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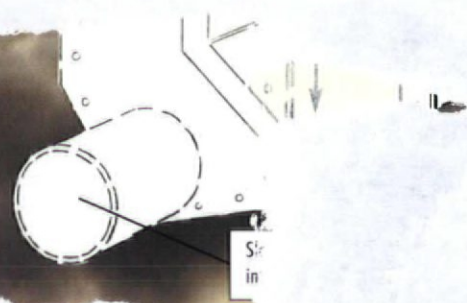




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151 Rosebery Avenue,  
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Editorial enquiries  
020 7505 6700  
Editorial fax number  
020 7505 6701  
Email  
firstname.surname@emap.com

**Editor**  
Isabel Allen  
**News editor**  
Ed Dorrell (020 7505 6715)  
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**Reporter**  
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## MODERNISM'S FALL FROM GRACE HAS MADE IT A STROPPY OUTSIDER AGAIN

By Isabel Allen

For all its newness, Le Corbusier's soon-to-be-completed church at Firminy (*see pages 27-39*) is showing signs of age. Its claim to being 'modern' is rendered a little shaky by the fact that it is reaching completion 40 years later than planned. The liturgical and cultural preferences it sought to reflect have long since moved on; the priest's living accommodation in its undercroft is no longer required. The structural expression speaks more about the technological possibilities of a bygone age than of a brave new world.

What remains, however, is the ability of the most successful Modernist buildings to play the role of devil's advocate. Modernism has been at its most potent and effective when it has been on the sidelines of architectural discourse, and at its most lacklustre or destructive when it has become the norm. Such changes in fortune are routinely ascribed to the degree of quality and care associated with its execution. As the preserve of a pioneering minority, it enjoyed the careful

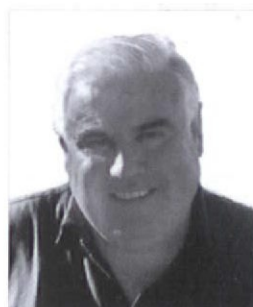
ministrations of a committed and skilled elite. As the default position of second-rate architects, planners and politicians, it fell into hands that were under-resourced, uncaring and inept. But there is a second issue. The underlying ethos behind Modernism was the reaction against conservatism; the reappraisal of society and the redefinition of built form. Those who advocated the universal application of its stylistic and formal qualities undermined the spirit of experiment and enquiry from which it gained its strength.

Paradoxically, Modernism's fall from grace has reinstated its status as a stropky outsider, sniping against the twin ills of conservatism and complacency. Where the orthogonal rigour of Le Corbusier's early work made a mockery of the idiosyncrasies of traditional architecture, the thoughtfulness and *gravitas* of his more expressive later work can be read as a built reproach to a culture which prizes the meaningless iconic gesture as an end in itself.

## CONTRIBUTORS



Jake Spain, whose photographs of the Firminy church feature in the *Building Study* on pages 27-39, is an architectural photographer based in Hampshire



William JR Curtis, who writes the review of Le Corbusier's Firminy church, is an architectural historian and the author of *Le Corbusier: Ideas and Forms*



George Saumarez-Smith, who reviews the book about the work of Joseph Gandy on page 46, is an architect with Robert Adam Architects

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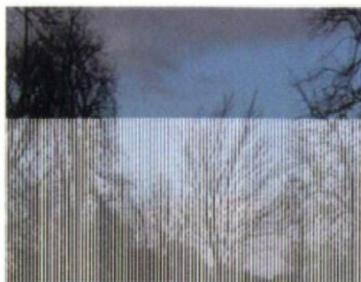
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#### FRIDAY 7 APRIL

- Paul Davis and AHMM win planning for new Saatchi gallery plans
- **Rogers faces major Cambridge rejection**
- Early indicator hints at possible Stirling 2006 shortlist
- Japanese star Kuma shortlisted in North East museum competition

#### MONDAY 10 APRIL

- Schmidlin cladding firm saved by German contractor
- **Lesser known Brazilian lands Pritzker prize (see pages 14-15)**
- Labour counter-attacks Tory record on regeneration
- Congestion charge opponents use design as weapon to hit Livingstone



#### THURSDAY 6 APRIL

- **Crowds sleep out in effort to snap up Shed KM's Salford upside-down terrace (right)**
- Wilkinson Eyre has second go in Brighton but risks wrath with no height reduction
- New plans for Margate's contentious Turner Contemporary revealed
- EH agrees to leave historic Fortress House headquarters



#### TUESDAY 11 APRIL

- **Modern church in Hackney wins listing (above)**
- Ken Yeang sees off stars to bring home bacon for Llewelyn Davies in Istanbul
- Victorian lobbyists come out in favour of Modernist Crystal Palace (see pages 10-11)
- Environment Agency admits polluting river

#### WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL

- Three in hospital as scaffold collapses at Consarc Design's Milton Keynes hotel
- Terry Farrell warned by conservationists over Edinburgh plans
- Government Office for London decide against Argent King's Cross call-in
- **Project 35 English and Konu Architects wins planning in Greenwich (left)**





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Staiths South Bank by Hemingway Design and Ian Darby Partnership for George Wimpey (photo by Tim Crocker)

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## DCMS CLIMBDOWN TO ZAHA REVEALED

The AJ has obtained the letter of apology Zaha Hadid forced out of the DCMS after Tessa Jowell made unsubstantiated claims about the London 2012 Olympic Aquatics Centre project last year. Following a heated exchange about Jowell's comments, DCMS sports chief Nicola Roche was forced to retract the allegations. Zaha, who worked on the scheme with S&P Architects, is understood to have threatened Jowell and her department with legal action before the letter was produced. The document, dated 21 December, represents an extraordinary climbdown for the minister, given the vehement nature of her earlier comments about the scheme. 'I have had to send the designers of the Olympic Aquatics Centre back to the drawing board because a change in the specification had almost doubled costs, which is simply unacceptable,' she told the Thames Gateway Forum on 24 November 2005. 'In our bid we pledged that the centre would cost £75 million, and that is what it will do. I will ensure that any potential overspend, no matter how small, is caught early and driven back down wherever possible.'

By Ed Dorrell and  
Richard Waite

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Zaha Hadid  
Zaha Hadid Architects  
Studio 9, 10 Bowling Green Lane  
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EC1R 0BQ

Your Ref

Our Ref.

21 December 2005



Dear Zaha,  
London 2012 Aquatics Centre

Following recent media reports about the costs of London 2012 Aquatics Centre, I thought it would be helpful if I wrote with the intention of providing some clarity for any clients who may have raised queries as a result of the coverage of the project.

Firstly, while the Aquatics Centre is more advanced than any of the other Olympic Venues, it is still at a very early stage of its development. That said, I understand from the LDA that, having won the Design Competition, Zaha Hadid Architects have undertaken all of the concept development work asked of them to high standards and required timescales.

I can confirm that Zaha Hadid Architects did not change the specification, nor have they been responsible for any proposed rise in costs. The Secretary of State's comments about the Aquatics Centre should be seen in the context of a continuing process of controlling the potential for costs to rise as is the case with any project. Given the amount of public expenditure involved in the Olympics, the Secretary of State was stressing that it is of paramount importance that a tight rein is kept on all costs - I understand from the LDA that you have been collaboratively and positively involved in cost control.

I can assure you on behalf of DCMS that we are grateful for, and supportive of, the work carried out by your team.

Kind regards,  
Nicola Roche

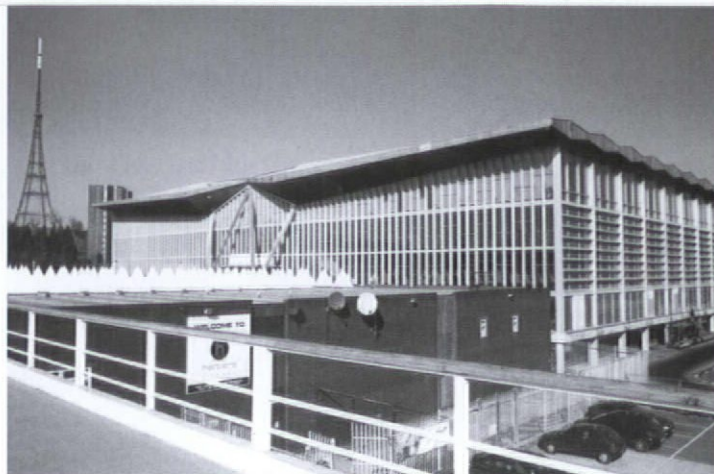
Nicola Roche  
Director of Sport



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE







1.

# HARRAP JOINS PALACE DEFENDERS

By Rob Sharp

Conservation architect Julian Harrap has joined the fight to save London's Grade II\*-listed Crystal Palace National Sports Centre, it has emerged.

The architect has produced these proposals (*opposite*) in a bid to prevent the demolition of the distinctive 1963 sports facility, designed by London County Council Architects.

Late last year, the Twentieth Century Society (C20) charged Harrap – who is currently working on London's Soane Museum – with the task of coming up with plans to save the dilapidated structure.

Now the AJ can exclusively reveal images of Harrap's controversial bid to save the crumbling sports facility from being razed to the ground.

The London Development Agency (LDA), which is

running a competition to redevelop the centre, has received massive public support for its destruction and replacement with a new centre.

But Harrap has proposed to keep the landmark open by subsidising its maintenance through the creation of an enabling development nearby, potentially in the form of a new housing scheme.

The designer has also created a number of options for rejuvenating the surrounding Grade II\*-listed park.

These include plans to resurrect some of its historic attractions, which include an FA Cup-quality football pitch and a motor-racing track.

Harrap said: 'We think we have a formula that would be attractive to the centre's supporters.'

Meanwhile, three other high-profile campaigners have added their voices to the growing chorus of dissent over the LDA's plans.

These include design consultant and Channel Four presenter Naomi Cleaver.

She said: 'The Crystal Palace Sports Centre is Grade-II\* listed for a reason, and that's because it's a majestic, grand building that has served the community magnificently.'

'Just because it is in need of refurbishment, do we really need to knock it down and start again? Surely this is throwing the baby out with the bath water, not to mention even more costly.'

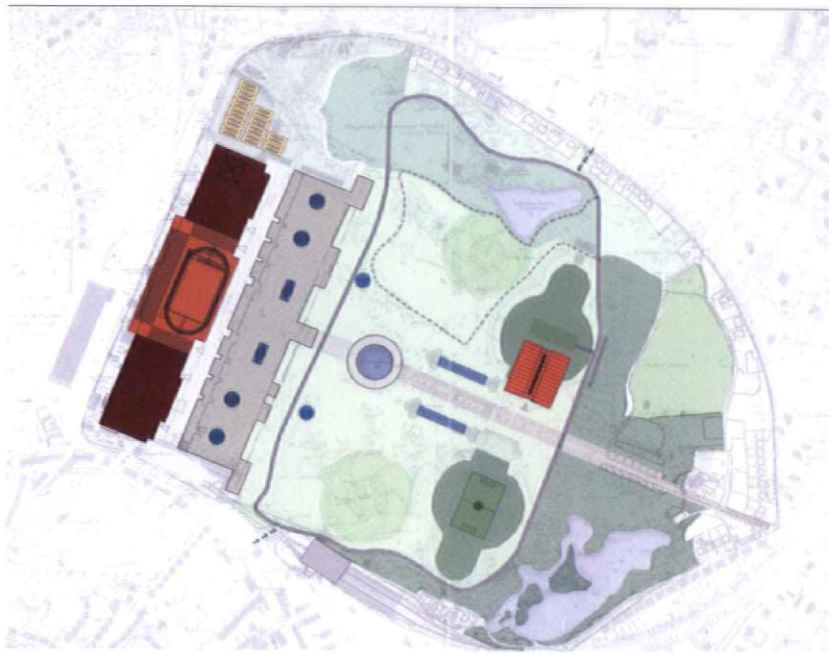
And Victorian Society spokesperson Kathryn Ferry said that she also could not support the centre's demolition.

'The Victorian Society believes that imaginative plans for the country's most important municipal park are long overdue, and we would encourage the LDA to take a holistic approach to this historic landscape,' she said.

Garden History Society principal conservation officer Jonathan Lovie agrees. 'The park today is depressing and barren and the C20 Society/Harrap proposals offer a well-balanced way forward,' he said.

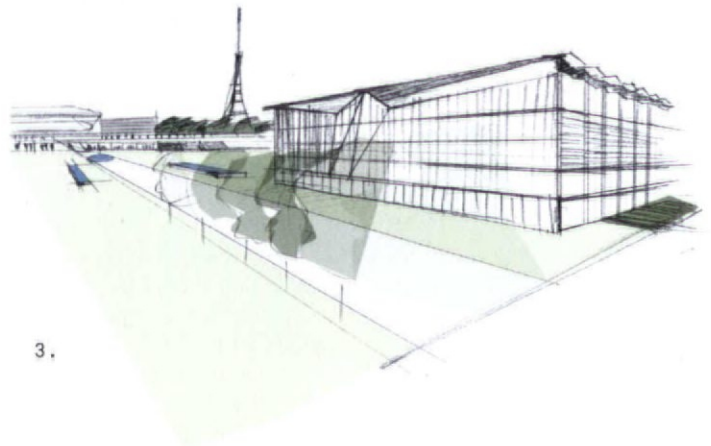
An LDA spokesperson responded by reinforcing the popular support for demolition. Locals had, he said, voted 'seven-to-one in favour' of a new sports facility, with the 'vast majority' of these wanting to see the existing centre knocked down.





2.

