

SWINDON MOTORSPORTS

Welcome to our public consultation on our proposals for Studley Grange Motorsports Hub.

The proposal is being brought forward by Swindon Motorsports who launched a search for a replacement motorsports facility in 2022 following the permanent closure of the Abbey Stadium in 2019.

The proposals will create a visitor attraction and sporting destination, catering to amateur and professional motorsports participants and enthusiasts.

The new facility will provide a long-term viable and sustainable future for speedway racing in Swindon with the development of a multi-use site which is commercially viable and suitable for a wide range of commercial, business, and leisure uses.

About Swindon Motorsports

Swindon Motorsports is a joint venture partnership between Swindon Speedway and Gaming International, set up to locate and deliver an accessible, sustainable facility, accommodating speedway racing.

Founding members of the Board include experienced and successful operators and promoters of leisure facilities, including speedway, who have invested their time and money in efforts to secure a new future for Swindon Speedway.

Phased approach to delivery

Swindon has been without speedway racing for over 4 years and we are determined to bring it back as soon as possible.

To that end, if we receive planning consent, we will adopt a phased approach to the development of the site, prioritising the construction of a speedway track to expedite the return of the Swindon Robins.

This will mean that the Robins can start at the earliest possible opportunity while the remainder of the site is constructed.

It is our aim and hope that the Robins can be racing again in 2026.



Planning considerations

Our planning application will be submitted to Wiltshire Council, the Local Planning Authority, to be determined in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

We will submit a planning application in spring this year and anticipate a decision in late 2025.



To find out more about Swindon Motorsports, and learn how you can become a supporter, please visit swindonmotorsports.co.uk

Aerial view of Studley Grange ©Google

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Site location and selection process

The Abbey Stadium has not operated speedway since October 2019, and a decision was taken in autumn 2022 to permanently close the site to motorsports racing.

A 'call for sites' was issued in November 2022 to find a new site 'within a 45-minute drive of Swindon centre'. Led by Savills, the search identified and secured the Studley Grange site, situated on land close to Junction 16 of the M4 in an area characterised by open space.

The site includes a listed farm building which will be retained and repurposed for the motorsports hub.

There is further land available to expand the site in the future for additional forms of leisure activities, subject to planning permission.



Why this site

The Studley Grange site presents an opportunity to significantly expand Swindon's motorsports offering with the creation of a multi-use leisure site and an increase in the range and regularity of motorsports events and activities.

The site is located in an area with few residential properties meaning there are no operational constraints related to noise and air pollution.

The site is also easily accessible for fans travelling from out of town, with sufficient space for an expandable capacity of up to 3,000 spectators.

The site has been secured on a 99-year lease, providing a long-term and sustainable future for motorsport-based leisure and the Swindon Robins.

The Abbey Stadium

Serious challenges now face the long-term viability of speedway racing in the UK, with eight speedway teams going into administration since 2016.

Recent analysis conducted by sports consultants Knight, Kavanagh and Page (KKP) outlined that the nation-wide decline in speedway operations has been caused by unsustainable revenue streams owing to declining audiences and fewer broadcasting deals. KPP concluded that speedway as a sport operating in isolation is therefore becoming increasingly difficult to make commercially viable.

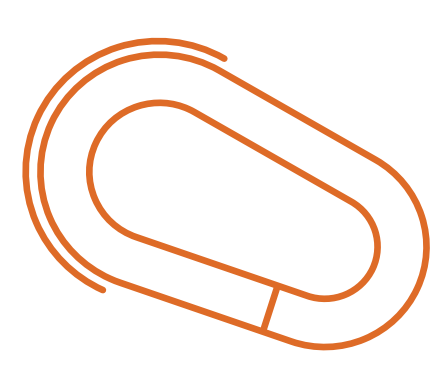
Planning restrictions at the Abbey Stadium severely limit the number of days for motorsports operation with strict noise and air pollution restrictions, rendering motorsports promotion, and participation financially unviable.

