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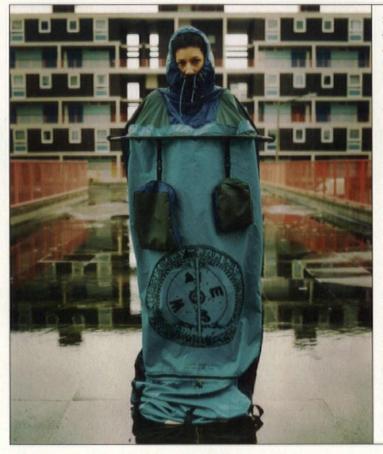
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Social bonding in communities is explored in a new exhibition by artist Lucy Orta. The RIBA show in London between 24 March and 20 April covers architecture, fashion and social activism. It includes prototype clothing and portable shelters for emergency situations. Orta, who holds the Rootstein Hopkins chair at the London College of Fashion, is to talk on 23 March with engineer Aran **Chadwick of Atelier One** on their current 'Dwellings' initiative. The public art commission for Nottingham and Sunderland city centres is being built this summer. The talk, chaired by Colin Fournier, costs £7 with concessions. Telephone 020 7307 3699 or email gallery@inst.riba.org for further details.

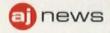
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Visit our website for daily news, the AJ archive, buildings, competitions and product information. Magazine articles marked 🛟 are available in greater detail online.



The employees said they would carry out a one-day strike to show their support for the existing board and their frustration with the external shareholders A senior Aukett source describes the reaction to foreign shareholders' attempts to oust two senior managers ** page 10



Design watchdog set for rethink

CABE has undertaken a major review of all its work after the government decided to freeze its funding at £12 million a year.

Policy and communications boss Matthew Bell, who has been in the job for six months, told the AJ that the design watchdog is set to concentrate its work more on the public sector and less on commercial office development.

'We expanded massively in the years after we were founded, but we have got to a stage where it seems that we should consolidate,' he said.

'We need to understand what we do best. If you look at where we have been successful, it has been in areas like schools and hospitals, but perhaps less in private offices.

'Commercial headway has been less than we might have hoped, but the ground we have really made up has been in the public sector,' he added.

Bias allegation hits CABE

An allegation of bias against CABE's design review committee has sparked a DCMS audit into conflict of interest issues at the commission.

The examination will seek to establish whether CABE operates within the Nolan principles, established to eradicate sleaze in public life.

Its primary focus will be Stuart Lipton and any potential conflict of interest that exists between his roles as chairman of CABE and of Stanhope – one of the UK's largest developers.

The audit, announced on Monday, will be led by chartered accountants AHL and any findings or recommendations for change are expected within the next couple of weeks.

The review is the government's response to a complaint from a member of the public against CABE's treatment of two schemes at South Kensington and Croydon Gateway.

The complainant, understood to be a member of the South Kensington Underground Development Action Group, has alleged a connection between the design review committee's treatment of Terry Farrell's proposal for South Kensington Underground Station and Lipton's role as the scheme's developer.

CABE's handling of two competing schemes for Croydon Gateway is also understood to be a source of complaint. A scheme by Foster and Partners for Stanhope is doing battle with another by Michael Aukett for developer Arrowcroft.

CABE's director of communications, Matt Bell, however, said the commission was confident its proceedures to protect against conflicts of interest were sufficiently 'robust'.

'We have full guidance to deal with potential conflicts of interest,' he said. 'We take issues of public probity seriously. It is important things are transparent. If the audit helps to do that, then great.'

However, he acknowledged that the need to attract high-calibre experts to the commission could raise the potential for conflicts of interest. And he admitted that as many as half of all commissioners could have some form of connection to Stanhope.

These include Ken Shuttleworth, who is currently working for the firm, Sunand Prasad, whose practice Penoyre & Prasad has worked on Stanhope's Stratford Project, and Paul Morrell through his position at Davis Langdon & Everest, which acts as an adviser to the developer.

However, Shuttleworth said there was no reason to be concerned about the commissioners' business connections. 'There is no bias towards Stanhope schemes at the design review,' he said. 'In fact I think it's the opposite. They probably have a harder ride.'

Zoë Blackler

Foster to hold court at Washington's Smithsonian Institution



America's Smithsonian Institution has appointed Foster and Partners to create an enclosed courtyard in front of the Patent Office building

in Washington. The scheme will create a 'dynamic 2,800m² ceremonial space' in front of the Greek Revival landmark, which is now occupied

ff I wouldn't be surprised if the things we've assumed for years to be right turn out to be wrong 72 Science writer Rita Carter on neuroscience's lessons for architecture » pages 16-17



Conservative mayoral candidate Steve Norris woos the property crowd at MIPIM

Farrell to masterplan Manchester renaissance

Britain's most ambitious urban design exercises, overseeing a citywide masterplan for the whole of Manchester.

The project was commissioned to trigger a widespread economic renaissance throughout Greater Manchester and its surrounding Lancashire hinterland. Farrell will take charge of the architectural and design phases of this wider initiative, which aims to transform the city into a 'Knowledge Capital'.

The urban design project which goes hand in hand with a review of 'governance' and 'enterprise' - will centre on 'coherence, livability and place-making' throughout the city. It will focus detailed planning in a massive 'arc of enterprise' that will take in an area that stretches from Salford University to Piccadilly Station, including the Oxford Road.

Farrell told the AJ that the decision to undertake the project had grown out of a commission to MIXED USE SPORT

The city-wide project will extend into the surrounding area

review the city's transport strategy. 'There is no point in simply looking at transport without creating a wider masterplan, he said.

He added that the project was 'fascinating', providing an unusual opportunity to masterplan a '19thcentury mercantile city that was never planned in the first place'.

Council leader Howard Bernstein agreed that the exercise was essential for the city's future.

'This agenda is challenging, but we are confident that our unique approach of translating economic and social objectives into deliverable spatial and masterplanning tools will succeed, he said.

However, the Manchester Society of Architects president, Simone Ridyard, said it was disappointing that an architect with a presence in the city had not been picked.

'Like any architect of quality, Terry Farrell's input into Manchester is welcome,' she said. 'However, experienced and proven architects in the city, such as Ian Simpson and Stephenson Bell, have made valuable contributions to the regeneration of the city. Surely their individual and collective qualification to continue this work far outweighs that of Farrell?'

Ed Dorrell

FOCUSED ON INTERBUILD In order to give readers the best and most up-to-date preview of Interbuild and of the exhibitors at the Architecture Pavilion, the March issue of AJ Focus will be distributed with the 1 April issue of The Architects' Journal.



by the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the National Portrait Gallery. The project - which represents Foster's first cultural scheme

in the Washington area - will provide a location for performances, art installations and special events.

Greenwich stares into space

A new £10 million planetarium by Allies and Morrison Architects is set to form a bronze-clad, cone-shaped structure among the Royal Observatory's historic domes

One of the world's most historic astronomical sites is to have a new planetarium. Allies and Morrison Architects' design for a new building at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich will join a constellation of observatories, including one by Sir Christopher Wren.

The cone-shaped development will be clad in bronze and have 120 raked seats facing a hemispherical screen.

Paul Appleton, Allies and Morrison's practice director, said the planetarium would be 'an environment that removes the real world; excludes all natural light, views and sound from outside; and creates an entirely artificial world for delivering the visitor into space'.

The scheme for the National Maritime Museum, worth up to £10 million, is due to start next year. The site owes its current form to Charles II, who instructed Wren to build his observatory in 1675.

Appleton said the project, which has already secured planning permission, also involved the restoration of existing buildings and landscape. 'The cone pops through the landscape and is a major new development. But in a sense we see this more as landscape and sculpture with a discreet new building.'

His design will be surrounded by a series of existing buildings with domed roofs. These include an 1890s observatory, and the white-roofed Meridian Building, whose telescopes are the biggest crowd-puller.

Appleton added that the form of the new block was steeped in astronomical significance. The calculated tilt of the cone forms an axis with the North Star and the angles of the cone represent mathematical curves that correspond to the orbits of comets and planets.

Jez Abbott

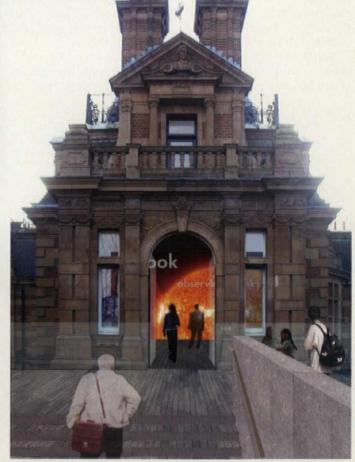


The bronze planetarium (above, second from left) forms a strong contrast in shape and material to the existing buildings

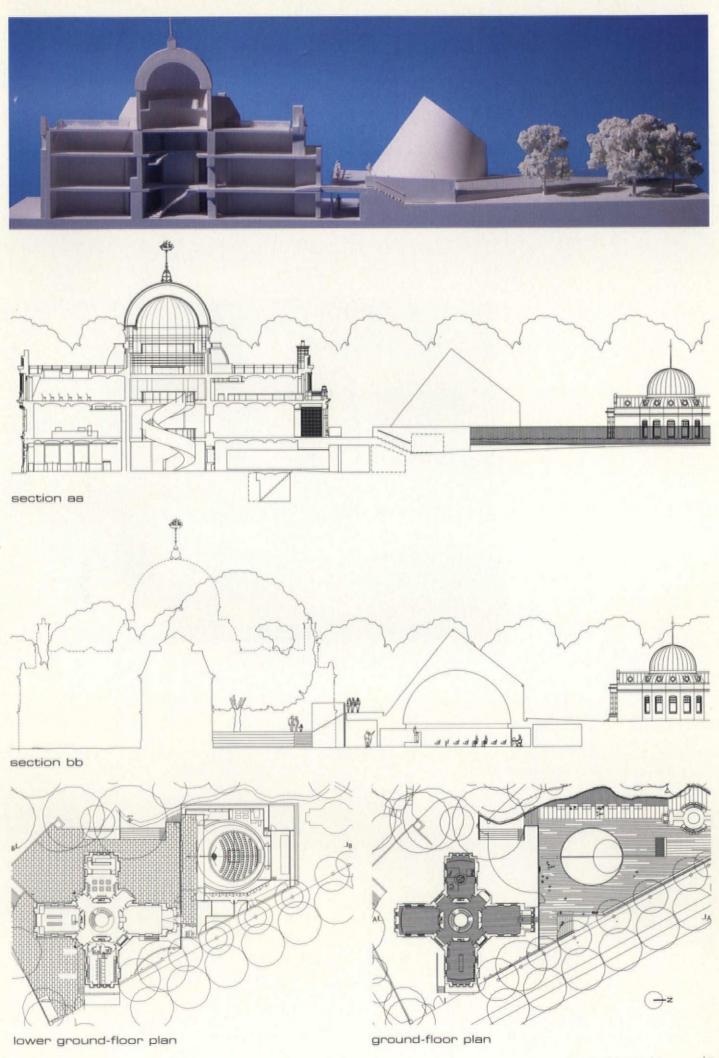


The tilt of the cone forms an axis with the North Star



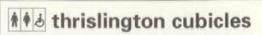


Above left: the new structure will stand between the South Building and the Altazimuth Pavilion. Above right: existing buildings will be restored





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Aukett's solidarity strike threat

Staff at Aukett threatened strike action last month in sympathy with the firm's senior managers, it has been revealed, after foreign shareholders threatened to unseat two directors (AJ 5.2.04).

The employees – who were furious with the investors for triggering an extraordinary general meeting at the end of March – had to be persuaded that industrial action 'would not help solve the company's problems'.

A senior Aukett source told the AJ that staff members were angry when they discovered that the foreign shareholders were attempting to replace chairman Ian Mavor and marketing director Stuart McLarty on the board. 'They wanted to express their frustration with the situation as they could see, like most other people, that the firm is doing well,' he said.

'The employees had a meeting and said they would carry out a one-day strike to show their support for the existing board and their frustration with the external shareholders. But we, as senior managers, talked them down,' he said.

'We told them that the best way to handle the situation was to

keep serving our clients and working to keep the company going forward. However, this does show that the existing management has the support of the staff and that they are very happy with the direction of the company, the source added.

The shareholders' rebellion, at last month's AGM, was led by minority shareholders Imagina Management from Madrid and Brussels-based Art & Build. They refused to support Ian Mavor and Stuart McLarty in their current roles, and are instead campaigning for them to be replaced by Imagina's Jose Luis Ripoll and former chair Gerry Deighton.

Two other high-profile ex-directors, former chair Andrew Lett and managing director John Thake, told the AGM that they too would use their votes in support of Deighton, who is actively campaigning for the rebel faction.

Aukett directors have warned that if problems at the company continue they would consider taking the firm back into private hands.

Ed Dorrell

'Strong' Tricorn will still be demolished

The man behind the masterplan to replace the Tricorn Centre in Portsmouth has called the doomed concrete canyon a 'very strong building'.

Chapman Taylor director Andrew Griffiths met architects Rodney Gordon and Owen Luder to talk over the fate of their disused 1960s shopping centre.

'The Tricorn is very strong and I fully support the built design,' he said. 'But it just doesn't integrate in pedestrian-flow terms. The reason I never supported its retention is its inward looking nature. There is no reference to the urban grain and it doesn't allow other areas to be connected to the city centre.'

The Tricorn is due to be demolished later this month following the failure of Portsmouth Civic Society to get it spot-listed. The Twentieth Century Society has described the demolition as an 'extremely short-sighted decision that sets a dangerous precedent'.



HOK International has appointed TPS Consult to assist it on the provision of security and counter-terrorism measures in these designs for the Central Bank of Kuwait HQ. The 40-storey skyscraper will form a high-profile addition to the Kuwait City skyline, with security concerns a priority due to the proximity of Islamic terrorists in surrounding states. Construction is to start on site later this year with completion scheduled for the end of 2006.

UDENT SHOWCASE



Scott Lindsay designed the ArtDepot as his BArch thesis project at the school of architecture, University of Dundee. He proposed creating a centre for environmental and applied art in a disused C-listed tram depot in Dundee. Lindsay's low-cost project provides performance spaces, a restaurant, cinemas and artists' studios. Gallery spaces are provided within the existing skin, contained in and around modified shipping containers. Studios plug into an overhead electric track and can be moved on existing tram rails, a metaphor of the building's past. Lindsay's tutor was Neil Verow.

Student Showcase is sponsored by Students' Union, a website set up by Union in association with The Architects' Journal at www.students-union.net. To submit work for publication in Student Showcase, email a publication quality image to aistudentshowcase@emap.com



At last, irrefutable proof that the Swiss have lost their

Hygiene and water saving have always been high priorities for

touch.

the Swiss so it should come as no surprise that Geberit has become the leading innovator in the field of hands free washroom equipment.

A tap without a handle?

With water becoming an increasingly scarce and expensive commodity, any measure that cuts wastage is a step in the right direction. Geberit's intelligent, infra-red controlled taps supply water on demand only, saving over 80% compared with traditional mixer taps.



Flushing without touching?

Automatic flushing is a relatively well known application for infra-red but Geberit has refined and developed the technology to the point where flushing of the WC or urinal is guaranteed each and every time, while saving over 60% of the water used by conventional methods. The benefits to hygiene and the washroom environment are clear.

But it doesn't stop there. With typical Swiss thoroughness, Geberit has taken the process further and designed a whole range of infra-red driven products to enable it to bring the concept of the hands free washroom to reality.

A hands free washroom?

HO I

Hill

The Geberit range takes infra-red control to its logical conclusion. Intelligent electronic taps, hand dryers and soap dispensers, combined with infra-red WC and urinal flushing,



provide the designer with everything he could wish for to create a modern hygienic washroom. Water and energy are controlled and conserved completely automatically and all functions are performed without the need for touching.

Remote programming?

With these intelligent infra-red systems, each urinal can be individually, electronically programmed at the touch of a button and adjusted to meet changing demands.

The Geberit system opens up exciting opportunities for both designers and architects. Fast and straight-forward to install, it's easy to clean and maintain, thanks to concealed plumbing and a clear floor area. As a result, washrooms can be impressively attractive as well as efficient and hygienic.

Have the Swiss lost their touch? Well, yes. And no.



Housebuilders gather war chest to fight North West homes 'ban'

A group of North West housebuilders are gathering a 'war chest' to launch a legal battle against the ongoing moratorium on new homes, the AJ has learned.

The group's adviser told the AJ that they are furious about housing limits outlined in new regional planning guidance that have left at least 15 planning authorities with no choice but to impose an outright ban on new homes.

The coalition is collecting the cash to fund a judicial review against the Government Office for the North West (GONW) in the High Court, said the adviser who preferred not to be named.

He added that while the group 'remains committed' to negotiating over Regional Planning Policy Guidance Note 13, it believes it will be 'left with no option but to head for the courts'.

In June last year at least one firm of architects in the Lancaster area started laying off staff because residential and domestic work was drying up. Pierre Williams, head of communications at the House Builders Federation, said he sympathised with the 'legal option' as a future course of action. 'We're trying to impress upon the government the desperation of the situation,' he said. 'It could well transpire that legal action is the only option open to us.

'Conversations have certainly taken place on this subject and we desperately need to ensure that the issue is resolved,' he added.

