustics June 2025, updated (version 2) July 2025 & Technical Memorandum

² Approved application 24/02863/FUL

Local Plan (2018) (LP), which seeks to ensure that development does not unacceptably harm existing land uses through the generation of noise.

17. LP Policy EN1 is also referred to, however this does not refer to living conditions or noise specifically. As such, it is not determinative in regards to this main issue.

Conservation Area

18. Whilst Paxford House is within the Paxford CA, the site of the proposed padel court is just outside it. I observed that the significance of the Paxford CA in part derives from its traditional Cotswold farming community character with distinctive local stone houses and a layout that reflects its rural history, in addition to the rich and cohesive number of vernacular and historic buildings and heritage assets that denote its evolution.
19. Whilst my visit was only a snapshot in time, I observed within the CA a variety of noise sources, typical of a small village some traffic, walkers, dogs and I observed bus stops and a (currently closed) pub with outside seating, in addition to noise from domestic gardens. As such, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, a particular tranquillity, or a lack of noise, is not apparent and not a contributing factor to the significance of the CA.
20. I observed that the traditional rural character of the CA is partly derived from the open, undeveloped, agricultural surrounding which historically has surrounded the village core. As such, this pastoral setting contributes positively to the significance of the CA and is the main way for the CA to be appreciated.
21. Whilst screened from the house and currently free from development, the appeal site is now an established part of the domestic garden area of the property, and I observed it was not particularly visible in views from within the CA or in views of the CA from outside. The appeal site therefore has a neutral effect on the setting of the CA.
22. Whilst large, the garden includes outbuildings and a swimming pool currently under construction, and as such, is a source of typical residential noise. The padel court would be for private domestic use only. Its use would be in keeping with the established character of the garden setting and its reasonable enjoyment. The padel court would therefore preserve the setting of the CA and would not harm the asset's significance.
23. There is therefore no conflict with LP Policies EN1 and EN11, which seek to ensure design standards that complements the character of the area and protect heritage assets and their settings.

National Landscape

24. The special qualities of the Cotswold National Landscape include (but are not limited to) its limestone geology, elevated arable landscapes, river valleys, dry stone walls and ancient woodland³. None of these key characteristics would be adversely affected by the development given its location in a domestic garden within a settlement. However, the Cotswolds Conservation Board produced a Position Statement in June 2019 regarding 'Tranquillity' and confirmed it is one of the 'special qualities' of the then AONB (now National Landscape).

³ As set out in the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023 – 2025

25. As set out above, given the village location of the appeal site and the associated domestic and traffic noise, it also does not reflect these characteristics. Any increase in noise and disturbance from an intensification of use, would, given the domestic nature of the use and the site, not harm the special qualities of the wider National Landscape.
26. I conclude that the proposed development would conserve the natural beauty and special qualities of the National Landscape. It would therefore accord with LP Policies EN1, EN4 and EN5, which collectively seek to ensure that proposals protect natural assets including the tranquillity of the countryside.

Other Matters

27. As set out above, Paxton House is Grade II* listed⁴. The special interest and significance of the property, listed in 1960, largely stem from its historic and architectural interest, but also, in part, from its domestic and village settings.
28. Notwithstanding the acoustic barrier issue raised above, given the well screened position of the proposed court some distance from the house, in addition to the mostly glazed/mesh fencing surrounding the court which would allow views through, the domestic setting of Paxford House would be preserved and its significance would not be harmed. It is noteworthy that the Council have not raised any specific objection in this respect. A lack of harm in this regards however, does not alter my conclusions.

Conclusion

29. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

B Phillips

INSPECTOR

⁴ List Entry Number: 1341721