

Stand ads cut

TOWN planners met last night to decide the fate of the new Wycombe Wanderers football stand.

As the Leader went to press, councillors were expected to support the club's plans with the proviso that they cut down on advertising.

A councillor told the Leader that fellow members would approve the plans but would call for advertising hoardings around the top of the stadium to be cut back.

Their decision follows a site visit last Wednesday to assess how much impact the proposed new stand would have on the surrounding area.

A refurbished stand would mean 2,000 more seats, 20 boxes, an upper tier concourse, new turnstiles and a refreshment area.

£1.7 million plan passes first hurdle at panel meeting

Blues get amber light for 5,000-seater stand

LISA COLE

DEPUTY CHIEF REPORTER

WYCOMBE Wanderers are a step closer to building a new stand at Adams Park after winning support from a key panel of district councillors.

Plans for the new 5,000-seater South Stand passed the first hurdle after Wycombe district councillors approved it at a meeting on Wednesday night.

The planning applications panel voted in favour of the stand after putting off a decision at the last meeting to pay a visit to the ground.

Wycombe Wanderers chairman Ivor Beeks thanked members for agreeing to the

proposals. He said after the meeting: "Now we can provide the facilities that people require."

Approval is also needed by the council's planning and development committee and then the DoE because the ground is in a Green Belt area.

Panel chairman, Councillor Mike Huddy (Lib Dem, Princes Risborough) cut

discussions short, saying members had nothing new to add.

Cllr Claire Mill (Lib Dem, West Wycombe and Sands) spoke out against the stand.

"Parking on match days causes serious problems. The huge volume of traffic created causes immense difficulties for people living in Sands."

Cllr Pam Priestley (Con, Icknield) said: "We are not being

asked to approve something that will bring in more spectators.

"Last night (Tuesday) was an extremely important match and I understand that the traffic was dealt with very well."

The stand would cost £1.7 million to build and would include a 2,000-seat family stand and 150 seats for the disabled.

Police shown red card

POLICE officers will not patrol inside Wycombe Wanderers' ground during some matches despite increased season ticket prices to cover the cost of security.

Stewards will take over responsibility for crowd safety during low-key matches at Adams Park, in Hillbottom Road, Sands, as an experiment in cost cutting.

But the move has been criticised by supporters who saw season ticket prices leap by £92 this year to £402.50 to include the rising cost of policing.

Club chairman Ivor Beeks said there

would be no refund as policing costs had threatened to double this year.

Low-key matches used to involve around a dozen officers while 50 officers are brought in for high-risk games.

Police will continue to control fans' traffic. Bob Officer, 36, chairman of the Wycombe Wanderers Independent Supporters' Club, said he feared without police protection the good behaviour of crowds might not continue.

High Wycombe police inspector Roger Doe gave the heavy strain on police resources as one reason for the withdrawal.

Blues sweat in council vote

REPORT

By Lisa Cole

WYCOMBE Wanderers have won their match against Wycombe District Council, but only just.

Fresh opposition threatened plans for a new £1.7 million all-seater stand at Adams Park when members of the planning and development committee met to make their final decision on Wednesday night. But the vote went Blues' way by seven votes to five.

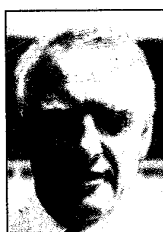
Wycombe chairman Ivor Beeks was delighted with the result, after fearing councillors may turn it down.

"I was quite worried. It has been a long, hard road this one."

Beeks added that he was fed up with hearing councillors say that the ground shouldn't be where it is.

"Every time an application at the football club comes up, they say it should not be there, but it is there."

He expects building work on the new 5,000-seater stand can start in a month, pending being rubber-



Worried: Ivor Beeks

stamped by the Government, and completed by the beginning of next season. The seal of approval is necessary because it is in a Green Belt area.

At Wednesday night's meeting, councillor Valerie Letheren (Con, West Wycombe and Sands), who represents some unhappy neighbours of Adams Park, urged councillors to refuse it.

"The people of Sands have had to cope with it (the club) and it has been a tremendous intrusion on their lives."

"You can't tell me that a stand that is going to take 2,000 people is not ultimately going to increase the number of people going to the club," she said.

Cllr Bruce Holland (Con, Bledlow-cum-Saunderton) was in favour.

"That football complex is a great deal better to look at than the rest of the buildings in that valley. Some of them are absolutely dreadful."

The club have agreed that the council can control the number, size and location of advertising boards on the new stand.

