



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

27 April 1984

COPTHALL STADIUM

Thank you for your letter of 25 April about Copthall Stadium, which the Prime Minister has noted. She was grateful to be kept in touch.

David Barclay

Miss Sue Faulkner,
Department of the Environment.

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cc: Mr Robbman (27/4)

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
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Prime Minister (2)

My ref:

Your ref:

25 April 1984

To note

Dms

26/4

Dear Private Secretary

COPTHALL STADIUM

The Prime Minister is already aware of the proposals for a national indoor arena to be sited at the Copthall Stadium. Although it does not fall within the Finchley constituency, its catchment area would be a wide one if it goes ahead. Copthall is, however, running into problems with funding and the Government may be criticised locally if the project fails. Mr Macfarlane thought that the Prime Minister should be forewarned.

2. It is the construction costs - estimated at around £12m - which are causing the biggest headache since the site itself is to be donated by L B Barnet and the Council will also contribute up to £300k pa towards operating costs. The Bernard Sunley Trust may contribute as much as 50% of the construction costs if the Copthall Trust receives charitable status. But these negotiations are proving to be lengthy and look, at the moment, uncertain.

There is also the additional problem that Copthall is in competition for private capital against 2 other major projects: an international standard complex in Birmingham and the conversion of a large warehouse in the London Docklands. Both projects are further down the road than Copthall and there must be serious doubt about the likelihood of all 3 projects raising private capital.

The Government may be criticised for "not contributing its share" but we have always taken the line that, wherever feasible, sport should meet its own needs and although the UK is deficient in high quality athletics stadia a substantial input from the private and voluntary sectors is required before public sector support can be considered.

We shall keep you informed of progress.

Yours sincerely

S I Faulkner

S I FAULKNER
Private Secretary

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