

The Architectural Heritage of the Moscow 1980 Olympic Games Today – An Inventory List

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This report presents a brief overview of key design concepts as well as of the current condition of the individual sites of the Moscow Olympic Games in the former USSR. The report reflects a modern view of the value of the objects regarding their world importance. The preparation of the 1980 Olympic Games can be considered the biggest architectural and urban planning programme in post-war Moscow. A recent study focused on the current state and condition of sports, training, residential and infrastructure objects as well as on the existence of key architectural ideas in the post-Soviet era.

Not only Moscow was affected by the preparation of the Olympic Games – even other Soviet republics received new projects; for instance, in Armenia’s capital city Yerevan and in Estonia’s capital Tallinn new airports were built, and Leningrad (Saint Petersburg) received a ‘twin brother’ of Moscow’s Olympiysky roofed stadium.¹

Nowadays, most of the surviving buildings experienced at least one change of function, major repair works or conversion. Also, according to Russian heritage preservation legislation (Federal Law № 73) the upcoming 40th anniversary will provide an opportunity to place selected objects on the monument lists. For some of the buildings (like the Soviet Telegraph Agency – TASS building in Moscow) such attempts were unsuccessful despite the support of the professional society.

All facilities built for the preparation and hosting of the Olympic Games can be divided into the following groups:

- A. Host city (Moscow) stadiums and training facilities;
- B. Off-Moscow Soviet Olympic team training facilities;
- C. Moscow welcome and accommodation infrastructure;
- D. Off-Moscow welcome and accommodation infrastructure;
- E. Moscow information and press infrastructure.

Unfortunately, the historic importance and authentic architectural values do not correspond with preservation concerns – the socialist modernist heritage nowadays is still not widely accepted as heritage, but only as a resource for being used as sports, training or entertainment facilities. Moreover, during the last few years a few conversion projects concerning key modernist buildings were announced, prepared and completed without any respect for the possible conservation status.

In 1975, the Moscow Olympic Committee hosted a competition for major sporting facilities; a total of at least 78 objects were designed and built. Some major stadiums as well as smaller facilities like swimming pools were severely altered, including even some from the 1920s and 1930s.

Major architects and construction engineers were involved in the design process. Some solutions like Druzhba Hall were unprecedented in Soviet architecture, some were tested by smaller-scale constructions, like the largest roofed sports complex Olympiysky with two prototypes existing in Leningrad (now Saint Petersburg) before – Yubeleyni and SKK (demolished in late 2019).

According to Russian Federal Law 73, cultural heritage objects need at least to be 40 years old to be protected monuments. Unfortunately, in the late 2010s the largest stadiums experienced large-scale conversions that did not respect their historic values. Only the Dinamo Stadium has had protection status (regional level) since 1987, albeit it was extensively modified. Public opinion is not ready yet either to perceive late Soviet modernist architecture as valuable. This is a gradual process – nowadays some selected buildings of the 1960s have received the status of protected monuments.

Stylistically, all Olympic objects in Moscow, except the ones built in the 1950s, follow the so-called socialist modernist aesthetics, including the (neo-)brutalist movement.

