

15th August 2009

Councillor Kay Cutts
Leader Nottinghamshire County Council
Normanton House
Old Melton Road
Normanton on the Wolds
Nottinghamshire
NG12 5NN

Councillor Neil Clarke
Leader Rushcliffe Borough Council
Civic Centre
Pavillion Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 5FE

Re Proposed Stadium Development at Holme Pierrepont.

Dear Councillor Clarke and Councillor Cutts,

I hereby wish to express my objection in the strongest possible terms to the proposed development of a 50,000 seat stadium as part of the proposal for the Nottingham 2018 World Cup Bid at Holme Pierrepont.

To put this in context, I am a very keen supporter for the participation in sport having competed myself at National Championship level as a rowing cox, my brother being an elite marathon runner and being one of a small handful of people who have completed a marathon on all seven continents and both polar regions. Another relation has also competed at Olympic level for rowing, with his niece currently seeking to be part of the Senior Great Britain team for High Jump, despite still being a Junior. As such, I am very acutely aware of the benefits to the young (and old) from *participation* in sport through health, confidence building, fitness and team working. With this in mind, I applaud the current developments underway to develop the Holme Pierrepont Water Sports Facility, both for elite and wider sports development.

This is a far cry from building a 50,000 seat stadium in an inappropriate location, with dubious legacy credentials, which apparently will do nothing to encourage the participation in sport, whilst also *removing* newly developed sporting facilities that are currently used by a variety of local football and cricket clubs. It is imperative that such facilities are preserved in order to provide readily accessible and attractive facilities for future generations.

Aside from the very important issue of removal of existing of existing sporting facilities, I object to the location of the proposed stadium on the following grounds:

- The location is “Green Belt’ and a substantial stadium occupying a site of 17 acres would be completely out of character with the existing surrounding environment, which is used and enjoyed by many in the local area. As such the development contravenes current planning guidelines (Planning Policy Guidance 2 - Green Belts)
- The location is on the Trent Floodplain. The development will require vast quantities of concrete and will cover land which at present acts as an important natural soak-away, slowing run off into local watercourses and the River Trent. Interference with this natural pattern will increase the flood risk to local properties, thereby undoing much of the benefit from the investment in flood defences that has recently been completed in the immediate vicinity. I understand that the Environment Agency would oppose the proposed development, for the proposal contravenes current guidelines regarding developments on flood plains. (Planning Policy Statement 25 - Development & Flood Risk)
- The local transport infrastructure is inadequate to cope with 50,000 spectators getting to and fro from the proposed location in an appropriate manner. The proposed site is nearly 3 miles from the City Centre and the railway station, meaning that it would not be practical for spectators to walk to the site. Even if a new tram-way is built, (none is planned in the proposal as far as I am aware) it would not be able to cope with the intensity of transporting that number of people to the site in a timely fashion. This would in turn force people into their cars, thereby significantly increasing congestion in the area, with all the associated issues for the local environment.
- The site is adjacent to Skylarks, a holiday home for the disabled who would be severely affected by the proposed development. Such facilities are rare enough, and there is a duty of care in the community and through yourselves as Councillors, to protect and support those who are most vulnerable in our society. This includes the provision of suitable recreational facilities in a pleasant, peaceful and restorative environment, as for example, is currently enjoyed by Skylarks and its customers. In a similar vein, the proposal would require the removal and re-siting of Greenacres, a permanently occupied caravan park. As a result, the proposal would cause disruption and distress to the vulnerable people who live there.
- Adjacent to the site are a number of active horse riding centres which are used by many in the wider community, including those from Skylarks. Having a 50,000 stadium nearby, with all the associated disruption and congestion would materially affect this activity, both from a road safety and an environmental enjoyment point of view.

Despite the objections to the current proposal, I should state that I am fully supportive of Nottingham submitting a bid to host a World Cup standard stadium that the city can be justifiably proud of. However, I am sure there are other areas of the city which could be redeveloped in order to revitalise communities and infrastructure. For example the area between London Road and the A612 Manvers Street would be central (300 yards from the

station), is walkable, is ripe for re-development and would be a prime site for an integrated development incorporating a stadium, sports facilities, restaurants and hotels.

Perhaps now is a time to act with vision, clarity and boldness, to use the World Cup bid as vehicle to break down some of the historic Nottingham City tribalism; to bring the two football clubs to the table, take advantage of the opportunities offered by new ownership at Notts County and initiate a shared stadium that would be fully utilised and sited in a suitable location. This could act as a beacon of excellence and co-operation for Nottingham nationwide, as well as potentially offering a much "Greener" solution, with benefits arising from regeneration, increased utilisation and fewer resources used for subsequent transportation.

Finally, I cannot emphasise enough that Green Belt land is designated for a purpose and is there to benefit not just the immediate local residents, but also the wider community, who come and enjoy the facilities and open space. Once this valuable green space is built on, it is gone for ever and hence we in the community, and yourselves as Councillors have a vital further duty of care to preserve it for current and future generations. On this basis alone, I trust that you will withdraw the current proposal and submit plans which redevelops a part of the city by building a jointly used and fully utilised stadium, of which Nottingham can be justly proud. This in turn would preserve the Green Belt environment and associated facilities around Holme Pierrepont for current and future generations.

Yours sincerely

Lady Bay Resident

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