

AJ

# 03.08.06 DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

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151 Rosebery Avenue,  
London EC1R 4GB

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)  
**Senior reporter**  
Richard Waite (020 7505 6636)  
**Reporter**  
Richard Vaughan (020 7505 6770)  
**Working details editor**  
Susan Dawson (015242 21692)  
**Reviews editor**  
Andrew Mead (020 7505 6717)  
**Technical editor**  
Hattie Hartman (020 7505 6711)  
**Art editor**  
Sarah Douglas (020 7505 6705)  
**Assistant art editor**  
Eriko Shimazaki (020 7505 6704)  
**Chief sub-editor**  
Angus Montgomery (020 7505 6708)  
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**Editor, AJ Specification / Online**  
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**Assistant editor, AJ Specification**  
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**Advertisement production**  
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## STUDENTS WOULD OFTEN JUMP INTO THE CHARETTE CART THEMSELVES

By Isabel Allen

The charette (see pages 19-61) has a distinguished place in architectural history. The word is thought to originate from the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris, referring to the cart which was used to collect student work at the end of an intense design exercise. Students would often jump into the cart themselves to add finishing touches to their schemes as it went on its way. The London branch of the AIA (American Institute of Architects) still holds its annual charette, where teams of UK students and AIA architects are given eight hours to address a design problem before presenting to an expert jury. It is, according to the AIA, 'a rewarding experience for all involved'.

But away from the cosy sanctuary of institutions and academia, it's trickier to buy in to the notion of such wholesome fun. When the AJ teamed up with Argent, the developer responsible for the regeneration of King's Cross, to invite 20 young practices to demonstrate their

talents in a one-day design charette, we knew it could be seen as either (a) an unseemly attempt to introduce *X-Factor* vulgarity to an industry which ought to know better; or (b) an unscrupulous ruse to persuade unsuspecting architects to part with their most-valuable commodity – their design expertise. It can only be a matter of time until one of our more erudite readers points out that the term 'charette' was also the name of the cart which carried the condemned to the guillotine.

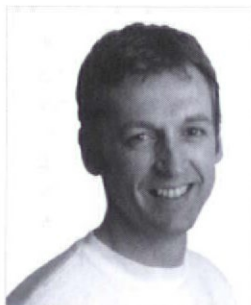
Then again, it would have been far easier and cheaper for Argent to have divvied up its new commissions among its existing architects, with perhaps the occasional punt on a personal relative or friend. With predictable results.

The charette can also be seen as (c) an enlightened initiative to nurture new talent by a developer determined to break new ground.

*The next issue of the AJ is out on 17 August*



## CONTRIBUTORS



Guy Drayton, who photographs the Designs on King's Cross session on pages 19-61, is a photographer whose work has been exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery



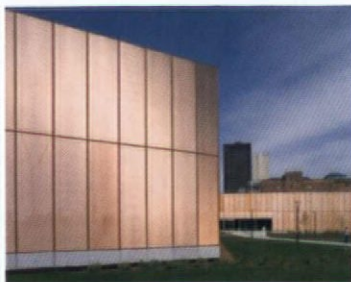
Murray Fraser, who reviews the book on Rick Mather Architects on pages 70-71, is a professor at the department of architecture at the University of Westminster



Alex Wright, who reviews MVRDV's latest book KM3: Excursions on Density on page 69, is a teaching fellow in architecture at the University of Bath



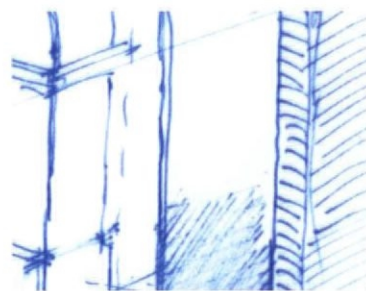
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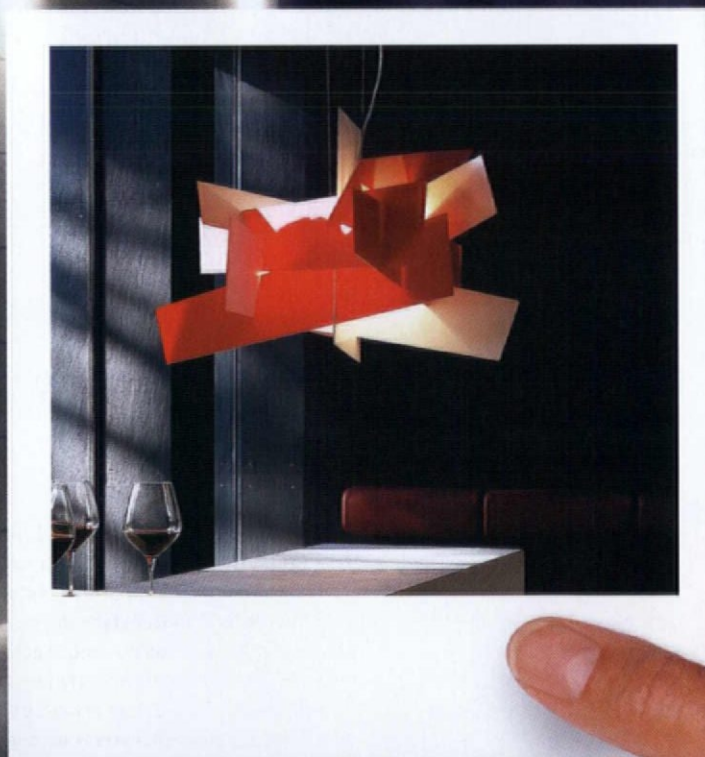
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#### THURSDAY 27 JULY

- Wilkinson Eyre's Mary Rose museum has lottery cash bid rejected
- Rogers' towers point the way for future development at Bankside (right)
- O'Donnell + Tuomey wins regional museum competition in Northern Ireland
- Chipperfield only Brit shortlisted for Denver art museum



#### FRIDAY 28 JULY

- Sergison Bates' 'first key building', a Walsall pub, faces wrecking ball (see pages 10-11)
- Chipperfield wins second Margate Turner gallery competition
- Design row puts £350 million Bradford regeneration on hold
- ARB reformer Nick Tweddle tops the RIBA council election results

#### TUESDAY 1 AUGUST

- Young Polish architects frozen out by Part 3 red tape
- Multiplex admits Wembley will miss yet another FA Cup deadline
- CABE reacts to Liverpool Pathfinder criticism
- Grimshaw's long-awaited Minerva Tower to be cut down by two-thirds



#### MONDAY 31 JULY

- Atkins' Southend casino given go-ahead after redesign and cost hikes
- Stay of execution for Crossrail-threatened Smithfield building
- Hawkins\Brown wins final green light for new Shoreditch project (left)
- Clifton Architects' Sea Life Centre plans dropped after animal-rights campaign



#### WEDNESDAY 2 AUGUST

- Urban Splash moves in to save SOM's first British building in Bristol (left)
- Gensler's Brum scheme in trouble as developer pulls plug
- Network Rail and English Heritage in U-turn over Paddington station span
- Questions emerge as Adam Caruso revealed as member of Walsall jury (see pages 10-11)





# DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

6A Architects / Alison Brooks Architects / AOC / Burd Haward Architects / DSDHA / FLACQ / Foster Lomas / McChesney Architects / McDowell+Benedetti Mossessionian & Partners / NORD / O'Mahony Pike Architects / Panter Hudspith / Piercy Conner Architects / Richard Hywel Evans Architecture and Design Sanei Hopkins Architects / Sarah Wigglesworth Architects / Studio Egret West / Urban Salon / Witherford Watson Mann Architects

King's Cross is the site of one of the biggest urban transformations in the UK today. The developer Argent is committed to creating an outstanding development which will attract families back into the inner-city and create a real sense of place.

The AJ teamed up with Argent to hold a one-day design charette in order to identify young practices which will help them to deliver their vision. Twenty practices were given a design brief for a high-density housing project within the King's Cross masterplan and asked to present their schemes by the end of the day.

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SAVE BRITAIN'S HERITAGE

# FOSTER ABANDONS SUPREME COURT

By Ed Dorrell

Norman Foster has walked away from possibly the highest-profile architectural commission in Britain today.

The international star has pulled out of his involvement in the design work on the UK's new Supreme Court.

Foster and Partners had been working as a consultant on the project – to radically rework the Grade II\*-listed Middlesex Guildhall (*above*) on Parliament Square, central London – with lead architect Feilden and Mawson.

But Foster ceased contributing to the design work at Stage D of the project. The AJ understands that he was offered more work up to and beyond Stage E, but instead decided to turn his back on the Design and Build scheme.

A source at the Department of Constitutional

Affairs (DCA), the scheme's client, said: 'We offered Norman Foster more work and we wanted him to stay on in an advisory capacity, but he decided against it.'

The full reasons for the departure remain unclear, although one insider on the project said Foster had realised that 'it wasn't going to be a Norman Foster building'.

And another long-term observer suggested that too many design decisions 'had not gone [Foster's] way'.

If the £32 million project does go ahead, it will see a radical conversion of Middlesex Guildhall's interiors. This will include new offices, a new legal library, the restoration of two light wells and the adoption of existing courtrooms.

It is understood that the changes to the historic fabric

have been subject to much debate with English Heritage.

Foster's departure will come as a severe embarrassment to the newly-formed DCA, which revealed the design team to much fanfare last year.

Speaking in May, when the proposals were submitted for planning, the Lord Chancellor, Charlie Falconer, spoke passionately about the challenges met by Foster and Feilden and Mawson: 'The location and setting of the UK Supreme Court should be a reflection of its importance and its place at the apex of the justice system and the heart of the constitution,' he said.

'The proposed design offers an exciting opportunity to reinvigorate a historic London building,' he added. 'We plan to deliver a world-class court building.'





1.

## NO ROOM FOR THE INN

By Ed Dorrell

'It's a bloody lovely little pub,' one regular says of Walsall's Wharf Bar. 'Why would they want to knock it down?'

This was the general attitude to the news that Will Alsop's masterplan for the centre of the Midlands town – unveiled last week (AJ 27.07.06) – would see the demolition of Sergison Bates' first defining building.

Another regular drinker and architectural aficionado agrees: 'It is a truly wonderful Modern building,' he says. 'The masterplan is destroying the town. It is like the 1970 destruction all over again.'

Just about everyone seems to appreciate the quality of Sergison Bates' 1998 building, which sits near to and complements Caruso St John's famous New Walsall Art Gallery.

Everyone except Alsop that is, who claimed last week that the hostelry was 'horrible' (ajplus 28.07.06).

Sergison Bates worked with Caruso St John on the design of the Wharf bar, which was completed soon after the gallery. It was seen as an attempt to bring nightlife back to the rundown town centre.

The practice also credits the building with launching it into the big time in Europe, with the pair securing a joint professorship in Zurich.

The extent to which Stirling Prize-winner Alsop is on his own with his views about the pub is most apparent when one talks to the client Urban Splash, the firm sanctioning and funding the proposed demolition. Even they cannot bring themselves to attack the design.

'This is not about architectural merit – I really like it as a building. But the point is that we might get 15 or 20 better buildings if it goes and that must be remembered,' Urban Splash's local director Nathan Cornish says.

'Our thinking is that the Gallery Square does not work very well at bringing people into the waterside site,' he adds. 'We believe another public building, such as a hotel, might work better there.'

Perhaps unbelievably, however, the demolition itself is not the most extraordinary element of this tale. This dubious honour goes to Adam Caruso, of Caruso St John, who was actually on the jury that selected Alsop for the vast site (ajplus 02.08.06).

Quite what happened on that competition jury, which





2.



3.

1. Urban Splash's Walsall development would see Sergison Bates' Wharf Bar knocked down 2 & 3. The 1998 building was a defining work for the practice

met two-and-a-half years ago, is open to supposition, but it seems unlikely that Caruso would have approved of the demolition of a building of which he is clearly very fond.

Those present are keeping schtum on what really happened – so we'll just have to speculate privately.

If Alsop's masterplan proposals, which were announced as the winning design, do get the final go-ahead, they will see the demolition of a 7ha swathe of central Walsall.

This will be replaced by a series of mixed-use buildings by Alsop himself, shedkm and young Austrian stars Querkraft.

Being reasonable and understated people, neither Caruso St John nor Sergison Bates are interested in entering into a public spat with Alsop or

Urban Splash over whether their building ought to face the wrecking ball.

Instead, they say they are hopeful that the current predicament will trigger a 'civilised debate'.

Adam Caruso says that there was a 'very important' question to consider, about whether developers in regeneration areas can 'exploit needy areas'.

'Often when this kind of thing goes through planning in places like Walsall there are not enough questions asked by the council,' he says.

And Jonathan Sergison says there were philosophical issues surrounding the idea of demolition.

'There would have to be questions about sustainability – this was, after all, funded by the council itself,' he says.

'There are issues about responsibility as well. To knock [a building] down after eight years seems very questionable.

'There is one other point that's worth thinking about, and that is that people in mainland Europe would be very confused to see a building like this under threat. There are not many buildings that they travel to the UK to visit.

'However, I would make it clear that we are really not the people to comment on the pub's architectural merit,' Sergison adds.

With this gentle response from the designers themselves, perhaps it is necessary to turn to a neutral to make a case for the bar's defence. Birmingham-based architect Richard Newman, of Bryant Priest Newman, told the AJ that he knew the pub well.

'I think the pub and the art gallery are an oasis of quality in a desert of mediocrity,' he says. 'I have even more time for it now than I did when it opened.

'The way that it takes domestic roof forms and slightly subverts them is really interesting and has become more mainstream recently.

'There is sometimes an argument to demolish a building which triggered a regenerative effect as the regeneration matures, such as with some of the bars in Birmingham. But this is definitely not the case here.

'It is a pleasant space and has a good atmosphere,' Newman adds. 'And it's not too precious or arty, which is important. Also it now seems to have developed a pleasant patina, like all good pubs.'



### THREE RIVALS LOOK NORTH

HKR, Stephenson Bell and Ian Simpson have drawn up proposals for a new £14 million office development in Manchester city centre as part of a developer-organised design competition. The three practices were approached by property giant Bruntwood to come up with a 4,700m<sup>2</sup> scheme to replace an existing three-storey 1970s block in Fountain Street. The developer gave the firms just four weeks to come up with a 'cutting-edge design' for the challenging plot. Bruntwood development director Peter Crowther said: 'We are developing this [building] as an investment, not to sell. Consequently we're looking for long-term flexibility and a design that will look good in 20 years' time.' He added: 'All three practices have used the latitude of the brief to provide very different answers to the questions posed. We've been left with a very difficult decision to make.' A winner is expected to be announced by the end of the month.

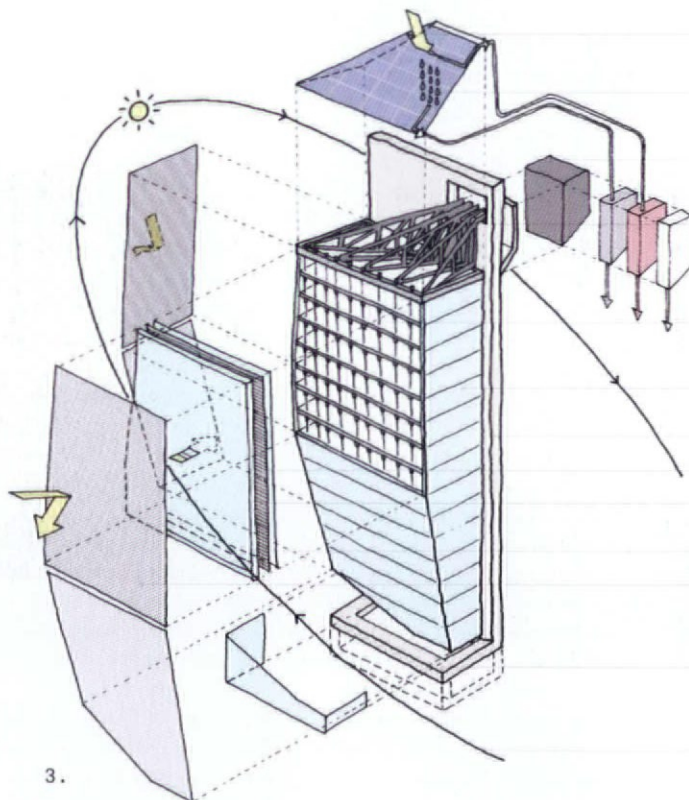
*By Richard Waite*



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3.

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COUNTERBALANCE

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BACK TO UPPERMOST FLOOR  
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FREE FLOOR PLATES)

NO FRITTING TO NORTH-  
FACING ELEVATION

LIMESTONE-CLAD CORE

SINGLE-GLAZED INNER 'SKIN'

BLINDS WITHIN THE CAVITY  
BLOCK LOW WINTER SUN

DOUBLE-GLAZED OUTER 'SKIN'

FRIT PATTERN ON GLASS  
PREVENTS EXCESSIVE SOLAR  
GAIN (FRIT PATTERN DENSITY  
VARIES BY FACET)

COLUMN-FREE GROUND  
FLOOR WITH DOUBLE-HEIGHT  
RECEPTION SPACE

SUN PATH





4.



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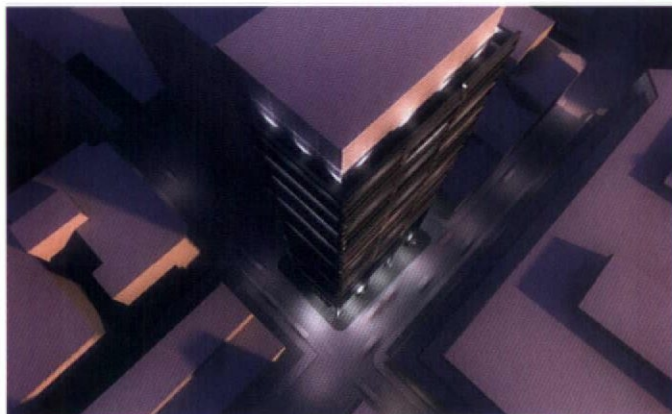
1, 2 & 3. Stephenson Bell's proposals for the 4,700m<sup>2</sup> central Manchester scheme

4 & 5. Ian Simpson's submission

6 & 7. The designs from HKR



6.



7.



### YOUNG PRACTICE SCAPE TO BUILD 'SENSITIVE' HOUSE

Up-and-coming practice Scape Architects has won planning permission for its first new-build private house in Tufnell Park, north London. The two-bedroom house is modest in scale, and Scape worked closely with Islington's planning and conservation department to produce a 'sensitive and contextual' design. Rising only 1m above the boundary wall, the two-storey building is sunken from the street to mitigate impact on a 270m<sup>2</sup> plot of land in the client's existing garden. From street level the property projects a tough, urban presence nestling behind a raised garden wall, ensuring privacy for both the occupant and the neighbouring house. Built on a solid-timber frame, the house interlocks with a semi-permeable wooden-slat screen, which wraps around the volume of the house, dematerialising into a more delicate arrangement at the rear. Bedrooms are located on the ground floor, and guests are orientated downstairs to the open-plan reception spaces, which give access to the terrace. At street level the screen conceals an amenity strip for waste and bike storage, flooding light down to the glazed elevation of the kitchen. The project's budget is £225,000 and it will go on site in January 2007, with completion set for May 2007.

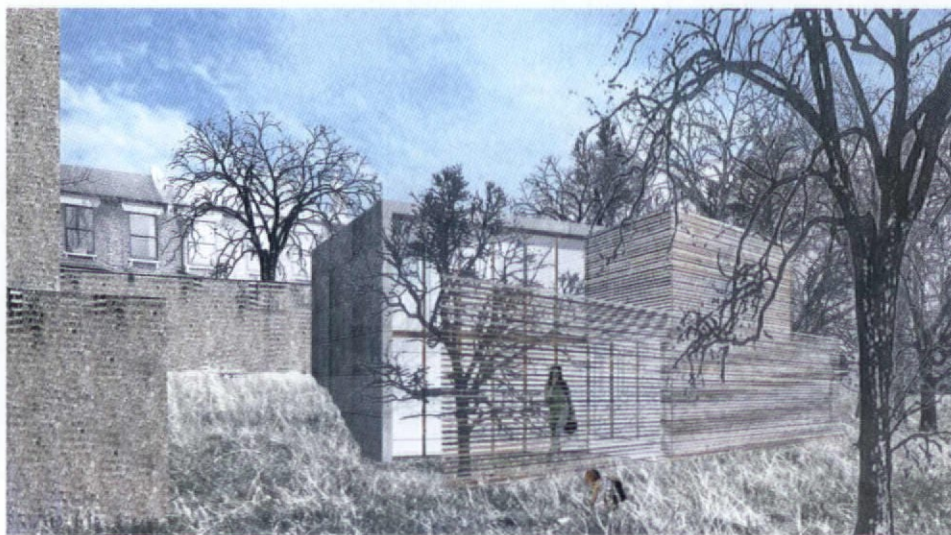
*By Richard Vaughan*



1.



2.



3.

1. The two-storey building will be sunken from the street
2. The house will rise only 1m above the boundary wall
3. A semi-permeable wooden-slat screen wraps around the volume of the house



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*'To compare Basil Spence to Le Corbusier or Kenzo Tange or Carlo Scarpa, to whom he owed so much, is to measure the gap between Ealing Studios and Hollywood, or salad cream and mayonnaise'*

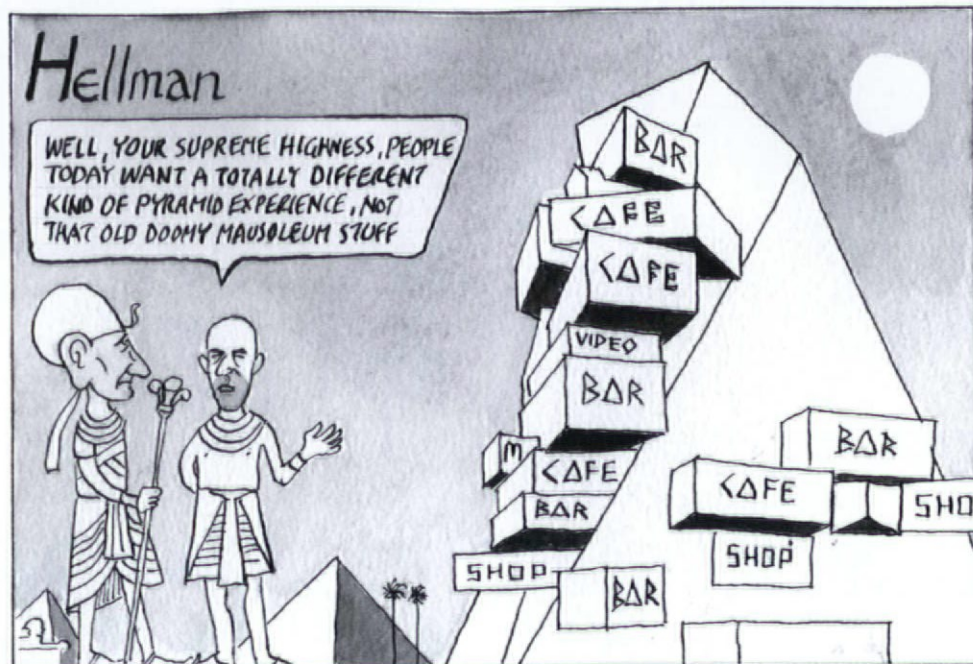
Deyan Sudjic on the HLF's £1 million donation to Spence's centenary. *Observer*, 30.07.06

*'Zaha doesn't suffer fools. Her unflinching self-belief is downright magnetic – but most of the time I just hide'*

Art dealer and Zaha client Kenny Schachter. *www.artnet.com*, 26.07.06

*'An institutional mess of the first order'*

Sir Peter Hall on the Thames Gateway. *Evening Standard*, 25.07.06



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#### REM LOSES HIS KOOL

Going back a few weeks, to the launch party of **Rem's** pavilion. Because it's worth it. Eagle-eyed **Elsie Owusu** spotted her old teacher Rem across the crowd. Knowing him from AA days, Elsie thought she was in a good position to introduce him to a colleague. But she made a fatal error in forgetting that Rem is officially The Grumpiest Man in Architecture. As she sidled up he cut her off mid-stride. 'Go away,' he said, 'I am telling an anecdote.' Elsie dutifully withdrew. Now that's power.

#### ROGUE'S GALLERY

Informants (they're everywhere) tell Astragal of a current proposal at Portland Place to restore the tradition of hanging portraits of former presidents in the hallowed corridors. Some ex-presidents of the RIBA –

could that be a name of a band? – have been consulted on this. While **Paul Hyett** said he was not really bothered by the idea, another of Astragal's old friends is, rather endearingly, more enthusiastic. That's right; old red-trousers himself, **George Ferguson**, desperately wants his mug to stare out from some Art Deco alcove. Astragal says let him have it.

#### FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

Anyone at a loose end ought to have a look at the website of BNP member and former RIBA presidential candidate **Peter Phillips**. It's very funny (in an **Alan Partridge** way). Phillips, who came last in the election, seems not a little frustrated with Astragal's colleague **Ed Dorrell**, who he has nicknamed **Ed Doorbell**. The point of this is anyone's guess. It's not quite

a pun and, frankly, it's just a bit weird – but what would you expect from a member of a far-right, xenophobic party?

#### A BRIDGE TOO FAR

To completely cock-up a design competition once is unfortunate. To do it twice – on the same project – takes real skill. A small drum roll, then, for Sunderland City Council and the long-awaited River Wear Crossing. First it bungled the appointment of **Frank Gehry**, and now there's an impenetrable smokescreen surrounding the latest bridge designs by **Spence Associates** and engineer **Techniker**. Rumours are that the as-yet-unseen scheme, which was chosen ahead of five others back in September, exceeds the council's budget. Insiders say this is just the tip of the iceberg. Watch this space for more...



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## TATE WILL TAKE TOO MUCH FROM GILBERT SCOTT

How cheering that you have seen through the hype that requires us to welcome any would-be 'icon' churned out by a signature architect, and tellingly pointed out both the mediocrity of Herzog & de Meuron's design for enlarging Tate Modern and the inconsistency of Sir Nicholas Serota in promoting it (AJ 27.07.06).

I had welcomed the original conversion of Bankside Power Station, as it (largely) retained Gilbert Scott's 'temple of power' – even though the Swiss architects chosen for the work had neither understanding of nor respect for his monumental brick architecture. But you did not mention that if the plans for the gratuitous ziggurat are endorsed as expected, we will lose yet more of Bankside, as the extension replaces over half of Gilbert Scott's symmetrical south elevation – including its central entrance. Insensitivity and ineptitude, or more egomaniacal vandalism? *Gavin Stamp, by email*

## PYRAMID SCHEME IS GETTING OUT OF HAND

With Herzog & de Meuron's proposed extension to Tate Modern – their second pyramid project – may we ask if we are witnessing the birth of the next architectural fashion?

Gottfried Böhm, Germany's sole winner of the Pritzker Prize, appears on numerous occasions to have prefaced subsequent architectural developments. His seven-storey glass pyramid in the medieval marketplace of Ulm was completed in 2004 and houses the town's central library, virtually adjacent to the Minster. Böhm's drawings beautifully illustrated the relationship of the buildings.

With Herzog & de Meuron's Tate pyramid following on so swiftly from their Courgenay cultural centre pyramid and Foster's soon to be completed Astanda pyramid, we look forward to Hellman's thoughts before it becomes the next post-Bilbao must-have fashion accessory for every regeneration dream.

*Peter Bareham, Sussex*

## NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST AT CABE

As CABE told the AJ before the publication of its piece on Darren Parker (AJ 27.07.06), we take very seriously the risk of conflicts of interest arising in its work – and of perceived conflicts of interest. CABE employees are free to stand for office in local government elections on the understanding that their interest is declared in CABE's Staff Register of Interests. Parker followed the guidance, declaring his intention to stand well in advance of the 2006 local elections and subsequently declaring his campaign successful.

Once elected, Parker was reminded that if any Hackney cases/projects arose in his work at CABE, he must declare an immediate interest and withdraw from CABE's engagement in the project, or any discussion of it, to ensure he had absolutely no involvement, or potential conflict of interest relating to Hackney.

Our guidance is among the most stringent within the public sector and all CABE staff receive regular reminders of its contents. Furthermore, we manage Parker's work to ensure that

he is not involved in CABE's work in Hackney. He had no involvement in the Dalston cases at CABE.

With respect to his role as a councillor, it is for Hackney Council's monitoring officer to advise its councillors on how it handles personal/professional interests. CABE cannot interfere in the governance of a local authority. We understand that the Council's monitoring officer advised Parker that he had no prejudicial interest in this case.

*Richard Simmons, chief executive, CABE*

## LESS 'GREENWASH' WILL DELIVER THE BEST BUILDINGS

I support the view that buildings that claim to have exemplary green credentials are not implicitly beyond reproach (AJ 20.07.06), but take issue with the notion that 'the most absurd manifestation of the quest for the holy green grail is the exemplar project'.

This argument implies that exemplar buildings cannot lay claim to their *raison d'être* for any length of time. That they therefore commit the worst sin against sustainability: waste. But the rationale for many exemplar buildings is precisely to avoid waste.

In my view the cardinal sin is the exemplar building which comes covered with so much greenwash it is impossible to differentiate between marketing hype and reality. But the increasing adoption of BREEAM ratings, together with the introduction by 2009 of building energy-labelling and certification, will help reduce spin and rhetoric and deliver genuine exemplars.

By trialling new designs, novel technologies and materials, and monitoring energy performance and occupant satisfaction, the exemplar building provides us with valuable knowledge that will inform and improve future design, allowing architecture to evolve.

But exemplar buildings are by definition prototypes, and if they are to add any real value it is vital that performance-in-use is objectively assessed and analysed and the results disseminated. At the moment this seldom happens and we are failing to learn the lessons which could deliver better buildings.

*David Strong, managing director, BRE Environment*

## THE ARB SHOULD EXERCISE ITS RIGHTS WITH CARE

The power of the five to halt ARB business by making it inoperative is perfectly clear (AJ 20.07.06). It is a statutory provision, clearly stated in the Architects Act. Humphrey Lloyd may complain all he likes now he cannot get his way, but he cannot change the law.

The board should take heed of the new members. In September the retention fee for next year must be approved. Should the Reform Group approve it? Of course it should, but only on terms which bring the Board's remit firmly back to earth.

*Ian Salisbury, Oxford*

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](mailto:angela.newton@emap.com) to arrive by 10am on the Monday before publication. *The Architects' Journal* reserves the right to edit letters.



# DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS





## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### INTRODUCTION

King's Cross Central will be the largest development of a single central London site for 160 years and will include at least 60 architectural commissions. In a bid to identify new talent the site's developer, Argent, teamed up with the AJ to hold a one-day design charette as part of the London Architecture Biennale. The event took place on Friday 16 June at the German Gymnasium in King's Cross. Twenty young practices were invited to produce sketch proposals for a high-density housing project which would encourage families to live in the inner city. The practices were given the brief in the morning and asked to present their projects to fellow contestants and a visiting jury at the end of the day.

The proposals, which are shown on the following pages, can also be seen at the New London Architecture Gallery, The Building Centre, Store Street, London WC1 from 4 August to 2 September.

### THE JURY

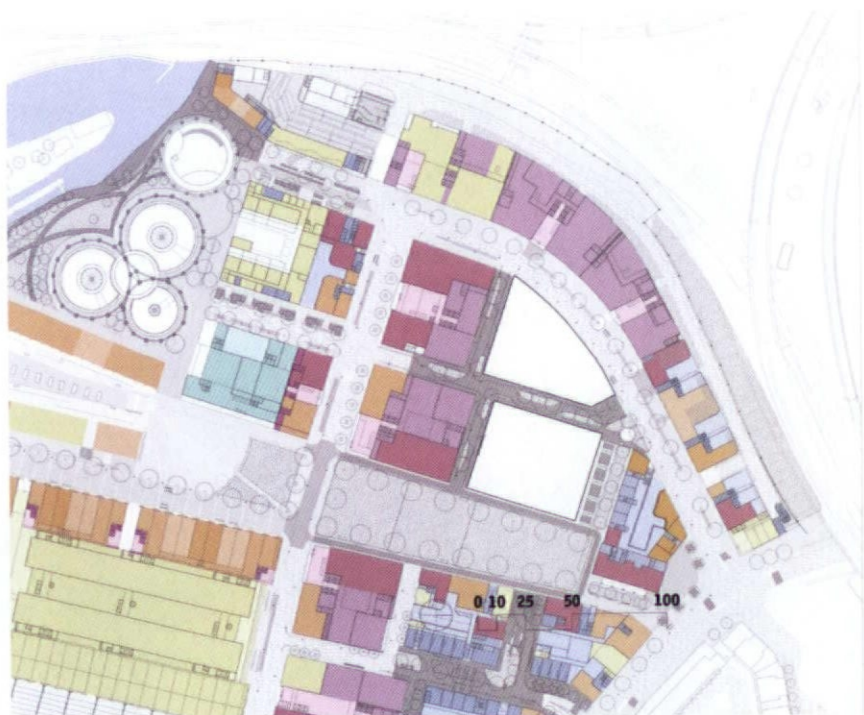
Roger Madelin, Argent  
David Partridge, Argent  
Isabel Allen, AJ  
Paul Finch, AR  
Pankaj Patel, Patel Taylor Architects  
Hugh Pearman, the Sunday Times

*Photography by Guy Drayton*

### THE BRIEF

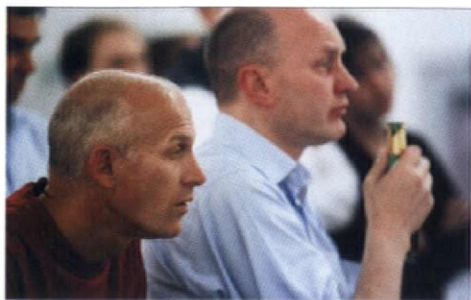
The brief was based on two adjacent building plots within the masterplan developed by Allies and Morrison and Demetri Porphyrios. It called for 350 units across the two sites with 29 per cent social housing for rent and a further 15 per cent intermediate. The mix and approximate size of the units is set out below.

|               | Social for rent            | Intermediate             | Market                    |
|---------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Studios       |                            | 34% (25 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 10% (37 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 1 bed         | 21% (48 m <sup>2</sup> )   | 40% (42 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 20% (49 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 2 bed (small) | 19.5% (61 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 13% (51 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 20% (65 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 2 bed (large) | 19.5% (68 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 13% (61 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 15% (77 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 3 bed         | 30% (84 m <sup>2</sup> )   |                          | 20% (86 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 3 bed (large) |                            |                          | 5% (102 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 4 bed         | 10% (93 m <sup>2</sup> )   |                          | 10% (145 m <sup>2</sup> ) |



Portion of the King's Cross masterplan showing the historic gasometers and the two adjacent plots selected for the charette





Judging: from left to right: Roger Madelin, Hugh Pearman, Isabel Allen, Paul Finch and David Partridge



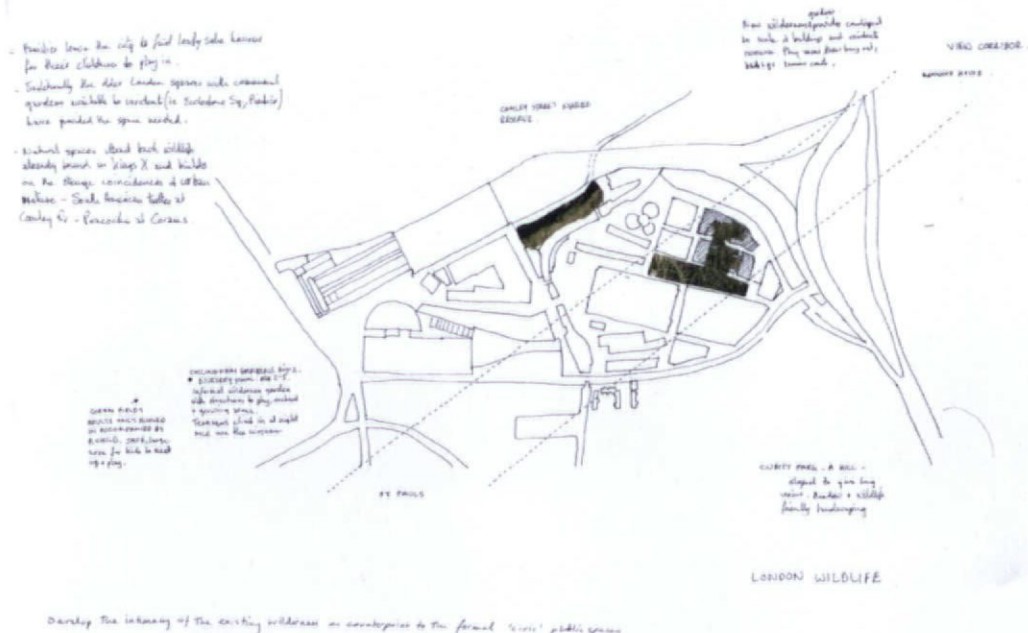
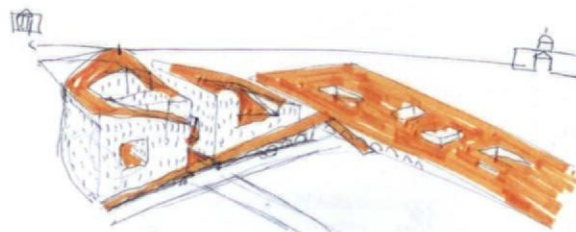


## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### 6A ARCHITECTS

Tom Emerson, Stephanie Macdonald,  
Rentaro Nishimura

Walking around the site enabled us to bring back evidence of the immense infrastructure of railways and canal that shape the King's Cross psyche – having disconnected it from London for the last 150 years – and the refreshing wilderness that has grown up in Camley Street nature reserve. We focused on retaining this dialogue of infrastructure and the ecology of wilderness to propose a strategy unique to King's Cross. [Proposed] Cubitt Park is envisaged as an inhabited viaduct wilderness park rising through the site and attracting a diverse ecosystem to the city, continuing into the residential site as the semi-private open space required to support a new residential community. Our proposal attempts to remind us that a place already exists which has a great deal of beauty and power that could enrich the tidy avenues of the masterplan.







11am Kings X 16.06.06



11am Kings X 16.06.06



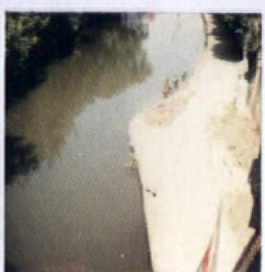
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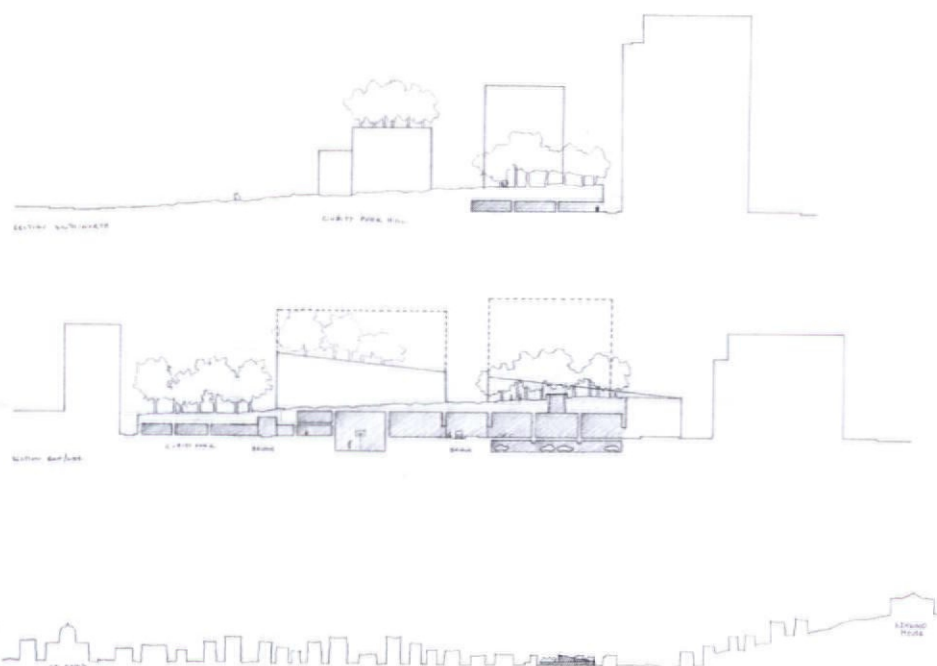
11am Kings X 16.06.06



Kings X 16.06.06

*'You have to admire the determination to find poetry in King's Cross. It raises the question of whether it is possible – or desirable – to reconcile elements of the existing landscape with the desire to radically transform the neighbourhood'*

Isabel Allen



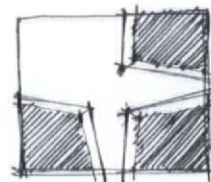
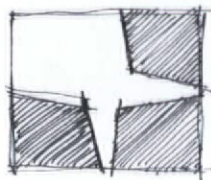
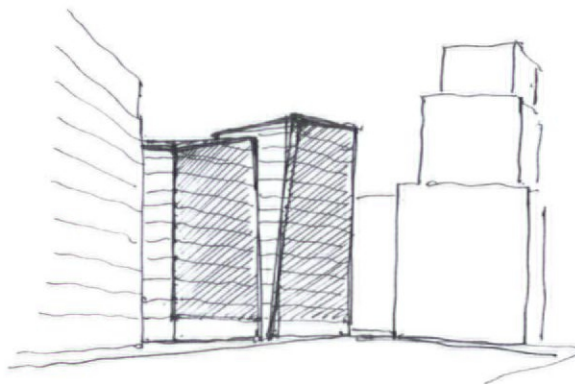
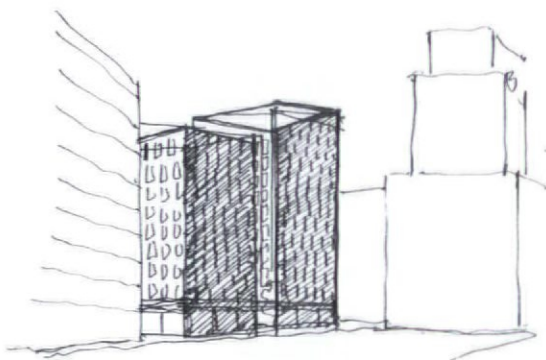
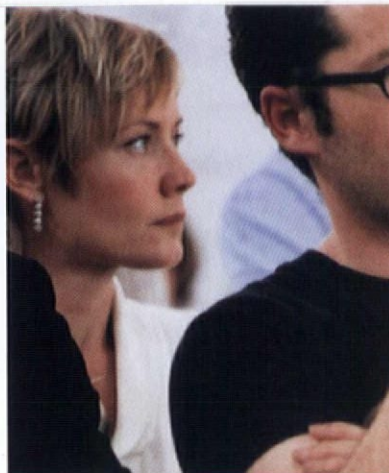


## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### ALISON BROOKS ARCHITECTS

Alison Brooks, Dominic McKenzie

The site reminded us of Central Park in New York, scaled down for the UK – high-density residential buildings lining an elongated green space. Our proposal is intended to intensify this quality, to create a 'mini-Manhattan' and at the same time make the site more permeable, more sunlit, and more social. The scheme is a perimeter block 'split' into towers overlooking the park, and a long 'bar' building on the west side, split in two. Each tower can be defined by the use at its base – the Crèche Tower, the Sushi Tower, the Fitness Tower, the Supermarket Tower etc. This collection of towers shelters a central south-facing courtyard, like the courtyards of Paris' 'grandes maisons'. The courtyard can be the hub of the new residential community, a private outdoor space to supplement the public park.







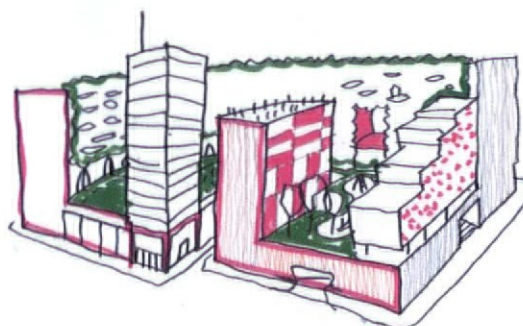


## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### AOC

Tom Coward, Geoff Shearcroft, Daisy Froud

How can the generous amenity and do-it-yourself potential of the suburban family home be incorporated in the high-density housing planned for King's Cross? We propose a 12-storey 'garden wall' enclosing a south-facing landscape of variegated residential blocks, private gardens and communal courtyards. Double-aspect one- to four-bed homes are grouped around convenient cores, with glazed winter gardens to the north and deep patios behind a vegetated screen to the south. These inhabited facades provide 'gardens' ripe for appropriation and environmental buffers. The full-height growing wall gives a formal collective identity to the housing, while encouraging the residents to personalise the individual homes.

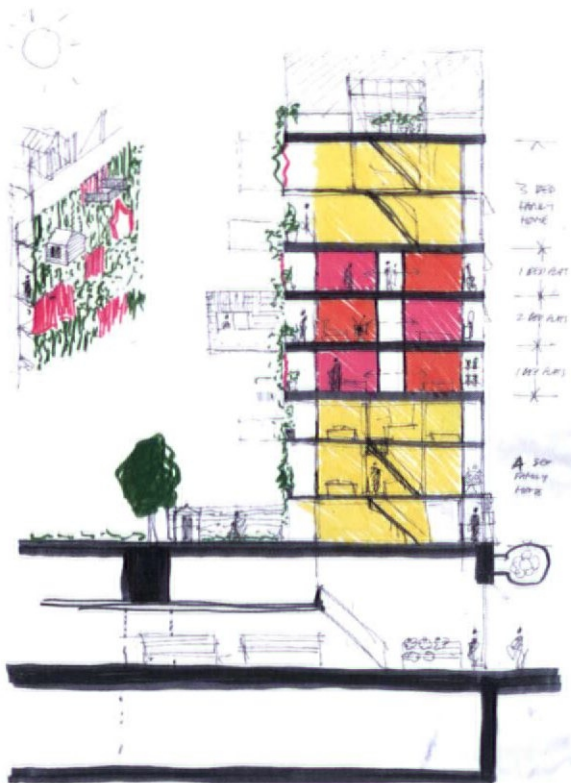


*'I really like the narrative behind this approach. It is clear that the scheme has been designed to allow the individuality of the inhabitants to be expressed without compromising the integrity of the overall architecture'*

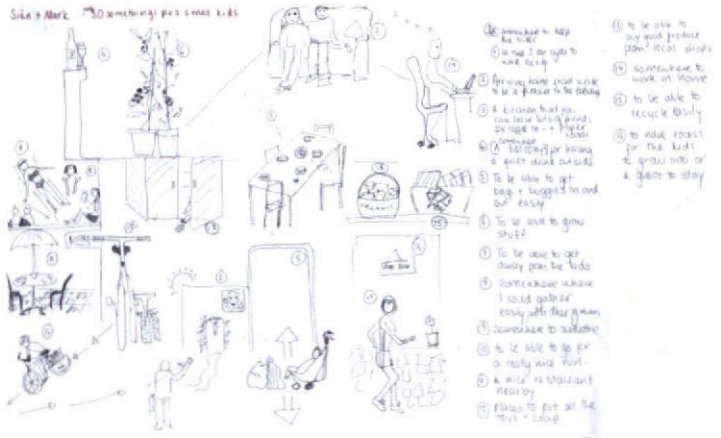
David Partridge



# SUBURBAN LIVING IN KINGS CROSS?



Sara + Mark - 30 something, 2 kids, 2 dogs



Timothy + Francesca - 40s, 60s, 2 dogs, 2 kids



Sophie - late 30s, 2 dogs



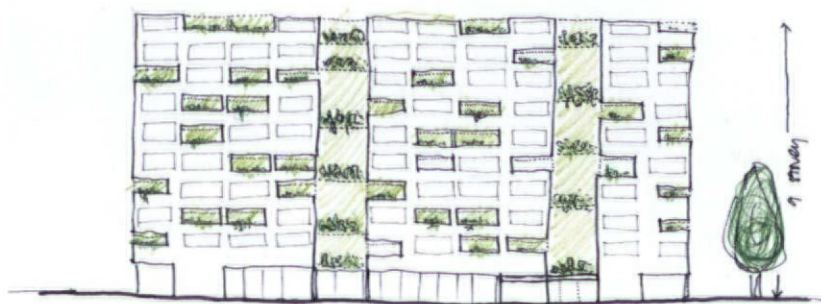


## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

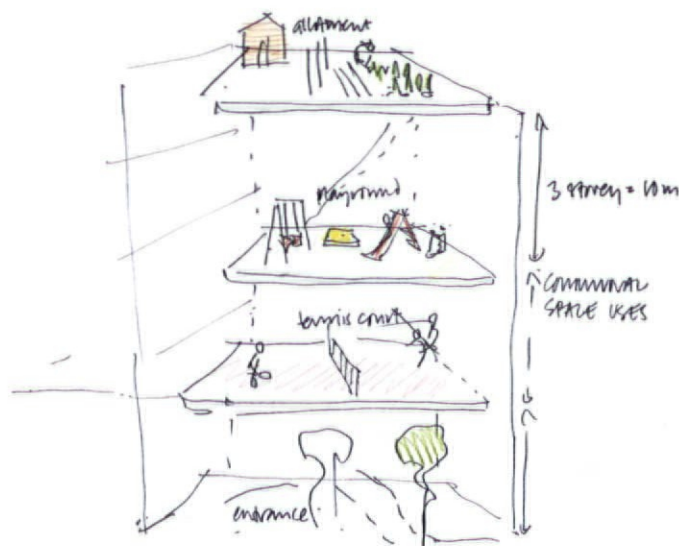
### BURD HAWARD ARCHITECTS

Catherine Burd, Buddy Haward, Val Tse

We asked ourselves: Who are the clients? Imagine it's us. Where and how would we want to live – a family with two young children in central London? We would want: a sense of community; good local facilities; low-energy sustainable design; a light-filled home; good views and, most importantly, private outside space. The project became about weaving green space into a dense urban footprint. We proposed: two buildings, ranging in height from six to nine storeys, depending on their edge condition. In each we carved out a long wide central courtyard running north-south. This provides access to the accommodation that wraps around three sides of the site, and gives a double aspect to each of the homes. The courtyard is glazed over its full height and is central to the low energy strategy for the development. It acts as a communal threshold space, and contains tennis courts/playgrounds/football pitches at various levels. The surrounding block of accommodation is then further cut in to at all levels to make spaces for private gardens and balconies. Larger (three- to four-bed) units each have a generous garden (9 x 5m), partially under cover, running along one side, and windows to three sides. The smaller units have balconies along their outside face. The majority of homes have an east/west aspect giving maximum light and views out. The courtyard, gardens and balconies perforate the urban block and enrich the internal and external elevations by allowing greenery to develop in the depth of the building, as well as allowing light and views through it.



