

Comment for planning application 24/00539/F

Application Number

Location

Proposal

Case Officer

Organisation Name

Address

Type of Comment

Type

Comments

I am sorry that this is late but I have been away and have only just caught up with this invitation to express my very strong objections to Oxford United building a stadium on "The Triangle" in Kidlington. My objections are threefold:

1. Kidlington has already suffered in recent years from the wanton disregard for the green belt surrounding our village. 4,200 new homes have been foisted upon our southern green belt "to meet Oxford's unmet housing need" which we now see as being based on fabricated statistics and will be used to some measure to meet the Universities needs. We are engaged in yet another battle to prevent our northern green belt from being used in a similar manner. "The Triangle" is the last remaining piece of the southern green belt separating us from the city of Oxford and is rich in wildlife including protected species.
2. OUFC are proposing an enormous development of a 16,000 seater stadium, hotel and fitness studio but nowhere is there any mention of car parking for the fans. They have made ridiculous claims that the fans will travel by bus or train when we know this is a nonsense. Any football fan (and I am one) will know that fans will not do this and will show up in cars and, as with other grounds around the country, will look for free spaces in supermarket carparks and along residential streets. Even if this were to be banned, there are no resources to police those restrictions except at local taxpayer expense. I have attended meetings where I have heard some really half-baked ideas, the prize for which goes to the scheme to add a surcharge to tickets to enable fans to travel free on buses. I am sure that I don't need to point out to you that buses do not travel to Kidlington from all areas of the county let alone further afield and would penalize locals like myself who would walk to the ground or pensioners who enjoy free bus rides anyway.
3. The resulting traffic on match days would be a nightmare. We do not have a traffic assessment for southern Kidlington arising from the extra homes that are going to be built in the area and Oxford United are ignoring the impact of their stadium on top of this. The matchday traffic at the Kassam (capacity only 12,500) is already a nightmare and they have much better surrounding roads to deal with it. Another OUFC crazy scheme was to apply to have the main road from Oxford to Kidlington and beyond to be closed on matchdays. At least common sense has prevailed on this but no alternative has been proposed to date.

Oxford United are of course pleading desperation and that this is their only chance of survival. If so, they have brought this on themselves by negotiating a short lease on the Kassam, knowing it would expire in 2026 and using this to hold local councils to ransom. It has recently been revealed that their claim that they can no longer stay at the Kassam is not correct as Mr Kassam has said that he has not been approached on the matter. They can still approach him to negotiate a new lease whilst exploring future options elsewhere.

You will know that Oxford United have mobilized a great deal of support in favour of their current scheme and it has been exposed that many of their supporters are not their fans as they have approached fans around the country to support them. I hope that you will disregard these and rely on local responses, both for and against, to inform your decision.