1. The dilapidated 1963 Crystal Palace Sports Centre, by London County Council Architects, is facing demolition  
 2, 3 & 4. The proposal by Julian Harrap would maintain the fabric of the Grade II\*-listed building and improve its surroundings

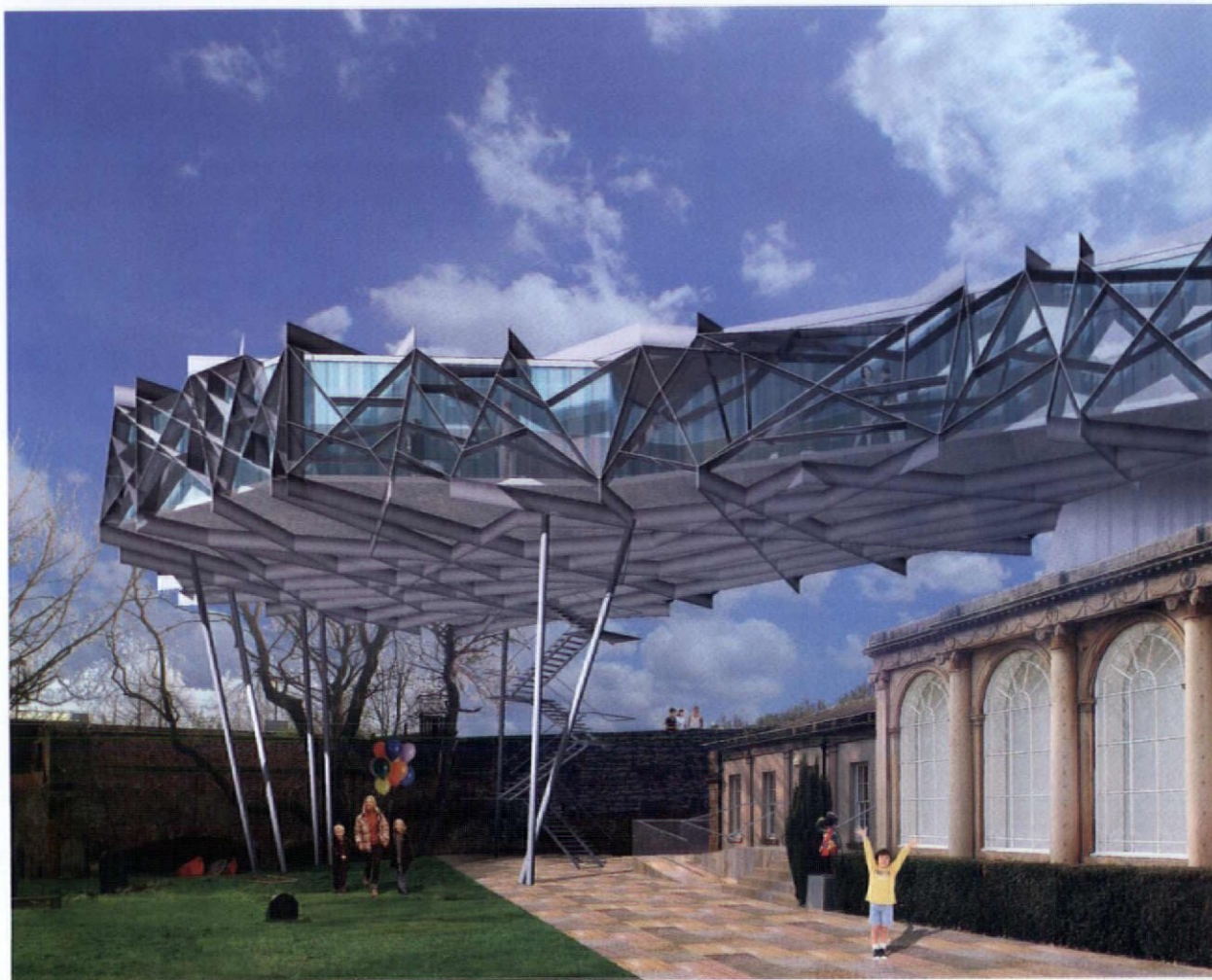


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### SMC ALSOP ENJOYS FIRST TASTE OF SUCCESS

SMC Alsop, the firm created last month when Stuart McColl's SMC Group took over Alsop Design, has won planning permission for this extension to Wakefield's Grade II\*-listed Orangery. The approval, granted this week, represents the first major success for the new office. The scheme, when complete, will feature a new glazed pavilion, which will be a 'creative centre for the built environment'. Backed by both CABE and Arts Council England, the project will also provide conference facilities. The Orangery – which in the past 300 years has acted as a school, a bathhouse, a burial site and a zoological garden – is at the centre of a site set around the city's railway station that is earmarked for regeneration. Also this week, SMC Alsop was shortlisted in the international competition for a 'Garden Ring City' in Singapore.

*By Ed Dorrell*



SMC Alsop plans to update Wakefield's 300-year-old Orangery with a glazed pavilion



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1.



2.

## WHO IS THE NEW PRITZKER WINNER?

By Clive Walker

Paulo Mendes da Rocha must surely be the best-known unknown in the architectural world. The 77-year-old is this year's winner of the coveted Pritzker architecture award – considered the Nobel prize for architecture – yet he remains relatively anonymous on the world stage.

In his native Brazil, however, his signature concrete style is as famous – and as adored – as Rio de Janeiro's statue of Christ, Corcovado.

Much of São Paulo, Brazil's business capital and home to 18 million people, has been shaped by Mendes da Rocha's hand. His Modern, often Brutal, designs include private homes, housing complexes, a church, museums and sports stadiums.

The Pritzker jury praised Mendes da Rocha for showing a deep understanding of space

and scale over the past six decades as an architect and, latterly, as a university lecturer.

'Inspired by the principles and language of Modernism, as well as through his bold use of simple materials, he modifies the landscape with his architecture, striving to meet both social and aesthetic human needs,' the panel said.

Among Mendes da Rocha's most popular works is the 1992 remodelling of Patriarch Plaza in São Paulo, symbolised by a floating canopy suspended from an architrave.

Other noteworthy buildings include the semi-subterranean Brazilian Sculpture Museum, also in São Paulo, where he used large slabs of concrete to create underground space. Mendes da Rocha's penchant for steel and concrete is also evidenced at the city's famous

Forma Furniture Store. His design is distinguished by a store-length glass facade – a recurring theme of his work.

Throughout his career, Mendes da Rocha has never been afraid to take risks. A 1954 graduate of the Mackenzie Architecture School, he shot to national fame in Brazil with a radical flying saucer-shaped design for the Paulistano Athletics Club, São Paulo. This structure – which won him the Presidential Award at the 1961 sixth Bienal of São Paulo – features reinforced concrete with steel cables suspending a steel roof, and was completed in 1958. It was considered revolutionary for 1950s Brazil, where construction lagged behind the rest of the world.

Like many architects, Mendes da Rocha designed his own home in 1960. The single-





3.



5.



4.

1. Plans for the University of Vigo, in Spain, could make Paulo Mendes da Rocha an international star
2. Mendes da Rocha lives and works in São Paulo, Brazil
3. The architect's self-designed house
4. Sketch for the Brazilian Pavilion at the 1969 Osaka Expo
5. The Paulistano Athletics Club, São Paulo

storey structure, resting on pillars, is embedded in a small hill and maximises the use of prefabricated and mass-produced reinforced concrete.

1969 saw the architect make his international debut, designing the audacious Brazilian Pavilion for the International Expo in Osaka, Japan. He travelled to Japan to manage the project – featuring a concrete and glass deck – needing special permission from the Brazilian military dictatorship to do so.

Despite being a finalist in the Pompidou Centre competition in 1971 and, 30 years later, creating Paris' bid for the 2008 Olympics, international project wins have largely eluded the new Pritzker winner.

But a recent success with a scheme for the University of

Vigo, in Galicia, north-west Spain, could elevate his international status. The brief is to integrate a series of buildings – a library, engineering departments, administration offices, and student residences – designed by several different Spanish architects, into a single campus. On the strength of this win, the Spanish government has commissioned Mendes da Rocha to develop a state-funded social housing scheme.

Parallel to practising, Mendes da Rocha has lectured since the 1960s at the University of São Paulo's school of architecture. His controversial views on social and humanistic issues brought him to the attention of Brazil's ultra right-wing dictatorship. In 1969 he was forced to quit teaching and only returned in 1980 when an amnesty was declared.

Mendes da Rocha still lives and works in his beloved city of São Paulo. His other great passion besides architecture is designing furniture – one example is the highly modernistic Paulistano chair.

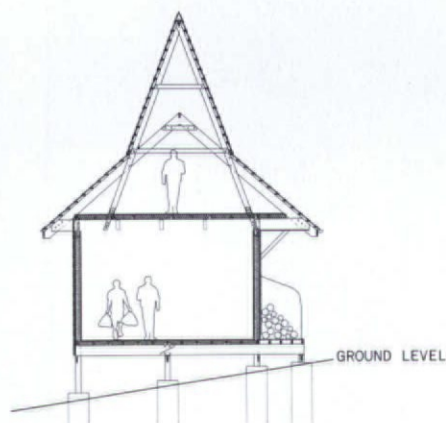
Pritzker may be Mendes da Rocha's most glittering accolade, but it is by no means the only award gracing his mantelpiece. In 2000, for example, he collected the Mies van der Rohe prize for Latin American architecture.

While few of his buildings have been realised outside Brazil, the lessons to be learned from his work, both as a practising architect and a teacher, are universal. Few architects can claim to be the author of such audacious, Modern designs that test the limits of construction.

## PAULO MENDES DA ROCHA CHRONOLOGY

- 1928** Born October 25 in Vitoria, Brazil
- 1954** Graduates, Mackenzie Architecture School
- 1958** Paulistano Athletic Club, Mendes da Rocha's first major commission, opens
- 1961** Wins Presidential Award for Paulistano Athletics Club
- 1969** Oversees construction of Brazilian Pavilion for the International Expo, Osaka, Japan. Forced to quit his university lectureship
- 1971** Finalist in the Paris Centre Pompidou competition
- 1977** Begins series of interstate bus terminals
- 1987** Designs iconic Forma Furniture Store, São Paulo
- 1988** Brazilian Museum of Sculpture, São Paulo, opens
- 1992** Completion of Patriarch Square and Viaduct do Cha renovation scheme
- 1993** Renovation of São Paulo state museum
- 1999** Designs stadia for Paris' 2008 Olympic Games bid
- 2004** Begins masterplanning enlargement and reconfiguration of Vigo University, Spain
- 2006** Named Pritzker architecture award winner





1. Section through dryer



2. The facility will use vernacular materials and construction techniques

# CHARITY SOWS SEEDS IN ROMANIA

By Ed Dorrell

The UK chapter of charity Architecture for Humanity (AfH) has revealed the details of its first international project.

The group, headed by BDP's Chris Medland and Megan Yates of Techniker, has worked *pro bono* with a group of students from Oxford University's Said Business School to design this Arnica flower-drying facility in Romania.

The concept – for the timber-clad, naturally ventilated 12 x 5m facility – is that of a generic model, which can be rolled out to other surrounding areas by local teams.

The brief demanded a building that would provide space for the drying process, the facilities required for hot-air production, the storage of 'green timber' and a lobby area for preparation.

The British-based charity also tried to design a building that could be constructed using vernacular building methods, materials and techniques as a way of guaranteeing that local trades can carry out the work on the structures.

Another unusual design challenge was allowing for the potentially steep slopes and remote sites of the Carpathian Mountains, where most of the Arnica-growing cottage industry is found.

The scheme was also carried out in collaboration with a community co-operative in Girda de Sus, in the west of Romania, which will further develop the designs to suit other sites.

The project, supported by the World Wildlife Fund, is as much a venture in business as an architectural exercise. As

such, both AfH and Said representatives have worked on developing the business model for the site.

Its main aim is to set up a pilot business that will 'add value' onsite by drying the flowers as soon as they are picked, and then exporting them directly to a German buyer with whom a contract has already been negotiated.

This business will be set up as a hybrid non-governmental organisation/not-for-profit company, with profits fed back into the system as subsidies for local farmers to keep some flowers on the fields to maintain ecological sustainability.

With the drying season starting in June, construction is planned to start on site in the next few weeks.

Visit [www.afhuk.org](http://www.afhuk.org) for further details.





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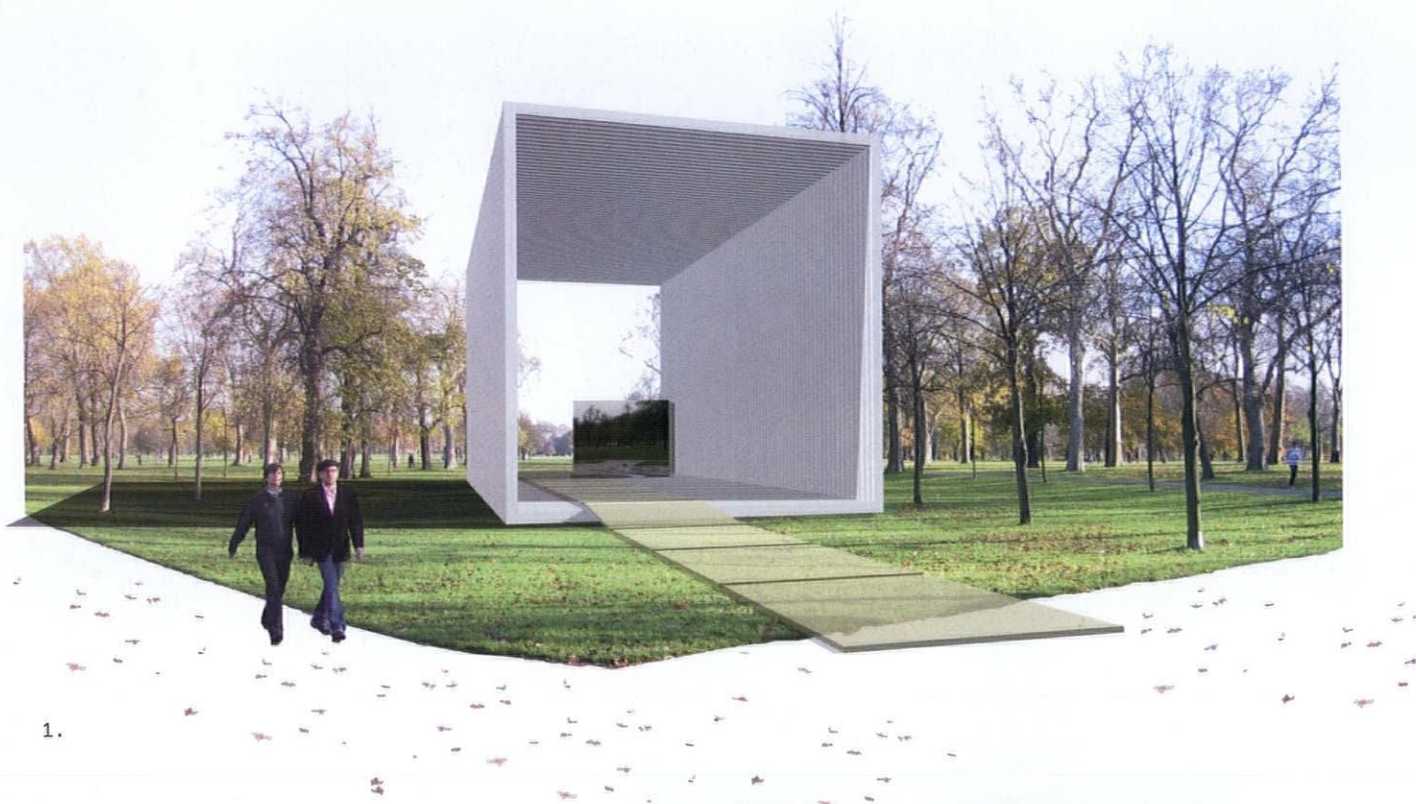
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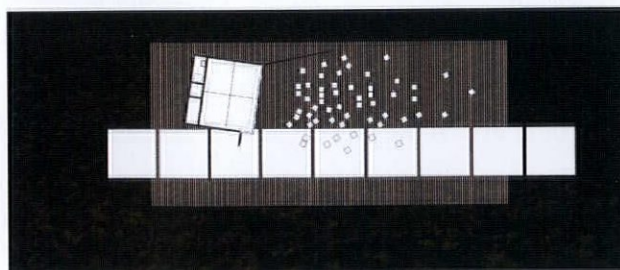




### FEENY UNCORKS ART BOX PLAN

London-based Peter Feeny Architects, with 3P Urban Process, has won an international competition for an 'art box' in Cork, the Republic of Ireland. The duo saw off competition from four other shortlisted submissions, including fellow London firm Eldridge Smerin. The winning design features a small mirrored box – the 'art box' itself – sitting within the outer frame. This frame, which is 12 x 12 x 24m, is composed of rectangular white fibre-reinforced plastic. This was designed to 'provide a filter' between the internal and external surroundings, which acts as a potential site for concerts, lectures and film screenings. The firm also designed a 'carpet', to link the box and frame to the outside world. The carpet will be made up of an LED system linked to a computer that responds to the movement within the art box.