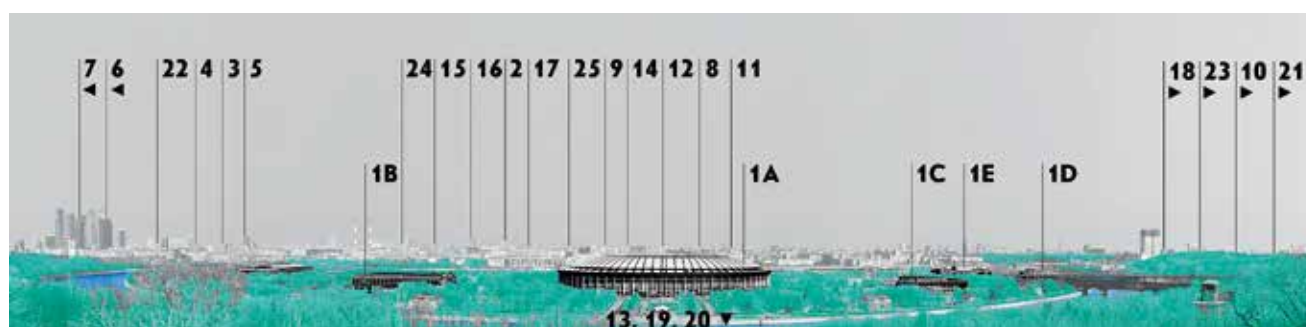


Fig. 1 Moscow city centre panorama view (towards northeast) with main Olympic buildings marked