Local architects have reacted with sympathy to the news. Nick Gillibrand, one of the first architects to highlight the problem (AJ 19.6.03), said he strongly sympathised. 'It amazes me that politicians have not acted quickly on this. There needs to be a legal challenge to the acts of the regional authorities.

'If nobody acts quickly then there will be blood on the carpet,' he added. 'There can't be this kind of messing around with the planning system again.'

Ed Dorrell

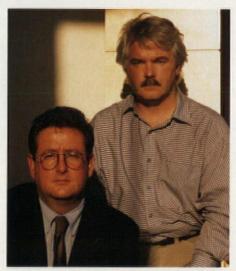
Harper Mackay successor facing dissolution

The practice that evolved out of awardwinning Harper Mackay last year, after founding partner David Harper left the office, has been dissolved.

Clerkenwell-based MAK architects halted trading last week after the remaining partners decided to pursue their different areas of work independently.

The firm – which reached 72nd in last year's AJ100 with 30 architects – was founded in 1985 and found considerable success designing premises for television companies and in the residential sector. It has already laid off the vast majority of its employees.

'For some time now the directors have been working in increasingly different fields,' an official statement read this week. 'In recognition of this we have decided to dissolve the practice and pursue these different paths independently.'



Founding partners David Harper (left) and Ken Mackay before they split early last year

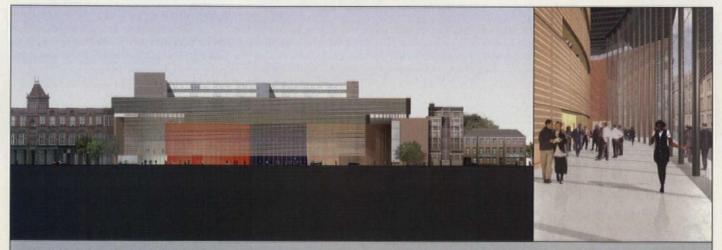
Ken Mackay said the remaining directors were undecided whether to retain the name or the offices. 'There are issues that we are trying to decide at the moment,' he told the AJ. 'We are in the process of a period of discussion, but we prefer to see it as a restructure.'

Harper left the practice in January last year to pursue a series of different projects with a new practice, a move that triggered the renaming and rebranding.

But he said he was saddened to hear the decision. 'I see it is as very sad news as I spent 17 great years working there,' he said. 'I have no idea why this might have happened.

'It is a terrible thing to hear as there are many very talented people still working for the firm,' he stressed.

However, he insisted that his new practice, Finlay Harper, has 'no interest' in taking on either jobs or staff left over by MAK's demise.

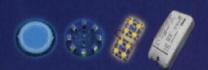


Rafael Viñoly Architects has won planning permission for this £31.5 million Performing Arts and Convention Centre complex in Leicester's St George's Cultural Quarter. The scheme will have two auditoria seating 750 and 350 people, production workshops, rehearsal rooms, restaurants and bars. Building work is due to start at the end of this year and finish in 2006. Project director Christina Seilern is the director of the practice's London office.





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who said what

'They could be the most influential group of architectural drawings in the world'

RIBA drawings curator Charles Hind on the institute's 212 works by Palladio. New York Times, 12.3.04

'I am delighted that common sense has prevailed in this matter and that we can move as swiftly as possible now to demolition'

Liberal Democrat MP for Portsmouth South, Mike Hancock, on the decision not to list the Tricorn Centre. BBC News, 10.3.04

'He hasn't changed that much over the last 50 years. He looks the same. He still has his hair. He is still a natty dresser. We share a tailor. I recommended mine to him'

Artist Peter Blake on Colin St John Wilson. loS. 14.3.04

'A preposterous quango – composed, apparently, of the blind and the bland'

Jonathan Meades on English Heritage. The Times, 13.3.04

'We all love to cook except Richard who doesn't cook but eats' Ruth Rogers. Evening Standard, 12.3.04

vital statistics

- The Russell Group of Britain's top 19 universities is dishing out more first-class degrees than ever before. In the last five years the number of top-level degrees achieved has increased by over 50 per cent.
- A new website poll has found that over four in 10 of the UK's pregnancies occur by accident. The research questioned nearly 3,000 women between the ages of 25 and 35, actively choosing to ignore the problem of teenage pregnancy.
- Former civil servant Michael Lyons has concluded that the treasury could save up to £2 billion a year if 20,000 civil service jobs were moved out of London and the South East to the regions.
- The government's policies encouraging high-density living appear to be working. In 1997, 47 per cent of new homes in the South East were detached while just 14 per cent were flats. By 2003, this was completely reversed with 19 per cent detached and 47 per cent flats.

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A beautiful mind, uncovered

The California-based
Academy of Neuroscience
for Architecture, holding
its first symposium
next week, believes its
research will prompt a
quantum leap forward
in the design of our built
environment. But just
how does the brain
perceive space and
design? And if we
knew, how would it
affect architects?
Zoë Blackler reports

Science has shifted its gaze inward, to the mysterious workings of the mind. Neuroscience is set to dominate the next decade as burgeoning research begins to cross this inner frontier.

On the west coast of the US, one group of enthusiasts is convinced that what these studies have to teach us about how we experience the spaces we inhabit will revolutionise the practice of architecture.

Just as the scientific explorations of the physical world during the 19th century empowered architects to progress in leaps during the 20th century, so the discoveries about our inner world will prompt huge advances in the 21st, they claim.

The source of these predictions is the Academy of Neuroscience for Architecture, based at the University of California in San Diego (UCSD), which is holding its first symposium next week.

The ANA's claims may be extravagant, but its credentials are rock solid. UCSD is one of the leading international research centres for neuroscience and home to the prestigious Salk Institute. The academy's research programme, spearheaded by

founding president John Eberhard, has the backing of the American Institute of Architects, which last summer awarded it the \$100,000 (£56,000) Latrobe Fellowship.

Over the next few years, architects and neuroscientists will work together to learn how human beings experience the built environment and how to apply these discoveries to theories of design.

The origin of this unique collaboration began with a moment in the career of one of UCSD's most famous figures – scientist Jonas Salk. During his search for a cure for polio, Salk experienced a mental block and his work came to a standstill. Seeking retreat in the abbey at Assisi, he was inspired by the building in its landscape, his mind was cleared and the answer came to him.

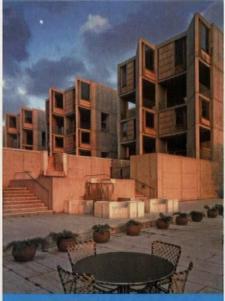
Moved by the power of the built environment to influence the mind, Salk commissioned Louis Kahn to design the Salk Institute, where research excellence would be complemented by architectural excellence.

Last summer the AIA's national convention met in San Diego. According to tradition, the host chapter marks the visit with the launch of a legacy project. Struck by Salk's experience, the San Diego chapter took the opportunity to set up the new academy.

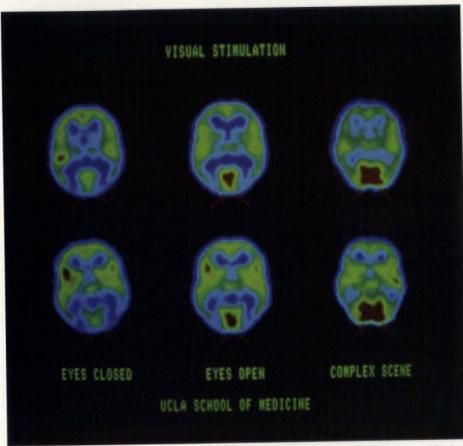
Alison Whitelaw, an English-born, Edinburgh-trained architect now based in California, was one of its founders. She suggests that initial research will focus on how the mind – the ephemeral facility unique to human beings – uses the hardwiring of the brain to conceive space. Architects will drive the research, posing questions for the scientists to explore.

Whitelaw finds it hard to pin down how the findings might be applied to the practice of architecture, but suggests the results could provide a scientific basis to the concept of good design.

The most obvious areas that could benefit, she suggests, are healing, learning and working environments. 'There is good research that with better daylighting in schools, students' test scores go up,' she says. 'Good architects have known this intuitively for some time, but we



The Academy of Neuroscience for Architecture's Salk Institute, based at the University of California in San Diego



Coloured positron-emission tomography (PET) scans showing the brain processing images. Brain mapping could be used in architecture to test peoples' real responses to buildings, rather than the feelings they claim to have, and potentially removing guesswork from the design process

don't know what is actually going on in the brain.'

Theories about the mind's experience of space are worse than patchy at present. 'We are only just defining avenues of study, rather that testing formulated theories. We still have a very long way to go. That's why it's so exciting, so huge."

Neuroscience for architecture is already on the curriculum at UCSD, and as research results begin to come in, these will be fed through into student courses. 'It's been wonderful to see how this has been received by the design and neuroscience communities,' she concludes. 'Most of the work neuroscientists do is about how to fix the brain when it's gone wrong, whereas this is about revealing its workings.

Scientific writer Rita Carter, author Mapping the Mind, agrees that the application of neuroscience to architectural design is still 'fairly speculative'. But she argues the developing science can offer a 'hardening up' of observations built up through the 'softer' disciplines of psychology and aesthetics.

Psychology has long understood that people experience discomfort in spaces either too vast or too confined. Neuroscience has discovered that these responses are hardwired in the brain, and that when its minimum and maximum limits are exceeded, the brain begins to behave differently.

You can tell by examining brain responses alone how near or far an object lies,' she says. 'In that way you can tell the precise point when an object comes too close for comfort.'

Even with a subject as esoteric as the experience of sacred space, neuroscience can provide some answers, having already identified the specific area in the brain linked to transcendence - the so-called 'god spot'.

Carter's predictions of how this knowledge might be applied, however, are likely to produce an uncomfortable response in the brains of many architects. Brain

mapping, she says, could test peoples' true responses to buildings, rather than the feelings they claim to have, which might not be entirely honest.

'It could remove the guesswork in designing,' says Carter. 'In the not-toodistant future you could get people to look at a number of designs and test their reactions.

But will this be another blow to the automony of the designer, with box-ticking substituted for art and generations of innovation and experimentation eschewed in favour of architecture by focus group?

Carter, for one, dismisses the danger, 'I wonder if box-ticking doesn't happen already,' she says. 'We already have soft theories about aesthetics. The question is whether assumptions about what is good and bad in architecture are born out by science. I wouldn't be surprised if the things we've assumed for years to be right turn out to be wrong.'

Equally, though, research may prove that much intuitive design is spot-on, creating finely honed solutions to the needs of the people it serves.

The crucial message for architects is that, like the Academy in San Diego, they must take control of the process. Brain imaging has only been going for 15 years,' Carter says. 'Very little applied work has been done.

This programme of the future is up for grabs. It's up to architects to make contacts with scientists and to learn about neuroscience, because they are going to be the ones who will be applying it. What exactly they do with the results is up to them.'

Until researchers start to ask the questions, it's impossible to predict the answers they will find or the solutions they could offer.

Indeed: who would have predicted the advance in computer technology that has spawned a generation of buildings that have broken free of the constraints of rectilinear geometry - Foster's Gherkin with its curvilinear twists and turns, or FOA's Yokohama with its complex geometries? Maybe a greater understanding of how inner and outer spaces influence each other could lead to revolutions in thought and in design that today are unimaginable.

For more information, visit www.neuro scienceforarchitecture.org or read Mapping the Mind by Rita Carter (published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson)

Fighting terror by design

Last week's Madrid bombings exposed the vulnerability of train stations. But there are measures that can be taken at the design stage. James Dennison explains

The appalling bomb attacks on commuter trains in Madrid last week have thrown the issue of railway security into sharp relief. Of course, maintaining security against the threat of terrorism will always primarily be a job for the police and the intelligence services. But building design can have a vital role in controlling access and, when the worst does happen, in mitigating the effects of terrorist strikes on rail buildings and their users,

'Railway stations are, by definition, a security nightmare,' admits Mark Whitby, director at structural engineer Whitbybird. 'Big, open spaces, packed with unscreened strangers carrying unchecked baggage, they require unrestricted access and are invariably in the middle

Security Notice

increased levels of security, item luggage must be searched before ng deposited within Holdalls.

of densely built-up areas. So traditional perimeter measures like bollards and vehicle exclusion zones are useless.'

But just because this vulnerability is built-in doesn't mean that some of it can't also be designed out, 'Anyone who has worked on a rail project will know that the "safety-first" culture is absolutely paramount,' says Grimshaw's Mark Middleton, working on

the extension of London's Paddington Station.

'It infuses everything from signalling and track maintenance to crowd control and emergency planning. Stations are already designed with a "nightmare scenario" in mind, like a burning, runaway train derailing as it enters the station and taking out some of the structure. Set procedures are in place to cope with such an event, covering everything from the PA system to refuge zones and escape routes, with redundancy built-in throughout.'

Indeed, thanks to decades of bitter experience at the hands of the IRA, the UK leads the way in counter-terrorist design. 'Perhaps the biggest challenge is the change in terrorist type,' says Arup security director John Haddon. 'In this country, almost all terrorism had been by Irish republicans, who give warnings and go for economic targets rather than killing people. The new threat is suicide bombers whose sole aim is to take lives, including their own.'

Haddon believes taking suicide bombers into account means stepping up existing security measures rather than fundamentally rethinking design guidance. 'The measures developed over the past decades are still valid,' he says. 'First and foremost, you have to minimise the likelihood of occurrence. It's not about fortifying buildings – there are too many scenarios; you'd just end up with a bunker.'

In railway stations where access can't be controlled (the best defence against bombers), this means designing out places of concealment, entering stations, but are expensive and can aggravate problems of congestion. Traditional paper tickets could be phased out in favour of 'smart' credit-card-style tickets, which identify and track passengers as they pass through the system. Oyster cards, like this, are already in use on the London Underground and could help to identify suspect passengers in the event of an attack. Both, however, raise civil liberties issues.

If the worst does happen, glazing is the most critical area of safety, as over 95 per cent of blast injuries are caused by flying glass. 'Anti-shatter film is very effective and should be fitted to all existing glazing that isn't laminated – though the frames must also be checked to ensure they can withstand the increased blast loads,' says

Railway security signs at St Pancras

Station in London,

asking passengers

to be more vigilant

following the bomb

attack in Madrid

last Thursday

as rail authorities are

David Hadden, Arup Security's facade specialist. 'The ideal is to fit windows with laminated toughened glass at least 6.8mm thick, anchored to reinforced frames in rebates at least 25mm deep.' Large panes of glazing (such as station roofs) should have cables stretched beneath them for the glass to wrap around should it be blown from its frame.

The aim behind the structure of stations is the same as for other buildings: to delay collapse long enough for people to escape. Robustness and ductility are the key attributes. 'Buildings with frames of steel or in-situ reinforced concrete exhibit the best resilience to blast loads,' says Hadden. Precast concrete frames should be avoided unless consideration is given to the blast performance of their connections. Load-bearing masonry buildings also perform badly in blasts.

For security reasons, much blast-mitigation expertise is deliberately withheld from the public domain. But if you are working on a particularly high-risk building, the advice is to contact the police at the design stage and they will put you in contact with the relevant experts on a need-to-know basis.



improving the lighting and reducing clutter to give CCTV cameras a clear field of vision. This extends to details like ensuring window sills, vending machines and phone booths are angled to prevent packages being left on them. Bins should consist of nothing more than rubber hoops with clear plastic bags hung from them.

'They're simple measures but they work,' says Geoff Dunmore, operational security manager at London Underground. 'In August 1994 our cameras caught the IRA trying to plant a bomb in Oxford Circus Tube Station. They couldn't find anywhere to place it so ended up dumping it in a bin outside.'

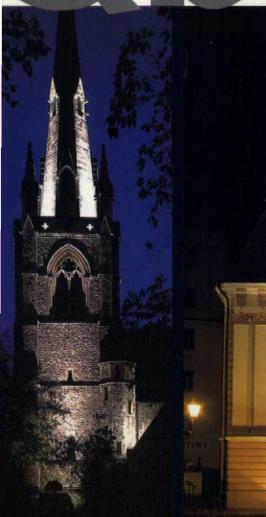
In the future, sensitive airport-style 'sniffer' booths could be installed, which pick up minute traces of explosive chemicals on people

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How much of our public realm should be sacrificed to the 'war on terror'?

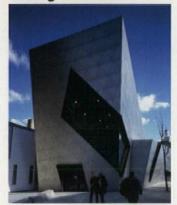
To Tony Blair, the Madrid bombings reinforce the message that we are fighting 'a new type of war' that 'demands a different attitude to our own interests'. To architects, many of the problems posed by the threat of terrorism are not so new at all. In 'Fighting terror by design' (Ajenda, pp 18) James Dennison outlines ways in which public spaces can be designed to minimise the risk of terrorist attack. As well as sensible precautions, such as applying anti-shatter film to glazing and selecting structures that resist blast loads, current best practice dictates that high-risk spaces be designed without 'places of concealment'. Nooks and crannies should be eliminated. Window sills and vending machines should slope so they cannot be used as shelves. In short, we are to design an environment which discourages assignations of any sort; where nobody can rest a cup of coffee, and which discourages any activity other than simply passing though.

It is a strategy that has been deployed in any number of 'invisible wars' - against crime, drugs or poverty. Or rather against homelessness, poverty's most visible, and therefore most threatening, manifestation. In his book City of Quartz, Mike Davies describes how, in a bid to deter vagrants, the Los Angeles authorities have created an urban realm where nothing is quite what it seems. Benches look like benches, but the discreet convex curve of the seat makes them impossible to lie on and uncomfortable even to sit on for any length of time. As an approach to public space this stands in direct opposition to work carried out by, among others, Giancarlo De Carlo, the Smithsons and Cedric Price, all of whom hold, or held, that the fundamental obligation of public space is to encourage appropriation by its users.

