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**26.07.07**  
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**MICHAEL DRAIN/**  
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## THE STIRLING SHORTLIST IS POISED BETWEEN ICONS AND THE METICULOUSLY MODEST

By Kieran Long

The Stirling Prize shortlist is out (*see pages 10-13*), and while there will be those who carp that there are too many buildings outside the UK etc., Stirling remains by far the most important date in the UK architectural calendar. There is no other event that stimulates such debate about the value of architecture in this country. My gut reaction is that this is a shortlist poised between the iconic one-off and the accretive addition.

The most obviously, almost offensively, iconic is OMA's Casa da Música, a meteorite of a building fired like a mortar from Rotterdam and crash-landed on a square in Porto. What it has to do with British architecture should be obvious – Rem Koolhaas has lived in London since the 1960s, and is a major figure in this country's professional and intellectual landscape.

The other show pony on the list is David Chipperfield's America's Cup building in Valencia. It is a canny piece of stadium architecture and has been widely published.

Glenn Howells' Savill Building is also in the icon category, with the overwhelming image of a building dependent on a wavy roof.

On the other side of the divide are buildings of meticulous modesty. Chipperfield's Museum of Modern Literature is an addition to a complex of buildings at the German literature archive in Marbach. Most of the building is dug into the hillside, behind minimal and beautiful concrete colonnades. Foster's Dresden Station is a comprehensive but pretty faithful rehabilitation of the eccentric original. Perhaps most modest of all, Haworth Tompkins' Young Vic theatre still has its entrance through an old butcher's shop.

So for this year's judges it's either/or. There is no housing, no office, no public space. This year's Stirling is all about how you like your leisure attractions: raw, or overcooked with garnish.

• The AJ and the *Architectural Review* have published the entire shortlist, and you can read these archived articles at [www.ajplus.co.uk](http://www.ajplus.co.uk)

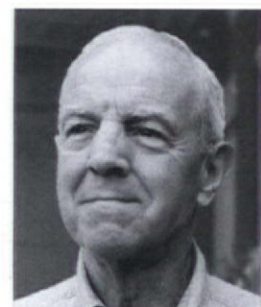
### CONTRIBUTORS



Edwin Heathcote, who writes the *Building Study* on the Victoria Miro gallery on pages 23-33, is the architecture critic for the *Financial Times*



James Morris, who photographs the *Building Study*, is a photographer based in Wales who has exhibited at the Royal Geographical Society



Dean Hawkes, who reviews Louis I Kahn: *Beyond Time and Style* on page 45, was formerly a professor at the Welsh School of Architecture and is an architect, writer and teacher



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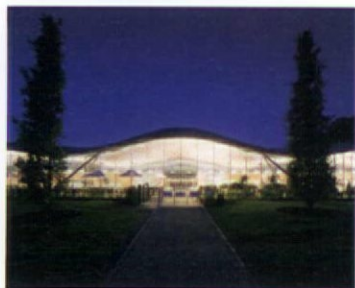
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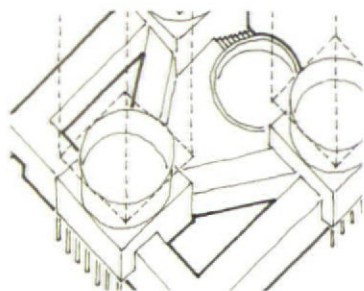
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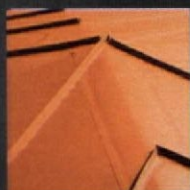
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#### FRIDAY 20 JULY

- Peter Womersley buildings listed by Historic Scotland
- Rolfe Judd's Tabard Square wins Housing Design Award
- RIBA looks into international accreditation
- **Stride Treglown bags housing competition for Letchworth Garden City (below)**



#### TUESDAY 24 JULY

- Kensington Palace Hotel faces the wrecking ball as Chipperfield scheme wins approval...
- ... While the practice also goes for planning in the City of London
- Porphyrios Associates resubmits plans for north London mixed-use scheme
- **English Heritage names buildings at risk, including Battersea Power Station (below)**



#### THURSDAY 19 JULY

- McAslan's Birmingham New Street proposals face funding setback
- **Zaha forced to improve sustainability of Olympic Aquatics Centre (above)**
- Mayor Ken attacks 'barmy bureaucrats' over Health and Safety proposals
- Bernd Becher, renowned photographer of industrial architecture, dies aged 75

#### MONDAY 23 JULY

- London's St Pancras Hotel is hit by fire...
- ... As blaze breaks out at Urban Splash's Lister Mills site
- **Government Green Paper calls for better housing faster**
- KSS Design Group unveils designs for Everton FC stadium



#### WEDNESDAY 25 JULY

- Southwark picks Elephant and Castle development partner
- **Bartlett student picks up £1,000 design award (above)**
- McAslan's Royal Military Academy wins planning
- FaulknerBrowns' £53 million Edinburgh Sighthill Arena resurrected



