

DEVELOP CROYDON

# Croydon Stadium Design

AND

# Inward Investment

ROUND TABLE

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16TH OCTOBER 2025

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# Stadium Design & Inward Investment

ROUND TABLE

**Jonty Castle:** Hosting major events brings challenges, particularly around how people enter and exit safely. That has to underpin everything we design.

**Daniel Blackburn:** Yes – the journey is critical. From the moment a fan leaves home to when they arrive at the stadium, every stage affects the local area. It's why some stadiums move away from urban areas, but that's a mistake – being embedded in a passionate community is an advantage, not a drawback.

**Jonty Castle:** We already have three major transport hubs. On match days, we're at maximum capacity – so we must think carefully about flow, parking, and movement. How do we future-proof that?

**Chris Edwards:** The stadium can't be developed in isolation. It needs to connect with Croydon and London more broadly. For many fans, supporting Palace is a spiritual experience built on community. That's what we should celebrate and enhance.

**Daniel Blackburn:** There's an incredible opportunity to reimagine how people move from stations and transport hubs to Selhurst Park. Tottenham's redevelopment in Haringey is a good precedent – they redesigned the surrounding area to work better for residents and visitors alike. Croydon could do the same.

**Mitesh Velani:** Building this stand will be a great achievement, but if we don't connect it to wider London, it will be a missed opportunity.

**Will Durden:** Exactly – this should be a catalyst for major regeneration, and we must not miss it.

## How can stadium developments be successfully integrated into local communities through the involvement of key stakeholders?

Successful integration of stadium developments into local communities depends on early, strategic collaboration between key stakeholders. By forming partnerships across local government, transport bodies, education, business, and cultural institutions, a stadium can drive regeneration beyond sport.

**Rumi Bose:** Partnership is key. The same principles apply to regenerating high streets – bringing life back through hybridised spaces that mix culture, work, leisure, and community, during different times of day. A stadium can function as a modern urban centre – like the Helsinki Library example, which has become a hub for civic life, creativity and connection.

**Jonty Castle:** The Birmingham partnership model is a great example. Early collaboration with the council opened opportunities that later attracted government funding for infrastructure and regeneration. That kind of joined-up partnership created lasting benefits across multiple sectors.

**Mitesh Velani:** Potential partners for us include Gatwick Airport, Westfield, and local education institutions. There's a real opportunity to think about transport and connectivity over the next 25 years.

**Rumi Bose:** Croydon is the largest London borough (by population) and one of the youngest, with plenty of green space, hyper connectivity, an ecosystem of small businesses, and rich cultural diversity. That gives it great ingredients for growth and regeneration – and partnership is key to this success.

**Jonty Castle:** We need a clear strategy. This isn't just about building a stand – it's about long-term regeneration for South London. We must bring the right stakeholders together to make that happen.

**Rumi Bose:** This is a positive, pivotal moment. We need to make the most of it.

**Jonty Castle:** Agreed. If we're going to seize this opportunity, we must identify the right people, create a strategic group, and promote Croydon as the centre of South London. Everyone – from TfL to the airport and local government – stands to benefit if we work in partnership.

**Will Durden:** CPFC is already well-connected by transport, but expansion could increase pressure. Many fans still drive, which presents sustainability challenges. Coordination from the Mayor's office and TfL will be critical. "Metroisation" of rail services could be transformational if delivered.

**Chris Edwards:** Partnership and communication are everything. Engaging with Westfield, the Mayor, and TfL is essential. Croydon has all the ingredients that have made the regeneration of similar towns and cities a success – so why not here?

**Jonty Castle:** If we can unlock strategic partnerships, this project can benefit not just Croydon but South London as a whole. We need a working group of people committed to making that vision real.

**Mitesh Velani:** The challenge is clear: we're going to build this stand, but let's use it as the spark to bring all stakeholders together for the future of South London. The potential is huge – and the time is now. We can build the stand in isolation but the wider strategy for South London needs to be a collective one.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- **Beyond Football:** The stadium must serve as a year-round civic and community hub – not just a match-day venue.
- **Design Philosophy:** Inclusive, flexible, and rooted in the local community, while also projecting a modern, ambitious identity.
- **Economic & Social Regeneration:** Drive local jobs, skills, and investment while enhancing civic pride and cohesion.
- **Transport & Infrastructure:** Leverage Croydon's connectivity while addressing congestion and sustainability.
- **Partnerships are Crucial:** Lasting regeneration requires joined-up planning – from local government to major regional stakeholders (TfL, Gatwick, Westfield, etc.).
- **Vision for the Future:** Position Croydon as South London's cultural and economic centre – with Selhurst Park as its symbolic heart.

# DEVELOP CROYDON ATTENDEES



## RUMI BOSE

FOUNDER DIRECTOR,  
RUMI BOSE BOSE LTD;  
CHAIR, NLA HIGH STREETS EXPERT  
PANEL; FUTURE OF LONDON BOARD  
MEMBER  
(PANEL CHAIR)



## MITESH VELANI

CFO,  
CRYSTAL PALACE  
FOOTBALL CLUB



## JONTY CASTLE

COO,  
CRYSTAL PALACE  
FOOTBALL CLUB



## DANIEL BLACKBURN

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR,  
KSS



## CHRIS EDWARDS

PARTNER AND HEAD OF  
HEALTH AND SAFETY,  
CALFORDSEADEN



## WILL DURDEN

DIRECTOR,  
MOMENTUM TRANSPORT  
PLANNING (ONLINE)

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On 16th October 2025, Develop Croydon welcomed a panel of experts to discuss the regeneration of Crystal Palace F.C.'s Selhurst Park stadium.