The difficulty of reconciling the need for public safety with the protection of civil liberties is universally acknowledged, but is generally assumed to apply only to issues such as electronic tagging. But isn't the right to enjoy our public space also an important civil liberty? Does the need to 'design out terror' justify such a fundamental impoverishment of the public realm?

Isabel Allen

Libeskind must be kidding with LMU



I saw your piece on Daniel Libeskind's new extension to the London Metropolitan University on the Holloway Road and wonder if he needs some new glasses, or perhaps he can prescribe new ones for all of us.

This building is almost mundane and is certainly very ordinary in its detail and use of materials. I can see nothing exceptional about it except that it is almost devoid of rational geometry and must have exceeded the budget by a considerable margin.

Let's face it, he is an attentionseeking aberration within the architectural profession, promoting an approach to building that has nothing to do with Humanism, the human form or the future of the environment. Please do not kid yourself otherwise.

Julyan Wickham, Wickham van Eyck Architects, London

No stars for Saxon's league table plans

It's impossible to disagree with Peter Bernamont's letter regarding practice league tables (AJ 11.3.04). How many times have we stayed in 'star-rated' hotels, for example, only to find all the boxes ticked off — mini-bar relentlessly topped up, telly in the corner, sheets turned down, nice stuff on the bathroom shelf — yet with all the welcome, warmth and friendliness of an overnight filing cabinet for people?

'Investors in People'? I hope means a president looking after all of his or her members, as much as us looking after our clients and staff. No offence to Richard Saxon, but he seems remote from the fact that the majority of all registered practices are sole principals or sole practitioners with little interest in playing in big, shark-infested ponds, who are giving a highly personal, perhaps idiosyncratic, service to private clients with less interest in league tables than in empathy and a good working relationship.

An ability to design in the chosen style goes down well too, and no one will ever be able to put that into a league table. 'Design Quality Indicators'? Oh dear.

Robert Franklin, Oxford

It's official: the Saxon backlash starts here

Is the RIBA completely off its head? Please God, don't anybody vote for Richard Saxon. I'm sure he's a very nice bloke really, but judging by his completely imprudent and potentially devastating published opinions on what he would do if he becamepresident, the profession would surely shrivel up and die if he were elected. We have no future with people like that in policymaking positions.

You know why good designers avoid management roles? It's because the world of the manager is full of boring, clueless, meddlers waiting to retire and who don't know how to take advantage of the benefits they already have, and consequently screw everything up for the rest of us.

Not that I have strong feelings on the subject.

TD Bernard, via email

Factories are not in the country house tradition

As an American recently moved to London, it is with interest that I follow the PPG7/country house discussion. In recent months I've visited several nearby country houses, including Chiswick, Pitshanger, Syon, Eltham and the Red House, and it's obvious that this important part of the British architectural tradition should be continued.

However, I find it curious to read in the AJ that three recently completed automobile factories are described as interpretations of the country house. Perhaps I have visited the wrong houses thus far, or I am completely misunderstanding the country house as a type, but I don't see the connection - and I wonder what those involved must be thinking, or visiting, in order to create this conceptual leap.

With this misappropriation of language, it is no wonder the government wants to restrict the building of country house estates, as they must feel they'll get bigbox factories - however elegant - dotting the landscape!

Christopher Pizzi, London EC1

Torres Blancas is the way to build a tower



Simon Smithson is right to praise Torres Blancas (Letter from Madrid. Concrete Quarterly, AJ 4.3.04). As remarkable as the building, and something that is not shown, is the way such a large tower sits lightly in its carefully constructed and maintained garden. Also seldom mentioned are the interiors. I've not been fortu-

nate enough to see inside, but locals told me that getting furniture to work in the curved rooms was, and still is, a challenge.

Stuart Tappin, Cameron Taylor, Bedford

Save our ARB: an open letter to Ian Salisbury

Ian, I have to say I'm baffled by the ferocity of your anti-ARB campaign, and by the reactions to it by our colleagues. You clearly have gathered a substantial following, but at present this actually arouses some anxieties in me. I worry that the profession is yet again in danger of shooting itself in the foot.

I once made a very comfortable living as a property developer, but felt I would have a more rewarding life as a 'professional'; a member of a highly trained, highly qualified, disinterested body of like-minded people, out to improve the world rather than merely exploit it. And I saw this profession as one motivated by excellence, and governed by statute in a way that would minimise charlatanism.

Well, we were all young once - nevertheless I retain some elements of that early idealism. Thus I helped fight tooth and nail in resisting Thatcher's civil servants' attempt to de-professionalise architecture, all of which effort had to be put down to Thatcher and her government's lack of understanding of what 'disinterestedness' or 'regulated excellence' actually meant. It seemed to me then that a clear separation of 'regulatory' and 'advancing architecture' (or professional club) roles was vitally necessary in the public interest. Arcuk seemed to do that in some measure.

Eventually 'we won', and seeing a clarified act and ARB come into being gave me great hope that there would be in place our equivalent of the General Medical Council, which would gather public confidence in its purpose and effect. The RIBA would thus be

relieved of its absurd conflict of interest in being, in the public eye at least, both supporter and disciplinarian of its membership.

Not so long ago, Alex Reid suggested the RIBA could no longer afford to discipline members, who might bring in barristers to defend their right to continue membership even if found guilty of gross misconduct or incompetence. I think Alex then suggested that, as the statute-founded regulatory body could not be sued, it alone should deal with public complaints. For once, I agreed.

My recent run-in with two buck-passing solicitors, over a simple transfer of a lease that took two years to finalise along with a year's lost rent, led me to the arms of the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors, a branch of the Law Society. Their complacent denial that there was anything worth disciplining or pursuing these incompetents for, raised me to levels of fury that I do not wish to repeat.

I even considered a public campaign to have the Law Society barred from having anything to do with regulating its members, and for them to establish the equivalent of the ARB. Do you really think the RIBA could do any better, or that the public would have any higher respect for the RIBA than it does for the Law Society in this area, with such a clear conflict of interest? Self-regulation just doesn't work - and we see the effect of that everywhere from pension providers to the BBC.

On another issue, the vast majority of complaints to ARB from aggrieved clients are, as I understand it, about the performance of inexperienced sole practitioners making a mess of domestic extensions. Shouldn't the ARB use this experience to inform the profession where it is going wrong in education/training? It does the rest of us no good to pretend these issues are beneath our Olympian gaze over our

Essential Art, where RIBA visiting boards are annually seduced by great visions and novelty, and cowed into assuming the schools are doing a comprehensive job for the majority of students who will never become 'stars'.

I have recently withdrawn from examining Part 3 students partly because of pressure of time, partly because external examiners are being inexorably squeezed out of a serious role in testing students' capacity to practice. More and more of the content and testing of Part 3 is retained in-house by the universities, some of whom seem (though not Portsmouth, where I latterly examined) to hold contempt for practice as a lower life form than academia.

My plea, therefore, Ian is for you to temper the rhetoric and explain more clearly how you would improve, rather than destroy, the very institution that, with good governance, should be the most positive force in all that we as a profession believe in.

Bob Franklin, Oxford

In space, no one can hear you scream...



Your building study of the TAG McLaren Centre (AJ 4.3.04) says it all about signature architects. The picture on page 30 shows a staircase with a horrendous trip hazard, all for the sake of that Space 1999 look.

KenTrimmer, via email

Please address letters to the editor at The Architects' Journal, 151 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4GB, fax 020 7505 6701, or email angela.newton@emap.com to arrive by 10am on the Monday before publication.

Even Mies would have trouble making a success out of PFI

The increasingly complex and legally fraught business of commissioning, designing and procuring public buildings is often cited as justification for the downgrading, even exclusion, of architecture. Design is presented as an optional extra, a bolt on – nice but not essential. The reverse is true; design is the creative process that models, anticipates and facilitates new futures. While we need to survey the individual propositions that new public procurement processes produce (the evidence), our primary focus must be on the review and redesign of the process that shapes them.

By project'shape' I refer to the context that generated the building and not the current vogue for fulsome forms. Not that shape cannot be a driver; I just wish someone would say they did it because they wanted to, because the design and production software has made the easily imagined, but technically difficult, possible – just as the mountaineer climbs Everest because it's there and he can (and the oxygen tanks make it possible).

There is a story of a Mies van der Rohe lecture in London where he spoke of his work at the Illinois Insitute of Technology and for Seagram: of steel columns encased, for reasons of fire, in concrete then rearticulated on the skin of the building by the steel that supports the glazing. The room was in awe of the inventor of a new construction vernacular; Mies drew on a cigar and concluded 'but of course, actually we did it like that because we liked the way it looked'.

I like to imagine that he might also have considered the formative impact on architecture of the design of the Form of Contract. Those who worked for Mies have told me otherwise; that he was unsure of proportion, relying on a gut reaction, and that his best work was done in pre-war Germany –

the latter confirms that proximity does not guarantee insight. Clearly heroes exist for us to construct as we want them to be, and it's best not to meet your heroes. (My father turned down the chance to dine with Groucho Marx – observing that the potential delight was not worth the risk of disappointment.)

So 'My Mies' had a stonemason for a father and a solicitor for a mother (a construction law specialist). So, would My Mies have willingly and wittingly embraced Partnering Contracts, Framework Agreements, PFI and LIFT? His mother would have made him wary of both the legal experts who facilitate the process and their colleagues who hover waiting to pick over the carcass of contractual failure; however, the answer must be 'yes'. He would have listened to his mother but carried on, keen to build – just as in 1930s Germany.

So, is considering what My Mies might have done today a pointless illustration of a fascination with the mythical status of 20th-century figures? The answer, of course, is 'yes'. But the vital issue is not whether Mies would have undertaken a PFI project, but, if he had, whether it would have been any good. My conclusion, based on experience of PFI 'outcomes' to date, suggests that even in the case of the Mies myth the answer would be 'no'.

So why are we now in the process of staking billions of pounds on the gamble that schools and hospitals will somehow be okay?

Because the short-term returns are the very presentable statistics for the provision of huge numbers of new facilities. It's only the long-term prospects that are poor – and when does anyone in government or construction think long-term? The mistaken view is threefold: that the value of design cannot be measured so it is not needed; that we won't make the mistakes of the past; and that the future is someone else's problem.

'The vital issue is not whether Mies would have undertaken a PFI project, but, if he had, whether it would have been any good'

Steve Norris, Tory mayoral candidate for London, was keen to show both his business credentials and irresistable charisma at MIPIM in Cannes last week

Meeting politicians is strange. What fails to come through the TV screens is their immense energy and charisma, without which they wouldn't even reach a lowly ministerial position.

MIPIM – last week's annual, absurdly commercial, property bash in Cannes – is increasingly one of the prime habitats for witnessing political animals at work, away from the stuffy atmospheres of Westminster and Whitehall. Among the big names present was old 'Two Jags' himself, John Prescott, escorted by construction minister, and Gordon Brown clone, Nigel Griffiths.

So it was no surprise to see Steve Norris, the Conservative Party's candidate for London mayor, prowling the exhibition space and pressing the flesh – especially as planning, development and architecture are set to be key battlegrounds in next year's election, and Norris is the non-executive chair of construction giant Jarvis. 'Shagger' (as he is almost universally known due to his not-so-private private life) was thus in his element.

This impression was strengthened when the former minister for London Transport conspired to be over an hour late for our interview. The all-too-believable excuse was that he had been delayed by a lengthy lunch with property gurus CB Richard Ellis. The image of Norris whiling away the hours with a large cigar, a glass of local armagnac and the company of large developers was irresistible.

When the big man finally made an appearance, it became quickly apparent why he made such a surprisingly large impression in the inaugural 2000 mayoral elections. Joining the campaign late after Jeffrey Archer's public humiliation, Norris steadily made up ground on Red Ken's bubbling campaign. Tory strategists claimed, fairly convincingly, that if the election had taken place two weeks later, the blue flag, instead of red, would have been raised over Foster and Partners' brand-spanking-new City Hall.

Standing around on the Cannes promenade, he looked exactly like what he is: a northern working-class lad who made it big – very big – in the heady atmosphere of 1980s London. The immaculate suit, the perma-tan skin complexion and the slightly garish gold jewelry all gave the impression of someone more likely to get on with the cockney entrepreneurs of *Only Fools and Horses* than either Livingstone or the Liberal's Simon Hughes.



Capital ambition

Given the tightness of Norris' itinerary and his lengthy lunch, the AJ's slot was cut back from 20 minutes to 10. So we start off with the most important issue for the capital's architectural community. What does he make of Livingstone's London Strategic Plan? 'The plan has very little of surprise in it and there is certainly a lot of common sense running throughout,' he says diplomatically. 'But I do think it is based on one fundamental flaw: the demographic predictions.

Ken says he is absolutely convinced that London's population is set to rise by 600,000 in the next 10 years, but I disagree. There will be increases in the UK, but this does not mean we cannot mitigate against them. There are many successful cities in the rest of the UK that need more labour and could handle an increased population.'

Throughout the interview - which takes place overlooking the sea, rather than in a meeting room, 'because I could really do with getting some air' - Norris shuffles around. At first sitting, then standing, then stretching with legs asunder, the politician gives the impression that he has either a massive energy surplus or is very bored. Or perhaps both.

Yet this doesn't stop his answers being a first-class example of the politician's art -

serious, thought-out and smooth, without really saying anything much.

'Another important issue is affordable housing, and the way Ken is dealing with local authorities,' he says, referring to the mayor's ongoing debates with London's boroughs over their levels of social housing negotiated in Section 106 agreements. 'Ken is demanding the boroughs get 40 per cent from all developers. I'm not saying that is not achievable, but it makes more sense to negotiate and come to sensible arrangements.

'Like all old socialists, Ken has this attitude that developers are there to be taken from. They are not. They are an intrinsic part of the economic future of the city and should be respected as people who add to this success.'

And then, without seeming to take a breath, on to the meaty issue of tall buildings. Traditionally the one-nation Tories, which to some extent Norris represents, are seen as bedfellows of the capital's powerful conservation lobby. But Norris seems to be treading a fine line between this heritage attitude and Livingstone's increasingly populist pro-skyscrapers policy, manifested in the widespread acclaim that greeted the 'Erotic Gherkin'.

'I have nothing against tall buildings at all, providing they are in the right place and are of a high architectural standard,' he says. 'I wrote to the inquiry to express my support vociferously for the Shard of Glass, as I think it's terrific. That is an example of the right building in the right place.' One gets the feeling he is keen to back them more passionately but doesn't feel diplomacy would allow it.

One topic of conversation that does rile the so-far unflappable candidate is his ongoing association with Jarvis, the construction firm heavily involved in the future of London's Underground. Critics have written off Norris, arguing that while he retains the firm's chairmanship his campaign will be constantly hit by accusations of a conflict of interest. 'That is complete nonsense,' he says angrily.

'Of course I would give up the position if I won the election, he stresses, as his eyes finally light up. 'But what do people want? Do they want someone who works for a living, unlike the other two candidates? Someone who knows what it's like in the real world? Or do they want someone who has only ever been inside politics? I think it's really important that I give them that choice. I know people will understand the options.'

Somehow, it doesn't seem unlikely. Mayor Norris? I, for one, wouldn't bet against it.

Ed Dorrell

The closing of physical transport could open the door to the future

Travellers now

actively avoid

the A-B route

seeking it out.

Instead of being

cited in tourist

literature, the

route has

become the

butt of jokes'

rather than

Transport is such an amorphous term that we are often tempted to regard it as a fact of life, like death or taxes. This is a big mistake. Transport is a living, mutating thing. It lives and breathes as we do and often, even when it appears to be stone dead, turns out to have metamorphosed into something else, even after hundreds of years of factitious service.

The first age of transport is exploration, because it is in the discovery of the otherness of other places that the idea of travelling

from A to B is born.

The second age in the life of transport begins when the surveying or formalisation of the route from A to B and B back to A again has been accomplished. This applies whether the journey is made on foot, by car, by boat, by air, or any other way.

The third age of transport has arrived when infrastructure is drawn to the route to facilitate its operation and exploit its location. Typically distribution centres, tunnels, bridges, harbours, runways or pipelines come into this category - any structure that facilitates the carriage of passengers, goods and services between A and B.

The fourth age of transport comes with the multiplication of complementary feeder routes so that A to B and back again becomes enmeshed in the omni-directional

network of other routes, existing or proposed.

The fifth age of transport comes with the beginning of saturation, when the passenger and cargo use of the route and the network it now serves has become so heavy that it threatens to become an obstacle to traffic, rather than a destination.

The sixth age of transport comes when this sheer 'M6ism' of A-B brings about a massive search for a solution and tolls are imposed. This so-called 'Option C' solution soon leads to the additional imposition of an all-day congestion charge, which

is raised until use of the A-B route has dropped to an acceptable level.

The seventh age of transport marks the beginning of its metamorphosis. Travellers now actively avoid the A-B route rather than seeking it out. Instead of being cited in tourist literature as a work of genius that inspires national pride, the route has become the butt of jokes. With the passage of time the state of maintenance of the route becomes a byword for neglect. This is the stage that approxi-

> mates to the present level of road traffic management in the South East of the United Kingdom today.

