

## Press release

20 October 2006

### Wembley Stadium Arch to be lit up for Diwali

Wembley Stadium's giant Arch will be lit up on 21st October in honour of this year's Diwali celebrations - the Hindu and Sikh Festival of Light.

The idea to illuminate the iconic Wembley Arch came from the stadium's architect Lord Foster and Multiplex Andrew Roberts and was backed by stadium owner Wembley National Stadium Limited and Brent Council. The dramatic 133-metre-high arch soars above the stadium, and is visible from vantage points across London. Already a national symbol and a familiar landmark on the city's skyline, the stadium is a neighbour to London's largest Hindu community, and the festival is traditionally marked by local celebrations. Every year, thousands of people light lanterns and fireworks that symbolise hope and the victory of good over evil. As a sign of appreciation to the local community as well as a wider message of optimism to the nation, the illumination of the arch will knit this great national symbol to the Hindu and Sikh communities of Wembley, the Capital and the UK.

Notes to editors:

Wembley National Stadium Limited (WNSL) is the company that is redeveloping Wembley Stadium as the world's leading sport and music venue. Offering 90,000 fans unrivalled views of the action in state-of-the-art facilities while generating an unbeatable atmosphere, WNSL will set new standards for supporters and performers alike.

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A subsidiary of The Football Association, profits generated by WNSL will provide an important revenue stream for The FA to reinvest in football at every level.

Wembley Stadium, designed by Foster + Partners and HOK Sport and built by Multiplex Construction (UK) Ltd

Originally built for the British Empire Exhibition of 1924, and in turn the site of the Olympic Games in 1948 and the football World Cup Final in 1966, the old Wembley Stadium was the most important sports and entertainment venue in Britain. The design of the new stadium builds upon the heritage of the old to provide future generations of sports and music fans with a venue equipped for the twenty-first century. At almost four times the height of the original, covering twice the area, and with 90,000 seats, the new Wembley Stadium will be the largest covered football stadium in the world.

The key feature of the new stadium is its partly retractable roof. When open it will ensure that the turf gets sufficient daylight and ventilation to maintain perfect condition. During major events the roof will close to provide cover for all 90,000 seats, whilst leaving the area of play open to the elements. The roof is supported structurally by a spectacular 133-metre-high arch that soars over the stadium, providing an iconic replacement for the old buildings landmark twin towers. Dramatically illuminated at night, the arch will be visible from vantage points across London. Under this arch, facilities are designed to maximise spectator comfort and enjoyment. The stadium's geometry and its steeply raked seating tiers ensure that everyone has an unobstructed view; seats are larger than the old ones, with more leg-room; the highest tiers are easily accessed via escalators; and a new concourse wrapping around the building allows easy circulation and provides seated catering for up to 10,000 spectators at any one time.

To create an intimate atmosphere during football and rugby games, the stadium has been

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designed with seats as close to the pitch as possible. Furthermore, the versatile design of the new Stadium also allows the venue to be easily configured to stage major music and entertainment events. The higher roofline of the new stadium and a new purpose-built sound system will all reduce the amount of noise 'spillage' from the stadium. This together with state-of-the-art acoustic design of the Stadium will ensure the legendary Wembley atmosphere will be even better.

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