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THE KEY TO LONG-TERM SURVIVAL IS USEFULNESS, NOT AUTHENTICITY

By Isabel Allen

It is fortuitous that the opening of the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre in Great Missenden (pages 21-35) coincides with the release of Tim Burton's remake of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. But that's all. This is not a hit-and-run initiative set up to capitalise on a passing fad but a costly and time-consuming venture, designed to serve its purpose over a period of several years. Its founders will only know if it has succeeded when the current wave of interest subsides and normality resumes.

Its architects have even longer to wait until they can evaluate their success. Aside from serving the interests of the client, Hawkins\Brown explicitly sought to address longer-term goals; to drag some decrepit, if delightful, old buildings into a state of health to allow them to serve future generations. This, of course, is the rationale behind any intelligent conservation project, and the Register of Architects Accredited in Building Conservation (pages 12-13) would doubtless argue

that any approved conservation specialist would have done the job just as well.

Having hurtled through myriad changes of use, this portion of Great Missenden High Street looked set to lurch its way through this century blighted by the *ad hoc* alterations and general neglect that are the hallmarks of such changes and of fleeting occupation. A straightforward structural restoration would have been a welcome short-term palliative but could never have compensated for the fact that these disjointed spaces have repeatedly proved to be too small or ill-equipped for modern-day life.

Hawkins\Brown has worked with historic buildings specialists on the scheme. But the key to long-term survival is not authenticity but usefulness. Time may prove that the most critical decision is the addition of a (contemporary) circulation gallery, which transforms a series of discrete spaces into a development of a commercially viable size.

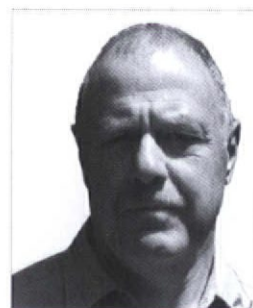
CONTRIBUTORS



Chris Wilkinson, whose sketchbook is featured on page 58, is a founding director of Wilkinson Eyre. He also teaches, writes and paints



Guy Drayton, who photographs the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre on pages 21-35, is a freelance photographer



Joe Holyoak, who reviews the new Pevsner on Birmingham on pages 44-45, is an architect, urban designer and teacher

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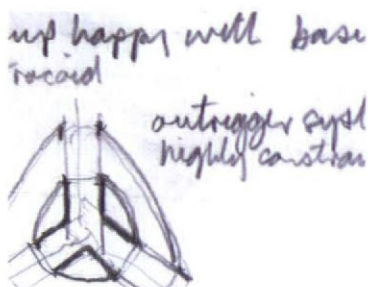
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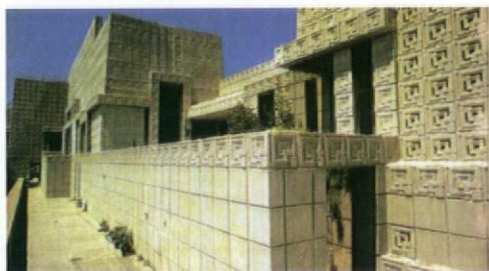


FOSTER PLANS MANCHESTER TURBINE

Foster and Partners has designed this £4.3 million, 80m-tall wind turbine that will power a stadium and 2,000 homes. The turbine will tower over the City of Manchester Stadium – home of Manchester City Football Club – if planning permission is granted in November, it was announced late last week.

PATHFINDER ROW FLARES UP AGAIN

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors has stepped into the relentless row over the government's controversial Pathfinder housing renewal schemes. The organisation claims Britain's heritage – especially Victorian terraced housing – is being 'rapidly lost' by unnecessary demolition and is calling for the government to look at 'accurate restoration' as a viable alternative.



ENNIS-BROWN HOUSE SAVED

Frank Lloyd Wright's earthquake-threatened Ennis-Brown house in Hollywood is set to be saved. The National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy and the Los Angeles Conservancy have paved the way for the final stages of raising the \$4 million (£2.2 million) needed for a seismic retrofit of the building, the stabilisation needed to withstand an earthquake.

ST MARY'S IN SOLO PLANS

St Mary's NHS Trust has decided to go it alone following the collapse of the Paddington Health Campus project, which would have brought together three hospitals on one site in west London (AJ 09.06.05). Originally masterplanned by Terry Farrell, the trust has now issued an OJEU notice to find a new architect to redevelop the hospital.

HOLYROOD IS DEMOLITION FAVOURITE

Enric Miralles and RMJM's Stirling-shortlisted Scottish Parliament could be targeted for demolition by a forthcoming television programme, after a poll found it was one of Britain's most hated buildings. A survey for upcoming series *Demolition* revealed Holyrood, a frontrunner to win British architecture's biggest prize, has made the list of 12 buildings that the British public would most like to see destroyed.

ROGERS HEADS DOWN UNDER

Richard Rogers Partnership has beaten a raft of international practices to make it onto the five-strong shortlist for a £400 million regeneration project in Sydney, Australia. Rogers has teamed up with Martha Schwartz Partners, along with Australian firms Lippmann Associates and Lend Lease Development to design the overhaul of the 22ha East Darling Harbour project, in the city's central business district.

BIENNALE HEAD NAMED

Ricky Burdett has been picked as the director of next year's Venice Architecture Biennale. Burdett, who is best known for his work on urbanism at the London School of Economics, will be responsible for the major international exhibition, which will be on the theme of world cities, in the Arsenale buildings.

MONAGHAN DEFENDS AHMM'S SHELTER REFIT

The architect who designed an £850,000 refurbishment for the London offices of homeless charity Shelter has hit back at accusations of overspending. AHMM co-founder Paul Monaghan said that the Old Street building reeked of a 'Victorian sweatshop' before his practice got to work.



LEEDS TOWER PLANNED

Ian Simpson Architects could radically alter the Leeds skyline if this impressive £200 million proposal wins council backing later in the year. The development, unveiled late last week, would include a 51-storey, 157m-tall glass skyscraper – the tallest building in the north-east of England.

£60K HOUSE FINALISTS NAMED

John Prescott this week announced the list of those shortlisted for the final stage of the high-profile £60,000 'design for manufacture' housing competition. The nine consortia include HTA Architects, Richard Rogers Partnership, Mackellar Architecture, Redrow, Sheppard Robson, PCKO Architects, Broadway Malyan, William Verry and Bailly Garner.

SEIDLER IS REAFFIRMED AS AN AUSTRALIAN

Harry Seidler, one of Australia's leading post-war Modernists, has had his Australian citizenship reinstated after a bizarre mix-up by the country's immigration department. The Australian government decided to revoke the Austrian-born architect's citizenship more than 19 years ago. However Seidler, 82, only found out about his 'illegal status' when he tried to change his address.

HADID BUILDS SPANISH BRIDGE PAVILION

Pritzker-prize winner Zaha Hadid has won the international competition to design a new Bridge Pavilion for the Zaragoza Expo in 2008. Spanning the River Ebro in eastern Spain, the 250m-long footbridge will link the trade fair to the city's station and will house 7,000m² of interactive exhibition space.

ARCHITECT JAILED FOR £60,000 FRAUD

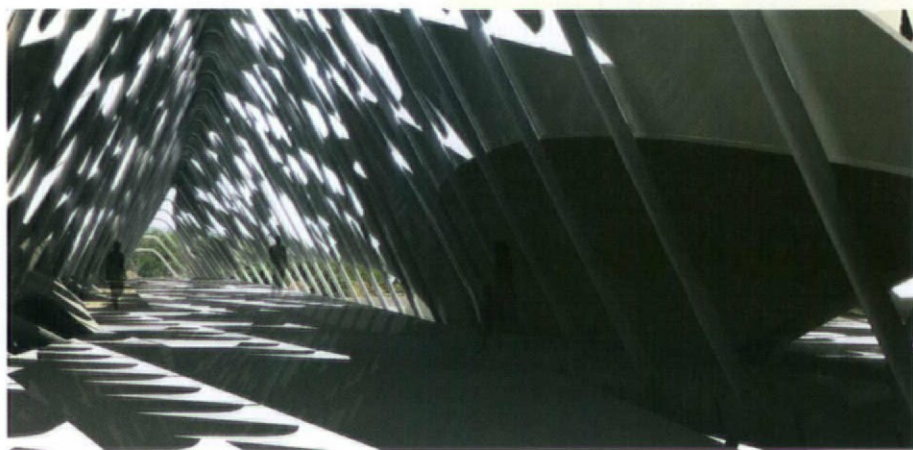
A Scottish architect has been sent to prison for 12 months after he pleaded guilty to swindling nearly £60,000 from an elderly woman's estate. Peter White, 51, a sole practitioner with a firm called Archetypes in the Borders town of Broughton, took the cash from the estate of the late Marjory Dakers-Sheriffs. It is the second time White has been found guilty of fraud.

CROYDON GATEWAY PLANS SLAMMED

Designs for the highly controversial Croydon Gateway by Foster and Partners and FaulknerBrowns – once heavily praised by CABE – have been slammed by Croydon council. In doing so, the council has knocked back developer Stanhope's appeal against its failure to consider its planning application quickly enough. This clears the way for the council and developer to meet head-to-head at a public inquiry beginning in January 2006.

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– are invited to enter designs for the cow.

The Designs

Fagerhult is a Swedish company, and designs should celebrate the country's culture and environment, whilst also focusing on the lighting aspect - We are looking for lit cows! Read about **Fagerhult** on the website www.fagerhult.co.uk To look at some of the funky designs, please refer to the official website www.cowparade.com.

For additional information and application forms visit our website www.fagerhult.co.uk.
Deadline for entries **Friday 28th October 2005.**

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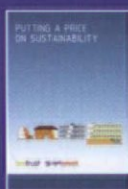
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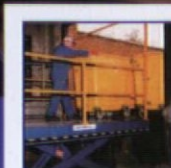


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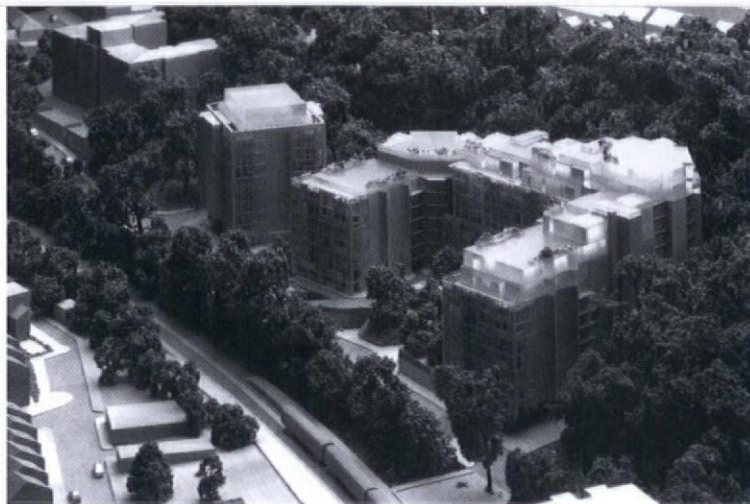
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Alan Camp Architects has been given the go-ahead for this residential development in the Maze Hill conservation area in Greenwich, south London. The £35 million scheme for developer Urban Solutions will vary in height between seven and 12 storeys and will boast green roofs and a planted steel trellis facade. Backing on to lush urban woodland, the 281 apartments will have views towards the Thames, the City and the Isle of Dogs. Work is expected to start on site in October this year.

DESIGN CODES PILOT A 'FIASCO'

By Ed Dorrell

One of the government's most determined attempts to persuade architects of the benefit of design codes has hit major problems.

EDAW, the masterplanner charged with drawing up the design codes for the long-awaited Ashford Barracks pilot project in Kent, has been sidelined from the entire process.

And a senior figure with Westbury Homes, which is in a house-building consortium with Wimpey on the scheme, has described the entire coding pilot scheme as a 'fiasco'.

The serious problems on the residential development – which have seen arguments between different partners – will bring into sharp focus John Prescott's claims that design codes will improve design standards and delivery times in the Thames Gateway.

It has emerged that an ongoing row over the design code has dogged the Ashford project, and there has also been controversy over a follow-up masterplan that has seen planning and architectural firm Barton Wilmore parachuted in to re-assess EDAW's work.

It is unclear whether EDAW will now accept the design code document, which was also guided by CABE-appointed enabler Llewelyn Davies Yeang, as its own work.

The scheme was announced in May 2004 with five other sites as pilots to test the viability of design codes.

It has now become clear that the attempts to use the coding system in Ashford have failed to live up to Prescott's expectations.

'We have got Barton Wilmore working on a series

of addenda to EDAW's design code,' Westbury's Ashford general manager Alan Quigley told the AJ. 'It has been a fiasco up to this point.'

'To a large extent we wish that we had never got involved with the coding. If [EDAW's] design code had been adopted as it was we would have been completely stuffed.'

'The whole design code has been a bit of a disaster – they certainly aren't a great addition to the planning process,' Quigley added.

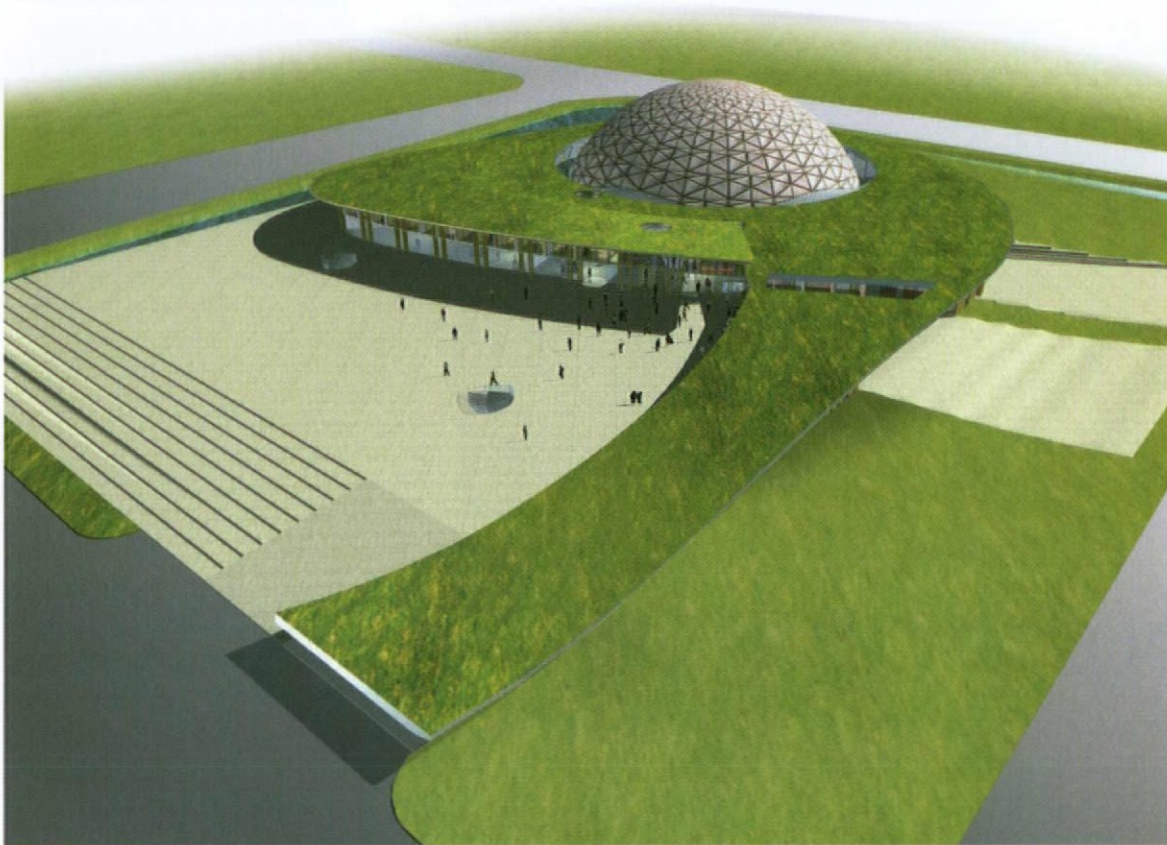
Barton Wilmore agreed that Ashford's experiences of design coding had not been positive. 'When we were brought in, we could see that there was a missing tranche of design work that needed to be carried out before we could proceed,' masterplanner Dominic Scott said.

