

BLUES GROUND STORM BREW

by LUCY TENNYSON

WYCOMBE Wanderers' plans to move to a new football ground at Sands could be threatened by a row over who owns a part of Hillbottom Road.

Factory bosses in Sands Industrial Estate are furious over a development company's proposals to build a football ground on a farm at the end of Hillbottom Road.

Limited

The industrialists say the road is private, and they they will try to stop football fans having access.

Peter Cormack, who manages factories on the north side of Hillbottom Road on behalf of landowner Maurice Saady, said they would certainly resist the use of the road by the football club.

"I have been in touch with all the sub-tenants and they object most strongly," he said.

The Wanderers now face strong opposition in the town to both parts of their plans, which the club says will pave

the way to top league football.

Hospital authorities object to the sale of the present ground at Loakes Park to a property developer to build two D.I.Y. warehouses. It would prevent Wycombe Hospital from expanding and cut already limited car parking, they say.

And now, Hillbottom Road residents and factories are united in opposing the football club's move to a new ground on land owned by Sir Francis Dashwood at the end of the road at Sands.

This week 72-year-old James Evans, a former regular at Loakes Park, collected 80 names on a petition, only one refusing to sign.

He said: "We are all incensed by the idea. We already have too many lorries going up and down this road, and now it could be football coaches and crowds of supporters as well."

"It's Green Belt land, I don't see how it can be allowed. This area used to be a nice little village, but now we've got the lorries, and next it could be football hooligans."

However, a spokesman for the property developer who negotiated with Sir Francis over the site, gave assurances there would be no problems.

Enjoyment

"I feel this site would bother the minimum amount of people. It is the best place in the town for it." And he said that the private part of Hillbottom Road was still owned by the West Wycombe Estate, and that there would be no problem. More events are in the pipeline and today (Friday) has a festival steering committee. On the 27 to 29, the festival will include a procession through the village, a clay pigeon shoot, Morris dancing and a village dance. Taking place on Friday the 27 to 29, the festival will include a procession through the village, a clay pigeon shoot, Morris dancing and a village dance. More events are in the pipeline and today (Friday) has a festival steering committee. On the 27 to 29, the festival will include a procession through the village, a clay pigeon shoot, Morris dancing and a village dance. Taking place on Friday the 27 to 29, the festival will include a procession through the village, a clay pigeon shoot, Morris dancing and a village dance.

WYCOMBE Hospital chiefs have cried 'foul' over Wycombe Wanderers' plan to sell Loakes Park.

The hospital was keen to buy the football ground, which was a key part of its expansion plans. The health authority approached Wycombe Wanderers with an offer, but the club rejected it.

Instead they accepted an offer from London-based developers Westbruton, who want to build warehouses on the site.

Now the authority is accusing the football club of concealing its plans, and its dealings with Wycombe landowner Sir Francis Dashwood, who acted as a middle-man in the Westbruton deal.

Under the terms of the multi-million pound plan, Westbruton will develop land owned by Sir Francis at Hillbottom Road, Sands, as a new football stadium for Wycombe Wanderers.

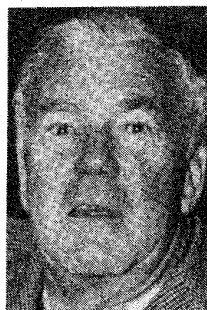
But the health authority claims the club did not let them know about Sir Francis' involvement until it was too late.

Contract

And Sir Francis said this week that if he had known the hospital was interested in the site he might not have gone ahead with the deal.

"If I'd known anything about the hospital's interest before I signed the contract, my answer may have been different," he said.

Row over plan for soccer site



MIDDLE-MAN: Sir Francis Dashwood

"I'm amazed they didn't move earlier. If they had come forward at the same time as the developers, I probably

would have said 'Yes'. "It sounds a very good idea to expand, but I didn't see the full case until I'd already made a deal with the developers."

"We're bitterly disappointed," said the health authority's district general manager Roy Darby.

"We're prepared to take our case to a planning appeal — it's our only chance."

Late

"We are very disappointed the football club didn't let us know who the owner of the land or the developers were until it was too late."

The club says it rejected the hospital's offer for the ground because the hospital could not guarantee an alternative site and could not raise the necessary cash as quickly as the developers.

"Although it would have been nice to allow the hospital to expand, you can't always accommodate sentiment in business and football is very much a business," said Jack Adams, a trustee of Wycombe Wanderers.