ELEVATION TO PARK







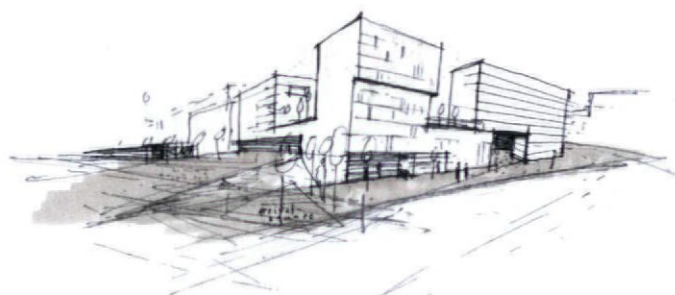
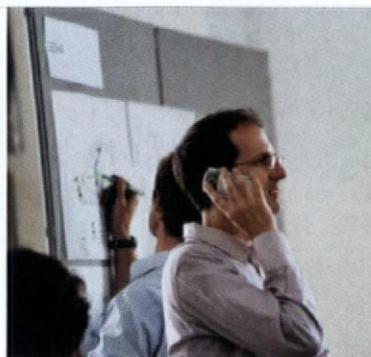


## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

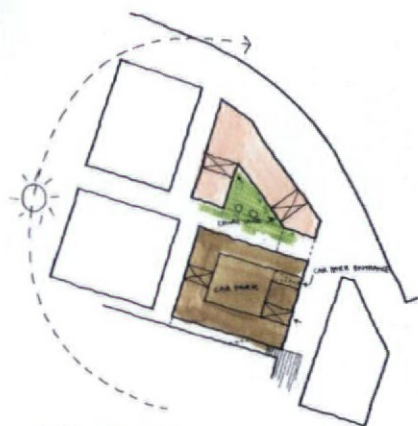
### DSDHA

David Hills, Martin Pearson, Sam Potter

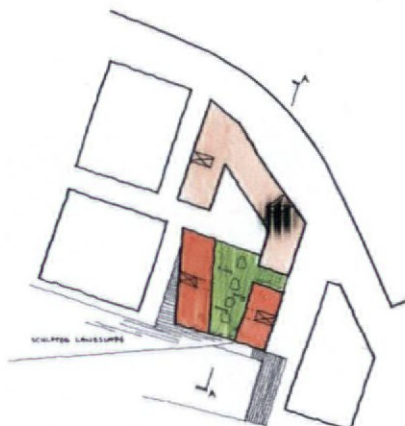
Our starting point was to claim an address for the housing development which would positively relate to [proposed] Cubitt Park, and develop a garden strategy to define an identity for the housing. The volume of the two housing blocks is broken down to optimise set-backs from the adjacent buildings, and maximise light penetration. The blocks are then structured around a series of discrete shared gardens. The ground and first floors are largely given over to the public realm for retail and leisure, with a generous provision of 'cellars' for the apartments using the depth of the parkside block. Above this the apartment building splits in two around a 'woodland terrace' which overlooks the park, and opens views to the rear courtyard apartments. This more-urban block grows from the paved square, which is carved at street level, and rises to an intermediate roof deck with tennis courts.



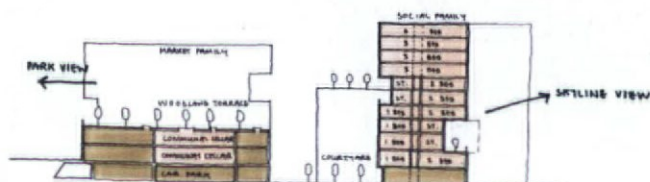
view from north towards the goods yard  
"large open north"



STREET LEVEL PLAN



THIRD FLOOR PLAN



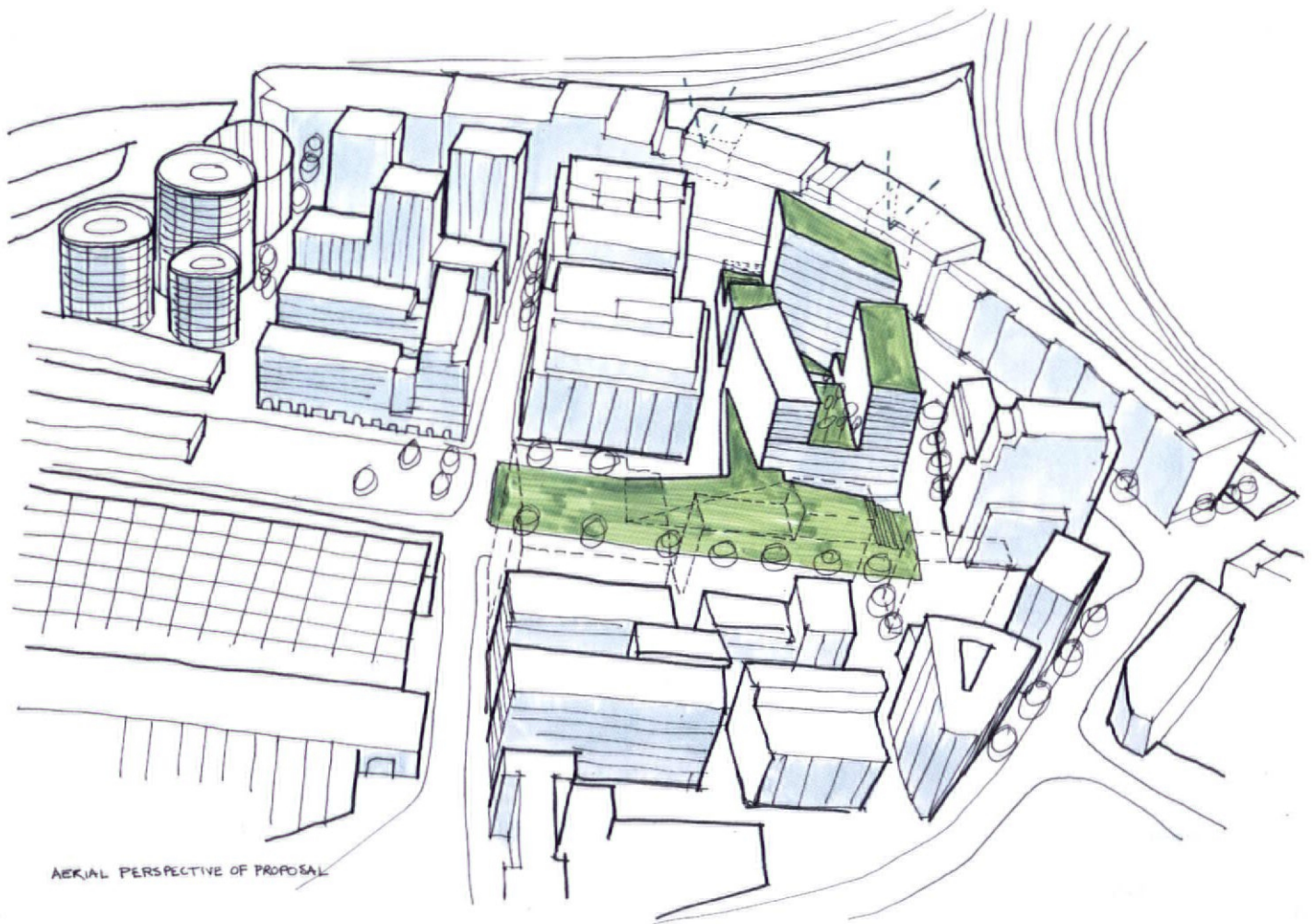
SITE SECTION A-A

KEY  
SOCIAL  
PRIVATE  
COMMERCIAL



*'I like the provision of different tiers of public space;  
the raised green lawn allows residents to be both  
apart from, and part of, the park below'*

Pankaj Patel



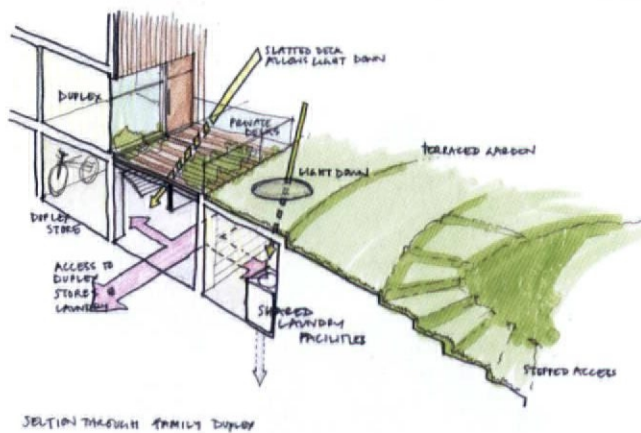
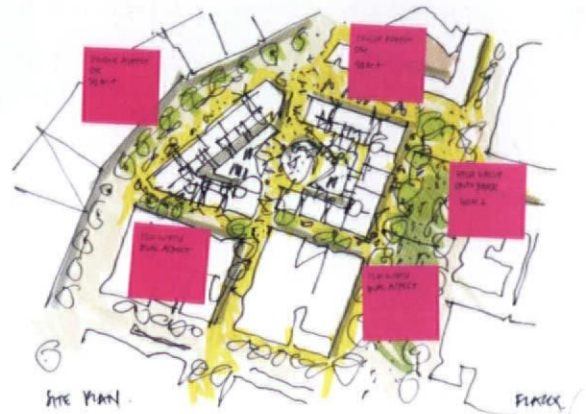


## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### FLACQ

Hal Currey, Joanna Burtenshaw, Marcus Lee

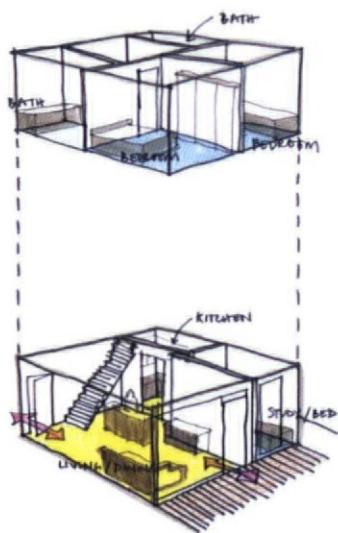
Our approach is deliberately strategic and, anxious not to upset the developer Argent, respects the principles of the masterplan. A strong urban presence is created through high-density development with a commercial outer edge at ground level, and a raised active and usable open space to the centre. A wiggle is created at ground level to slow any through traffic with terraced gardens to either side. Based on London Zoo's goat mountain, the terraces cover a series of storage rooms for bikes, boxes and (snow) boards. A potential community building or crèche provides a focus and daytime activity. Responding to aspect and street scale, town houses are located to the south, with apartment blocks on the main frontages. The mixed tenure (single aspect, through apartments, family duplexes and roof-top maisonettes) informs the composition of the elevation.



SECTION THROUGH FAMILY DUPLEX







*'An effortlessly confident scheme with real attention focused on the central communal garden and facilities, as well as addressing the one major fault in most city-living concepts – the absence of storage'*

David Partridge



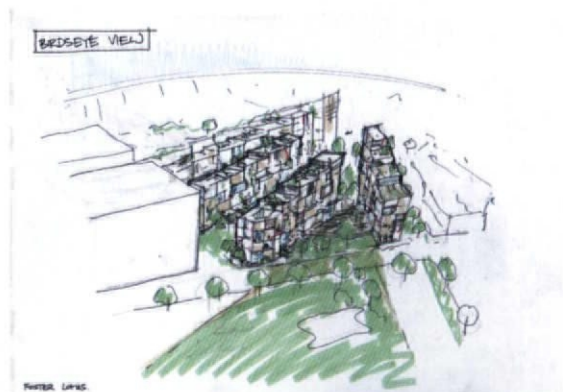
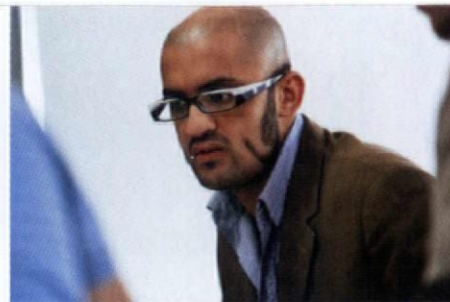
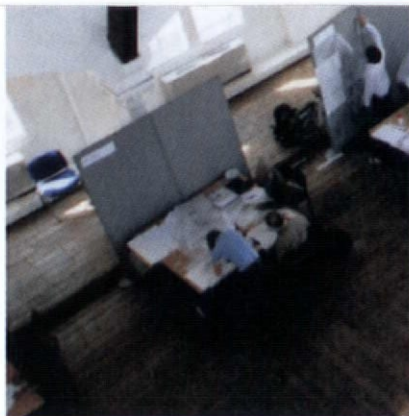


## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### FOSTER LOMAS

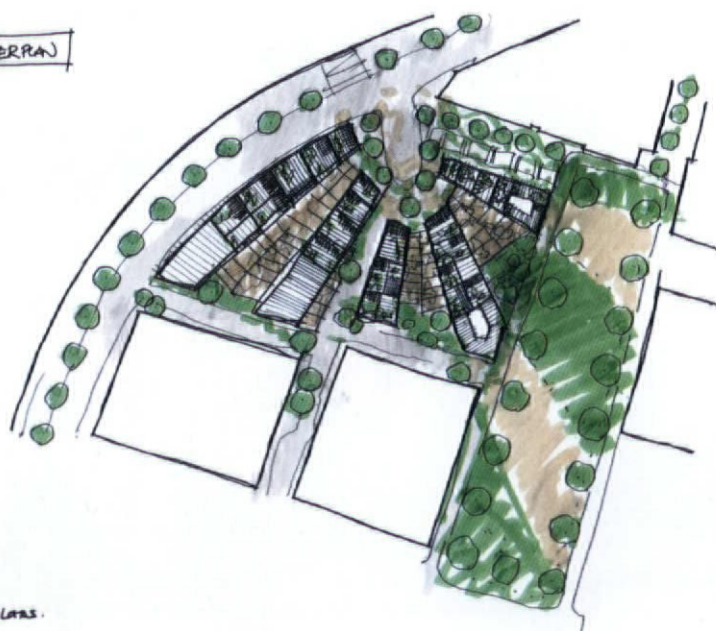
Will Foster, Greg Lomas, Nadeem Abbas

The design uses sliced forms that break up city blocks to increase light penetration and take advantage of passive solar gain. The ground is manipulated to form public and private green living spaces and 'energy orchards' between, within and on top of the new residential slices. These are connected to a hub that is a local exchange for goods, services, energy and recycling and becomes a focal point on the adjacent street. The slices shift in scale, form and density, responding to their location, setting up views and vistas to the interstitial green spaces and the park to the east.



MASTERPLAN

FOSTER LOMAS





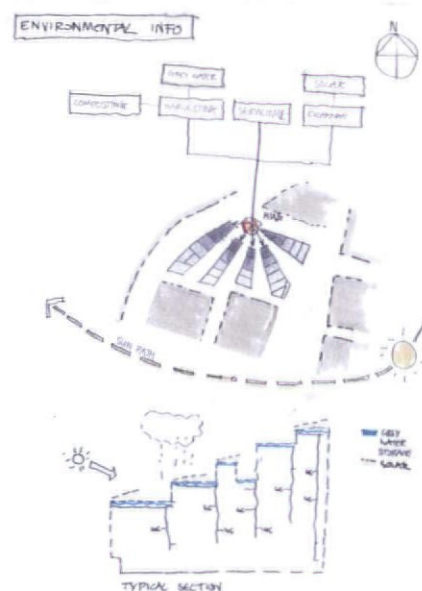
CROSS - SECTION.

PUBLIC PRIVATE PRIVATE PRIVATE PUBLIC PRIVATE PRIVATE

FOSTER LOMAS.

*'The glove-shaped formation is a logical response to the shape of the site. A lot of thought has gone into giving character and diversity to potentially anonymous strip accommodation'*

Pankaj Patel



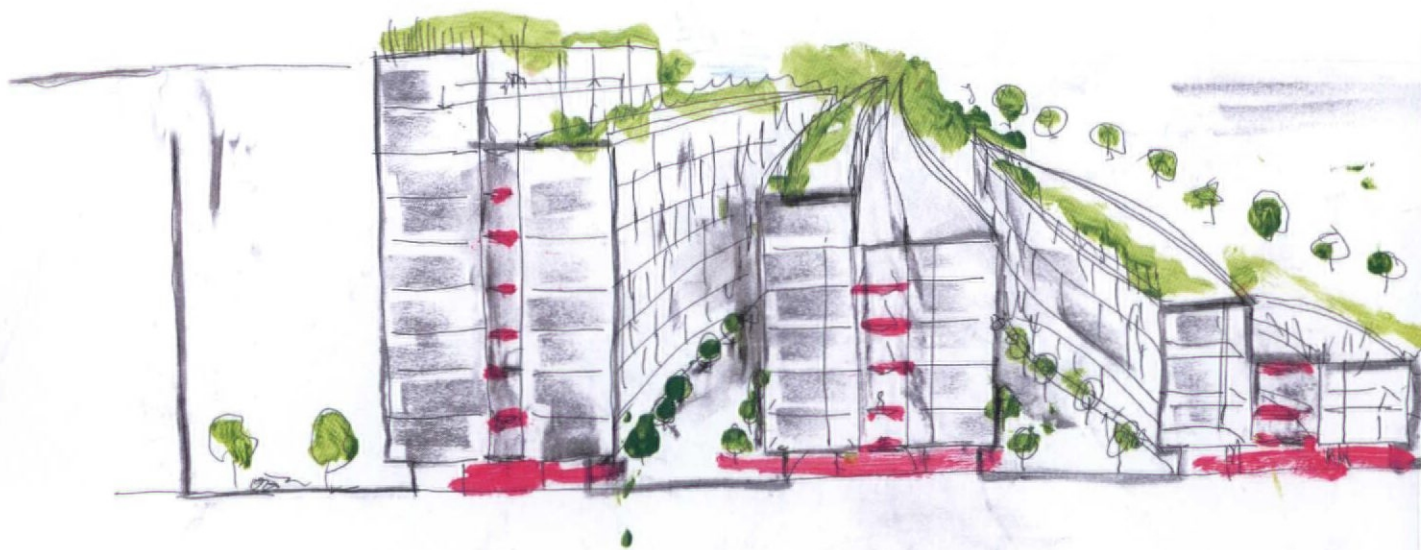
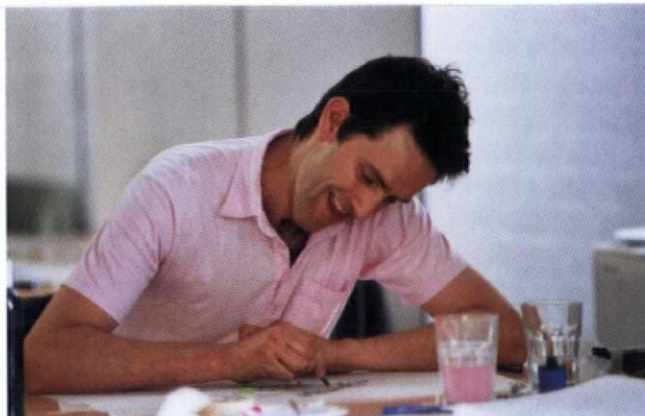


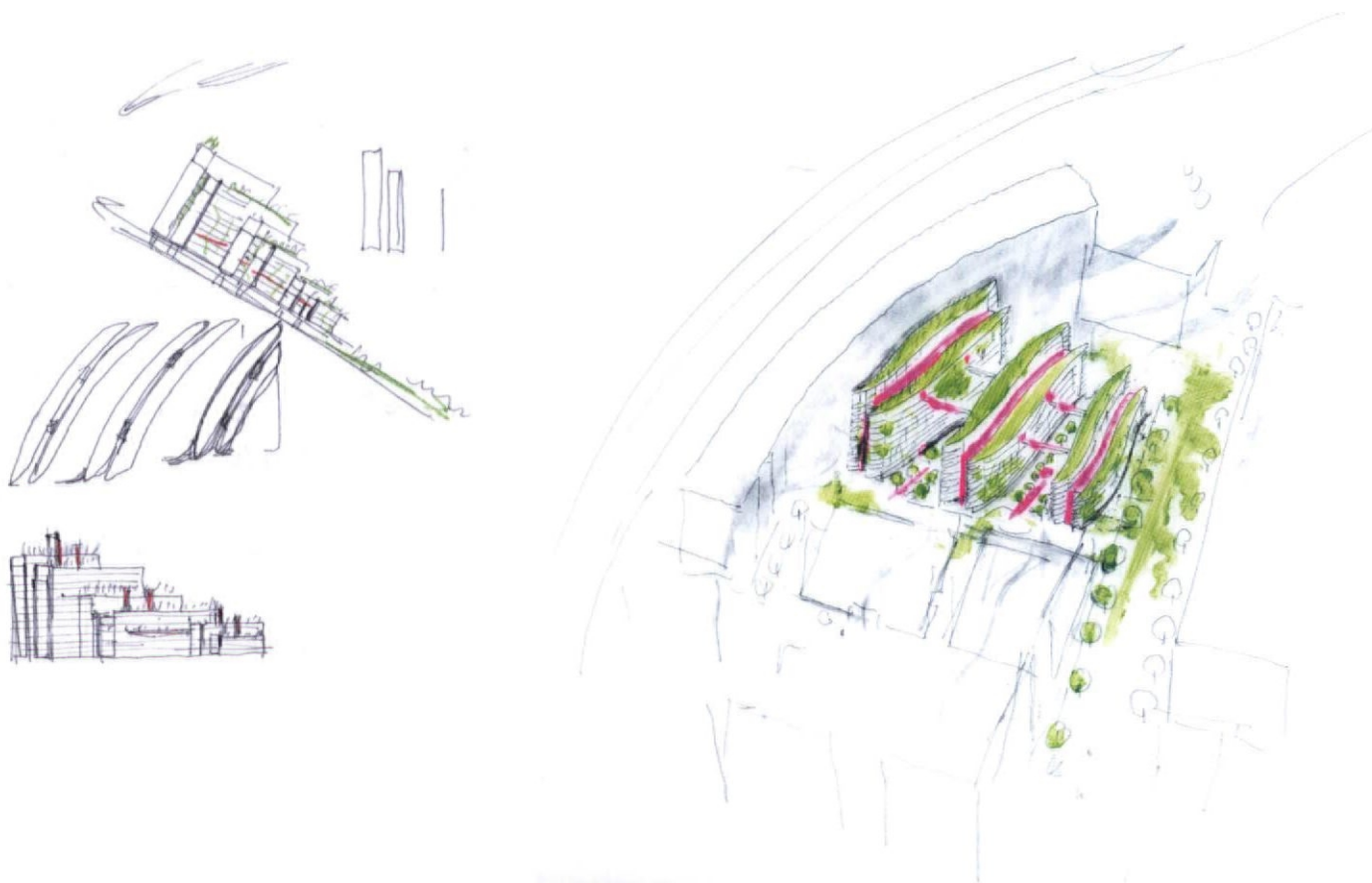
## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### MCCHESENEY ARCHITECTS

Ian McChesney

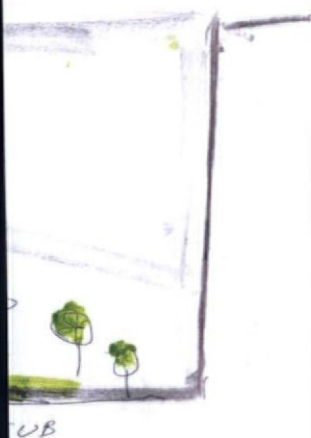
Three simple blocks are provided for the respective users: private, key worker and social. The high density required by the brief ruled out more intricate, informal diagrams; and so the aim was to provide a clear legible scheme with a strong identity. The three blocks fan out, reconciling the powerful curve of the railway to the north west with the formal arrangement of [proposed] Cubitt Square to the east. Each building is divided by naturally ventilated covered access ways, which means that all apartments enjoy opening windows to each side. Two new streets are created giving added permeability; the waving curves of the blocks provide fluidity to both the new streets and internal access ways.