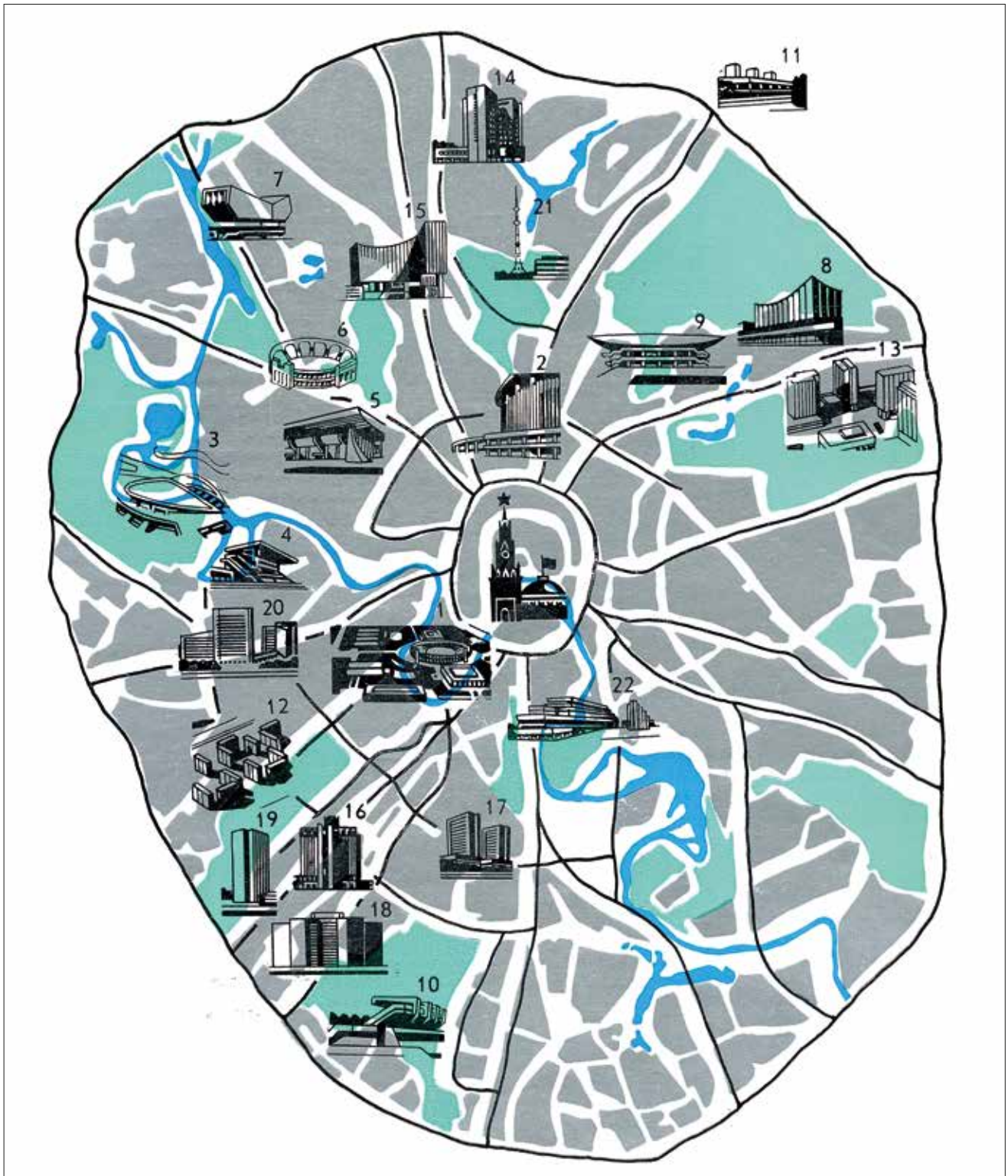


Fig. 2 Map of Moscow showing selected Olympic objects

They have some features of the Soviet world, but generally they are rooted in the architecture of the Modern Movement. Involved architects, designers and planners were aware of the main post-war Olympic buildings and definitely were inspired by some of them. Nonetheless, some of the leading architects developed their personal style based on extensive work over decades before the preparations for the Moscow Olympic Games started.

A broad social acceptance of the architectural values of such examples is rapidly growing nowadays, but even faster Moscow's commercial estate development as well as the participation in European and global sporting events have led to rapid and menacing changes to Moscow's Olympic sites, the surrounding urban landscape or even to momentary conversions (already happened or developed at major sites in Moscow).



Fig. 3 Luzhniki Central Stadium complex, area plan as presented on official Moscow Sports Department navigation board on-site, 2019

Below, the Russian committee of DOCOMOMO International presents an inventory of the current state of nearly all structures erected or converted and used for the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow, as examined in the second half of 2019, almost 40 years after their construction. The current Russian cultural heritage conservation policy as well as social movements like the Moscow-based Archnadzor activists still do not perceive the late modern architecture as heritage or have only just begun to translate it into the overall historic city vision.

List of Olympic objects in Moscow City

(Figs. 1 and 2):

(22 objects from this list were presented in the book Олимпийские сооружения Москвы. Проектирование и строительство. М.: Московский рабочий, 1981 [Olympic Buildings of Moscow. Design and Construction. Moscow: Moskovsky rabochy], 1981)

1. Lenin Central Stadium
- 1A Big Arena
- 1B Small Arena
- 1C Swimming Pool
- 1D Druzhba Hall
- 1E Olympiada AMS
2. Olympiyskiy Sports Complex
3. Velotrek
4. Rowing Channel
5. TsSKA Sports Complex
6. Dinamo Stadium
7. Dinamo Sports Complex
8. Izmaylovo Sports Complex

9. Sokolniki Sports Complex
10. Horse-riding Complex Bitsa
11. Chayka Swimming Pool
12. Dinamo Shooting Ground
13. Olympic Village
14. Izmaylovo Hotel Complex
15. Molodezhnaya Hotel
16. Cosmos Hotel
17. Sport Hotel
18. Sevastopol Hotel
19. Salyut Hotel
20. Tourist Central House
21. Solnechny Motel
22. International Trade Centre and Hotel
23. International Post Office
24. Olympic Tele-Radio Complex
25. Olympic Press Centre
26. Sheremetyevo-2 International Airport Terminal

A. Host City (Moscow) Stadiums and Training Facilities

Lenin Central Stadium Big Arena

(Figs. 3 and 4)

Built 1955–1956 for USSR Peoples’ Spartakiad, used for 1957 International Youth Festival and all major sporting events since.

Moscow Olympic Games opening and closing ceremonies took place there.

Architects: Alexander Vlasov, Igor Rozhin, Nikolay Ullas, Aleksander Khryakov



Fig. 4 Lenin Central Stadium Big Arena with Lenin Monument

Converted: 1976–1999 (architect: I. Winogradsky, A. Echeistov and others)
 Converted: 1996–1997 (new seats and permanent roof added)
 UEFA 5-star certified in 1998
 Converted: 2014–2017 for FIFA World Cup 2018 (architects: SPEECH)
 Capacity (1980): 96,000 spectators
 Capacity (current): 81,000 spectators
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: Facades, Master Plan*

