

Weekly News Summary

6th February 2024

Construction among sectors least impacted by AI job

threat: Lords report downplays new tech's potential to disrupt labour market. Artificial Intelligence will not cause widespread unemployment and is unlikely to cause much disruption at all in physical and interpersonal sectors like construction. The House of Lords' Communications and Digital Committee published its report into the government's AI strategy on Friday, in which it dismissed the risk of a "robot apocalypse" and encouraged the government to embrace the technology. To read more Click [Here](#)

Construction buyers see happier times ahead: Optimism levels among construction buyers have hit their highest levels in two years. Results from the bellwether S&P Global UK Construction Purchasing Managers' Index in January showed a strong improvement in business activity expectations as the main index registered 48.8 – up from 46.8 in December and the highest reading since August 2023. To read more Click [Here](#)

Student and flats jobs shoring up regional city workloads: Residential and purpose-built student housing-led projects are supporting construction activity across the UK's four major regional cities. According to the Deloitte Regional Crane Surveys, flats and student room projects are helping to offset the project slowdown in the central areas of Belfast, Birmingham, Leeds, and Manchester. Development activity remained strong in 2023 with the four cities collectively recording 63 new construction starts, although this was still down from 74 in 2022. To read more Click [Here](#)

Timber imports on the rise again: Latest numbers from trade body Timber Development UK show imports rallying during the second half of 2023. Timber import statistics for November 2023 show that the market continued to improve in 2023, compared to 2022, with import volumes for the full year likely to be only slightly behind 2022 numbers. To read more Click [Here](#)

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Currencies	Last	Chg.	Chg. %
FTSE 100	7,639.66	24.12	0.32%
DAX	16,876.24	-27.82	-0.16%
Euro Stoxx 50	4,660.85	5.58	0.12%
S&P 500	4,942.81	-15.8	-0.32%
Nikkei 225	36,160.66	-204.16	-0.56%
Dow Jones	38,380.12	-274.3	-0.71%
FTSE 100 Futures	7,613.00	29.5	0.39%

Current value as at 10:20 BST, 6th Feb 2024

ABOUT UKR

UKR is an established construction recruitment agency supplying trades & labour to the UK construction industry. We recruit at all levels across the following disciplines: Construction, Civil Engineering, Mechanical & Electrical, Rail and Utilities on a temporary, contract and permanent basis.

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Builders' merchant volumes drop 12% in November: Sales volumes through Britain's builders' merchants were down more than 12% in November 2023, compared to November 2022. The latest Builders Merchant Building Index (BMBI) report shows builders' merchant takings were down by 5.7% in November 2023 compared to the same month in 2022, with volume sales falling 12.1%. Sales revenue did not fall as much as sales volumes because prices were, on average, 7.2% higher in November 2023 than they had been 12 months before. To read more click [Here](#)

Construction's quickest payers revealed – latest rankings: Amey, Morrison Utility Services, ISG, and Costain rank as construction's fastest-paying main contractors settling subcontractor and supplier invoices in less than 20 days. Latest returns from submissions to the Government's Duty to Report on Payment Practices and Performance indicate a slight improvement on past years. The controversial self-reporting data, which is collated and published by trade body Build UK every six months, has been challenged by subcontractors who complain it is open to gaming because it is based on the number of invoices paid rather than value. To read more click [Here](#)

Transport for London proposes tunnelled DLR extension: Willmott Dixon has released film footage showing the scale of its undertakings on an east London housing estate. The three-minute timelapse video shows the £164m second phase of the regeneration of Barking's Gascoigne East, including demolition of the 1960s blocks and construction of new housing. Willmott Dixon undertook the project for the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham's regeneration company Be First. To read more click [Here](#)

Timelapse video captures transformation of Barking estate: A new report reveals that UK construction is behind other sectors in its efforts to reduce Scope 3 carbon emissions. Mobilityways, a carbon analysis consultant, published its 48-page Road to Net Zero Study last month, with findings from a nine-month investigation of large UK organisations' progress in addressing decarbonisation in their operations and supply chains. To read more click [Here](#)

