Optus Stadium
Perth, Western Australia

An award-winning stadium project delivered on-time and on-budget

When Western Australia needed a sports venue to put the state firmly on the map, they chose a design and ethos that was ‘Fan-first’ driven. The result, The Optus Stadium, has won numerous architecture, design, sporting, tourism and public awards and is already generating considerable revenue through sporting, entertainment and corporate events, as well as providing a unique, year-round park space for Perth residents and visitors.

The Westadium Consortium
In 2014, John Laing was selected as an investor and manager of the Optus Stadium project, as part of the Westadium Consortium, which also included Multiplex, Brookfield Financial and Brookfield Johnson Controls (now Brookfield Global Integrated Solutions), along with an award-winning design team that had previously been involved with the redevelopment of the Sydney Cricket Ground and design and development of the Beijing 2008 Olympic National Aquatics Centre.

Design and Features
The stadium needed to be able to host a wide range of sporting and entertainment events, offering fans outstanding viewing, integrated facilities, state-of-the art technology, good quality catering facilities and excellent corporate hospitality. It is currently used for Australian Rules Football League matches, national and international cricket, rugby league and rugby union, and soccer.

The Optus Stadium has already drawn record crowds since opening and celebrated its one millionth visitor in June 2018.

The venue has also already played host to Ed Sheeran and Taylor Swift concerts and will continue to realise a significant revenue stream from live entertainment.

Stadium capacity is between 60,000 and 70,000 depending on the event, and the amphitheatre in the park surrounding the stadium can seat an audience of 1,000.

The Stadium is one of the best in Australia for fans with special access requirements, including 60 Universal Accessible Toilets.
Seating: 60,000 – 70,000 depending on set-up

Workforce employed: 5,800

Economic value added during construction: A$2.5bn

Fan-first:
Complete Wi-fi coverage / Dedicated player viewing rooms / Extensive corporate entertaining facilities / Wide range of public bar and catering facilities / Dedicated Stadium Park

located across all five levels, eight times the number of permanent accessible parking bays in event mode than required under the building code, 450 wheelchair positions with flexible seating for guests and carers, and 327 enhanced amenity seats for fans with other mobility requirements.

The project heralds the widest range of hospitality options of any stadia in Australia, including 13 different ticketing options from general admission to a variety of premium product choices. These include the Australian-first Locker Room and Coaches Room, where patrons can experience player warm-ups, post-match media conferences, and direct sight and sound from AFL home team coaches box, giving patrons unrivalled game insights.

One Team Approach
From the outset, all parties committed to a One Team Approach to resolve issues, based on a ‘your problem is my problem’ approach to establish a “Project Comes First” attitude.

A Project Team Charter was signed by the Directors representing each of the project parties which set out the principles and provided commitment of the senior leaders to the values that would engender the “One Team” approach.

Several ‘Whole of Project Partnering’ workshops established alignment between the project leadership’s approach to project management and problem solving. This helped to progress swift design decisions which enabled the project to be delivered on time whilst incorporating latest possible design decisions – such as Audio Visual upgrades to the Stadium Bowl screens, which are the largest in the Southern Hemisphere, and higher quality digital ribbon signage around the bowl to maximise the fan experience.

- Open 365 days a year
- Covers 2.6 acres of rehabilitated parkland incorporating six nature playgrounds and picnic and BBQ areas
- 300 metres of boardwalk
- Amphitheatre with seating for 1000 spectators
- Specially-commissioned art installations, including Aboriginal art
- Community sports oval available for public use on non-event days

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The contractual documentation allowed for design input from the Operator for key spaces to take place mid-construction, which proved extremely challenging to accommodate within the fixed completion timeframes. This major program risk required strong focus, coordination and collaboration between all parties to ensure that the final design met the Operator’s requirements whilst not impacting on the completion date. This One Team approach also allowed an agreement between the parties to be reached regarding construction changes and operational readiness that were required due to delays in the construction of Matagarup Bridge, which remained incomplete at Commercial Acceptance.

**Leading the way in Building Information Model projects**

Optus Stadium is one of the first projects in Australia to be delivered to Building Information Model (BIM) Level of Development 500 (LOD500). LOD500 means that an entire BIM ‘as-built model’ of the Stadium and Stadium Park was handed over to the facilities management team at completion of the Design & Construct phase, which will enable the BIM model to be utilised throughout the 25-year maintenance period. A federated BIM model was issued weekly, compiling information from individual design consultants and subcontractors into a single ‘point of truth’. This ensured everyone accessed and worked from current information, allowing the project to reap the inherent rewards of BIM, such as clash detection and identification of constructability issues early in the design phase.

**Local impact**

The site chosen for the stadium build had previously been a refuse tip. Westadium worked closely with the state and local environmental groups to ensure we treated the site properly for the future health and wellbeing of the local area.

In addition, we had close interaction with the traditional owners of the land – the Noongar and Whadjuk people – to understand and incorporate elements of cultural significance into the site as a mark of respect for the traditional owners.

During construction, the stadium project employed around 5,800 people, contributing an estimated A$2.5bn to the local economy. The Stadium currently employs around 2,000 people across all its operations.

The Stadium Park is open all year to residents and tourists and includes an amphitheatre that can host both live entertainment and films. There are BBQ and picnic areas, a number of award-winning play spaces, a wide range of public art and high quality café and catering options.

To encourage the use of sustainable transport, the stadium design incorporates limited public car parking spaces. Instead, the purpose-built bus and train stations bring people to the stadium from the city, and there is parking for 600 bikes. The stadium precinct is located on the Swan River and has a jetty where boats can drop passengers. A new bridge, constructed independently of the stadium, spans the river, creating a major pedestrian link with East Perth. There is some parking for those who need greater accessibility.

**Continued management**

The Optus Stadium is now run by VenuesLive! on behalf of the Western Australian State Government.
To smash the 1,000,000 AFL fan mark for the first time, before the home and away season has even finished, is a testament to Optus Stadium.

Mick Murray, Sports & Recreation Minister.

The facilities here are truly world-class and Optus Stadium really puts Perth on the map to hold more international events.

James Sutherland, CEO, Cricket Australia

Cricket’s international governing body (ICC) gave a glowing endorsement of Optus Stadium, with Richie Richardson, a member of the Elite Panel of ICC Match Referees describing the venue as “by far the most impressive and well laid out stadium that I have ever visited.”

Mr Richardson and the head of the ICC anti-corruption and securities unit, John Rhodes, inspected the stadium in December 2017 and recently submitted their final report to Cricket Australia.

In the report Mr Richardson said:

The comprehensive amenities, along with the quality and functionality of the facility, surpass the required standard to host any international cricket match. The layout of the stadium provides convenient easement within and around the facility and it is conveniently located within close proximity of the city centre. The new stadium is a wonderful, refreshing world-class stadium, and I have no hesitation in recommending that the venue is approved for staging all three formats of international cricket.

Optus Stadium is now second only to the MCG in terms of AFL crowds. The high customer satisfaction ratings, which ran to 94 per cent at the most recent measure, demonstrates why Western Australians and visitors alike keeping flocking to the venue.

Six months after the opening of Optus Stadium, we are second only to the MCG in terms of AFL crowds, with 41 per cent more Western Australians enjoying live AFL football each week.

What they say

Image credit: Optus Stadium