

# Emirates stadium



## **Emirates Stadium**

### **Historical background (who wants the project? And why?)**

The Emirates Stadium is built on a former brownfield industrial estate known as Ashburton Grove in Islington, London; to provide a home ground for Arsenal FC. Arsenal FC's previous stadium in Highbury, of which it was named after, was located a mere half a mile away from the emirates.

The capacity of Highbury was small in comparison to other “ top-flight” status football clubs and therefore expansions were proposed. However, due to surrounding transport and residential amenities, further to local authority planning objections, the room for expansion was very limited at the existing ground.

Corporate hospitality management via corporate viewing boxes is a key business network to Arsenal FC as a means of securing deals for the benefit of the clubs financial capital. Highbury however, was incapable of accommodating the expanding wealth of prospective clients bearing interest in the club. The proposition of enhancing corporate relationships and negotiations was a key figure in the framework plans for a new stadium.

Sporting successes at Arsenal FC had also widened their fan base and the demand for match tickets was outweighing the supply. Stakeholders within the ownership of the club were subsequently underutilised and opportune revenue was missed; this was sacrificial to the prospects of future investment.

After selective consideration of various locations suitable for Arsenal FC and their respective fans it was therefore decided on the turn of the millennium,

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that a new stadium was to be developed on the Ashburton Grove site. The capabilities of generating greater capital to enable the club to financially contest with some of the biggest football teams in Europe whilst also providing first class facilities to their many supporters showed an unwavering determination for the clubs advancement.

This was the birth of the ‘ Emirates Stadium’. Islington, London; was before hand, a waning borough and the new stadium was seen as a solution to contribute to the regeneration of the area. BUY OUT EXISTING OCCUPANTS ON ASHBURTON GROVE – very expensive Islington councils waste recycling plant Royal mail Holloway delivery office Two bridges over the Northern city railway were also built connecting the stadium with drayton park wer also built. Structure of the project (Financing, Objectives, Constraints etc.).

In order for Arsenal FC to fund the approximate £275m project, the sale of existing surplus land assets was necessary to enable their financiers to provide sufficient supporting gain for a case in obtaining a large loan to fund the remainder.

Highbury was demolished and redeveloped (with the exception of the ‘ east stand’ due to heritage listing) into what is now known as Highbury Square; an allotment of housing units that were sold to generate over £300m in final completion sales (currently payable in instalments to Arsenal FC).

Sportswear manufacture ‘ Nike’, also contributed to the project funding through their multi-million pound sponsorship deal that is still binding at present.

At the beginning of 2004, the project order date, Ashburton Properties, a subservient of Arsenal Holdings plc, was created in order to gain access to a loan over £200m from a banking assembly that specialised in stadium facilities management and funding. Noteworthy banking companies within this assembly include: the RBS (Royal Bank of Scotland plc), The Bank of Ireland and Allied Irish Banks plc.

Towards the end of 2004, a £100. 2m corporate sponsorship deal had been struck between ‘Emirate Airlines’ and Arsenal FC. One of the significant terms of this deal comprised of Emirates owning the naming rights of the stadium of which led to the stadium being known as the ‘Emirates Stadium’ and not its original ‘Ashburton Grove’.

### **Multi-faceted, Analysis, Feasibility**

Complicated cash flow, site assembly, waste plant location, residential, demolition and disposal, advertisements.

### **Highbury re-development**

2-stage tender: Taylor Wimpey & Sir Robert McAlpine “Main Contractors”  
(Their Project Manager was Gulf Christiansen) Also did Excel Centre, London.

Construction team was entirely site-based (Contractors and Consultants); problems were solved quickly, minimal expense, dispute resolution.

Financial, Programme capital; certainty of delivery time – half way through season? X Time “of the essence”

**Stakeholder analysis (Conflicts and resolutions)**

Construction of the Emirates stadium began promptly once the tender had been signed in February 2004. Leading UK building and civil engineering company 'Sir Robert McAlpine' was awarded the contract as the main contractor to complete the job.

Global designs practice 'Populous' (formerly known as 'HOK Sport') were responsible for the architecture and design of the stadium. They have been and are currently lead architects on many large projects of similar nature throughout the UK and across the globe e. g. Millennium Stadium, Cardiff, Wales; Wembley National Stadium, London; and the 2014 Asian Games Stadium, Incheon, South Korea.

