

Wasps offered Olympic stadium for new home



Star attractions: Paul Sackey, left and Danny Cipriani are among a host of big names in the Wasps squad, but will they continue to light up Wycombe on Saturday afternoons?

Picture by ANITA ROSS MARSHALL 01 7164 01

■ Club reject initial scheme ■ Wycombe still first choice

WASPS have been given the opportunity to make the Olympic Stadium, which is being developed in London, their home ground.

The stadium will have an 80,000 capacity for the 2012 Games but will then be downsized to 25,000.

However, Wasps say they are unlikely to accept the offer.

Chief executive Tony Copsey said: "It was offered to us, but the first scheme was turned down.

"It's a bit of a bizarre design and we didn't feel it was suitable for rugby, so unless they drastically change the design I'm doubtful."

Wasps do not like the idea of having a running track between the pitch and the stands, and are also unimpressed by the roofing, which does not cover all the seating.

The location could also be a stumbling block.

Copsey said: "We've got some supporters in the London area and you could argue they would travel to the East End as much as anywhere else.

"But the Hackney area isn't the biggest rugby population in the area, so it's probably not ideal and that's another factor that would come into consideration, and count against it."

A final decision is 'ages' away, but Wasps say nothing is ruled out.

Copsey said: "You can never close the door on anything so we will have a look at it and see what it's about, but I don't think it will feature in our plans."

Wycombe remains Wasps' first choice

EXCLUSIVE

Wasps
by Alan Feldberg

and Copsey said they and Wycombe Wanderers, who would share a new stadium if one were built in the town, were waiting on feedback from Wycombe District Council.

Copsey said: "Our preferred option is definitely Wycombe.

"We're pushing the council at the moment and will hopefully have some sort of steer - a statement of intention that a new stadium is a possibility on a site within Wycombe that fulfils all our ambitions - within the next couple of months.

"But if the council are not up for that challenge or don't want the European champions in their backyard then we've got to look somewhere else.

"It's all about being ambitious off the field as well as on it."

Steve Hayes, Wanderers managing director and 25 per cent stakeholder in Wasps, said: "We are progressing quite well [with the council] and looking at a few sites all within the boundaries of Wycombe."



What would it mean to Wycombe if Wasps moved away from the town? Tell us what you think at

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