> The eighth age of transport continues the metamorphic process begun by the seventh. Avoidance of the route has now become a national pastime. There is increasing emphasis on microwave and satellite communication systems and telephone lines as means of conducting business in A-B land without actually going to either place. Finally, after an accident in which many people die, a Royal Commission is appointed to look into the whole matter. Sure enough, in due course, the principal recommendation of this body is that the A-B route be permanently closed and its function taken over by 'new communications technology in place of movement.

Asked to explain what this means, a government spokesman says: 'Letters become weightless when replaced by emails."

Thus the ninth age in the life of transport begins precisely when the medium loses its physical form and ephemeralises itself into an IMAX-quality image of B seen from A, and A seen from B.

This sort of remote command capability has been sought by the military ever since the Second World War, since when the technology has improved immeasurably. Use it and route A-B will actually work better 'closed' than it ever did open.

Jonathan Adams

Percy Thomas

When and where were you born? July 1961, Ym Mryste.

What is your favourite building and why?

For the past few years it's been a tie between a 19th-century hayrick in St Fagan's Museum, and the Villa Mairea. They both express a perfect balance of the personal and the universal.

What is your favourite restaurant/meal?

The Menu Gourmand at the Manoir au Quat'Saisons changed the way I think of restaurant food for good. However, fish and chips at the seaside on a winter's day satisfies like nothing else.

What vehicle(s) do you own? None. My old BMW estate was written off on Christmas Eve.

What is your favourite film? The Forbidden Planet.

What is your favourite book? The Dancing Column by Rykwert.

What is your favourite 'design classic'?

Ross Lovegrove's plastic bottle for Ty Nant water is too recent to be a classic, so I'm going for the Dalek.

What is the worst building you've ever seen and why?

New housing estates along the M4 corridor. So fake, so sad and an indictment of us all.

Who or what is your biggest architectural influence and why?

Has to be Will Alsop, my close colleague and mentor from 1984 to 1998.

Who is the most talented architect you've worked with? Willy McLean.

If you hadn't been an architect, what would you have been?

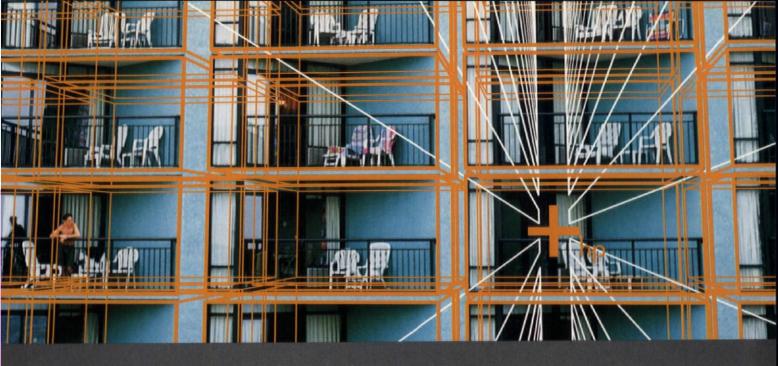
An archaeologist or earth scientist of some kind perhaps.

What would your advice be to architectural students?

Firstly, there aren't any design rules, at least none worth following. Secondly, change architecture schools after Part 1.

What would your motto be?

'Truth against the world' has got plenty of mileage left in it.



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Antony Gormley and David Chipperfield Architects have collaborated on Gormley's new studio, a setting for creating, making and reflecting

By Barrie Evans, Photographs by Richard Bryant/Arcaid



Glimpsed above its high boundary wall, the sawtooth roof profile of this building might at first be mistaken for a refurbished industrial shed. A second look shows a refinement of form and tactility of materials that are exceptional in this run-down area close to London's King's Cross station.

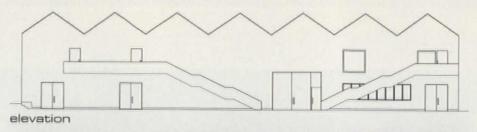
This refinement and materiality are evident right from the front gate, a large still-glistening plane of galvanised steel that slides back near-noiselessly under remote control. Its opening reveals that the building is set beyond the pristine plane of a large courtyard whose sides are punctuated by specimen trees and which is currently the stage for two of Gormley's dark cast figures.

The enclosing courtyard walls and the flat plane of the building, with its snaking galvanised staircases, emphasise the outdoorroom quality of this space – an entrance hall (deliveries follow a separate route to the west of the courtyard). This courtyard is part of the studio, intended as a summer working space created by placing the building at the rear of the site. It was an opportunity taken; the site had been piled in the 1980s for a sixstorey office block. Building on these piles, the courtyard is a substantial structural plane capable of taking 5T point loads.

Neither Chipperfield nor Gormley go in for architectural/sculptural games of obfuscation. That this abstraction of an industrial shed is not immediately legible externally in a form-follows-function way stems from the particularity of the working methods of Gormley and his six full-time assistants. The 900m² building is of seven equal bays – that hidden farthest to the west (left of frontview) is even more obscured than originally designed, following the just-completed northerly extension of the adjacent club.

As shown by Chipperfield's typically spare orthogonal plans, the two bays starting from the east are a ground-floor workshop plus external stair leading up to office, library and communal space; then a three-bay full-height studio; then the last two bays house a ground-floor delivery point/store and photography studio (currently being used as a gallery mock-up) plus an external stair to the first floor to the two studios of Gormley and his wife, painter Vicken Parsons.

The asymmetrical southerly front still needs some explanation. Set into the facade's vertical, metal-edged, render strips, there are necessary (galvanised) doors but few (galvanised-framed) windows, principally to the ground-floor workshop and first-floor office and communal space. There, square glass panels are set back from the building surface, capable of sliding fully open. The library to the rear and the studios also have windows, though relatively small, facing largely blank surrounding walls. No accident, of course. When you move inside the building you find all the bays extensively rooflit (supplemented by high-level fluorescent and halogon fittings). Daylight floods in, with all its inherent variability. Gormley is happy to live with the summertime consequences, if necessary,











Above: main studio with its strong rooflight illumination. The opening leads to the workshop. Left: looking in the opposite direction in the main studio, with double 'loft' doors to Gormley's first-floor private studio. Opposite top: the 'stair-hall', an outdoor room for summer working. Opposite bottom: private studio of Vicken Parsons

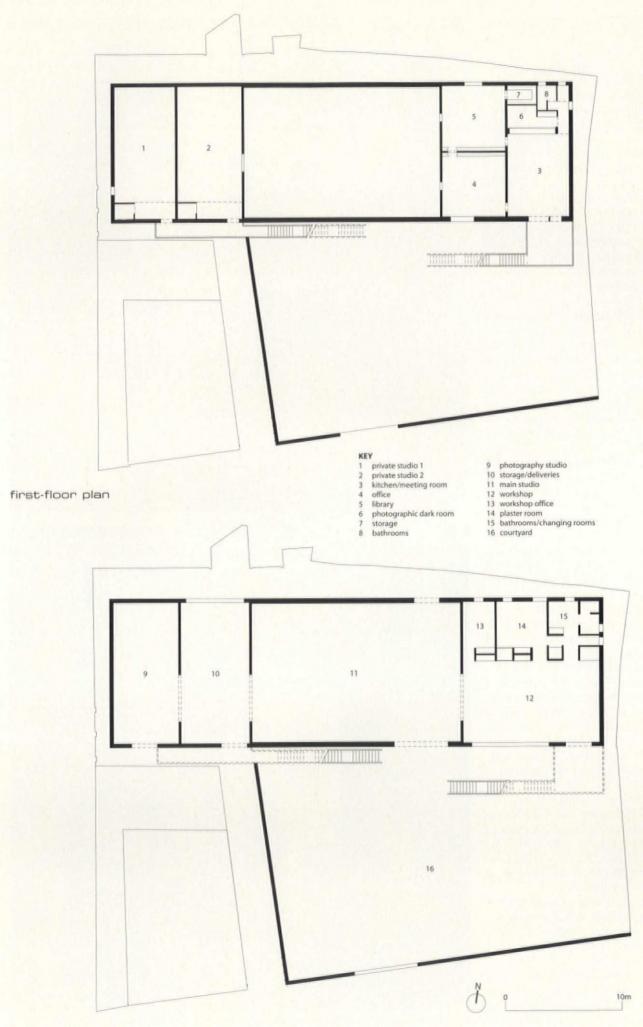


site plan

maybe painting the rooflights with greenhouseglass white paint. So the elemental outdoors of the sky comes indoors. But the building does not seek out views. To my question as to why there are so few windows, Gormley says: 'We are trying to reinvent the future. We don't want to have to refer to it.' And later on, 'the studio is a place of tremendous concentration, (a place) to be completely self-absorbed'. He cites the monastery as the model for the sculptors' inner focus, and the cloister in particular as a parallel with his studio, enclosed yet open to the sky.

If the cloister tradition of thinking-whilewalking may be followed by Gormley and his team, he remains somewhat ambivalent





about Chipperfield's circulation-lengthening sculptural flourish of having only external stairs (for all weathers). He is interested, though, to give it a try, to see how this enforced separation of spaces will affect the group. (In fact, there are a few visual links into the main studio: shuttered windows from the office and library and loft-style opaque double doors from Gormley's private studio.) Gormley has been clear all along what his team needed in this, their first purpose-built studio, and is very aware of the need for the building to provide a setting for their particular workstyle. This chimes with Chipperfield's preference for the concept of 'purpose' over (mechanistic) 'function; purpose suggesting a more inclusive role for a building, embracing its social/cultural dimension.

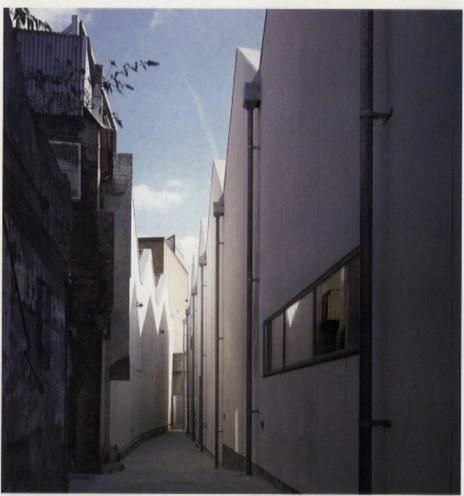
While the purposes were clear early on, the means of realising them were less certain. Gormley and Chipperfield began with ideas of getting away from all those wet trades and the problematic component and people interfaces of traditional contracting, hoping to find an off-the-peg industrial building to modify. Nothing suitable could be found in the UK, though Gormley cites precast industrial buildings in Italy and is admiring of Chipperfield's Stirling-shortlisted Ernsting Service Center in Germany. So, as Chipperfield says, they started with the idea of 'a deluxe shed and ended up stripping down (the idea of) a gallery.' Maybe it's a bit too much of a gallery still. This is something that both are still reflecting on.

There is a lot of underlying structure here for the heavy work Gormley sometimes makes. There are several crane rails overhead and a lot of support structure in the walls for hanging pieces. But the walls are finished in white plaster, more lab-like than factory. The ethos is that while the studio is, almost incidentally, the site of much fabrication, it is essentially a place where something can be made and then reflected on.

You can walk all around the outside of this building, something Gormley values; the 3-4m-deep strip to the rear is a well-used outdoor workspace. Beyond that are the backs of other industrial buildings. It is typical of the attention to detail of this project that a deal was struck with the main neighbour to reclad his decrepit wall (in fibre-cement sheets), making this back area a positive rather than leftover space. This is control without the freakery, in contrast to the Ron Dennis/Foster HQ for TAG McLaren (AJ 4.3.04). Working together has been an important part of this building, as the programme has evolved.

The result is an appropriately flexible, straightforward concept. It has, though, that Chipperfield refinement of form with a limited materials palette that allows the elemental use of extended planes without blandness and lets the materials speak for themselves. Despite the simplicity it is not formulaic – no Chip off the old block, but a particular response to a particular group of people, purpose-built for imaginative work.





Top: view from the office through the workshop, with entrance to the store at ground level.

Bottom: rear of building, an important workplace. Wall to left reclad in cooperation with the owner



Specification summary

SUBSTRUCTURE

FOUNDATIONS/SLABS

Site preparation, exposure of existing piles, reinforced concrete slab, 150mm screed with fibre reinforcement; 34 CFA piles with linked pile caps

SUPERSTRUCTURE

Structural steel frame including lifting beams. Intumescent paint finish to exposed steelwork

UPPER FLOORS

Reinforced concrete including 150mm sand and cement screed with polypropylene fibre reinforcement

ROOF

Profiled metal deck, Sarnatherm roof insulation with Sarnafil covering. Zinc capping to gables. Roof access safety system

ROOFLIGHTS

Vitral manually operated self-supporting double-pitch rooflights, double-glazed

Purpose-made mild steel fabricated external stairs with galvanised finish

EXTERNAL WALLS

Blockwork cavity walls. Tyvec solid vapour barrier and expanded metal reinforcement, rendered finish

WINDOWS AND EXTERNAL DOORS

Galvanised steel windows with opening casements and sliding windows. Solid panel mild steel doors with galvanised finish

INTERNAL WALLS AND PARTITIONS

Brick and block walling, stud partitions

INTERNAL DOORS

Galvanised steel doors to studios, timber doors elsewhere

INTERNAL FINISHES

WALL FINISHES

Gyproc wallboard lining, plastered rendered and roughcast walling, ceramic wall tiling

FLOOR FINISHES

Ceramic floor tiles to showers

CEILING FINISHES

Plasterboard lining throughout

FITTINGS AND FURNISHINGS

FURNITURE

MDF panelling, MDF shelving, cupboards

SERVICES

SANITARY APPLIANCES

WC suites, sinks basins, taps

DISPOSAL INSTALLATIONS

Cast-iron and UPVC disposal installations

SPACE HEATING/AIR TREATMENT

Underfloor heating, ventilation to WC, dust extracts

ELECTRICAL SERVICES

Fluorescent lighting with bags and banks individually controlled and switched

BUILDERS'WORK IN CONNECTION

General holes, insulation, etc.

EXTERNAL WORKS

LANDSCAPING, ANCILLARY BUILDINGS

Reinforced concrete apron including blinding, waterproofing, reinforcement and steel float finish. Under slab drainage system. Repairs to adjacent properties

PRELIMINARIES, OVERHEADS AND PROFIT

Stated OH&P 7 per cent Specification data provided by Brendan Hennessy, Capita Cost Management

CREDITS

TENDER DATE

November 2001

START ON SITE DATE

February 2002

CONTRACT DURATION

40 weeks

GROSS INTERNAL FLOOR AREA 909m²

FORM OF CONTRACT

JCT 98 Private without Quantities

CLIENT

Antony Gormley

ARCHITECT

David Chipperfield Architects: Kevin Carmody, Paul Crosby, Andy Groarke, Victoria Jessen-Pike, Kaori Ohsugi

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Jane Wernick Associates

SERVICES ENGINEER

Environmental Engineering Partnership

QUANTITY SURVEYOR Capita Property Services

MAIN CONTRACTOR

Leonard Field

SUBCONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS

Ironmongery Allgood; galvanised stairs, doors, windows Chimetal; roofing Sarnafil; sanitaryware Armitage Shanks

WEBLINKS

Antony Gormley

www.antonygormley.com

David Chipperfield Architects

www.davidchipperfield.com

Jane Wernick Associates

www.wernick.eu.com Environmental Engineering Partnership

www.eep.co.uk

Capita Property Services

www.capitaproperty.co.uk







An Englishman's home

In an unusual twist, English Heritage is the client for this restoration, conversion and extension of a house for its own office use, undertaken by van Heyningen and Haward

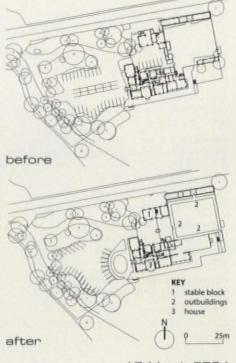
By Barrie Evans. Photographs by Peter Mackinven/VIEW

Brooklands, a Grade II-listed 19th-century gentleman's residence in suburban Cambridge, is the new east of England headquarters for English Heritage (EH), now merged with the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England. EH's brief to architect van Heyningen and Haward (vHH) was multi-layered. Partly it was social, providing shared accommodation for the former separate organisations, which had, on occasion, somewhat different agendas. Partly it was functional - Brooklands had been home to the commission in this region since 1996 - but housing the combined workforce would require conversion and extension as well as providing an occasion for some restoration.

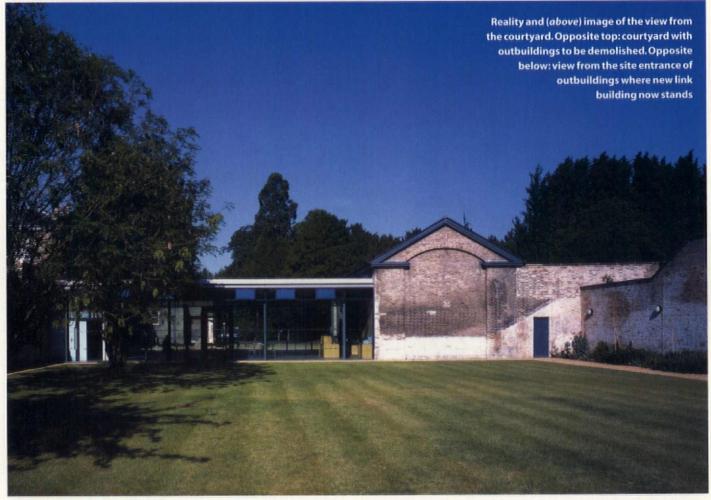
In addition, EH saw the chance to create a model project for others to look to. As EH's Richard Halsey emphasises, 'using historic buildings is very much our message'. EH wanted to show that it is possible to economically adapt such buildings, of which there are many, for contemporary office use. And in the new work, says Halsey, 'we weren't looking for early 19th-century pastiche but contemporary architecture'.

