

Comment for planning application 24/00539/F

Application Number	<input type="text" value="24/00539/F"/>
Location	<input type="text" value="Land To The East Of Stratfield Brake And West Of Oxford Parkway Railway Station Oxford Road Kidlington"/>
Proposal	<input type="text" value="Erection of a stadium (Use Class F2) with flexible commercial and community facilities and uses including for conferences, exhibitions, education, and other events, club shop, public restaurant, bar, health and wellbeing facility/clinic, and gym (Use Class E/Sui Generis), hotel (Use Class C1), external concourse/fan-zone, car and cycle parking, access and highway works, utilities, public realm, landscaping and all associated and ancillary works and structures"/>
Case Officer	<input type="text" value="Laura Bell"/>
Organisation Name	<input type="text" value="Sumedha Bird"/>
Address	<input type="text" value="3 Beagles Close,Gosford,Kidlington,OX5 2QJ"/>
Type of Comment	<input type="text" value="Objection"/>
Type	<input type="text" value="neighbour"/>
Comments	<p>As a resident of Kidlington for the past 15 years I am writing to object to the proposed stadium.</p> <p>My main concerns are the negative impact caused by the stadium and visitors especially during matches (41 per year) and events, the impact on local environment and lack of longterm sustainability for the club.</p> <p>The planned traffic management scheme will cause massive disruption to those living in Gosford and Water Eaton. The roads are already struggling on busy traffic days (eg school holidays, bank holidays, end of university) with people trying to get to and from the A34 and this will be even worse with match traffic. Closing the roads, even for short periods, will cause gridlock and cause significant changes to our current ability to get in and out of Oxford and to get to the ring road. This will be even worse once the new houses are build in the area as there will be more people traveling to local amenities.</p> <p>I live close to the site and am concerned about the nuisance the the stadium will cause. Despite the plans to encourage people to come by public transport or use designated parking there will still be an increase in vehicles coming through the area increasing pollution and noise. As the stadium does not have parking for all visitors it is likely people will park in local streets which will again increase the traffic and therefore pollution in these areas (which will be worsen by loss of another green space). This occurs regularly in Blackbird Leys in the streets around the Kassam. The volume of people coming to the stadium and coming to and from parked vehicles will cause disruption to those in the residential areas. Closing a main route into Oxford will cause more stationary traffic in any given area. When the roads are closed, where there are routes around, these will cause longer journeys again causing more pollution. Closing the main route for us into Oxford will significantly change our access to amenities.</p> <p>The stadium plans have looked at disruption due to noise and light. All the calculations have been based on noise within the stadium however before and after matches people will be outside the stadium building. This will generate noise that will not be muffled by the building. If the stadium aims to increase use of local businesses (eg local pubs, shops etc) this will continue well before and after a match. The noise will not be limited to the area around the stadium but would be within Kidlington itself and within earshot of the residential properties already there.</p> <p>I do not agree with using up evermore of the greenbelt to build the stadium, especially as there are other areas of the city that have not been build on in this way. The local areas green spaces have already been lost too numerous housing projects. This project will remove even more green space and impact further on the environment and wildlife in the village. I worry about the water runoff from the site, even with the drainage basins, as it is reliant on the other anti flooding projects to work. Until the houses have been build and established we cannot be sure there will be no effect. I worry that the effect longterm will be on houses already at the edges of the flood plains like ours.</p>

I am concerned about criminal and antisocial behaviour related to football. Although the majority of those attending will behave well research shows that criminal activity increases around stadiums on match days with a spatial and temporal relationship with proximity to matches. Looking at government statistics for 2022-2023 football arrests and banning orders, the number of banning orders are increasing, incidents occurred at 50% of matches with those being arrested being fans of teams within the 5 football leagues and most arrests happening at home games. The commonest severe offences are public order offences, violent disorder, alcohol offences and possession of class A drugs. There are also the more minor incidents that occur adding to these statistics. Even with a policing plan the stadium will increase crimes and antisocial behaviour in the local area and those of us closest to the stadium will be most at risk of being affected.

The new stadium is over 5 storeys high (24.6m) and is by far the tallest building in the vicinity. Based on the plans it will tower over the mature trees and be easily visible within the area. The modern metal and glass design does not match any neighbouring properties (or local sporting facilities at Strafield Brake) which are brick and stone. It takes away from the character of the village, which although large, has a more traditional feel. The loss of greenbelt land makes the gap between our village and Oxford even smaller.

The proposed benefits of the stadium to the local area are contradictory and not guaranteed. The stadium will create jobs but, if the stadium is easily accessible, there is no guarantee these jobs will be for local residents. It is likely that existing staff at the Kassam will simply transfer to the new stadium. The hotel will create jobs but again may not necessarily be locals. The stadium will provide opportunities for local children to play sport but only if they enjoy football. There are no facilities for other sports (e.g. rugby, athletics etc) and with the stadium being used for football through the season, there is no time to use it for anything else. If visitors are going to be brought in from around the area on public transport or transferred in from designated parking sites, they will not be staying in the local area and so may not bring that much business to local shops. The proposed onsite hotel has 180 rooms (approx 360 people if 2 per room, 720 if 4 per room) which is very small numbers compared to the number of away seats allocated and even smaller compared to the capacity of the ground.

I also worry the ground is not sustainable for a football club wanting to progress through the football leagues. The clubs current attendance falls well below the capacity of the proposed stadium but for a club to be financially viable they need a large enough ground to generate revenue from ticket sales to be able to buy top quality players. The club are currently in a play-off position and so could win promotion to the championship (and if they play well all the way to the premiership in a few seasons). But the proposed stadium would be much smaller than all but one of the current championship grounds and well below the target size of 30 000 capacity for a premiership team to be financially viable. Smaller clubs have managed in the premiership but have been demoted quickly. The triangle site has no scope for expansion for the club to maintain a position in a higher league.

I object to the new stadium because it will significantly impact our lives as a local residents. It will cause traffic and parking issues as well as increase crime and antisocial behaviour. It will increase pollution. It is changing the character of the village and shortening the greenbelt gap with Oxford. I also feel it will be a short term fix and limit the prospects of the football club.

Received Date

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Attachments