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Information Sheet 28/2008 – 18th July 2008

1. Hail to the chief

The Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) select committee has recommended the creation of the role of a **chief construction officer** to be a “single point of engagement” with the industry. The report, ‘Construction Matters’, also called for government to become a better construction client.

Building 18-07-08 p.13

Some industry experts have expressed concerns that the role can be successful only if operating from within the **Treasury**. The officer would not, they say, have sufficient influence if housed within BERR, or even the Office of Government Commerce (OGC), as they currently stand.

Construction News 17-07-08 p.4

2. Ron Spinney

Ron Spinney, former chief executive and chairman of Hammerson has died. Spinney is widely credited with setting the firm on the path to its current status as an established FTSE-100 company.

Property Week 18-07-08 p.4

3. Academic interests

The government’s academies programme should be extended to cover **primary schools**, according to a report published this week by liberal think tank CentreForum. The report, ‘Academies and the Future of State Education’ has the backing of England’s the three major political parties.

The Guardian 16-07-08 p.10 & CentreForum 2008

4. A capital idea

Foreign investment into London has contributed **£710m to the capital’s economy**. According to the latest annual review from inward investment agency Think London, 178 international companies set up or expanded businesses in the city in the year to March. The agency identifies future investment increases from emerging economies, but warns investment by Indian companies will be more restrained in the coming years.

Think London 2008

5. Location location location

The government must **re-think the locations** of proposed eco towns if the initiative is to be successful. The ‘Eco towns and Beyond’ report by PRP Architects, urban designer Urbed and lobby group Design for Homes, urges the government to concentrate on brownfield and urban development, rather than rural sites. Infrastructure costs, housing demand and planning permissions are identified as the main barriers to rural schemes.

AJ 17-07-08 p.10

6. Bio-reform

Reform of land ownership is crucial to efforts to maintain tropical forests in the face of demand for land for the production of biofuels. The Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) report, ‘People, Forests and Human Well-being’, identifies a need for 515m hectares of land to be devoted to growing biofuels by 2030, only 200m of which could be drawn from land not currently covered by rainforest.

RRI 2008

7. People and companies

Dame Judith Mayhew has been appointed to chair the **New West End Company** as it embarks on a £1.5bn five year investment programme. Dame Judith will lead the business improvement district’s strategic board, comprising senior figures from retail and property, including Land Securities, John Lewis Partnership and the Crown Estate.

Property Week 18-07-08 p.9

Irvine and James Sellar, the father and son team behind **Sellar Property**, discuss their efforts to secure funding for the Renzo Piano-designed London Bridge Tower. They share their enthusiasm for working with their Qatari backers, who have experience in building towers in Doha, “another Chicago,” according to the senior Sellar.

Property Week 18-07-08 pp100-102

8. News in brief

- Britain must build “at least” **eight new nuclear stations** over the next 15 years, the

government has announced. Meanwhile, the cost of **cleaning up** Britain's atomic waste will, according to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), be £83bn, an increase of £10bn on previous estimates.

The Guardian 14-07-08 p.2 & 18-07-08 p.27

- Large firms are still failing to make the most of the potential offered by **social networking sites** to improve their own internal management, according to a survey conducted across 18 countries by technology researcher Gartner.
BBC News 11-07-08
- The All Party Urban Development Group report 'Greening UK Cities' Buildings', published this week, recommends that government implement measures other than **tax breaks**, in order to reduce the carbon footprint of commercial buildings.
Building 18-07-08 p.16 & APUDG 2008
- Concrete specialist John Doyle has developed a system whereby the **building core** can be erected at a rate of a floor a day.
Building 18-07-08 pp52-54
- The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) is to launch its own **construction interest group** in advance of the merger between Major Contractors Group and the National Contractors Federation as the UK Contractors Group (UKGC) in January 2009.
Contract Journal 16-07-08 p.2

9. Davis Langdon jobs

Three Davis Langdon and Davis Langdon Schumann Smith jobs have been shortlisted for this year's Stirling Prize: **Manchester Civil Justice Centre** (Denton Corker Marshall); **Westminster Academy at the Naim Dangoor Centre** (Allford Hall Monaghan Morris) and the **Royal Festival Hall** (Allies and Morrison).
www.building.com 18-07-08

Davis Langdon's Dubai Project Management team has been appointed to act as project manager and programme manager to the second phase of the **Al Barari** project. The mixed use development will include residential apartments, a six star hotel, a mosque, a dance studio, a library and extensively landscaped gardens with waterways.
www.albarari.com

The Frank Gehry-designed **Serpentine Pavilion** opens to the public tomorrow (Saturday 19th July). The planning, procurement and carefully managed assembly of the extraordinary structure were accomplished within a 12 week timeframe.

Building 18-07-08 pp24-26

Robert Seymour Associates' **Riverhouse** on the Dartmouth estuary features a clear glass wall on one floor, projecting 1.5m over the water and offering an extensive panoramic view of the setting.

Building 18-07-08 pp48-51

...Davis Langdon Schumann Smith

Exeter's **Princesshay Shopping Centre** was named Best New or Refurbished Shopping Centre at this year's Retail and Leisure Property Awards. Wilkinson Eyre, Chapman Taylor and Panter Hudspith were among those contributing to the scheme.

Property Week 18-07-08 p.47

...sustainability

Davis Langdon last week sponsored the launch by the **UK Green Building Council** (UKGBC) of the report of the GBC's Organisational Measurement & Reporting Task Group. The report highlights the benefits of, and challenges to, organisational measurement and reporting of sustainability impacts, and examines the range of methods and frameworks by which it can be accomplished.

UKGBC 2008

...costs

The latest cost breakdowns are provided for **paints, stains and finishes**.

AJ Specification July 2008 p.42

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