'Design codes have certainly not sped up the process in this situation,' he added. 'The intention of the codes seems to be a good thing and the objective is to be applauded, but it is yet to be seen whether they can make anything better.'

Perhaps surprisingly EDAW was in agreement that the Ashford experiment was not going well. Managing principal Bill Hanway said the firm 'has backed away from the job because we do not feel it was going in the right direction'.

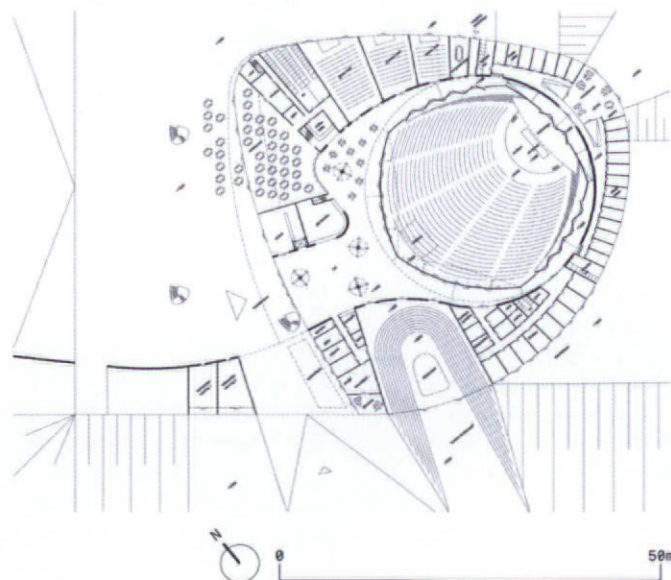
'The trouble is design codes can become more and more complicated,' he said.

However, Llewelyn Davies Yeang enabler Martin Crookston argued that problems on the project were simple 'micro-design issues' from which lessons should be learnt.



1.

1. The flowing roof wraps around the Buckminster Fuller dome
2. A plan of the site, outside Amsterdam
3. The dome will be completely renovated
4. Front elevation
5. Side elevation
6. The original dome



2.



3.



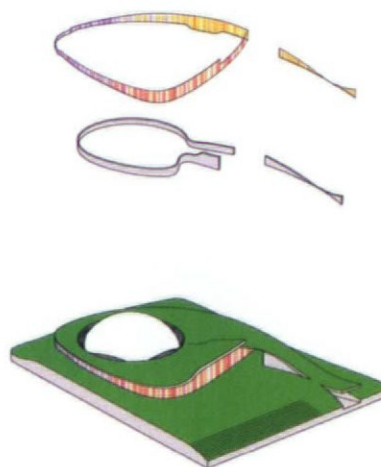
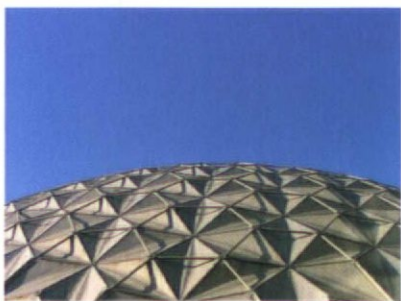
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GROUPA AUKETT CHURCH TO GO WITH THE FLOW

GroupA Aukett, a division of the newly merged Aukett Fitzroy Robinson, has drawn up plans to turn an abandoned Buckminster Fuller dome into the 'spiritual heart' of a new church in The Netherlands. The listed aluminium dome was originally home to the Museum of Aviation at Schiphol Airport, just outside Amsterdam. However, for the past two years, the dismantled geodesic sphere has been languishing in 16 sea-containers. Now, the Living Evangelical Community, who bought the classic Modernist structure to save it from demolition, wants the dome to become the centre of a new 9,000m² church building. According to Lolke Ket, one of the masterminds behind the competition-winning design, the scheme takes its inspiration from the 'symbols of heaven and earth'. The practice hopes to incorporate all the building's other functions under a 'flowing' grass-roofed building, which will sit below the renovated dome, wrapping the church's main congregation area.

By Richard Waite



REGISTERING DISAPPROVAL

By Ed Dorrell

It is perhaps not unusual for the world of conservation architecture to become heated and fraught with debate – one often hears that a row is brewing over one sensitive site or another. Rarely, however, does this world descend into internal warfare over professional organisations or institutes.

But two weeks ago this appeared to have changed drastically. The ARB's old nemesis, Ian Salisbury, turned his fury on a lesser known organisation called the Register of Architects Accredited in Building Conservation (AABC), sending an official complaint about the group to the Office of Fair Trading (OFT).

The complaint – which has also been brought up by other architects in the past fortnight – is a relatively simple one and

concerns the route to AABC registration. Critics argue that it is extremely difficult to become signed up. And it would seem that they have a point.

The criteria for accreditation demand that architects prove that they have successfully completed five conservation schemes. This would be acceptable, critics argue, if the AABC, which was recently brought in-house to become the 'RIBA AABC', was seen as little more than a badge of honour.

But two years ago it stopped being a club for large conservation architects and became a very important factor for income streams for many architects around the country. English Heritage (EH) and the Heritage Lottery Fund made the extraordinary decision that cash would only be granted to

projects if the architect working on them was AABC registered. To say panic ensued would be an exaggeration but it was not far off.

How does one complete the five schemes needed to join the AABC if one must already be a member to get any meaningful schemes? It was, and remains, a hugely reasonable complaint.

The decision in early 2003 to withhold grants to non-members sent shockwaves through the world of conservation. Architect Robert Adam said at the time the accreditation test would exclude younger architects. 'EH only allows you to do work if you are experienced but how do you become experienced if you can't get any work?' He said.

In addition, the fact that the source of last week's OFT



Ian Salisbury's work on Leicester Cathedral. It is alleged it could have represented five schemes in the eyes of the AABC



complaint is Ian Salisbury really ought to concern the AABC; for if Salisbury turns even half the energy he used against the ARB on it, then it could soon find itself in trouble – he is nothing if not tenacious. The AABC is not on as firm a footing as the ARB, which used its legislative position so successfully to bat away Salisbury's attentions.

And to make matters worse, it seems that everyone connected with the process accepts that the AABC rules of accreditation are currently being bent to such an extent that the whole system is rendered a laughing stock.

Jim Cuthbertson, a conservation architect from Glasgow, where Historic Scotland has recently followed EH's lead to withhold grants to non-accredited architects,

told the AJ that he was deeply frustrated with the current system. 'Architects are seeking ways around the problem, for example subcontracting the lead consultant role to a conservation-accredited architect – thus eroding the fee due to the architects who are doing all the work,' he said.

'It is very difficult to see what this new arrangement will do to maintain or improve the quality of work carried out on the building,' he added.

In addition, Cuthbertson claimed that in Scotland the AABC is seen by most practitioners as an exclusive club designed to ensure work is kept in the hand of the large elite. It is, he said, known as the 'Edinburgh club'.

Salisbury also provided evidence that there was a real problem with the rules of

membership being bent. On one occasion, he said, he had complained to an EH officer that he was unable to join the AABC because he had only ever worked on one serious conservation job; the wholesale renovation of Leicester Cathedral. There is an easy answer, the EH officer apparently responded; divide the job into five separate phases and submit each as a different scheme. Salisbury claims he was told he would easily be accepted on to the register. 'Obviously I was unprepared to do that as it is wholly unprincipled,' Salisbury said.

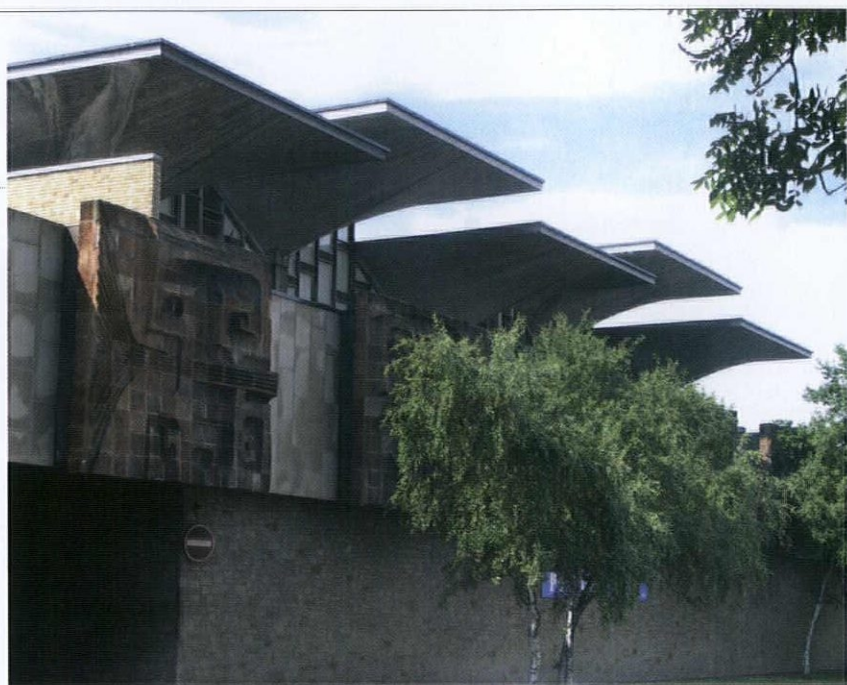
But where does one go for an argument in defence of the under-fire organisation? Who better than George Ferguson, the RIBA president who decided that the AABC should be brought under the

umbrella of the Portland Place organisation? In addition, Ferguson's own practice, Acanthus FM, has itself been involved with a host of conservation projects.

However, not even Ferguson argues that the AABC is perfect, instead claiming that the RIBA was attempting to solve its problems. 'There is undoubtedly a question over the criteria for membership,' he said. 'We need to look at it as it is a reasonable cause for concern.'

'As for the OFT complaint, we'll have to wait and see about that when it reports its conclusions,' he added.

If not even Ferguson is moved to throw his weight behind the organisation, who will? Things may change but the omens are not looking good. Do I hear the sound of knives sharpening?



MARTIN PRIESTLEY

A MARKET GEM OF A LISTING

By Richard Waite

It did not come as a surprise to campaign group Huddersfield Gem when it was announced that the West Yorkshire town's 1970s Queensgate Market Hall would be listed.

The organisation, set up to protect the hall, knew it was an under-appreciated jewel long before culture minister David Lammy gave it a Grade II listing last week.

Significantly, the decision could save the building from demolition. Kirklees council has floated a number of options to redevelop the area – some of which would have seen the market hall flattened.

The council will now have to reconsider its plans, a move which will delight English Heritage, which described the hall as 'the best surviving example of a 1960s or '70s retail market' and 'a key

exemplar of a building type that is currently under particular threat'.

Designed by the J Seymour Harris Partnership (now Seymour Harris Architects), the building was opened on 6 April 1970 and features a roof structure based on 21 asymmetric paraboloid shells.

According to Huddersfield Gem, the practice was inspired by Mexican Felix Candela for the innovative, lightweight concrete roof sections.

The group also claims the developments in hyperbolic paraboloid structures needed for the 'flying' cantilevered roof make the building 'unique in the UK and possibly the world'.

The market hall boasts one of the largest ceramic sculptures in the world, designed by German émigré sculptor Fritz Steller. The enormous abstract

art panels – titled *Articulation in Movement* – weigh almost 50 tons.

Steller met the project's lead architect Gwyn Roberts while they were both at college in Birmingham.

Roberts was never to see his masterpiece listed. The architect, who left the practice to set up on his own in the early '70s, died last year.

Unsurprisingly, the Twentieth Century Society, which put the building forward for listing, was thrilled by the DCMS's decision. Caseworker Cordula Zeidler said: 'This is one of the most outstanding post-war buildings in the region and it is quite rare to get one [listed]. It is a really good local landmark.'

