

NEWS

Hall Green Stadium to be demolished after fight to save historic track fails

Greyhound track opened in the 1920s will now close to make way for more than 200 houses in Birmingham suburb

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By [Tamlyn Jones](#)

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Racing at Hall Green Stadium will now be a thing of the past

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Birmingham's planning chiefs today approved an application to replace the track, which opened in 1927, and a 48-bedroom hotel with up to 210 houses.

The plan has been plagued by controversy from the start with objectors saying it would cost jobs and the loss of a community asset while supporters cite the city's dire housing shortage.

Animal rights groups have also campaigned for its demolition over claims that greyhound racing is cruel.

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It appeared last month the stadium had been handed a reprieve [after councillors went against the recommendation](#) of planning officers and were 'minded to refuse' so deferred the application by Euro Property Investments, [which bought Hall Green in 2014](#).

But it emerged last week that three proposed key reasons for refusal - loss of community facility, loss of jobs and low affordable housing provision - would most likely be thrown out if the applicant lodged an appeal.

Questions were raised over the robustness of figures provided by both supporters and objectors in relation to how many annual visitors Hall Green Stadium welcomed and how many staff worked there.

Birmingham also has a greyhound track in Perry Barr and councillors and planning officers said that it would be able to support those nights lost at Hall Green.



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be dispute over these figures but whatever the number of visitors and staff there, it is going to be a significant loss.

"It has been listed as an asset of community value. Even with lower number in terms of jobs and visitors, I think this is an asset worth protecting."

Coun Barry Henley (Lab Brandwood) said: "The application should be approved as the three reasons listed for its refusal hold no water.

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"We have another greyhound stadium and Hall Green is smack in the middle of a residential area.

"We're not abolishing great racing so, if there's a need for it and if the gambling industry requires it to continue, it will take place elsewhere."

The Greyhound Racing Association operates both Perry Barr and Hall Green, which has a capacity of 2,700 and also houses a snooker club, bar and restaurant.

It also uses Hall Green as a head office but its lease is due to expire there in 2018.