*By Ed Dorrell*



1. The art box sits within a plastic frame  
2 & 3. Concept designs





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*'His creations must have inspired more misery than any in history'*

Simon Jenkins on Le Corbusier. *Guardian*, 07.04.06

*'While there are many subjects on which Simon Jenkins is a perceptive and intelligent writer, aesthetics is not one of them'*

Deyan Sudjic. *Observer*, 10.04.06

*'It was always the asceticism of the affluent'*

Thomas Sutcliffe on Modernism. *Independent*, 07.04.06

*'Now is the time to put it into its history box and lock it up for good'*

Robert Adam on Modernism. *Observer*, 10.04.06



#### BRAD BEHAVIOUR

Will we ever know the true nature of the relationship Hollywood superstar **Brad Pitt** has with the wonderful wacky world of architecture? At first we understood that Bradley was besotted with the discipline to the point where he'd agreed to take up an apprenticeship with **Frank Gehry**. Brad was even supposed to be designing a chunk of the Frank's Hove scheme. But then it all fell apart and Frank told a US magazine that he'd only met Brad the once – and that was very definitely all. However, **Angelina Jolie**'s beau has apparently now rekindled his love affair with buildings. He's been spotted down in the Caribbean meeting with some more architectural types – **Thomas Willemeit**, **Wolfram Putz** and **Lars Krueckeberg** – to discuss

an extremely high-end development in Palm Springs. Careful chaps, Brad seems fickle. Let's hope for their sake the affair's not so short-lived this time around.

#### LIVING IN A BUBBLE

An oddly small affair at the RIBA marked the launch of an excellent book, by **Tony Chapman**, to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the Stirling Prize. The names were out in force; **Chris Wilkinson**, **Ian Ritchie**, **Will Alsop** and **Marco Goldschmied** were but a few. The highlight was the result of a caption competition which featured **Marco** and **Stella McCartney**, the 1999 celebrity judge, in **Future Systems**' Lords media centre. The invented quotes had Marco turning to Stella to ask: 'What do you make of this scheme?', to which

she replies: 'Whatever!' Outstanding work.

#### FOOLS TOLD

News reaches Astragal of a bit of a misunderstanding. In AJ 30.03.06, the newsdesk ran a story about the **Historic Buildings Liberation Front**, which was then followed up in the *Guardian* two days later – 1 April. Apparently a large swathe of our glorious readership read the piece and concluded that it was an April Fool's article. It was not a joke – it was serious. There really is a nutter running round the towns of Bedfordshire and north Hertfordshire attacking new developments. It's unlikely, verging on the stupid, but it is not made up. You can phone the ever-helpful folk at Bedfordshire Constabulary if you don't believe us.



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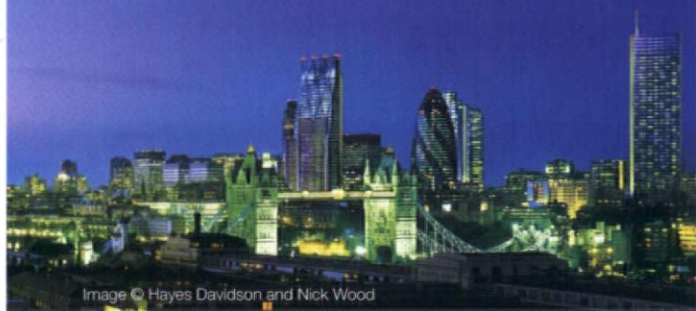


Image © Hayes Davidson and Nick Wood

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## LETTERS

### TSO CLAIMS PART L ERRORS REPORT WAS 'INACCURATE'

The Stationery Office (TSO) was extremely surprised to read the article 'Unauthorised Part L Published' (AJ 06.04.06). There are a number of inaccuracies in it, which would have been avoided if the AJ had talked to TSO before publication.

Not only did TSO publish its Approved Documents with the full knowledge of the ODPM, but also at no time did the ODPM consider legal action against TSO, contrary to what the article claims.

By way of background, TSO's publication of its own imprint of Approved Documents is under a valid Public Sector Information (PSI) licence and with the full knowledge of ODPM. This type of activity is encouraged throughout government as part of the Reuse of Public Sector Information regulations.

TSO's publications faithfully represented the information published on the ODPM website between 15 and 31 March. At no stage did TSO introduce any errors into the material.

TSO is printing revised versions of the relevant documents and will send a free copy to all customers that have already purchased them.

We are very conscious of the importance of information to our customers and will ensure that all information contained in a document carrying a TSO imprint is entirely reliable.

Unsubstantiated and inaccurate accusations of the kind that appeared in your article damage TSO's reputation.

*Richard Dell, chief operating officer, TSO*

### CAMERA DESIGN IS POLAR OPPOSITE OF WHAT IS NEEDED

Despite being a confirmed supporter of the congestion charge, I have sympathy for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea over the issue of poles and cameras (ajplus 10.04.06).

These are just the latest abomination to clutter up our streetscape, along with the plethora of markings, notices and unsightly bins. Every now and then an enlightened authority commissions some swanky street furniture from a trendy practice, but even this is soon marooned in the rising tide of random bits and pieces.

It is time that Ken Livingstone put some of the income from the congestion charge into decongesting our streets of their shameful cargo of ill-thought-out excrescences.

It might even create some space for the councils' sanitation departments to deal with the tidal wave of litter, dogs' mess, and stuck-on chewing gum that is dragging down the experience of living in London for those who are forced to repedestrianise the streets.

*Denise Marshall, London SW4*

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### FESTIVAL LEGACY SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE PAST

I wonder how many people gave a second glance to the Festival of Britain pavilion faced with demolition (AJ 06.04.06)?

In a museum it might attain some *gravitas*, but otherwise it hardly grabs attention. Making it one of a triumvirate with the Festival Hall and the Lansbury Estate is laughable.

Make's sharply geometric structure looks far more exciting. Isn't it time to stop wallowing in the past?

Lorraine Woodward, by email

### DRAWING UP A PROPOSAL FOR THE SKETCHBOOK

Having seen the final page of last week's AJ (AJ 06.04.06), may I ask whether you would consider renaming the 'Sketchbook' feature 'Scribble Pad'?

Would you have published this item if the author and client referred to were not known in London architectural circles?

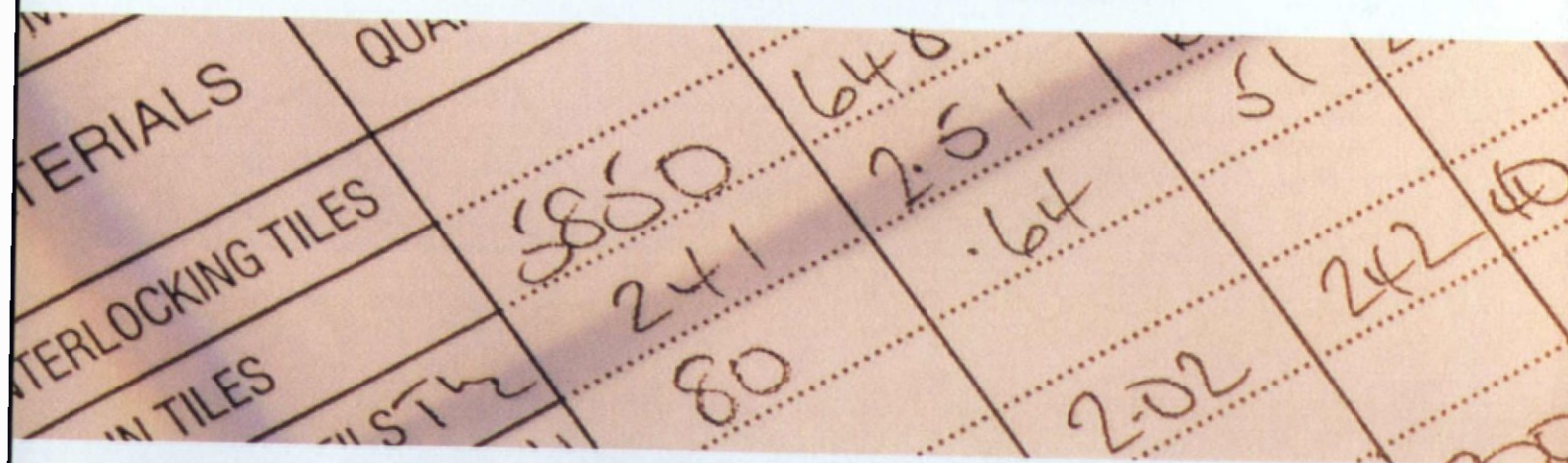
May I make a suggestion on how this page could be improved? Why not run a regular feature where children of all ages from schools across Britain are invited to draw a building in their locality which means something to them, and publish the best entries weekly in the AJ. This would help to broaden the AJ's reach and credibility in a way that the present format fails to do.

David Billingsley, Aberystwyth

### COMPETITION SEEKS SCHOOL SCHEMES

Entries are being sought for the Changing London Schools competition, which will feature educational projects from inner-London boroughs. The contest, supported by the AJ, is open to international architects, designers and design students with school projects either completed, in design or under construction. It is hoped that entries will range from inspiring classroom extensions and dynamic external spaces for schools, to larger-scale transformations of existing school buildings and new schools and academies. The competition will culminate in a show at BDP's Hub space during June's London Architecture Biennale. The exhibition will be accompanied by workshops with school pupils, and a debate on the role of architects and designers in the changing face of education will also take place. For information visit [www.architecturefoundation.org.uk](http://www.architecturefoundation.org.uk) from 13 April or email [changinglondonschools@architecturefoundation.org.uk](mailto:changinglondonschools@architecturefoundation.org.uk). The deadline for competition entries is 8 May.

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# IS MODERN LIFE ANY BETTER THAN MODERNISM?

The V&A must be rubbing its hands with glee at all the free publicity its Modernism blockbuster show is gaining in the press.

Simon Jenkins in the *Guardian* comes close to proving Godwin's Law (which measures the time it takes before an internet discussion on any given topic invokes Hitler) in print.

He may have a point. The best buildings combine vision with a degree of sympathy for public taste. The Modernists could hardly lay claim to giving the public what it wanted.

But if Modernism led to the poorly constructed high-density housing that blights large areas of our cities, then what of the equally poorly designed medium-density housing estates that are cropping up to replace them? A design which the developers would claim gives people what they want.

Is the rise and rise of the modern equivalent of the two-up two-down really any better? Surely no-one will be calling for the preservation of such stock during the latter half of this century.

The likelihood is that these designs will soon begin to look as insubstantial, dated, and downright ugly as many of the towers that crowd out our city skylines.

Modernism may have been dead end, but the sort of bland medium-density suburbia that has appeared in its place is no solution either. The challenge for today's architects is not to impose their ideas on an unwilling public, nor to capitulate to the tyranny of popular taste, but to provide – dare I say it – a third way.

*Joseph Donahue, London SW2*

# STRAIT TO THE POINT ABOUT TURKEY'S GEOGRAPHY

Regarding your article 'Zaha Hadid Wins Istanbul Masterplan Competition' (AJ. 06.04.06).

'River Bosphorus'?! Isn't it wonderful that ignorance of the well-known geographical setting of Istanbul is not a problem at all when formalistic antics in computer graphics override content, and when clients – even those with direct social responsibility – line up to buy 'signature schemes'.

*Berna Basatemur, by email*

# SOAR'S ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOS ON SHOW

An exhibition of Tim Soar's photographs of UK architects at work is to go on show at the new Lionworks Studio, on Wallis Road in London's East End. The photographs, which were commissioned by the AJ, include the 'In Practice' series of architects' offices, and portraits of the young practioners selected for the AJ Corus 40 Under 40 exhibition. The exhibition will run from 5-19 May. Viewing is by appointment only. Call 0208 986 7714.

# HAS THE ROOT OF ZAHA'S INSPIRATION BEEN FOUND?

Maybe it was just because I opened my AJ shortly after a rather traumatic trip to have a filling replaced, but isn't there something rather dental about Zaha's masterplan for Istanbul (AJ 06.04.06)?

And I mean this not in an entirely attractive way – it seems as if there has been some serious grinding taking place.

Still, at least she managed to pluck an incisive scheme from what could have been the jaws of defeat.

And it is nice to think of her getting her teeth into the Turkish architectural scene.


*Sharon Brite, Stockport*

# CORRECTION

The original version of a story published on [www.ajplus.co.uk](http://www.ajplus.co.uk) on 5 April 2006, 'Acquitted PCC architect Ingrid Morris mired in legal trouble', may have been open to misinterpretation.

We would like to stress that Ian Salisbury acted entirely professionally and impartially in his role as an expert witness in the original Ingrid Morris case. To read an updated version of this story, go to [www.ajplus.co.uk/news](http://www.ajplus.co.uk/news)

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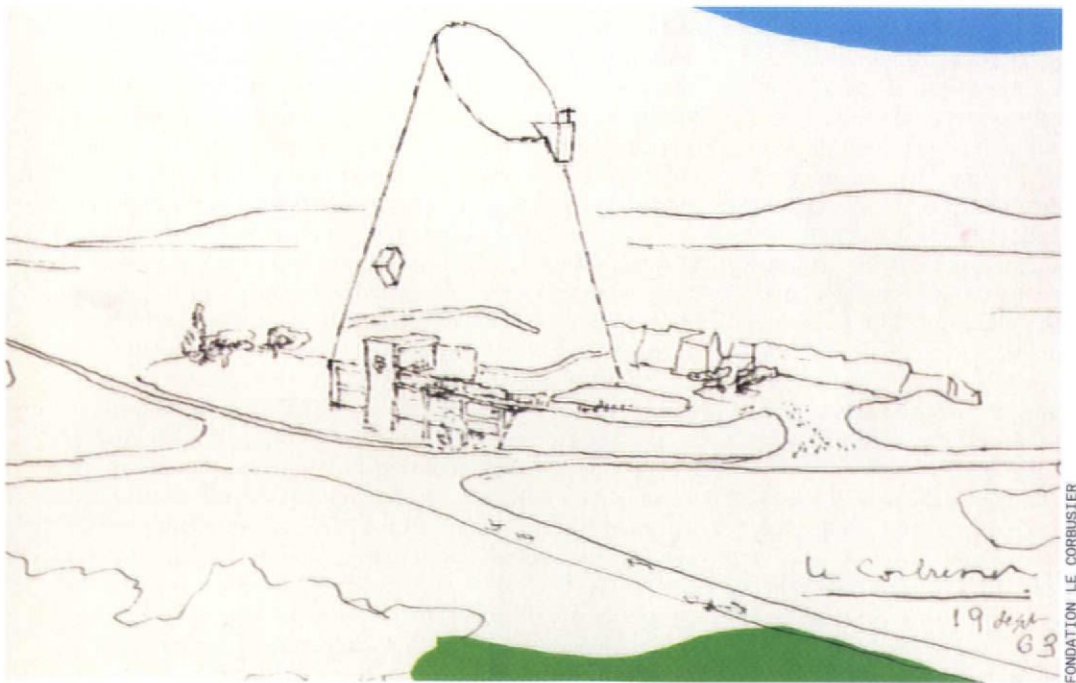
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# LE CORBUSIER/ FIRMINY



1. Site perspective by Le Corbusier, 19 September 1963



## IS IT POSSIBLE TO KEEP THE SOUL OF AN ARCHITECTURAL IDEA ALIVE IN SUCH CONDITIONS?

*By William JR Curtis. Photography by Jake Spain*

When Le Corbusier died in August 1965, he left behind him several unrealised projects, among them the Church of St Pierre, to stand in the new town of Firminy-Vert, not far from Saint-Etienne in the south-east of France. He had already designed three other buildings for Firminy, a Unité d'Habitation on a hillside with long views over the landscape, and a sports stadium and cultural centre in a central valley of the town where a quarry was once situated. All three were built in the course of time, but only now, some 40 years later, is the church on the point of completion, under the guidance of Le Corbusier's former associate José Oubrière.