For more information visit www.monoculartimes.co.uk/huddersfieldgem



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'I'm very interested in doing buildings that people are fond of – I'm not so interested in convincing the architectural community that I'm a genius'

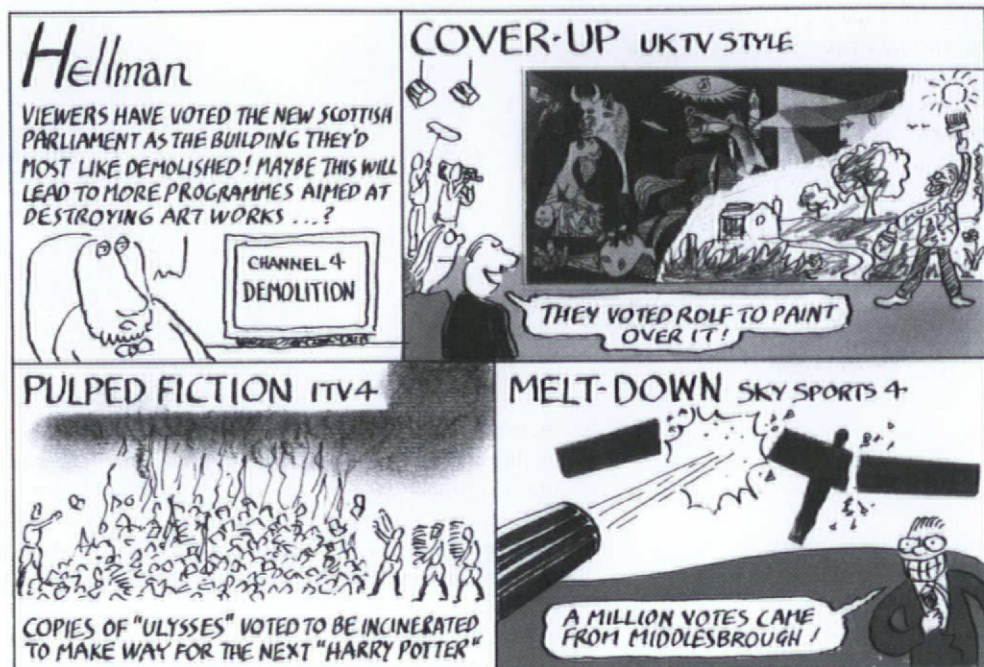
David Chipperfield.
New York Times, 11.08.05

'Eisenman does not dress the part of avant-garde architect – he looks like a vigorous retiree en route to some weekend yard work'

David Dudley, Cornell Magazine, July/August 2005

'urban planning's Ali G'

Jonthan Glancey on Will Alsop. Guardian, 06.08.05



WWW.LOUTSHELLMAN.CO.UK

FLAT PACKED

The reopening of the Isokon flats in Hampstead was a real family affair, with the celebrations well attended by those with a genuine link to the 1930s apartments. Descendants of **Jack and Molly Pritchard** – the furniture designers who dreamt up the scheme – and DJ **Matt Black** (of dance music pioneers **Coldcut**), the grandson of Isokon's eccentric Canadian architect **Wells Coates**, were all there to toast the immaculate restoration of the much-loved building. The Notting Hill Housing Group and **Avanti Architects** have restored the flats to their original splendour. The Grade I-listed ocean liner is now ready to sail into the backdrop of any Art Deco TV drama, like *Poirot*. **Agatha Christie**, a former Isokon tenant, would have been proud.

SOUNDS LIKE FUN

Freebie-hunters would have been disappointed by last Saturday's launch of a new project at **Álvaro Siza** and **Eduardo Souto de Moura's** Serpentine Pavilion. The 'Sounding Architecture' event was lacking the *de rigueur* accoutrements – the canapés and booze to which Astragal is accustomed. However, this problem was made up for by the performance. This pioneering exploration of 'the non-visual awareness of space' is led by sound artist **Kaffe Matthews** and artist **Lynn Cox**, collaborating with a group of 18 deaf and blind participants. All very odd but, perhaps surprisingly, worth a visit.

LIVE AND LET DIET

There Astragal was, mindlessly reading the *London Evening*

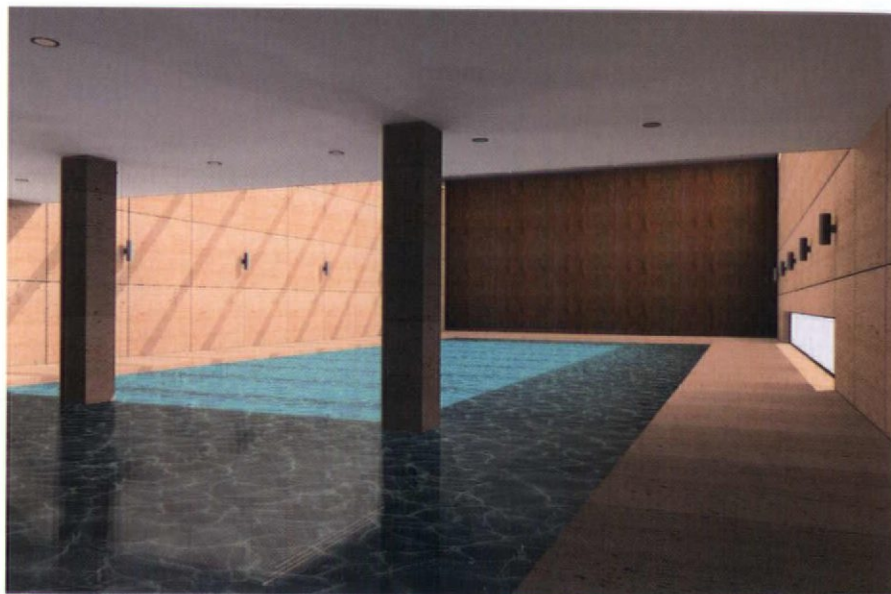
Standard last Tuesday, leafing through the Review section, and the most bizarre thing appeared on page. Staring out was a full-length photo of **Andrew Hanson**, the chairman of RIBA's London region and a founding partner of **Hanson Cribb**. Further inspection revealed that he had secured a byline as well. A new career replacing **Rowan Moore** as *ES* architecture critic, perhaps? But no. Even closer inspection (actually reading the written words) showed that Hanson was writing on the topic of the Atkins Diet and the reported 'damage' it had done to him. Concerned readers will be pleased to hear, however, that last time Astragal bumped into Hanson he was tucking into a large helping of what seemed a very 'balanced diet'. A full recovery, it would appear.



STUDENT SHOWCASE

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 studentshowcase@emap.com



Ben Huntley, Myron Kasapakis and Adrian Moore, fourth-year students on the BA Architecture course at the University of Liverpool, designed a five-star hotel alongside the Grand Union Canal in Birmingham's Eastside. The project was part of 'A Masterplan for Eastside' designed by the students. Materials used include Travertine stone cladding and Cor-Ten Steel to add an air of sophistication yet retain a memory of the site's industrial history. The tutor for this project was Torsten Schmiedeknecht.

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CLIENTS NEED PERSEVERENCE, DEEP POCKETS, UNFLINCHING CONFIDENCE AND BALLS OF STEEL

Being a client has much of the satisfaction of being an architect – but without the need for the seven years' hard training or (in my case) any particular talent! In many ways it is the easiest thing in the world, like being a big kid, playing with a full-size Lego set. But being a good client isn't all plain sailing.

I have never owned a boat, but friends of mine who have tell me boat-owning guarantees two days of happiness – the day you buy it and the day you sell it. In many ways, a building project is just the same. The early days of any project are very exciting – there are few things more enjoyable than exploring creative ways to transform what is often wasteland into a great scheme.

Take Urban Splash's New Islington scheme in Manchester. It was a joy to establish a masterplan and work with Will Alsop and Christophe Egret to produce drawings and models exploring ways to turn this tired and largely abandoned council estate into a wonderful modern place to be. But, as with any other project, there are a huge number of obstacles to overcome before we realise these dreams. These include:

- Signing JV agreements with Manchester City Council and

English Partnerships. Once the lawyers become involved, the pile of these supposedly simple documents ends up being taller than me.

- Obtaining planning and listed building consents and negotiating with the numerous local interest groups, who appear to be competing to see who can adopt the most conservative stance.
- Meeting every single resident living on the estate and trying to satisfy all their (sometimes conflicting) desires.
- Persuading British Waterways to link in our new canals with the existing system (you would not believe how difficult this can be).
- Coming up with a land remediation strategy.
- Devising a marketing plan to persuade a somewhat sceptical public, not to mention the bankers (no it's not rhyming slang) that what was once one of Manchester's most notorious council estates will be transformed into a great place in which to invest and live.
- Persuading the architects – who (I am pleased to say) want to build their life's monument with Urban Splash's money – to do so within budget. Or near enough.
- Then, finally, getting on site, seeing tenders come in over

budget, contractors go bust on you and the inevitable inclement weather cause delays.

Why does building work almost always cost more, and take longer, than you think?

But despite all the trials and tribulations, the joy of seeing beautiful buildings where once there was nothing is fantastic. So clients like us may not have the talent or the patience to design buildings, but we need perseverance, deep pockets, unflinching confidence and balls of steel to overcome all the obstacles and realise our architects' dreams. And hopefully make a few quid.

If you have any suggestions as to who I should donate this month's fee to then please send an email to the address below.

Tom Bloxham is the chairman of Urban Splash. Email: ajcolumnists@emap.com

LETTERS

IS THERE SMOKE WITHOUT FIRE AT BATTERSEA STACKS?

Parkview International's claim that the chimneys at Battersea Power Station are 'beyond repair' (AJ 28.07.05) should be treated with the greatest scepticism. A second opinion, from an independent engineer working to a proper conservation brief, should be obtained.

On a wider note, according to government Planning Policy Guidance PPG 15, 'substantial demolition of the listed building, or any significant part of it' requires alternative ownership to be considered.

Keith Garner, via email

CAUSEWAY COULD BE A GIANT FALSE ECONOMY

The real problem with the Giant's Causeway competition (AJ 21.07.05) is that the Northern Ireland DETI is still trying to save money by using an existing site owned by the local council for the World Heritage Site visitor's centre – located on the headlands!

Nobody has attempted to ask, let alone answer, the first basic strategic question for a natural World Heritage Site: 'What public facilities are strictly essential for viewing the site and what can be located (and more effectively provided) elsewhere?'

Des McConaghy, Liverpool

To see more from Keith Garner and Des McConaghy about Battersea and the Giant's Causeway, and to engage in debate, visit www.ajplus.co.uk/forum

MONEY AND POWER DEFINE THE BUILDING DEBATE

Methinks Rob Cowan doth protest too much in his defence of architects against Deyan Sudjic's assertion they tend to serve the rich and powerful (AJ 28.07.05).

True Sudjic, after years of discussing architecture purely in terms of style, has only now come round to the view some have been expounding for decades but that does not invalidate the

premise. Whether in the Middle East in the 1970s and '80s or China now, architects flock to where the power and wealth is, irrespective of the nature of the regimes served. With no moral imperative to guide architects (the RIBA/ARB would never strike off a member who designed, say, a cutting-edge torture chamber) they are free to work for whoever has the cash to build.

And, since the demise of local authority departments, architects who wish to contribute to people's needs rather than profit, are marginalised. The huge edifices for multinationals are first and foremost symbols of global power over local communities and only incidentally expressions of aesthetic or energy-conscious niceties. Despite reservations about Sudjic's own motives, this is a welcome blast of natural ventilation into the debate.

Louis Hellman, London W3

ARCHITECTURAL SKETCHES DRAW CRITICISM

Since the AJ relaunched, your support for the humble art of sketching has proved to be the highlight of each issue. Nigel Woolner's St Mark's (AJ 07.07.05) brought a whole new meaning to the conventional watercolour, proving that you should never leave a painting to dry beside a toilet.

Will Alsop's sketch in AJ 21.07.05 was a cracker. Alsop's insightful cultural reading of globalisation and 'the' standard house type was a revelation. Its cod philosophising and wilful lack of refinement was such a wittily ironic surmising of the Alsop oeuvre.

Given the abundance of blank space in your new design, perhaps you should scrap the articles and give away free pencils. That way you won't even have to pay these talented architects to spend all their waking hours providing such valuable insights.

Jim Horner, Bristol

Please address letters to The Editor, 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. The Architects' Journal reserves the right to edit letters submitted.

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HAWKINS BROWN/ ROALD DAHL



THIS IS NOT A WILLY WONKA THEME PARK BUT A TEMPLE TO LITERACY; ITS PRIMARY PURPOSE TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO ENJOY THE ART OF STORY-TELLING

By Isabel Allen. Photography by Guy Drayton

Hawkins\Brown was established by Roger Hawkins and Russell Brown in 1989 and now has a staff of 57. It has developed a reputation for delivering social-cultural buildings and community-based projects in the UK. Recent arts projects include: the Culture House in Dalston, the new home of the Vortex Jazz Club (2005); a London studio and workspace for artists Rachel Whiteread and Marcus Taylor (2004); and the renovation of the Henry Moore Foundation in Hertfordshire (1999). The Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre in Great Missenden, Oxfordshire, opened in June 2005.

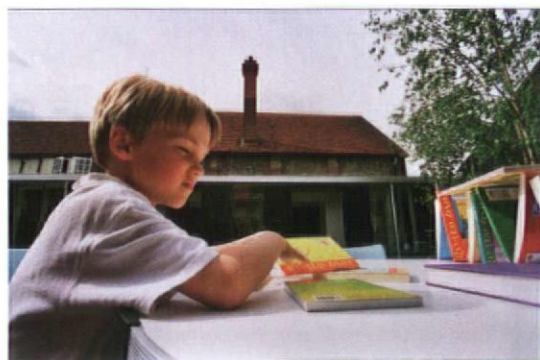
The *Big Friendly Giant* casts a watchful eye over Great Missenden High Street, and aficionados might notice that the gates to the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre are an exact replica of those used in Tim Burton's just-released remake of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. But there are no singing Oompa Loompas or chocolate lake. This is not a Willy Wonka theme park but a temple to literacy; its primary purpose to encourage children to enjoy the art of story-telling. More prosaically, it is also an essay in rural regeneration; an intensive mixed-use development, albeit at a micro scale. A rag-tag collection of historic buildings reinvented as an exhibition space, an archive, a shop, a café, a teaching space, offices, a flat for a writer in residence – and even a flat to let.

Grouped around a central courtyard, a 19th-century flint and brick hall and 16th-century dwellings used to jostle for position with less elevated 20th-century additions including a garage, lean-to and WC block. Ravaged by time and myriad

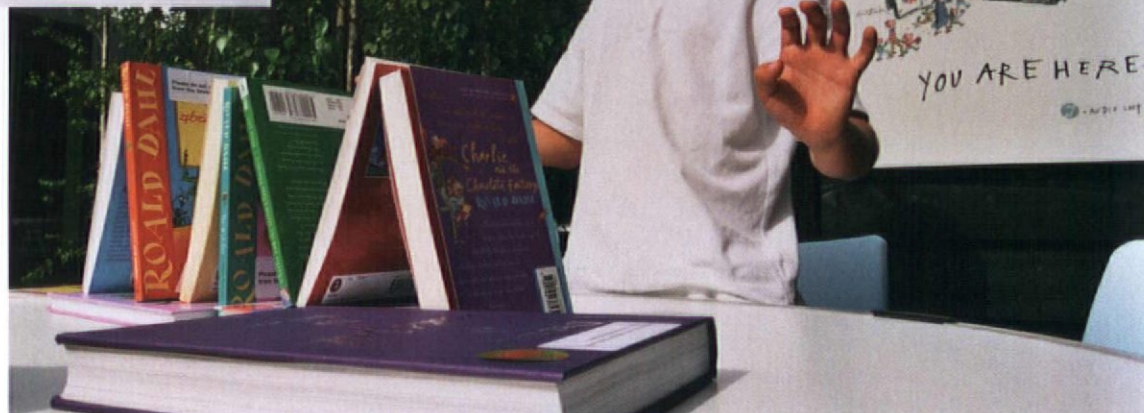
changes of use, the buildings were a jigsaw puzzle of considered intervention and ad hoc bricolage. Armed with a comprehensive historic building survey carried out by Archeological Services and Consultancy, Hawkins\Brown embarked on the task of working out what to keep, what to change, what to remove and what to add to the location. An electro-plating plant to the rear of the site was demolished to make way for a simple timber-clad pitched-roof building, which sits comfortably with its more established neighbours and houses the Dahl Archive on a mezzanine and exhibition space below. Otherwise, the design team worked hard to reconcile the existing accommodation with the different elements of the brief.