*'The aerofoil dynamic produces a street proposition externally, and cross-ventilation internally – both fresh'*

Paul Finch



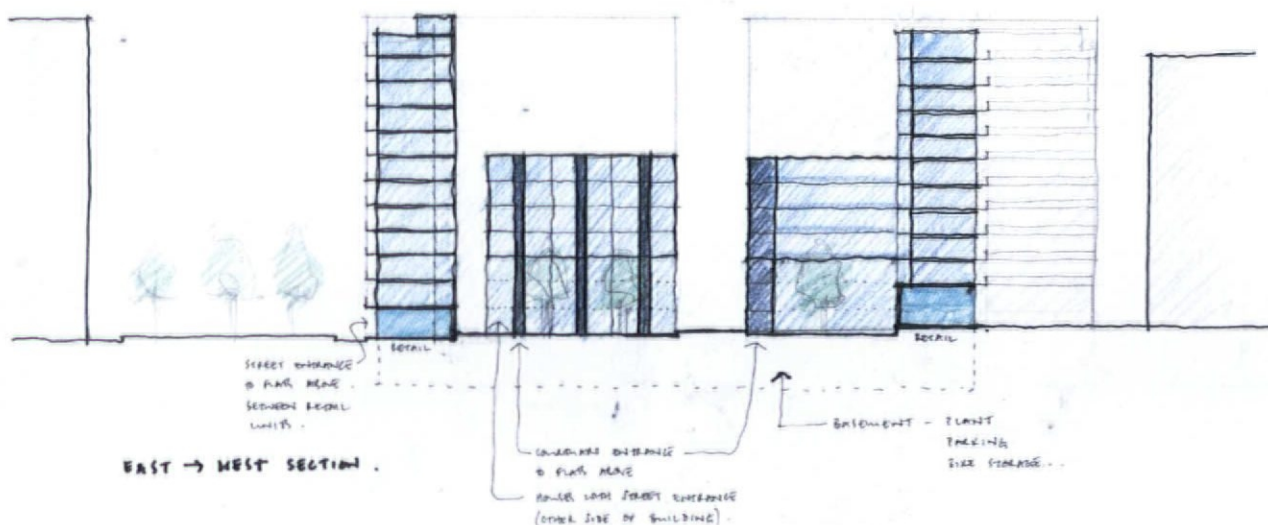
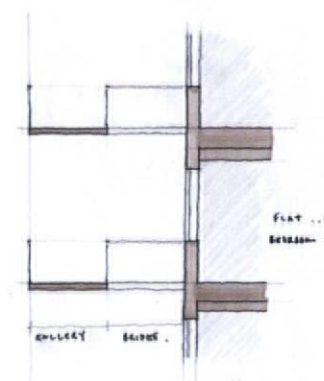


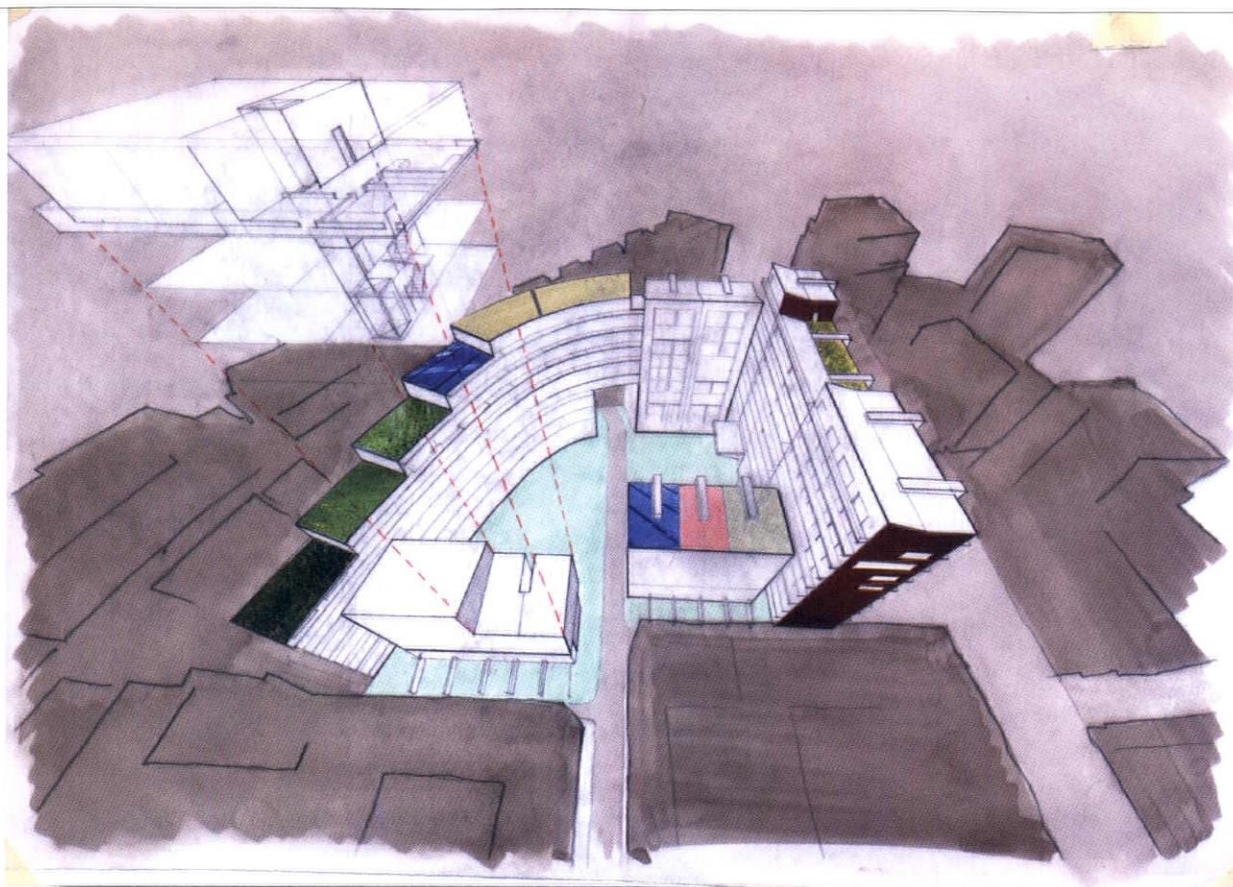
## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### MCDOWELL + BENEDETTI

Renato Benedetti, Nicky Mylius, Shelton Foo

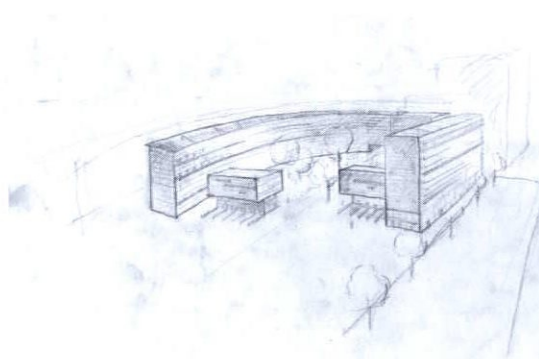
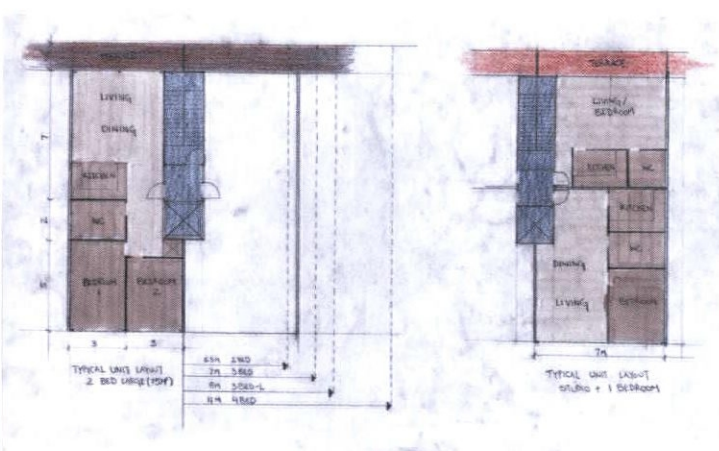
Our proposal is tailored to Argent's high-quality requirements, as well as its attitude (and ability) to provide effective long-term management. Light and air quality is maximised. All units have external space. The predominant typology has vertical circulation, eliminating corridors and allowing each flat to have a double aspect and only one neighbour across a shared landing. At ground level this spreads entrances and activity around the entire site. It also allows a variety of flat sizes and the option of double-height maisonettes. Different tenures can be paired. The overall massing faces south to capture natural light, framing and protecting a large courtyard circled by both communal roof gardens and private balconies. Openings through the buildings connect the courtyard to the neighbourhood parks and streets. The south edge is defined by two terraces of family houses with gardens.





*'This scheme concentrated on the provision of very-well-thought-through interiors, perhaps at the expense of really developing the outside'*

David Partridge



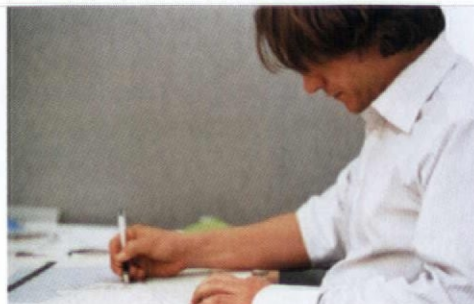


## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

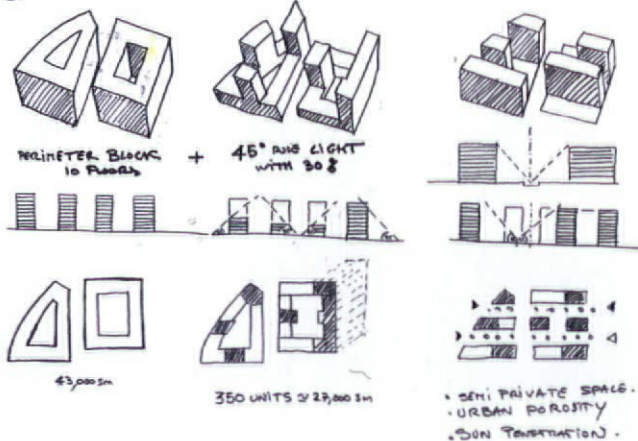
### MOSSESIAN & PARTNERS

Michel Mossessian, John Veikos, Per Brunkstedt,  
Nicolas Ranko

We believe that the principles of good design are instrumented through a rigorous methodology which identifies the key factors and sets the right vectors into actions towards a consensual and sustainable design proposal. From the key factors of the brief our design process sets the parameters to optimise an efficient balance between sight lines, views and sun penetration. 'Staggered fingers' in plan and section are proposed to allow a higher density while providing more porosity and a clear hierarchy between the family spaces and the adjacent public park. This is the key factor of success to entice families making the move to the city for better places to work, live and play.

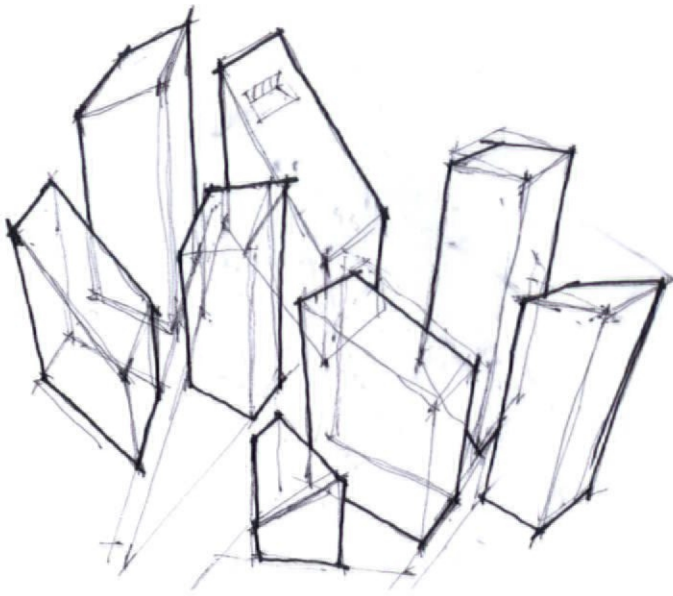


#### ① BLACK BOX - MASSING



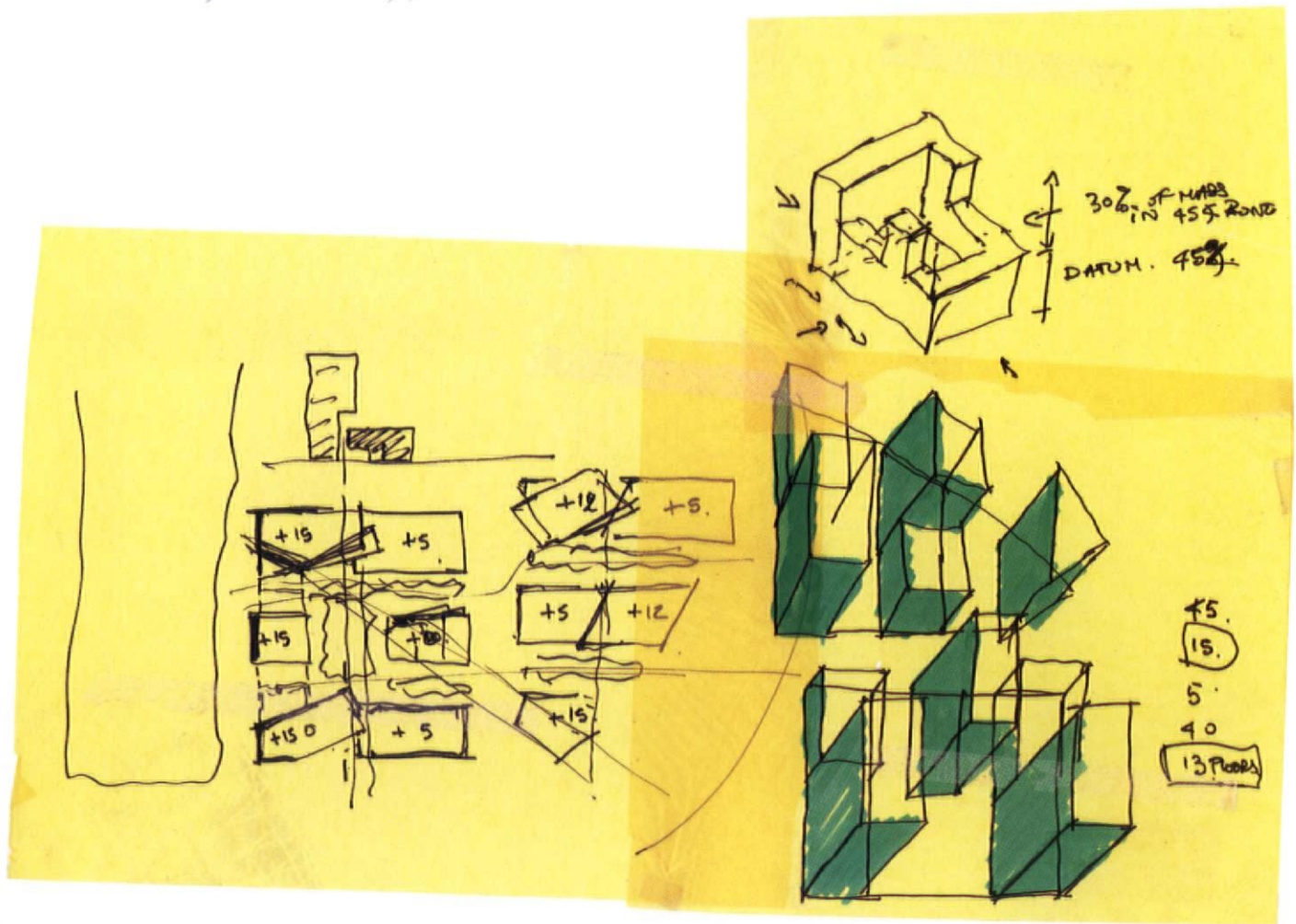
#### ② BLACK BOX - URBAN ACTIVATION





*'Michel Mossessian: the ex-SOM man breaks down what could be dauntingly large blocks into identifiable smaller units. A weakness is that he proposes differentiating them by tenure, which immediately introduces a rich-poor distinction. Easily rectified, however'*

Hugh Pearman



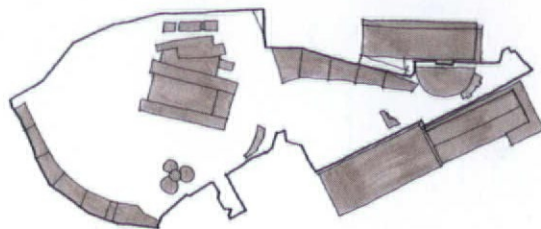


## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

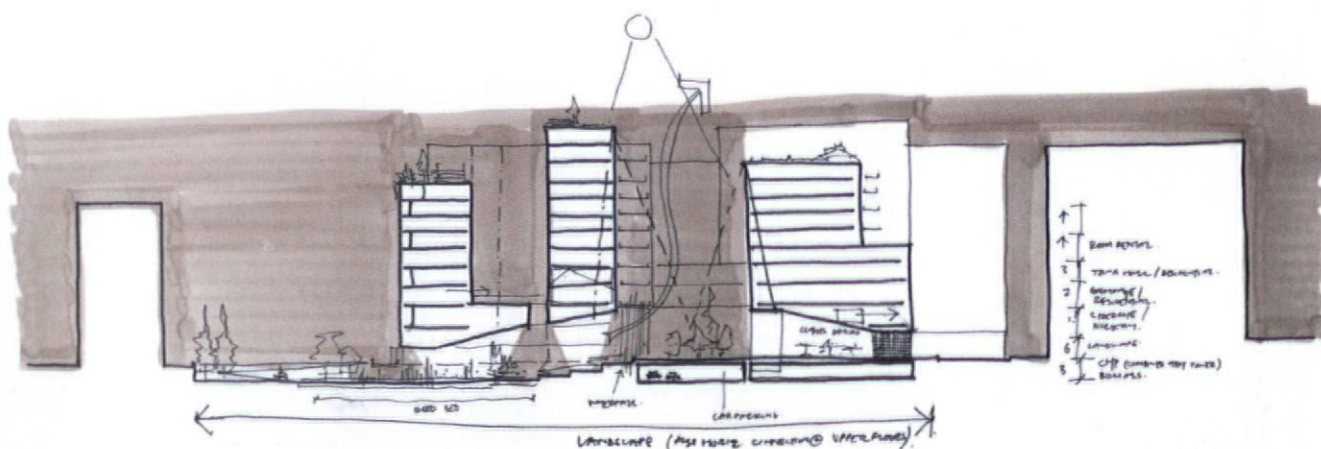
NORD ARCHITECTURE

Alastair Forbes, Liam Madden

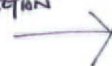
Our densely urban scheme draws its inspiration from the strong surrounding context of King's Cross. Within this area there are numerous examples of large buildings, such as King's Cross and St Pancras stations, assembly sheds and gasometers, that are a massing of smaller structures or 'sums of parts'. Within the proposal, both sites are merged into a singular monolith that is broken down internally to present an open, penetrable structure that couples interior/exterior and public/private spaces. A series of 'blocks', containing diverse housing typologies and public uses at high level, form a hybrid landscape of courtyards and passages which link directly to the primary public space of [proposed] Cubitt Park and respond to the need for social and ecological durability. The composition seeks to mediate between the scales of 'urban' King's Cross and the individual dwelling.

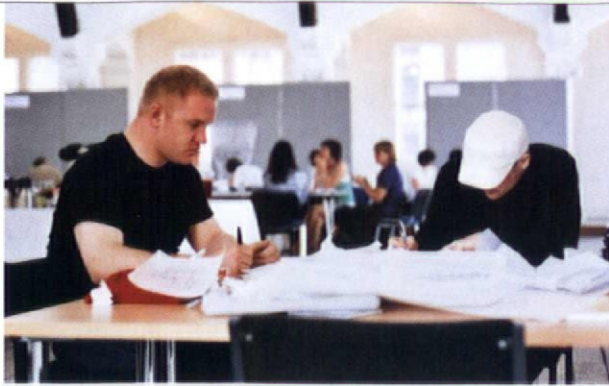


## TYPOLOGY



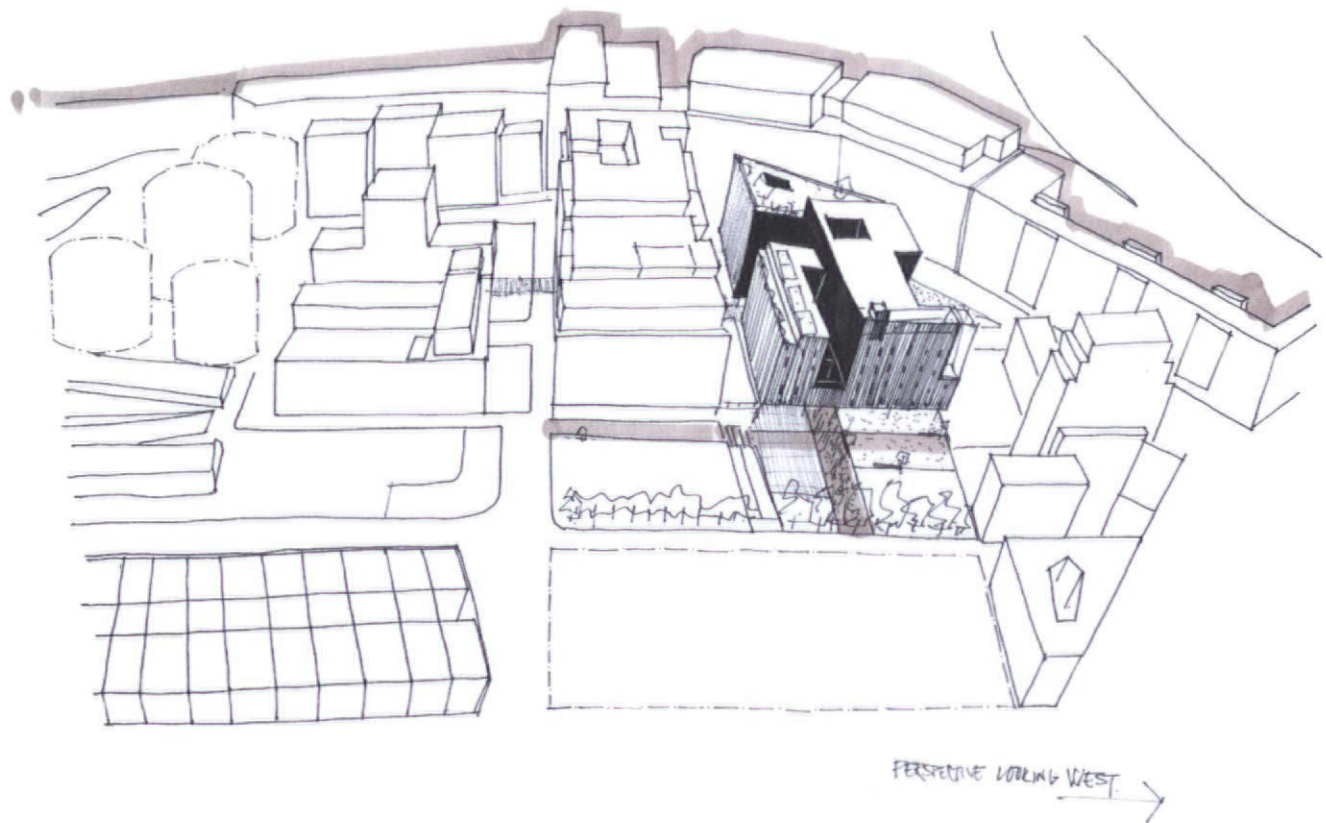
Long. SECTION  
1500





*'A fortress-like approach which really reflected the tough urban credentials of this Scottish practice. We really appreciated that the suggested adjustment of the landscaping to the main park was a cross of St. George! Too late for England sadly!'*