For their own projects with historic buildings, many architects find that EH's agenda is more open to building change than that of the local conservation officer. So too at Brooklands. As we shall see, local conservation officers pushed EH (as client) more toward straight conservation on some fronts than it intended.

Brooklands was built between 1825 and 1827, architect unknown, extended before 1888 and again after 1906, then requisitioned and altered during the Second World War. Located behind a high boundary wall, approached from the west, the building prospect at the start of the project was asymmetrical. The house had to its left (north) a run of ad hoc single-storey outbuildings leading to an imposing stable block. (Other small outbuildings were attached around the stables too.) Beyond the single-storey run was hidden a neglected walled garden.







Right: restored stables block linked through stable arch. Right below: link building meets the house, with disabled lift and stair. Opposite top: new approach route to HQ. Opposite below: new offices behind the house look over a 2m-high garden wall

Broadly, vHH's project has been to sweep away all the outbuildings to leave the house and stable block uncluttered, make the walled garden usable again, extend the house (already in office use) to its rear alongside the south side of the walled garden, convert the stable block to office use, and design a new link building between house and stable block as an entrance and shared space.

It is not just that no clear route existed through the house that could have made its front door work as the project's main entrance. The new link building is much nearer to the centre of gravity of the group of buildings. And it plays a symbolic and practical role in bringing together the former staff of the commission and those from EH. Reorienting the entrance is reinforced by redesign of the front garden, some of it yet to be completed. However, the essential relationships between house, walled garden, stable block and surrounding garden remain.

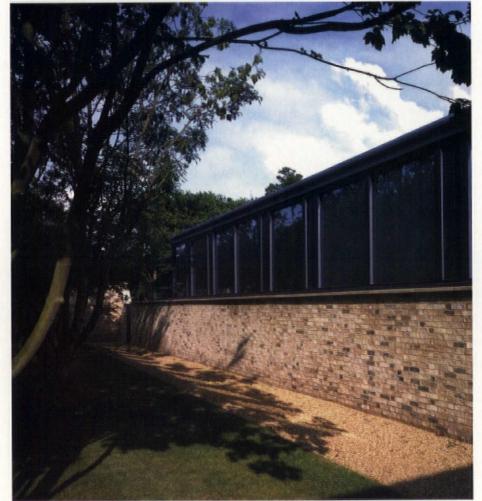
There was no money to do much more to the main house beyond improving disabled access and upgrading WCs. The main change has been to the loggia at the southwest corner, built after 1906, then crudely walled in during the Second World War as a cinema. This masonry has been removed and a glass wall set behind the original line of columns, creating a meeting room.

Ventilation is provided via separate ventilating hinged panels, an approach followed too in the new extension to the rear (east) of the house. That single-storey, flat-roofed building sits alongside the walled garden, where the garden wall has been reconstructed (in lime mortar, without movement joints). Though creating problems elsewhere, the fact that the house/extension floor is 1m above the walled garden (and link building) allows the extension's north windows to sit above the garden wall while internally they have normal sill heights. There are matching windows to the south, rather than following the full-height glass of the adjacent loggia, a necessity given the desk layout and the risk of summer overheating. Also, the Feilden Clegg Bradley housing being built very close by argues for









some built-in privacy. However, brise-soleil (which the conservation officer would have preferred to be a pergola) are due to be installed this month.

Externally, the rear house extension is unambiguously new, a white box (Sto rendered) contrasting with the house and stable block brick. Internally it is of masonry with framing of steel portals, a device also used in the link building.

Removal of outbuildings increased debate about the appropriate treatment of existing brickwork. All has been washed, but not scraped to remove traces of the past such as roof lines and paint, leaving a 'collage' effect in places, particularly marked in the walled garden.

Internally, the modern upper floor of the stable block has been lowered and upgraded. Blocked window openings have been opened up. It was the intention of vHH to introduce double glazing with superimposed window bars as a response to EH's desire to cut energy consumption, but ultimately both EH and the conservation officer preferred single glazing, which required a relaxation of the Building Regulations. Internally, the thick brick walls are left uncovered, except for dado timber boarding with dado trunking.

The roof has been insulated and boarded between the existing scissor trusses, which required a new stepped eaves detail to accommodate the greater construction thickness. There is a new continuous rooflight along the north slope (the conservation officer wanted roof windows); vHH often uses toplight to change the dynamic of spaces. Overall the wood and brick aesthetic helps retain some of the workaday character of this building's origins.

The new link block is uncompromisingly different: flat-roofed, framed in steel portals with structural glazing vertically butt-jointed using black mastic. The glass was fitted with solar film but the occupants soon removed it, preferring greater transparency and dealing with solar gain by opening the windows. The solid attached entrance porch echoes that of the existing house (that porch a later addition). Sawn York stone for the floor inside and as an apron to the front was an upgrading of specification won by the conservation officer.

The transparency of this new block serves to lightly link the house and stable block while opening up views through to the walled garden. As an entrance it pushes staff

Right: link with entrance to stable offices. Opposite: brickwork cleaned but not'scraped'

together; as a space it has potential for meetings, exhibitions and social use; and there is a small kitchenette behind a screen wall. Such uses have started to happen. (There is also a disabled lift for the 1m rise into the house.)

While the link building has more of a machine aesthetic than other parts of the project, the care in detailing shows through (see Working Detail, pp40-41), sharing some of the hand-built feel of the rest of the buildings. The clear articulation of elements from vHH also gives a consistency to the differing detailings in different areas. The project is not expensive, nor precious; it lets the layers of past use show through, building on them as others will no doubt do in future. As a model project it has balanced the inevitable conservatism of conservation voices, sensitively but not timidly restored and converted, and boldly built new. Others can dare to do likewise.



Cost summary

Based on final account, for gross internal areas of both

existing buildings and nev	w extensions	
	Cost per m ²	Percentage
	(£)	oftotal
SUBSTRUCTURE	96.99	6.94
SUPERSTRUCTURE		
ALTERATIONS	41.21	5.1
SUBSTRUCTURE	41.42	5.1
SUPERSTRUCTURE		
Frame	23.32	2.9
Upper floors	2.99	0.4
Roof	55.84	6.8
Rooflights	6.22	0.8

Staircases	7.01	0.9	SERVICES		equisors.
External walls	86.35	10.6	Sanitary appliances	2.73	0.3
Windows	45.20	5.6	Disposal installations, water	2.87	0.4
External doors	10.00	1.2	Space heating and air treatment	52.53	6.4
Internal walls and partitions	8.70	1.1	Electrical services, protective		
Internal doors	18.34	2.3	comms installations	82.37	10.1
Group element total	263.97	32.5	Lift installations	10.31	1.3
INTERNAL FINISHES			Builders' work in connection	4.25	0.5
Wall finishes	14.08	1.7	Group element total	155.06	19.1
Floor finishes	32.26	4.0	EXTERNAL WORKS	14.57	14.1
Ceiling finishes	16.01	2.0	PRELIMINARIES/INSURANCE	120.31	14.8
Group element total	62.35	7.7	TOTAL	811.65	100.0
FITTINGS AND FURNITURE	12.76	1.6	Cost data provided by Monk Dunstone Associates		

CREDITS

TENDER DATE July 2001 START ON SITE DATE October 2001 **CONTRACT DURATION**

10 months

GROSS EXTERNAL FLOOR AREAS

Link building 152m² House extension 261m2 Stable block (two floors) 238m2 House (basement, ground, first floors, loggia) 1,053m²

CONTRACT

GC/Works/1 with Quantities (1998)

TOTAL COST £1,383,052 CLIENT **English Heritage**

van Heyningen and Haward: Jo van Heyningen, Birkin Haward, Peter Rawlings, Frances Crow, Emma Adams, Sara Darwin, Jeff Travers, Richard Moorby, Declan McCafferty, Phil Veall

COST CONSULTANT

MDA

SERVICES ENGINEER

Roger Parker Associates STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Hannah Reed & Associates **PROJECT MANAGER**

Gardiner & Theobald **PLANNING SUPERVISOR** David Mulley Associates.

MAIN CONTRACTOR Haymills (Contractors)

SUPPLIERS

Flat roofing Firestone; zinc sheet Rheinzink; insulation Kingspan; lime Hydraulic Lias Limes; Yorkstone paving Marshalls; precast concrete elements CAP; flush doors Leaderflush; carpets Tretford; ceilings Danogips; lighting Norlight

SUBCONTRACTORS

PC floors Milbank; brickwork Cottrell; structural steelwork SCWS: steel stairs Pro-J; structural glazing Cantifix; timber windows Coulson; rooflights ESB; mechanical and electrical Sothams; iftsThyssen; underfloor heating Isowarm; roofing Cannonbury; zinc flashings NDM

WEBLINKS

English Heritage www.english-heritage.org.uk van Heyningen and Haward www.vhh.co.uk MDA

www.mdaconsulting.co.uk Roger Parker Associates www.rpa-cambridge.co.uk Hannah Reed & Associates www.hannahreed.co.uk Gardiner & Theobald www.gardiner.com Haymills (Contractors)

www.haymills.com



working details

Glazed wall supported by steel portal frame

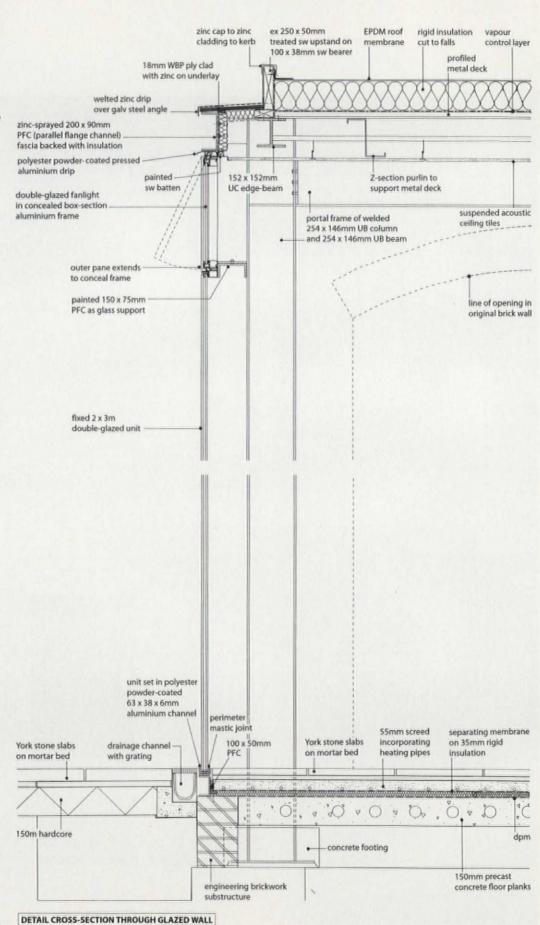
The reception building is a transparent, glazed enclosure set between the brick walls of Brooklands House and the stable block; it forms a new main entrance, gives access to the stable block and house and acts as a communal space for receptions, exhibitions and social gatherings. The building's transparency distinguishes it from the adjoining historic buildings and allows views through to a walled garden.

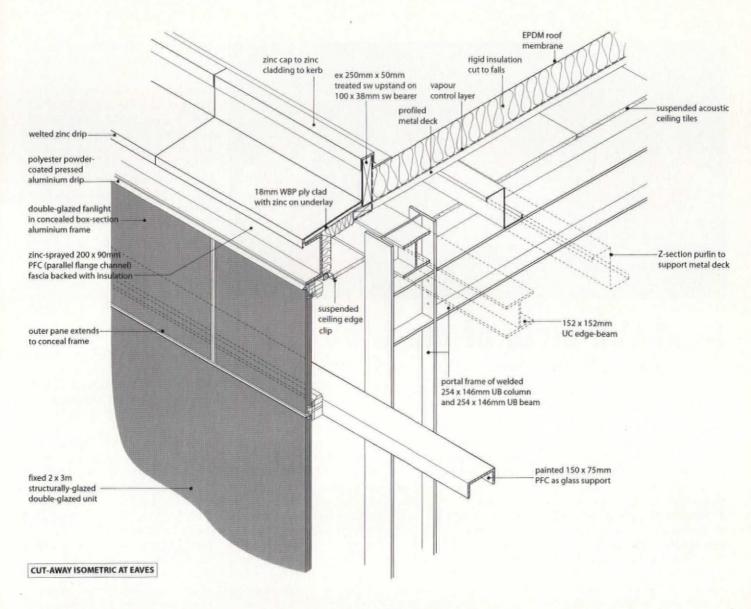
The structure consists of four exposed steel portal frames of welded 254 x 146mm UB columns and beams connected at the eaves with 152 x 152mm UC edge-beams. As neither of the brick gable walls was plumb, the two outer frames are offset from them to accommodate their shape and to keep clear of existing foundations. The frames support a profiled metal deck, rigid insulation and an EPDM roof covering.

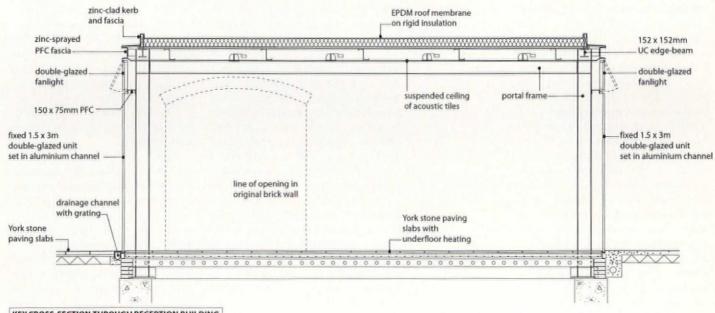
The east and west walls are glazed to clerestory level with 2 x 3m double-glazed units of clear toughened glass. At ground level they slot into an aluminium channel which lies flush with the internal and external floor finish of York stone flag paving. At clerestory level they are supported by a 150 x 75mm parallel flange channel (PFC) bolted to the outside edge of the portal frame column. The PFC also supports a row of double-glazed fanlights running above the fixed glazing. The outer panes are extended to conceal box-section aluminium frames. The fanlights are operated by remote control.

To articulate the wall/roof junction, the fascia is formed of a zinc-sprayed 200 x 90mm PFC bolted to the frame and thermally isolated from it. It is zinc-sprayed to match the zinc-clad eaves and upstand above it. A pressed aluminium drip throws water away from the glazing below.

Susan Dawson









In at the birth of the Blob

If square tools of the trade were responsible for Modernism, then computer technology means the future is... Blobby

BY SUTHERLAND LYALL

It is not entirely surprising that people in the creative fields, surrounded as they now are by CAD, CADCAM, digital imaging, verifiable 3D imaging and virtual reality, have occasionally pondered whether these new methods of modelling have any effect on the nature of the end product.

It is a variation on Marshall McLuhan's tricksy medium/massage proposition. For architects the question most commonly asked has been whether or not the T-square and setsquare determined architects' visual preferences for the orthogonal sparseness of Modernism simply because these tools most readily produce regular geometric forms. The corollary is that the freeform of Blob, or however you care to describe the architecture of the avant-garde present, has surely flowered (or, if you hate it, been unleashed) as a consequence of the deployment in the architectural studio of 3D software applications that are capable of indeed, predicated upon - free-form shapes. Most of these applications, incidentally, were originally devised for other activities such as 3D graphics, film cartoon animation, the mapping of jet fighter airframes plus their skins, or analysis of the topology of groundwater.

Alessi's vacuumformed titaniumalloy Tea and Coffee Piazza illustrates a conversation with Greg Lynn on 'The Structure of Ornament' in Digital Tectonics Of course, the simplistic argument that T-square equals orthogonal and 3D Studio equals Selfridges, Birmingham, breaks down as soon as you think about Vierzehnheiligen which, by all accounts, Balthasar Neumann designed using conventional T-square and set-square — as did Frederick Kiesler his Endless House and Ron Herron his Walking City. But there is no gainsaying the strong suspicion that the introduction of the computer into the offices of engineers and architects has enabled them to literally think outside the box.

Growing library

And so, in the past couple of years, that little digital section in the corner of architecture bookshops has steadily grown in size and scope. Neil Spiller's important and exploratory 1998 book Digital Dreams had a subtitle redolent of the inexplicable potential beauties of the cyber-universe: 'architecture and the new alchemical technologies'. And, among others, including John Frazer's Evolutionary Architecture and Greg Lynn's Animate Form, there was last year's toe-in-the-digital-water from Yale, Mapping in the Age of Digital Media. And now, in the last month or so, we have a bunch of books on cognate

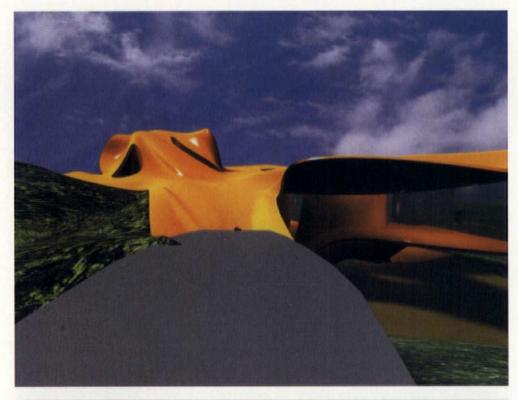
topics. They include Kostas Terzidis' compendium of digital form types, Expressive Form - a conceptual approach to computational design. There is the collection of Mappingstyle essays, Digital Tectonics, this time from people centred on Bath University who it would seem are signed-up disciples of Deleuze and Guattari and of Cambridge Engineering Design Centre co-chief Kristina Shea and her 'stochastic, non-monotonic shape annealing' software eifForm. Among the texts in this book are several on Gaudi's approach to design, including one about the hanging models and another about Gaudi's use of second-order geometry. And there is one by Shea herself.