The matchmaking process followed familiar commercial criteria – shop by the exit; café and shop clearly visible from the street – but it was also informed by a more esoteric logic. A low-ceilinged, rather claustrophobic room, which was part of the original coaching house and still has the original 16th-century beam, has become the 'Boy' gallery dedicated to Dahl's childhood, much of which was spent in the stifling environment of a disciplinarian boarding school. The lofty proportions of a former village hall house the 'Solo' gallery, which relates Dahl's later, more adventurous, years. The fact that the former is painted dark red, while the latter is an airy cream, exaggerates the sense of liberation as you move between the two.

Where buildings have been retained, the attitude has been very much make and make-do. As project architect Anna



1.



1 & 2. The centre aims to provide inspiration for young visitors

MacDougall puts it: 'Is it knackered? If so, how do we make it work?' Drawing parallels between the uncanny qualities of the exposed ancient structures and the more sinister aspects of Dahl's work, MacDougall and her colleague Seth Rutt describe the conservation strategy as a homage to the author. There is also an echo of Dahl's delight in the eclectic and the 'as found', which is exemplified in the collection of curious objects he kept on the table in his writing hut, and of the 'anti-aesthetic' of the hut itself – given that Dahl clearly did not live in abject poverty, the torn linoleum and general air of decay can only be read as an aesthetic choice.

Given the constraints of working to a limited budget and with listed buildings in a conservation area, it is not entirely clear that there was any real alternative to the practice's way of working. But Hawkins\Brown does seem to have gone beyond the bounds of a straightforward, pragmatic approach with this project. Those involved talk about the building almost as another personality involved in the process of design, a capricious individual who would continually throw up problems and solutions in almost equal measure. 'No two walls were parallel or perpendicular,' MacDougall recalls, 'and a couple of them kept wanting to fall down. There was a 16th-century oak truss hidden behind the plasterboard. When we found it we thought "that's great, let's keep that exposed"'. The quantity surveyor, David Flower of Appleyard & Trew, was prone to quoting the adage 'old buildings bite back'.

The meandering confusion of the historic fabric is somewhat leavened by the cool linearity of the new glazed gallery which runs along the east side of the courtyard, linking the new and existing buildings and acting as the main circulation route. The link building has a sedum roof, which the architects describe as a reference to Norway, the birthplace of Dahl's parents. The reference is a little tenuous given that sedum is an alpine plant, but apparently living roofs in general are very much a Norwegian thing. For the record, the birch trees planted in the courtyard are indeed indigenous to Norway. Whatever, the green roof provides thermal and acoustic insulation and adds to the obligatory environmental credentials, as well as forming a pleasing relationship to the fields which are visible from the courtyard.

In many respects the project is a direct development of an earlier Hawkins\Brown scheme, the Henry Moore Foundation in Hertfordshire (AJ 15.04.99). There is the same robust palette of materials – Douglas fir, dark-stained timber, Baggeridge Brick – the same simple construction techniques, the same judicious juxtaposition of painstaking conservation and quiet new-build. As at Henry Moore, the practice set out to create an architecture which would allow the exhibits to take central stage. As MacDougall puts it: 'We wanted to make buildings which might have a longer life than their current use.'

That said, there is ample evidence of a close creative collaboration between Hawkins\Brown and exhibition designer Bremner and Orr. Building and exhibition elegantly meet and part



3.



4.

3. The courtyard is planted with birch trees indigenous to Norway, the birthplace of Roald Dahl's parents

4. The Douglas fir staircase to the first-floor office space is a modern interpretation of the existing stair

like partners in a dance. Sometimes the coming together is overt, such as the outsize door which looks – and smells – like a giant chocolate bar. At others, there is a more casual understanding between the two. Hawkins\Brown is quick to point out the fact that the stable block pavers in the courtyard bear a passing resemblance to the squares of a chocolate bar, but you'd have to have a particularly fertile imagination to make the connection yourself. The relationship between the mini pitched-roofed outline of the replica of Dahl's writing hut and the larger pitch-roofed volume in which it stands is too satisfying to be coincidence, yet too subtle to appear contrived.

The play on scale has echoes of a recurring theme in Dahl's work. Who can forget the giant insects in *James and the Giant Peach*, or Mike Teavee, who is shrunk to television size, carried off to a machine designed to test the stretchiness of chewing gum in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*? It is also reminiscent of another strand in Hawkins\Brown's work, a playful aesthetic evident in the offices of the Women's Pioneer Housing Association in west London, a friendly-looking box on stilts which hovers over the Central Line, and the Archigram-esque Bradbury Street market stalls in Hackney, East London (AJ 27.01.00).

Here, it is an apt response to the challenge of designing an environment for children. In keeping with the strategy of designing a building which can survive a change of use, it is perhaps appropriate that Hawkins\Brown has avoided the usual box of tricks: upper and lower windows; parallel handrails; staircases with

tiny 'in between' steps. Instead they have sought to identify ways in which 'grown-up' architecture can be appropriated by children: the change in height between the glazed link and courtyard is a step for an adult and a bench for a child. This low-key approach is the only sensible course of action in an environment which is designed not only for adults and children but for Big Friendly Giants as well. Where's the fun in a child-size chair when a pile of outsize paperbacks will serve the purpose just as well?

In truth, there is a fine line between fortuitous accident and architectural intent. Much of the project's Dahl-esque quirkiness is down to the higgledy-piggledy confusion of the buildings themselves, an echo of the crackpot English countryside portrayed in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. (Dahl was commissioned to write the screenplay of Ian Fleming's children's classic). The buildings have bitten back in more ways than one. Designed to act as a background, they have instead taken centre stage.

Whether the project is read as a narrative exercise, or simply a pragmatic response to the specifics of building and brief, is a matter of personal taste. In any case, Hawkins\Brown tells a damn good story. And that, after all, is what this is all about.



5.



6.



7.

5. The step up to the circulation gallery doubles as a children's bench
 6. The writer in residence's flat sits above the entrance arch. The gates are a replica of those used in Tim Burton's film of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
 7. The glazed gallery rationalises circulation while leaving the historic structures exposed



8.

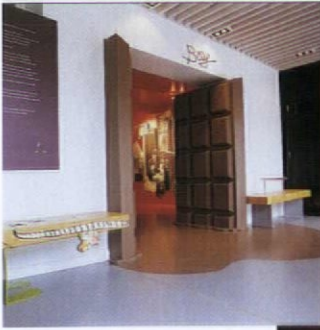
8. Chocolate paving...

9. ...or simply the obvious choice for a robust outdoor space which needs to withstand varied and heavy use?



9.





10.



11.



12.

10. The chocolate door into the 'Boy' gallery

11. Inside the 'Boy' gallery - the red paint creates a feeling of confinement

12. Loftier proportions of the 'Solo' gallery. The bespoke carpet is based on the lined yellow paper Dahl used

13. The new-build gallery with view through to a gallery for temporary exhibitions



13.

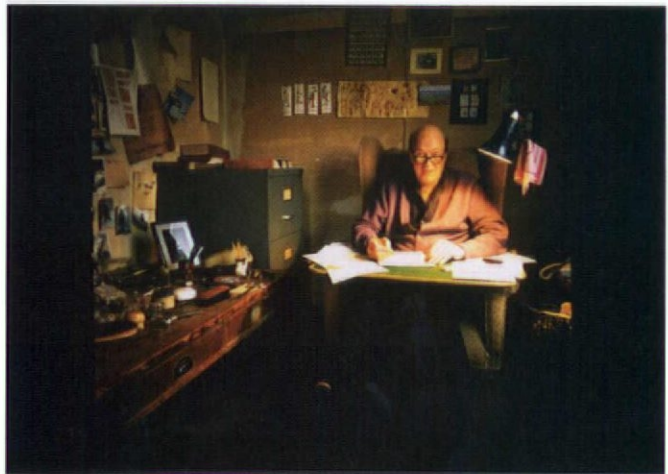


14.

14. The new-build gallery houses a replica of Dahl's writing hut

15. Roald Dahl at work inside the writing hut at Gypsy House

16. The objects Dahl kept on his writing desk



15.



16.



17.



21.



23.



24.





18.



19.



20.



22.



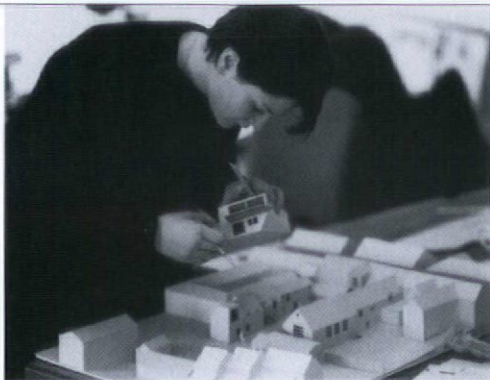
17. The site before work began
 18. A 16th-century beam was uncovered during the enabling works
 19 & 20. The glazed link corridor under construction
 21-26. Visual studies used to determine whether specific elements of the existing architecture should be removed or retained



25.



26.

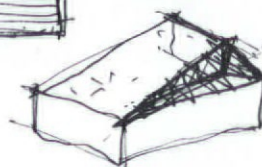
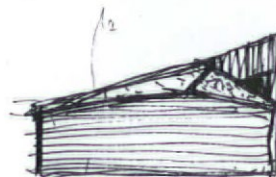
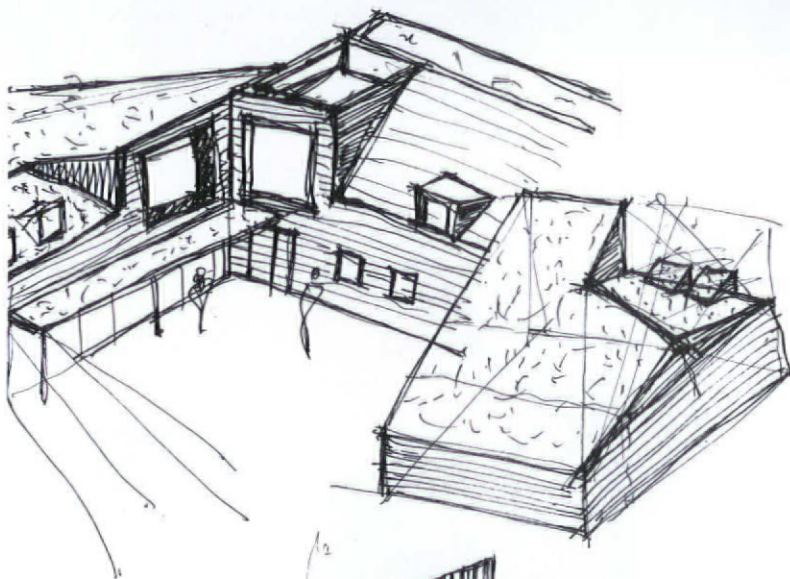


27.

TUESDAY 16TH JAN 2003

EXHIB SECTION. ✓

MONY (STAGE) ELEVATION ✓



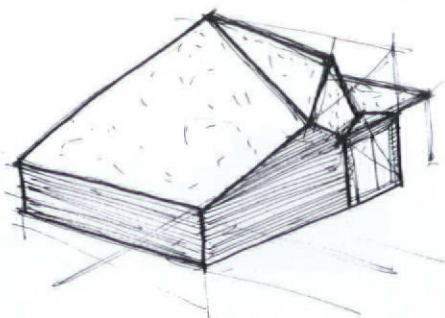
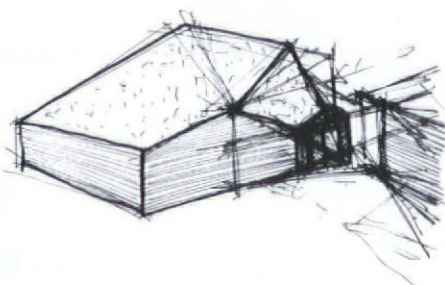
REMOVE WALL/ELEVS ?

OWN TITLES

FIVE NAMES

ARCHITECTURE PAVILION PLANS

28.