The new Main Stand will provide more general admission seats, new corporate facilities, improved disabled access and a club museum, as well as a community hub to hold events beyond match days, such as concerts and conferences.

Key points raised during the Develop Croydon roundtable included the importance of modern, inclusive and flexible stadium design in fostering community cohesion and economic growth. The stadium's proximity to major transport hubs and existing infrastructure presents both challenges and opportunities for urban regeneration. The conversation also highlighted the need for partnerships - between stakeholders such as Croydon Council, TfL, Gatwick Airport, Westfield and businesses - to drive wider investment and community benefits.

### What role can modern stadium design play in shaping Croydon's wider regeneration vision?

Modern stadium design can be a catalyst for civic pride, community connection, and economic growth. A modern Selhurst Park could become a 365-day destination that integrates sport, leisure, and culture – driving investment, creating jobs, and fostering inclusivity.

Rumi Bose: This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reshape Croydon as South London's city of the future – a hub for culture and community. Croydon is in a period of rediscovery and rethinking its identity, and Selhurst Park is a key part of that story. This isn't just a sports project; it's a regeneration opportunity to explore how this landmark can shape the borough as a whole.

A modern stadium and the club's growing profile make a fascinating case study – not just about architecture or attendance, but what a stadium can represent in the life of its people. It's about civic pride, community connection, and long-term opportunity. More than just match days, it's about placemaking, civic pride, and economic benefit – jobs, skills, and community cohesion. The challenge is to create a stadium *of* Croydon, not just *in* Croydon.

# Stadium Design & Inward Investment

## ROUND TABLE

**Daniel Blackburn:** Traditionally, urban stadiums like Selhurst Park were fortress-like, closed off from local communities. The trend over the last 20 years has been to open them up – to make the ground more public-facing and integrated. The stadium should be part of the area, not just in it.

**Chris Edwards:** When stadiums are developed alongside wider city plans, they can act as catalysts for regeneration – as we saw in Liverpool. When they're designed in isolation, they struggle. Croydon is similar to Liverpool – a proud, culturally rich community. Aligning sport, leisure, and music with regeneration makes designing a successful stadium much easier.

**Jonty Castle:** A Premier League stadium today is like a modern-day church – a catalyst for community. We don't want to be active just 30 days a year; we want a 365-day venue used by businesses, residents, and visitors – hosting everything from football to expos, concerts, weddings, and community events. The design must be impressive, inclusive, and functional – a landmark that catalyses regeneration.

**Mitesh Velani:** Design is important – we need a variety of spaces that can serve different uses. For example, a sports gaming hub or open, high-ceiling areas that allow flexible community use. Music and culture are essential. By programming a diverse range of events, the stadium can reflect the full range of Croydon's communities and those in the wider South London.

**Mitesh Velani:** Unlike many US or European stadiums built on out-of-town sites, Selhurst Park is rooted in its community. That makes it unique. The design should ensure longevity, inclusivity, and intergenerational relevance – a stadium that outlasts us and continues to serve Croydon and South London.

Success looks like inclusivity and building community.

**Will Durden:** Look at Wembley – its redevelopment radically transformed its area. West Ham's move shows how even small relocations can reshape communities. The challenge is to deliver the 365-day model effectively while balancing the needs of local residents.



**Jonty Castle:** Fulham Pier is a good example. It's both a football stadium and a members' club, with the boardwalk open to the public. People walking their dogs or jogging can stop for a drink or a coffee – that's close to a true 365 model. We'll never have the River Thames, but the principle is the same: build inclusivity and everyday use into the design.

**Daniel Blackburn:** The advantage local clubs have is that they're already embedded in their communities, so they don't need to rely on hotels or large entertainment venues. If we can leverage that and be more inclusive, the 365 model doesn't need to mean huge revenue – it can mean better engagement and a stronger sense of community.

**Daniel Blackburn:** Exactly. The stadium shouldn't just be for football. It needs to be designed for alternative uses, with flexibility to hold different types of events – from art studios to gaming hubs, serving both the community and the club.

### What strategies ensure stadiums drive long-term inward investment?

Flexible, community-oriented spaces and year-round activities can embed the venue in daily life, while careful planning around transport, access, and connectivity ensures sustainability and growth. When integrated into Croydon's wider regeneration vision, the stadium can attract investors, boost local business, and serve as a catalyst for further development.

**Jonty Castle:** Through the Palace for Life Foundation, we can weave community activities into stadium use, not just sport. The stadium can become a physical representation of our community values.

We've got investors, we are a global story and have so much potential – we need revenue from building to compete at that level. It's imperative to drive sporting success but it's got to work for the wider community too and if we look at value to Croydon, all the economic benefits, the value of hotels, travel, retail, etc. – that can also support the success of Croydon.

**Mitesh Velani:** The new stand itself may be the impetus to generate more investment into the area. I've seen how one strong development can trigger many others.

**Rumi Bose:** Looking at the public library model across Nordic countries – whilst the funding landscape is very different here in the UK – this still provides great examples of generating civic activity through multi-use and partnership. For example at the Oodi Central Helsinki Library – people can borrow books, use 3D printers, gaming consoles, eat and drink, watch theatre, or simply socialise. It is a 'living room for residents', providing a diverse urban experience with services and facilities available all around the clock, seven days a week. Most of these audiences will not be here to attend major events, but for daily, layered, diverse activities, catering to the aspiration of a '365 day stadium'. That's the kind of civic energy we could aspire to.