

Paper Petition Details

Arbour Park Football Stadium & 88 Houses

Further to a recent article regarding the plans for Arbour Park, we would like to voice our concerns on the proposed plans below.

Firstly, we would start by asking why, as residents of Stoke Road, we were not forewarned of the plans for this project prior to finding out via a newspaper article? Doesn't the council have a due diligence obligation to individually inform those residents who will be directly affected by its decisions? Stoke Road is an arterial road into the town. It is always busy, with traffic regularly backing up from the bus station, past the shops and beyond, at times reaching Slough Crematorium. Congestion is currently at an all-time high, exacerbated by the road system at Wellington Street and the change to traffic flow through Chalvey High Street - which has already had a noticeable knock-on effect on all adjoining roads. It will be interesting to see whether the new Heart of Slough traffic system helps or hinders future traffic flow down Stoke Road as, so far and with only a couple of months left before completion, it is far worse.

Were other parks considered as possible sites for the football stadium, perhaps Upton Park or Salt Hill Park which are served by several A roads rather than one lone B road, thereby spreading the load? It is ludicrous to expect Stoke Road alone to manage all the extra traffic that these houses and the stadium will generate, with no support from other possible access roads like Shaggy Calf Lane and/or Wexham Road. An important consideration, which should not be under-estimated, is the havoc extra congestion will cause emergency vehicles, notably ambulances, heading to Wexham Park Hospital. Has the Primary Care Trust been approached for its views?

Judging by the plans, there do not appear to be many allocated parking spaces for the stadium within the complex. What happens on match days to all those extra cars? Does Stoke Road become STFC's unofficial overflow car park? With the profusion of HMOs on this road street parking is already at a premium, and the only viable solution should these plans go ahead, would be to paint double yellow lines along the entire length of the road as a suitable deterrent.

Another, not inconsiderate, concern for sitting the stadium within an existing community is the likely disruption caused by fans walking to/from matches. There have been horror stories from people who lived near the old Reading stadium of drunken fans vomiting and urinating in front gardens, and damage to residents' properties and cars.

Whilst writing, we are curious as to where the money for this building project is coming from? Surely, in these constrained economic times, Slough Council has better things to spend its money on than a shiny new football stadium for, apparently, some 200 fans? Couldn't this money be better used for the greater good of the majority of Slough's residents, i.e. by regenerating the sorry state of the town centre shops, which seem to consist these days solely of charity, pound or mobile phone unlocking shops? Couldn't the money be used to promote Slough as a great place to open attractive shops by providing independent shops with business rate incentives, perhaps?

If that's not possible, how about spending any spare cash on sorting out the malodorous stench from the sewage plant that, too regularly these days, is strong enough to make

drivers on the M4 gag, and which says more effectively than anything else *"Welcome to Slough -a town you want to avoid at all costs!"*

We, the undersigned, urge Slough Council to take the above points into consideration when making its decision. The main motive for locating the stadium on this site appears to be only its historical proximity to the old stadium, thus benefiting the 200 or so Slough Town supporters. Can Slough really afford this extravagance for so few residents? If so, does that mean that the residents of Stoke Road and all neighbouring roads (who easily outnumber the football fans) will have to pay through increased congestion, mess, noise and a detrimental disruption of the quiet enjoyment of their homes? We keenly await your decision.

This petition was received on 16th April 2012.

This petition was passed to the Principal Valuer (Asset Management) on 18th April 2012.

This petition was responded to on 12th May 2012 by the Principal Valuer (Asset Management).

Final Results

Number of Signatures	71
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Council Response

Thank you for your petition dated 22ND March, 2012 concerning the above matter which was received by the Council on 16th April, 2012. I would like to formally respond on behalf of the Council which I hereby do as follows:-

- (1) The Council and the other stakeholders of the Arbour Park Project are committed to informing the public about the proposals and in particular local residents potentially affected by the scheme. To this effect Abracadabra Leaflet Distribution were appointed to deliver 1,400 leaflets on Friday 24th February, 2012 to local residents informing them of the Public Consultation Event for the Arbour Park Project held on Friday 2nd March/Saturday 3rd March, 2012 at the West Wing on Stoke Road. I can confirm that leaflets were handed delivered to all the properties in Stoke Road in the vicinity of the site including all the Stoke Road residents signing the petition. The two leaflet distributors were tracked by a GPS system as this ensures delivery and of course if necessary it can be proven. The Public Consultation Event is not a statutory responsibility but is considered good practice. Further consultation with local residents will be made during the Development Control process once the requisite planning application is submitted.
- (2) Pre-application discussions have commenced with the Council's Development Control Section on the scheme. Traffic generation from the development is one of the material considerations in the process of determining the planning application and the issues raised by the Council's transportation engineers are being taken into account in refining the planning application prior to submission.
- (3) In terms of considering alternative locations within the borough boundary of Slough for a football ground for Slough Town Football Club is concerned I can

advise that a very detailed examination of alternative sites has been undertaken and this process will be overtly demonstrated in the planning application submitted. In essence the subject site is considered the most appropriate location in planning terms.

- (4) To my knowledge the Primary Care Trust (PCT) has not been specifically consulted on the proposals to date. If such consultation is not part of the Development Control process then I shall specifically request that my colleagues in Development Control consult the PCT.
- (5) The provision of car parking for the football ground totals 232 at present. This is made up of 123 car parking spaces in the car park immediately adjoining Stoke Road and 109 car parking spaces (5 of which are disabled) in the car park behind the club house. This provision is considered sufficient to cater for the number of fans attending the football ground. The Development Control process will specifically examine this aspect.
- (6) I cannot comment on the behaviour of fans visiting other football clubs. The profile of Slough's fans is such that the behaviour you mention is highly unlikely. No guarantees can be given in respect of poor behaviour but in terms of the games that Slough will play even with promotion into a higher league the likelihood of such behaviour will be remote. Slough Town Football Club will have stewards on duty on all match days and there will be zero tolerance to anti-social behaviour. Slough Town Football Club are acutely aware that they are part of the community.
- (7) The project is self-financing with the land value generated from the sale of the private houses and the shared ownership dwellings funding the enhanced sporting facilities for St. Joseph's High School, the community facilities and the football ground for Slough Town Football Club.

The planning application should be submitted next month and all local residents will be consulted giving them an opportunity to make any comments about the proposals for the Council's Development Control Section's consideration in determining the application. Once the planning application has been submitted and registered as valid by the Council's Development Control Section I shall contact you to let you know.