

London prepares for the Olympics

The photograph on the sheet was taken in early 2009 and presents a snapshot of the major development under way in preparation for the 2012 London Olympics.

In the foreground one can see Stratford east railway station where key transport developments are taking place. In the background are a number of Olympic construction projects, including the Westfield Shopping Mall.

In the past, the land shown in the photograph used to be mainly low industrial units, transport depots and railway sidings. It was relatively low-value land, which is one of the reasons that this site was chosen for the Olympics. The owners of the various industrial units have received support and compensation to enable them to relocate elsewhere.

1. What is the evidence that major redevelopments are taking place?

It is evident that there is construction going on in the area, this can be seen particularly from the machinery but also because:

- the Westfield Shopping Mall can be seen in the background, still under construction.
- There are lots of buildings which can be seen in the background.
- there is a large sign which says 'Everyone's London 2012' which suggests that the developments taking place are on a large scale to attract large amounts of people.

2. The development at the railway station is part of an overall plan to provide a top quality public transport infrastructure for the Olympic Games. What are the benefits of this approach to transport management?

-Well, the Olympic Games by nature are going to attract large amounts of people to come, and this is financially rewarding. However, public transport infrastructure must be carefully taken into consideration, because no matter how amazing the Olympic Games are, if people cannot reach there, then it may end up being a big problem (for example financially, if many people do not even bother to purchase tickets to attend the Olympic Games, as the destination is not accessible.

-well thought out infrastructure is convenient for people when travelling.

-Also, regarding long term benefits, it means that more people in the local area can travel after the Olympic Games to work in other areas (perhaps secure jobs with higher incomes).

-the temporary workers on the Olympic Site can travel there conveniently.

- The main benefit is that it will help to ensure the public gets to the venues in time and in some degree of comfort.

3. Notice that there is a slogan in the photograph, albeit partially obscured that reads 'Everyone's London 2012'.

A) What do you think is meant by this slogan? It means that all these developments which are taking place for the Olympic Games, when finished are for everyone to enjoy and experience, for example not just the athletes and tourist, but local people as well.

Basically, the ambition of 'everyone's 2012' is to inspire people of all ability, belief, postcode, and colour to participate fully in the Games – and it extends far beyond London and late summer 2012.

B) How will the local community benefit from the building work taking place in preparation for the Olympics?

-the area is hoped to be regenerated socially, economically and environmentally.

- the sporting facilities can be used by the community; this can promote a healthy lifestyle in an area with high levels of obesity.
- the community can enjoy more entertainment/recreation facilities such as the Westfield Shopping Mall.
- improvements in transport infrastructure have the most long term benefits as local people can benefit from its convenience, also it means that local people could travel to other areas for job opportunities.
- lots of temporary jobs will be needed, especially in the construction industry, so local people's skills can be used, and local people can be trained as well (e.g. apprenticeships).
- Boosting social and economic prospects in Stratford and the Lower Lee Valley, an area of high unemployment and deprivation.
- Bringing about the transformation of largely derelict, brown-field sites through comprehensive and co-ordinated development.
- Improvements to transport infrastructure which would be of benefit to the wider Thames Gateway area.

C) One critical element of London's winning Olympic bid was the so-called 'legacy' of the games- the longer term benefits arising for the local community. Can you see from the photograph what some of these might be?

Well, there are obviously a lot of developments going on, and it is likely that the sports facilities could be used in the future by local communities, as well as recreational uses such as the Westfield Shopping Mall, and generally the area will attract tourists, and therefore increase the economy of the area (e.g. prices going up such as hotels charging more money etc which will benefit the tourist industry).

Other benefits include:

- Sports facilities with a national and international profile.
- The Olympic stadium itself, which could be used for an Athletic or Premiership football stadium.
- 4,000-4,500 new residential units built to house teams in the Olympic village- could be used to provide affordable and key worker housing.
- A 1,000,000 sq ft media centre would be created for the games, which would have the latest technology and could be used as a centre for media based organizations and creative industries in the future and would also encourage associated and complementary industries and lever in much needed private investment.
- An increase in tourism linking into and complementing existing and planned regeneration in east London (people still go to Barcelona and Munich to visit the Olympic sites)
- Wholesale environmental and landscaping improvements and new urban design concepts
- Staging a major international event such as the Olympics would be a major cultural boost to east London, which has long suffered from the image of dereliction and unattractiveness. It would be an excellent chance to publicise the area's wide cultural diversity and create tourist attractions such as an Olympic Park.

4. If you were to visit the areas shown here one year after the photograph was taken, how do you think it would have changed?

I think there would still be a high level of construction going on, and the area would look more developed e.g. the Westfield Shopping Mall might have more added to its exterior (such as the windows etc). There might also be more people there (e.g. working/just observing etc).

Sources used: <http://209.85.229.132/search?q=cache:rMVah3HUXUYJ:www.london2012.com/blog/2009/07/racing-towards-equality-in-sports-organisations.php+menaing+of+slogan+%E2%80%98Everyone%E2%80%99s+London+2012%E2%80%99.&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk>

<http://www.lda.gov.uk/server.php?show=ConWebDoc.177>