Heavy hints

The essays in Mapping were cautious; those in Digital Tectonics are less tentative and hint at more: 'For some time architects and engineers have used computer programs to test the structural stability of their designs. But programs are now being developed for actually generating novel structural forms. These go beyond the already very sophisticated use of genetic algorithms championed by Karl Chu and others, to produce forms which have their own structural integrity. Using such programs as eifForm, 'the "designer" merely establishes certain defining coordinates and then unleashes the program, which eventually "crystallises" and resolves itself into a certain configuration. Each configuration is a structural form which will support itself against gravity and other prescribed loadings. And yet each configuration thrown up by the program is different.'

You think of Blob and then of the Surrealists' preoccupation with automatic writing.

Among the other texts we find Cecil Balmond, Lars Spuybroek and van Berkel and Bos talking over recent preoccupations. For architectural people worried about an engineering takeover, Balmond speaks with ominous enthusiasm: 'I started getting interested in structure in a broader sense when I realised suddenly that structure actually had all the ingredients that architecture had, if you start to look for a more





radical architecture. Episode, boundary, travelling margins – these are all structural concerns.' Ah, those old travelling margins.

Harder line

Kostas Terzidis' book promises a much harder line. The blurb begins: 'With the increased use of computers, architecture has found itself in the midst of a plethora of possible uses. The book offers some alternative directions, which combine theoretical inquiry with practical implementation.' Terzidis elaborates: 'The mode of utilising computers in architecture today is vague, inexplicit, and often

Top: Kolatan/
Macdonald's
Meta-Hom for
Charlottesville,
Virginia appears
in Next
Generation
Architecture.
Above: Hayes
Davidson's
futuristic
simulation of
London from a
Bermondsey
swimming pool

arbitrary... Often, theories of design and form are "translated" into computational ones merely to participate in the digital fashion... Challenging these assumptions, the book offers an appropriate theoretical context for computer-based experimentations, explorations and form-making. By employing computational and formal theories, such as those of kinetic, algorithmic, hybrid, folded or warped form, the author offers a theoretical bridge between the establishment of the past and the potential of the future.' In the end you really wonder whether he has achieved that somewhat nebulous ambition



because, although you have certainly learned a little about folded, hybrid etc, forms, and that they are connected by the activity of geometry, that's about it.

Visual delight

Less overtly cerebral, but visually delicious, is Joseph Rosa's book, Next Generation Architecture, which reveals the prevalence of built non-orthogonal architectural forms. Rosa explains that the book is an expansion of an exhibition he curated at the Carnegie Museum of Art, 'Folds, Blobs, and Boxes: Architecture in the Digital Era', 'which looked at the range of possibilities offered to architecture by digital technology. The work variously demonstrates computing technology as rendering, as a means of fabrication, and most evocatively as a way to rethink architecture at many scales rather than merely transcribing more efficiently what is already familiar.'

Rosa continues: 'Terms such as beauty, scale, and proportion, once used to describe the massing, articulation and texture of pre-digital vernacular, have given way to adjectives like smooth, supple, and morphed, derived from digital-age practices that are finding their niche in the ideology of 21st-century architecture.' As you would expect of a grown-up exhibition catalogue, this is a visual feast of projects and completed buildings prefaced by a little history of pre-digital non-orthogonal architecture, mostly from around the middle of the last century. I hope,

though, that nobody makes the mistake of consigning Archigram to the role of Blob precursor.

Simply the best

And then, to bring us back to transcribing more efficiently what is already familiar, there is the privately circulated, modest and untitled collection of Hayes Davidson's oeuvre. Alan Davidson's team in its studio behind Paddington Tube Station is the best in the world, and not just because its members draw inspiration – not from digital randomness but from artists as diverse as Hugh Ferris, Cyril Farley, William Walcott

'In the past couple of years, that little digital section in the corner of architecture bookshops has steadily grown in size and scope'

and (though they don't mention him) Edward Hopper. There are two elements that are not immediately obvious in this collection. One is the firm's incredible pioneering work in producing verifiable 3D images (and sometimes from moving viewpoints) which stand up in court and planning inquiries. The other surfaces quietly on the last page in the 1996 image, London 2050. It is only when Davidson himself shows you the 'before' view of this image that you realise this seemingly innocuous night view of London from a rooftop swimming pool somewhere in Bermondsey is actually a construct of a London populated by dozens of yet unbuilt tower buildings. And you hadn't noticed the difference.

Computer equals blob? You begin to understand there is more to it than that.

Publication details

London. 2004. £19.95

Terzidis, Kostas, Expressive Form. Spon, New York. 2003. £17.99 Leach, Neil; Turnbull, David; Williams, Chris (eds), Digital Tectonics. Wiley Academy, London. 2004. £26.99 Rosa, Joseph, Next Generation Architecture, contemporary digital experimentation and

the radical avant-garde. Thames & Hudson,

Backwards glance

Some years ago the launch of those monthly boys' toys, Stuff-style, magazines, opened everything up to the hoi polloi. Ghastly. Confusing. Hitherto the design world had done its trainspotting in the esoteric design magazines where it could clock up the latest toasters and hi-fi systems and interiors and exteriors – to use in conversation with the initiated and perhaps... ahem... adapt them.

For the same reasons, they all bought books about specialist areas of design such as plastics and product design and trawled monographs on revered designers and architects. The latter still have a future. But, arguably, so fast has become the rate of change in technological innovation and its casing design that the former have been rendered irrelevant by Stuff, by the Sunday supplement design pages and by the catalogue of the Gadget Shop. So David Redhead's Electric Dreams: designing for the digital age may well be among the last of a genre which has been going since the middle of the 20th century when household godjets, to use Reyner Banham's insightful description, began to be imported from the US, and Ulm-trained people were only just starting to get their cool, grey hands on European mass-market product design.

The title is fashionable in its knowing reference to Philip K Dick's Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep, a title which authors have been quarrying for tedious yonks now. Also, the subtitle suggests that this book is something to do with digital design. Not so – it's about all those nice things we have seen in Stuff which are run by moreor-less digital technology: Nokia telephones, Samsung vacuum cleaners, Sony Aibos, Alessi telephones and the work of that great design team at Apple.

Redhead writes about the return in 1997 of Steve Jobs. He reports Jonathan Ive as saying: 'Back then we had the same design team as today... Yet we were totally useless... We were shipping tedious bland products.' The suggestion is that the designers made radical design leaps simply because Jobs took the design team seriously and gave it instant access to the main board. Ho, hum. But do we need a book like this when, given the time it takes to produce even a paperback, it is at least six months out of date when it hits the bookshops? We need speed. Give us Stuff and the Web.

David Redhead's Electric Dreams: designing for the digital age is available from V&A Publications, London, priced £14.95







From left, Philippe Starck designed the 'Jim Nature' portable television for SABA in 1994. It is now in the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Jonathan Ive and the Apple Design Team developed the iPod; Samsung's K9 vacuum cleaner came out of the London studio run by Mark Delaney

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Tax Britannica

Planning ahead has never been more essential, with legal changes and new developments affecting how much tax you pay BY ALAN NEAL

The chancellor has been busy in his last few Budgets in reshaping taxation and, following his pre-Budget report at the end of 2003, he had much to say about 'level playing fields' between the Inland Revenue and taxpayer. But through changes he has made, the field is far from level between different business structures, and a number of different matters must be weighed up to arrive at the correct choice.

Company tax has been very much reduced, whereby profits up to £10,000 are free of corporation tax, up to £300,000 at 19 per cent and over that at 30 per cent. This compares with the tax leviable on a partnership or LLP at a personal rate of 10 per cent for income up to £1,960, at 22 per cent up to £28,540 and 40 per cent thereafter after a personal allowance of £4,615. A company is therefore a much better vehicle for sheltering undrawn profits. But one must contrast that with the new, and very expensive, regime of taxing company cars and increased National Insurance contributions (NIC) payable on salaries paid from companies against profit shares from non-incorporated businesses.

A very popular planning step much used in recent years to reduce tax costs has been the payment of director/shareholders through the medium of dividends instead of salary. Dividends are only taxed at an effective top rate of 25 per cent of the net dividend and both employers' and employees' NIC are not payable. Considerable savings can therefore be made. However, in his pre-Budget statement, the chancellor made more than a veiled threat to introduce legislation in the forthcoming Finance Act to prevent this, another of his so-called 'levelling' measures. He has not said how he intends to do this and there is much speculation that he may levy NIC on dividends.

My own view is that we may see an extension of the horrendous 'IR 35' rules, by deeming income as something different from what it is and taxing it at a higher rate accordingly. The only safe

'A mistake resulting in a failure to deliver the return will have expensive consequences. It is no longer possible to delay or avoid liability by not signing or completing a deed'

planning now, if you find yourself in this situation, is to take maximum dividend income before 5 April by writing the dividends to directors' loan accounts for subsequent withdrawal of them, income tax and NIC free. There are, however, restrictions imposed by the Companies Acts that limit the amount that can be paid (and remember dividends have to be paid to all shareholders, not merely director/shareholders, unless properly waived in advance).

Sale and acquisition

Many are not aware that, for capital gains tax (CGT), both retirement relief and indexation allowance have been abolished for individuals and replaced with taper relief. The rules for this new relief are complex, having been changed four times since their introduction in 1998. The relief is given at different rates for business assets and non-business assets. For the former, after two years of ownership, one's CGT is reduced to a quarter of the normal rate, effectively producing a top tax rate of 10 per cent, while for the latter a full 10 years' ownership is needed before full relief is given, but the effective top rate is still 24 per cent. One would have hoped that the distinction between the two would have been easy to establish - sadly not.

The position is highly complex, particularly if the frequent legislative changes have recategorised the asset, as full relief may not be available. For example, premises owned by some of the partners, but occupied by the partnership, are still treated as non-business, though the law is being changed as from 6 April 2004 – but not retrospectively, so a substantial tax bill can still be incurred even after then as the full relief is not available until 2014. Careful planning can reduce the impact of such anomalies.

The purchase of goodwill on the acquisition of a business has always presented a problem to the purchaser as the cost has not been allowable against tax until that goodwill is realised by a future sale, which is rare. There is now some measure of relief since, if the purchaser is a company, the cost can be written off against corporation tax, but not if the buyer is unincorporated.

Stamp duty land tax

Stamp duty is one of the oldest taxes on the statute book. The Finance Act 2003 saw this swept away for all property transactions, though leaving it intact for shares and certain transactions involving partnerships.

Instead we now have stamp duty land tax (SDLT). This borrows many concepts from the stamp duty, but reinforces them with newer ones, particularly in the compliance area, taken from the self-assessment regime for income tax, while rebasing the tax on transactions instead of documents. For those involved in any transactions involving any interest in land, advice on the effects of SDLT is essential.

While rates on purchases have remained the same, with the starting point for commercial property raised from £60,000 to £150,000, a new levy is introduced for leases, the effect of which is broadly to increase substantially the amount of tax payable.

A complex return form now has to be completed and submitted by the purchaser whenever there is a land transaction, the onus being on the purchaser to get it right. As the basis of liability rests on a transaction, not a deed, judgment is often required to determine, against a complex new legislative background, whether that point has arrived or not. A mistake resulting in a failure to deliver the return will have expensive consequences. It is no longer possible to delay or avoid liability by not signing or completing a deed.

This only just gives a flavour of some of the recent changes. It has not become any easier for the businessperson, either in planning their own affairs or advising their clients against an ever-more complex tax regime. Professional advice is always useful if one is to avoid new and unforeseen pitfalls and organise one's affairs to mitigate and reduce tax by legitimate devices.

Alan Neal is a solicitor and tax partner at Morton Fisher solicitors

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Sues you, sir: a cautionary tale of the contract without paper

'Mr Jones was in an

unenviable position

timetable breathing

with a production

down his neck'

The construction industry is so hemmed in with standard forms of contract, specifications and bills that take up large expanses of shelf space, it is easy to forget that making a contract can be surprisingly simple under English law. In the recent case of McNicholas v Endemol (13 October 2003) the claimant relied on a handshake as having formed a contract. The judge decided against them, but the case serves as a useful reminder that a contract does not necessarily need reams of paper, and caution should be exercised during any pre-contract negotiations so as to be quite clear when, if at all, a contract is entered into.

Endemol produces Fame Academy. To make the first series it had to find a house with grounds. Something large was wanted, as Endemol needed to accommodate about 150 people

on site while the programme was made. It was anticipated that works would have to be carried out to whatever property was chosen before filming could start.

Endemol needed to sort out any planning consents that were required, not least to permit a planned weekly live broadcast from

a marquee in the grounds. There were significant time constraints. Endemol was looking for premises in July 2002 to start filming in October.

Endemol became interested in Essendon, a house in Hatfield. McNicholas, the claimant in the action, and a Mr Curson, had interests in Essendon. When Endemol did not use Essendon, McNicholas sued, alleging breach of contract. Endemol argued there had been no contract.

Negotiations had begun in July 2002, Endemol being represented by a Mr Jones. Towards the end of that month there was an agreed price, and Endemol had sent Curson a draft contract. On 26 July the parties met to discuss the draft. Unbeknown to Curson, by this date Endemol was looking at alternative properties, including one in Highgate, north London, that was eventually used to make the programme.

The judge found that by 26 July, Jones was in an unenviable position. He had a production timetable 'breathing down his neck', and had to get a property that the BBC was satisfied with. He needed to keep as many options open for as long as possible while concluding a deal as quickly as possible.

After the meeting, and as part of a discussion, Jones and Curson shook hands. Curson said that although at that stage the written agreement had not been finalised, the parties became bound at the time of the handshake. Jones disagreed. He said that by the handshake he had sought only to obtain an assurance from Curson that he would not go back on things thus far agreed.

The judge carefully weighed the evidence of both sides as to the circumstances of the handshake. He also took into account that the terms of the draft written contract had not been agreed at the meeting. There were important matters left open, such that there was a lack of certainty as to the precise bargain. The judge

concluded that while the handshake was more than a mere courtesy, and indeed may have been symbolic, it did not connote a binding deal.

The judge went on to reject the claimant's alternative cases, namely that there was a binding agreement reached during later exchanges of the

draft contract, and that Endemol was prevented from reneging on the putative deal because Curson had taken steps to accommodate Endemol's anticipated occupation of Essendon.

It appears that Endemol hung on to all its options until the 11th hour. By the end of July the Highgate house had become Endemol's favoured option. However, as late as Friday 9 August, Endemol told Curson that the agreement for Essendon might be finalised and signed by the following Monday or Tuesday.

On Monday 12 August Endemol's lighting crew arrived at Essendon, but left, saying they would return the next day. Later on that same day, Jones signed an agreement to use the house in Highgate. Only then did he tell Curson that Essendon would not be needed after all. While the judge remarked that Endemol's conduct had been 'somewhat disingenuous', and that Jones appeared to feel some embarrassment about the matter, there had been no agreement and the claimant failed.

Sue Lindsey

Shades of grey that should stay gridlocked

A reader suggested I take a look at Page & Park's site at www.pagepark.co.uk.
'It's got,' he said,'a bizarre and ugly, dynamic, orthogonal, spider's web as an index to projects.' Intrigued, I fired up the browser and got this big black screen with the name of the practice in a dark and barely discernible grey.

After clicking in all the obvious places, you work out that you have to scroll down to enter the site – and upload either or both Flash and QuickTime. You fondly remember the Space Hijackers Architectural Design site featured last week.

You then hit 'Enter' and there is the aforesaid grid with various building types in, for no good design reason, differently sized lettering such as 'Cityplanning,' Health and wellbeing' and so on scattered around the grid. You hit, say, 'Commercial' and as your cursor rolls over the grid it distorts, morphs into a rectangle and there is a building and some useful notes about it.

The bar on the side turns out to be a slideshow button, but you have to twist your head unpleasantly to the left in order to discover this fact. There is a welcome 'Home' button, although you need acute eyesight to read what it does. Don't get me wrong, these guys have done some great architecture and conservation. It's just that if their website had been a building their clients would have long chased them deep into the waters of the Great Glen on account of thoughtlessness about usability. And that naff distorting grid. Repeat after me: 'Just because you can, it doesn't mean you have to.'

I learn that you can get a free CD which updates all versions of Windows from 98 onwards at www.microsoft.com/security/protect/cd/order.asp.

Go carefully and, should it actually turn up in the post, do a Custom Install rather than the automatic one: you can never tell what other alleged goodies MS wants to install on your computer without telling you. I sent off for mine. I'll report when I get it.

sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com



London

AJ Small Projects Award 23 March-24 April. An exhibition at the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, W1 (020 7580 5533). John Pawson Wednesday 24 March, 19.00. An Architecture Foundation lecture at Centre Point, WC1. Details www.architecturefoundation.org.uk Lucy Orta: Selected Works 24 March-30 April. An exhibition at the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, W1 (020 7580 5533).