The Church of St Pierre stands close to the stadium and has evidently been conceived as a focal point in the geography of Firminy and as a vertical counterpoint to Le Corbusier's other buildings. From a distance, the church looks like a sloping, concrete funnel with the top sliced off at an angle, so as to tilt towards the south and the path of the sun. Its monumental form remains enigmatic and suggests many analogies: an industrial stack; a truncated, volcanic cone; an enlarged astronomical instrument; even an oversized piece of modern sculpture.

On closer inspection, the geometry of the church begins to reveal its complexity. The main tower rises from a square base originally intended to house parish offices and the priest's residence, but now containing a sequence of interconnected spaces for civic and cultural use. As the building ascends, it achieves the transition from square to curved geometry by means of sloped surfaces affording different profiles on each of the four sides.

When Le Corbusier designed this building, he was preoccupied with the projection and intersection of forms such as cones, cylinders and hyperbolic paraboloids. The square base of the building is almost aligned to the main cardinal points, while the top seems to lunge and twist towards the heavens. The tower is punctured here and there by angled skylights, while the dynamic approach of the access ramp is dramatised by the spiralling geometry of downpipes and gutters attached to the main structure. Rainwater descending around the tower in a swirling movement is one of the main themes of the building.

The church at Firminy is an unapologetically concrete building, although it could be argued that its real materials are light, shade, space, proportion and movement. The ascending ramp introduces a note of ritual, and one penetrates the interior at a point several floors above the ground. For the moment, though, there is just enough missing from the main space for it to be difficult to assess the architectural quality of the final result.

Le Corbusier was intending to create a meditative, yet majestic space, which would expand dramatically upwards after the tightness of the entrance. When the building was designed it was envisaged as a major church in the diocese, replete with bishop's seat, a somewhat grandiose altar and pulpit, and an appropriate sense of monumentality. Countering any effect of pomposity was the theme (as at the monastery of La Tourette) of a 'noble poverty', of stern concrete surfaces without any extraneous decoration.





2. The church stands next to Le Corbusier's earlier stadium

Possibly Le Corbusier hoped to combine the secular and the sacred in a single edifice: the section of the Church of St Pierre reveals the idea of a continuous floor as a folding plane, a social theatre of sorts, in harmony with the inclined seats of the stadium outside and with an unbuilt proposal for an outdoor theatre with steps cut into the rock. Much has been written about Le Corbusier's interest in cosmological symbolism, but at Firminy he seems also to have aspired towards a republican, civic monumentality.

Light is brought into the interior of the church in several different ways. There are directed skylights on top and to the west, meant to drop a ray onto the main altar around Easter-time. To the east, the wall of the sloping concrete shell is perforated by holes corresponding to the constellation of Orion. Around the base of the main room there are lateral slots which admit a subdued, coloured light reflected off angled concrete planes. A similar device is used to greater effect in the main church at La Tourette, where it adds to the sense that the severe mass of the building is floating on slots of light. At Firminy, the reading is more confused.

In fact, it needs saying that St Pierre does not seem to possess the same gravitas and magical power as Ronchamp and La Tourette. Perhaps things will change when every single element is in place? But I suspect that the problem is more basic, and that it stems in part from the diminution of height that was forced upon Le Corbusier's design in July 1964 to reduce costs. Perhaps, too, the church at Firminy suffers from a slight self-consciousness, as if the artist was doomed to repeat formulae bearing his own signature.

The furniture of the church is mostly fashioned from concrete of a lighter colour than that used in the walls. The space is 'punctuated' by free-standing objects, such as the main and secondary altars and the pulpit and ambo. Of course Le Corbusier was fully aware of ancient precedents in this regard, such as the Church of San Clemente in Rome, whose interiors were amply illustrated in *Vers une Architecture* (1923), but he also drew upon his own experiences of designing religious buildings.

As at La Tourette, he was guided by enlightened members of the clergy – such as the *curé*, Roger Tardy – who were influenced by the review *L'Art Sacré*, which promoted the idea of a renewal of church art combining the abstraction of Modernism with a return to its roots. In this case, the altar follows liturgical prescriptions by descending through several levels of the building so that it touches the ground. The result is an impressive pillar recalling other vertical elements in the building, such as the downpipes on the outside or the attached spiral stair. The Corbusian 'free plan' is reinterpreted in terms of a series of dramatic events and focal points. The interior space has a vaguely theatrical quality, not unlike a stage with different symbolic elements – a cross, a side-altar – disposed here and there and perceived in sequences and juxtapositions.

Le Corbusier received the commission to design the church in Firminy in 1960 and was supported by both church and state in this endeavour. The mayor of Firminy was none other than Eugène Claudius-Petit, the former minister of reconstruction who had already employed Le Corbusier to design the Unité at





3.



4.

3 & 4. Views just inside the entrance to the base of the building, which was originally going to house the parish centre  
5 & 6. Ramped approach to the porch through which the church itself is entered

Marseille. The architect's earliest ideas recalled his unbuilt church project of 1929 for Le Tremblay, in which a rectangular shaft rose from a lower platform cut through and surrounded by an ascending ramp. Le Corbusier often transformed earlier concepts in this manner when confronted by a new problem.

He also had a memory well stocked with historical examples, which he metamorphosed in his own way through lateral leaps of imagination. He may not have been religious in an official sense, but he did have a sense of the sacred and a deep interest in the architecture of the past. In turn, in his world view, 'nature' was seen as a source of mythical meanings. Le Corbusier was particularly interested in the transcendent possibilities of light.

Probably the cluster of ideas guiding the Firminy church project was also influenced by recent realisations, such as the extraordinary Assembly in Chandigarh (1951-65), with its top-lit chamber in a form recalling a modern cooling tower, and the cosmological symbolism of both ancient Indian temples and the Pantheon in Rome. In that case, too, there was the transformation of the 18th-century Jantar Mantar Observatory in Jaipur, which Le Corbusier believed 're-linked man to the cosmos'.

At Firminy, Le Corbusier was clearly interested in planetary symbolism related to the sun, moon and stars. On the east facade, a parabolic hood protects the openings, while also evoking the path of the planets and the crescent of the moon. In the case of Firminy, the architect seems to have fused some of his own precedents with the idea of a sort of sacred mountain

or sliced-off cone linking the earth to the heavenly sphere. From the beginning he was also obsessed with the fall of light, and there are even sketches examining the rays penetrating the floating cupola of Hagia Sophia. However, Le Corbusier, working with his associate, José Oubrière, was eventually obliged to compromise his ideal intentions for this project not just once, but several times. As a result, the final scheme signed off by Le Corbusier and dated July 1964 was considerably lower and more squat than originally intended. Apart from a decrease in elegance, there may also have been a loss of diffusion in the lighting of the interior surfaces.

While written documents were prepared to allow a calculation of costs, the scheme itself was portrayed in drawings at a scale of 1:100. As a result, when Le Corbusier died a year later, there was little visual documentation giving a clear idea of precisely what he intended for a multitude of details, including incisions and joints in surfaces, windows and doors and even the colour and texture of the concrete itself.

When Oubrière took the project on, he had to rely on his knowledge of Le Corbusier's architectural language in making an interpretation of the detail. For the rest, he followed as closely as possible the last signed drawings. The project ran up against numerous difficulties, though by the mid-1970s the lower floors were up as far as the base of the superstructure. But then things ground to a halt for more than 20 years. The church stood there like a truncated pyramid (some spoke of a concrete bunker), visited by intrepid Corbusian pilgrims, and was eventually bricked up.





5.



6.

This is not the place to go into the complex history of the revival of the project, which included classification as a *monument historique* in the mid-1990s and a fundraising drive by the L'Association Le Corbusier pour l'Église de Firminy-Vert in the same period. The fact is that Oubrierie and his French associates were able to recommence construction at the end of 2003, with the results that one sees today. There were some changes in the programme, as the idea of having a priest living downstairs was abandoned, to be replaced by vague ideas about exhibition spaces and places for cultural events. The Catholic religion itself has changed, and there are even those who find Le Corbusier's yearnings for the sublime inappropriate to modern liturgy. But what has been built corresponds as closely as possible in overall form to the plans of 1964.

Sceptics will naturally pose the question: so what exactly is being built today in Firminy? Is it truly a Le Corbusier building in all respects? Or is it a Corbusian *project* reinterpreted in crucial ways by another architect? For one speaks of 'details' as if they were mere details, but it was Le Corbusier himself who claimed that 'there are no details' in a fully resolved work of architecture, meaning perhaps that detail is the final resolution of the underlying ideas and intentions of an artistic creation.

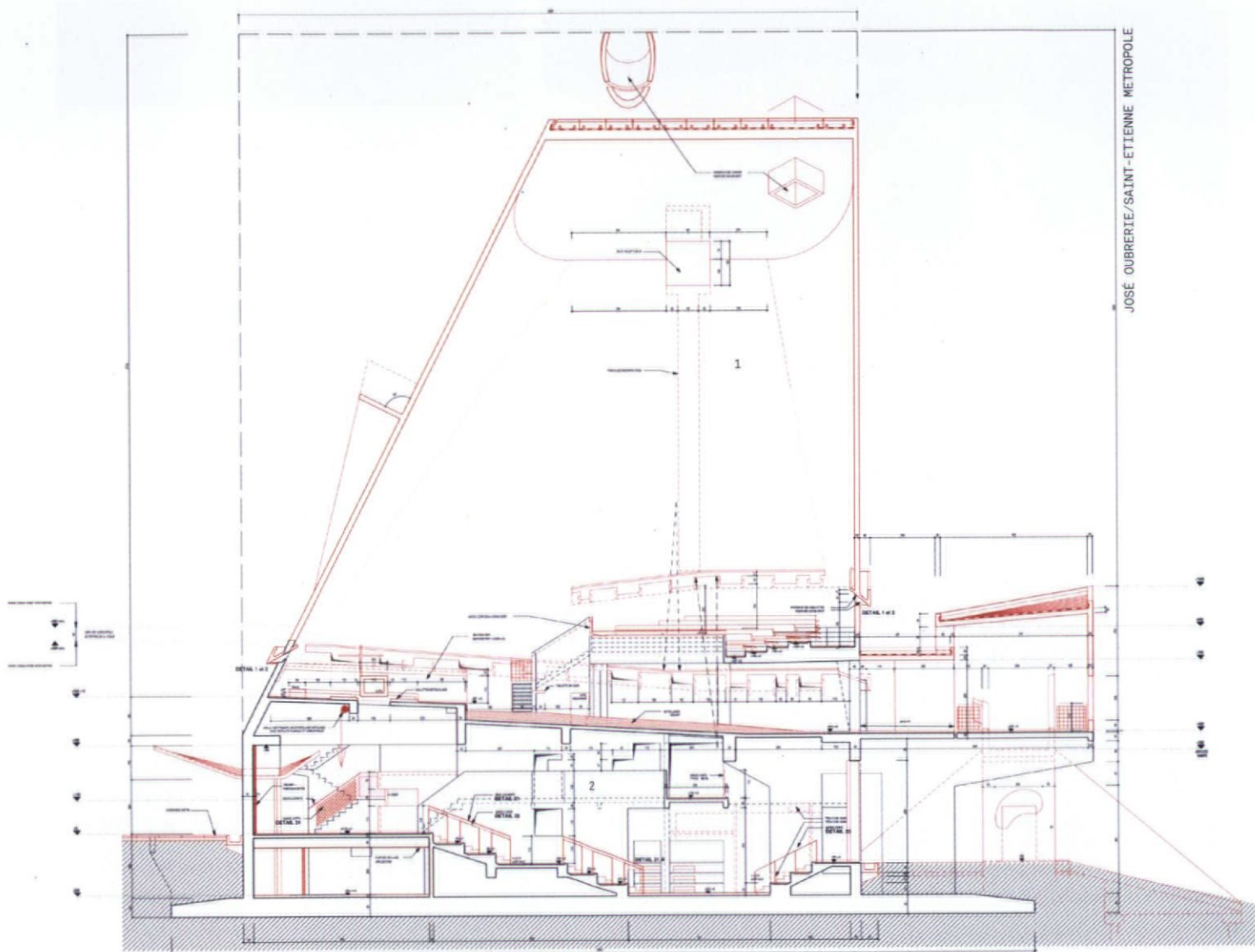
Here, Oubrierie and his associates are courting some risk, for how can they be sure what Le Corbusier would have done if he had lived to see the building through a detailed design phase and actual construction? Apart from anything else, he was notoriously

capable of changing his mind once the building was on the way up. He was even capable of coming up with ingenious last-minute solutions to unforeseen problems, as we know from, for example, the design of the nearly contemporary Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts at Harvard.

Perhaps there are broader issues here to do with changes in the way that buildings are made. For the palette of materials and techniques available at any particular place and time puts limits on what it is possible to build. When Le Corbusier drew 1:100 drawings, he probably had a good idea about the eventual material reality of what he drew. But how much of the culture of construction which he was taking for granted 40 years ago still exists today? 2006 is not 1964 when it comes to the construction industry in France or anywhere else for that matter.

Without a doubt, Oubrierie has gained from structural progress in the construction of concrete shells, but the question here is in the realm of architectural and material expression, not just the world of building technology. Does the building nearing completion in Firminy in fact materialise Le Corbusier's intentions in all respects, including the texture and colour of the concrete; the placement of grooves and lines; the jointing of windows and walls; the sense of visual weight? Does it bring the concepts alive in forms and materials with an appropriate spiritual and physical presence? Is it possible to keep the soul of an architectural idea alive in such conditions? If Le Corbusier were suddenly to return to earth, one wonders what he would say.