David Partridge





## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

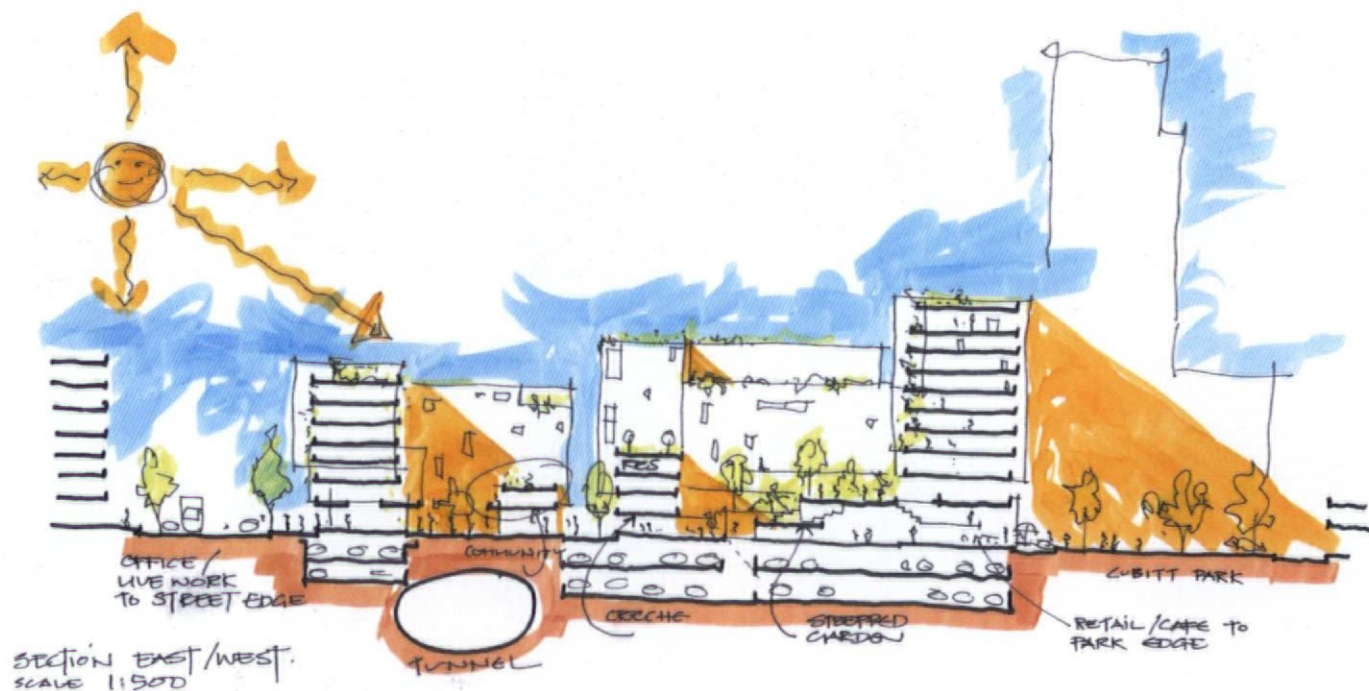
### O'MAHONY PIKE ARCHITECTS

Eoin Reddington, Conor Kinsella, Richard Collins

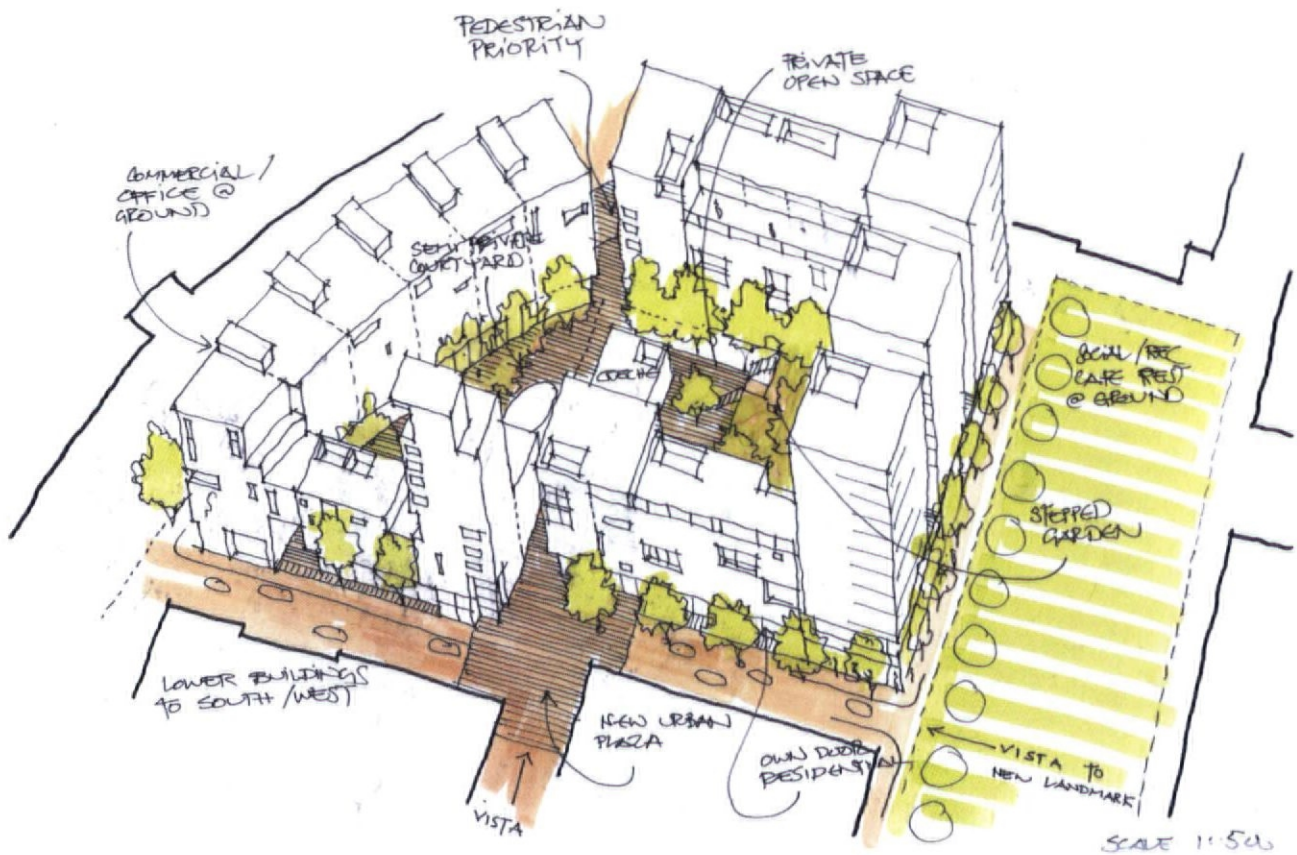
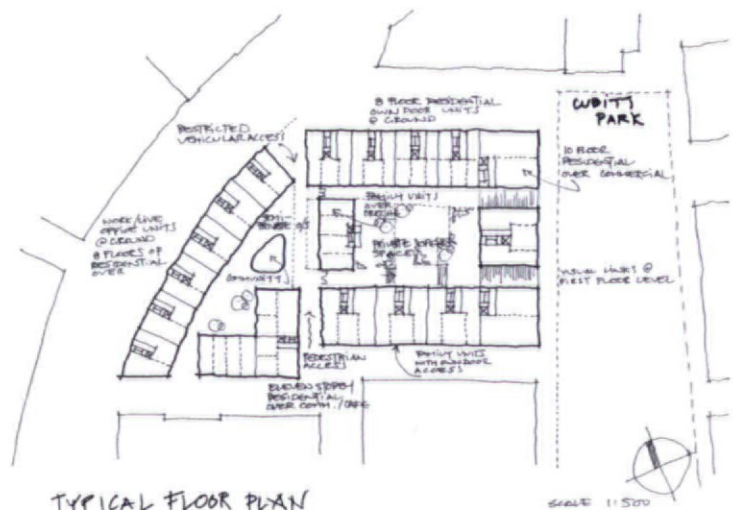
Our proposal seeks to build on the work of the masterplan and sets itself a simple set of objectives to provide a pleasant place to live, reflecting the aspirations of the home zones. A calm architecture is proposed.

The means of achieving this are:

- provide buildings of different heights to establish a hierarchy of streets and maximise exposure to sunlight and daylight for the units;
- provide family-sized, own-door duplex units at ground level on the quieter streets to encourage 'ownership' of these home zones;
- Maximise the number of dual-aspect units with south- or west-facing living areas and balconies; and
- create a transparency in the buildings at street level to form visual connections between the public and semi-private realm and enrich experience of the street.



Roger Madelin



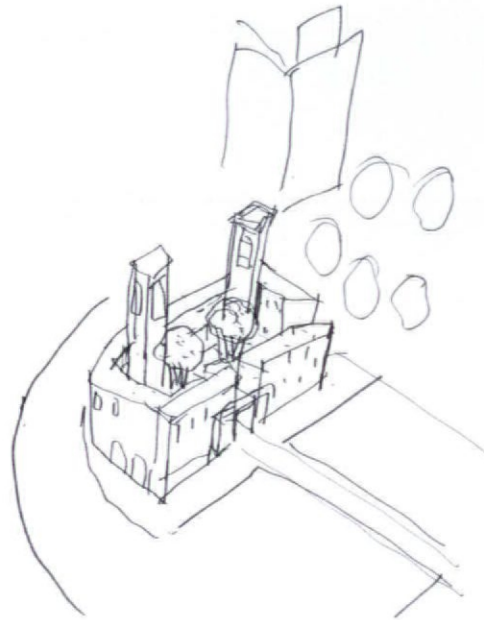


## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### PANTER HUDSPITH

Simon Hudspith, Hugh Strange

Our proposal is to create a community that has a clear character and sense of place. By joining the two sites with a perimeter living wall, a communal garden is created. Each flat is dual aspect, with a view of the garden and cross ventilation, while still providing high-density living. Smaller-scale mews houses for families provide a link through the middle of the site.





*'A fascinating sequence of secret gardens  
culminating in tucked-away terraces  
offering the opportunity for real privacy  
in a very successful, high-density scheme'*

Roger Madelin



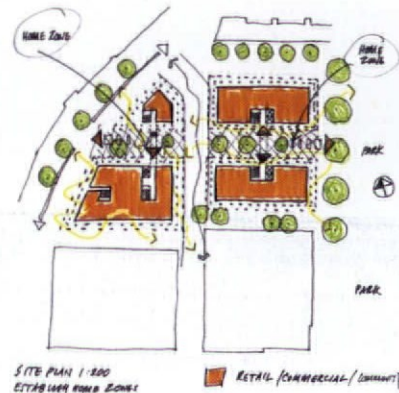


## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

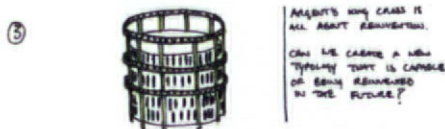
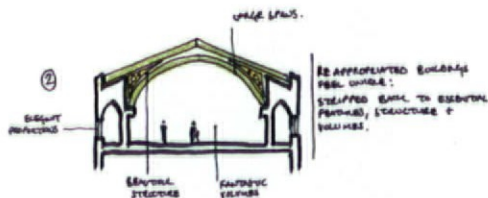
### PIERCY CONNER ARCHITECTS

Stuart Piercy, Richard Conner, Susan Carruth

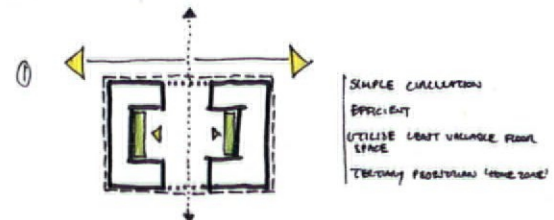
The Swing Building is an über-flexible structure, neutrally planned to accommodate almost any use. This inherent capacity for reinvention in response to fluctuations in the market and fashion is our approach to essential sustainability. It wears its expressive structure on the outside – a nod to the craftsmanship and enduring charm of Victorian industrial architecture, now nostalgically enjoyed as functional yet romantic residences. The location of the charette – the German Gymnasium – provided evidence of the enduring appeal of refurbished, 'vintage' buildings.

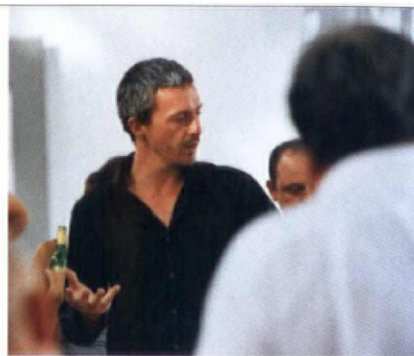


### INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION



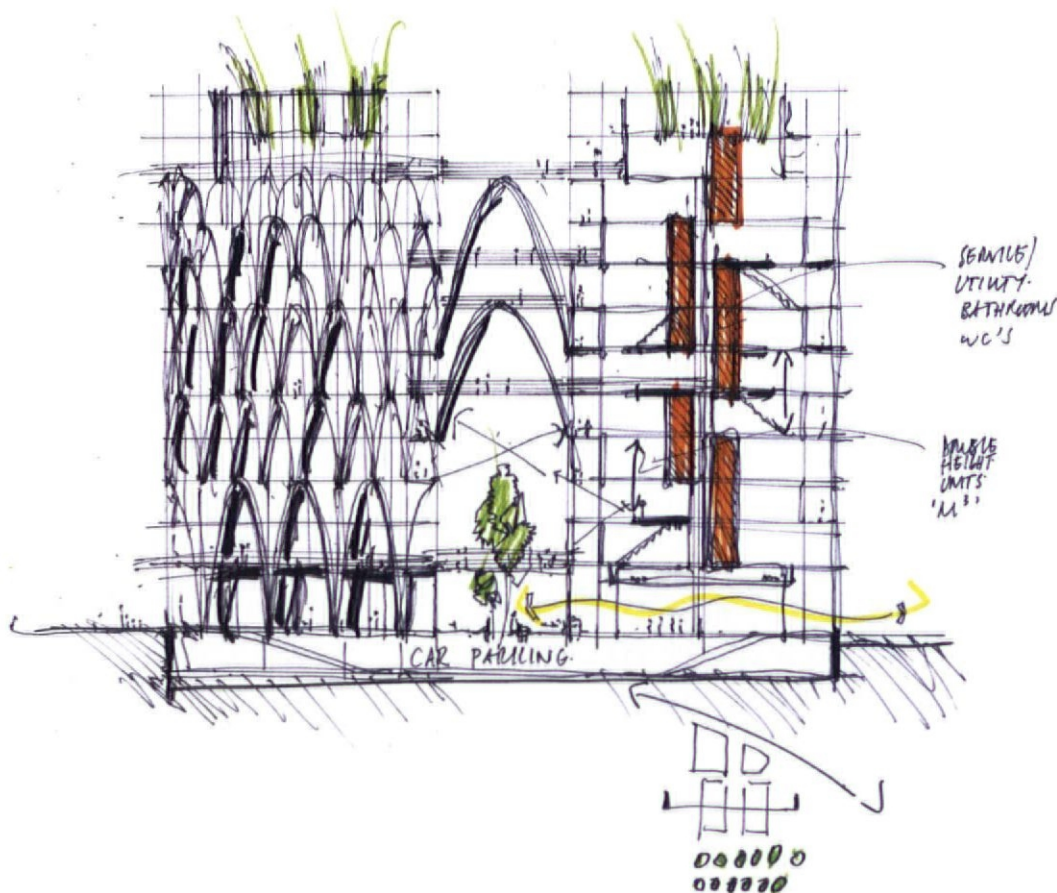
### METHODOLOGY





*'An unexpected and fascinating attempt at modern-day Gothic, buildings seemingly inspired by a mix of George Gilbert Scott's Midland Hotel and the famous listed gasometers. Underlying this is a valiant attempt to create an identifiable sense of place'*

Hugh Pearman





## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### RICHARD HYWEL EVANS

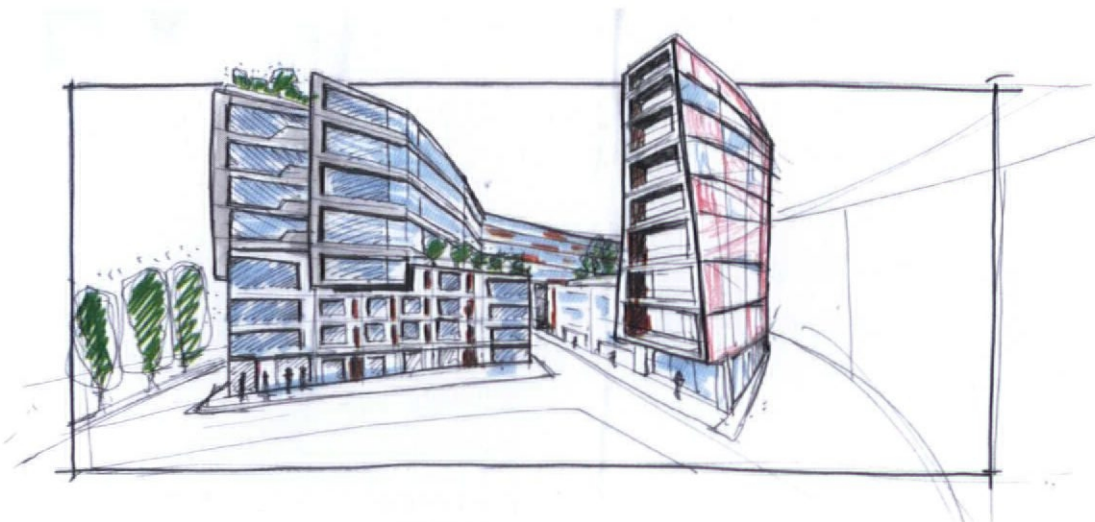
Richard Hywel Evans, Tom Foster,  
Dickon Hayward

Our proposal is about perception and scale. A multi-faceted design that places four-storey town houses for families facing on to [proposed] Cubitt Garden; the plan forms generally accepting the principles of the overall masterplan but hollowing out the core. On the eastern edge we designed a building that enjoys the curve and resulting energy of the site and sets up a strong kinetic rising form that connects King's Cross back to the City and is the highest point of our design, dropping down towards the park to ensure afternoon daylight. On top of the four-storey London plan snake dense linear forms, which straddle the blocks below: crash pads and studios for urban nomads and the first-time buyer, flats with views open on to high-level roof gardens. This collision of uses explodes into an orgy of forms, flashing sneak previews and surprise vistas, finding their own direction and constantly revealing different levels. Sit back and take it in – there's a lot to see, plus shops, a park and a nice beer garden on the corner.



*'To me this looks ready to build.  
It's dynamic and brave, with a  
bold approach to form-making*

Roger Madelin







## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### SANEI HOPKINS ARCHITECTS

Amir Sanei, Abigail Hopkins

#### UNITE'D FRONT

We want to create family dwellings;  
Without the social shortcomings.

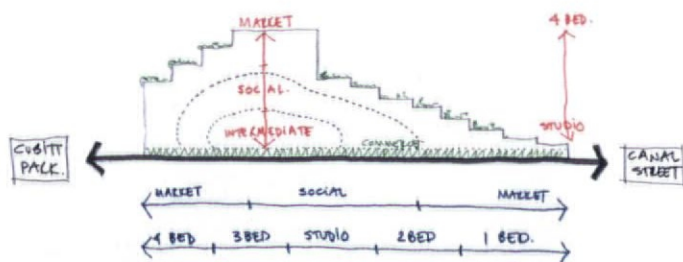
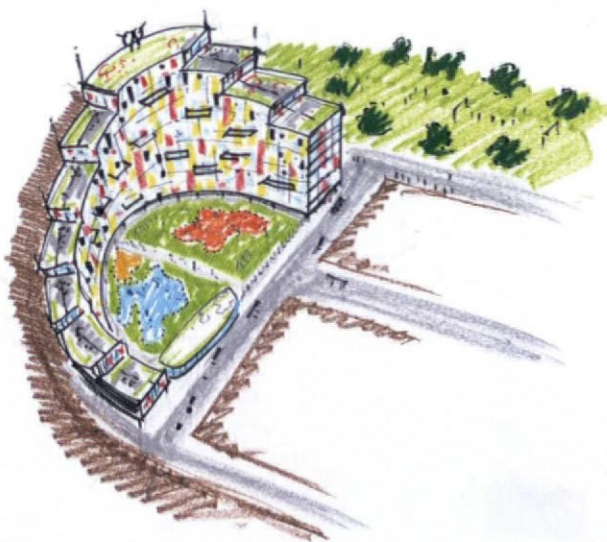
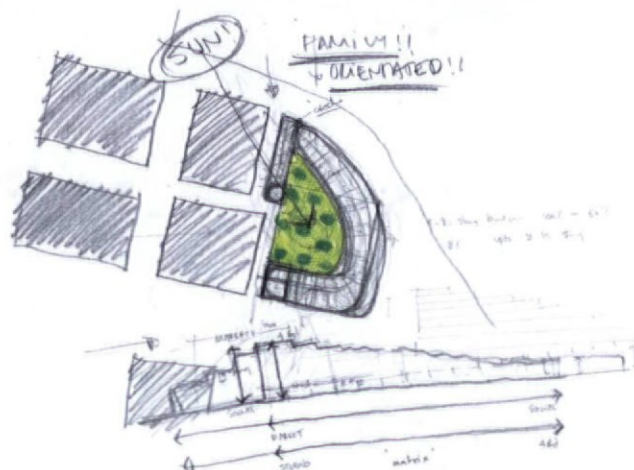
The model seemed dark and dense;  
More green and sun made sense.

A communal garden à la Notting Hill;  
Will attract families straight in from Lille.

With problems in the UK and France caused by cultural segregation;  
The model for this site should surely be that of social integration?

A complex matrix will be designed to allocate the apartments;  
The variables of which some will be dictated by Argent.

Some would fault the pioneering masters, Jeanneret and Smithson;  
We celebrate the 'Unite', but with hindsight let's get it right (on)!



