

The decision on the fate of Slough Town Football Club has been delayed for two months.

Members of the ruling Labour group on Slough Council postponed the decision to allow more time to reach a favourable decision for both groups involved.

At a cabinet meeting on Monday councillors said they want to accept the Sikh school bid because it means backers will receive £6.2 million to fund the school.

Slough Sikh Educational Girmat Trust (SSEGT) has secured the £6.2 million DFES funding provided they build the school on land north of St Ethelbert's School, Wexham Road.

Of that £6.2 million about £1 million will go towards council capital funds, for projects such as building a new school wing.

Slough Town Football Club supporters had earlier demonstrated outside the town hall in protest over the club's plight and the use of the land for a Sikh school.

The club has no home and will play at Windsor and Eton FC next season. Supporters say promises have been made for the last 10 years to find the club a new home within the borough, all to no avail.

It wants the land off Wexham Road for a hotel and training pitches. This would then provide the club with funds to buy the lease for the site of the current home, Wexham Park Stadium, and build a 6,000 capacity venue.

The Rebels' supporters have teamed up with Bordside Tenants

and Residents' Association in opposition to plans for the school.

Pam McGarvey, association chairman, said: "One of the reasons we are against the school is because of the extra traffic it will generate.

"It is already very busy at 9am and 3pm and it will get worse if a school is built"

Chris Sliski, from Knolton Way, Wexham, secretary of Slough Town Supporters' Association, said there were already five primary schools within a two-mile radius of the proposed site. He added there were already surplus school places and intake was going down next year.

When asked about potential problems of traffic at the cabinet meeting Chris Spencer, Slough Council's director of learning, said the issue would be brought up during the planning stage of the development.

At Monday night's meeting it was agreed to defer the decision to ratify the offer of

land to the Sikh School for a further two months. Cllr MacLssac said the Sikh School is willing to sacrifice some of their land to accommodate the football club, allowing more land for Mr Deaner to develop his commercial venture.

Mr Deaner wanted 12 acres of land north of St Ethelbert's School to build a hotel with 150 beds, training pitches and a fitness suite, which he believed would raise enough capital to buy the lease from Mr Thome, thus enabling him to develop on the existing site which has a planning application for a 6,000-capacity stadium.

Slough Borough Council originally offered Slough Town 5.25 acres of land for their plan.

Its extra tune for club's future By Kari Plunkett

Council tries to agree a home for Slough Town FC and a Sikh school

EXTRA TIME has been called to find a way for Slough Town Football Club to continue to play in its home town.

Slough Borough Council has brokered a deal with the Government for more time to keep the club in Slough and still retain funding to build a new Sikh school.

But sceptical club supporters, who spent Monday picketing the town hall, wonder if they will ever see anything concrete from the deal.

Both the Slough Sikh Educational Gurmat Trust and the football club are vying for the right to use a plot of land north of St Ethelbert's School in Wexham Road, Slough.

Instead of giving the go-ahead for the trust to build a new school councillors have deferred the decision for two months.

The motion passed at Monday night's Cabinet meeting means the council has two months to satisfy the football club's need for land, but significantly affirms its support for the Sikh proposal should the club's problem not be solved in that time.

At the meeting, council education boss, Chris Spencer, said the competing agendas of the two groups made the issue 'very complex'.

The trust has £6.2 million of Education Department (DiES) money to build a faith based school on the land situated north of St Ethelbert's School in Wexham Road, but needed to get council permission this month or lose the grant.

Troubled Slough Town Football Club, which faces exile to a ground-

share in Windsor, has a stadium nearby that it cannot use and so also desperately needs the council owned land.

Mr Spencer has cut a deal with the DiES for an extra two months to sort out the situation without the trust losing its funding.

A confident Mr Spencer said: "If I didn't think there was a possibility of agreeing an alternative I wouldn't be presenting this to cabinet."

The education chief then hinted that he might already have a plan up his sleeve to get the council out of making the difficult decision which would inevitably leave one group bitter.

He said: "I do think there is a good alternative involving the football club that we can come to."

Chris Sliski, honorary secretary of Slough Town Supporters Association and a Wexham resident, was

frustrated by what he heard at the cabinet meeting.

He said: "Will someone please tell us what the plan is? We've been waiting a long time to find out what it is.

Mr Sliski told the Express what the supporters wanted to see was something 'concrete'.

He added: "We are getting very sceptical about all this. They are promising us something down the end of a tunnel and I think if the Sikh school gets the go-ahead they'll just block up the tunnel again."

Spokesman for the Slough Sikh Educational Gurmat Trust, Nick Kandola, admitted to being disappointed that the decision hadn't been made on Monday night.

He said: 'At least this might give the football club one last attempt to find the right compromise in the next couple of months.'