

Blues can train away

IN 1988 Wycombe District Council displayed vision and wisdom when it refused planning permission for building a football stadium in the Green Belt and an Area of Natural Beauty. The council was over-ruled by the Department of the Environment on the basis of the planning policy guidance which was obtained at that time.

Revised Planning Guidance now reflects the increased recognition of the damage done by such developments in the Green Belt. The document, PPG 17 (September 1991) states that "major football stadia cannot be regarded as appropriate development within an approved

Green Belt," (para 50).

Para 34, dealing with sport in the Green Belt refers to only "small ancillary buildings" and "unobtrusive spectator accommodation" and then only in "very special circumstances." With such guidance in 1988, planning permission to move an established stadium into the Green Belt could not have been granted.

Consequently the new planning guidance must now be used to limit, as far as possible, the damage produced by this development, but the recent planning decision seems to suggest that proper attention has not been paid to current government planning policies. There must

be no expansion at the stadium site, but this should not interfere with the club's success, because there is no rule that a training pitch must adjoin a match pitch.

Many football clubs, including the famous and not so famous, train successfully on pitches not adjacent to their stadium, so Wycombe Wanderers need

not feel so hard done by on this account.

Similarly there must be no increase in car parking. The damage done by car travel has become so clearly recognised that even car manufacturers and motoring organisations now acknowledge this. For example, in Zurich NISSAN now offer purchasers of their new cars a discounted season ticket for use on all public transport. And in this country, the AA has called for measures to reduce our dependence on our cars, including the development of public transport for access to the countryside.

The value of Park and Ride services has become so well recognised that they now qualify for TSG funding. Chester has just received a grant of £1,245 million for its Parka and

Ride facilities and Bath's has been so successful that the only major problem now is how to keep up with the growth in demand. Such facilities have clearly succeeded elsewhere. Now they must be developed in Wycombe and applied to the Football Stadium, together with other first class public transport to this venue.

The High Wycombe Society has suggested that the use of postcodes to identify the start and finish of journeys could open the way to simple use of computers to easily discover the journeys people want to make, and then to organise bus routes, timetables and Park and Ride services to closely match these needs.

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Parking is off-side

I WOULD like to register a definite "No" for a training pitch at Adams Park.

It's bad enough trying to park outside my daughter's house when I visit on a Saturday, and not being able to, without having another pitch to worry about.

The roads are totally inadequate for the volume of traffic and people who attend matches.

It is totally unreasonable for an area such as Sands to have disruptions like this. It is disgusting. Why can't school pitches be used?

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