27. Project architect Anna MacDougall at work - models played a key role in communicating the design to the inexperienced client
28. Sketches exploring the form of the new-build gallery. The architects were keen to minimise its apparent bulk



KEY

1. GALLERY 4 (SOLO)
2. MUSEUM STAFF OFFICES
3. INVENTING ROOM

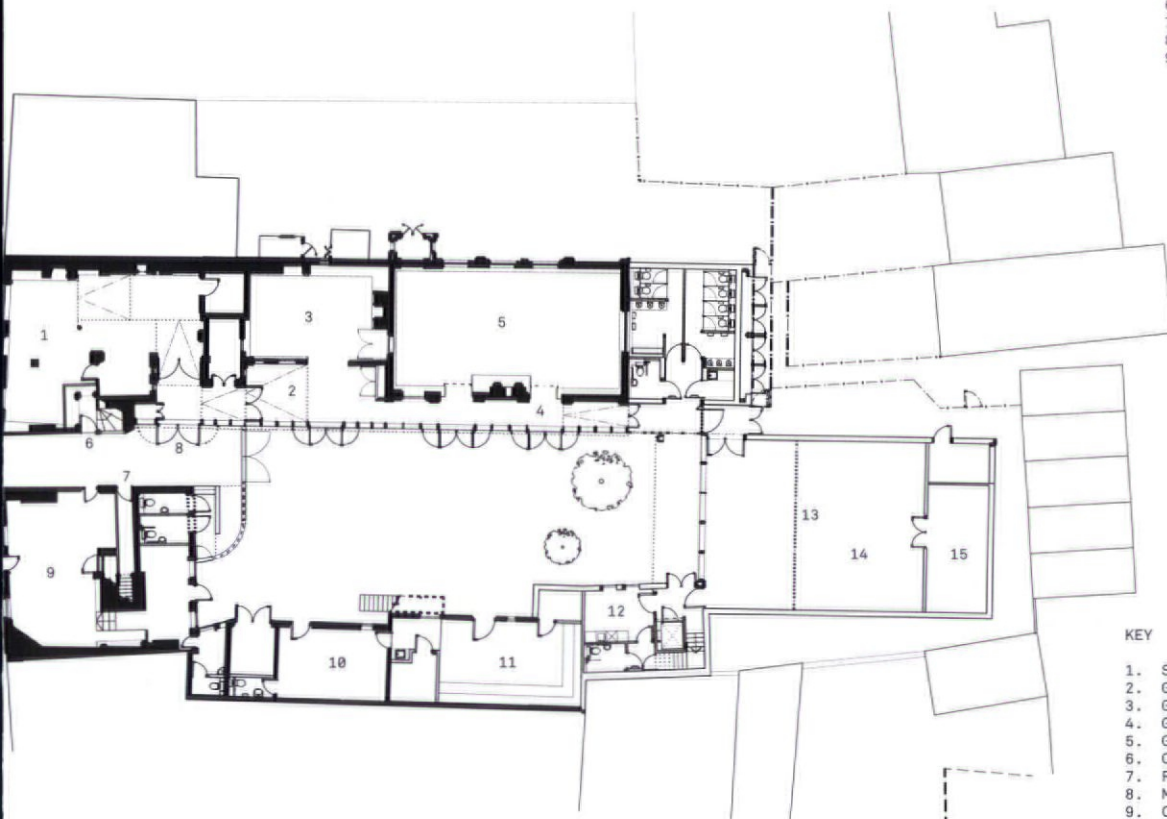
29. Cross section through courtyard



KEY

1. GARAGES
2. TEMPORARY EXHIBITION GALLERY
3. GALLERY 5
4. READING ROOM
5. MEETING ROOM
6. MUSEUM CAFE WC
7. FLAT TO LET
8. CAFE
9. HIGH STREET

30. Long section through courtyard



KEY

1. SHOP
2. GALLERY 1
3. GALLERY 2 (BOY)
4. GALLERY 3
5. GALLERY 4 (SOLO)
6. OFFICE/WRITER'S ENTRANCE
7. RESIDENTIAL ENTRANCE
8. MUSEUM ENTRANCE
9. CAFE
10. CHILDREN'S EATING ROOM
11. INVENTING ROOM
12. STAFF ROOM
13. LINE OF MEZZANINE HOUSING ARCHIVE
14. GALLERY 5
15. TEMPORARY EXHIBITION GALLERY

31. Ground floor plan

Cost summary

Data based on final account, for gross internal areas. Existing buildings for refurbishment 729m². New build 355m²

	Cost per m ² (£)	Percentage of total
DEMOLITIONS, ALTERATIONS		
Refurbishment	58	1.99
SUBSTRUCTURE		
New build	226	3.79
SUPERSTRUCTURE		
Structural works - refurbishment	61	2.11
Structural works - new build	81	1.35
Upper floors - refurbishment	10	0.35
Upper floors - new build	75	1.25
Roof - refurbishment	87	2.99
Roof - new build	347	5.81
Staircases - refurbishment	12	0.43
Staircases - new build	10	0.17
External walls - refurbishment	37	1.27
External walls - new build	206	3.45
Windows, external doors - refurbishment	47	1.63
Windows, external doors - new build	115	1.92
Internal walls, partitions - refurbishment	26	0.91
Internal walls, partitions - new build	87	1.45
Internal doors - refurbishment	23	0.79
Internal doors - new build	45	0.75
Ironmongery - refurbishment	14	0.48
Ironmongery - new build	29	0.48
GROUP ELEMENT TOTAL		27.61
INTERNAL FINISHES		
Wall finishes - refurbishment	108	3.71
Wall finishes - new build	73	1.22
Floor finishes - refurbishment	82	2.83
Floor finishes - new build	86	1.44
Ceiling finishes - refurbishment	67	2.30
Ceiling finishes - new build	63	1.06
GROUP ELEMENT TOTAL		12.55
FITTINGS AND FURNITURE		
Refurbishment	23	0.80
New build	18	0.30
GROUP ELEMENT TOTAL		1.11

SERVICES

Sanitary appliances - refurbishment	16	0.54
Sanitary appliances - new build	36	0.60
Waste, soil, overflow piping - overall	13	0.68
Cold water services - overall	22	1.11
Hot water services - overall	22	1.12
Heating - overall	135	6.88
Ventilation - overall	126	6.46
Gas services - overall	19	0.96
Electrical services - overall	194	9.93
Lift installation - overall	16	0.81
Builder's work - refurbishment	21	0.72
Builder's Work - new build	36	0.60
GROUP ELEMENT TOTAL		30.41

EXTERNAL WORKS

General - overall	63	3.21
Drainage - overall	58	2.99
External services - overall	14	0.70
GROUP ELEMENT TOTAL		6.90

PRELIMINARIES - OVERALL 306 15.66

TOTAL 100

Cost data provided by Appleyard & Trew



32. Great Missenden High Street

Specification for new-build

SUBSTRUCTURE

New gallery, WC block and core: piled foundations. Circulation gallery: in-situ concrete trench-fill foundations. In-situ reinforced-concrete ground slabs, brick and block foundation walls

SUPERSTRUCTURE

New gallery: Steel portal frame with in-situ reinforced-concrete mezzanine. New core: timber floor joists and plywood deck

ROOF

New gallery: proprietary steel roof decking, acoustic mineral-wool insulation, vapour-control layer, rigid insulation between timber battens, plywood, fire-rated board, rigid insulation, Tyvek membrane, cedar shingles on battens and counterbattens. Circulation gallery: timber rafters, plywood deck, sedum roof system. Core: timber rafters, vapour-control layer, insulation, Tyvek membrane, clay tiles on battens and counterbattens

STAIRCASES

External: black-stained Douglas fir posts, stringers, landing, treads and handrail. Bespoke stainless flitched 'shoes', non-slip inset nosings. Internal: Douglas fir treads/risers with non-slip inset nosings, handrail and t&g boarding to lift shaft wall

EXTERNAL WALLS

Circulation gallery: Douglas fir posts, sill and head plate with double-glazed sealed units bonded back via stainless steel angles. Gallery and core: Douglas fir timber weatherboarding, battens, breather membrane, counterbattens, rigid insulation, blockwork

WINDOWS AND EXTERNAL DOORS

Douglas fir-framed, ledged and braced doors. Douglas fir-framed glazed doors. Aluminium motorised opening vents. Timber tilt-and-turn windows (double glazed) in new openings. All stained black

INTERNAL WALLS AND PARTITIONS

Blockwork and plasterboard/Farmacell-covered metal stud partitions

WALL FINISHES

Paint finishes to plaster/lined walls. White stain to internal timber

FLOOR FINISHES

New gallery, Gallery 2, education rooms and circulation gallery: resin on screed. Shop: solid oak strip floor. Gallery 4: bespoke carpet on plywood

CEILING FINISHES

Paint finishes to plasterboard/plastered ceilings. White stain to internal timber

Credits

Tender date

January 2004

Start on site

February 2004

Completion

May 2005

Gross internal floor area

1,084m²

Form of contract

Single Stage Main Works Contract JCT 98 with Quantities

Total cost

£2,119,380

Client

Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre

Architect

Hawkins\Brown: Anna MacDougall, David Bickle, Seth Rutt, Jeremy Walker

Structural engineer

Price & Myers

Environmental engineer

Michael Popper Associates

Exhibition designer

Bremner and Orr

Quantity surveyor

Appleyard & Trew

Planning supervisor

Appleyard & Trew

Planning consultant

Adrienne Hill Planning Consultants

Party wall surveyor

Peter North & Partners

Asbestos consultant

Adamson Laboratory Services

Historic buildings recorder

Archaeological Services and Consultancy

Building surveyor

Appleyard & Trew

Enabling works contractor

Durkan Pudelek

Main works contractor

T & E Neville

Subcontractors and suppliers

Electrical subcontractor W Portsmouth; *mechanical subcontractor* Briggs Forrester; *flooring subcontractor (resin)* Future Flooring; *flooring subcontractor (linoleum & carpet)* Hi-Tech Flooring; *ironmongery* Higrade; *paving* Baggeridge Brick; *gallery wall linings and partitions*armacell; *WC cubicles and duct panel systems* ABP-TBS Partnership; *flush-glazed opening windows* Seufert-Niklaus; *resin floor* Sika; *lime plasterwork* Old House Store; *tiles* Architectural Ceramics; *recycled-plastic vanity tops and splashbacks* Smile Plastics; *sedum roof* Erisco Bauder; *linoleum* Armstrong; *external breathable paint* Keim Paints

NEW BUILDINGS CONNECTED BY A GLAZED CIRCULATION GALLERY

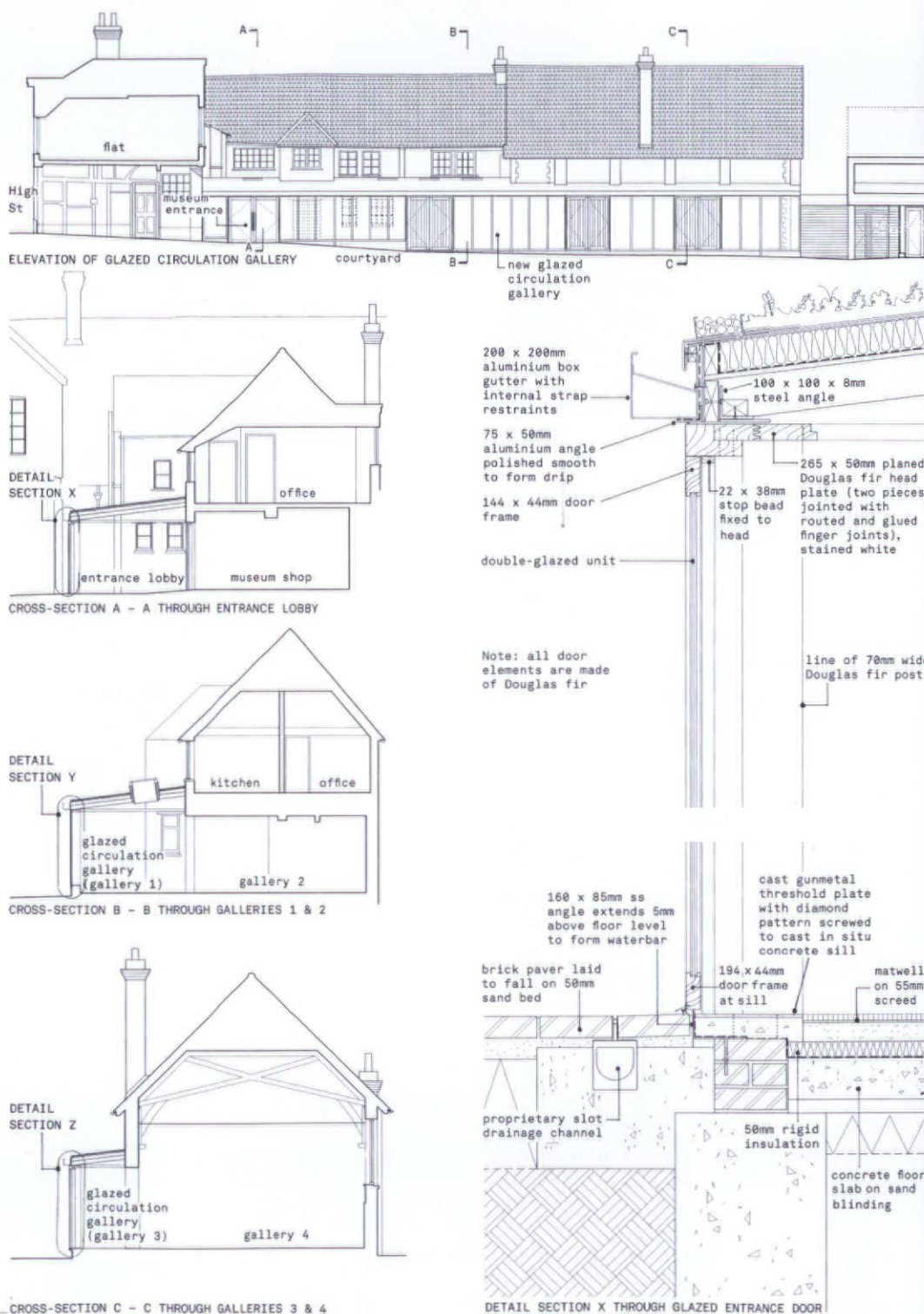
The centre is housed in a group of buildings, once a coaching inn, which flanks a courtyard off the High Street.

The buildings on the west side now accommodate many different functions – shop, museum, galleries, offices, and WCs. They are linked and unified by a single-storey glazed circulation gallery set against the west wall. It forms the main entrance lobby, provides circulation between the principal areas and connects at the end to a covered walkway beneath the mezzanine of Gallery 5. The glazed circulation gallery creates space for signage and enlarges exhibition Galleries 3 and 4.

