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In brief

THE number of bidders in the race for the £355m Coventry Building Schools for the Future has fallen to just three. Bouygues and Wates are thought to have failed to make the grade. BAM PPP, Laing O'Rourke and Sir Robert McAlpine remain in the competition.

R&D Construction will build 542 new houses and flats in south-west Scotland having won a £37.5m deal with Dumfries & Galloway Housing Partnership. The contract involves the demolition of 373 houses and flats located over two sites in Dumfries and one in Stranraer.

GALLIFORD Try has won several health contracts worth a total of £48.6m. The three deals are: Contracts for NHS Grampian under Framework Scotland to design and build three new healthcare centres worth a total of £22.3m in Forres, Moray, and two Aberdeen based centres in Foresterhill and Whinhill.

RUSSELLS Construction has won an £8.7m contract to build a Holiday Inn in Manchester. Demolition of the existing building began earlier this year, and construction of the 147-bed hotel is set to finish in spring 2010.

A Costain-led consortium has reached financial close on the £230m Bradford Schools Phase 2 PFI Project. The Integrated Bradford consortium includes Costain, HSBC, Building Schools for the Future Investments and Amey Ventures.

Two chase Oldham BSF deal

Balfour Beatty will go up against Equity Solutions BSF for £230m schools scheme.

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TWO firms are battling to chalk up victory on a Building Schools for the Future (BSF) deal in the North West, estimated to be worth around £230m.

The roll-call for the Oldham Council project is Balfour Beatty up against equity investment company Equity Solutions BSF, which has Galliford Try on board as its contractor.

This is the first time Equity Solutions has pitched for a BSF scheme – the organisation is more usually associated with NHS LIFT schemes.

A council source said: "Balfour and Equity were the only two firms to express

real interest in our BSF scheme.

"It is more usual to have three contenders shortlisted, but two may become the norm as currently there are so many BSF schemes about that many contractors already have their hands full bidding for these projects."

But BSF programme director Cath Inchbold said: "Both of these bidders have assembled strong consortia and we look forward to what is certain to be a very competitive and challenging dialogue with them."

Bids are due in before Christmas and will be evaluated early in 2010.

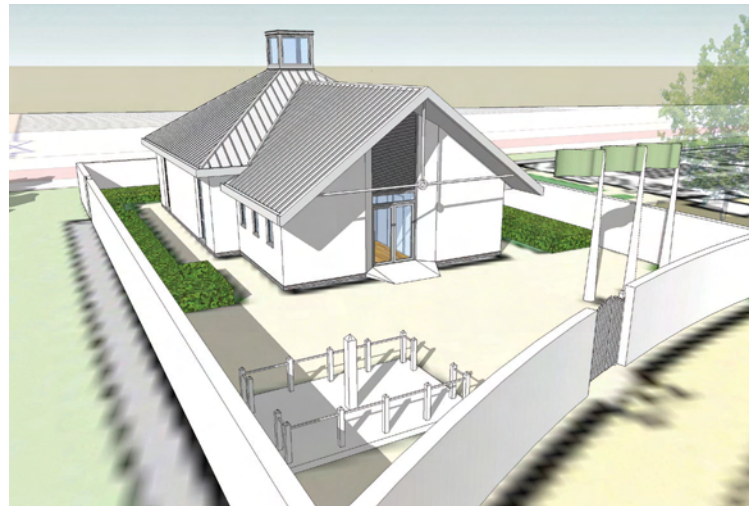
A preferred bidder is expected to emerge from the fray during summer

2010, with work on site programmed to kick off around January 2011.

The scheme features 12 schools in total and the first projects to get off the starting blocks will be the refurbished North Chadderton School and a new school to replace the St Augustine's and Our Lady's Roman Catholic Schools.

Others schemes include refurbishing Hathershaw, Bluecoat, Royton and Crompton, plus Crompton House schools.

Also on the agenda is the makeover of the New Bridge Learning Centre, the revamp of a pupil referral unit at Failsforth, and three new schools for pupils with special needs.



DEFENCE STRATEGY Metrix – a 50/50 joint venture between facilities management company Sodexo and QinetiQ – has submitted plans for the £700m Defence Technical College at the site of MoD St Athan in South Wales. The plans include proposals for a Hindu temple for the use of Gurkha and other Hindu soldiers, located at the development's main entrance.

Five targeting Heathrow road

FIVE rivals have picked up the tender paperwork for a £60m project to build a new airside access road at Heathrow Airport.

CJ understands the line-up for the project is Balfour Beatty, Ferrovial, Vinci, Laing O'Rourke and Morgan Est.

A Skanska/McNicholas joint venture has decided not to pitch for the project, while Costain has failed to make the shortlist.

A preferred contractor is due by December this year, with work on site set to take off in April 2010. Completion is due during spring 2012.

The job involves building the Eastern Airport Airside Road under BAA's Complex Build Integrator framework.

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