Lenin Central Stadium Small Arena

Built 1956
 Converted: 1975–1980
 Capacity (1980): 8,500 spectators
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: mostly preserved (exterior), mostly renovated (interior)

Lenin Central Stadium Swimming Pool

Built 1956
 Converted: 2016–2019
 Architects: V. Fursov, Yu. Afanasiev, A. Shabaidash
 Capacity (1980): 10,000 spectators
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: completely converted

Lenin Central Stadium Druzhba Hall

Built 1976–1978
 Architects: I. Rozhin, Yu. Bolshakov, V. Tarasevich
 Capacity (1980): 1,860 or 3,960 spectators
 Capacity (projected): 3350 spectators
 Converted: 2017–2020
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: mostly preserved (exterior, except windows), renovated interior



Fig. 5 Olympiysky Sports Complex and Swimming Pool during conversion/demolition

Lenin Central Stadium «Olympiada» Automated Management System Building

Built 1978–1980
 Architects: I. Yarov, A. Saukke, A. Moiseenko, A. Sveshnikov
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: mostly preserved (exterior, except windows), renovated interior

1. Olympiysky Sports Complex (Fig. 5)

Built 1975–1980 for Moscow Olympic Games (used for 22 Olympic disciplines), used for major sporting and musical/entertainment events until 2019
 Architects: Mikhail Posokhin, Boris Tkhor, Leonas Aranauskas
 Sports Complex capacity (1980): 35,000 (or 17,000+18,000) spectators
 Swimming Pool capacity (1980): 15,000 spectators
 Yearly visitors (in 2018): 3.5 million
 Sports Facilities users (in 2018): 6,000 daily
 Capacity (projected): 10,000 spectators
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: conversion (2019–2021) with demolition of most parts except façade details (Sports Complex) and roof structure (Swimming Pool)

2. Velotrek (Velodrome)

Built 1975–1980 for Moscow Olympic Games, used for sporting and training
 Architects: N. Voronina, A. Ospennikov and others
 Velodrome capacity (1980): 6,000 spectators
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: partly renovated exterior (part of façade cladding) and interior (vestibule, service facilities)
 Additional facilities on site: Cycling Trek (preserved, in use)



Fig. 6 Facade of the TsSKA Sports Complex

3. Rowing Channel

Built 1972–1973 for sports and training events before, during and after Olympic Games

Tribune, service and administration facilities, artificial channel (2300 by 125 metres)

Architects: V. Kuzmin, V. Kolesnik, I. Rozhin, A. Yastrebov

Renovated in 2011–2014

Tribune capacity (1980): 3,400 spectators

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly renovated exterior (façade cladding except tribune) and interior

During the 2013–2014 renovation a hostel for 100 visitors was constructed on site

4. TsSKA Sports Complex (Fig. 6)

Built 1976–1979 for Moscow Olympic Games, used for sporting and training

Architects: Yu. Krivuschenko, A. Chekmarev, D. Ragozin

Football Arena and Universal Sports Complex

Tribune capacity (1980): 5,000 spectators (10,000 total)

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly preserved exterior, partly renovated interior

5. Dinamo Stadium (Fig. 7)

Built 1926–1927 for First Soviet Spartakiad, later served as a home stadium for Dinamo football club. Used for Moscow Olympic Games (football) and for sporting and training for major sporting events until 2010s.

Architects: L. Cherikover, A. Langman

Converted: 1934–1936, 1977–1978, 2008–2018

Tribune capacity (1923): 25,000 spectators

Tribune capacity (1934): 53,445 spectators

Tribune capacity (1980): approx. 74,000 spectators

Tribune capacity (2018): 36,540 spectators

Smaller Arena was added in 1938, Swimming Pool in 1957 (demolished in 2008), gymnastics and training halls were added in 1970s (demolished in 2010)

Heritage Protection status: Regional Level (since 1987), actual protection zone was limited drastically in 2012 and nowadays contains only one tribune

Integrity: Demolished except front-side (southern) tribune

Young Pioneers Stadium (1934, demolished in 2016) in Dinamo area was also used during Moscow Olympic Games.