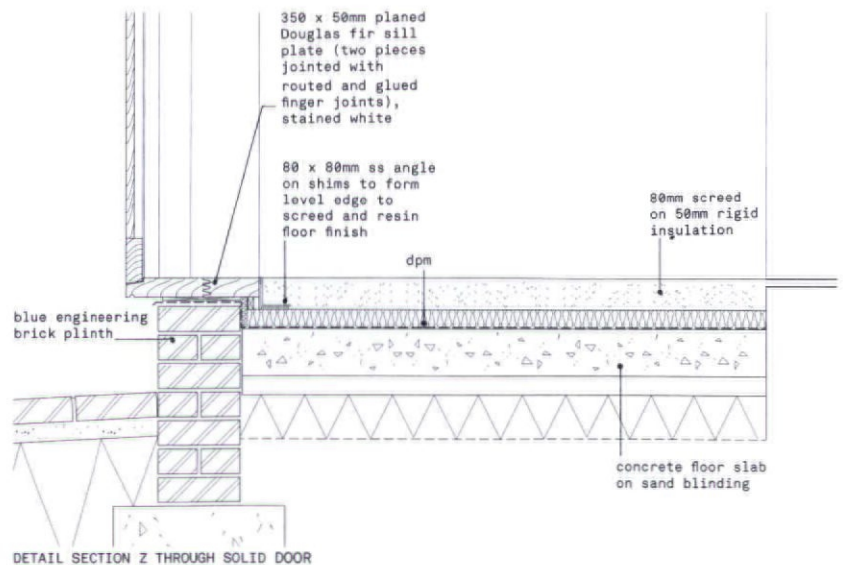
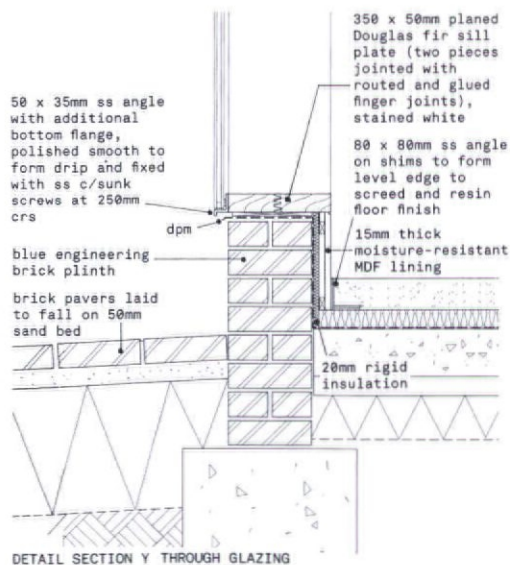
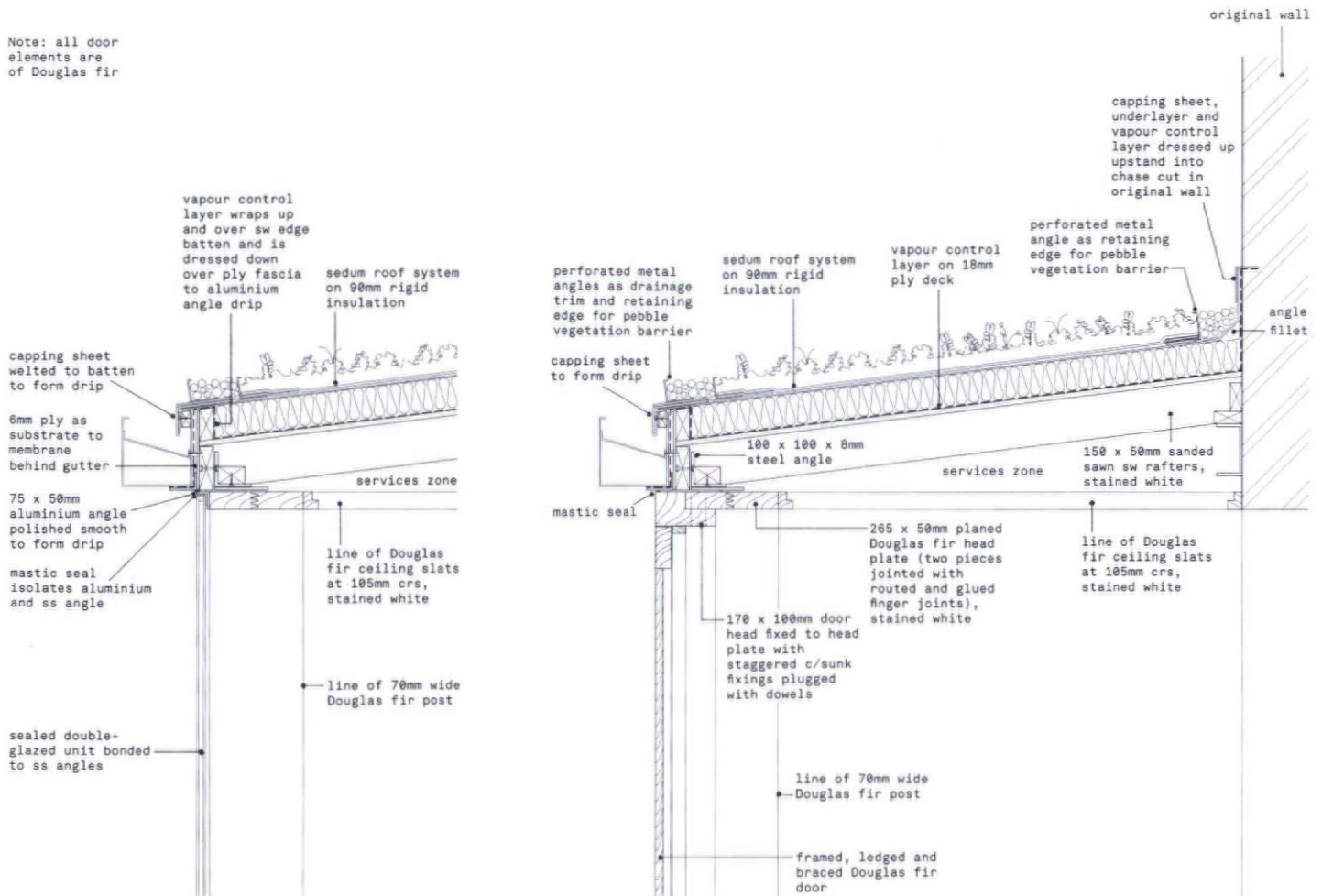
The facade of the circulation gallery is framed by a continuous Douglas fir ladder frame which also supports the ends of the 150 x 50mm rafters; these support a ply deck and a sedum roof system. A 200 x 200mm aluminium box gutter acts as a fascia.

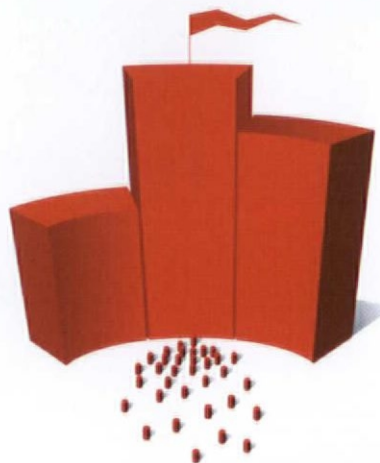
The ladder frame consists of a 265 x 50mm Douglas fir head and sill, both formed of two pieces jointed with routed and glued finger joints, connected by 70mm-wide Douglas fir posts at differing centres. The frame width was determined by the brick plinth below it. At the entrance door the sill plate is replaced by a gunmetal threshold plate. The sealed double-glazed units are fixed back to the frame with back-to-back angles.

Susan Dawson



Note: all door elements are of Douglas fir





CMA 2005 Construction Marketing Awards

London Zoo **30 November 2005**

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The winners will be announced at an Awards Dinner at London Zoo on 30 November 2005.

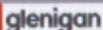
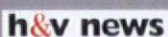
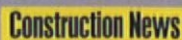
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Best Structural / Exterior Product

Best Commercial Vehicle

Best Plant / Tool

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Marketing Planning Award

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MARKETING AWARDS

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Best Use of Events & Exhibitions

Best Use of PR

Best Use of Direct Marketing

Best Technical Literature

Best Integrated Supply Chain

Best Small Budget Campaign (under £25k)

Campaign of the Year

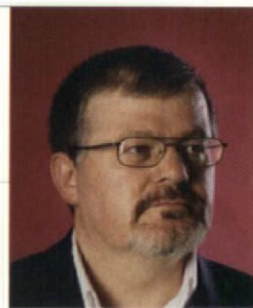
Agency of the Year

Supported by



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WRECKING BALL

By Austin Williams

I guess Robert Mugabe has taken things to extremes but it would be easy to forget that knocking down buildings owned by people with whom you disagree has long been a staple of unpleasant, but authoritative, governments across the world. From the demolition of illegal settlements in South Africa in the 1970s, to Thatcher smashing gypsy and traveller encampments in the '80s, it has all been part of the rich tapestry of authoritarian rule.

But things have changed dramatically in recent years and, interestingly, those First World regimes that have subsequently found themselves part of the post-Cold War consensus now seem to be confused by the old rules. Israel, admittedly, is still trying to tear down its settlements – but this time its own – as a means of looking fair-minded. No place for extremism there. Indeed, its demolition strategy has taken on the mantle of a righteous

act according to commentators across the world. Whereas, in the past, Ariel Sharon might have vigorously defended the rights of fervent nationalists to remain anywhere they damn well pleased, today that all seems a little bit too illiberal, even for Zionists. The wrecking ball is a great leveller.

Similarly, the UN habitat policy on this subject is purely pragmatic. Whereas, in the past, shanty towns – in even the most loyal Commonwealth countries – would be regularly destroyed and the poor turfed out, things changed in the '90s, when offending governments were advised to leave the houses in place and provide the squatters with basic electricity so they would become so grateful that relations between these poor and the state would stabilise.

Whatever the reasons for the other countries' shifting attitudes to the dispossessed, it is undoubtedly true that unreconstructed colonial outposts like Zimbabwe look

increasingly old hat. Play up, and play the game, old boy.

However, a consequence of the alleged liberalisation of attitudes to Romany encampments, 'illegal' traveller settlements, squatters, and the like, has resulted in the UK government not really knowing what its position is. Inevitably, it advocates judicial enquiries and public consultations but, even in Britain, the government is slightly uncertain about what the right course of action is in any given circumstance.

So when John Prescott advocates razing large areas of terraced housing to the ground – a perfectly sensible precursor to major development – all hell breaks loose. Compare this with Chinese proposals to build 20 cities a year for 20 years. Here, the hasty masterplans for full-scale societal transformation are not being met with the equivalent British demands for restraint.

The economic and social dynamic of the Asian tigers

means people see change as a positive transformation. In China, there is a sense that conservation of old buildings and old ways is not a high priority. Demolition is no more problematic than chucking out the chintz. In the UK, in the post-war period, there was a similar mood that accepted the demolition of old terraces because it was seen as a worthwhile condition of modernisation.

Today, the last bastion of uncontentious demolition in this country is the destruction of houses occupied by evil forces. From Ian Huntley to Fred West and others, their houses have been demolished, and, in the case of Huntley's, the dust taken away to secret locations to be buried. More 'annex of evil' than 'axis of evil'. Such is the turnaround in world affairs that British demolition projects are now akin to dabbling in the occult.

As Jane Jacobs says, there is a *Dark Age Ahead*.

EVERYTHING HAPPENS SO FAST THAT IT NOW LOOKS SEAMLESS

By Sutherland Lyall

Since last year when we took an early look at voice over internet (VoIP, the P stands for protocol) things have changed with bewildering speed. Fuelled by the rapid take-up of broadband in the past couple of years, VoIP has a life and a series of internal controversies all of its own. Broadband itself is set to kick off into stratospheric 24 Meg/second speeds, enabling really smooth audio and video. WiMAX, the forthcoming local area wireless network, presages a cellphone-like version of VoIP, one up in terms of range from wireless VoIP and managed via WiFi or Bluetooth. The cellphone companies, already under notice for some charging practices, are casting around for goodies with which to fight back and are actually contemplating cutting prices.

But VoIP take-up is happening inexorably. Airbus, the plane-maker, is about to switch its 40,000 employees to VoIP. Oxford University now has a widely based VoIP system. It is taking off because existing providers, mainly BT, have had a monopoly and little incentive to offer more financially attractive packages. BT has argued that cellphones have been astonishingly successful despite the very high cost of their calls and that price obviously isn't an issue. But of course it is.

ADDING VALUE EVERYWHERE

Everywhere you look, someone is adding special value to their favoured telephony systems. In July, Paul Zimmerman, inventor of Pretty Good Privacy internet cryptography, announced that he should have telephone privacy software available next year

for VoIP. BT has brought out its Bluephone, which links wirelessly to an office or domestic wireless access point and, when it goes out of range, transfers to a Vodafone cellular system. Skype, which encourages third-party plug-ins, has recently announced a video-conferencing plug-in from Santa Cruz Networks which also facilitates Skype's ability to share photos, applications, documents and spreadsheets – but now for up to 200 people at any one time.

UNDER THE HOOD

Think of VoIP as a variation on email. Sound gets digitised via your computer's sound card and sent off via the internet to another computer whose sound card converts it into sound again. Geeks were doing this years ago using simple software and dial-up modems but it was a fairly chancy business. Telephony needs to be able to cope with immediate to-and-fro communication. This is where the sheer speed of broadband has made the difference. Everything happens so fast that it now looks seamless to the broadbander despite the often complex routing.

Here was the other breakthrough: the ability to communicate with the world outside the closed environment of the internet. And this is where it gets more complicated. On one hand there is Skype. It is the pioneering, proprietary, free VoIP system for making computer-to-computer calls. It has, according to co-inventor Niklas Zennström, 42 million users. He says things that users like to hear: 'I think charging for calls belongs to the last century.' You have to take that *cum grano salis* because all the big



A VoIP phone
from Siemens...



...and one from BT

(and small) telephony people are busy trying to work out how to make big bucks from VoIP – and Skype's Out service, which lets you call people in distant countries on land or mobile numbers for about half the price of a local call, makes sure it bills you.

PHONEY WAR

An alternative to Skype is SIP, (Session Initiation Protocol). There are other protocols, such as H323 and also MGCP (media gateway control protocol). But SIP is the most common and allows such things as instant messaging, video and audio conferencing and network gaming. Windows XP's Windows Messenger is tied in with SIP. So SIP looks likely to be the protocol taken up by the business world, leaving Skype to the domestic market – not least because Skype's software is free. On the other hand, Skype's Zennström apparently says that his application was written because SIP was 'such a bad protocol'. But SIP proponents, mostly big commercial operations anxious to get VoIP institutionalised, point out that Skype's programming origins in file-sharing mean that some new firewalls will automatically exclude it. In any case, neither the SIP nor the Skype people are prepared to take the first step to create interoperability between the two systems. However in the US, PCPhonelines is now selling the \$50 (£30) VTA1000 dual-mode Skype/SIP phone which gives users the choice of systems. That is not the end of the battle. But for somebody buying a VoIP system for the office, the technicalities are probably not as important as the installation price, maintenance charges and call charges.

MOBILE FIGHTS BACK

With the possibility of WiFi and Bluetooth wireless VoIP and the introduction of WiMAX, remote VoIP will provide an alternative to cell phones. Not happy with this concept, the cellphone companies are working out ways of fighting back. Vodafone has decided to launch a low-cost, flat-rate 3G service.

FUTURE PROOFING?

If everything is moving so fast, isn't it a good idea to stay with BT until things settle down? Not really. Because next year BT is to start taking its whole system IP (internet protocol) and plans to have done so around the UK by 2009. This won't, admittedly, be on the internet but on BT's private internet. But it will accommodate company VoIP systems because, like it, they will be digital. But you shouldn't expect it to be any less expensive.

This move confuses the issue of how we get VoIP implemented and paid for. Currently, if you have a BT line what you are doing is using VoIP telephony over an existing telephone system for which you still pay telephone line-rental charges. There is a persuasive (to VoIP customers at least) argument for paying only for internet connection. One industry prediction is that as companies move over to VoIP for simple cost reasons, they will eventually be able to take packages involving voice, internet access, video telephony and other services such as high definition television. What would be nice would be the right to choose not to have all the football channels with every package.



OPEN OFFICE OPENS DOORS

This week's entertaining bit of kit is Open Office. It is an ace multi-platform Microsoft Office clone – except it is totally free.

Recently, I didn't have a copy of Excel to hand so, instead of pirating a copy, I downloaded the current beta version of Open Office and fired up its spreadsheet. There was a worrying greyish jumble of lines and then the pure grid of numbers. Ahhh. Word.doc files also started firing up. Both worked just fine. My grasp of the minutiae of spreadsheets is marginal so I didn't exactly stretch its limits. But it looked good.