Greyhound racing, the financial underpin and enabler of speedway racing promotion is under severe financial pressure and with growing concerns related to welfare has a very uncertain future.

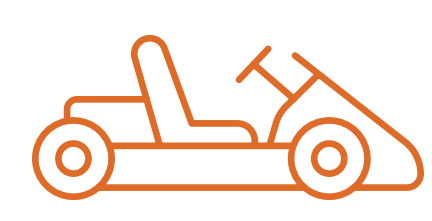
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Overview of the proposals



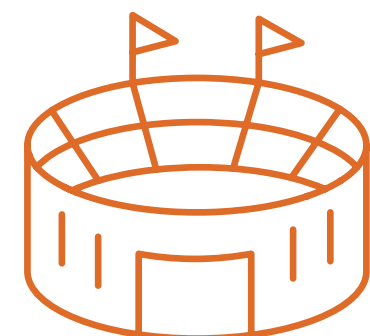
A speedway track and associated infrastructure to host speedway racing and training, to serve as the home of the Swindon Robins



A racing specification karting circuit for recreational and competitive use



Facilities for refreshment and recreation, including themed retail and entertainment, and food and beverage outlets



A multi-use events arena with an expandable capacity of up to 3,000



A small complex of business units sensitively designed around a landscaped courtyard providing office, meeting and workshop space, aimed at start-up motorsport related enterprises.



The restoration and reuse of a Grade II listed farm building



A minimum of 200 landscaped car parking spaces, including EV charging points



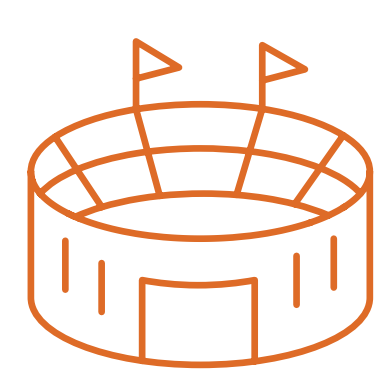
Significant investment into the local area, creating jobs and training opportunities during construction and operation



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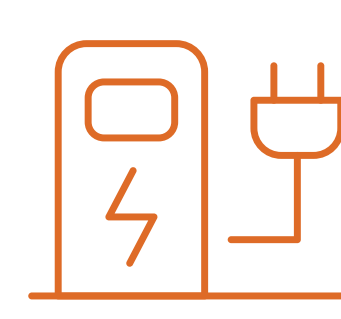


Benefits of our proposals



A new multi-use motorsports hub

The Studley Grange Motorsports Hub will deliver a range of motorsports-related events and activities, including speedway and karting, with the option to expand the site in future. Crucially, the mixed-use nature of the proposal will put Swindon Speedway on a sustainable footing for the future, delivering a facility and operational model that is fit for the twenty-first century.



Sustainability and energy efficiency

The proposals have been designed to integrate sustainability throughout the site, including through the use of solar panels to provide renewable energy, double-glazed windows and insulation to minimise heating requirements, rainwater harvesting systems to water vegetation and racing surfaces and the use of recycled materials and upcycled furniture.



An easily accessible site with no revenue limiting operational restrictions

The site is situated in an easily accessible location in a large open area in a natural bowl close to the Great Western mainline and M4 motorway, with few properties in the immediate vicinity, adjacent to a former waste tip. As a result, it is not expected that there will be any operational restrictions that will affect the viability of the site.



Supporting biodiversity

The plans will deliver a series of biodiversity enhancements and habitat creation to promote and support local wildlife, delivering a Biodiversity Net Gain over the 10% required in national planning policy.



