

Comment for planning application 24/00539/F

Application Number	24/00539/F
Location	Land To The East Of Stratfield Brake And West Of Oxford Parkway Railway Station Oxford Road Kidlington
Proposal	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	Laura Bell
Organisation Name	Lynne Tighe
Address	3 Talbot Road,Oxford,OX2 8LL
Type of Comment	Objection
Type	neighbour
Comments	<p>Loss of Green Belt.</p> <p>The proposed new stadium development in addition to the major housing developments underway in the area, on Green Belt land will join North Oxford and Kidlington, which completely negates the reason for the existence of the Green Belt in the first place. I can see no 'very exceptional circumstances' claimed by OUFC to allow construction of the proposed new stadium on existing Green Belt land. There appears to be evidence, though denied, that the club may have made itself effectively homeless by a failure to enter into negotiations to stay at the existing Kassam site. Cherwell District Council should and ought to contact the Kassam site owner and the stadium company to establish the truth of the matter. This is of utmost importance in my view. OUFC claim, as another extenuating circumstance, that there are no alternative sites. The plain fact of the matter is that they already have an existing ground on an extensive site and situated in an area where many of their fan base live. If the club owners have funds or access to funds, then it makes far more sense to use the funds to agree a deal to purchase and further develop the ground on the existing site rather than destroy the remaining Green Belt between Kidlington and Oxford.</p> <p>Environmental concerns.</p> <p>(1) I understand that the Triangle acts as a "drain" for excess rainwater in the area, effectively acting as an important sink to minimise flooding in the neighbouring occupied areas. If this is taken away then where will the excess water go and what will be the impact on flood risks? Has there been a proper investigation into the effect on local flood risks once this land is no longer able to receive excess water?</p> <p>(2) It is claimed and independent reports show, that there is a very high degree of bio-diversity in the Triangle and there are suggestions that the ecology reports undertaken on behalf of OUFC have underestimated the richness of this biodiversity and that some of the findings are disputed. For example, I understand that there were no breeding bird surveys carried out between the key times of March through to May. This is a serious omission and Cherwell district council should make sure that these are carried out. I fail to see how building a football stadium on Green Belt land, demolishing trees, razing to the ground of a green area and concreting it over can meet any claims to environmental sustainability, in area where, in addition, an adjacent 100 year old golf course and acres of fields and farmland is also set for destruction and housing development!</p> <p>Traffic issues.</p> <p>(1) OUFC have claimed that 90% of users of the ground would arrive by public transport. I fail to understand on what basis they have made this assumption. Currently, 83% of visitors to the Kassam football stadium arrive by car. It stretches credulity to assume that the vast majority of attendees will catch trains and buses (expensive, time consuming, unreliable and inefficient) rather than take/ share a car and then find somewhere to leave it in the vicinity of the ground. OUFC can have zero influence on how people will choose to arrive at the stadium. There is very limited public parking available either at the ground or within walking distance so there will inevitably be a serious adverse impact on local residents on match days. Local park and ride car parking is designed for visitors to Oxford city centre,</p>

shoppers, workers and hospital visits and should not be used to facilitate the parking needs of thousands of football fans. It will deter shoppers to the city centre on Saturday match days and struggling city centre shops need these customers more than ever before.

(2) The suggestion that there should be road closures and diversions before and after games, particularly on the Oxford Road, is totally unacceptable and it would seem that these are being considered despite Oxford County Council saying that the Oxford Road cannot be closed. Is Oxfordshire County Council going to object to this? To restrict traffic movement between Oxford and Kidlington and create diversions onto other already congested areas (Peartree, Wolvercote and Cutteslowe roundabouts) will cause traffic chaos and be a source of huge inconvenience for local residents. Other possible consequences could be the knock on effects on the strategic road networks of the A34 and M40. At the very least a footbridge between Oxford Parkway station to the ground must form part of any planning application, though the cost and feat of engineering required for a footbridge to span both the Oxford Rd and A34 would need careful consideration as to its feasibility. Also, even if there is a footbridge, how will the station itself cope with the additional rail users on match days? It is a small station and not designed to cope with thousands of football fans. Chiltern Railways have already flagged this up and stated that there would need to be significant investment to update the station facilities and purchase extra rolling stock. How will this be achieved and funded?

(3) I have lived in this area for 30 years, one mile or so from the proposed stadium site. I have witnessed the steady increase of traffic on the Banbury Road, Oxford Road to Kidlington and Peartree Wolvercote, Wolvercote and Cutteslowe roundabouts. The area is regularly gridlocked with traffic and it is getting worse. There are significant further building developments already underway, eg Oxford Northern Gateway, and thousands of new homes south of the Kidlington roundabout, which will exacerbate this. It seems crazy to further compound the traffic problems in this area by building a football stadium. The infrastructure simply does not exist to cope with it. Some consideration must be given to the local residents and the effect on their lives. Kidlington residents voted against the stadium in the Kidlington Parish poll last year and do not want this in their village.

Received Date

21/04/2024 18:35:23

Attachments