

By email only

30 August 2023

Dear Dr Sudbury & Green Party Colleagues

OUFC STADIUM PROPOSAL FOR THE TRIANGLE IN KIDLINGTON (PLUS 200-BED HOTEL ETC)

We write to you, Dr Sudbury, as a member of Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC's) Cabinet and to all of you as members of the Green Party. The OCC Cabinet will vote on this proposal on 19 September. We are looking to you to provide some environmental leadership.

We draw your attention to the following:

1. The most environmentally friendly solution is for the club to remain at Kassam. As 'Greens' you will understand the carbon effects of demolishing the current stadium and building a new one (with other commercial buildings, including a 200-bed hotel).
2. The attached email from Mr Kassam (obtained by FoI) shows that neither the County nor the City Councils have attempted to find a way for OUFC to stay at its current site. Why not?
3. OUFC's original lease which was due to end in 2026 gave the club the right to renew on the same terms until 2046. But OUFC negotiated a new lease in 2021 and in doing so appears to have made itself homeless by negotiating away its right to stay at Kassam. We have repeatedly asked OCC to explain to us exactly why OUFC can't stay at Kassam but despite holding this information they refuse to disclose it to their electorate who have a right to know.
4. If OUFC made itself homeless for commercial, or other reasons, we believe they are unjustified in seeking to build another stadium on Green Belt.
5. Unlike OUFC we have carried out not one, but two ecological appraisals of the Triangle. Both have shown that it is ecologically valuable. The adjacent woodland, marked as ancient woodland in the Local Plan, is a protected priority habitat (which OUFC have suggested could be 'enhanced' by landscaping). Please see attached photos.
6. OCC is spending tax payers money (> £100 k to date) for the commercial benefit of private overseas investors whilst taking away important local green space from local residents. Why?
7. The Triangle is located close to Oxford Parkway but the train is not going to be the choice of travel mode for most fans. Neither will it be active travel. It will be via private motor car. Even the club acknowledges that it will look to use the Park & Rides for car parking.
8. The Triangle is the last bit of green space (Green Belt) remaining between Kidlington and North Oxford once the planned developments are in place and the Planning Inspector intended it to be left for this specific purpose. Voters in this area have voted for change as a result of the amount of development in this area. The Kidlington Parish Poll clearly demonstrated that a clear majority of residents are opposed to the stadium. Can you understand their frustration with a new Lib Dem/Green/Labour Cabinet that has chosen to promote this proposal?
9. The Lib Dems have a strong following in this area but we have recently openly criticised them for remaining silent on the Triangle. But there are also Green Party members on the District, County, City and Parish Councils who we believe should be opposing this. If you or the Lib Dems believe that you will miss out on votes by being associated with the failure of this proposal, we believe you misunderstand your supporters' demographic.

Cllr Sudbury, we believe that you should be opposing this proposal on environmental grounds and we hope you will vote against it. To all Green Party members, we hope that you will support us by lobbying Cllr Sudbury to vote against the Triangle proposal on 19 September.

We would welcome a response from each of you individually.

We will follow the proceedings with interest.

With best wishes

Friends of Stratfield Brake

CC

Oxfordshire County Council

Oxford City Council

Kidlington Parish Council

All Green Councillors on District, County, City and Parish Councils