

Comment for planning application 24/00539/F

Application Number

Location

Proposal

Case Officer

Organisation Name

Address

Type of Comment

Type

Comments

Personally for me, Oxford United as a club has saved my life on more than one occasion. This is why I can not watch this football club become homeless or even cease to exist.

In late 2018 my grandfather died of cardiac arrest in front of me, I provided him with CPR until the ambulance service arrived and after this traumatic experience, I was diagnosed with PTSD in late 2019. I became a shell of myself, hiding away, scared to leave the house, worried myself or anyone around me could drop dead at any moment, having constant panic and anxiety attacks. I was in my 3rd season of being a season ticket holder when this happened and my only safe space where I felt like I could get away from everything and feel like my 'normal self' again was spending time with my Dad, watching Oxford United. Lockdown hit that season and the football stopped for a while, I was fortunate enough to be living with my Dad but my PTSD spiralled and I was in an extremely bad place, having thoughts of wanting to die. He kept me going by looking after me and when football resumed, we would watch together on i-follow, eventually attending a few games socially distanced in the stadium. Oxford United ran a competition to recognise fans that had gone above and beyond in lockdown to help people, I nominated my Dad and he won a signed shirt, as part of this we had an honest conversation with Cameron Brannagan and at the time media man, Liam. The club broadcast this chat online, I can only imagine the number of people that it could have helped by them watching one of the clubs heroes engaging in conversations about mental health. After getting my PTSD under control in 2022, I ran the London Marathon for the British Heart Foundation, the club was extremely supportive of this, providing me with a signed shirt to auction off to raise funds. They are more than just a football team, they are community driven and really do make a difference to peoples lives.

Unfortunatley for me, my tramatic experiences didn't stop there... In August 2023 on the first game of this years season, I gave birth to my first child, my daughter, Nuala. Days before this I had recieved the heartbreaking news that at 38 weeks pregnant, Nuala's heart had stopped. We had suffered a stillbirth. One of the outfits we had planned to put her in was an OUFC baby shirt, I have a picture which I will treasure forever of her wearing this. On that horrific day, Oxford United gave my Dad a release too, in the same day he had to meet and say goodbye to his Granddaughter, he utilised his way of coping, going to the football in the afternoon and supporting the U's. The support from the fanbase we have had and continue to recieve as a family after losing Nuala is second to none. Without this football club, I wouldn't have made lifelong friends and have a safe space to talk anything from mental health to footie results! I am extremely grateful to the club for also recognising our loss on the first home game of 2024 where they displayed the names of every fan who had died in 2023 on the score board and in the match day programme, the club then personally