6. Dinamo Sports Complex

Built 1980 for Moscow Olympic Games (basketball, volleyball), used for sporting and training

Architects: I. Mikalev, E. Rozanov, E. Chivikov, V. Milashevsky.

Football Arena and Universal Sports Complex

Tribune capacity (1980): 4,950–5,550 spectators

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly preserved exterior, partly renovated interior



Fig. 7 Dinamo Stadium during conversion

7. Izmaylovo Sports Complex

Built 1976–1980 for Moscow Olympic Games (athletics), afterwards used as part of the Russian State University of Physical Culture, Sports, Youth and Tourism

Architects: I. Gunst, N. Smirnov

Tribune capacity (1980): 5,000 spectators

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly preserved exterior, partly renovated interior

8. Sokolniki Sports Complex

Built 1956, used during Moscow Olympic Games (athletics), used for sporting and training

Converted: 1970–1973, 1975–1979

Architects: A. Yegorov, B. Shapiro, M. Larina, V. Nesterov (head)

Tribune capacity (1980): 5,530 spectators

Tribune capacity (current): 7,000 spectators

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly preserved exterior, partly renovated interior

9. Horse-riding Complex Bitsa (Fig. 8)

Built 1977–1980 for Moscow Olympic Games (horse-riding, pentathlon), used for sporting and training

Complex contains two sporting grounds, stables for 234 (summer) and 240 (winter) horses, 3 riding halls, gymnastics hall hotel and few training and service facilities

Architects: A. Yegorov, B. Shapiro, M. Larina, V. Nesterov (head)

Reconstruction: 2004–2006

Stadium tribune capacity (1980): 12,000 and 2,000 spectators

Biggest riding hall capacity (1980): 1,500 spectators

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Partly renovated, including cladding of facades and windows



Fig. 8 Bitsa Horse-riding Complex, tribunes

10. Chaika Swimming Pool

Built 1957

Architect: B. Topaz

Converted: 1977–1980

Architect: D. Solopov, M. Kazarnovsky

Converted: 2012–2016 (new building addition in unfinished state)

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: mostly renovated facades, totally changed interiors

11. Dinamo Shooting Ground

Built 1925, used until 2018

Area of 34 hectares

Converted: 1975–1980

Tribune capacity (1980): 1150, 550, 330 and 300 spectators

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Demolished in 2018

B. Off-Moscow Soviet Olympic Team Training Facilities and

D. Off-Moscow Welcome and Accommodation Infrastructure

For the 1980 Olympics, the USSR did not only build facilities in Moscow, but also new infrastructure across the country. Leaving out the training facilities of the national team, two airports are worth mentioning: Yerevan in Armenia and Tallinn in Estonia. The first was built for Asian and Pacific region long-haul flights and the second was intended for the sailing/yachting sports teams and fans (Tallinn was selected as the venue for these ‘marine’ disciplines).

Yerevan Airport, Zvartnots Terminal 1 has not been operated since 2006 (Departures) and 2011 (Arrivals) and nowadays is in a dangerous condition due to a lack of any maintenance and with announced plans to demolish the terminal. International support from the professional society (including DOCOMOMO International, the Russian Union of Architects etc.) has stopped this process for the time being, but a good future for this object is not yet guaranteed.

Tallinn International Airport Terminal opened in 1980; it was designed by architect Mikhail Piskov and interior designer Maile Grünberg.

Leningrad (Saint Petersburg)

Kirov Stadium (1950, converted 1978), demolished in 2006
During the 1980 Olympics, it hosted seven football matches for 72,000 spectators.

Kiev, Ukraine

Kiev Central Stadium (1923, converted 1967, 1980, 1999, 2012)

During the 1980 Olympics, it hosted seven football matches for 100,000 spectators.

UEFA certified 4-star

Capacity (current): 70,000 spectators

Minsk, Belarus

Dinamo Stadium (1954, converted 1980, 2018)

During the 1980 Olympics, it hosted seven football matches for 50,000 spectators.

