

## NOTES FOR EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING ON 19 JANUARY 2023

OCC CABINET 24 January 2023

PROPOSAL FROM OXFORD UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB TO OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
LAND TO THE EAST OF FRIEZE WAY / SOUTH OF KIDLINGTON ROUNDABOUT

Report by Corporate Director Customers and Organisational Development

[https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s64219/CA\\_JAN2423R06%20OUFC.pdf](https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s64219/CA_JAN2423R06%20OUFC.pdf)

See also the OUFC Stage 0 report at

<https://oufcstadium.co.uk/december-update/>

I have appended below the Notes on OUFC Stage 0 SB Report already circulated.

### Key points for KPC

1. Recommendation is to enter into negotiations on Heads of Terms to agree terms on which the triangle would be leased to OUFC (1a).
2. Heads of Terms would be non-binding and subject to approval of detailed plans and undertakings (1a, 1b, 29).
3. Will require engagement with a broad range of stakeholders (1f).
4. Stratfield Brake proposal not suitable or deliverable and therefore not recommended to progress with this (5).
5. Ancillary developments on Triangle to be within the stadium footprint without “significant additional development” (6, 28)
6. OUFC Stage 0 response “addresses a number of the OCC objectives and Principles ... although further information will be required in most areas” (20). These will need to be reassessed with regards to the Triangle proposal through detailed project development planning (23).
7. Heads of Terms can be negotiated in parallel with this (23).
8. Recommendation is for “‘in principle’ commitment to agree the commercial terms”, but no commitment yet to a final agreement “until these objectives (and other considerations referred to in this report) are demonstrably satisfied” (24).
9. Most of KPC’s 6 questions will be addressed through the next stages of project planning (26).
10. OCC will seek to develop “reasonable clauses and covenants on the undertakings OUFC will make to meet OCC’s objectives” (30).
11. “As part of any proposal OCC will be seeking to ensure appropriate community benefit to support the ongoing sustainability of local sports clubs and facilities. “ (42)
12. Seems to leave open whether a leasehold or freehold transaction will be pursued (46)
13. “At this stage further public engagement has not been undertaken; the exercise undertaken earlier in the year still stands regarding the principles for negotiation and whether the County Council should enter into discussions, albeit with regards to a smaller parcel of land.” (51)
14. “The County Council will welcome and take into consideration further views from communities and stakeholders when more detailed plans from OUFC are available at future milestones. (53)

### Draft statement of KPC’s position

1. KPC’s position in the matter of the Triangle proposal is very different from its position in the matter of Stratfield Brake. Whereas we are leaseholders of Stratfield Brake, and the stadium proposal could not have gone forward there without our agreeing to relinquish the lease, in the case of the Triangle we are only consultees, although the land is within Kidlington Parish.
2. We should leave our position on Stratfield Brake as it stands. We do not yet have answers to all our questions and do not have the information we agreed we need to make a decision. Even

though OCC are currently taking SB off the table, it could come back, and we would then have to reconsider any decision that we might take now.

3. A number of our questions relating to the Stratfield Brake proposal have not yet been fully answered: transport, traffic congestion and parking, the number and frequency of major events, benefits to the local community (sporting and otherwise), the long-term dependability of commitments entered into by the club. These will need to be fully answered in relation to the Triangle site.
4. There is the added major issue in the case of the Triangle proposal of the effective removal of the Green Belt gap between Kidlington and Oxford that would result, after the planned housing developments immediately South of the A34. It is hard to see how the proposal fits with OCC's stated requirement of maintaining the "green barrier" between Oxford and Kidlington.
5. We should take the same open-minded approach to the Triangle proposal as we did in the case of SB. We need much more information about the plans for the new site, as well as answers to the questions above, before we can make up our minds.
6. Because of these unknowns, OCC should take a similarly open-minded approach. Instead of speaking of negotiations and in principle agreement, they should be speaking, as they did last January, of discussions without any in principle commitment.
7. No advantage would be gained by making a firm decision now for or against. We need to time it further down the line, so as to fit in most effectively with OCC's decision-making process. A decision that is as fully informed as it can be is likely to have more impact than a decision at this stage, given all the unknowns.
8. For the same reason there is no point in us consulting residents until we are more fully informed. The outcome is unlikely to influence OCC one way or another at this stage, assuming that they agree to go ahead with negotiations, or discussions, on January 24<sup>th</sup>.
9. The online survey conducted by OCC in the early part of next year cannot be considered a sound consultation. We will consider in due course whether and how to consult more soundly and systematically, perhaps through a Parish Poll.

