

Planning Application 24/00539/F

Deadline for responses 3 April 2024

Target Decision date 21 June 2024

## To Whom it May Concern

### Planning Response Number 4

Having read the planning application for the stadium at the triangle in Kidlington we have the following concerns:

#### Democracy

A Parish Poll was held on 10 May 2023 on the question *Should Kidlington Parish Council support the building of a stadium for Oxford United Football Club in Kidlington?* The Poll was called by a group of residents, not by the Parish Council. The status of the Poll is advisory:

Out of a total 10,022 Kidlington electors, 928 voted YES and 2,073 voted NO. The turnout was 29.99%. Although it did not call the poll, the Parish Council views the result as significant, and thanks the residents who turned out to vote.

The poll result is more or less in line with that of the County Council's online survey more than a year ago, in which out of 822 local respondents 38% were in favour of negotiating with the Oxford United and 58% were against. Given this, and the fact that Councillors are elected democratically, where is the justification in their support to move this forward?

#### Biodiversity Net Gain

The claims that this site is not already highly biodiverse or biodiversity neutral are false. The site is rich in biodiversity including but not confined to, great crested newt, badgers, and bats. These are protected species. Since it is now universally accepted that the monitoring equipment installed at the site to detect bats was removed very shortly after it was installed, there has been no effective survey conducted. Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. This is legal requirement in such an area.

What are the new and improved habitats? "The vision has been to incorporate flexible multi-functional spaces, monocultured (and aesthetically pleasant trees and shrubs) that can be enjoyed whether it be a match day or not". Biodiversity is not about giving wild lands over to public wanderings.

In what reality can the building of a concrete mass on this site add 10% net biodiversity gain? That makes a false assumption that the site currently has no biodiversity which is absolutely not the case. Planting monocultures bears no resemblance to the biodiversity currently in situ.

## Construction

The talk of Route Map for Avoidable Waste in Construction would be far better met by not constructing and instead coming to a business arrangement with Mr Kassam to build a fourth stand at the Kassam and upgrade facilities there.

## Economic

Given this is a site relocation, of the £27m alleged annual contribution to the economy, how much of this is simply being diverted from the existing football club at Kassam, and what proportion is being given to the local Councils to invest locally, other than 1% of this for (£280k) business rates?

## Flooding

The favoured hard landscaping option (4.3) is asphalt. This will do nothing to allow excess water absorption.

Kidlington until the early 2000's used to flood, and Environment Agency (EA) controls were installed.

These have not been upgraded and there is no national budget to do so. The build of this concrete mass (on a preferred asphalt surround), will only serve to move flood waters closer to residences, how is this to be avoided?

## Carbon Reduction Pledges

The summary claims a 51% CO2e reduction by moving to Stratfield Brake. The stadium is not being built at Stratfield Brake, so how is this relevant?

The 'what if' reductions discussed in this Sustainability Statement, are exactly that, what ifs and pipe dreams. What if the stadium were to be built to Olympic standards or to BREEAM Outstanding and confirmed as this, not set out as an aspirational goal to be diluted if they use too much capital and start to look like they might not be **'economically viable'**.

By simply asking the question 'what if?' They are failing to make any pledges or demonstrate any evidence of agreed and firm CO2e reduction actions or means thereof.

Yours faithfully

A. Asbury

Resident and local Company Director