

**Rachel Tibbetts**

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**From:** Planning  
**Sent:** 14 April 2024 19:03  
**To:** DC Support  
**Subject:** FW: OBJECTION TO OUFC PLANNING APPLICATION reference 24/00539/F  
**Attachments:** Stratfield Brake bird count 2023.xlsx

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**From:** stephen thatcher [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 14, 2024 6:01 PM  
**To:** Planning <Planning@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** OBJECTION TO OUFC PLANNING APPLICATION reference 24/00539/F

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Mr Stephen Thatcher  
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14<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**OBJECTION to OUFC Planning Application Reference 24/00539/F**

I have lived along the Oxford Road for 47 years and have spent 68 years living in Kidlington. I would like to list my objections referring to the OUFC Planning Application reference 24/00539/F.

OUFC does not appear to have traffic modelling data that I can comment on.

**PARKING PROVISION**

184 parking spaces with 2 coach bays is totally short of the mark. If they expect fans to cycle then 150 cycle spaces will be nowhere near enough. Again, it would be against the local transport policy for OUFC to take over the spaces at The Park and Ride.

The Park and Ride is a service for drivers who come to Kidlington and catch buses to Oxford where parking is scarce, thus keeping cars and pollution out of Oxford.

People who live in the surrounding villages and towns as far afield as Chipping Norton use the Park and Ride to catch the hospital bus to access The JR hospital, Churchill and Nuffield Hospitals and other hospitals in Headington as key workers and patients, where again parking is limited.

OUFC has no influence in where it's fans park. Fans will take over the use of this facility which goes against the reason it was built and will prevent the people who need to use it from accessing it. It isn't a designated car park for football supporters! They have that already at Kassam!

What right legally does OUFC have to create Controlled Parking Zones, Reroute traffic, or organize hundreds of coaches to invade the area around Water Eaton and Kidlington?

The villagers voted against a stadium being built at a recent poll. Their voices should be heard.

I am under no illusion that as free parking is found in Kidlington that Sainsburys, Tesco's and the village car parks and local streets in Kidlington will become full of cars causing a nuisance to shoppers and residents. How easy it will be for fans to buy bulk alcohol at these shops before a game!

The Oxford Mail recently reported that shoppers in Sainsburys along the Oxford Road in Kidlington were unable to leave the car park for an hour after a lane was closed on the A34. That is not unusual. It just made the news this time.

There should be parking provided for supporters at the Stadium, but it is obvious that on the small site available for the stadium that this is impossible putting the problem over to the roads in Kidlington, Cutteslowe and Five Mile Drive. Based on size alone and the inability to have space for hundreds of cars and coaches this sight is not suitable!

## HIGHWAY SAFETY

Several days a week there are problems on the A34 which means traffic uses Kidlington as the next available route. I was stuck on the Oxford Road for 35 minutes outside my home last month and arrived at Parkway an hour after leaving home. When the traffic queues in the morning rush hour, both service roads and the main road become gridlocked.

16,000 people arriving by bus must be about 400 buses which I can't imagine stagecoach will provide. The few services to Kidlington, Woodstock, Banbury and Witney also double up as the Park and Ride buses. 400 coaches off-loading passengers at the Park and Ride or outside a stadium blocking the highway. With thousands of fans walking on roads!

### Emergency vehicles using the Highway

The ambulance station, Thames Valley Police Headquarters and The Fire and Rescue Service all need speedy access along the Oxford Road.

Diverting or holding up traffic on this road so 16,000 people can access a stadium could cause loss of life.

## TRAFFIC CONGESTION

At some point 7 days a week and at match days when 16,000 non residents wish to access a sports stadium which would be on a major transport route, the congestion around Kidlington would become a living nightmare.

Recently when there was an accident on the A34 and Kidlington was gridlocked, were forced to stay home after all attempts to leave Kidlington failed! Add in 16,000 people arriving in the area and the situation will become impossible for villagers.

Sandy lane crossing is closing to traffic sometime soon. Drivers accessing nearby villages will be forced into driving along the Oxford Road to exit the village adding to the congestion.

Observe Cutteslowe roundabout and see the congestion along three lanes from Marston direction, traffic queuing from Summertown, gridlocked traffic along Sunderland Avenue in both directions as the norm. Vehicles leaving the Water Eaton Park and Ride and people crossing the road holding up traffic can cause a tailback to this roundabout.

When Blenheim has major events, Kidlington becomes congested. Historically, when Sir Richard Branson used to hold summer parties with several hundred people, it was difficult to get out of Kidlington. The noise could be heard all over Kidlington!

Not only doesn't OUFC have a plan for a footbridge, I can't imagine a footbridge from the Parkway, crossing over the train track and A34 to get to the stadium on the other side. Pedestrian crossings to allow 16,000 fans to cross will cause traffic to come to a standstill causing congestion as traffic backs up along Frieze Way and the Oxford Roads. This is totally unacceptable on a major road for traffic or villagers. Why are we re modelling Kidlington to accommodate a stadium, when OUFC already have one which they are not being asked to leave!

