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To: Planning
Subject: Ref. 24/00539/F

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I wish to put on record the following objection to planning application 24/00539/F, submitted by Oxford United Football Club:

OUFC's application focuses on how spectators will access the proposed stadium, but says little about potential disruption for people who need to travel to or from Oxford Parkway station or Oxford City along the A4156.

Six bus services use this road: the 2 and 2A between Oxford and parts of Kidlington; the S4 between Oxford and Banbury; the S5 between Oxford and Bicester; the S7 between Oxford, Woodstock and Witney; and the 700 between Kidlington and Thornhill Park & Ride via Oxford Parkway and the Headington hospitals. All these services are in use 7 days a week at least until 8 pm, the majority until after 11 pm, by members of the public for whom travel by private car is not an easy alternative. If private vehicles are diverted away from this route and sent via the Peartree Roundabout for periods of at least 30 minutes on various days in the year, will the bus services keep to their normal route as and when traffic to the stadium allows, or follow the diversion, or wait until the diversion is lifted? In each case their timetables will be disrupted and delayed; have Stagecoach and the Oxford Bus Company been consulted? (They do not seem to be listed among those invited to comment.)

Spectators who arrive by train, bus or car at Oxford Parkway will have to get to the stadium on foot along pavements which are only wide enough for two or at most three people to walk abreast. It is not clear how OUFC proposes to limit the flow of pedestrians to 30 minutes before and after events or to control that flow at other times (see advice from Thames Valley Police about the likelihood of accidents). In addition, OUFC envisages that some spectators will come by bicycle, presumably on national cycle route 51, which runs along the pavement on the west side of the A4156. How will cyclists and pedestrians be managed together? And what is to happen to cyclists travelling to or from Oxford on route 51? They cannot safely be diverted via Peartree Roundabout because there are no cycle tracks along Frieze Way.

OUFC says it intends to submit a planning application for a footbridge across the A4156. Without details of the size and location of this bridge, the present application is incomplete, but it seems likely that a footbridge would merely reduce, not remove the problems of managing large numbers of pedestrians on narrow pavements along a busy arterial road and the consequent disruption to other road users. As it stands, OUFC's application does not seem to be compatible with Oxford County Council's transport and connectivity policy.

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