



# Oxford United Supporters' Panel

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## Planning Application - 24/00539/F

Oxford United Supporters' Panel (OUSP) is made up of supporter representatives nominated by fans to represent fan views to the club and more widely. As stakeholders in the proposed development at the Triangle, we write to support the application. We ask you to consider the following points:

- Oxford United is a key local institution especially for Oxford "Town" and Oxfordshire County residents. It provides entertainment for thousands each match. Its community of all ages and all social backgrounds is unique in Oxfordshire. Many fans attend with several generations of their family.
- Through the club's charity arm, (Oxford United in the Community), health and wellbeing initiatives reach across Oxfordshire. The club's commitment to the Leys Legacy and retaining the current training facility in addition to having a new base at the Triangle will not only ensure this work continues but will provide facilities to enable further expansion of this work.
- Successive owners as well as fan groups have explored the possibility of purchasing the Kassam Stadium without success. The landlord terminated the licence in 2021 and agreed a short term licence until 2026. The County Council is satisfied that the club has no right to renewal and will be homeless in 2026, risking losing the social benefits detailed above. This situation should be taken into account when considering the very special circumstances for the development.
- The design has put inclusivity at the heart of the design. Disabled fans have been involved in the design specification throughout, to ensure it meets the accessibility needs of the community, and surpasses standards for football stadia. This includes allowing for 130 elevated view wheelchair spaces and a state of the art sensory room.

- Current inequality for Oxford United's women's team will be addressed by providing them with full access to the stadium. Design features which address the needs of female supporters are being incorporated into the plans.
- Sustainability is central to the design. It would be the first all-electric stadium in the UK, a source of pride for the county.
- The site's proximity to existing public transport links will significantly reduce transport emissions, an environmental benefit which will accrue over time. The Kassam stadium is about 5 miles from Oxford station, a journey which takes around ¾ of an hour by public transport. The Triangle is less than half a mile from Oxford Parkway, which would make it one of the closest grounds to a railway station in the country, and would provide excellent rail links.
- Evidence suggests the fears that all fans who drive to the Kassam will also drive to the Triangle are unfounded. The experience of Brighton and Hove Albion demonstrates that once the infrastructure is in place, public transport will be used. There are few real alternatives for accessing the Kassam, limiting choice in many cases to driving. Football special buses are in such demand that the provision has doubled on several routes this season.
- Biodiversity would be improved by a net gain of 15% through innovative planting, the introduction of new habitats such as a pond, and the protection of woodland to the south.
- The landscape plans for the northern section of the site will enable public access to this site for the first time, sharing the wellbeing garden with the community.
- The design includes a 180-bed hotel, conference and event space, along with a health and wellbeing centre, to help deliver significant economic and social benefits to Oxfordshire. This element of the development will provide additional jobs, not simply relocating current jobs from the Kassam stadium. With the new housing planned for the area this will be important

We urge the planning team to consider these points when considering the planning application.

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On behalf of Oxford United Supporters' Panel