

'Anti-football' SNP must revisit fan-zone decision

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The SNP must abandon its hypocritical stance on a fanzone at one of Scotland's biggest stadiums, or earn a reputation as being an "anti-football" administration, the Scottish Conservatives have said.

It was reported earlier this week that senior nationalist figures in Glasgow scuppered a bid by Rangers to have a trial entertainment area installed near its Ibrox ground.

That's despite backing the very same idea for Hampden, Scotland's national stadium just a few miles away.

Now Scottish Conservative Glasgow MSP Adam Tomkins has written to sport minister Joe Fitzpatrick urging him to ensure his party properly considered such proposals not only in Glasgow, but right across the country.

He said it was the latest example of the SNP's dismissive attitude to football, despite it being Scotland's national sport and participation in it key to improving public health.

The nationalists have already been widely criticised for introducing the offensive behaviour at football legislation, which unfairly targeted law-abiding supporters and was later scrapped thanks to opposition MSPs in Holyrood.

And the party have also repeatedly rejected calls to introduce the option of drinking alcohol at football matches, despite fans, clubs and the SFA being in favour of a pilot.

Tomorrow, the SFA will decide on the future of Hampden, with SNP calls for a fan zone at the ground being a key part of the campaign to keep it as Scottish football's official home.

Scottish Conservative Glasgow MSP Adam Tomkins said:

"In seeking to deny Ibrox a fan zone – while backing one for Hampden – the SNP looks utterly hypocritical.

"All professional clubs and football authorities in Scotland should be encouraged to explore options to make the matchday experience ever better for

fans.

“Instead of blocking this, the SNP should be reaching out right across Scotland to see what it could do to help.

“The SNP is fast-gaining a reputation for being an anti-football administration.

“It passed legislation which criminalised supporters with its illogical offensive behaviour at football legislation, and continuously opposes alcohol at football matches even though the clubs, SFA and fans want it.

“Now it’s standing in the way of clubs who simply want to make a day out at the football more enjoyable and better value for money.”