

# Challenging construction and building legacies



Charged with ensuring all construction is completed on time for London 2012, Howard Shiplee's role as Construction Director for the Olympic Delivery Authority could be described as the toughest Olympic challenge. Here he talks to Anthony Woodburn about progress to date, the Olympics' sustainability credentials and the role of Local Authority Building Control in the construction process

**H**oward Shiplee was appointed to the post of Construction Director for the London Olympic and Paralympic Games in September last year. Over the next five and a half years he will have to ensure that everything gets built on time and to standards that are fit for purpose for the Games and for the legacy needs that will follow.

He said: "The key challenge is to deliver this huge project – twice the size of T5 in half the time – in an efficient and productive way. It is a daunting challenge but also a fantastic opportunity – to stage an inspirational Games but also leave a lasting legacy the country can be proud of."

Great strides have already been made, he continued: "Appointing our Delivery Partner, unveiling our Olympic

Transport Plan, and announcing our Sustainability Strategy have all taken place over the past year and earlier this month we hit our tenth major milestone since last summer with the submission of our planning applications for the Olympic Park.

"With the core construction work due to start next year, the challenge we are facing is also a huge opportunity for UK Construction to prove that, when it comes to major projects like this, we are a real force to be reckoned with.

"By delivering this huge project in an efficient and productive way we will have a unique chance to showcase the best of British engineering and construction expertise."

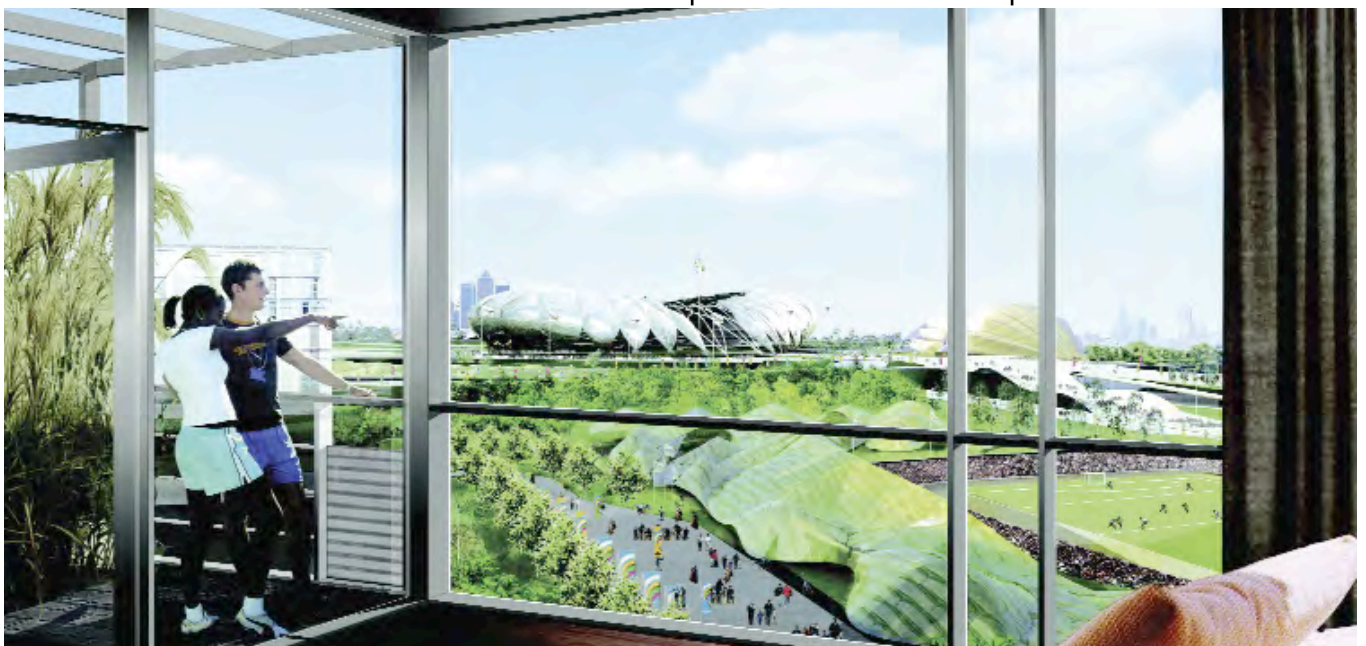
Sustainability remains a key driver for the ODA. The groundbreaking Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) unveiled in January will