6. Section east-west

KEY

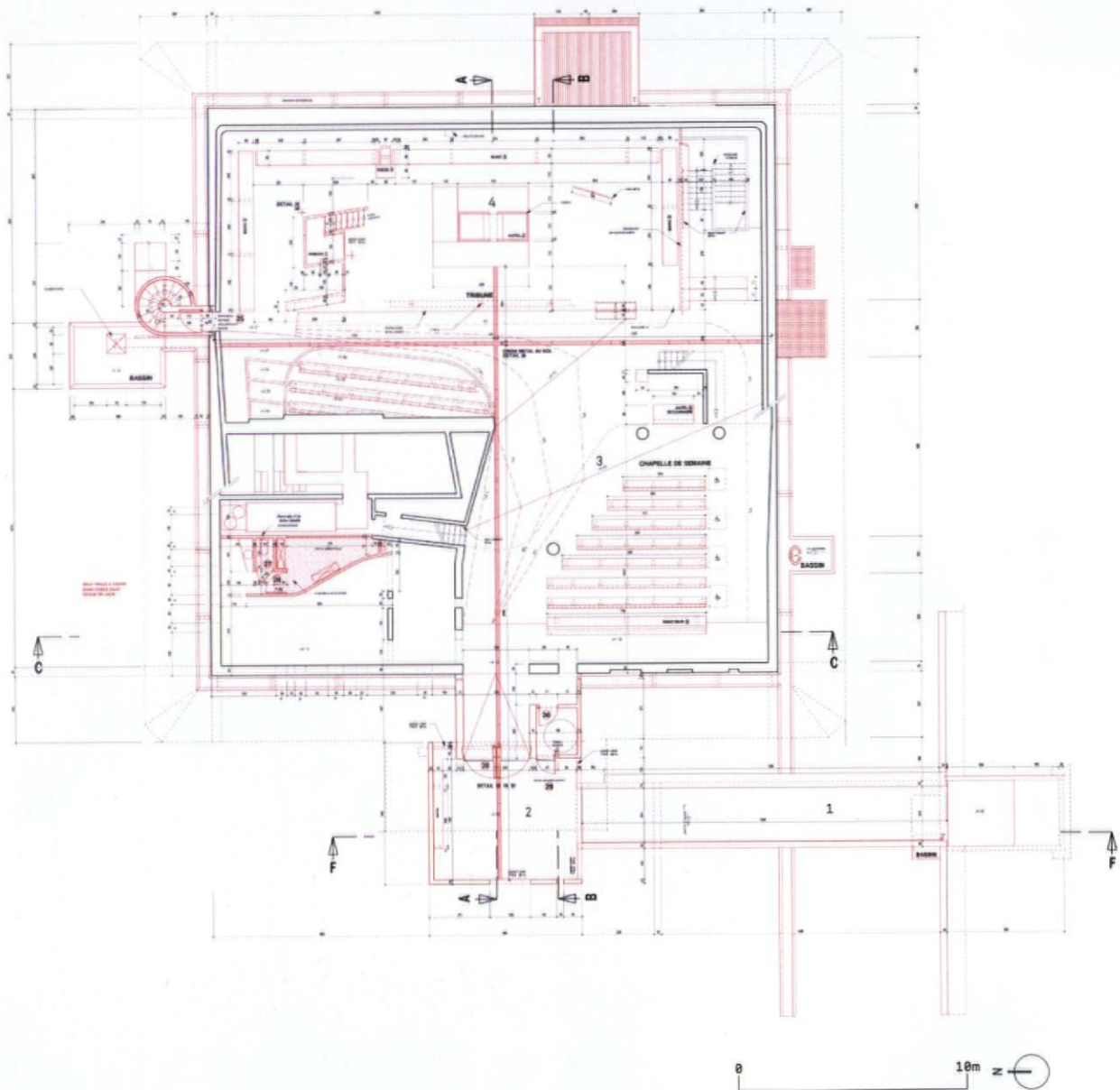
- 1 CHURCH
- 2 ORIGINALLY INTENDED AS PARISH CENTRE;  
NEW USE STILL TO BE DETERMINED





7. A volcanic cone? An industrial stack? The building's enigmatic form suggests many analogies

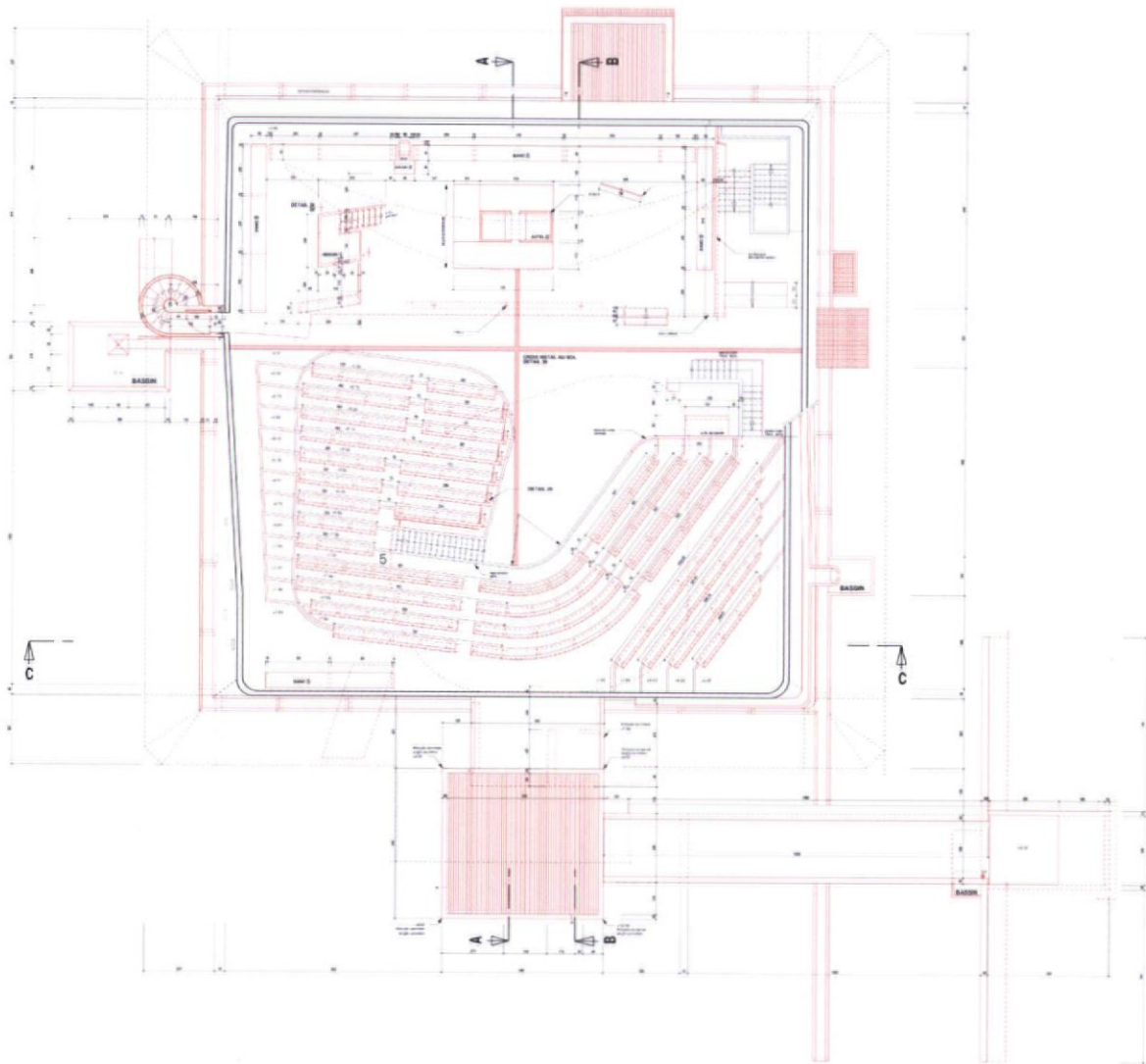




8. Plan of church: lower level

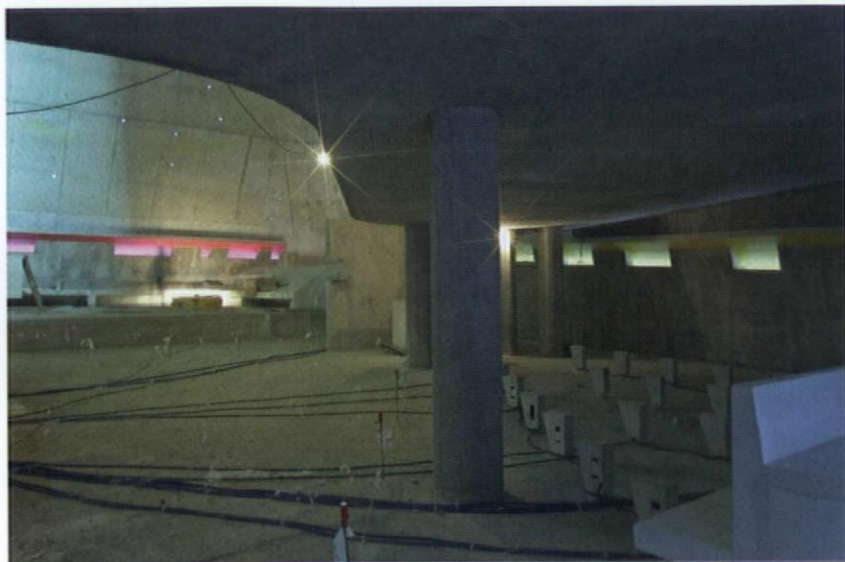
- KEY
- 1 RAMP
  - 2 PORCH
  - 3 WEEKDAY CHAPEL
  - 4 ALTAR
  - 5 PEWS





9. Plan of church: upper level





10.



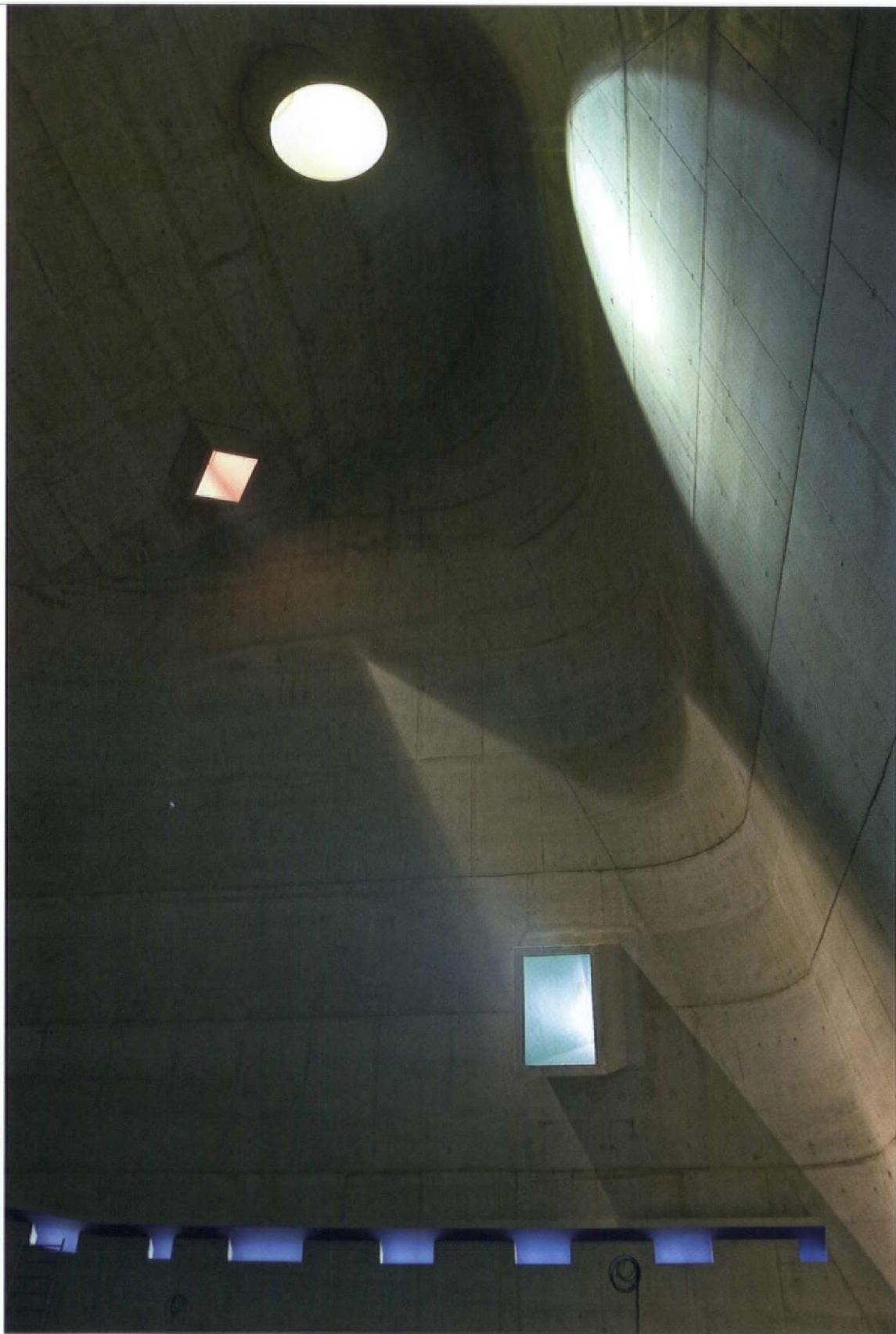
11.

10. On the right is the sheltered and intimate weekday chapel  
11, 12 & 13. Light effects in the church,  
slightly modified by artificial sources  
while construction continues



12.





13.



