

PLANNERS PUT BOOT INTO THE BLUES

THE future of Wycombe Wanderers' hoped-for training pitch hangs in the balance after planners rejected the club's latest proposals for their new stadium site.

Club director Brian Lee refused to be drawn on whether officials would push once

By **ANDREW NEISH**

more for the plan's acceptance by Wycombe district councillors but said: "I don't think we have decided whether we will try again."

He added: "We have tried again before but we have been turned down at every point. I am very disappointed."

"All we want to do is make

others see that we are trying to provide the club and its people with decent facilities for them to enjoy — nothing more."

The club's latest project for the town's Sands site included a real grass pitch instead of a synthetic surface and officials had pointed out there would be no flood-lighting.

But councillors, residents and conservation groups opposed the pitch, saying the Green Belt area should not be altered and claimed the plan would spoil a section of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Tory councillor Val Letheren told colleagues at a planning meeting last week: "The club is now in the Green Belt and they must realise what putting this in the Green Belt means."

But Mr Lee said: "I think we have enhanced the area very much. We're not out to ruin the place. Obviously the plan isn't acceptable but we have to respect the council's decision and think again."

Councillor Len Hampton supported the club and said of the pitch, which would be available for youth training sessions: "It won't spoil the valley. It's an asset to the district."

Other councillors pointed out that the site lay next to factories but others won the day with a plea to preserve the area as untouched Green Belt.