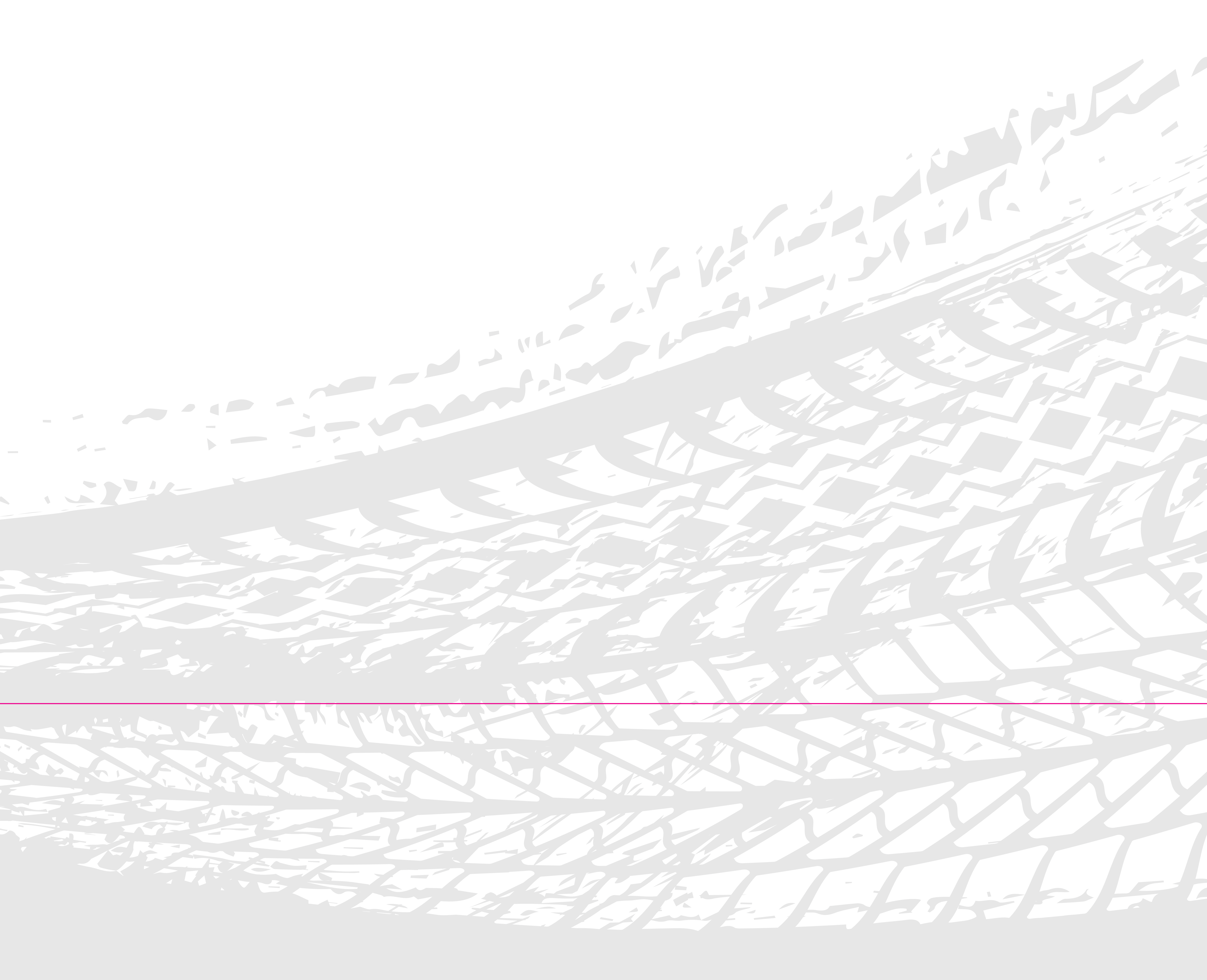
Investment, job creation and training

The proposals represent a significant investment in Swindon. It is anticipated that, once operational, the site could support over 60 jobs, as well as creating apprenticeships and other training opportunities.



Integrated facilities

The motorsports hub will feature integrated facilities and amenities to support the commercial operation of the site, including a business centre, a food court area for refreshments and merchandise, a club house and training opportunities, a bar and café, a media centre, and associated business units to complement motorsports uses.