UK-based consultant engineers 'Buro Happold' provided solutions in both structural and services engineering design to the stadium.

'Arcadis AYH' (formerly AYH) were initially appointed as project and cost managers to the project, however, their role quickly expanded as the administering and relocation of over 80 businesses at Arsenal FC's former site was required. This allowed for commercial and residential developments within Islington to be cross-funded and eventually made provision for the new housing allotments and a new waste and recycling centre for the Islington Borough.

Private funded, Private project/ contract (Onus on who?)

Local communities; business displacement, working with local authorities.

Sustainability issues and agendas (Impact, Conflicts and resolutions)

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Due to the Emirate's stadium being built upon a former brownfield industrial site, Buro Happold thought it was necessary to carry out an environmental impact assessment of the estate so that any contaminated earth found could be re-generated and re-used to provide better ground conditions for the stadiums foundations.

Buro Happold's engineering expertise in developing the form and structure of the Emirates Stadium was thoroughly examined to “ minimise the environmental impact and reflect the aspirations of the local community”. One of the most noticeable design solutions provided by Buro Happold's to meet these objectives, is the clear downward sloping roof that forms a natural ‘ dish’ of which augments the stadiums micro-climate.

When designing the project, Populous tried to coalesce the needs of the end-users with an environmentally sound structure. As the Architects of the stadium, their ideas implemented took account of multiple contributors to the sustainable agenda that is ever-growing in the UK, particularly within urban areas such as greater London.

The incorporation of natural ‘ passive’ ventilation systems throughout the stadium has made way for a more pleasant environmental climate whilst also deducing the need for mechanical ventilation systems of which can add to the released emissions count.

Solar power systems through glass cladding and skylights have also been fitted to contribute to their ‘ power-saving’ ethos that could potentially prove ‘ money-saving’ during the lifetime of the project.

Not only does the stadium have sustainable measures integrated into its design but the surrounding new-build developments have also been built to standards set out under the BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Eco Homes guidelines. These form part of the Code for Sustainable Homes; a benchmark in voluntary frameworks for sustainable development.

‘ Desso Sports Systems’; a company that specialise in artificial turfs for sports and recreation currently provide the stadium with their pitch. They say that their synthetic grass fibres can be recycled for “...civil-engineering applications...or as artificial turf” and are keen to stress the point that only environmentally friendly, biodegradable chemical products are used to clean the turf.

Regeneration

Brownfield site

Section 106 TCPA, obligation to support and facilitate project area

Newlon Housing Trust; Social Housing

### **Evaluation of risks**

Even with the new Emirates stadium as the home ground for Arsenal FC, the current demand for tickets still greatly outweighs the supply. The board of directors are said to be in the process of looking to expand the stadium as a result. It is however, very unlikely that the extent of the supply will be matched by the demand due to the sheer fan-base the football club

possesses and the feasibility of constructing such a vast amount extra to the existing development.

The risks of this potential expansion include jeopardising the sustainability issues mentioned (above) so that the stadium only meets the demands of the present and is sacrificial to meeting the demands of the future (Brundtland).

What also needs to be borne in mind is to what extent the extra capacity will bring in terms of revenue. With economies of scale in highly populated areas such as London, the capital gain of a greater number of sales made may not prove profitable and could drastically add to the clubs overall net debt; thought to be around £200m 3Q 2009.

Motor vehicle use and other forms of private transport have not been well incorporated into the stadiums design and surrounding location. This has not been by mistake and the developers are trying to promote the use of public transport (possibly tied in with the sustainable communities' agenda). There have been recent upgrades on the tube at Holloway Station (Arsenal FC's local station) and more buses have been added to frequently provide services to the stadium.

The potential risks of relying on public transport are: inaccuracies in times, traffic congestion and provision for disabled supporters access to the ground.

Programming

Business displacement



Compulsory purchase orders

Financial model

Stigma with football stadiums e. g. Wembley, Birse – walker stadium, laing o’rourke – millennium stadium

### **Economic and business related factors**

From a marketing point of view; the emirates stadium was purely financially driven. The clubs successes had expanded to a rate which was over-utilising its existing resources and many opportune costs resulted. As an innovation to providing Arsenal FC with the maximum potential for revenue gain, a completely new and improved stadium for the entire club was seen as the most serviceable concept to adopt.

### **REGENERATION**

Not about football stadium, regeneration of Islington

Trying to get on the local authorities side

Reflection on project’s management

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