

## New Stadium for Bath Rugby

PERA's position on the proposed New Stadium at the Rec has been clear for several years. While PERA is not opposed to improvements or redevelopment of the current Stadium, PERA is opposed to changes that will cause local residents to suffer further noise, nuisance or pollution.

We have welcomed Bath Rugby's consultation on the New Stadium. Both PERA committee members and interested local residents have participated in the workshops held last year and earlier this year. From these workshops PERA has identified a number of issues arising in connection with the design of the New Stadium that are not yet clear or that need to be addressed in future developments of the New Stadium design. Whilst the proposals are positive in a number of respects (e.g., Riverside regeneration, use of the Stadium by amateur clubs and schools), a number of significant concerns remain.

In no particular order, our thoughts and concerns are set out below. Note that this list is not comprehensive but we believe it captures the key issues. It should be noted that the views of PERA's members include a body of residents that do not wish to see any New Stadium built or any loss of Rec space to a New Stadium. However, the below represent the views of the vast majority.

### Principal issues

- **Size.** The consultation was not sufficiently detailed to form a full and proper assessment of the size of the New Stadium, but its apparent size, both footprint and anticipated height, was commented on adversely by the majority of local residents. More detail is required in relation to the intended size of the New Stadium for residents to properly assess its impact.
- **Residential area.** Unlike the west and south-sides of the proposed Stadium, the north-side of the Stadium (and to a lesser extent the east side) is a residential area that closely borders the Rec. Any future designs must ensure residents' legitimate concerns are addressed.

### Size and footprint issues

- **Footprint.** The Stadium footprint should not be increased unless it can be shown that it would not degrade the utility of the area. In particular, the New Stadium design indicates a significant expansion to the east, cutting across a large portion of the Rec that is currently used by the local community for many different activities.
- **Height.** The proposed height of the New Stadium also appears to be close to the parapet height of Great Pulteney Street. This is far too high and will damage previously identified "protected views". Residents' rights to light and privacy also need to be addressed. The proposed height is unsympathetic to the Stadium's historic setting.
- **Temporary stadium.** The siting of a temporary stadium for Bath Rugby alongside the building site for the New Stadium is strongly opposed by PERA and its members. Siting a temporary stadium on the Rec would, at a minimum, result in a total loss of green space, a total loss of amenity for the wider community, and excessive noise and visual intrusion.

## Access

- **Traffic access.** Traffic to/from the New Stadium should only ever come via Pulteney Road/North Parade, never via William Street. During construction, ONLY south-side access should be used.
- **Pedestrian access.** Primary pedestrian access points and entrances to the New Stadium should be on the Riverside, North Parade and the south-side via the Leisure Centre. Stadium entry via the William Street entrance should only be for Emergency access. In particular, there should never be any access via Johnston Street.
- **Rights of way.** At present, pedestrians can access the Riverside and the Leisure Centre via the Rec. This access should continue to be provided following development of a New Stadium.

## Nuisance and pollution

- **General.** The New Stadium should not adversely affect neighbours' quiet enjoyment of their homes and it should be designed to minimise noise, light and other pollution (e.g., food smells) for local residents. This is particularly important on the north-side of the Stadium which is lower and borders a residential area.
- **Outside events.** Outside of regular Bath Rugby matches, there should be a very low limit on the number of events allowed at the New Stadium/the Rec. Any events that are permitted should have a cut-off of no later than 11pm on Fridays and Saturdays, and no later than 10 pm on other nights. Everyone should be offsite by then. The William Street Entrance should not be used for these events and there should continue to be something that prevents permeation into the residential area after these times, and dusk-to-dawn, as currently exists.
- **Commercial facilities.** Commercial facilities along the river-front need more discussion on usage, hours and types of facility, particularly those that serve alcohol. Issues of noise, security, safety, ASB, prevention of excessive drinking, are all issues that are of major importance to local residents, who are the most likely to be adversely affected.

## Traffic and wider environmental issues

- **Car park - traffic.** PERA has major concerns on an underground car park. It will have a detrimental impact on an already congested City, particularly along approach roads. Encouraging additional traffic into Bath is directly at odds with BANES's stated aims to reduce traffic and encourage other means of transport to/from the City. The fact that it has a detrimental impact on the overall height is also a major issue.
- **Car park - air quality.** The proposed car park will also exacerbate air-quality issues which BANES and the UK Government have committed to reduce. PERA objects to the inclusion of a car park at the Rec, but should one be built any ventilation of the car park should discharge extracted air to the south-side of the Rec.

- **Flood mitigation.** Flood protection for adjoining residential properties should be increased to give them at least the same level of flood risk as that planned for the pitch.
- **Environmental protections.** Consideration must be given to the impact on, and protection of, bats and other wild-life as a result of the proposals (both during construction and following construction of a New Stadium).

#### **Process and protections**

- **Representation.** PERA and those residents who most closely border the Rec should be represented on the Stadium “Resident Group”. Further, residents most local to the Rec should be consulted separately as they are the people most directly affected by the New Stadium proposals.
- **Safeguarding protections into the future.** The ultimate ownership and control of the New Stadium may change from time to time, and any new owner or controller may wish to use the New Stadium in ways that are incompatible with protections to be afforded to local residents. Protections afforded to local residents and the wider community in connection with the construction and use of a New Stadium must therefore be robust and capable of enforcement by residents in the future. Ownership of shares, debt, financing structure, and transferability of any of these are therefore important to local residents and should be known in advance.

Agreed by the PERA Committee - October 2018