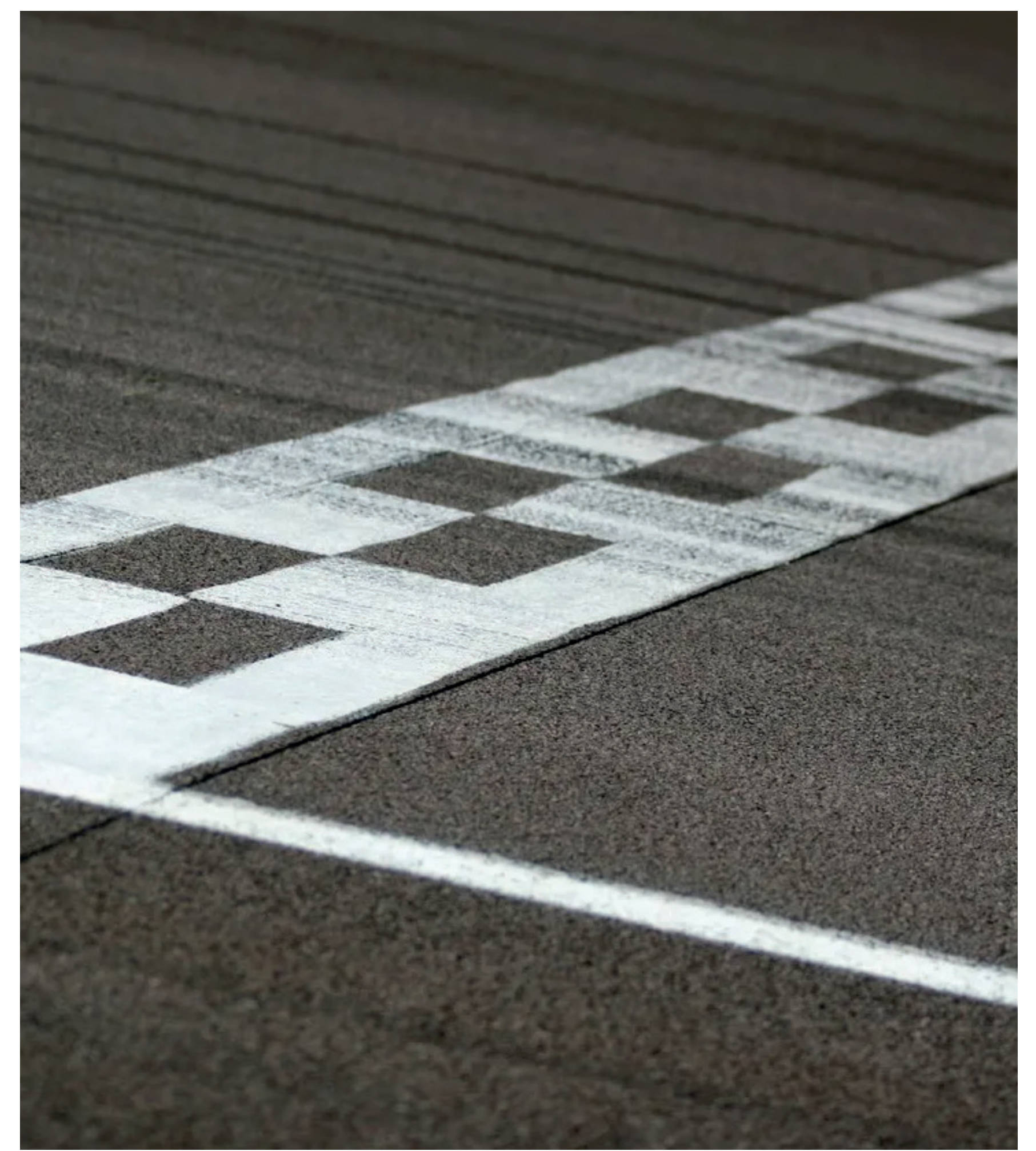


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Design and technical considerations

Design

The proposals have been designed to combine functionality, safety, and entertainment, with high quality landscaping, the use of eco-friendly materials, and a combination of modern and historic designs. This will ensure high standards of comfort and convenience for visitors. The site will also incorporate sustainability throughout, with solar panels on roofs, high performance insulation, rainwater harvesting, and the use of reclaimed materials.