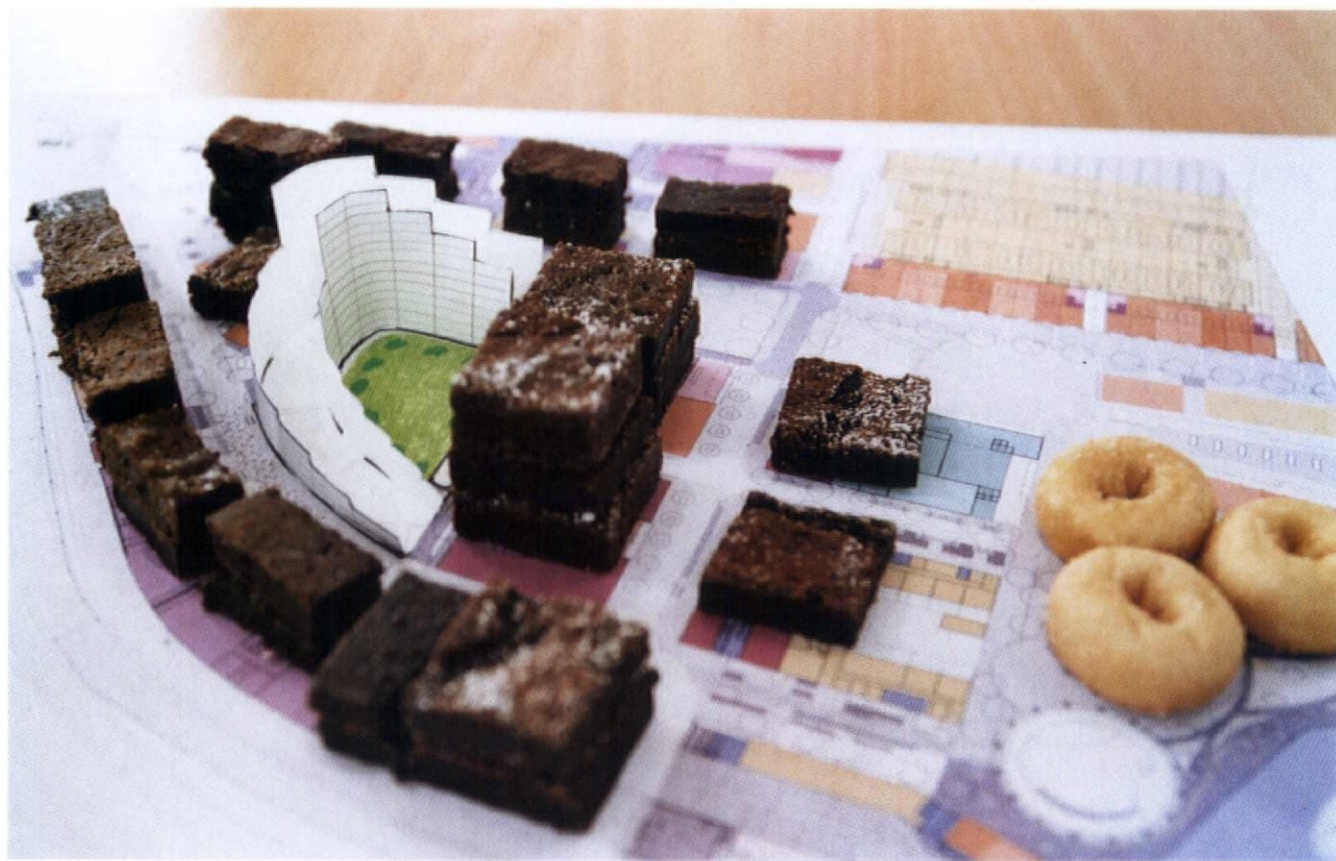
TENURE MATRIX

SANEI HOPKINS



*'This is Byker Wall revisited. A very attractive proposition – a nice presentation'*

Paul Finch





## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

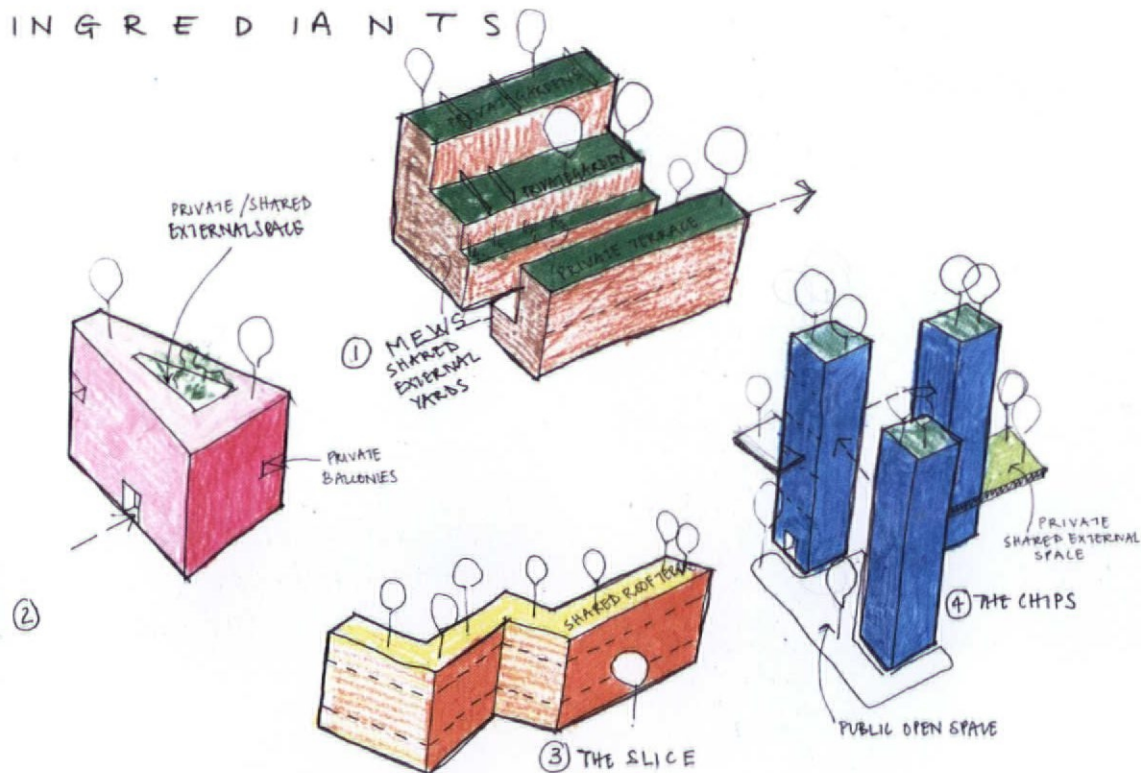
### SARAH WIGGLESWORTH ARCHITECTS

Sarah Wigglesworth, George Legg, Renée Searle

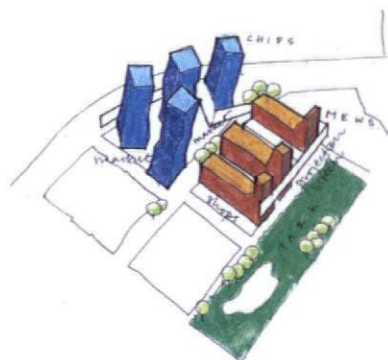
Our approach involved carrying out a kind of feasibility study on both sites to consider what sorts of housing typologies and massing and heights might work. We were especially interested in their implications for scale and the grading of relationships between the street, the interior of the block and the private realm inside the flats. We looked at high-density UK and European socio-spatial precedents (mansion blocks, the Berlin block, the C19 tenement and the west London terrace). We designed formal types such as chips (towers), doughnuts (perimeter blocks), pasta (dense terraces) and slices (slabs) and developed three exemplar 'menus' that demonstrated different organisational options.



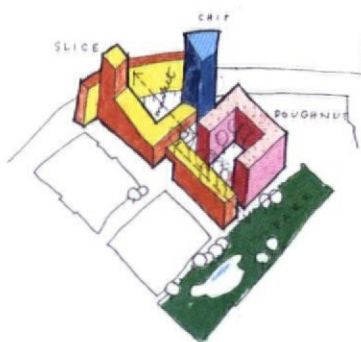
### INGREDIENTS



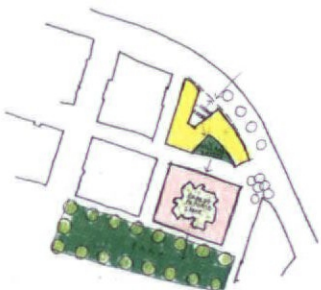
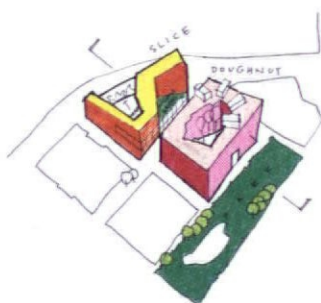
# MENU 1



# MENU 2



# MENU 3



*'Interesting exploratory work which offers an approach rather than a solution. It would have been interesting to see one of the options really followed through'*

Isabel Allen



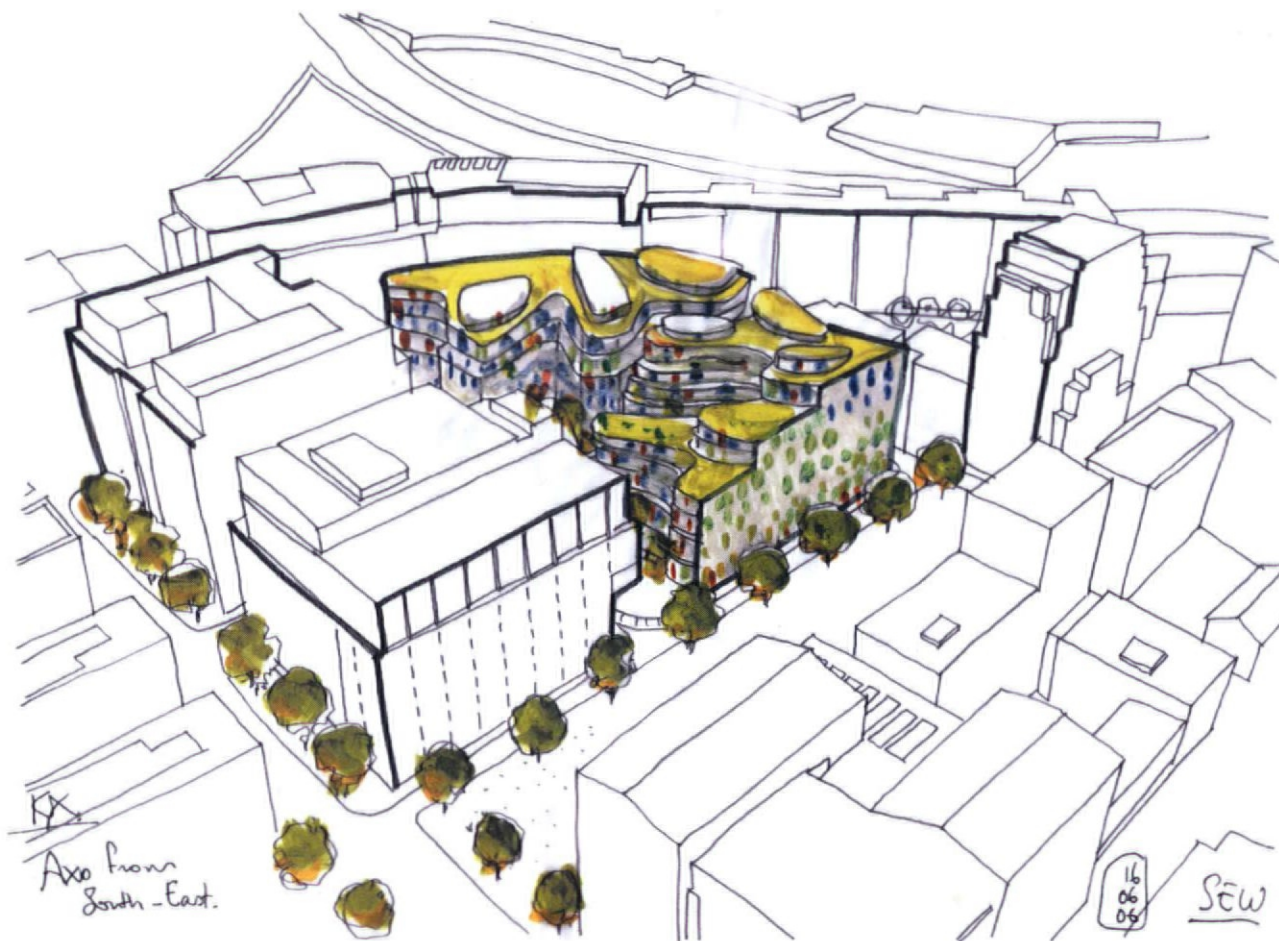
## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### STUDIO EGRET WEST

Christophe Egret, David West

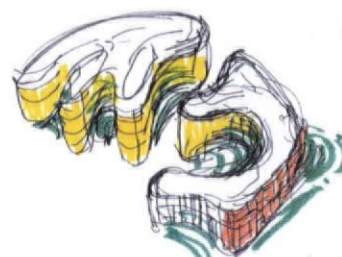
We wanted to respect the clarity and rigour of the masterplan, while creating the comfort and domesticity needed to attract families to the area. We proposed that the outer building line of the blocks defining street and park remain intact while creating a new pedestrian-dominated spine linking the new homes to the reprogrammed gasometers and school to the south. The inner facades of the building envelope are softened to create a curved and stepped building populated with generous green terraces that cascade down to small private gardens at ground level.





*'A coral reef of architectural organisms: an interesting soft-architecture foil to all those sternly rectilinear office blocks in the masterplan. These are architects who are also not afraid of high-density – person-wise or colour-wise'*

Hugh Pearman



*Discarding the glove - KX*



## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### URBAN SALON

Alex Mowat, Diana Cochrane,  
Nathanaelle Bues-Contillon

#### EXPLODING THE BLOCK

The masterplan's block is exploded into four domestic-scaled blocks with a staggered street through the centre.

#### FOUR PERSONALITIES NOT ONE

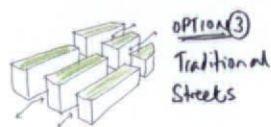
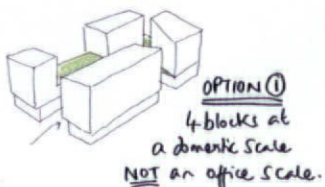
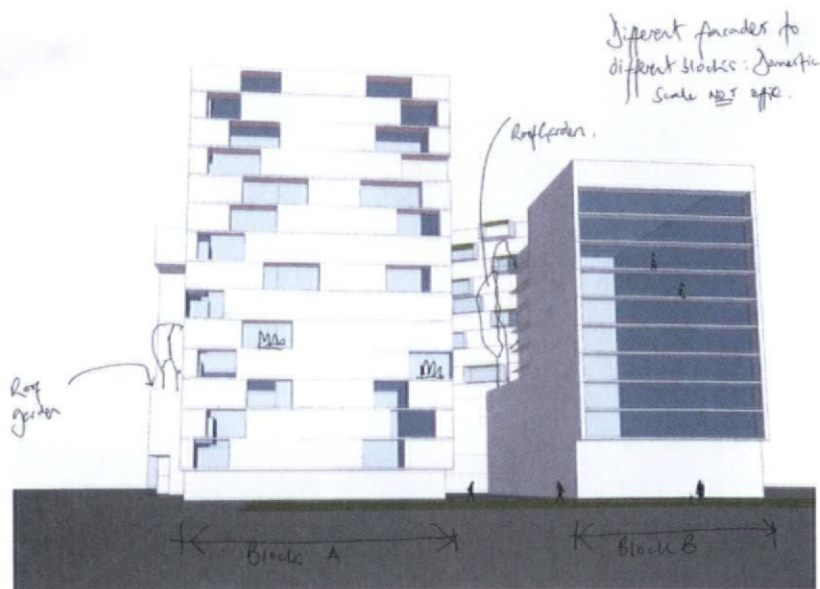
Each of the four blocks could be designed by a different architect to create diversity.

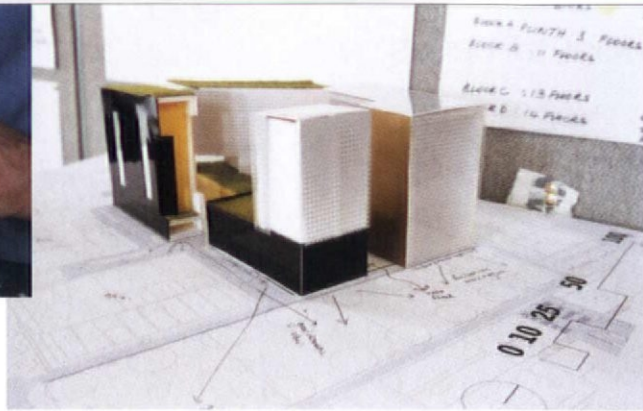
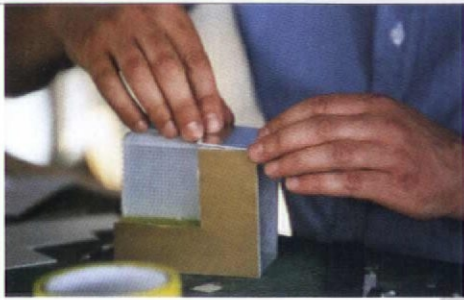
#### SOMEWHERE SAFE AND QUIET TO PLAY

A central plateau is carved out at fourth-floor level, creating communal gardens to supplement individual green spaces. The buildings are orientated to exploit long views, make corners, maximise use of daylight and value for corner flats.

#### ALL MOD CONS

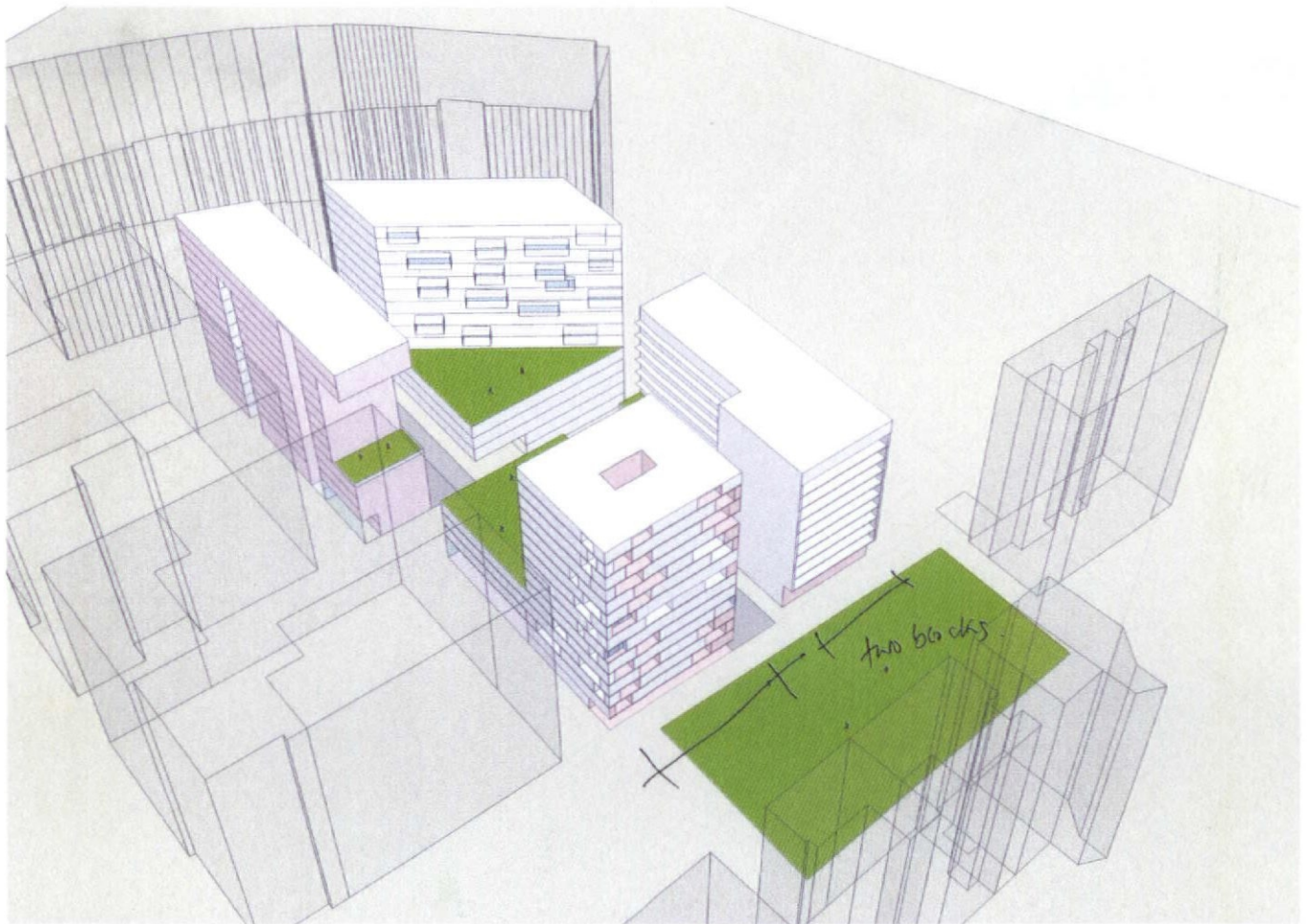
Cross ventilation, solar thermal heating, high thermal mass, double-aspect flats, flexible interiors, terraces and a variety of flat types are provided, because one size doesn't fit all!





*'It's a green-roofed version of Connect Four'*

Paul Finch



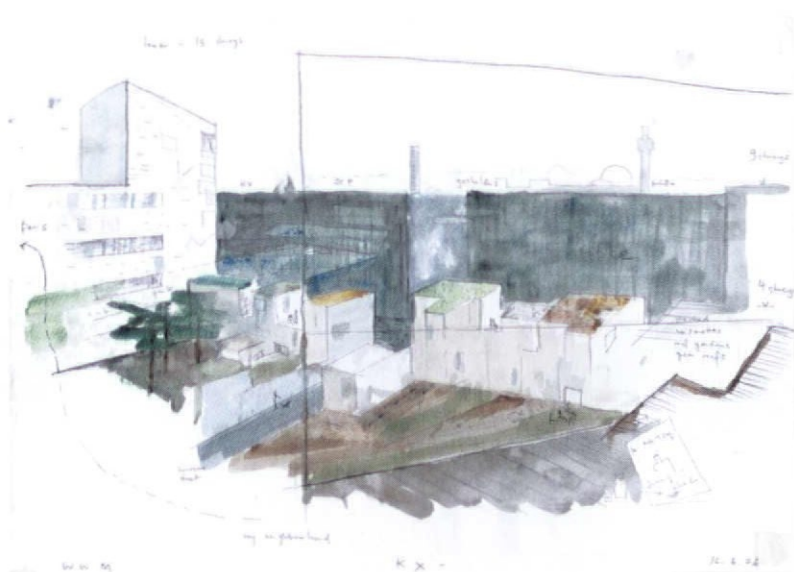
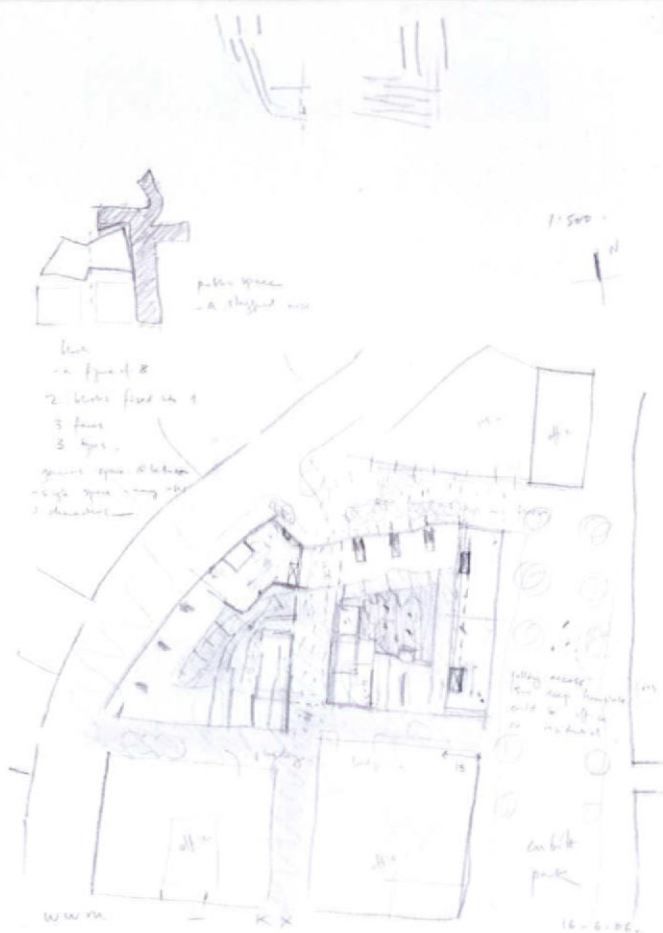


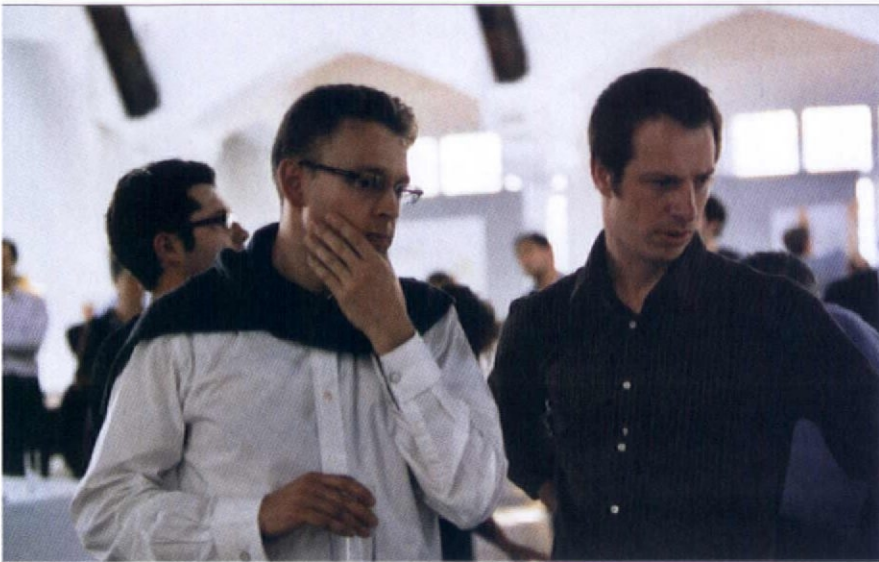
## DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