UEFA certified 4-star

Capacity (current): 22,246 spectators

Tallinn, Estonia

- *Yachting Sports Center*
- *Olympia Hotel*
- *TV Tower*
- *International Airport Terminal*
- *Olympic Village*
- *Palace of Culture and Sport*

All facilities are partly renovated and still in use, except the Palace of Culture and Sport which is nearly abandoned but not yet ruined.

Protection status: unknown

C. Moscow Welcome and Accommodation Infrastructure

12. Olympic Village (Fig. 9)

A model Soviet micro-district for 14,000 citizens and extensive social and sports service system. Contains 18 16-storey apartment buildings (P3/16 prefabricated panel series), shopping centre, training complex (administration, three halls, swimming pools, football fields), culture centre (multi-use events hall for 1200 seats, two cinema halls for 250 seats each), post-office, telephone station, etc.

Built 1977–1980

Capacity: 3438 apartments, eight kindergartens and child-care facilities, 22 social and sport service facilities.

Area: 83 hectares

Architects: Eugeniy Stamo (head); S. Karpova, M. Shugaev, A. Muromsky (master-plan); O. Kedrenovsky, V. Kiselev (directorate); A. Samsonov and MNIITEP office (residential part); V. Bogdanov and Mosproekt-1 office (shopping centre); M. Poltoratsky, G. Mironov, S. Mindul (sports and training centre); O. Kedrenovsky, T. Malyarchuk, N. Gadzetskaya (culture centre); V. Bogdanov, E. Barbyshev, A. Lukyanenko



Fig. 9 Moscow Olympic Village, directorate and apartment buildings

(post office). Artist: V. Zamkov, B. Talberg

Converted: 2014–2017 (culture centre).

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly preserved exteriors, partly preserved public interiors. Master plan was changed and some football and training grounds demolished (2018); instead of a telephone station a new construction of high-rise housing started.

Sports and training complex renovated in 2018–2019.

13. Izmaylovo Hotel Complex

Built 1974–1980

Architects: D. Burdin, V. Klimov, Yu. Rabaevand, M. Arutchyan, Yu. Matysasov, E. Putyatin, A. Soldatov.

Artist: Z. Tsereteli

Capacity: five hotel blocks for 10,000 people, 1000 seats in entertainment/conference hall, 8500 seats in restaurants and café, various service facilities.

Converted: 2010

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly preserved exteriors, partly preserved public interiors

14. C. Moscow Welcome and Accommodation Infrastructure Molodezhnaya Hotel

Built 1976–1979

Architects: I. Loveyko, Yu. Gaigarov, G. Sidlerov

Capacity: 1500 persons

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Partly preserved exteriors, renovated interiors

15. Cosmos Hotel (Fig. 10)

Built 1976–1979

Architects: V. Andreev, T. Zaikin, V. Steiskal, O. Cacoub, P. Jouglet, S. Epstein

Capacity: 1777 rooms

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly preserved exteriors, partly preserved public interiors

Converted: Announced for 2020



Fig. 10 Hotel Cosmos and later Charles de Gaulle monument

16. Sport Hotel

Built 1976–1979
 Architects: O. Kedrenovsky, P. Klokov
 Capacity: 705 persons in 401 rooms, 600 seats in restaurant, 500 seats in conference hall
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: Demolished in 2012

17. Sevastopol Hotel

Built 1976–1979
 Architects: V. Datyuk, I. Elizarova, V. Khavin
 Converted: 2014
 Capacity: 3624 rooms
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: Mostly preserved exteriors, partly preserved public interiors

18. Salyut Hotel

Built 1977–1980
 Architects: A. Samsonov, A. Bergelson, A. Zobnin, V. Rossi-khin
 Capacity: 2020 persons in 1232 rooms
 Converted: 2003, 2014–2016
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: Mostly preserved exteriors, partly preserved public interiors