More interestingly for someone in my trade is the fact that the Open Office wordprocessor now has a word count – although you can't devise an icon and put it on one of the taskbars as you can with Word. Yes, you can cut and paste. But no, not drag and drop. Another annoyance is that you have to reassociate Word files with the Word programme because Open Office takes them over.

But look, if drag and drop makes it to the next full version and the whole thing is free, I can't understand why anybody would not have it on every computer in the office. sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com

PERFECT PROOF

In litigation, the burden of proving a fact usually falls on the person who says it is true, writes *Sue Lindsey*. They have to adduce evidence, which may include expert evidence, to persuade the court that, on the balance of probabilities, their version of events is right. The Court of Appeal has recently rejected the findings of a judge who had decided between conflicting expert evidence on the basis that the claimants had not discharged their burden of proof (*Stephens v Cannon*, 14 March 2005). What are the principles that applied?

Only in exceptional circumstances should a court resort to making a finding on the basis that the burden of proof has not been discharged. A helpful illustration of why and when that might arise is the House of Lords' decision in the case of *Rhesa Shipping*. That case concerned a ship that sank in calm seas.

The claimant, who wanted to recover on their insurance, claimed that the ship had sunk as a result of a collision with an unidentified submerged submarine. The defendant said that the problem was one of wear and tear. The judge ruled out the wear and tear explanation on the basis of the expert evidence, and so felt compelled to decide that the submarine theory must prevail, even though no submarine had been detected.

Lord Brandon cited the Sherlock Holmes dictum: 'How often have I said to you that, when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth?' He then went on to explain why it had been inappropriate for the judge to apply it. There had, in fact, been a third option available – that the burden of proof had not been discharged. The judge could have decided that the claimant had not proved their case, and the true cause of the loss of the ship was in doubt.

In *Stephens v Cannon*, the judge had been faced with conflicting expert opinions on valuation. In addition to the usual problems with valuing property (including which comparables apply and when the property might have been sold) the experts had been valuing a hypothetical house – the defendants were supposed to have built it but had not. The judge opted for the defendant's expert's view, saying: 'I am unable to decide that I prefer one view over the other and in those circumstances the case fails to be decided on the basis of the burden of proof.'

The Court of Appeal emphasised that the court should resort to finding the burden of proof has not been discharged only when, even though it has tried hard to do so, it cannot reasonably make a finding on an issue in dispute.

Furthermore, and in particular in order to comply with the European Convention on Human Rights, the judgment must explain to the parties (and thereby also any appellate court), why it has not been possible to make any other finding. The valuation was not an 'either/or' issue. There was a range of values. Had the court worked through the factors considered by the experts, it might have been able to come to its own view about value without resorting to the burden of proof.

Sue Lindsey is a barrister at Crown Office Chambers. Visit www.crownofficechambers.com



Serralves Museum, Porto

BOOK

By Sarah Jackson

New Museums

By Raul Barreneche.
Phaidon, 2005. 208pp.
£39.95

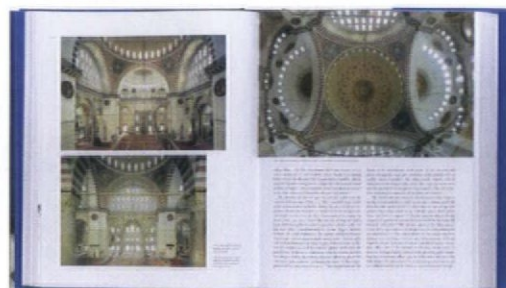
We are, says the introduction, in a golden age of museums; museums (post Bilbao) are now a global phenomenon: they are popular, have been 'revolutionised by desire' (more shops and cafés,) and the architecture is a major part of the appeal. But despite this increase in architectural impact, no clear themes or directions have emerged.

The book is equally directionless. It is made up of 27 seemingly random case studies of museums built in Europe, the US and Japan between 1998 and 2004. For each building there are between five and seven pages of glossy photographs, a page of text and token tiny drawings. The buildings, almost without exception, are shown without context, void of objects or people, and the text seems to be straight from PR puffery

rather than research or direct experience. There are undoubtedly some beautiful buildings (Kengo Kuma's Museum of Hiroshige Ando, for one) but quite why they were chosen, or how they function as museums, is hard to tell. Some interesting themes are touched on – the content versus container debate and the changing balance between object storage and viewing, for example – but they are not discussed in detail and you are left wanting more.

This is a deeply frustrating book. Great for images to pad out presentations but certainly not worth £39.95. Not one of Phaidon's best: a wasted opportunity and a disservice to this fascinating, evolving, building type.

Sarah Jackson is a design review advisor with C&BE



Süleymaniye, Istanbul

BOOK

The Age of Sinan:

Architectural Culture
in the Ottoman Empire

By Gülru Necipoglu.
Reaktion, 2005. 592pp. £60

Maybe some delegates at the recent UIA congress in Istanbul managed to tear themselves away from Zaha and make for the Süleymaniye mosque complex – a symbol of the Ottoman Empire at its 16th-century height, designed by the most accomplished architect of the period, Sinan. With a background in bridge-building and military engineering, Sinan has been called 'the Turkish Michelangelo'; he's also been seen as a proto-Modernist in his rationalism and pursuit of structural clarity in reconciling the dome of a mosque with the rectangular prayer hall beneath. In that respect, his Selimiye mosque at Edirne (1569–75) is hailed as his masterpiece.

But in this dense, detailed, truly comprehensive study, Gülru Necipoglu supplements her formal analyses with an

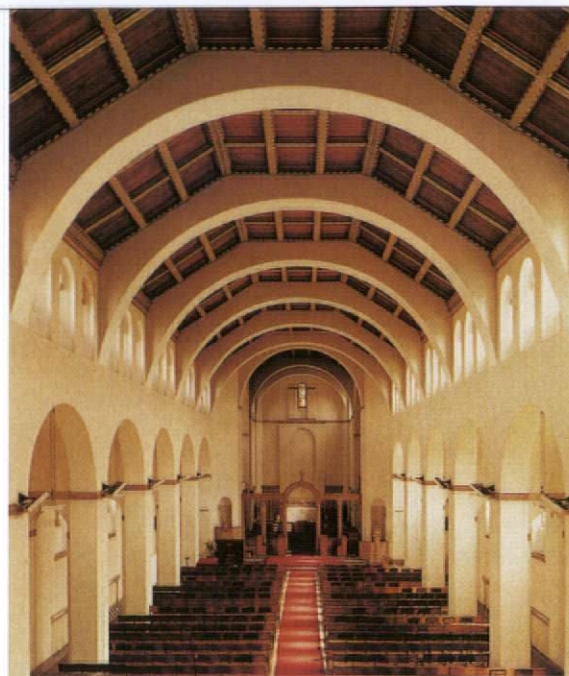
archive-trawling recreation of the cultural context that the buildings (not just mosques) emerged from – the urban setting, the Ottoman construction industry, the status of Sinan's patron for a particular mosque (which would determine its type). Helping her do this are many historical illustrations which accompany the scrupulous plans, sections, and present-day photographs. These images are always subservient to the text, underplayed even – and the book is probably destined for specialists. But after all the detail and myriad annotations, it is hard to disagree with Necipoglu's simple last sentence, where she says that Sinan's mosques are 'intensely alluring monuments, some of the most enduring architectural masterpieces'.



1.



2.



3.

BOOK

By Joe Holyoak

Pevsner Architectural
Guides: Birmingham
By Andrew Foster.
Yale University Press,
2005. 326pp. £9.99

1. Former H B Sale factory
2. Gem Buildings
3. Edwin Reynolds' St Mary's Church,
Pype Hayes
4. Mural from Birmingham Chamber
of Commerce, by John Piper

Directly across the street from Future Systems' Selfridges stands a little blind-windowed building. It is revealed here for the first time that this is Birmingham's last surviving 19th-century music hall. This is typical both of the city's little-known architectural history and of the numerous surprises that are found within this fine book – astonishing value for a tenner. In addition to the riches of the text, the many colour photographs, mostly by James Davies, are ravishing.

Andrew Foster is opinionated in the true Pevsner manner. Selfridges is 'an appalling neighbour'. In the Central Library 'space flows magically'. The city council's new information centre in New Street 'clashes horribly'. You needn't agree, but it makes for entertaining reading.

In the 1966 *Warwickshire* volume of the Buildings of England, Birmingham rated 118 pages; in this new guide it gets more than 300. There is much new research and more extensive coverage of the city centre, with excursions to several outlying areas such as Edgbaston, the University of Birmingham, Aston and Bournville. But you will still need your old Pevsner if you want to visit, say, Maguire and Murray's St Matthew's church or Pugin's St Mary's College.

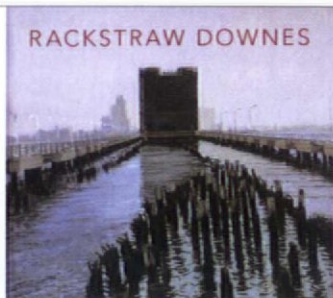
Until recently, nobody visited Birmingham for pleasure. Only a few came to study the architecture (mostly Bournville). People came here to work, to shop, or to study for a degree. Birmingham was certainly ambitious from the 1870s onwards but the ambition was often expressed

in quantity, not quality. In the 1960s, the municipal machine built more council dwellings than anywhere else; those which remain are mostly a liability. Birmingham completed its inner ring road while other cities were hesitating; 20 years later it regretted its boldness and started dismantling it. In the 1970s it defeated London to build a National Exhibition Centre; the result was a joyless collection of big sheds.

But, largely uncelebrated, there has always been an architecture in Birmingham worthy of attention. It often shared some of the qualities of the place and its economy – hard-headed, small-scale, practical and unsentimental. Nationally, prominent architects have regularly designed important buildings: Thomas

Archer, A W N Pugin, Charles Barry, William Lethaby and, less successfully, Norman Foster and Nicholas Grimshaw. But until recently the dominant architectural culture has been largely locally grown.

Foster draws attention to his particular local heroes: William Bidlake, 'foremost Birmingham architect of the Arts and Crafts', praised by Hermann Muthesius in *Das Englische Haus*; Lethaby's disciple Edwin Reynolds, designer of austere composed houses, factories, pubs and churches; and the city's best post-war architect, John Madin. His 1957 commission by the Calthorpe Estate to replan Edgbaston showed how Modernism could sensitively complement 19th-century arcadia. His own fine early '60s house there, Foster notes, 'was nastily rebuilt



Garden Temple
and Temple Pool
at Little Sparta

BOOK

Rackstraw Downes
By Sanford Schwartz et al.
Princeton University
Press, 2005. 192pp. £32.50

One painting in this book is titled *Concrete Ditch With Sewer Main, Texas City*; another is *Four Spots Along A Razor-Wire Fence*. Born in England, Rackstraw Downes lives in the US but he's kept an outsider's eye. His subjects are ones which many photographers have focused on in the past two decades but far fewer painters – construction sites, highway intersections, 'abandoned land and trashscapes'. Downes shuns the glamorous or the monumental (apart from infrastructure). There's no machine-age romance, as there was between the wars, or painterly flourishes to sugar the pill. The works are often panoramic in format: inclusive, democratic, with no detail more important than another. Downes makes a detached inventory of the mundane built world.

CRITIC'S CHOICE

By Andrew Mead

Just as Jože Plečnik engaged with Classicism in a profound but very individual way (AJ 28.07.05), so does *Ian Hamilton Finlay*. Beside a pool of water lilies at Little Sparta – Finlay's garden in the Pentland Hills, 20 miles south-west of Edinburgh – is his Garden Temple, dedicated to Apollo. Plaques and memorials throughout the grounds evoke other mythological figures, or the way Classicism has been mediated by such painters as Poussin and Claude.

Finlay is 80 this year, and three exhibitions in Edinburgh mark the event. At the Scottish Poetry Library is *Early Works from the Wild Hawthorn Press 1964-1971* – a selection of Finlay's prints, cards and booklets. *L'Idylle des Cerises* at the Ingleby Gallery has new graphic works and sculptures, with Finlay's collaborators – the people who do the carving – scrupulously credited as usual, while at 18th-century Inverleith House is *Sentences*: aphorisms that Finlay formulated in the process of making his garden, painted on the walls in various fonts, sizes and colours. 'Classical gardens deal in grave generalisations, modern gardens in fussy particulars,' says one: 'The garden gnome is of the Gothic and not the Hellenic tradition,' says another.

But Little Sparta is permeated by more than Classical myth, with Finlay's references to the French Revolution, the history of English landscape gardening, warships and fishing boats and the passage of the seasons. With a painted inscription on it, even a humble watering can becomes a protagonist in the garden's elaborate morality play. Yet you could ignore all the conscious allusions that punctuate a visit and just enjoy the botanical diversity and the ingenious spatial planning, as Finlay makes every metre of the site count and keeps you turning corners or exploring culs-de-sac, wondering what comes next.

The Little Sparta Trust aims to protect the garden in the future. Already one can see issues of management arising as some of the earlier carved inscriptions begin to erode – should they just become slowly indistinct? Little Sparta will be open intermittently until the end of September. Visit (www.littlesparta.co.uk and www.rbge.org.uk).

For forthcoming events visit www.ajplus.co.uk/diary

in 1991'. (He doesn't name names but we know who he is.)

Madin's major buildings have fared no better. His 1959-60 Chamber of Commerce in Edgbaston, with its John Piper mosaic mural, will soon be demolished. Also under threat are his two best city-centre buildings, the Lever House-influenced 1966 Post and Mail building, and the Corbusian 1973 Central Library. Implied in the book is the belief that the attitudes that destroyed many of the city's best Victorian buildings in the 60s and 70s still persist, now showing the same indiscriminate blindness to the merits of the best post-war Modernism. This book provides valuable evidence which may at least help to counter them.