### WITHERFORD WATSON MANN ARCHITECTS

Stephen Witherford, William Mann, Ben Green

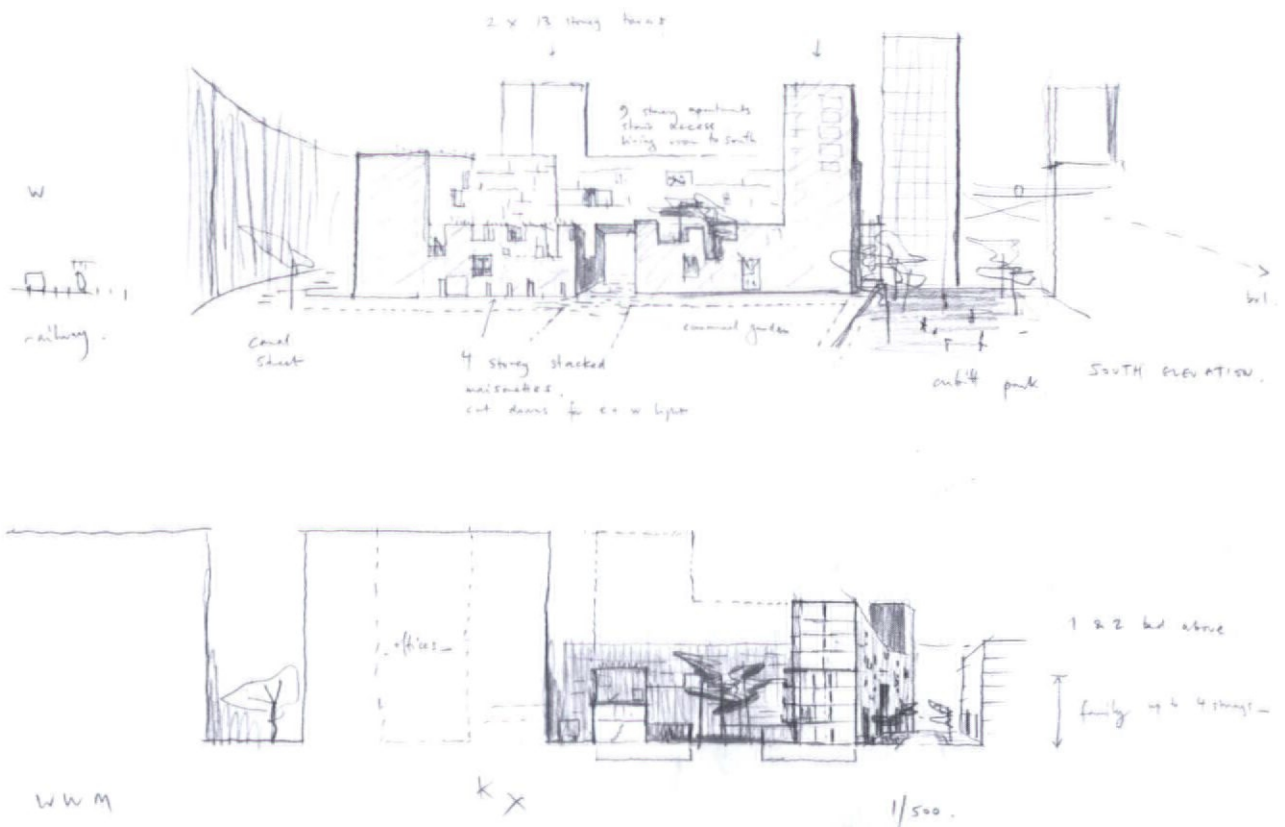
What does it mean to move from an active metropolitan public space to a 'homezone' in the space of 300m? We proposed a single urban block inflected to characterise the streets and gardens around. An eight-storey mansion block forms the northern edge; a gallery-access block fronts to the park; stacked maisonettes form a four-storey southern edge, maximising sunlight to the courts; towers at opposite corners engage with neighbouring high-rises. The frontage to the park accommodates mix; the courts are shared between communal and private gardens; the maisonettes, perforated with terraces, support a domestic scale and sociability on the interior streets.





*'A complicated set of urban moves condensed into a very careful space, producing a project which is neither laboured nor fussy'*

Pankaj Patel





# MIPIM ASIA 06

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## THE TRANSPARENCY OF ITS SHIMMERING FACADE CHANGES WITH THE LIGHT

By Hattie Hartman



1. Early visualisation of the glazed copper facade

*The new Public Library in Des Moines, Iowa, was designed by David Chipperfield Architects and opened in April this year. Part of a long-term regeneration plan, it includes, in addition to the large public library, community and commercial spaces, all set within parkland.*

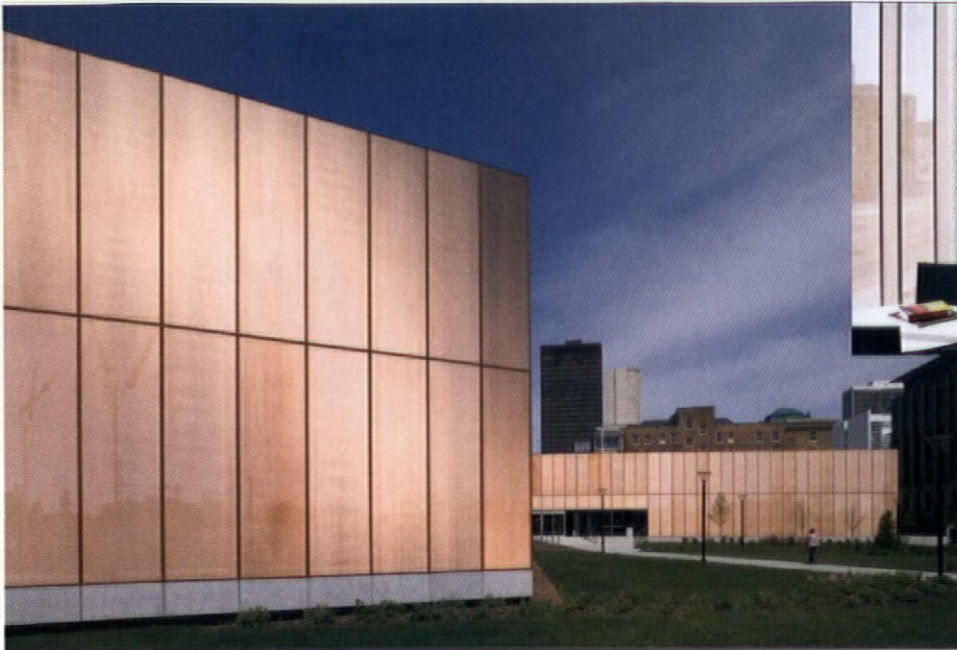
'It's awesome. The public loves it,' says Kay Runge, director of the Public Library in Iowa's state capital Des Moines. 'Prior to the opening, people kept asking, "where are the windows?"' When people went inside and understood the transparency of the building, they wanted to know how it worked. Runge calls it 'David's magic'.

It all started as a park – a new, six-block-long park to regenerate the western edge of downtown Des Moines and link it to the leafy suburbs further west. But the city soon realised that a park needs activities to bring it to life, and commissioned Chipperfield to design a new library-cum-community centre for the site, following on from his museum in nearby Davenport (where Runge was previously based). Asked to engage the community by presenting several designs which treated the park in different ways, Chipperfield proposed four schemes: a compact four-storey block hugging the eastern edge of the park near downtown; a linear, low building stretching along the park's northern frontage; a rambling courtyard scheme; and an organic 'fingers in the park' approach. The library board and the public converged on the fourth 'building in the park' option, seduced by the vision of reading areas overlooking the new green spaces.

The architect took panoramic views to their literal extreme, opting for a fully glazed facade rather than windows punched in walls or conventional cladding with beams and spandrels. Not quite Philip Johnson's Glass House, but close. Stacks for books were buried in the centre of the plan and the curving perimeter of the building was maximised to create informal reading areas. But how to keep out the hot summer sun, control glare and provide a bit of privacy so that library visitors could relax and read next to a big glass wall? Mirror glass was ruled out as aesthetically inappropriate and because of the dulling effect of its tint on exterior views. Sophisticated exterior shading devices were rejected because they are not widely used in America.

The architect did not, however, go with a home-grown solution. The library is clad in Okatech, a German insulating glass panel made by Okalux, with an expanded copper-mesh interleaf, chosen for its insulating capacity and its shimmering visual effect that changes with the light. In daylight occupants can see out but passers-by cannot see in. At night the illuminated library reads as a glazed box, revealing the activities within. Chipperfield had considered the product for a Japanese project, but never used it. In Des Moines, Okatech met all the design parameters: exterior visual appeal; maximising park views; and control of solar gain and glare. Project architect Martin Ebert explains that 'the beauty of the product is that it is just a glazing unit which can be applied to a bog-standard glazing system'. Using Okalux meant, however, no more curves, so Chipperfield's organic forms became rectilinear.





2.

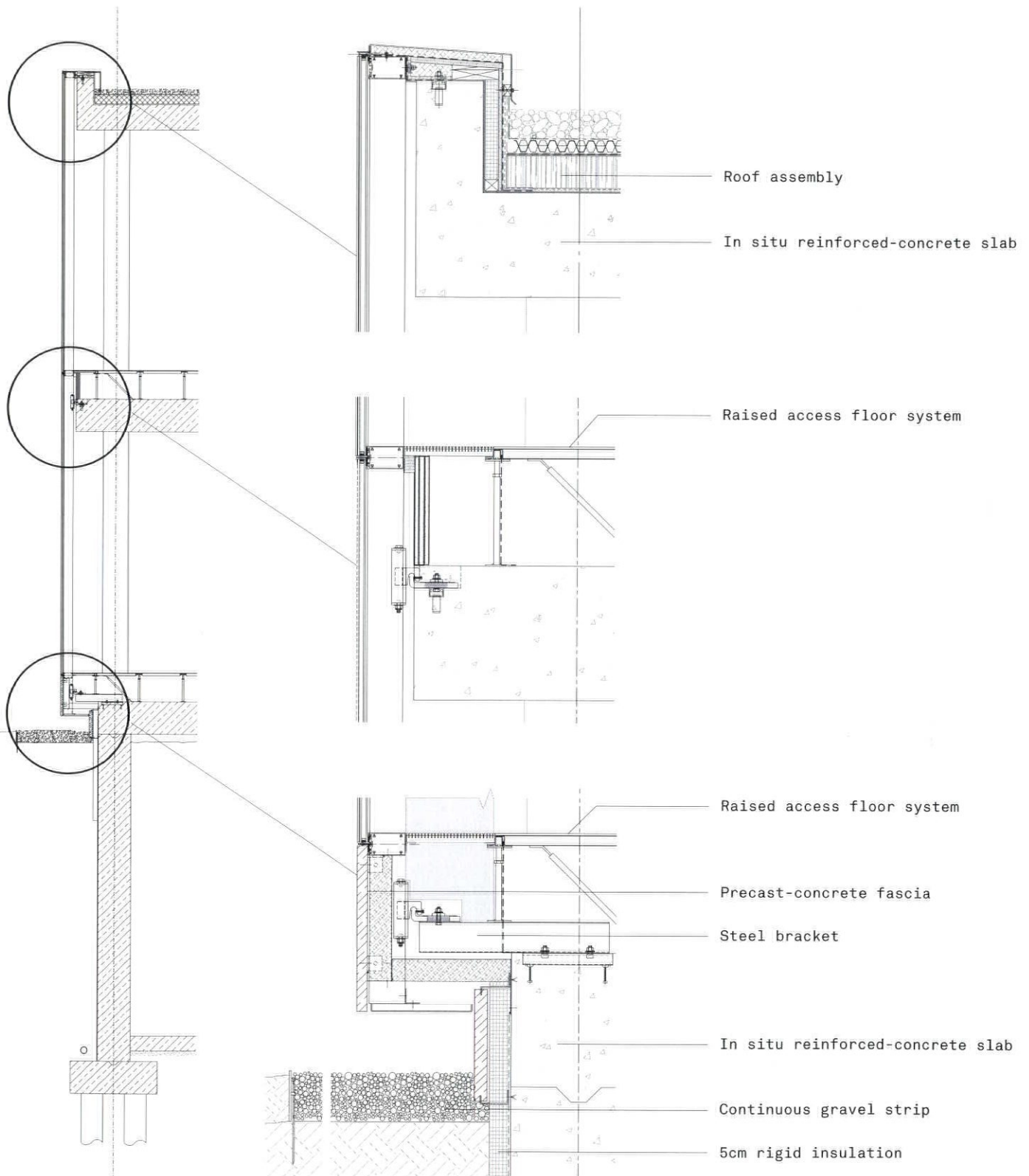


4.



3.

- 2. By day, occupants can see out of the library but passers-by cannot see in
- 3. At night the building becomes a transparent 'glazed box'
- 4. The glazing system affords occupants both privacy and panoramic views, while reducing glare



5. Wall section





6.



7.

6. Early visualisations showed curved walls which had to be deleted in order to use the Okalux panels

7. Sample of an Okatech panel showing the copper mesh

Okalux developed bespoke panels for Chipperfield, as it had for Rem Koolhaas' Seattle Library, which was on site while the Des Moines library was in design. In Seattle the metal is untreated aluminium, a uniform material, different from copper with its natural variations. Okalux had used copper mesh on small projects in Germany, but never on the scale required by the Des Moines library – 3,500m<sup>2</sup>. What's unusual about Okalux metal meshes is that they are both directional and three-dimensional, so they perform like a fixed screen of micro-louvres and can block out up to 84 per cent of solar transmission, depending on the angle of the sun. The more vertical the angle, the greater the screening, in keeping with the need to block the sun's glare. Furthermore, the copper mesh is see-through and visually attractive at close range and from afar. From inside, the transparency varies according to the weather. Sun on the facade creates a copper sheen which reduces visibility. On a cloudy day, the mesh is more transparent.

Each 4 x 14 foot panel (the building was designed in imperial dimensions) is triple-glazed, with an exterior leaf of 6mm low-iron glass; a 2mm cavity with the expanded copper mesh; a middle 6mm leaf of toughened glass with an inward-facing low E coating (N32) which reduces heat loss; a 14mm air cavity; and another 6mm leaf of toughened glass. The panels are hermetically sealed to prevent any particles or moisture damaging the copper, and each panel weighs almost 250kg.

The panels were fabricated in Germany and shipped to Iowa, where they were fixed to aluminium frames by Architectural

Wall Systems using structural silicone glue. The glazing panels have a 27mm border of copper-coloured fritting, so that the silicone and spacers behind are not seen through the glazing. Pairs of panels were mounted one above the other in a subframe, then delivered to site and hung on steel brackets in the first-floor slab.

The building has an elegant base detail, which makes it appear to float about nine inches above the ground. A precast fascia panel below the glazing reads as the floating base of the building. Another visual illusion is the fact that only about 60 per cent of the cladding panels are transparent glazed screens. About 30 per cent of the panels are backed with insulation and aluminium panels on the interior, where back-of-house uses do not require panoramic views. The remaining 10 per cent of the panels are doors. From the exterior, the panels are visually indistinguishable (except at night).

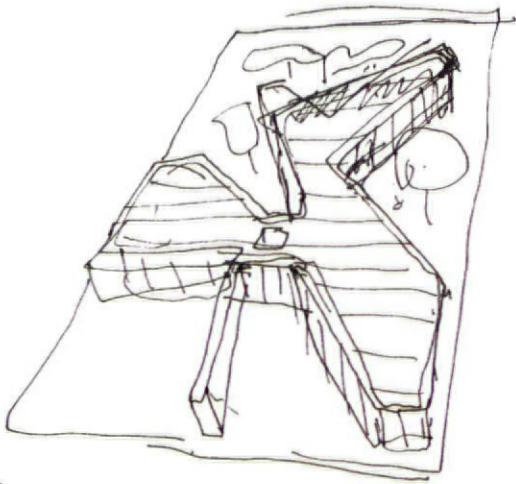
The library has a sedum green roof, which Ebert (who is German) sees as 'normal', though it is unusual in Iowa. The green roof was specified for aesthetic reasons to enhance views from overlooking buildings. Interestingly, it did not result in significant energy savings, though it promotes biodiversity.

The restrained simplicity of Chipperfield's scheme derives its visual drama (and reduced cooling load) from the shimmering glass-and-copper facade. One cannot help but query the embodied energy of the heavy cladding panels, manufactured in Germany and shipped halfway around the world to Des Moines. This globalised sourcing of materials should not be quietly dismissed.





8.

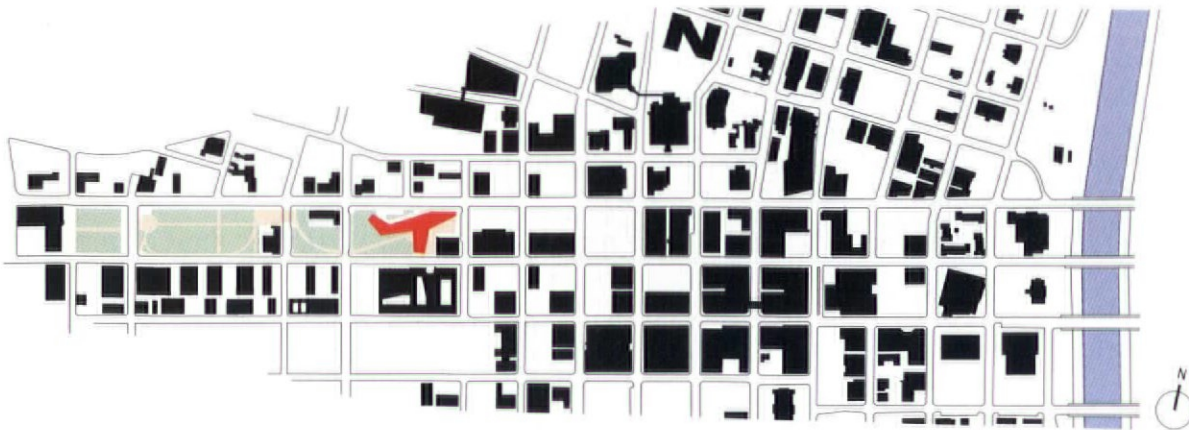


9.

8. Vertical panels hung on steel brackets at first-floor level. Brackets at top and bottom for restraint only

9. Early sketch for a 'building in the park'

10. Site plan showing library location within the new park



10.





## DOT THIS, DOT THAT, DOT THE OTHER. DUH

You know all that dot com and dot co dot uk and dot org suffix stuff. A mate of mine has managed to get a dot fm suffix so that he reads like a radio station. Don't ask. But now, only three months after it was introduced, more than two million people and organisations have signed up to dot eu and it is now the third most popular domain.

I introduce this not to bang the Brussels drum, but to ponder whether your website suffix matters. Originally, for some it seemed cooler to have a dot com suffix simply because it was American. 'Dot com' seemed to read 'international'. Then there were people who made a point, with dot co dot uk, about being British – a particularly good thing to know if you were buying stuff online. And then they introduced dot com dot local country which was a bit schizophrenic, being at once international and local but actually just a fudge.

So, in these days of OJEU whatsits, should you not think about changing to, or adding, a dot eu to your website address? Or have the Germans bunged their electronic towels on the best sites already?

*sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com*

## WARNING NOTICE

We all know that smoking is bad for us, yet many smokers delight in the paraphernalia of lighting a cigarette and the pleasure of the addiction, writes *Kim Franklin*. The government and the industry know that smoking is bad for us, but both depend upon the revenue produced by the sale and taxation of tobacco. The tension of trying to discourage smokers from doing something they are hell-bent on doing is addressed by those increasingly alarming notices mounted on cigarette packets. They have yet to announce 'you will die if you open this', but it won't be long.

Similarly everyone knows that litigation should be avoided like the plague. It is time-consuming and expensive. There is no saying what will happen. The chances are that whatever you are expecting to get out of it, you will be disappointed. Nevertheless disputes proliferate, particularly where parties with diametrically opposed interests are required to co-operate to the same end. The construction industry is a good example; landlord and tenant – and marriage – are others. On the one hand there is an industry that depends upon the resolution of disputes for its livelihood: not just the lawyers, but the experts and consultants who advise them. On the other, the cost to the taxpayer of

maintaining the court system is not inconsiderable.

The courts have responded to this dichotomy with various reforms intended to encourage those in dispute to reach an early settlement and avoid litigation. Such initiatives include the preaction protocols (AJ 15.06.06) that require putative parties to exchange information about their claims, and to meet to discuss them, before proceedings commence.

It seems, however, that this is not enough. The courts have now introduced a Practice Direction to the protocols, a sort of preprotocol protocol, which requires would-be litigants to actively consider mediation, or some other form of alternative dispute resolution, before proceeding. The Practice Direction states that litigation should be a last resort and only embarked upon after negotiation, early neutral evaluation or mediation have failed. It takes its lead from a recent disputed patent case, *IDA Ltd v University of Southampton* (Judgment 02.03.06), in which the appeal court judges warned that disputes can be 'protracted, very very expensive and emotionally draining'. On top of that, business can be 'stultified by the dead hand of unresolved litigation'. The Practice Direction gives the court an express power to find out what settlement steps were taken.

What if the parties, much like the smokers, ignore these warnings and remain intent upon slogging it out in the courts? At present, if proceedings are commenced, or costs incurred unnecessarily, the court can penalise the party at fault with a hefty costs order, or by reducing their damages. But it will not be long before the 'dead hand of litigation' reaches out and stamps a warning across the court forms – if not exactly 'Litigation Kills', then something very like it.

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





## BOOK

By Alex Wright

KM3: Excursions on Density

By MVRDV. Actar, 2005.

1415pp. £48



KM3 is MVRDV's new volume on what it calls the 3D city. Originally conceived as a series of mini-books, it has been published as a single 'entity' – some 7cm thick.

Its underlying premise is that in times of globalisation the unit of architectural scale needs updating from the cubic metre to the cubic kilometre (hence KM3). Each chapter (or mini-book) deals with observations, hypotheses and speculations based on this premise. In doing so, the book also forms a framework for presenting the recent theoretical and built work of MVRDV.

Although the book is largely pictorial, each section begins with a short passage of text which presents its content, or thesis. For some reason these are presented in a 20-point Helvetica font which appears

to shout off the page. The arguments presented in this myopia-friendly format are not made any more persuasive by the repeated use of rhetorical questions, giving the text something of the feel of political soapbox oratory.

Within the book there are some intriguing images, some good statistics and architectural work of real merit. But such faint praise should not obscure the fact that anyone who has concerns about measuring architecture by the cubic kilometre may have limited sympathy for this tome.

More than 200 pages are devoted to presenting a proposal for a future city, which takes the form of a 5 x 5 x 5km cube, described in terrifying detail. The proposition that the earth is populated with these cities is put forward without

any hint of the irony that one might expect from architects whose education roughly coincided with the arrival of the Borg in *Star Trek*.

As a reviewer I'm obliged to offer a comprehensible account in 500 words of what the reader may expect of these 1,415 pages. The best I can say is that reading it is analogous to finding oneself trapped at a party for a small eternity with some youthful cocaine fiend. As a result of their intoxication this imaginary party-goer is wildly self-opinionated, overconfident, and manically keen to share their breathless world view with you in a non-stop monologue. Their confidence is, unfortunately, enhanced by their rather geekish familiarity with the last two years' content of the *New Scientist*.

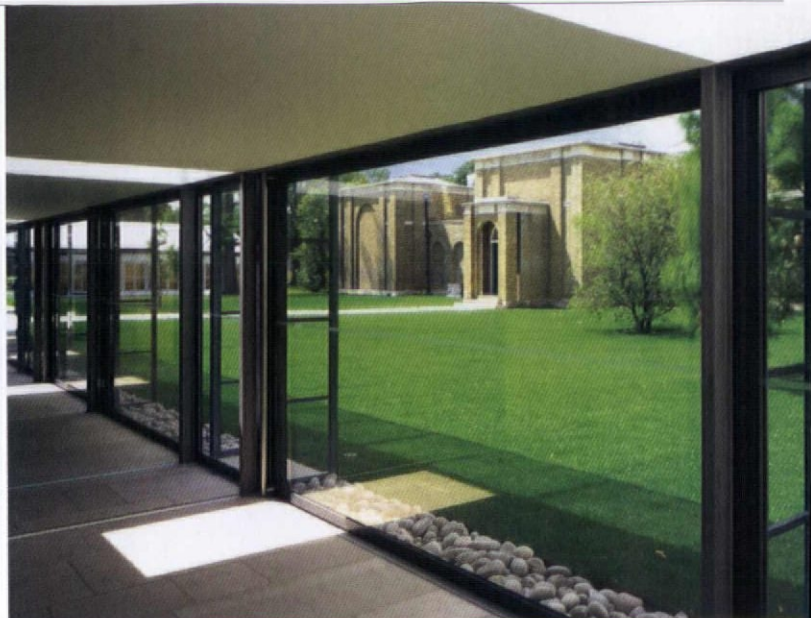
Add to this imaginary scenario their drug-induced certainty that their stream of consciousness is endlessly fascinating, insightful and radical, and you can imagine how I felt by page 1,415. If you too have ever endured such a loud, skittish, undiscerning deluge, you might also echo my plea for the orator to 'please, turn down the volume'. That same plea seems oddly appropriate both to any architect who also proposes a 5 x 5 x 5km building cube as a module for future urban life, or any potential purchaser of this book.