PPE warning after non-registered kit fails safety tests: The British Safety Industry Federation (BSIF) has issued a warning after the widespread failure of non-member personal protective equipment in safety tests. The federation examined 123 non-member products assessing advertised performance, marking adequacy and compliance with standards. Only 21% – 26 products – proved fully compliant, leaving 79%—97 products—falling short of testing criteria. Many of these substandard products are still available and in use posing serious risks to unsuspecting wearers. To read more click [Here](#)



Planning Leads

Title	Location	Value	Publish Date
Converison to Wellbeing Facility	Glasgow	£100,000	05/02/2024
Conversion to 30 Dwellings	Southampton	£2,000,000	05/02/2024
Mixed Use Development (6 Units)	North West London	£700,000	05/02/2024
MOT Garage and Office	Paisley	£200,000	05/02/2024
Cricket Facility	Crewe	£100,000	05/02/2024
Extension to Casino	West London	£100,000	05/02/2024
Commercial Development	Preston	£2,000,000	05/02/2024
Swimming Pool	Ipswich	£100,000	05/02/2024
Conversion to 3 Dwellings	York	£200,000	05/02/2024
Conversion to Care Home (9 Rooms)	Birmingham	£300,000	05/02/2024
8 Dwellings	Portsmouth	£900,000	05/02/2024
Care Home (140 Rooms)	Tonbridge	£7,500,000	05/02/2024
Extension to Retail Unts	Hemel Hempstead	£100,000	05/02/2024
Extension to Restaurant	Coventry	£100,000	05/02/2024
Storage Facility	Crewe	£100,000	05/02/2024
Swimming Pool	Exeter	£100,000	05/02/2024
Guest Accommodation (1 Room)	Tonbridge	£100,000	05/02/2024
4 Apartments	Oxford	£500,000	05/02/2024
Conversion to Mixed Use (4 Units)	Gloucester	£300,000	05/02/2024
Office	Swindon	£2,000,000	03/02/2024
Extension to Guest House and Restaurar	Chelmsford	£100,000	03/02/2024
Conversion to Dwelling	Coventry	£100,000	03/02/2024
Hotel (4 Rooms)	Wolverhampton	£300,000	03/02/2024
Conversion to 9 Flats	North London	£500,000	03/02/2024
Conversion to Dwelling	Nottingham	£100,000	03/02/2024
Conversion to Dwelling	Worcester	£100,000	03/02/2024
Conversion to HMO	Northampton	£100,000	03/02/2024
4 Dwellings	Leicester	£500,000	03/02/2024
Conversion to Flat	South East London	£100,000	03/02/2024
Conversion to Care Home (3 Rooms)	Cardiff	£100,000	03/02/2024



Contractor ranked by work won during December 2023

Rank	Contractor	No. contracts	Value
1	JRL	1	£245.0m
2	Legacie Contracts	1	£200.0m
3	Morgan Sindall	15	£188.2m
4	RG Group	1	£120.0m
5	United Living	1	£75.6m
6	GMI	2	£70.8m
7	Willmott Dixon	8	£69.7m
8	Royal BAM	5	£65.8m
9	Hill Partnerships	2	£56.0m
10	McLaughlin & Harvey	1	£52.0m
11	Kier	5	£44.7m
12	Lagan Construction Services	1	£43.9m
13	ISG	2	£42.0m
14	George Cox & Sons	1	£34.6m
15	Classic Builders	1	£33.5m
16	Readie	1	£33.5m
17	Ogilvie Construction	2	£33.0m
18	Farrans	1	£30.0m
19	Mott MacDonald (JBA Bentley)	1	£30.0m
20	Deconstruct (UK) t/a The De Group UK	1	£30.0m
21	Gilbert – Ash	1	£30.0m
22	GRAHAM Construction	2	£27.7m
23	O'Brien Contractors	1	£25.0m
24	8 Build	1	£20.0m
25	Henry Boot	1	£20.0m

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