Joe Holyoak is an architect and urban designer and a reader at Birmingham School of Architecture

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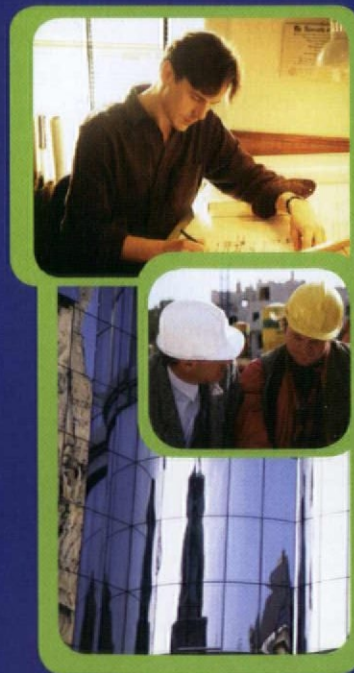
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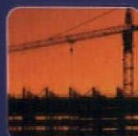
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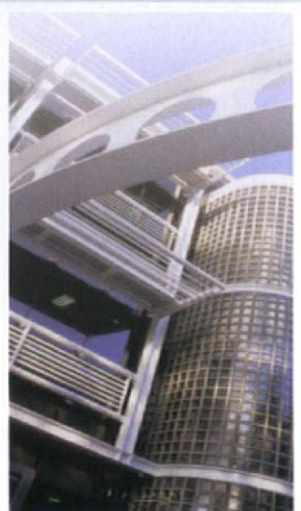
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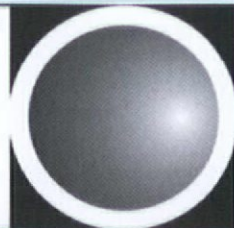
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Newly Qualified Architects - Shoreditch

This practice has recently set up a 2nd office and is now looking for good technical architects. Working on a £30million hotel refurbishment as well as a number of educational projects. The firm uses Vectorworks and is happy to cross-train. Could suit candidates looking for either temporary or permanent positions, but should be immediately available. JOB REF 0714

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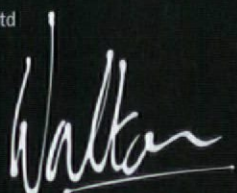
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Interviews: From September 12 2005

Application forms (CVs not considered) via phone or email quote ref: AJ

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TENDER

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT

Durham County Council seeks expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced contractors who wish to be considered for inclusion on the tender list for the contract to construct a new Heritage Resource Centre at Hardwick Park near Sedgfield, County Durham.

The new building is a timber and glass pavilion approximately 400 sq metres to a design by Sarah Hare Architect selected following an RIBA competition. The cost of the building is estimated to be in the region of £900,000

The project forms part of the restoration of the 17th Century landscape garden which benefits from grant aid through the Heritage Lottery Fund. We are looking for contractors with a good record in delivering bespoke high quality buildings who can demonstrate an ability to work to extremely tight tolerances on joinery elements and preferably experience with glulam structures.

Expressions of interest must be received no later than 22nd August 2005. Following this the pre-qualification documentation will be sent out with a return deadline of 5th September 2005.

Successful pre-qualification will require submission of company health and safety documentation, company accounts and completion of the pre-qualification questionnaire together with references detailing relevant projects completed in the last 3 years.

The pre-qualification information will be assessed by the County Council and the Design Team with a view to selecting a short list of 5 or 6 contractors who will be issued tender documentation on 19 September with tender return by 14th October 2005. The tender process will be a single stage tender based on bills of quantities in accordance with NJCC code of practice. We are seeking contractors who are able to make an early start on site with a view to completing this building by June 2006.

David Miller BSc. MRTPI
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Architectural Competition – Expressions of Interest

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Landmark Building – Shoeburyness



Gladedale Homes and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council wish to invite Expressions of Interest for an Architectural Competition for a Landmark Building at the entrance to the Thames Gateway in the former Shoebury Garrison, Southend-on-Sea.

The site is in a prime location at the mouth of the River Thames and within the context of the 189-acre former Garrison. The Landmark Building will therefore set the benchmark for the high quality and design standards expected for the remaining development and Southend generally. As such, it will need to integrate fully with the existing and future phases, demonstrate a clear contribution to the creation of a distinctive place and promote ease of access to and through the development.

Applications are invited from Architects who wish to be considered for inclusion on a shortlist for the competition for the design of this building.

This Expression of Interest should be submitted in writing to Ian Curry at the address below by Friday 2nd September, 2005.

Submissions must be no more than 12 A4/A3 pages detailing relevant experience, financial standing, PI Cover, CV's of key personnel and statement of availability to commence work immediately.

The appointment will be in 2 stages:

1. A shortlist of up to 4 architectural practices will be invited to submit proposals. An honorarium of up to £3,000 will be awarded to each of the short listed practices.
2. The successful architect will be invited to develop the proposals, at least up to Planning stage, (RIBA work Stage D).



LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

PROCUREMENT OF TECHNICAL AND DESIGN SERVICES FOR THE NEW PRESTON REGIONAL BUS INTERCHANGE

Lancashire County Council is inviting expressions of interest from consultants with a proven record of designing new transport interchanges to tender for the design of a new Preston Bus Regional Interchange.

For further information please log onto:

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using the key word (place) Preston.

The reference number is:
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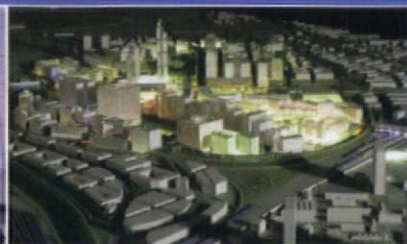
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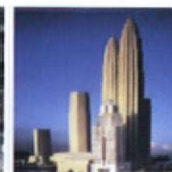
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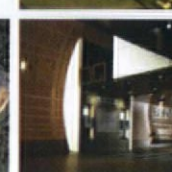
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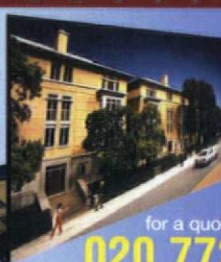
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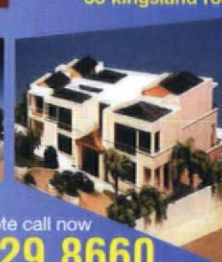
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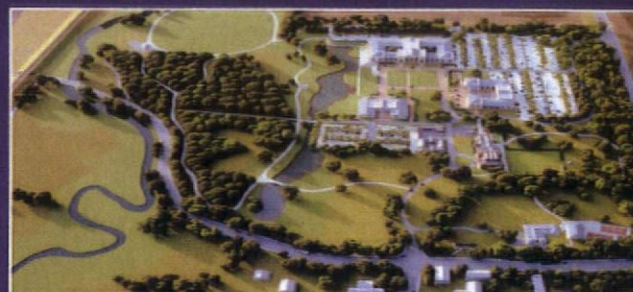
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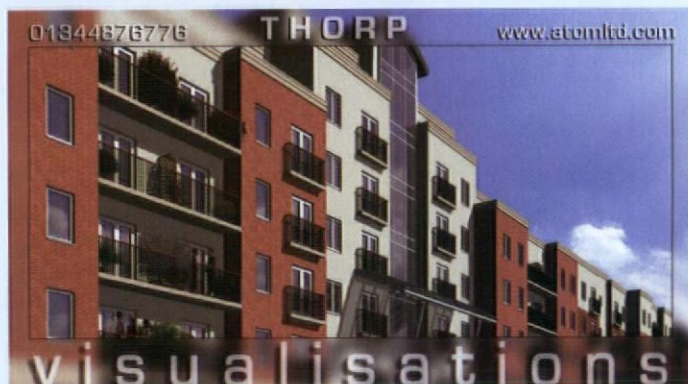


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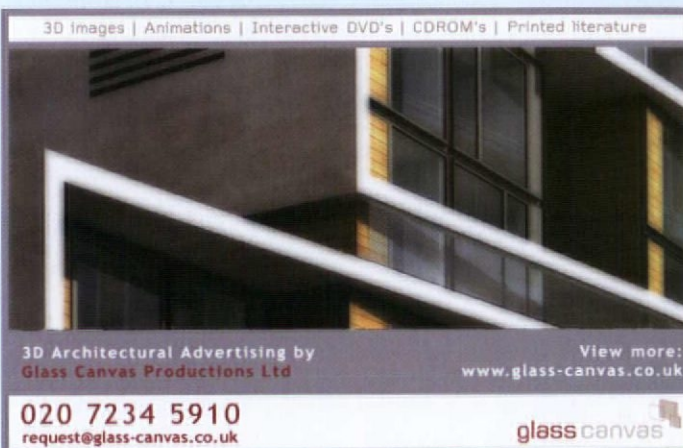


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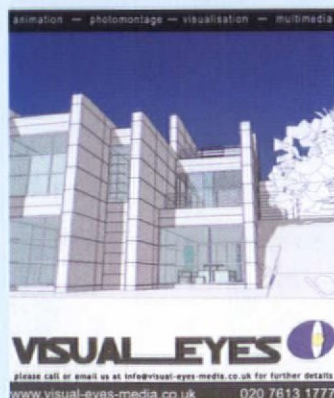
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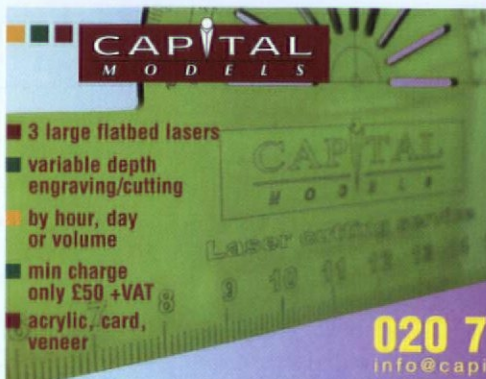
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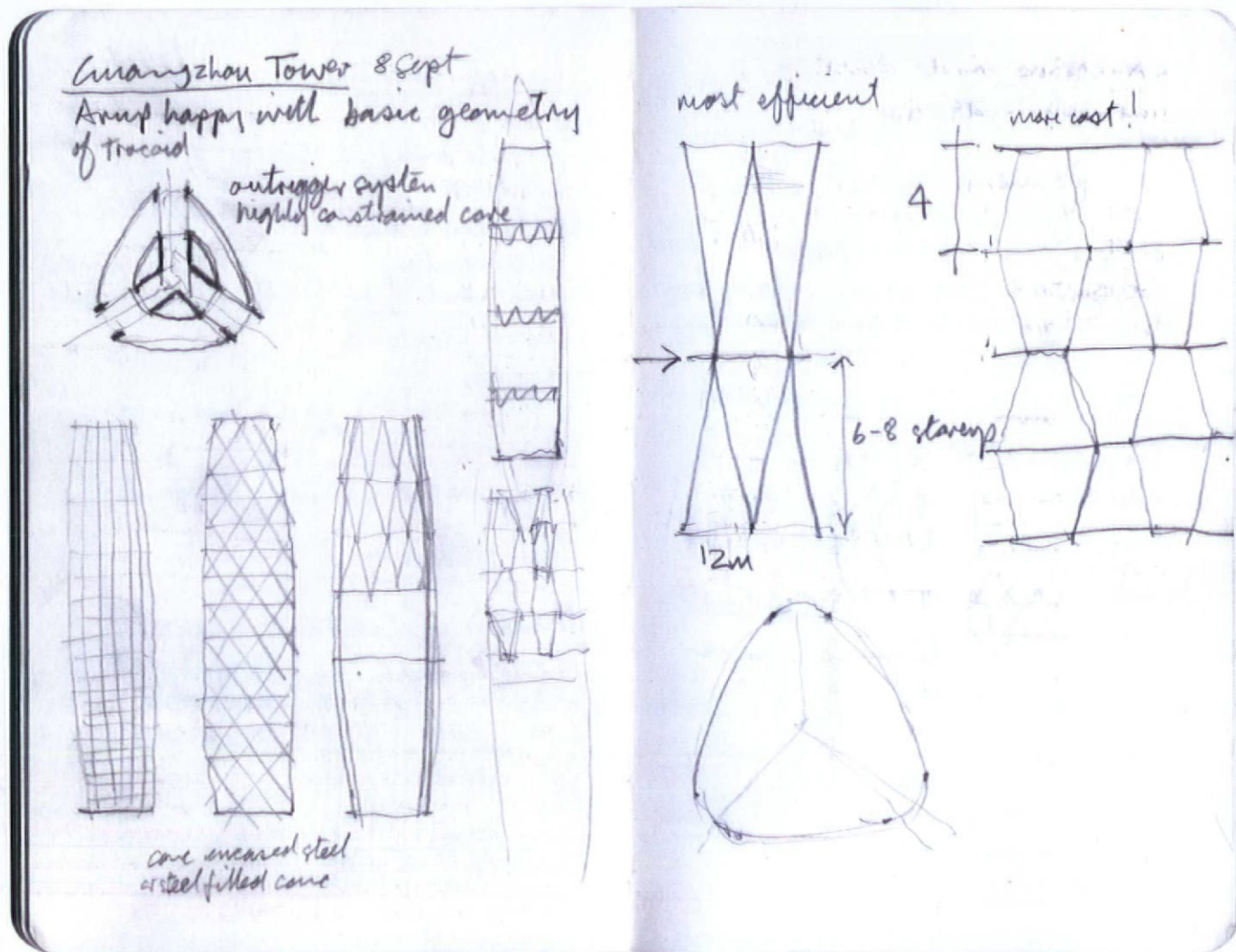
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Study sketches for Guangzhou Tower. By Chris Wilkinson of Wilkinson Eyre

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Kalcurve, which is a variation of translucent Kalwall cladding and roofing system from Stoakes Systems, has been used by INC Design Associates to create this attraction over a Wetherspoon pub at Merry Hill Shopping Centre, Brierley Hill. At night, the facade is transformed into a glowing skin by fibre-optic lights.

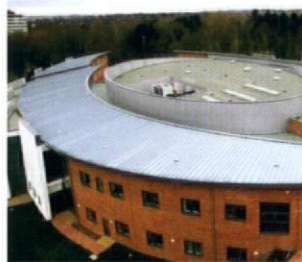
KAWNEER



AJ ENQUIRY 203

In keeping with the government's agenda for educational transformation, Kawneer, the UK's leading manufacturer and supplier of architectural and aluminium systems, has launched its fully unitised AA4001 framing system. The system meets the requirements of Document L of BB93.

ASH & LACY



AJ ENQUIRY 204

A prestigious new addition to Birmingham's landmark buildings has been finished with a roof that demonstrates the versatility of Ash & Lacy's Ashzip standing-seam roof system. The £17 million Elmhurst Ballet School has relocated from Camberley in Surrey and features some 5,000m² of Ashzip roofing.

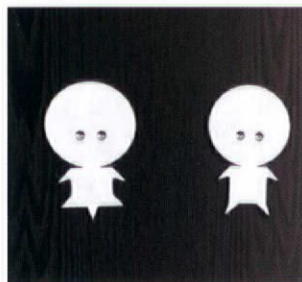
KABA



AJ ENQUIRY 205

World-leading door manufacturer and supplier Kaba Door Systems has launched KOAX – a ground-breaking, separated extra low-voltage DC motor drive and control system, which will revolutionise the safety and operation of industrial overhead doors and roller shutters.

PHILIP WATTS DESIGN



AJ ENQUIRY 206

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