*Alex Wright is an architect and teacher in Bath*





1.



2.

## BOOK

*By Murray Fraser*

Rick Mather Architects  
By Robert Maxwell et al.  
Black Dog Publishing,  
2006. 240pp. £29.95

1. Priory House, Hampstead
2. Dulwich Picture Gallery

Rick Mather is the best of the American architects who have chosen to practise in Britain. He trained at the University of Oregon, where one of his undergraduate tutors happened to be Alvin Boyarsky (this was the period in which Boyarsky was building up a name as an innovative educator at schools across the USA). In 1963 Mather came over to London, where he proceeded to work for a variety of practices. He studied urban design at the Architectural Association, and taught part-time there and at the Polytechnic of Central London while establishing his own practice during the 1970s.

Mather soon gained a reputation for structural glass roofs and staircases which provided dramatic features for the conversion of private houses and restaurants. Very soon he

was being asked to extend a number of smaller London museums in a similar fashion.

Boyarsky meanwhile had taken control at the AA and not only gave Mather a teaching post but employed him between 1978 and 1984 to refurbish the institution's premises – that fine pair of Georgian terraced houses in Bedford Square. Always popular among users was the new bar that Mather installed on the first floor. Like all his designs, the scheme for the AA was studiously cool and yet subtle enough to fit comfortably into the crumbling, idiosyncratic historic environment that surrounds us in Britain.

This latest book on Mather is a joy to read, equally for the sumptuous photographs and for the finely judged text by Robert Maxwell. Indeed,

Maxwell can be seen as a sort of mirror-image of Mather in the sense that, from the mid-1960s, he went frequently to the USA to teach, and was later appointed dean at Princeton School of Architecture in the 1980s.

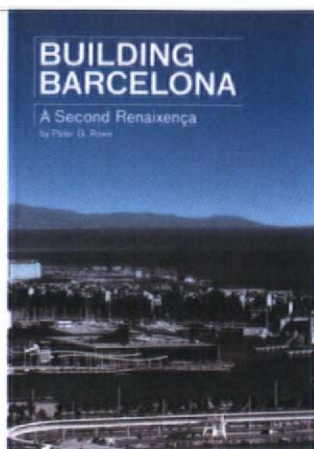
Maxwell's role in the transatlantic milieu that helped to spawn Mather, and his lifelong interest in the aesthetic dialogue between Modernism and architectural history, makes him an ideal commentator on Mather's work. He is also a devotee of Robert Venturi, and so sees no higher praise than in describing Mather as a quasi-mannerist in the way he plays around with the formal language of white-render-and-plate-glass Modernism.

This is very much an architect's book – lots of clear plans and sections and

high-quality colour images, so you can find your way easily around each project. Most are well known and, looking back on them today, the highlights are the early Hoffmann House in Hampstead, which used for the first time laminated glass roof beams (engineered by Tim McFarlane) for a lean-to extension; the Priory House, also in Hampstead, with a dreamy swimming pool lying below its glass staircase; the glittering sequence of Zen restaurants across London; the low extension to the already-sublime Dulwich Picture Gallery; and the assorted additions to Lasdun's campus at the University of East Anglia.

In recent years, Mather's training in urban design has begun to pay off, with a number of masterplans for

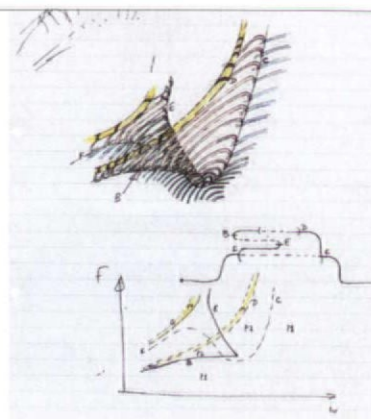




## BOOK

**Building Barcelona:**  
A Second Renaixença  
By Peter G Rowe. Actar,  
2006. 208pp. £15

Barcelona continues to be cited as a model for 'urban renaissance' at the expense of a more nuanced view. Writing as an informed outsider, urbanist/academic Peter Rowe recounts the city's first *renaixença*, from the 1830s to the early 20th century, and then focuses on the last 25 years – the source of all the acclaim. Though Rowe too is upbeat, he doesn't shirk from criticism, whether of the famous public spaces programme (100 projects completed between 1981 and 1987, but not always maintained) or of urban design in the Olympics building boom. Of the 'Barcelona model' of urbanisation, he concludes: 'just how applicable it might be elsewhere is a matter of conjecture.' It's irritating that the book's (grey) images are collated in separate sections and not referenced in the text.



## CRITIC'S CHOICE

By Andrew Mead

Reviewing the latest volume of Richard Rogers' collected works in last week's AJ, Nicholas Ray wrote that, unlike Rogers, 'all the great architects I can think of *do* draw, memorably if sometimes idiosyncratically. It is not that they are artists, but the process of drawing reveals the complicated relationships that they analyse'. In his text for *Lines of Enquiry: Thinking through Drawing* – the latest show at Kettle's Yard, Cambridge – Patrick Lynch says: 'Drawings are simultaneously a form of recording and invention... You might be thinking about other buildings and architects that you admire while talking to an engineer or client, recalling archetypes and atmospheres. Sometimes you find yourself drawing upside down, literally from another person's point of view.'

Lynch is one of several architects included in the show, along with Colin St John Wilson and Eric Parry. But their contributions hang beside those of archaeologists, surgeons, physicists, zoologists, astronomers, acousticians – a broad spectrum of pursuits across the arts and sciences. And while the drawings loosely fit one or other (occasionally both) of Lynch's categories – recording and invention – they're neither grouped by that, nor by the disciplines they represent, nor by the degree of finish (which varies greatly). Although affinities between items do sometimes emerge, it's frankly a miscellany, but one in which a drawing is invariably a working tool – as in the page above by engineer Allan McRobbie. The exhibition continues until 17 September and, if you can't get to Cambridge, there's a nice little catalogue for only £4.95 ([www.kettlesyard.co.uk](http://www.kettlesyard.co.uk)).

The old dispute about *disegno* versus *colore*, drawing versus colour, which has simmered since the Renaissance – Vasari called *disegno* 'the animating principle of all creative processes' – comes to mind when turning from Kettle's Yard to a show at Birmingham's Ikon Gallery. It's a collaboration between Olafur Eliasson (whose simplistic 'giant sun' was a big hit at Tate Modern in 2004) and scientist Boris Oichermann: 'a laboratory to explore the way that colour is perceived'. It all sounds quite Albers-like and rather more interesting than Eliasson's work at the Tate ([www.ikon-gallery.co.uk](http://www.ikon-gallery.co.uk)). For forthcoming events visit [www.ajplus.co.uk/diary](http://www.ajplus.co.uk/diary)

areas such as central Milton Keynes and the South Bank arts complex – the former scheme awaits a developer, while the latter has now been discarded. Currently, with a vast renovation project in process for the Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, Virginia, Mather is 'on the verge of being recognised in the country of his birth', in Maxwell's words. It is a fitting tribute to an architect who has worked with such consistency and modesty on these shores over the past four decades.

Murray Fraser is a professor at the University of Westminster



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Multiple award-winning team of this globally recognised practice is looking for a Lead Design Architect with UK housing experience. You will ideally have worked for a practice with a reputation for successful social housing schemes, with clients that include private developers and housing associations. An innovative approach to design, technical/contractual confidence and a love of challenges are all required. Progression, excellent support and a competitive remuneration package are on offer. Call Jennifer. Ref: AJJW031454

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Our ongoing strategic planning initiatives have seen the business grow to the point where further design talent must be identified to ensure the practice's continuing success.

Accordingly we are seeking to recruit high calibre individuals with proven design talent and at least eight years practical experience to enter our organisation at a level offering definite partnership prospects. The successful candidates will enjoy working in a collaborative design environment, have an ability to work on a variety of projects simultaneously and be willing to commit to a long term, exciting career in architecture. The appointees will enjoy unique opportunities for architectural expression and the full support of a well managed and well resourced organisation.

Architects interested in this opportunity should email their portfolio and details to Andrew Barclay, Design Director at [andrew.barclay@wam.co.nz](mailto:andrew.barclay@wam.co.nz) or send to 201 Victoria Street West, Auckland 1010, New Zealand. Andrew will be available to meet candidates in London in early August.

For more information about the position and the practice visit [www.warrenandmahoney.com](http://www.warrenandmahoney.com)

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## Building Careers...



### Project Architect London WC1 - To £50,000

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### Architect Moscow - To \$40,000 + Bens

Russian speaking Design Architects to work for a UK practice based in Moscow, you should have experience of working on large commercial projects including, offices, mixed use developments & hotels. Ref: 4593

### Package Architects & Technologists London WC2 - To £38,000 + Bens

This exciting London based practice are working on several new multi-million pound schemes & currently seek talented Architects & Technologists to work in their vibrant creative offices. Opportunities are available for candidates with experience in all building types. Ref: 4605

### Architectural Assistant London SE1 - To £17.00 per hour

We are currently looking to recruit people with good all round experience working on Hotel & Resort projects internationally. This position is available initially on a contract leading to a permanent position for the right individual. Ref: 4612

### AT A GLANCE

Technicians Contracts throughout London - To £20p/h  
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Medium-sized award-winning practice has a key vacancy for an experienced architect to work on a stunning £12m residential development. Project includes the refurbishment of a 16th Century manor house with additional units in the grounds. Candidates must be part III qualified with 2 years+ PQE and excellent Autocad & jobrunning skills. Very exciting opportunity.

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**Jobrunner Central London £to38k**  
Award-winning, design focussed practice has urgent requirements for bright, ambitious jobrunners to join their thriving teams. Microstation or Autocad fluent, you will be hardworking, organised and focussed with excellent all-round skills. An excellent opportunity to work for a practice where hard work and success are recognised and rewarded.

**Project Architect Central London £to40k**  
Our client is a friendly, busy practice with a large number of projects in the residential, education and commercial sectors. Candidates will be responsible for running 3-5 projects of £1-5m each at differing stages with a very fast turnaround. Microstation skills & at least 4 years experience are essential. Excellent potential for progression to Associateship.

**Arch Asst Central London £20phr**  
Looking for the next step? Our client has urgent requirements for talented, intelligent architectural assistants to join them on an ongoing contract basis. Microstation fluency essential. Initially you will be producing exquisite presentations drawings, and then moving onto detailed design and production information. Great long term prospects.

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We have ongoing requirements for a range of staff, from Project Architects to CAD Technologists. To discuss your options in the strictest confidence, please contact:

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# your next career move

**Town Planner to £45k pa** **Chichester**

Our client is a busy and highly professional Architectural practice, who have recently won a number of awards for their residential developments and masterplanning work. Currently they are looking for a senior Town Planner to manage a number of ongoing projects. Ideally candidates should be RTPI-qualified, and have project-management experience within the private sector. There is an entrepreneurial spirit to this role, and it would suit someone looking to relocate to the South-Coast. **Ref:TP**

**Architectural Technician to £35K pa** **Berkhamsted**

Residential specialist, whose workload generally covers private housing and developer work, are looking for a competent technical assistant who has a good knowledge of how a building is put together. A background or interest in MDF spec-writing would be an advantage. CAD ability essential. **Ref:111755**

**Design Technician to £32k pa** **North Hampshire**

Career opportunity for an accomplished architectural technician to join this growing and established practice, the bulk of whose work is residential development. Candidates should be capable of producing housing layouts and helping out with preparing planning drawings. There is a large design element to this role, so would suit a technician looking to diversify their skillset. **Ref:111183**

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Please apply with CV to Mr J Owen, Julian Owen Associates Architects,

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Tele: 0115 9229831 Email: julian@julianowen.co.uk Web: www.julianowen.co.uk



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You will be a Graduate in a related field. Experience is not essential as training will be given. You will be required to Work on AutoCad, produce computer generated 3D work and produce freehand presentations. The suitable candidate will also be involved with concept design, feasibility studies, planning and building regulation applications and liaisons with Clients and contractors. Salary, depending on qualification and experience, £16k to £18k pa.

Application in writing with CV and examples of recent work to:

**NWM Design Studio, Ground Floor, EX Androit Building, Cecil Street  
Birmingham, West Midlands B19 3ST.**

## Architectural Recruitment Consultants

*Magenta*

**Part 2 Assistant London & Herts £32K**

With an outstanding reputation for its training and career development our award winning client is becoming one of the country's leading practices. You will be involved in various stages of the design process from concept through to completion. Excellent opportunity to be fully supported in gaining your part 3.

**Architect & Technician North West £37K**

A long term future with one of the country's leading practices awaits Architects (RIBA) and Technicians (HNC qualification). A minimum of 2 years UK PQE experience is essential for this role. You will form part of a team engaging on commercial / pharmaceutical and residential projects. Autocad or Microstation is essential.

**Senior Design Architect London £45K**

Ideally you will have between 6 and 10 years large scale design experience and be capable of developing designs for residential and commercial schemes from inception through to planning and detail design. This is a fantastic opportunity to work in a progressive environment that offers genuine career development.

**Technician West Midlands £34K**

Responsibilities will include producing working drawings, assisting with feasibility studies, surveying, site visits and liaising with clients and consultants. Experience of construction detailing is also essential as is the ability to communicate at all stages, be self motivated and display a reliable and flexible approach.

**Technician South East £35-40K**

The majority of our clients work involves new build leisure centres, sports facilities and large retail/commercial projects. Autocad skills are essential in order to produce working drawings in a lively and fast moving environment. You will either work alongside a senior architect or manage your own projects, dependant on experience.

**Architects & Technicians London & Essex £37K**

Recently qualified design architects, good technical architects familiar with the residential sector and technicians are all in demand. Projects range from inception through to completion on a variety of projects. Excellent starting salary with the opportunity for fast track career advancement up to associate level is on offer.

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## Technical Illustrators Wanted

Due to a variety of new property developments in construction, our client requires technical illustrations for promotional material. A variety of styles are needed, from sleek 3D modelling to hand rendered watercolours and everything in-between. Please e-mail or post samples with availability and rates to the details below.

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Design Coalition are based in Ongar, Essex and are a large Architectural and Interior Design practice working in retail development of Hotels, Restaurants and Bars.

To progress their forthcoming projects, DC are seeking to fill the position of Architectural Technician.

The successful applicant should have a minimum of 5 years in architectural practice and have had further education to B.Tech diploma / HNC Degree in Building Construction or similar standard, with a comprehensive understanding of the current UK Building Regulations.

An ability to work as part of a team, but be able to produce information independently and with minimal supervision is essential. Working from feasibility to completion on a range of projects from small conversions to multi-site new build acquisitions, this position is busy and varied.

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- Minimum 1 year UK experience including at least 3 months experience in schools building projects and in particular special needs schools
- Proven ability of technical and detail design development
- Good knowledge of UK Building Regulations
- Good knowledge of DfES Design Guides
- Proficiency in the use of AutoCAD
- A positive, proactive and friendly disposition

Please email your CV to: [lesley@acparchitects.co.uk](mailto:lesley@acparchitects.co.uk)  
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Over the last 100 years, Southern Housing Group has become one of the largest housing associations in southern England, housing 45,000 residents, owning and managing 24,000 homes, employing 900 people and working with more than 70 local authorities. Our activities centre on four key areas: the development of quality affordable housing, housing and neighbourhood management, a range of housing options for rent and home ownership and social investment.

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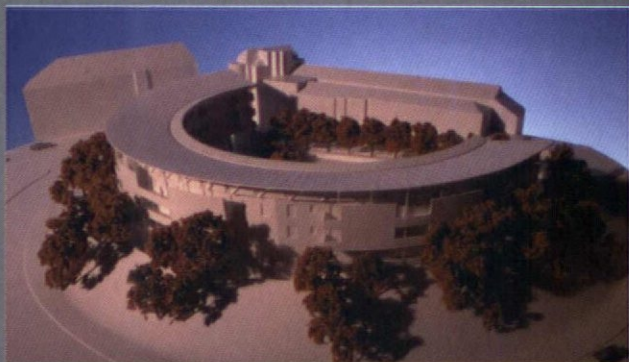
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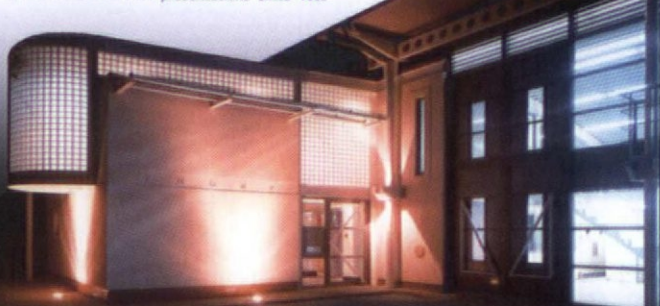
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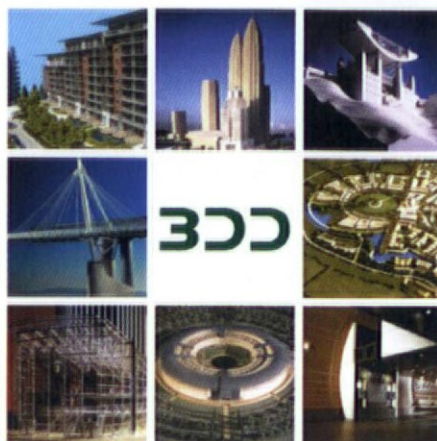
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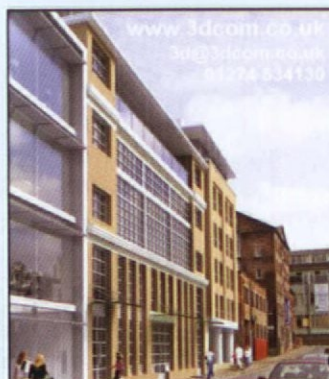
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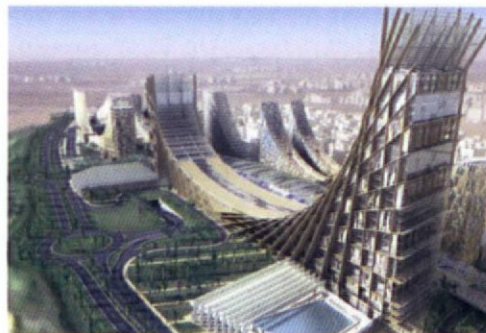
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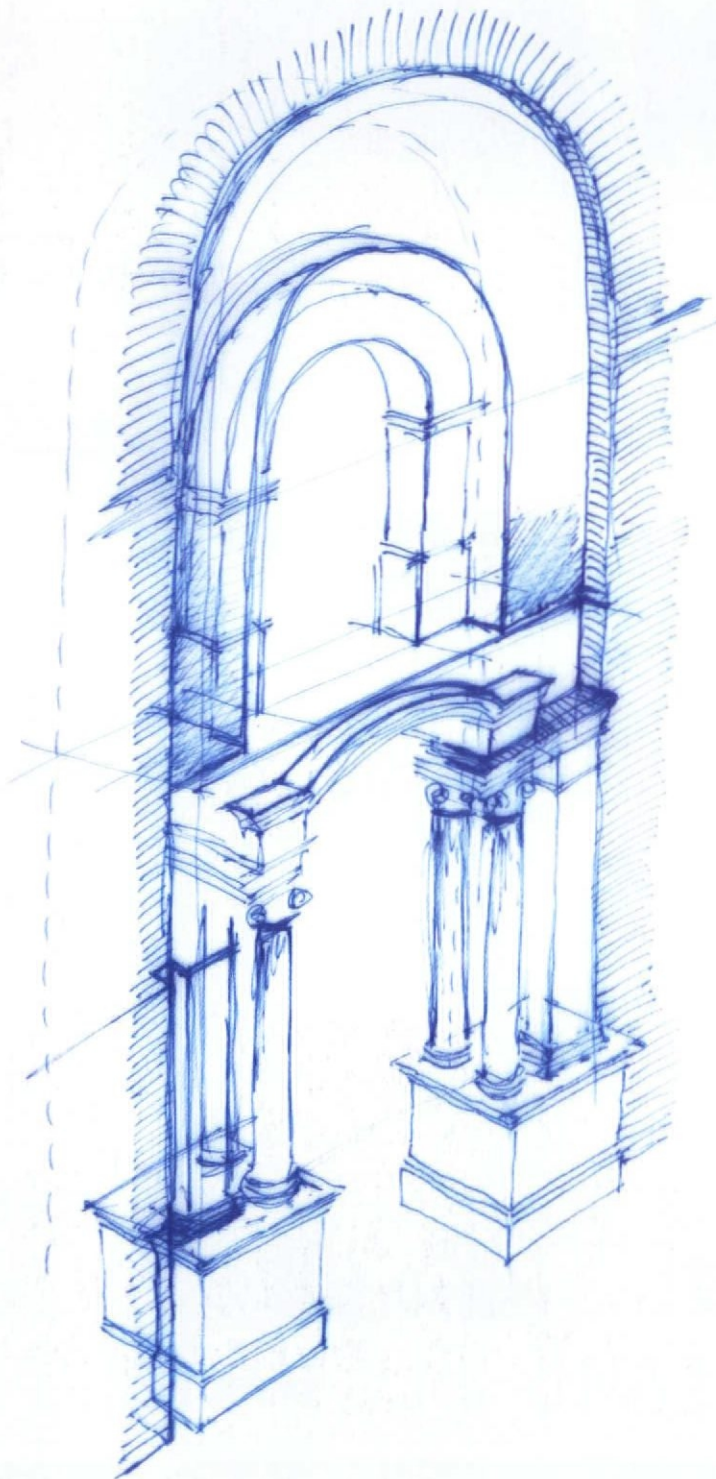
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Sketch for the renovation of an existing opening at the new Medieval and Renaissance Galleries at the V & A. By Julian Harrap of Julian Harrap Architects

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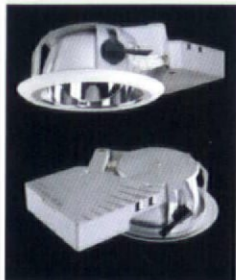
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## METAL TECHNOLOGY



### AJ ENQUIRY 204

Curtain walls and glazed doors have helped to refurbish a famous Belfast school, Dominican College, in Fortwilliam Park. System 17 provided a stunning full-height atrium to the new, three-storey building. System 10 and 18 glazed doors and System 5-20 and 4-20 windows were used.

## KINNARPS



### AJ ENQUIRY 205

The new Chelmsford offices of leading law firm Kennedys have been furnished with a wide variety of products from Kinnarps. Products were selected for their versatility, quality and competitive pricing. Maximising staff comfort and well-being through good ergonomics was a key factor.

## BRETT MARTIN



### AJ ENQUIRY 206

Brett Martin Daylight Systems' triple-skin rooflights have been used to brighten the interior of Devonport Naval Base's new Distribution Centre in Plymouth. A triple-skin rooflight system was specified to achieve an insulation U-value of 2.2 W/m<sup>2</sup>K - the minimum required to comply with the new revisions to Part L.

## METSEC



### AJ ENQUIRY 207

Metsec, the UK's largest manufacturer of light-gauge galvanised-steel framing systems, has supplied over 2,000m<sup>2</sup> of site-fix metal sections as fast-track infill walling for a new private school in Wellington, Shropshire. Build speed was the major factor in selecting Metsec's SFS system.

## SCHÜCO



### AJ ENQUIRY 208

New from leading building envelope specialist, Schüco International, is the Royal S 160.HI, a highly engineered aluminium lift-and-slide door system that can accommodate vents up to 3,000 x 3,000mm and offers excellent levels of both thermal insulation and weather performance.



# Levolux

Urban Village



The Visage Swiss Cottage – Terry Farrell & Partners – Timber Louvre

Inspired by architecture, Levolux innovates, from state of the art aluminium aerofoil fins to internal shading solutions. Light, heat and glare—all controlled by effective, discreet and often unique, solutions. Harnessing the emerging possibilities of building technology, Levolux pushes the boundaries to achieve your vision.

BRISE SOLEIL • AEROFOIL FINS • LOUVRES • EXTERNAL BLINDS • INTERNAL BLINDS

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DESIGNED TO CONTROL

Levolux, Forward Drive, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 8NT United Kingdom Tel: 020 8863 9111 e-mail: [info@levolux.com](mailto:info@levolux.com) [www.levolux.com](http://www.levolux.com)  
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