When waiting at the bus stop at Garden city watching a few fans getting on the near empty Oxford United Fans bus, I don't believe the fan base is actually Kidlington!

### ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

Pollution levels in Oxford Road Kidlington are high! More traffic will increase air pollution.

Frieze way is unlit. Light streaming from a stadium will affect the animals, bats and birds nesting in that area.

The noise from thousands of fans will have a negative effect, prevent migrating birds from using this prime habitat.

I have already witnessed OUFC fans urinating in bushes in Kidlington! 16,000 fans needing the toilet before or after a game will need to form a large queue to access toilets. There are only 2 public toilets in Kidlington.

When walking around Stratfield Brake and even when sitting in my back garden I can hear the Announcements at Parkway station! Unless the stadium is sealed with an airtight lid, sound travels!

When Cherwell came up with the local plan, this valuable land was left as GREEN BELT. Development of this space will remove the last green space between Kidlington and Oxford. **A large commercial site with hotels, stadium, shops etc has no place on Sacred Green Belt.**

### DRAINING AND FLOOD RISK

Recent wet weather has shown how the triangle's willows have allowed this land to hold vast amounts of water. It has been flooded and has soaked up the run off from the Oxford Road, during the heavy rain. Developing this land could force flooding into other areas of Kidlington. Flooding was bad 2023/24 in the woodlands by Stratfield Brake.

The sewers in Kidlington are already struggling to cope. Some gardens along the Oxford Road are regularly having sewage leaks in their back gardens!

### LANDSCAPE IMPACT

A stadium that is nearly 82 feet tall covering the majority of the triangle site will create an over bearing feature in a soon to be (When Water Eaton houses and the luxury homes next to Cutteslowe and eventually the planned houses to be built on North Oxford Golf Course and Stratfield Farm) a residential area.

It will urbanize the last remaining green belt gap and have an impact on the setting and species of Stratfield Brake Nature Reserve. There will be a permanent and destructive effect on the nature. The species survivals depend on not only Stratfield Brake, because they also need to fly and feed in the triangle to survive.

There is so little remaining habitat for nature to survive in Kidlington as home building on the green belt has already begun to create sterile areas. To accommodate the lack of parking for houses of multiple cars: lawns, gardens and trees have been removed from people's homes to put cars on. Less greenery is less oxygen creating grass and trees and less greenery means less able to absorb the CO2 produced by cars. Which means more pollution affecting more people's health.

## NATURE CONSERVATION

Ancient woodland surrounds this site and needs protecting.

The woodland trust has up to date monthly records of birdlife at Stratfield Brake which shows there are more species of birds than previously thought. These birds will also fly to and from the triangle! Barbastelle bats have been seen and should be protected.

There are ancient oaks near to the proposed entrance of a stadium. These should not be removed. They have preservation orders on them which must be upheld.

Nature can lock up carbon while offering a host of other benefits such as food and flood alleviation. The climate and nature crises are so closely interlinked that we cannot address one without the other. We need to protect nature as much as possible.

The UK is one of the most nature depleted countries in the world! This stadium will destroy what little nature Kidlington has left.

Linnets are coming into our garden for food for the first time in 47 years. They have lost the hedgerows near Cutteslowe where luxury houses are being built and being forced out! One species is being lost to nature!

Kidlington has very little woodlands and green belt land left. It needs protecting. These birds need protecting.

The County Council purchased the Green Belt land known as "The Triangle" specifically to protect it from development. Therefore I am against this land being leased or built on to provide a stadium for Oxford United Football Club.

In 2018 OxVox had The Kassam Stadium designated as "AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE supported by Littlemore Parish council and Oxford City council.

The stadium was built to modern standards and whilst it could be improved there is no reason to move and build a new stadium on GREEN BELT by Stratfield Brake Nature Reserve.

It appears the OUFC is deliberately making itself homeless.

In January 2024, Firoz Kassam confirmed to the Oxford Mail that he is happy for the yellows to continue playing home games at the stadium in Littlemore. So why is Oxford United's chief executive Mr Williams claiming there is no option to renew the lease which expires in 2026? The OUFC has no right to take Kidlington's Green Belt?

I strongly oppose Cherwell District Council allowing a huge commercial enterprise to be built on GREEN BELT. The land is already leased and is a man's livelihood growing willows.

This willow farmer has created an amazing eco system, home to many species and vital being close to Stratfield Brake in maintaining the wildlife, fauna and flora at both natural areas.

As a woodland trust volunteer who does a monthly bird count at Stratfield Brake, I am attaching a spreadsheet 2023 so you can see how alive with different birdlife this area is.

These are the points that I would like you to take in to consideration.

Yours faithfully

Stephen John Thatcher