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ON TOP OF THE WORLD

Wednesday, 6 July, 12.49: A moment that will leave an indelible mark on the city of London. Against the odds the UK's capital won the right to host the 2012 Olympics. For bid leader Lord Coe, it was a personal triumph to match his two 1500 m Olympic gold medals and his 800 m world record. Paris had been considered the favourite, but London's slick presentation and self-proclaimed status as Europe's leading city carried enough force to break the tape first. The construction industry has particular reason to be overjoyed: it stands to gain capital works worth £8.3bn. But

how does this figure translate into actual projects?
Mark Leftly answers the key questions

What work will there be for the construction industry?

It's an £8.3bn bonanza. About £6.1bn of this will be spent on improving roads and railways. The Olympic Park, which includes the stadium, and the athletes' village together come in at nearly £1.7bn. Some of this work would have happened anyway as part of wider regeneration plans.

Is there any danger of the industry running out of capacity?

Construction inflation could increase 1-2% in

London and the South-east, according to cost consultant Davis Langdon. A number of other large projects in the surrounding area, such as Crossrail and the Thames Gateway expansion, will put pressure on contractors' resources. Some argue, however, that if the work is available, then more firms will enter the market. James Bulley, London 2012's director of infrastructure, told *Building* earlier this year: "The capacity of the construction industry is, in fact, greater than that of most previous host cities." The completion

The legacies of Olympics past

The London 2012 Olympic bid team is aware of the successful regeneration projects created by the past three games, but it must also beware some of their failures ...



Athens 2004

The Greeks have struggled to come up with the £4bn it still owes from hosting last year's games. No city since Barcelona in 1992 has made money out of hosting, preferring to point to the long-term economic, regenerative and social benefits. Certainly Athens gained vital infrastructure, with a new airport and 120 km of new and improved roads, according to consultant Atkins. In the five years leading up to the games, it has also been estimated that the typical Athenian house price rose 62%, compared with 47% in the rest of the country. Not all the usual regeneration boosts have occurred, however - many of the 16,000 homes in the Olympic village are now due for demolition and reconstruction.



The Olympic stadium

The initial design is by Foreign Office Architects, and is the centrepiece of the 100 ha Olympic Park, masterplanned by EDAW. With a pricetag of more than £250m, the 80,000-seat stadium is unsurprisingly the most expensive sporting venue in the London bid. Construction is expected to be completed by early 2011, although some minor additional works will be necessary in the run-up to the games.

Wembley stadium and Heathrow Terminal 5 and most of the Olympic construction programme should also free up contractors and

When are the permanent venues and village for construction?

- The £66m aquatics centre: December 2005 to December 2008
- The £254m Olympic stadium: July 2008 to January 2011
- The £24m handball arena: January 2009

to July 2011

- The £8.5m Broxbourne canoeing course: October 2006 to January 2008
- The £26m velodrome: July 2007 to December 2008
- The £7.5m BMX circuit: July 2007 to December 2008
- The £13m hockey centre: February 2010 to February 2011
- The £600,000 Regent's Park softball centre: March 2011 to May 2011
- The £121m International broadcasting centre:

February 2010 to August 2011

- The £590m Olympic village: June 2007 to December 2011.

When will the first tenders be issued?

The government is expected to invite expressions of interest for early works within weeks. First up are likely to be remediation contracts. The Stratford site has experienced everything from the Black Death to bombing during the Second World War. Initial research has identified contamination from gas works, mills and oil ▶



Sydney 2000

Many observers felt that this was one of the greatest games, both for the rich sporting entertainment and the professional way it was run. The former is difficult to deny, but there is a slight question mark over the latter. The stadiums the Olympics left behind are unused for much of the year, despite their huge maintenance and running costs. According to research by the Halifax bank, homeowners saw their residences gain in value, with the site of the Olympic village, Homebush Bay, rising 70% between 1995 and 2000, compared with 50% for Sydney as a whole. Homebush and the Olympic Park venues, though, remain underdeveloped, and form part of a rundown 25 km strip earmarked for the construction of 25,000 homes in May. ▶