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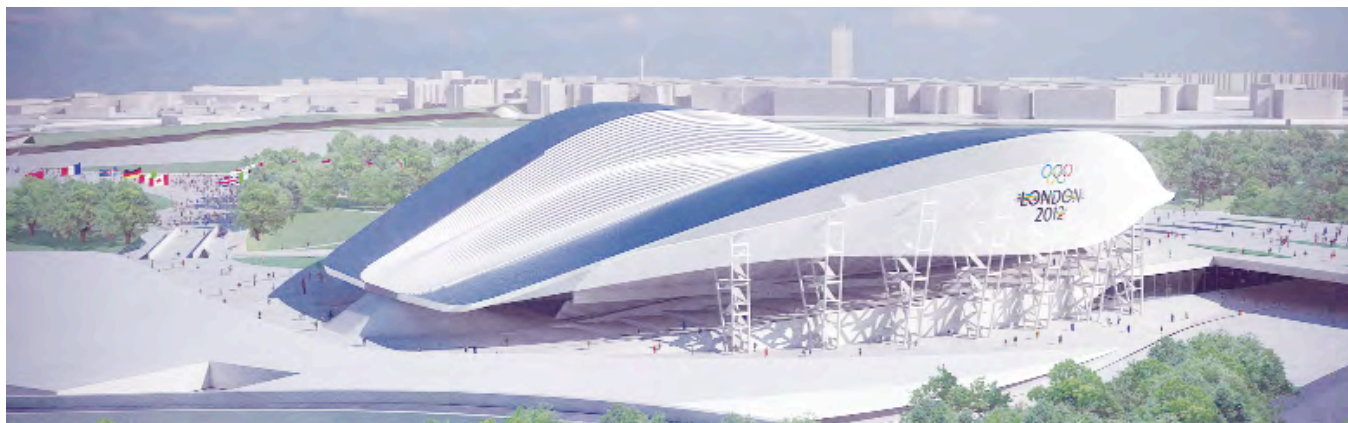
ensure that during the construction phase the ODA will set new standards for the sustainable design and construction of major sports venues and infrastructure used for the Games.

The SDS is already committed to:

- Identify, source, and use environmentally and socially responsible materials
- At least 20% of materials used in permanent venues and the Olympic Village will have previously been used somewhere else, or be a recycled product
- Maximise timber from sustainable sources with all timber used from known, legal sources, with clear supply chain evidence
- 90% of demolition material to be reused or recycled



The Olympic Village



The Aquatics Centre

Howard said: “Sustainability runs through all we are doing – through the design and construction of venues, the sourcing and use of energy, the re-use of waste materials and the use of sustainable transport routes, such as the waterways in the centre of the Olympic Park.”

One of the chief motives of hosting the Games is the regeneration of the Lower Lea Valley and the subsequent legacy of the Games. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in London will be the biggest regeneration project in Europe. And for the first time in Olympic history, the Games themselves and the legacy are part of the same overall plan.

There are two aspects to this, explained Howard: “First the hard legacy – the physical transformation of the Olympic site, with substantial improvements to buildings and infrastructure.

“We are building a new town the size of Exeter in the Lower Lea Valley, all of it delivered on recycled brownfield land. After the Games, the area will enjoy the largest new urban park in Europe for 150 years with an enhanced network of restored waterways and new wildlife habitat. Transport links will have been transformed, and of course there will be world class sports facilities.

He continued: “But the regeneration of the area is about more than just mending the physical fabric. These improvements need to go hand in hand with the ‘soft legacy’ – the economic and social regeneration of the area with the Games acting as a

catalyst. Thousands of new jobs will be created, both in the construction phase and in legacy, and the regeneration will also encourage huge business growth in the area, helping to boost the local economy.

“Taken as a whole, this is a physical and social investment that will transform the Lower Lea Valley for local people, not just in the run up to the Games but for decades to come.”

Howard acknowledges how significant the Building Regulations will be in the construction process: “People sometimes moan about the Regulations, and say they are negative and constraining. But without them we wouldn’t have such safe and healthy buildings, they would not be as environmentally friendly as they increasingly are, and they would certainly not be as accessible to those with disabilities.

“The Regulations aren’t, in my view, a set of constraints – indeed, in my view, they can positively encourage innovation and new ideas, and that’s something I personally applaud.”

He also acknowledges the key role LABC could play: “The massive scale of the construction involved in hosting a successful Games is a real challenge to everyone involved and Local Authority Building Control can play a key role in this.

“As I have said before, I have complete respect for the Building Regulations which are of immense importance in the construction process. The involvement of LABC will ensure the consistent

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interpretation and application of Building Regulations across the entire Olympic Park site.”

“We will also be able to draw on the decades of experience and expertise LABC has gathered over the years, and its involvement in the construction of other prestigious projects such as the City of Manchester Stadium, the Emirates Stadium and the new Wembley Stadium, will I’m sure prove invaluable.”

*The new Wembley Stadium, one of the many high profile venues that will be utilised for the Olympic Games. Brent Council’s Building Control Department have played an integral role in the design team throughout the construction process at Wembley. This experience and expertise may prove invaluable in the run up to the Games*

