

Lord's revamp to cost 200 mn pounds

The cost of revamping the hallowed Lord's cricket ground here is estimated at 200 million pounds and the project will take 10 years to complete, a media report Saturday said.

The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) appointed Herzog and de Meuron -- a celebrated Swiss construction firm -- that will now consult the London mayor's office over the revamp plans which are expected to change the face of the ground, The Daily Telegraph reported Saturday.

The revamp plan will see a new-look ground with floodlights, extended stands, and a major new residential development along the Wellington Road. But all this will need permission from the Westminster Council since St John's Wood is a strictly controlled conservation area.

'There is always bound to be a bargaining process with the council,' David Batts, the director of the masterplan, was quoted as saying by the daily.

'Herzog and de Meuron designed the Tate Modern and that has become a destination in its own right,' he added. 'People go there just to have a coffee, not necessarily to look at the paintings. We hope it's the case here, especially if we have got a hotel of our own.'

The plans were based only early working models, which will be refined before anything can be taken to Westminster Council. But they still impressed the MCC committee, especially proposals to have a suspended walkway, some 20 feet in the air, running around 80 per cent of the ground. With an extra 10,000 seats also part of the plan, there has to be some solution to the rush that develops on major match days.

One of the key ideas of the blueprint involves the development of two disused railway tunnels under the nursery ground, which are likely to be turned into a sports injury clinic in partnership with the adjoining Wellington Hospital.

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