The stand includes a 1,800-seat family stand and 150 seats for the disabled. It will be built up the bank behind the Woodland Terrace.

New stand is backed

Wycombe Wanderers have won their match against councillors – despite a last-minute scare.

Fresh opposition threatened the plans for a new stand at Adams Park when members of Wycombe Council met to make their final decision.

The vote of the planning and development committee on Wednesday night was seven for and five against.

Wycombe Wanderers chairman Ivor Beeks said after the meeting: "I was quite worried. It has been a long hard road this one."

"Every time an application at the football club comes up they say it should not be there, but it is there."

He said he hopes building of the new 5,000-seater stand can start in about a month.

A seal of approval is now needed from

A NEW stand for Wycombe Wanderers has won council backing, as Lisa Cole reports.

the DoE because the stand is in a Green Belt area.

At the meeting on Wednesday, Cllr Valerie Letheren said she was shocked that members were willing to allow the stand to go ahead and urged them to refuse the plans.

"The people of Sands have had to cope with it (the club) and it has been a tremendous intrusion on their lives."

"You can't tell me that a stand that is going to take 2,000 people is not ultimately going to increase the number of people going to the club."

Cllr Bruce Holland spoke out in favour of the proposal.

"That football complex is a great deal better to look at than the rest of the buildings in that valley. Some of them are absolutely dreadful."

The club has agreed to enter into a planning obligation with the council which would control the number, size and location of advertising boards on the new stand.

The stand will cost £1.7 million to build and will include a 2,000-seat family stand and 150 seats for the disabled. It will be built up the bank and will replace the Woodland Terrace.

The club has three years to increase its number of seats from 1,400 to 2,000 or it could face expulsion from the league.

Arthur Church



CHURCH
VIEW

I WAS happy to learn that Wycombe District Council planners had approved Wycombe Wanderers' new all-seater stand for their ground at Adams Park.

It was by a bigger majority than I had been led to believe was possible.

What I find difficult to understand, though, is the parroting by one opponent that it will increase the permitted spectator attendance there. That is not, repeat not, a fact. The attendance figure was set by the council itself and it cannot, apparently, be increased without their say-so.

Wanderers' fans win

FOOTBALL fans will be rejoicing today at news that Wycombe Wanderers look set to get the stand they so desperately want.

The South Stand, if given final approval, will be an attractive feature of Adams Park.

It will also be an important asset for the Blues if they are to build on their success and improve their status as a professional club.

It is a shame then that Wycombe District Council has dithered for so long over the plans. Its decision to pay a site visit to the town's most famous landmark last week appeared ludicrous in the extreme.

Perhaps the council could learn a thing or two about pace from Blues striker Miquel Desouza.

Proposals for a new stand at Wycombe Wanderers football ground looks set to go ahead after a select committee of councillors gave it the thumbs up.

Plans for the new 5,000-seater South Stand were given the seal of approval by Wycombe councillors at a meeting of the planning applications panel on Wednesday night.

The panel voted by 19 to six in favour of the stand after putting off a decision at the last meeting to pay a visit to Adams Park.

Wycombe Wanderers chairman Ivor Beeks thanked members for agreeing to the proposals.

He said after the meeting: "I think it is a really excellent day for the town. Now we can provide the facilities that people require."

The council's planning and development committee now has to agree to the plans before they are considered by the Department of the Environment.

Approval is needed by the DoE

ONE result has had Wycombe Wanderers worried all season – and it's got nothing to do with the football pitch. But this week Wycombe Council looked set to let the club go ahead with their planned new stand. Lisa Cole reports on this week's meeting.

because the ground is in a green belt area.

There were 19 votes for and 6 against the scheme at the meeting.

Panel chairman, councillor Mike Huddy (Lib Dem, Princes Risborough) cut discussions short, saying members had nothing new to add.

"I think people had had plenty of time to talk about it and I honestly felt most people had already made up their mind which way to go when they came into the meeting," he said after the meeting.

Cllr Claire Mill (Lib Dem, West Wycombe and Sands) spoke out against the stand.

She represents an area that includes the Blues' Hillbottom Road home.

Claire said: "Parking on match days causes serious problems."

"The huge volume of traffic created causes immense difficulties for people living in Sands."

She said noise from crowds would be increased as a result of being lifted higher by the stand.

Cllr Pam Priestley (Con, Icknield) said: "We are not being asked to approve something that will bring in more spectators."

The stand would cost £1.7 million to build and would include a 2,000-seat family stand and 150 seats for the disabled.