From Buchanan to Buckinghamshire Thursday 25 March, 18.30.

A Twentieth Century Society lecture by Christopher Woodward at The Gallery, 70 Cowcross St, EC1 (020 7250 3857). Asia @ AM1 25-26 March. A two-day

Asia @ AA1 25-26 March. A two-day event curated by Ken Yeang at the AA, 36 Bedford Sq, WC2. Details 020 7887 4000.

The Architecture of Jean Renaudie Until 26 March. An exhibition at the AA, 36 Bedford Sq, WC1. Details 020 7887 4000.

Naum Gaho: Gabo and Colour Until 27 March. An exhibition at Annely Juda Fine Art, 23 Dering St, W1. Details 020 7629 7578.

Material Matters 29 March-3 April. A symposium, workshops and an exhibition at the University of East London. Details www.uel.ac.uk/ material matters

Keith Williams Wednesday 31 March, 18.45. A lecture at the Theatre Museum, Russell St, WC2. Tickets £5. Bookings 020 7943 4804.

Crystal Palace at Sydenham *Until* 18 April. An exhibition at Dulwich Picture Gallery, Gallery Rd, SE21. Details 020 8693 5254.

Women in the Workplace 1860-2004 Until 1 May. An exhibition at the Women's Library, LMU, Old Castle St, E1. Details 020 7320 2222.

East

Attila Csorgo 27 March-9 May. An exhibition at Kettle's Yard, Castle St, Cambridge. Details 01223 352124. Timber Frame Repairs 5-7 May. A three-day course at Cressing Temple, Essex. Details Pauline Hudspith 01245 437672.

East Midlands

The Possibilities of Architecture:
Archigram 1961-1974 Until 26 April.
An exhibition (and some related events) at Nottingham Castle.
Details 0115 915 3648.

North West

Charlie Hussey Thursday 25 March, 19.30. A lecture at St George's Church, Chapel Yard, Friargate, Preston. Details Doug Chadwick 01254 59835.



INSIDE JOB

The notorious Maze prison near Belfast is now empty and its future is uncertain. Photographer Donovan Wylie was recently given access to document its interior, and his work can currently be seen in an exhibition at Belfast Exposed, 23 Donegal Street, Belfast and in a book, *The Maze* (Granta Books, £25).

Architecture and Ideology; Best Studio 3 (Arkheion) 26 March-29 May. Two exhibitions at CUBE, 113 Portland St, Manchester. Details 0161 237 5525. The Stage of Drawing: Gesture and Act Until 28 March. An exhibition at Tate Liverpool, Albert Dock, Liverpool. Details 0151 702 7402. Rick Mather Monday 29 March, 19.30. A lecture at Chester College, Parkgate Rd, Chester. Details Mark Kyffin 0161 236 5567.

South

Neil Armitage Thursday 25 March, 17.30. A lecture at the School of Architecture, Portland Building, Portland St, Portsmouth. Details 02392 842086.

South East

Immaterial: Brancusi, Gabo, Moholy-Nagy 25 March-23 May. An exhibition at Southampton City Art Gallery, Southampton Civic Centre. Details 023 8083 2153.

RIBA CPD Event: Smart Practice – Project Management for Profit and Pleasure Thursday 1 April, 16.00. At Le Meridien Hotel, Gatwick. Details 01892 515878.

Conservation of Historic Ironwork

Wednesday 21 April. A day school at the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton, Chichester. Details 01243 811464. **Dungeness** *Until 16 May.* Photographs by Nigel Green at Rye Art Gallery, Ockman Lane, Rye. Details 01797 222433.

Wessex

Visions of the Near Future Until 21 March. An Arnolfini exhibition at L Shed, Bristol Industrial Museum. Details 0117 917 2300.

Working with the CDM Regulations Monday 29 March. A Construction Study Centre course at the Avon Gorge Hotel, Clifton, Bristol. Details 0121 434 3337.

The New English Country House Until 24 April. An exhibition at the Architecture Centre, Narrow Quay, Bristol. Details 0117 922 1540.

Bill Woodrow & Richard Deacon Until 3 May. An exhibition at the New Art Centre, Roche Court, East Winterslow, Salisbury. Details 01980 862244.

West Midlands

RIBA CPD Event: Production Information Code Thursday 25 March, 14.00. At Birmingham. Details 0121 233 2321.

David Batchelor Until 28 March. Light sculptures at the Ikon Gallery, Brindleyplace, Birmingham. Details 0121 248 0708.

Getting Ready for Major Changes to the Building Regulations Wednesday 31 March. A Construction Study Centre course at Birmingham. Details 0121 434 3337.

RIBA CPD Event: JCT Major Project Form Tuesday 6 April, 13.30. At Birmingham. Details 0121 233 2321. RIBA CPD Event: Conservation & Repair of Timber Thursday 22 April, 14.00. At Birmingham. Details 0121 233 2321.

Yorkshire

4x4 Making Places 2004: Masterplan Mania 18 & 25 March, 18.00. An urban regeneration forum at the Brunswick Building, Leeds Metropolitan University Details 0113 244 9973.

Diana Cochrane (Urban Salon)
Thursday 25 March, 18.00. A lecture
at the Arts Tower, University of
Sheffield. Details www.suas.org
Other Criteria: Sculpture in 20th
Century Britain Until 28 March. An

Century Britain Until 28 March. An exhibition at the Henry Moore Institute, 74 the Headrow, Leeds. Details 0113 234 3158.

Eduardo Chillida Until 20 May.

Eduardo Chillida Until 20 May. Retrospective exhibition of the Basque sculptor at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton, Wakefield. Details 01924 830302.

Scotland

Wiel Arets Wednesday 24 March, 18.00. A lecture at the Tower Building, University of Dundee. Details ADASLECTURES@hotmail.com

Don Murphy (VMX Architects)
Thursday 25 March, 17.00. A lecture at
Robert Gordon University, Garthdee
Rd. Aberdeen. Details 01224 263700.

Re: Motion – New Movements in Scottish Architecture Until 31 March. An exhibition at The Lighthouse, 11 Mitchell Lane, Glasgow. Details 0141 221 6362.

Keppie Design: 150 Years of an Architectural Practice Until 16 April. At RIAS, 15 Rutland Sq. Edinburgh. Details 0131 229 7545.

Wales

Modernism is Still Alive: John Winter Thursday 25 March, 19.30.

A lecture at Faenol Fawr Hotel, Bodelwyddan, 5t Asaph. Details Peter Stonebridge 01745 815600.

RSAW Small Practice Surgery Series: CDM Regulations Update Tuesday 30 March, 12.30-15.30. At Fulton House, Swansea University. Details 029 2087 4753.

Rut Blees Luxemburg Until 25 April.

Urban photos at Ffotogallery, Turner House Gallery, Plymouth Rd, Penarth. Details 029 2070 8870.

Information for inclusion should be sent to Andrew Mead at The Architects' Journal at least two weeks before publication.

Divine decoration

KENNETH POWELL

Byzantium Rediscovered: The Byzantine Revival in Europe and America

By J B Bullen. Phaidon, 2003. 240pp. £45

Eric Gill's views on the decoration of Westminster Cathedral, opened in 1902 but still awaiting, over 30 years later, the lining of rich mosaics that its architect J F Bentley intended, were typically straightforward. 'How beautiful the cathedral would look whitewashed,' he said.

During the century following its completion, Westminster Cathedral has inspired admiration from many who would shudder to think of its noble, concrete-vaulted interior concealed by decoration (though the side chapels have mostly received their mosaic cladding, with varying degrees of success). Bentley's vision was, however, of a church in the spirit of Ravenna and Venice.

Its style was, he wrote, 'early Christian Byzantine – the same in which St Sophia at Constantinople is built'. The brick and concrete internal frame, almost Brutalist in its austerity, was there to be embellished by generations to come.

Bentley (a Goth by conviction) was directed to the Byzantine style by his client, Cardinal Vaughan, for a number of reasons. Economy counted for a lot, but equally, as J B Bullen comments, there was the belief that the cathedral, close to Westminster Abbey,

occupied by the Anglicans, would 'in its allusions to an even more ancient and venerable past... have pulled the historical rug from beneath their feet'.

Over-inflated, perhaps, by Phaidon's lavish packaging (though the illustrations are generally excellent), *Byzantium Rediscovered* is nonetheless a useful book, bringing together the fruits of much scholarly research (including work by its author) and tracing the influence of Byzantinism internationally.

In Britain, the Gothic Revival was, in part, a conservative and nationalistic movement, which in the aftermath of the French Revolution sought inspiration in native models as opposed to the 'international style' of Classicism. By the 1850s, however, GE Street, having travelled extensively in Italy, condemned the 'cold, colourless, insipid' character of much recent architecture in England — 'our people have no conception of the necessity of obtaining rich colour and no sufficient love for it when successfully obtained,' he argued.

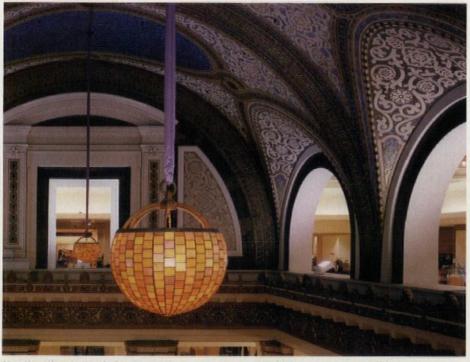
In England, at least, the taste for the Byzantine had its roots in the work of Street, Butterfield and that most exotic and eclectic of Goths, William Burges. There had been earlier experiments in the Romanesque and 'Early Christian' styles - Sara Losh's church at Wreay, Cumbria, for example, or the basilican church at Wilton, Wiltshire. (For some reason, its architect, T H Wyatt, escapes Bullen's notice.) But the decisive influence was, of course, that of Ruskin the source of inspiration for Morris, Lethaby and the Arts and Crafts, with its interest in Byzantium as a vigorous alternative to the stale politeness of much Gothic and 'Queen Anne' work. There was a sensuality and exoticism about the Byzantine that challenged academic traditions and found its finest expression in the work of Henry Wilson, whose baldachino in St Bartholomew's, Brighton, is one of the most sensational pieces of church furnishing in Britain.

The Gothic Revival had shallower roots in France, where Paul Abadie's great basilica of Sacre Coeur on the hill of Montmartre drew on Southern French and Oriental, as well as Byzantine, sources, and Vaudoyer's Romano-Byzantine shrine of Notre Dame de la Garde dominates the skyline above Marseilles. In Germany, the search for pure and primitive artistic models generated not only the Nazarene school of painting but also exercises in Early Christian architecture by Klenze, Persius and others – the 1880s throne room at Ludwig II's Neuschwanstein resembles a Norman chapel in Sicily.

Bullen's discussion of the relationship between Byzantinism and the work of Ludwig's great protégé, Richard Wagner, is informed and there are illuminating, if brief, excursions into the fields of painting and literature. By the end of the 19th century, western European travellers and scholars had opened up the cultures of the Near and Middle East to a wide public. The Byzantine Revival, as Bullen says, had an 'underground life' that extended across the cultural spectrum.

Architecturally, Byzantinism found its most extensive expression in North America. E A Freeman thought H H Richardson's New York Capitol at Albany, NY, 'worthy to stand in Ragusa'. In America, the Byzantine style had no confessional undertones – it could be used for Methodist churches, Catholic shrines or synagogues. In the work of Louis Comfort Tiffany, however, it found an artist with the ability to merge Byzantine and Art Nouveau to staggering effect and a clientele with the ability to fund decorative projects that, in sheer self-indulgence and excess, might have appealed to the Empress Theodora herself.

Kenneth Powell is an architectural journalist



Mosaic ceiling by Louis Comfort Tiffany at the Marshall Field department store, Chicago



Man meets nature

JOHN BANCROFT

A Right to Difference: The Architecture of Jean Renaudie

At the Architectural Association, 36 Bedford Square, London WC1, until 26 March

A Right to Difference: The Architecture of Jean Renaudie By Irénée Scalbert. AA Publications, 2004. 176pp. £25

Who's heard of Jean Renaudie (1925-81)? I certainly hadn't. But after visiting the AA's exhibition, I'm now a convinced Renaudien.

In drawings and photographs, the show focuses on two schemes in particular: Renaudie's renewal of Ivry-sur-Seine and his redevelopment of Givors near Lyon. Aside from the quality of his realised work, Renaudie's importance to us today is in creating 'sustainable communities' – not the low-density sprawl officially promoted in this country under that designation, but low-rise, high-density places in which people spend fulfilling lives. Complete with shops, cafés and places of entertainment, all can be reached pleasurably on foot. Renaudie saw topography as a challenge

 an opportunity to create places with a strong identity. They are real communities from which we can learn.

Renaudie must have derived great pleasure from the death-knell of high-rise when, in 1972, the French government banned such buildings in town centres. (This civilised enactment is nowhere near our own statute book, it seems.) At first glance, his work might be categorised as relating to the 'megastructure' movements of the early 1960s, but that would misrepresent it. Whereas man is reduced to a mechanisitic pawn dressed in space garb in the fantasies of Archigram, Renaudie is concerned with human beings 'made in the image of God' – dignified, not to be exploited.

Everything we are shown bears this out. Renaudie's sensitivity both to man and nature – the latter used to create a new 'spirit of place' – expresses his wish to create an organic architecture that will be life-enhancing, and give delight not only to those who experience it daily but to visitors too. At





Above left: terraces of Jeanne Hachette, one of Renaudie's three buildings at lvry-sur-Seine. Above: Givors. Bottom: one of Renaudie's many drawings for the new town of Vitrolles near Marseilles. His scheme wasn't built

Givors, for instance, a meandering path climbs up through cascades of foliage festooning the interlocking terraces of the housing. As in many a historic town, it culminates at a medieval castle, where pedestrians are rewarded with views of the rich tapestry they have just passed through and the countryside surrounding the town.

Renaudie's apartments, with their unusual variety of plans, clearly promote new experiences of living. Through the relationship of angled spaces, shaped windows giving unusual views, and natural light falling from different directions, everyday life is transformed as if by a magician, while pieces of furniture surely come into their own when emphasised as partly freestanding objects. I am reminded of Picasso, who advocated the crooked hanging of pictures; he thought that with conventional regularity they become quickly disregarded.

For those who have the good fortune to live in Ivry or Givors, the experience must certainly be stimulating. But this exhibition and its accompanying book are the next best thing. They communicate the richness of these projects and let us see what made the master tick.

John Bancroft was a senior housing architect with the GLC



Schinkel

By Martin Steffens. Taschen, 2003. 96pp. £4.99

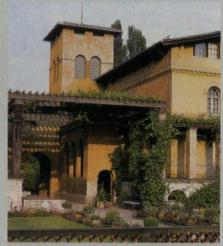
As someone brought up in the heady days of the Modern Movement, but a longtime admirer of Schinkel, it still came as a surprise to me to read the first paragraph of Martin Steffens' introduction to his splendid book, writes Robert Huddleston.'Karl Friedrich Schinkel is perhaps the best-known German architect,' says Steffens. Not Mies or Gropius or a host of others?

But this book confirms that Schinkel was an outstanding architect. Working in the first part of the 19th century, he was also a highly talented painter, stage designer, art writer and chief official to the royal building authority. In one of the happier flukes of history, all but one of his most important buildings are still extant. Although mostly located in Berlin and

Potsdam, they even survived the Second World War, and one of his finest Berlin works, the Altes Museum, is now being meticulously restored.

This new book is one of an extensive series of monographs on artists and architects, published by Taschen. Of a remarkably high standard at a very modest price, they feature six architects so far – Schinkel, Gaudí, Loos, Neutra, Scharoun and Wright.

The book opens with a short but comprehensive introduction to Schinkel's life (1781-1841), and continues with 23 beautifully illustrated articles on his major works in all fields, with both completed and unexecuted projects. Steffens acknowledges the importance of Schinkel's teacher and friend, Friedrich Gilly, who inspired some of Schinkel's designs for memorials and stage sets, including those of 1816 for *The Magic Flute*, still used



Left: Schinkel's National Theatre. Above: his Roman Baths at Charlottenhof Castle

as the basis of performances today.

Among the included buildings are
Schinkel's magnificent National Theatre, which
was gutted in the Second World War. The
exterior has survived and been restored, with
the interior reconstructed as a concert hall.
Perhaps the most perfect of his buildings,
Charlottenhof Castle, is retained in a formal and
informal landscape setting at Sanssouci Park,
Potsdam. Although called a castle, it is a modest single-storey example of Classical architecture, exquisite both inside and out. The book
concludes with a chronological summary of
Schinkel's work, and maps showing the location of his buildings.

If this review sends you rushing to buy a copy of the book, you will possess a treasure for less than the price of a paperback which you would cheerfully leave on a plane.

Robert Huddleston is an architect

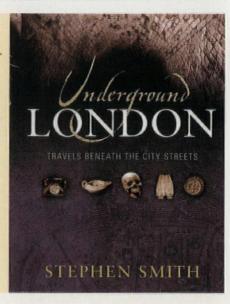
Underground London: Travels Beneath the City Streets

By Stephen Smith. Little, Brown, 2004. 390pp. £17.99

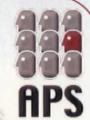
Right beside Richard Rogers' Lloyd's Building is the late-19th-century Leadenhall Market, in which stands a hairdressers called Nicholson and Griffin, writes Andrew Mead. It's what's in the hairdresser's basement that is significant: a pier from the main basilica of London's buried Roman Forum which, when completed in 140AD, was the largest such complex north of the Alps.

