

Bucks buzz excites Wasps

Al Fayed's cash could pave the way for top-flight rugby at Adams Park

MOHAMED Al Fayed will dip into his pot of millions to finance Wasps' move to Adams Park if it gets the green light.

And the BFP can reveal that Wasps are so excited about the prospect of coming to Bucks for two years that they have already confirmed that they could be interested in a much longer deal.

The BFP understands Al Fayed will pay the rugby club's initial rent and give Wasps a pay-off to quit their rented home at QPR.

The Harrods owner wants Wasps out of their current groundshare deal at Loftus Road so that his Fulham football team can take their place, while their ground is

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being redeveloped.

Wasps signed a ten-year groundshare deal with QPR in the summer and pay Rangers £17,000 a match. But cash-strapped Rangers want Fulham because the loaded Premiership club are offering considerably more.

The two-year-deal Wasps are discussing with Wycombe is believed to be worth in the region of £750,000 to Wanderers – but Wasps owner Chris Wright revealed yesterday that his club could be interested in a much-longer arrangement.

Wasps, who include England's Lawrence Dallaglio

among their stars, approached several clubs but Wycombe is now their number one choice.

They have held two meetings with Wycombe in the past week and talks are so advanced that Wright wrote to Wasps' season ticket holders this week outlining the benefits of being in Bucks.

He wrote: "Whilst there maybe some financial advantage to London Wasps in temporarily vacating Loftus Road, we clearly do not want to do anything which would jeopardise London Wasps' long-term future for a short-term gain.

"However, having explored further the possibility of a temporary relocation to Wycombe, many of us involved at London Wasps have become

enormously intrigued about the potential of moving there.

"The stadium has an ideal capacity of 10,000, has excellent facilities including extensive bar and dining areas and in many respects would make a most ideal rugby stadium.

"Nigel Melville [Director of Rugby] is certainly aware that we could generate a much better atmosphere in a near sold out 10,000 seater stadium than is possible at Loftus Road where we are unlikely to get close to filling 19,000 seats.

"If we do choose to move there, it would be for an initial period of two years, but of course such a move might prove so successful that we would wish to stay there beyond this period."

Wanderers are keen to have the egg-chasers as tenants, providing the money is right and providing that Wasps pay for a new £350,000 Desso pitch.

Used by clubs such as Ajax, the pitch combines normal grass with synthetic fibre and is tough enough to enable both football and rugby.

But the plans could all hinge on the council. Blues' planning permission only allows the ground to be used for football and it is unclear whether that includes rugby football.

The Blues, who successfully applied for special planning permission to stage the World Lacrosse Final last summer, will delay making a fresh application until more talks have been held.