

Wanderers to appeal over new ground

WYCOMBE Wanderers are to appeal against Wycombe District Council's refusal to allow a new football ground at Sands.

In a joint move, the property developer Westbruton has also indicated it is appealing because the council did not determine its proposal for a large warehouse on Loakes Park.

Wycombe Wanderers want to sell Loakes Park for a joint development between the hospital and property company to pay for a move to a more modern and prestigious ground at Sands.

However, while approving of the hospital's expansion plans, the council did not approve of building a new football ground at Sands.

At a planning meeting in July, the council said the site had inadequate parking and was in the Green Belt an area of outstanding beauty.

At the same time, the committee deferred a decision on whether to allow

Westbruton to build a large warehouse and garden centre on half of Loakes Park. A new site for the club had to be found before a decision could be made.

But a hunt for an alternative site for the Wanderers has so far proved fruitless. This delay is causing obvious frustration to the hospital authorities, who want to develop their half of Loakes Park for new wards for the elderly and mentally ill.

Roy Darby, general manager of Wycombe Health Authority, said the money was lined up for the work to start. "The longer this goes on, the more critical it becomes for us. We can't afford to wait much longer," he said.

"We would like to do away with the appeal, but we are in other people's hands."

The deadlock can only be resolved by finding a site for Wanderers. If it goes to appeal, and a likely public inquiry, then the issue will be delayed well into 1987.