This basement is one port of call for Stephen Smith in his entertaining survey of the subterranean city – its rivers, sewers, tunnels, air-raid shelters and catacombs. Naturally, he's drawn to the areas we're not meant to know about, so one of his most interesting chapters explores what might lie underneath Whitehall in the way of government facilities – whether for command, communication or escape. In the post-11 September climate when Smith was preparing his book, there was doubtless some refurbishing in progress: security was tight and he has no revelations.

Smith wrote off three suits in the course of his researches and even took in an exhumation, when the crypt of St Andrew's Holborn was cleared belatedly of 2,000 plague victims. 'That's just the effect of the natural dye from the elm wood. They go that colour when the coffins rot,' says a Museum of London archaeologist, proffering a skull. But Smith seems relatively nonchalant; not bad for someone who admits that, a few months earlier, he could hardly even bear to travel by Tube.



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Archadia Chartered Architects has promoted Jean Hanna to director.

Fitzroy Robinson has promoted Viktoria Kowal, Alison Roennfeldt, Luke Schuberth and David Sorrell to associate director

Stephan C Reinke has been appointed as global director of Woods Bagot Holdings.

Pearce Buckle (Design Engineers) has opened a new office at 3 Europa Court, Sheffield Business Park, Sheffield S9 1XE. tel 0114 290 0980.

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Aedas has appointed Richard Hyams as design director.

Greenway Group has appointed Jacqueline Rast as principal.

Terence O'Rourke has appointed Darren Shorter as a new assocaite director in urban design. He joins the practice from Southampton City Council.

Lisa Rapson has joined TPS Consult as a principal engineer, based at the Heathrow Sanctuary Road office.

 Send details of changes and appointments to Victoria Huttler, The Architects' Journal, 151 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4GB, or email victoria.huttler@ construct.emap.com



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Please forward your CV, stating your preferred location to: Anthony Reddy Associates, Dartry Mills, Dartry Road, Dublin 6. Fax: 01-4987001 Email: info@arad.ie

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www.buildwork.co.uk

We are looking for a graduate structural engineer and a technical draughtsman to join our small practice in London SE1.

You should be interested in design and have a practical approach to problem

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Take out a text-only advertisement in a box this size (40mm x 42mm) at the introductory price of

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£25,000 Birmingham Part II Architect Market leading national multidisciplinary consultancy now seek an ambitious team player. You must be part II qualified and posses excellent

AutoCAD skills. RefASH110402 Birmingham Architect

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Contract Roles

Architectural Technician £22hr Birmingham £18hr Birmingham Architectural Assistant €19hr **Nottingham Architectural Technician** £23hr Birmingham Architect

For further details and information on many other roles, please contact Adrian Sharpe on 0121 450 5020 or email on adrian.sharpe@netrec.co.uk www.netrec.co.uk/property.php

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You will carry out all aspects of architectural work in connection with Rural Consultancy, Country House Management and Estate Management. This would include carrying out work on properties with high heritage value and often of Listed quality. Dealing with interesting clients and properties, we are looking for an Architect with at least five years experience ideally working with heritage properties.

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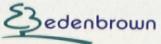
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Part-time appointment would be considered

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Email: mail@johnstonmather.com



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TENDERS

Expressions of Interest Architectural Design Services

The Langworthy Road Church and Community Centre is a joint venture between St Ambrose Church, Salford Methodist Community Church, and Salford First, the local housing association. The project will provide the community with a better faith, community and social facility in the heart of the Seedley and Langworthy area of Salford. Linked to the church and community centre there will be an affordable residential development. The estimated works cost budget is £4.4m.

The scheme is a key project within the Seedley and Langworthy Initiative and will add to the exciting proposals for the adjoining Urban Splash Development and new RC Primary School . A notice has been published in OJEC seeking expressions of interest from innovative Architects practices interested in providing creative design solutions for what is destined to become a landmark scheme

For further information please see OJEC notice or contact PDW. Expressions fo interest are to be received by 12 noon on Wednesday 21st April 2004.





Salford Methodist Community Church





Central Procurement Directorate

Assessment of the built heritage of the former Maze prison and Long Kesh army base site

Central Procurement Directorate, Supplies & Services Division on behalf of its client the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) is inviting tenders from suitably qualified individuals or organisations to undertake this work

The aim is to develop an assessment of the built heritage at the site to help inform decisions about any potential future development by:

- identifying the heritage value of the Maze site via detailed research into its history and to provide an assessment of its significance and that of its constituent parts:
- compiling a detailed record of the site to the standard stipulated; and
- considering if or how parts of the site could or should be preserved for the future.

The study should provide sufficient information for the Environment Heritage Service (EHS) of the Department of the Environment to consider if any part of the site would be appropriate for statutory protection.

It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded in early April 2004.

Tender documents and a full specification can be obtained only by applying in writing or by fax quoting Reference Number S/13121/03 to the following address

Central Procurement Directorate Supplies & Services Division Room 275F Rosepark House Upper Newtownards Road Belfast

BT4 3NR

Tel: 028 9052 6495 Fax: 028 9052 6591

The closing date for the receipt of completed tenders is 15:00hrs on Thursday 1st April 2004

Late Tenders will not be accepted

The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister may accept all or any part of a tenderer's offer but is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender

ARCHITECT REQUIRED

Must have good hand drawing and autoCAD skills with a knowledge of traditional building construction. Applicants should have experience of running a working drawings' programme along with proven competence in detailed design and contract administration with an understanding of historic building issues

Apply in writing with C.V. and sample of work to Victoria Bacon at Carden & Godfrey Ltd., or e-mail: victoria@cardenandgodfrey.demon.co.uk No agencies.

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9 Broad Court, Long Acre, London WC2B 5PY Tel: 020 7240 0444 Fax 020 7836 2244

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GET GROUP PLC

AJ ENQUIRY NO: 301



accessories and light fittings from electrical products manufacturer, GET will be having a first public unveiling at Interbuild. The new Ultimate Screwless Flat Plate wiring accessories will be shown, alongside the new Drum range of amenity lighting. GET will also be showing its new G9 spotlights and GU10 floating glass downlighters.

A clutch of new wiriing

TOSL

AJ ENQUIRY NO: 302

Timbmet Door Solutions Ltd has been working with Berkeley Group plc on a variety of projects including Chelsea Bridge Wharf where a variety of TDSL: doors and doorsets have been selected. At Putney Wharf and Imperial Wharf, St George has selected TDSL's Veneered doors in Oak finish. The doors feature and attractive traditional Spanish design to complement the interior.

DALSOUPLE

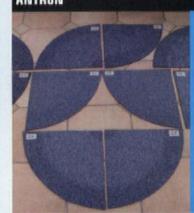
AJ ENQUIRY NO: 303



Rubber specialist Dalsouple has been granted a patent for its new magnetic rubber tile, for use in access floor installations. The tiles are loose laid onto metal access panels and held by magnetic attraction. To access the sub floor, the tiles are lifted and replaced time and again without loss of performance. For more information contact Dalsouple on 01278 727777.

ANTRON

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REGINOX

AJ ENQUIRY NO: 306



Gemini Kitchens has specified Reginox UK for sinks taps and accessories for installation in its extensive range of luxury kitchens. Reginox is supplying Gemini kitchens with thousands of sinks a year from its RegiPro and RegiLux ranges of stainless steel and composite sinks, with the RP 103S inset single bowl and drainer sink proving the most popular model to date.

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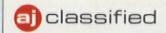
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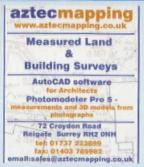
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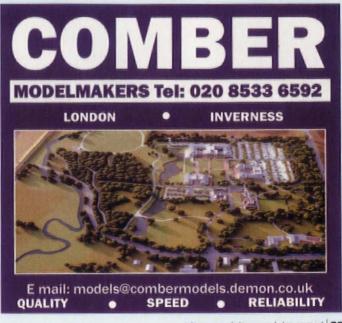
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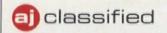
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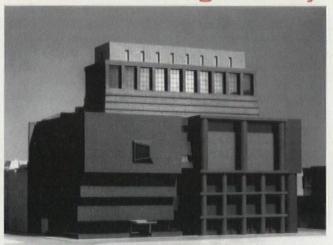
Cannes do

veryone seemed to be enjoying themselves down at MIPIM, but there was tension in the air as relationships between the property industry and politicians appeared to be moving to a slightly more confrontational phase. This was chiefly as a result of the combative Ken Livingstone, who referred twice in speeches to how he would 'crush' London boroughs who stood in his way on apparently any issue. Whether this sort of language is appropriate seemed highly dubious, especially since the mayor's powers are essentially negative as far as planning is concerned. He cannot prevent boroughs refusing schemes, only stop them approving them. On the other hand, his London Plan is now being presented as a building block for a new penal planning regime where developers will be forced to pay, say, £7 per square foot (we still like a bit of imperialism) as a 'price' for getting planning permission, and possibly some social housing on top. For the first time since he became mayor, the property boys are beginning to think Ken may not be such a great idea after all. They have also noticed that by supporting the dreadful high-rise development at Ilford town centre, he has also lost the plot as far as his 'high-quality' tall buildings policy is concerned.

Not much choice

n the other hand, the obvious man to lead the opposition to Ken, that is to say the Conservative mayoral candidate Steve Norris, is shackled by his continuing association with no-hope PFI firm Jarvis. Many delegates Astragal spoke to expressed the view that if he was serious about having a real go at winning the mayoralty, he would have found a better firm to work for, and would probably have dropped his outright opposition to the congestion charge. OK, it hasn't worked out the way Ken intended, but it has made a difference. Why argue about it? Step forward Lib-Dem Simon Hughes as the rational choice if you are fed up with Ken. He is highly committed, a Southwark MP, knows his stuff and

the ones that got away



Astragal's 'The Ones That Got Away' competition features schemes that, for better or worse, stayed on the drawing board. Can you identify this project and its architect? Post your entry, to arrive by first thing Monday morning, to AJ Astragal, 151 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4GB, or fax 020 7505 6701. The first correct entry out of the hat wins a bottle of champagne. The never-built scheme in last week's competition (AJ 11.3.04) was a 1944 scheme for London's South Bank by the Royal Academy Planning Commitee. Unfortunately, no one answered correctly.

is popular with all sorts of groups across London. He likes good new architecture too.

Park and ride

orris sounded utterly professional in his speech on the London stand as he criticised the mayor more in sorrow than anger. But the star of the London show that particular day was co-speaker Terry Farrell. His message was a simple one, and the more you think about it, the more convincing it sounds: turn the 'Thames Gateway' area into a giant national park for use by Londoners and others in the South East. The idea works on several levels. First, it establishes that the prime purpose of so far undeveloped land is to start as nature and only be built on if it is sensible. This implies ruling out volume housebuilder estates on flood plains, massively contaminated land and sites covered in pylons which are too expensive to relocate underground. Second, it concentrates minds on the necessary provision of housing elsewhere in London, in addition to what may be built in the Lower Lea Valley and on either side of the Thames Gateway bridge, linking Beckton to Thamesmead. The

government should put Terry in charge of the big idea, and while it is in good design mode, hold a proper design competition for the new bridge.

House and garden

ctually John Prescott likes Terry F's ideas, possibly because he hasn't entirely understood that they represent something of an alternative to his gateway strategy. The deputy prime minister gave a spirited rant at MIPIM, during which he hilariously referred to Ebenezer Howard's Letchworth Garden Centre, in the course of a speech which was almost impossible to decipher in policy terms. Except that the problems down south are different to those up north. In the former we have housing shortage, mainly due to lack of affordable and key worker house building since 1979; the northern cities have too much social housing, large chunks of which need to be demolished to re-establish a viable market. Hull, Prescott's home town, is a case in point. Whether his new regional assemblies will solve the problem seems unlikely - it was regional policy which created the problems in the first place.

Adding up

alk at the London Development Agency reception, hosted by new chair Honor Chapman, included the extent to which all London boroughs could contribute to the housing effort. For example, the new Foster masterplan for the Elephant and Castle (project architect John Prevec - who is about to join Ken Shuttleworth at Make) suggests creation of 4,500 new homes. Another example is the 7,500 dwellings the council envisages around Brent Cross, where another ambitious masterplan is under way. Now suppose that each London borough enabled/approved/ procured 1,000 homes per year for 10 years. Wouldn't that address the London 'problem' without splattering estates on unsuitable sites all over the South East? And isn't the real problem that councils have been disenfranchised from the provision of new homes since Mrs Thatcher's election?

Master class

ill Alsop and his team appeared in various guises. The practice's brilliant Bradford masterplanning framework was the subject of an Architectural Review seminar session; its inspirational New Islington masterplan in Manchester was favourably reviewed in a mock CABE design review; and the firm's remodelling of the Neo-Classical block overlooking Bloomsbury Square in London was shortlisted for the official MIPIM awards. Drinks all round!

Noises off

ne prominent civic dignitary conducted a discussion with leading property consultants in the topfloor suite of his swish hotel during an after-lunch session. As talk turned to rentals, yields and the office supply pipeline, a series of what can only be described as love calls from the suite next door began to distract the participants. The grunting and groaning went on and on but the host maintained an imperturbable demeanour. One's thoughts turned to the definition of sang-froid.

astragal at mipim



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EVEREDGE AJ ENQUIRY NO: 201



In response to customer demand, a tougher and made-to-measure version of the permanent lawn-edging system has been developed. EverEdge has produced Bespoke, following demand for a deeper and customised version, especially for public areas where there are high levels of visitor numbers and where greater edging depths are required. It is available in 2m lengths with a 2.5mm thickness, and in various depths ranging from 150mm to 300mm. This is a 140 per cent increase on the conventional EverEdge.

HANSENGROUP

AJ ENQUIRY NO: 202

FendorHansen has developed a new and unique high-security glazing system, which will find wide acceptance among architects, contractors and clients. Applications will include secure establishments such as magistrates' courts and police stations, and potentially vulnerable premises including

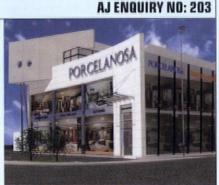


banks, building societies, and central and local government offices. For a new FendorHansen technical guide, call 0191 438 3222 or email: sales@fendorhansen.co.uk

CIRUS

Cirus, the general contracting arm of HLS Construction Group, has won a contract worth about £3.3m to build the new UK headquarters for Spanish-based bathroom furniture and tile manufacturer Porcelanosa. Cirus is

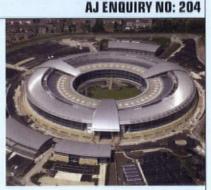
working with architect



DTR:UK and project manager Pick Everard to build a four-storey showroom and office space close to Wandsworth Bridge, London.

KEIM MINERAL PAINTS

Concrete beams, columns and ceilings at the new GCHQ building have been decorated with Keim Mineral Paints to provide a truly long-life finish. Keim Ecosil provides an economical, high-quality, obliterative breathable finish for the ceilings, Keim Lotexan N is a protective

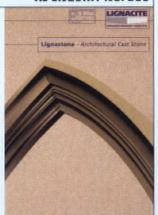


clear finish for column, and Keim Concretal Lasur has been used on beams and columns to unify and maintain the concrete appearance.

LIGNACITE

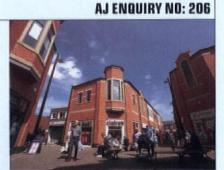
Lignastone is a hand-cast masonry material that closely resembles natural stone. It is an extremely durable architectural product, manufactured to BS1217, and an affordable alternative to natural stone. Lignastone is hand-cast using a finely graded cement-bound mixture of special sands, which lends itself to a wide variety of shapes, dressings and intricate details. Applications include housing, education and commercial projects.

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KINGSPAN

High-performance flat-roof insulation by Kingspan Insulation has played a key role in an £8.5 million project that has completely transformed the centre of Redcar. A total of 4,500m² of 40mm Kingspan Thermaroof



TR26 FM high-performance rigid urethane insulation were installed beneath the Protan membrane, and were complemented by an attractive mono-pitched slated elevation.

RENTOKIL INITIAL

Take a leaf out of the books of businesses at the cutting edge of design and sign up for the latest must-have accessory for the office – the show-stopping Yucatan Fantasy, which is fast achieving celebrity status. Rentokil Tropical Plants is offering this exclusive new species of plant on a 'first come first served' basis, and demand is already high for the tall South American beauty. Nine years in development, the Yucatan Fantasy has trailing yellow variegated striped leaves and stands 1.5m tall in its pot. Only a limited number have been grown this year.

AJ ENQUIRY NO: 207



HANSON BUILDING PRODUCTS

The launch of Hanson
Building Products will be
complete by Interbuild
2004. The amalgamation
of two Hanson divisions –
Hanson Concrete Products
and Hanson Brick – has
culminated in the formation



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of Hanson Building Products. Interbuild will present a major communication opportunity to target the UK's major specifiers with one of the widest heavy building materials collections in the UK. Visitors will be able to see brand names in concrete blocks, facing bricks, flooring systems, packaged building materials and aggregates.



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