

Council should help club's goal

THE current debacle concerning the development of Wycombe Wanderers' football stadium at Adams Park is a timely reminder to the authorities of the dangers in short-term thinking.

Just after the last war finished, talks of regeneration began concerning housing and public utilities expansion, including the Wycombe General Hospital site.

At that time, a very large and newly redundant site was available in Hazlemere, The Leadbetters Park. The idea was mooted that this would contain both hospital and other public utilities providing ample space for expansion as the population grew. Housing took priority and the hospital was redeveloped on the present site and the college was constructed in the town centre.

When Loakes Park was discussed regarding hospital expansion etc, many of us felt that this would be an ideal opportunity to break from traditional in-town development with all its implications for residents and congestion, and floated sites such as H7 at Terriers and the Handy Cross area. The decision by the local authority was to site the new ground in a cul-de-sac in Sands. It has been a bone of contention ever since. No major development now should ever be constructed in such a difficult position.

However, this is what the town has got and new issues must be faced up to.

1. It will not go away.
2. Wycombe Wanderers is a flagship for the area and has put Wycombe firmly on the international map.
3. It has got to be developed to conform with the Taylor Report. The club has no choice but to construct as laid down by the national government.
4. Thought must be put in place to allow an entry and exit system to and from the ground to minimise inconvenience to local residents. (There is room for this if goodwill exists between various individuals and landowners.)
5. If the local council persist in opposing expansion of Adams Park, it will split the local community apart. I would remind councillors that they have to seek a public mandate every four years and such a popular club will not forgive or forget in a hurry. Thousands have already signed petitions and more are being organised.
6. It must be realised that Wycombe Wanderers are of vital local economic importance and to undermine the

newly-found confidence in the town's future would be an act of gross folly.

I conclude by stating that I have no vested interest in Adams Park or Wycombe Wanderers, but like most people in the area take great pride in the achievements of what used to be a small town along the M40 midway between London and Oxford.

Alan Page
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Put Wycombers into Wanderers

AS a supporter for more than 40 years, may I welcome Mr Smith to Wycombe Wanderers and, along with many others, say what a good choice it seems. Thank you to Martin for his amazing achievement and good luck be with you.

However, there was one area of team selection and emphasis Martin seemed to ignore that Mr Smith has immediately spotted. That is the vast importance of training and selecting local young players.

I was particularly saddened when our brilliant local hero Westy was prematurely dropped. I admire all Wycombe's players, but there is a special bond when they are from your own territory.

Why was the excellent Jim Melvin dropped from youth team management? I hope he can be restored. Incidentally, as a teacher, may I say what wonderful work Jim has done for the Wanderers in the community and in local schools.

So, if you want to stop us having a good old moan from the chow shed, let's see a few Wycombers in the Wanderers.

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Area can't stand Blues' expansion

I MUST respond to your Editorial of last week and your totally biased stance in favour of the proposed new stand at Adams Park for Wycombe Wanderers. Of course the vast majority who do not live in Sands are in favour of it - how easy to say 'yes' when you need only to visit the club by choice!

Wycombe District Council does have the responsibility of being the local planning authority, and the councillors when deciding planning applications always take into much consideration the effect of new developments on neighbours. Are they to stop now?

No one would disagree that the club has been redeveloped in a totally inappropriate location. Can therefore councillors lightly give permission for a huge new construction in the Green Belt and AONB just because it's the popular vote?

The reason we are told the new stand is required is to comply with safety regulations for Division 2 status and ultimately Division 1. Just like Terminal 5, we know this means even more crowds in the long run. That is what this is all about, but ultimately 15,000-20,000 fans and their cars just cannot be accommodated in the Sands area.

The police and fire brigade have both stated that they are very unhappy with the present access arrangements to the ground. How crazy to address one point of safety in an ultimately all-seater ground, without solving but compounding another.

Of course the councillors must visit the site to take into consideration the impact of all this before deciding. Would you like the ground on top of you?

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