## Credits

---

### Client

Saint-Etienne Metropole

### Architect (design)

Le Corbusier

### Architect (realisation)

José Oubrière, Yves Perret and Aline Duverger,  
assisted by Romain Chazalon

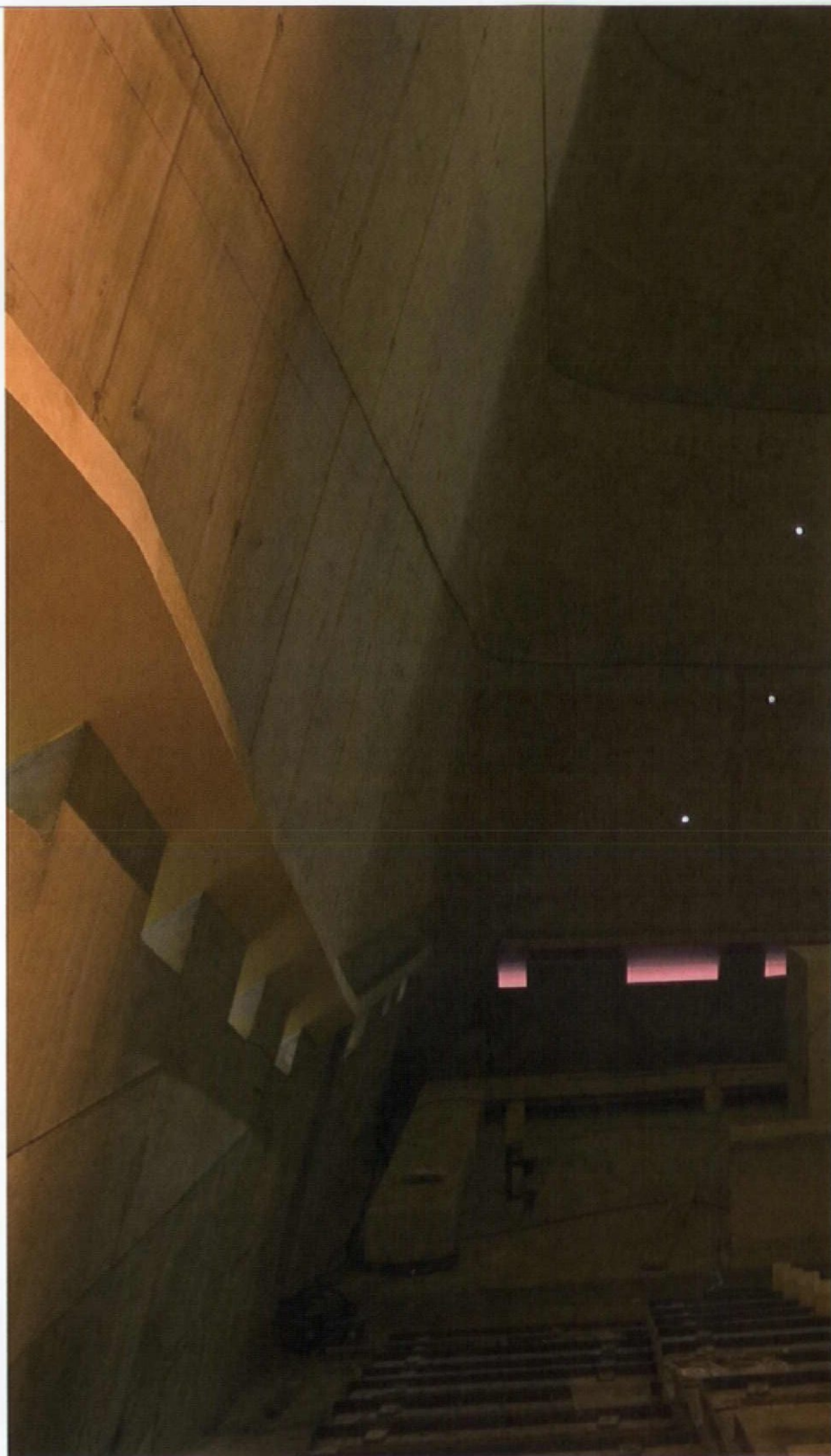
### Engineers

Andre Accetta; Bet Rabeisen

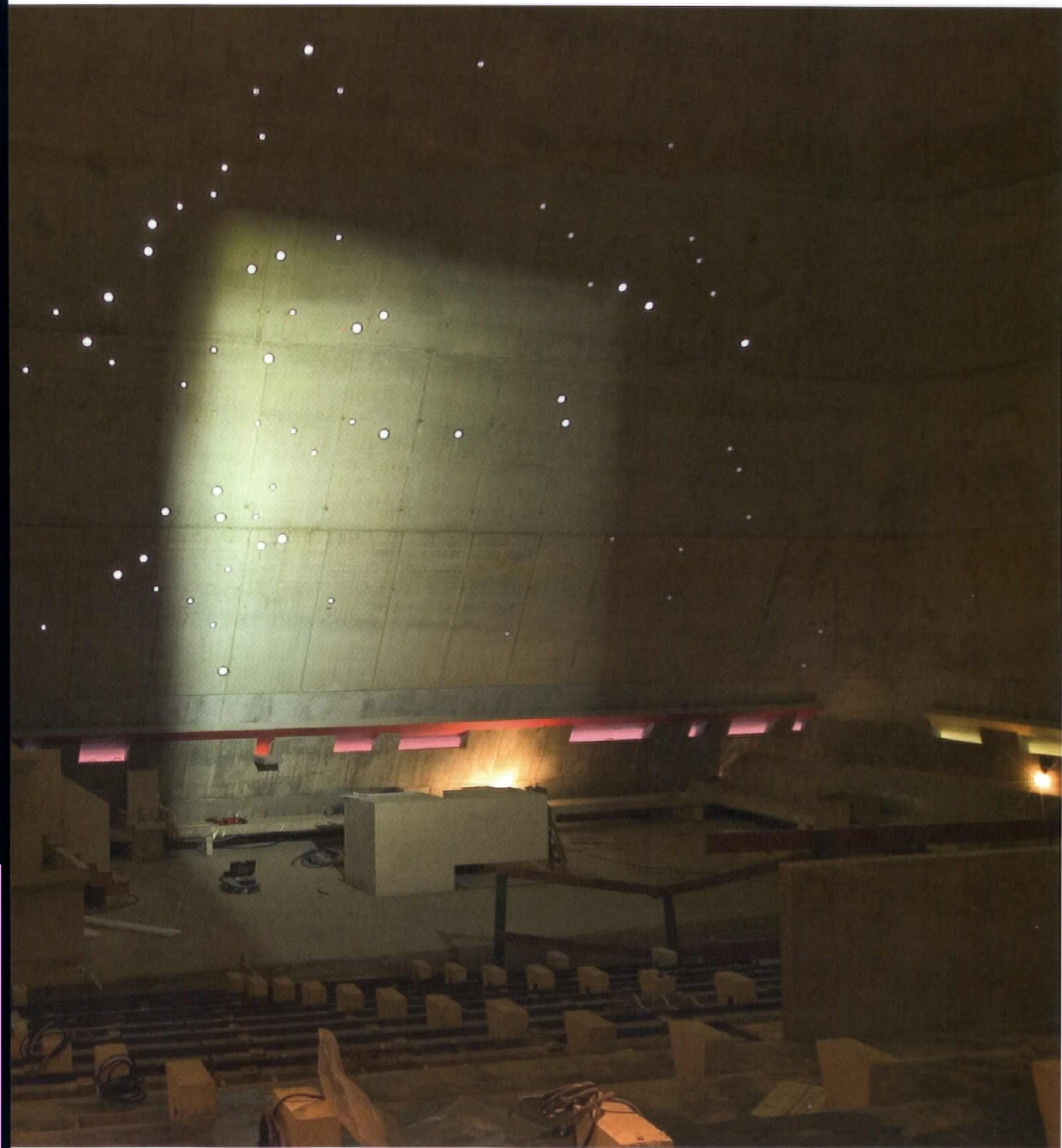
### Chief Architect,

Historic Monuments of the Loire

Jean Francois Grange Chavanis







14. View towards the main altar and perforated east wall





MARQUIS (RED), TEXTURE: STOCK  
FARMHOUSE BROWN SANDFACED, TEXTURE: SMOOTH  
WAVENEY YELLOW, TEXTURE: SMOOTH



## Beautiful brick

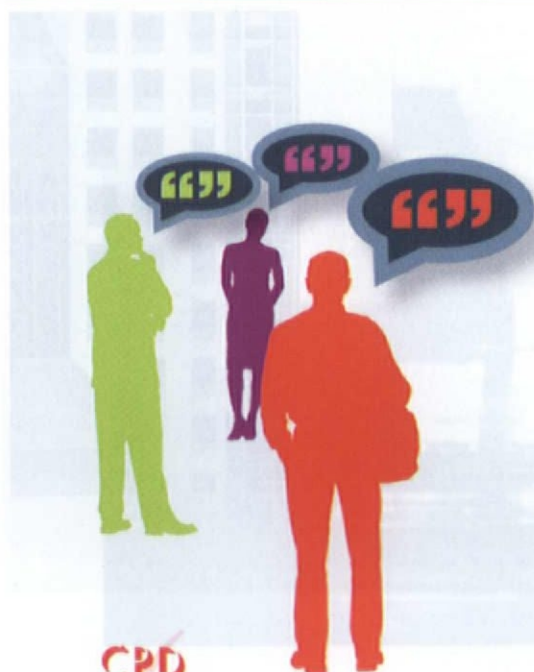
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**Chris Horn**, Elephant & Castle Development Director, **Southwark Council**

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## JOINED-UP GOVERNMENT ISN'T WORKING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

By Barrie Evans

*Sustainability is increasingly focused on the larger scale, not just the individual building, as reflected in the recent Ecobuild conference*

Moving up in scale is changing the priorities of Poran Desai, of BedZed-developer BioRegional. Even looking at future housing developments at the scale of BedZed, he will be putting less emphasis in future on measures for individual buildings, such as insulation and southerly orientation – one of the rigidities of the BedZed layout – instead taking a more balanced view of quality of life. And as he moves up in scale, he is increasingly focusing on this broader agenda – involving, for example, green transport and local energy generation, especially CHP (combined heat and power) and renewables.

Density has become one of the watchwords for building at a larger scale, among other things helping to make local energy generation and transport viable. John Rouse, of the Housing Corporation, expressed this as 'compact development' rather than simply density. Compactness involves thinking of the locale in an integrated way – bringing together transport modes, local services, work and leisure. Rouse is also a supporter of codes for urban planning and design to push change in this direction, though he accepted we 'need a method [of codes] that is workable for relatively low-skilled planning departments'.

At the city scale, this idea that larger urban areas can be planned as a network of locales is embodied in the current planning for expansion of Ashford, one of the ODPM's target

towns for housing growth. Luke Engleback, of EcoUrbanism, saw this as a fight to be had with traditional housing developers with their preference for extensive rather than intensive development.

Another step up in scale is Dongtan Eco City in Shanghai, the 'world's first sustainable city' according to Arup, which itself has 120 staff working on the masterplanning of 630ha. The 'old world' may be consolidating, but a lot of the globe is still rapidly urbanising and industrialising. China has been portrayed as a problem country because of this, but Chris Twinn, of Arup, said: 'China knows it has to change. Otherwise, in the longer term it will get ripped off by the world as fuels get scarcer.' The initial planning focus for Dongtan is on water – for use and leisure – waste management/recycling, movement and energy supply through CHP and renewables.

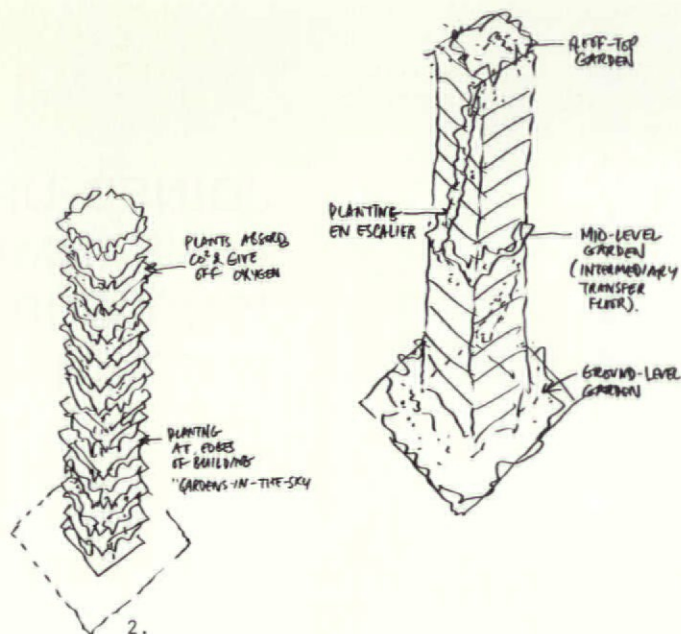
### ECOLOGICAL SKYSCRAPERS

There's many a section been drawn through cities with buildings shown getting denser and taller toward the centre. But how tall? Are we talking about compact medium rise, like the 'groundscrapers' of London's Broadgate, or about towers? Ken Yeang for one has doubts about towers. 'I don't think the tall building is very ecological in resource use,' he said. 'But it will be with us for some time... The tall building is an evil object, but something you have to live with.' So he designs tall buildings as a realist rather than a purist: 'It's a dirty job, but somebody has to do it.'





1.



## WHAT'S THE HURRY?

The message of government chief scientific advisor Sir David Strong that we just have to keep plugging away, prodding the market with legislation, was not urgent enough for many. Stephen Tindale, of Greenpeace, was particularly critical. He felt that government momentum is flagging on many fronts, with international carbon targets not likely to be met and those targets now not ambitious enough. Good intentions, such as pushing renewables and integrated transport, have stalled. Increasing air travel, a big carbon-growth area, is being accepted by government on a predict-and-provide basis rather than addressing the need to cut carbon head on, (Each of us UK individuals averages a 'carbon footprint' – all in emissions, ie for home, work, leisure, etc – of around 10T of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. One return flight to Australia emits 3.6T/person.) Predict-and-provide is an approach, Tindale felt, that has already been seen to fail in trying to provide for future road transport. Roads promote traffic; so too do runways.

For the built environment in particular, Tindale said codes should be more stretching; local CHP and renewables should be mandatory, council tax/business rates/stamp duty should be reduced/increased to reflect energy efficiency. He doesn't believe that cost or over-regulation would be hurdles for the public. Change has to be driven, Tindale said: 'We don't have time for good practice to filter down.'

Most acknowledged that wind turbines and photovoltaics on dwellings aren't yet cost effective. For some, there is an

overriding need to act now despite the cost, as well as the symbolic value of being 'seen to be green' as part of raising public awareness. Others see these actions more as 'greenwash' – how many symbolic gestures do we need? Maybe we have to be harder-headed about where we put our money. On the Mayor of London's requirement for 10 per cent renewables for building projects in particular, which other UK cities are now emulating, Heinz Richardson, of Jestico + Whiles, said that while some politicians need to have something to show, the same money would be better spent on the building fabric, saving more carbon, albeit unseen.

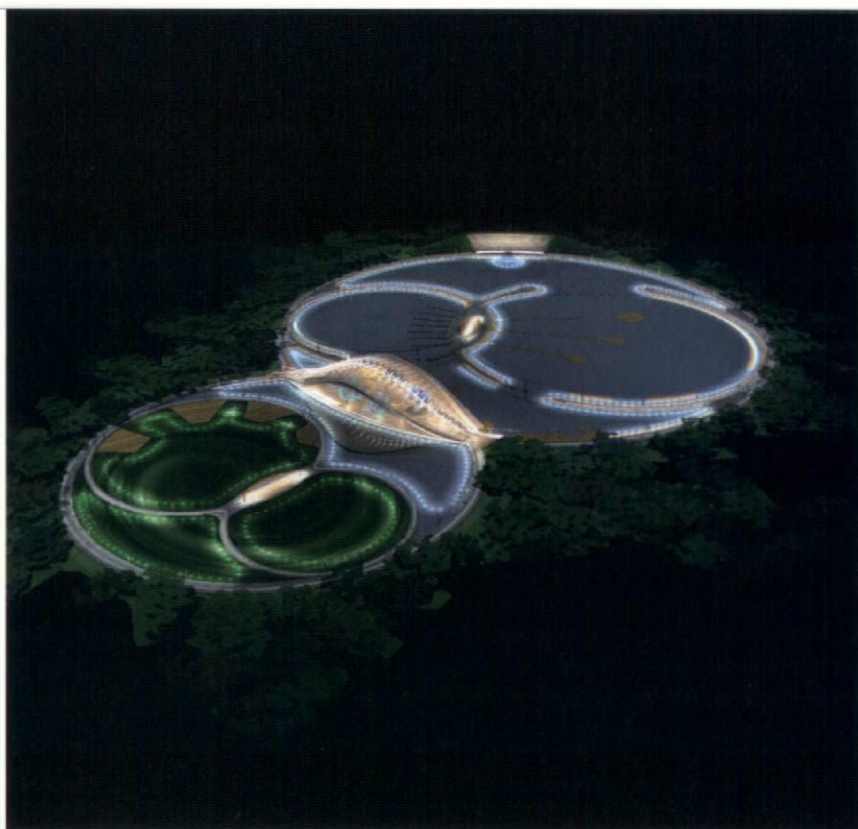
If all these various people are gearing up for new futures, the dissenting Jan Maciag, chair of the Traditional Architecture Group, suggested the only gear we can practically engage is reverse. He wants us to go back to 'simplicity and localisation' in building and living. Interestingly, this was the only contribution in two days to get a spontaneous round of applause.

## PRACTICAL PROGRESS

Bill Gething managed to embody hope, the need for urgency – it is 'so serious that we may have to be less balanced' – with resigned acceptance that in fact the main drivers that have made a difference to sustainability so far are 'regulation and market forces'. So a lot rides on developing more ambitious codes. Guy Battle of Battle McCarthy also saw the coming of energy labelling of buildings making a significant difference, especially to developers' briefs, and 'agents will have to respond'.



1. The redevelopment of Titanic Mill, Huddersfield, by Lowry Homes will have an element of power generation, aiming to be carbon neutral
2. Sketches by Ken Yeang for green towers
3. Dongtan Eco City



3.

Unpromisingly, this need for codes was in the context of the UK's recent failure to produce a Code for Sustainable Buildings. The only current output of that project is the draft Code for Sustainable Housing. Of this, Bill Stow, director general of environment at DEFRA, said it pointed the way 'to a higher standard (than Building Regulations) that will become mandatory later on'. Stow suggested this would give the market more future certainty. Government projects will be commissioned to the code's standards once it's published.