Transport and travel

The proposed access to the site will be via the existing highway network from the T-junction that connects onto the B4005 opposite Hay Lane. This route was historically used by larger landfill vehicles and does not have any outstanding safety issues. The operation of the site would have a minimal impact on the highways network, with movements in the day relatively modest in scale and larger events typically taking place outside the busiest traffic periods. The facility has been designed to provide on-site parking for the busiest events of the year, and would be unlikely to result in an unacceptable impact on the highways network.

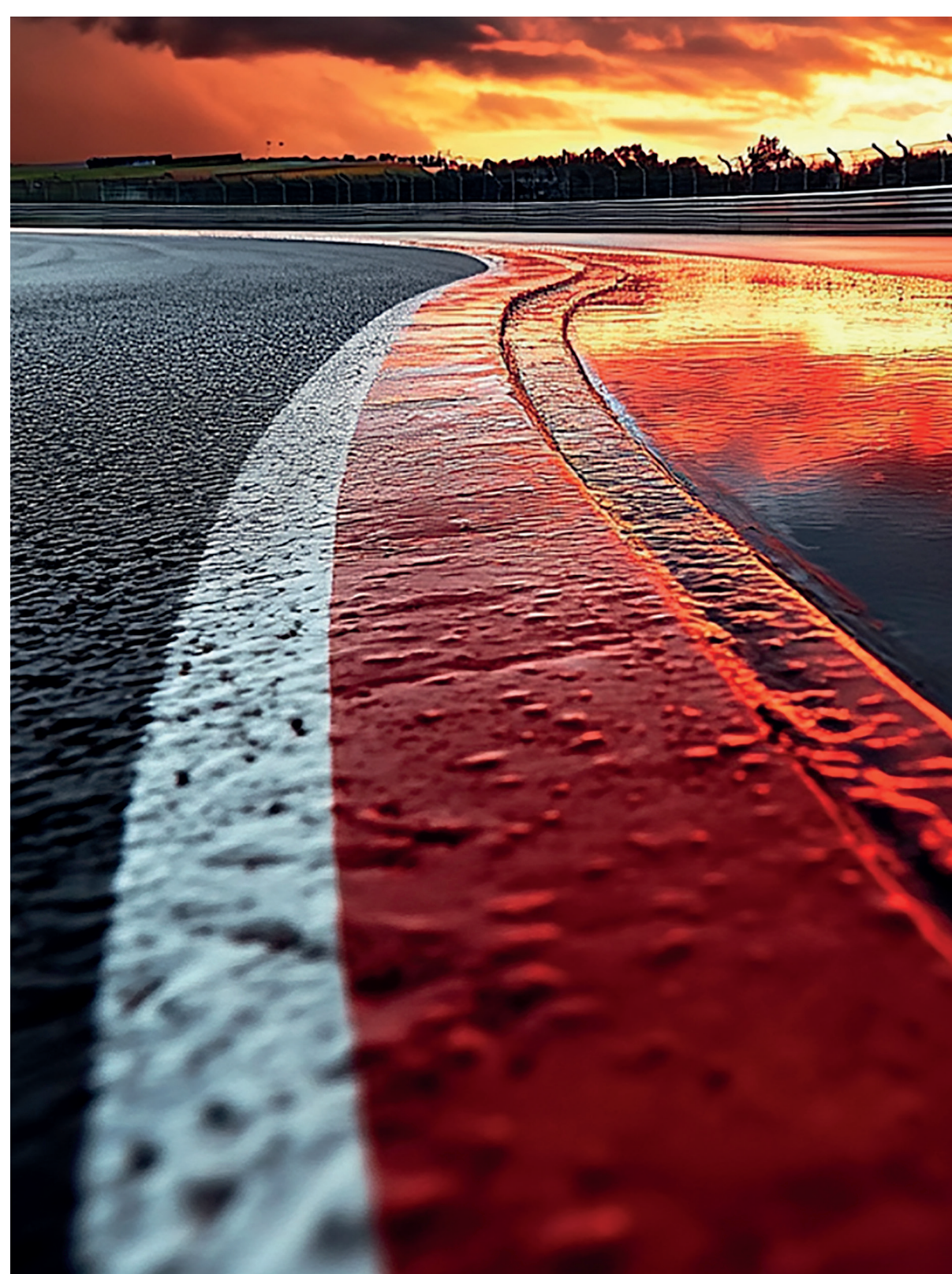
We anticipate agreeing a formal Transport Assessment, Travel Plan and Event Management Plan in dialogue with Wiltshire Council and National Highways.

