

Friends of Stratfield Brake

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To Layla Moran MP (layla.moran.mp@parliament.uk)

By email only

CC to Liberal Democrat Councillors (list at end)

Dear Layla

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT SILENCE ON OUFC'S STADIUM PROPOSAL

As you know, there is strong evidence that local residents are opposed to Oxford United's new stadium proposal. As well as your own survey, this was confirmed by the Kidlington Parish Poll. Yet, not one single Liberal Democrat has spoken out publicly against it on behalf of local residents.

We believe that the only rational explanation for this Liberal Democrat 'Wall of Silence' is a local policy understanding on this matter. We assume the reason is fear of association with any decision linked to the possible demise of Oxford United if the proposal doesn't proceed.

This situation has created a democratic deficit because there has been no reasoned debate or open questioning/criticism of the stadium proposal.

Our group is the only voice standing up for our local Green Belt and residents' substantial concerns about this major development. We have endured many months of unpleasant, personal, ongoing and escalating online bullying simply as a result of opposing the stadium. Meanwhile, you and your Liberal Democrat colleagues choose to remain silent. You are failing in your duty to represent your constituents.

We, and our supporters, note as follows:

- The information provided by OUFC has been consistently poor: it fails to address local concerns around traffic, parking, loss of biodiversity and the

green barrier, pollution (air, noise and light), crowd control & management, and lacks details on all key aspects.

- OUFC's commitments to the local community are vague and unfunded and consider only Kidlington: they completely overlook North Oxford and Gosford & Water Eaton.
- Significant amounts of taxpayers' money is being spent on a proposal to sell publicly-owned Green Belt land to further the commercial interests of overseas-based investors.
- OUFC supporters form less than 1% of the Oxfordshire electorate and about 4.5% of the Oxford City electorate.
- OUFC's interests are being prioritised ahead of people who voted for your party.
- There is mounting anger amongst local people at this silence: it has been noted, and won't be forgotten.

Despite this, not one of the Liberal Democrats, right from you as our MP, to those on the Lib-Dem-controlled County Council Cabinet, to the Oxford City Councillors in the directly adjacent Wolvercote Ward, and nearby Summertown Ward, down to Kidlington Parish Council, have shown any support to local residents who are opposed to this proposal.

Kidlington Parish Council has stated its opposition to both Botley West and the closure of Sandy Lane but, under the guise of perpetually seeking more information, has failed to respond to the County Council's consultation. They have sat on the stadium fence for too long.

The Lib-Dem-controlled County Council Cabinet is forging ahead with the stadium proposal against the wishes of local residents and without disclosing all the relevant facts around why Oxford United needs to leave its current stadium.

Cllr Calum Miller's role as leader of this proposal on behalf of the County Council is especially worrying: he has heard from, but clearly ignored, local people and groups. He has also presided over another appalling County Council consultation. We have received legal advice to the effect that it was unlawful by failing to provide information on fundamental questions such as why the Club has lost its right to remain at the Kassam Stadium until 2046.

You and your colleagues have completely abdicated your responsibility to represent your constituents' opposition to this overwhelmingly-unpopular stadium proposal.

This situation needs to change. Please urgently tell us what are you going to do about it?

We will be sharing this letter widely with our supporter base, and publishing it on our website and social media pages, together with any response.

Regards

Victoria Campbell and Suzanne McIvor

For and on behalf of FoSB

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