But why a new domestic code at all? Why not start from EcoHomes (part of the BREEAM stable)? Stow said it was clear there will be convergence of the two in time, but that government wanted to 'put a government stamp on it'. However, Arup's Chris Twinn felt the new code was in some ways a 'dumbing down' of EcoHomes which 'has a harder edge' and is 'implementation and audit based'. And the new code 'seems to penalise dense urban developments', Twinn said, for example the inevitable urban limits to solar access are not traded off against better proximity to public transport. Twinn did point to the need for BREEAMs generally to focus more on neighbourhoods, not just individual buildings.

Other government policy pointers from DEFRA's Stow included: the need for greater rigour in ensuring our buildings are actually complying with regulations – air-tightness testing is the most recent example; the current review of sustainability for existing buildings, including consideration of regulation and fiscal incentives; a draft waste strategy, including construction; a focus

on water supply, maybe with water-efficiency labelling of fittings; and the fact that the 'interdependencies' of government areas of concern 'is an issue in itself', one 'not much addressed'. To translate – joined-up government isn't working for sustainability.

#### UK GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL

Despite the Bush/Kyoto positioning, there are changes apace in the US. The US Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standard is run by the US Green Building Council (USGBC) and is being taken up particularly for public projects in some US states. Compulsion is making LEED increasingly influential. USGBC now has 6,500 member organisations and its conference this year attracted 14,000 delegates. There are now moves to start a GBC in the UK – BREEAM having lost some of its momentum – though there are questions about whether it should be in the hands of a private company – BRE. You can register your interest in a UK GBC at [www.ukgbc.org](http://www.ukgbc.org)

One feature of LEED in the US is the accreditation of designers and other industry players as sustainability experts. The RIAS too has its Sustainable Design Accreditation system and Bill Gething was asked if RIBA would follow suit. This looks unlikely. The RIBA has considered it, says Gething, but is concerned about sustainability being seen as specialist, not part of the mainstream.

It is because sustainability aims for the mainstream that change is so difficult – pioneering projects are not enough. Minds will have to change.



## A QUICK LOOK BACK AT MACS

Since he is the second minister representing the ODPM in Cabinet, we should all be reading David Miliband's blog at [www.odpm.gov.uk/cs/blogs/ministerial\\_blog/default.aspx](http://www.odpm.gov.uk/cs/blogs/ministerial_blog/default.aspx). Although it is difficult to believe, even of MPs, this seems to be a first for Westminster, and 'is being evaluated by the independent, non-partisan Hansard Society'. An ominous sign is that the site quaintly calls it a 'weblog'.

Just to underline this column's noted even-handedness, here is a site for jobsworths. It is a short history of Mac design. It is on the Engadget site, at [www.engadget.com/2006/04/01/30-years-in-apple-products-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/](http://www.engadget.com/2006/04/01/30-years-in-apple-products-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/). Amusingly, given the high cool of recent Jonathan Ives designs, the very first Apple (1976) looks like a cash register in a Western movie. In 1977, they started doing pro design in the form of the vaguely Olivetti-ish Mac II.

Ives joined Apple in the early '90s, but didn't bloom until Steve Jobs returned as CEO and appointed him vice-president of industrial design, when he brought out the iBook, that beautiful milky flat screen and the G4 tower – then the stunning Cube which, lacking a fan, regularly fritzed its hard drive. Still... [sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com](mailto:sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com)

# THE DELAY DEBATE

The analysis of delay on construction projects has developed into something of a dark art, writes *Kim Franklin*.

The basic concept is simple. Employer and contractor both envisage that the project will be completed within an agreed period. The project does not complete on time and both parties incur unexpected costs. The contract provides various remedies for delay. Liquidated damages may be payable to the employer. The contractor may be entitled to an extension of time, loss and expense.

But in order to take advantage of them, the parties need to demonstrate the causes of the delay and responsibility for them. Three contractual options present themselves: reasons of the contractor's making, that is 'culpable delay'; contractually permissible acts by the employer, such as ordering variations, or breaches of contract, tagged 'acts of prevention'; and reasons beyond the control of both parties, such as bad weather.

In the old days, contractors would support their claim for an extension of time with a bar chart comparing the original contract programme with the as-built position, and highlighting the delaying events with a yellow triangle or similar token. The employer might query whether it was

ever possible to build to the programme, wonder whether the yellow triangle actually caused delay at the time on site and might even mention the critical path. But usually a deal was done on some form of empirical basis.

But things have moved on, and now delay analysis is big business. Delay experts have become modern-day necromancers, conjuring network programs of enormous complexity from the bowels of their computers and rival methods, rejoicing in titles such as 'as planned impacted' and 'as built but for' which vie with each other to demonstrate the true causes of delay.

The construction industry's fascination with this topic was demonstrated by the sell-out success of the recent 'Great Delay Analysis Debate' staged by the Society of Construction Law. Delay experts used four different methods in the context of a simple contract completed seven days late.

Alastair Farr of Trett Consulting supported the contractor's claim for a seven-day extension using the 'as planned impacted' method, superimposing delays on the contractor's programme.

Steve Briggs compared the intended programme with the as-built position to demonstrate, on behalf of the employer, that all the delay involved was culpable.

John Hammond, acting as the engineer, used the 'as built but for' approach, starting with the as-built position and 'collapsing' the delaying events, and agreed with the employer. Keith Pickavance, as the adjudicator, impacted delays onto the critical path as the work progressed and found the contractor was entitled to the halfway house of a three-day extension.

Several points emerged from the proceedings. If you use four different methods to analyse the same set of facts, you come up with three (or more) different answers. All involve an element of subjectivity. There is no definitive answer.

It is easy to lose sight of the main objective and for the process to become an end in itself. As one experienced expert once confided to me: 'I don't use charts any more, I use photographs.'

*Kim Franklin is a barrister and chartered arbitrator at Crown Office Chambers in London. Visit [www.crownofficechambers.com](http://www.crownofficechambers.com)*





## BOOK

By Edwin Heathcote

Jørn Utzon Logbook –  
Vol II: Bagsværd Church  
Edition Bløndal, 2005.  
168pp. £35



The Bilbao Effect should rightly be called the Sydney Effect. Jørn Utzon was the true progenitor of the contemporary icon; of architecture as billboard and urban marker. With the Sydney Opera House he presaged not only Gehry's turning of a big port project into a regional and national symbol, but also the sculptural language, curvaceous segments and sail-like fins.

The Opera House's extraordinary success and adoption as a symbol of post-colonial Australia has led to Utzon becoming almost solely identified with a single building, and one ultimately constructed under notoriously acrimonious conditions. Perhaps only Colin St John Wilson and his brutally protracted British Library are a parallel in terms of a single building having such a

dominant and unwelcome effect on a long career.

For Utzon should be equally famous for a far smaller work – the extraordinary church at Bagsværd, Copenhagen. From outside it looks like something assembled from the leftovers of a none-too interesting factory; until a closer view, when the detailing comes into its own. Someone, you realise, has really thought about this.

But it is only on entering, that Utzon's genius becomes clear. Using luminosity to create numinosity, the interior is bathed in the brilliant northern light. The church's extraordinary tsunami section is well known – inspired partly by Aalto's organic glass vase and partly by clouds, and carefully generated using complex geometries of interlocking

circles aimed at maximising the celebrant's voice.

Symbolically the programme is simple but sophisticated: the voice of man rises up to the heavens, the light from the heavens is spread over the congregation. It works in a way which few contemporary churches do; embracing the congregation but allowing the spirit to soar while never distracting from a powerful focus on the altar. There is something slightly dated about the building, in a peculiarly Danish way of being retro chic, but at base a powerfully timeless seriousness. This is one of the highpoints of humane Scandinavian Modernism.

This book, relatively light on text but heavy on wonderful photography, describes the church well. Seemingly every detail is featured, from light

fixtures to roof construction and there is generous coverage of the furniture, fittings and even vestments, all designed by the architect as a post-Arts and Crafts *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

The church as a type can be a condensed repository of architectural ideas, the catalyst for designers to burst free and purely create. Certainly Bagsværd is as fertile and perhaps more intriguing than Sydney's icon, and it is well covered here in a book that's hard to fault; it's particularly good to read Utzon's own articulate and heartfelt words. It should sit well with Richard Weston's monumental and very orange monograph, its clear, white design just toning down that sagging shelf a touch.

*Edwin Heathcote is the Financial Times' architecture correspondent*



## BOOK

By George Saumarez-Smith

Joseph Gandy: An Architectural Visionary in Georgian England  
By Brian Lukacher. Thames & Hudson, 2006. 224pp. £40



Gandy's Tomb of Merlin, 1815

The east wall of the Picture Room in Sir John Soane's Museum is filled by William Hogarth's famous cycle of eight paintings entitled *A Rake's Progress*. The paintings illustrate the declining fortunes of a promising young man poisoned by the corruptions of society, who eventually finds himself in a debtor's prison and ends his life in a lunatic asylum.

The hinged walls to either side of *A Rake's Progress* swing open theatrically to reveal an astonishing display of the works of Joseph Gandy, a man whose career has distinct parallels with Hogarth's Rake. But for Gandy it was not gambling or social disgrace that plagued his tragic career, but his pathological and obsessive imagination.

Gandy was born in 1771, and at a young age was recognised as a brilliant

draughtsman. At 16 he was apprenticed to James Wyatt, and he was awarded an RA Gold Medal at 19. But despite these promising beginnings, Gandy never fulfilled his potential. He designed only a handful of buildings, relying on painting commissions to maintain his practice; was twice imprisoned for unpaid debts; and died in 1843 in a lunatic asylum near Plymouth. A final irony is that, for an architect who spent much of his career fascinated by tombs and funerary monuments, there is no record of Gandy's place of burial.

Gandy's fame as an architectural illustrator largely rests on his association with Soane, whose designs he illustrated intermittently from 1798 until Soane's death in 1837. Each man clearly influenced the other. Gandy

excelled at representing Soane's inventive vaulted interiors, subjects that tested his technical brilliance. Equally, Soane's placing of an alabaster sarcophagus in a mystical subterranean crypt in his own house, and the extraordinary lighting effect obtained by filling it with lit candles, was surely inspired by the effects that he admired in Gandy's visionary watercolours.

With Gandy's work we are never quite sure whether we are looking at the past or the future. In one of his most famous works, an aerial view of Soane's Bank of England, the building could be read either as being under construction or as a ruin. Similarly, the last work he ever exhibited at the RA in 1838, a *Design for a Cast-Iron Necropolis*, was at once archaic and futuristic. The ancient world,

through Gandy's eyes, was reborn into a glorious and triumphant future.

Brian Lukacher's new monograph is the first to be published on Gandy, surprising when one considers the richness and attraction of the subject-matter. The book is beautifully illustrated and immaculately researched, and places Gandy into the much wider cultural context of late-Georgian England, alongside such figures as Coleridge and Turner.

Together with the new exhibition of Gandy's work at the Soane Museum (until 12 August), this excellent book is sure to provoke wider interest in a fascinating and important figure.

George Saumarez Smith  
is an architect with Robert  
Adam Architects





Neue Frauengasse housing, 2002



## BOOK

By Barrie Evans

Architektur\_STMK  
Haus der Architektur Graz,  
2005. Euro 25 (£17.50)

*Architektur\_STMK* is a companion to the earlier *Graz Architecture*, published when Graz was European City of Culture in 2003. This new title deals with architecture in Styria – the region centred on Graz – and while it is only in German, a separate booklet in English contains the introductory essay and all the building descriptions.

The Graz guide covered the extraordinarily inventive flowering of the Graz School – relatively hardline Modernist work, more Swiss than Scandinavian – from the mid-1980s. A similar period and selectorial eye is at work here, as the architects fan out from Graz into the wider countryside.

Despite Michael Szyszkowitz's opening essay on responding to the local landscape – one of towns and villages among plains and

mountains – what strikes you most about the buildings is their consistency. An architectural policeman might suspect an aesthetic cartel at work.

There is some contrast with the same architects' urban buildings – digging into sites, the occasional curve, and especially the use of timber – but less than might be expected. Local identity gets modest response. Formal clarity reigns.

After Szyszkowitz's introduction, almost all the book comprises one to four pages per building, each with at least one image and small-scale plan, plus a very brief outline and insightful appraisal. This informative new pocket guide (12 x 6cm) makes the case well that, when in Graz, you should journey outside the city too. There is much of interest to experience.

## CRITIC'S CHOICE

By Andrew Mead

One purpose behind the AJ's recent features on the Thames Gateway (AJ 02.03.06) and the latest German IBA (AJ 27.10.05) was to prompt a subtler assessment of what should be valued in these scarred industrial landscapes – to consider what should be left alone as well as what should be changed. 'A fresh look at our inherited surroundings' is the title of one of the main sessions at the 2nd European Landscape Conference, organised by the European Foundation for Landscape Architecture, which takes place in Lille from 31 May to 2 June.

Under the title *Protéger La Planète: The Landscape Vision*, the conference includes specialist workshops and field trips to contrasting sites in the region – Lille is close to both the coast and former coal-mining territory on the Franco-Belgian border – as well as plenary sessions on such global themes as 'Nature and biodiversity' and 'Blending large infrastructure into the landscape'. But gardens get a look-in too, so there's something for everyone ([www.efla.org](http://www.efla.org)).

A more remote landscape, less obviously touched by man, features in Simon Faithfull's *Ice Blink* at Stills, 23 Cockburn St, Edinburgh, until 14 May. Faithfull travelled to Antarctica with the British Antarctic Survey last year as part of an Arts Council project; Rachel Whiteread was on the same trip, which proved a prime source for her striking installation, *Embankment*, at Tate Modern, now in its last days (it closes 1 May). Drawings, films and photographs by Faithfull are on show at Stills (see picture), and later this month Book Works will publish *Ice Blink: An Antarctic Essay* ([www.bookworks.org.uk](http://www.bookworks.org.uk)).

The Thames Gateway reappears in the next exhibition at London's Architectural Association (AA) from 29 April–26 May. Titled *The Thames Gateway Assembly*, it looks at proposals by the GLA Architecture and Urbanism Unit and supplements architects' projects with student work from members of the AA's Diploma Unit 14. There's a debate on 10 May. Other London events include lectures at Tate Modern by David Chipperfield (18 April), *Abalos and Herreros* (3 May), and *FAT* (9 May) ([www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)). For forthcoming events visit [www.ajplus.co.uk/diary](http://www.ajplus.co.uk/diary)



# green roofs 2006

Sponsored by:



## Enhancing the design and commercial applications of green roofs

**Thursday 1st June 2006**

Radisson Marlborough Hotel, London, WC1B

The implementation of green roofs or more specifically, intentionally vegetated roofs, is moving ahead full steam. Once considered more of an eco-fad than a serious business proposition, evidence is fast accumulating of the financial value that green roof integration can deliver to designers, builders and end-users.

Leading players in Europe and North America have demonstrated the environmental, social and economic benefits of green roofs, and yet the UK still lags behind. Hampered by a weak legislative framework and a lack of drive from those within the industry, it is imperative that green roofs become an integral design requirement before it's too late.