19. Tourist Central House

Built 1971–1980
 Architects: V. Kuzmin, E. Gorkin, N. Nilova, E. Zorina, A. Tyablin
 Capacity: 1300 persons, 800 seats entertainment hall
 Converted: hotel converted in 2005–2007
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: Mostly preserved exteriors, partly preserved public interiors

20. Solnechny Motel

Built 1978–1980
 Architects: R. Gvozdev, V. Sher, V. Blomerius, L. Orshansky, N. Fokina, V. Starostin, M. Vorobyeva.
 Artist: Z. Tsereteli
 Capacity: 450 people (402 in motel rooms, 48 in bungalows)
 Converted: 2000s
 Heritage Protection status: not listed
 Integrity: Roughly preserved general shape

21. International Trade Centre and Hotel

Built 1974–1980
 Architects: M. Posokhin, V. Kubasov, P. Skokan, G. Tchernov
 Capacity: 600 hotel rooms, 627 apartments, 2000 seats in congress hall, 500 seats in entertainment hall
 Converted: 2000s
 Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly preserved exteriors, partly preserved public interiors

E. Moscow Information and Press Infrastructure

22. International Post Office

Built 1977–1980

Architects: Yu. Scheverdyayev, V. Kilpe, M. Feldman

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly preserved exteriors, partly preserved public interiors

23. Olympic Tele-Radio Complex

Built 1976–1980

Architects: L. Batalov, S. Akinfeev, P. Bukharev

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly preserved exteriors, partly preserved public interiors

24. Olympic Press Centre

Built 1977–1980

Capacity: up to 3000 reporters, 500 photojournalists, 400 seats in conference hall

Architects: I. Winogradsky, V. Antonov, Yu. Yusim, Yu. Kalmykov, S. Faibisovich

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Mostly preserved exteriors, partly preserved public interiors

Moscow International Airport Terminal

25. Sheremetyevo Terminal 2 (present – SVO Terminal F)

Built 1977–1980

Capacity (1980): up to 1500 passengers/hour

Converted: 2009

Heritage Protection status: not listed

Integrity: Partly preserved exteriors

Abstract

Dieser Artikel gibt einen kurzen Überblick über die wichtigsten Gestaltungskonzepte sowie über den aktuellen Zu-

stand der einzelnen Austragungsorte der Olympischen Spiele von Moskau in der ehemaligen UdSSR und geht der Frage nach, ob diese Stätten als modernistisches Erbe von Weltbedeutung betrachtet werden können. Die Vorbereitung der Olympischen Spiele 1980 kann als das größte architektonische und städtebauliche Programm im Moskau der Nachkriegszeit angesehen werden. Eine kürzlich durchgeführte Studie konzentrierte sich auf den aktuellen Zustand und die Beschaffenheit von Sport-, Trainings-, Wohn- und Infrastrukturobjekten sowie auf die Existenz architektonischer Schlüsselideen in der postsowjetischen Ära.

Nicht nur Moskau war von der Vorbereitung der Olympischen Spiele betroffen – auch andere Sowjetrepubliken erhielten neue Projekte. So wurden beispielsweise in Armeniens Hauptstadt Eriwan und in Estlands Hauptstadt Tallinn neue Flughäfen gebaut, und Leningrad (Sankt Petersburg) erhielt einen „Zwillingsbruder“ des überdachten Moskauer Olympiastadions.

In jüngster Zeit erlebten die meisten der bestehenden Gebäude mindestens eine Funktionsänderung, größere Reparaturarbeiten oder einen Umbau.

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¹ As known, at the end of 2019 the Saint Petersburg (Leningrad) CKK– Sports and Concert Complex was prepared to be converted or demolished by a private owner without any published preservation decisions.

Credits

Fig. 1 © Mikhail Knyazev, DOCOMOMO Russia

Fig. 2 from Olympic Buildings of Moscow. Design and Construction, 1981

Figs. 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10 photo Nikolai Vassiliev, 2019

Figs. 7, 9 photo Nikolai Vassiliev, 2018