The Notes on the OUFC Stage 0 appended below are there for convenience. They are only partially relevant to the Triangle issue.

DAVID ROBEY

18 Jan. 23

## NOTES ON OUFc STAGE 0 REPORT

See <https://oufcstadium.co.uk/december-update/>

Executive summary

p. 4: The design brief has been in development throughout the workstage, and has been refined and adapted through several design review workshops, carried out with internal client stakeholders. The outcome of this process is an indicative sitewide masterplan that considers the footprint and land requirements of an 18,000 capacity stadium, 3,000 capacity arena and 200 key hotel. Accommodating OUFc's goal of a year round, multi-use venue, that both enables the stadium and enhances the local community facilities will be integral to the next stages of the project. Due to the evolving nature of the project the proposal is now a stadium only.

**Does this mean that there won't be a hotel? Which of the many options listed is now being proposed?**

Kidlington Cricket Club

- At the time of writing, OUFc have agreed Heads of Terms for the Cricket Club to be relocated from Stratfield Brake.

**We need to know exactly what and were.**

Gosford All Blacks RFC

- Subsequent to the issue of the Stage 0 report, OUFc through its ongoing site searches, successfully identified a relation site for the rugby club, to the south of Stratfield Brake.

**What does this mean? Elsewhere the proposal seems to be that the Rugby Club will be retained on the SB stie.**

p. 30: 3.7 Potential Transport Links

- Creating a formal route to Croxford Gardens to the north

**Likely to alarm to residents of CG in the absence of a detailed parking control scheme**

p. 36: 3.10 Parking Provision

Proposed on site Car Parking – 330

**3 times the present level: not what we had expected when all but essential parking is to be provided off-site**

p. 59: 5.5 Stadium on Smaller Site

The two options illustrated both remove all but a small section of the Kidlington Green Gap.

p. 76: 8.3 Stakeholder Engagement

**Interestingly, neither KPC nor GWE are included in the list of “ key stakeholders in the development of the wider masterplan”. This may reflect earlier stages in the development of the plan, when its proponents didn't seem to realize that we had a 100-year sub-lease on the site. To be fair, however, we have had and continue to have good contacts with OUFc.**

p. 80: Appendix 02 - Traffic and Transport Strategy. Executive Summary

The assumption is that 90% of fans will travel by sustainable modes and a “detailed transport strategy will be developed” to get them there. The site will include dedicated bus and coach stands.

**We will need to see the details of the transport strategy before agreeing anything. The provision of bus and coach stands on- rather than off-site (e.g. at Oxford Parkway) does not fit with the aim to minimize the concrete footprint.**

pp. 88-9: Appendix 02 – 7 Emerging Masterplan

The fans survey suggests that 32.3% of fans would travel to the site by car, which would require 5814 parking spaces. This is well above the total capacity of Parkway and Pear Tree. The club's aim is that only 10% will travel by car, requiring 1800 spaces. This is less than the total overall capacity of the nearby sites, but no information is given on the amount of free space at the times when they will be used by fans. The Club's 10% aim may also be over-optimistic.

p.93: Appendix 02 – 9 Summary and Next Steps

It is expected that OUFC will "support and fund any required Traffic Regulation Orders to control unwanted parking as a result of matches and events".

**We will need to see firm details of TROs before agreeing to anything.**

p. 105: Proposed development

Mixed-use site with 18,000 seat stadium, arena, 250 bed hotel, 4 no. football pitches and clubhouse, sports facilities for use of the local community, pedestrian walkway connecting the site to Oxford Parkway station in addition to either 4 no. rugby pitches **or 150 no. homes.**

**This seems to contradict the Executive summary above.**

### **Our six questions**

For reference, the six questions to which we would need detailed, specific and concrete answers before deciding whether to relinquish our lease.

1. Does the Club really need to move to Stratfield Brake?
2. What benefits, sporting and other, would there be for Kidlington residents?
3. How would the negative impacts be mitigated: noise, congestion, parking, crowds?
4. What would the site look like? How green/eco-friendly would it be, how would it fit with the surrounding landscape?
5. What replacement facilities would there be for the current sports club users?
6. How can we be sure any commitments entered into will be honoured?

### **Issues insufficiently addressed**

The report does not address 1 or 6, gives little information about 2 and insufficient information about 3, is not clear about 4 since we don't know which of the many options is being proposed, and gives insufficient information about 5. In particular:

- A series of options are proposed for the site, but it is not clear which one is now being put forward. We need much more detail on the preferred option.
- Number and nature of matches and events per year
- Match-day traffic congestion

DAVID ROBEY  
30 December 2022