### Key benefits from attending

**Green Roofs 2006** is The Architects' Journal's unique event dedicated to driving green roof design into the mainstream. Delegates will have the opportunity to:

- Hear the latest insights and ground-breaking case-studies from a broad spectrum of experts engaged in green roofs
- Learn about the latest research on analysing the value uplift and whole life costing of green roofs and green space design
- Question and understand the big issues of the moment; collaborative working, working to planning guidelines, best practise in SUDS management and much more...
- Hear leading experts on green roofs report on the vital progress being made, and the potential for future wider adoption

### Hear from industry experts including:

- **Dusty Gedge**, Founder, **Living Roofs**
- **Roger Madelin**, Chief Executive, **Argent Group**
- **Mike Gibbs**, Director of Landscape, **Broadway Malvan**
- **Paul Shaffer**, SUDS Project Manager, **CIRIA**
- **Dr Alun Tarr**, Director, **Blackdown Horticultural Consultants**
- **Leon Yates**, Urban Design & Regeneration, **Lewisham Council**

### Outstanding networking opportunities

Don't miss this exclusive opportunity to network with leaders across the industry from architects to contractors, engineers, planners, roofing experts, ecologists and end-users. This is a fantastic chance to interact with other executives and get up to speed with all the current developments in green roofs.

#### Sponsorship and exhibition opportunities

For details please contact **Toby Redington** on 020 7505 6634 or email: [toby.redington@emap.com](mailto:toby.redington@emap.com)

**To register - Tel:** 0845 056 8069

**Email:** [constructconferences@emap.com](mailto:constructconferences@emap.com)

**[www.ajgreenroofs.co.uk/2006](http://www.ajgreenroofs.co.uk/2006)**



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**For more information and/or an informal discussion  
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For more information and an application form, please contact Nancy Forsyth at the Highland Housing Alliance on **01463 702896** or email [nancy.forsyth@highland.gov.uk](mailto:nancy.forsyth@highland.gov.uk)  
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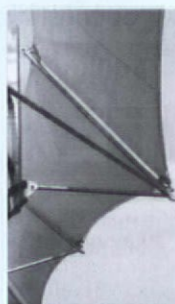
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Ref: 00407/A5 Senior Lecturer in Building Surveying & Construction Technology

Ref: 00426/A5 Senior Lecturer in Construction Project Management

Ref: 00406/A5 Senior Lecturer in Urban Regeneration & Design

These new posts will contribute to the work of the School across the teams:

- Architecture & Urban Design
- Construction Management
- Communication Media for Design
- Landscape & Garden Design
- Property, Housing & Regeneration

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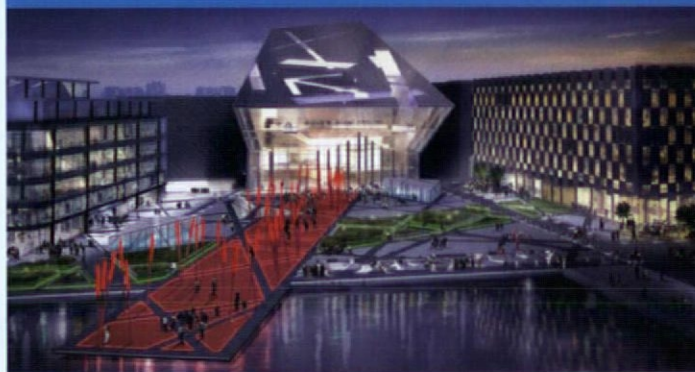
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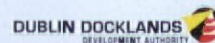


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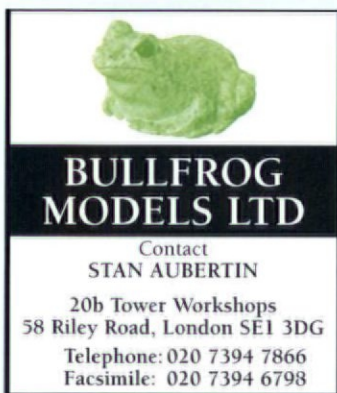
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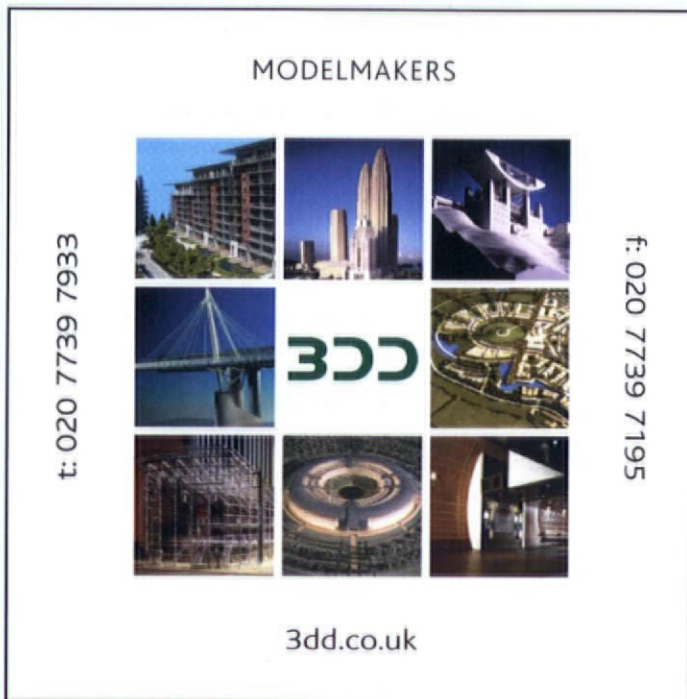
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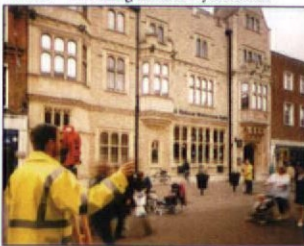
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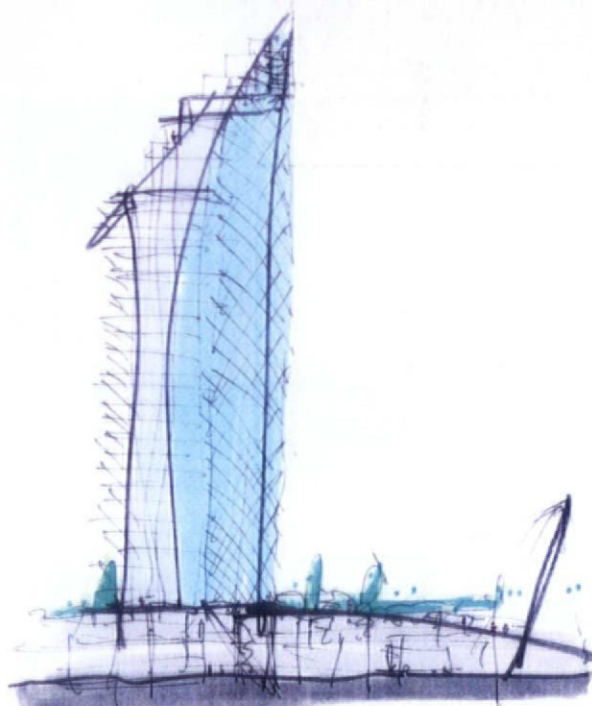
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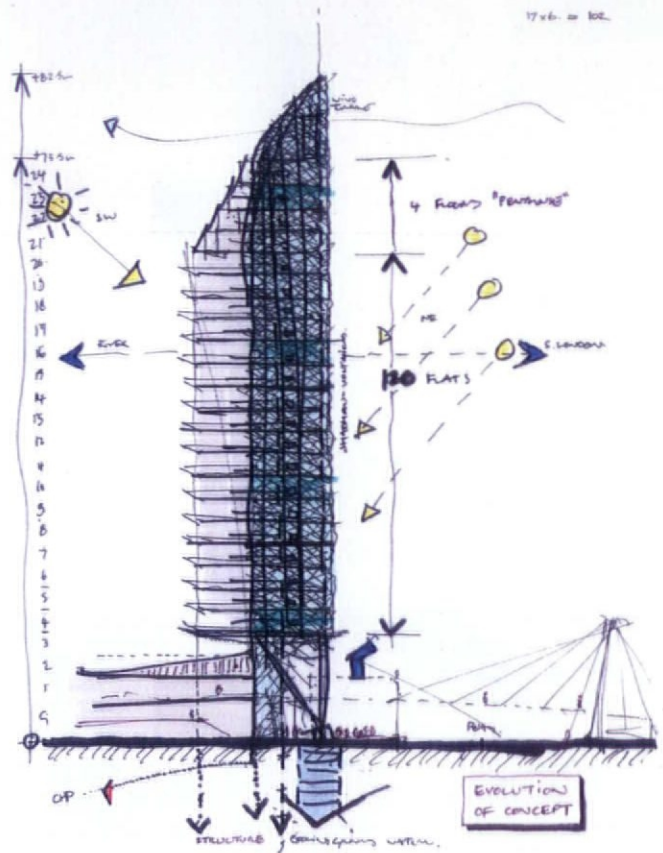


**RICS**





\*0604 / PRICE'S CANDLE FACTORY PHASE #2



Concept sketch for Price's Candle Factory Phase Two.  
By Alan Camp of Alan Camp Architects



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## MILLIKEN



### AJ ENQUIRY 201

Go with the Flow is an organically inspired new carpet collection from Milliken with designed-in flexibility to work around the contours of any space with comfort and ease. The range evolves Milliken's structured industrial mesh theme into something much softer, with more organic forms and textures.

## STOAKES SYSTEMS



### AJ ENQUIRY 202

Atkins has used Kalwall translucent cladding on the Highways Agency's new control centre in Warrington. Kalwall means the architect has neatly solved the problem of maximising natural daylight while retaining privacy and security. Call 0208 660 7667 or visit [www.stoakes.co.uk](http://www.stoakes.co.uk)

## EATON



### AJ ENQUIRY 203

Ability to meet a tight 10-week deadline won Eaton the contract to supply a 5MVA packaged substation for Liverpool's new £70 million Met Quarter retail development. A 12.4m-long substation was built at Eaton's Birmingham factory and supplied to the site, being lowered into position by crane.

## METAL TECHNOLOGY



### AJ ENQUIRY 204

Using its high-performance curtain walling for the three storey, two-unit building on Europa Boulevard, constructed by Bowmer and Kirkland, Metal Technology provided a stunning grey/green facade for the 2,300m<sup>2</sup> town-centre office development fabricated by Anaco Systems.

## AMBASS-A-DOOR



### AJ ENQUIRY 205

Ambass-A-Door, one of the UK's leading manufacturers of high-performance, fully finished joinery, has launched a new and innovative Twin Fully Reversible Mock Sliding Sash window. The new window offers the aesthetics of a traditional sash design with the added benefits of ease of cleaning and secure locking.

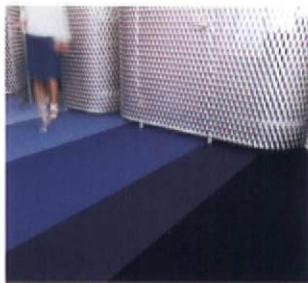
## CLAXTON BLINDS



### AJ ENQUIRY 206

Claxton Blinds is one of the leading commercial window-blind companies in the UK, specialising in interior window treatments for any requirement. Notable projects include Tower 42, the Canary Wharf Tower and the Citigroup Tower. Phone 01727 840 001 or visit [www.claxton-blinds.com](http://www.claxton-blinds.com)

## INTERFACE



### AJ ENQUIRY 207

Refreshed with new colours and a yarn that hides dirt more effectively, Palette 2000 from Interface sets the standard as one of the best plain cut-pile carpet tiles on the market; one that has a 20-year track record of performance and cost efficiency supported by millions of square metres that have been installed.

## MARSHALL-TUFLEX



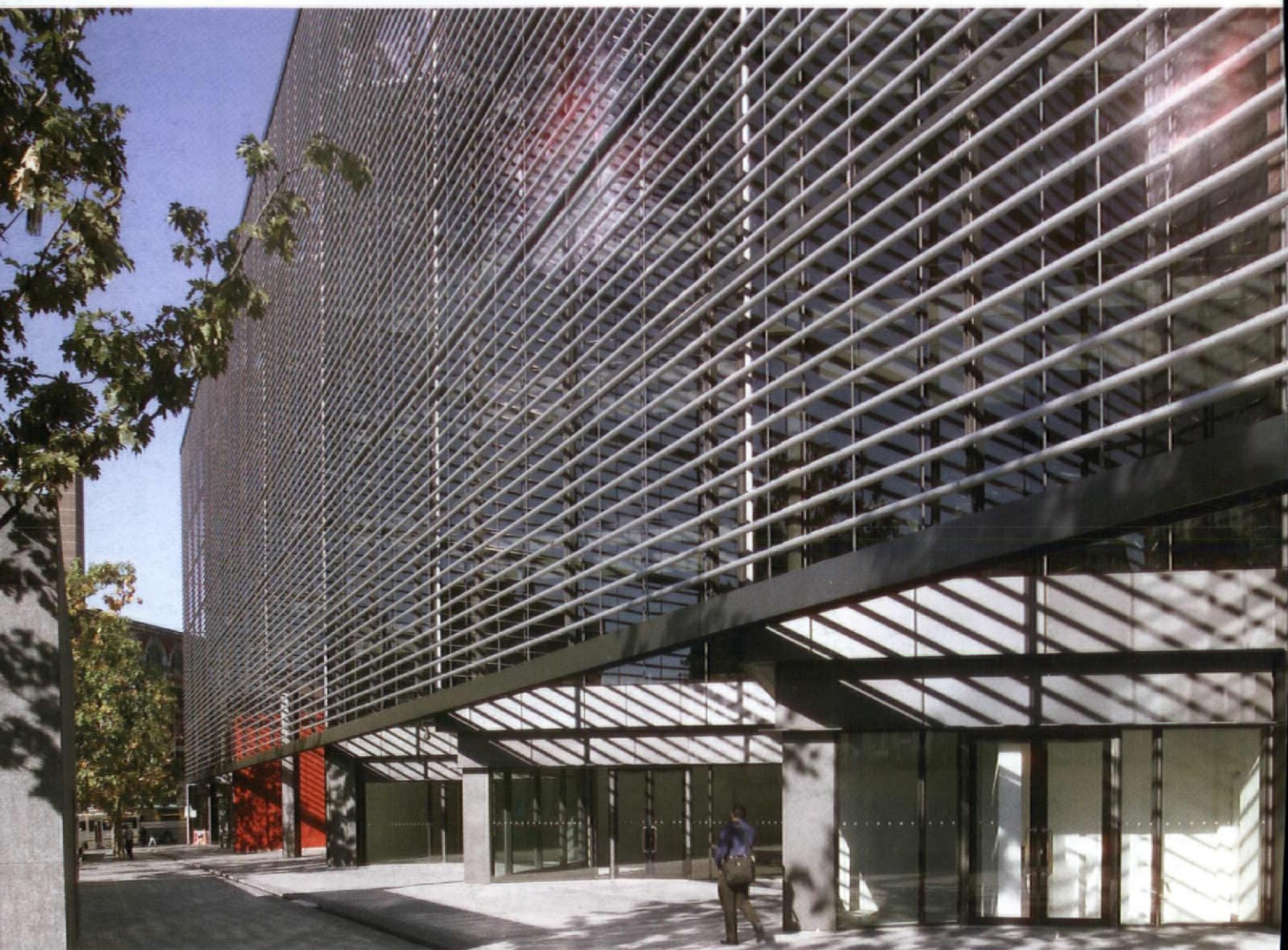
### AJ ENQUIRY 208

Marshall-Tuflex has contributed to Hanson's new development of a two-storey house in the grounds of the Building Research Establishment at Bucknall Lane, Watford. Marshall-Tuflex supplied one of its own Rainwater Systems for the project, via stockist Eurocell Building Plastics.



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