Noise

The Studley Grange site is a more suitable location for speedway racing than the Abbey Stadium, which is surrounded by residential development. Noise mitigation and management will be incorporated into the design from the outset. The new site has few residential neighbours whose amenity will be protected by using ancillary buildings and the topography of the site to control noise emissions using best practice experience from the motorsports industry.

Biodiversity and ecology

Initial ecological and habitat surveys have described the site as a mixture of woodland, grasslands, scrub, and urban. The proposals include a series of mitigation measures, including the siting of tracks to avoid the removal of woodland and other important habitats, and the use of soft and hard landscaping to manage and improve ecology and habitats. Additional surveys on protected species will also be undertaken.



Flooding and drainage

The site falls within Flood Zone 1 meaning a low probability of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment will be submitted alongside the planning application to set out how sustainable urban drainage systems will be utilised to manage surface water runoff, which will be discharged into the nearby watercourse network. Consideration will also be given to the use of permeable paving, filter drains, and swales.

Heritage

The site includes a two-storey Grade-II listed building known as Studley Grange Farmhouse. The building is unoccupied, boarded up and displays evidence of structural deterioration, making it a Building at Risk. The proposals will conserve and restore the Farmhouse with the aim of refurbishing and reusing the building as office space.

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Feedback and next Steps

Get in touch

We have now launched a public consultation on our proposals which runs from Wednesday 29 January to Sunday 23 March 2025.

We invite residents, stakeholders, and interested parties to engage with the consultation and submit your thoughts on our proposals.

You can submit your feedback via the following methods:

Email us at consultation@thirty47.co.uk

Write to us at our Freepost address at
FREEPOST TC CONSULTATION
(no stamp required)

Fill in a feedback form at our public exhibition event

Submit your feedback online via our project website at swindonmotorsports.co.uk



Following the end of consultation, we will consider the feedback received and produce a consultation report which responds to the key issues raised. This document will be submitted alongside our planning application.

The closing date for your feedback is 23:59pm on 23 March 2025.

Feedback received after this date may not be included in the consultation report.

Studley supporters

We are keen to work with motorsports enthusiasts and speedway supporters to deliver a new motorsports facility that is shared by all.

We are currently inviting interested parties to register as a 'Motorsports supporter' to keep informed on the progress of the planning application, get involved in the design of the facility, and have the option to join a future management group and purchase shares in the Company.

Timeline

- **September 2022** – Permanent closure of Abbey Stadium to speedway racing
- **November 2022** – 'Call for sites' launched
- **August 2024** – Studley Grange announced as site
- **October 2024** – First pre-application meeting with officers from Wiltshire Council
- **December 2024** – Second pre-application meeting with Wiltshire Council
- **January 2025** – Launch of consultation on Studley Grange proposals
- **February 2025** – Public exhibition event
- **Spring 2025** – Submission of planning application
- **Late 2025** – Decision anticipated from Wiltshire Council