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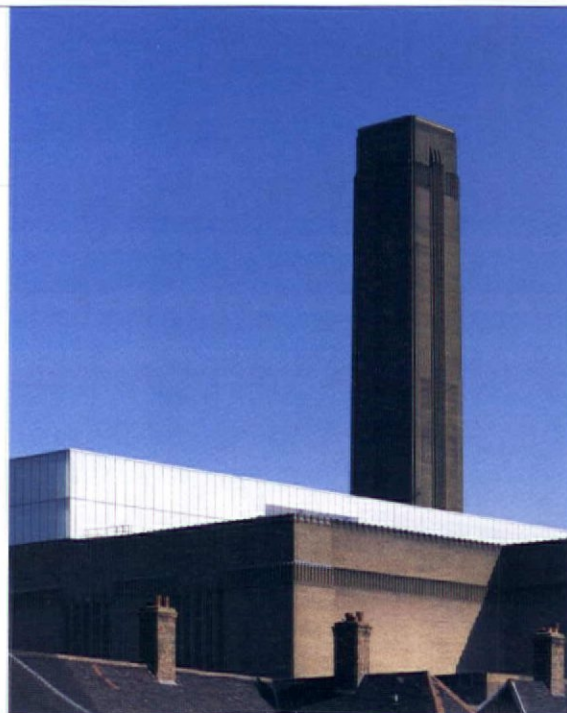
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The awards can be entered via the UK Revit User Group website [www.revitusergroup.org.uk](http://www.revitusergroup.org.uk), an on-line community where Revit customers can share ideas, exchange hints and tips and generally interact with like-minded individuals.





RICHARD BRYANT/ARCAID

# DESIGNER SOUGHT FOR MOBILE TATE

By Richard Vaughan

The Tate is interviewing a number of architects, believed to include BIG Architects with engineer Adams Kara Taylor, Lynch Architects and youmeheshe, to develop the UK's first portable arts pavilion.

The 'Mobile Tate' pavilion will tour the UK from August 2008 to August 2012, as part of a Cultural Olympiad scheduled to finish at the Olympic Park in Stratford, east London, in time for the Olympics' kick-off.

The project is being conceived alongside partners the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games, the Arts Council and Creative Partnerships, who are looking at ways to secure £1 million to fund the detailed design and construction of the pavilion.

A Tate spokeswoman said: 'We have nearly finished

interviewing a number of shortlisted practices. We have had a number of expressions of interest and we will be announcing a winner shortly.'

It is the first time a portable arts space on such a scale has been attempted in the UK, and it is understood the pavilion will bring art to 'unexpected settings' as well as the Tate galleries in Liverpool and St Ives.

According to a design brief obtained by the AJ, the pavilion will 'make a new space for art, creating a different experience than is possible in a gallery, attracting and engaging people who do not visit museums and galleries'.

The winning practice will be asked to design a hugely ambitious temporary structure; it will need to be easily dismantled while offering

a setting for eating and dancing and also providing a minimum 200-seat auditorium space complete with stage.

The demountable pavilion will tour the country during the summer months over a four-year period, acting as a travelling festival for art that will, according to the brief, 'give a sense of the circus is coming to town'.

As well as providing space for exhibitions, the pavilion will need to be capable of growing and shrinking according to the size of the installation, while remaining small enough to be easily transportable.

The winning architect/engineer team will be announced next month, and outline designs are expected by October, ahead of an agreed detailed design by February next year.





WARRICK SWEENEY

GARETH GARDNER

**GLENN HOWELLS ARCHITECTS**  
THE SAVILL BUILDING VISITOR  
CENTRE, WINDSOR  
Latest odds: 3-1

## STIRLING PRIZE SHORTLIST

By Max Thompson

David Chipperfield Architects has stolen a march on its rivals in the race to the 2007 Stirling Prize – with two of its schemes making this year's shortlist.

Chipperfield's brace are the America's Cup building in Valencia, Spain, and the Museum of Modern Literature in Marbach am Neckar, Germany.

The four other shortlisted buildings are: Glenn Howells' Savill Building, Windsor Great Park; Haworth Tompkins' Young Vic, London; OMA's Casa da Música, Porto, Portugal, and Foster + Partners' Dresden Station, Germany.

Despite being 'over the moon' at the double Stirling selection, David Chipperfield said the fact that both his schemes were in Europe spoke volumes about the state of UK architecture.

He said: 'What have I built in England in the last 25 years? [Working in Europe] has worked out fine for me – apart from continually having to apologise to my family for always being on a plane – but does every young British architect have to do what I have had to?

'England does not help its young architects,' he added.

Like winner Richard Rogers last year, Chipperfield has a one-in-three chance of walking away with the prize, now in its 12th year.

Chipperfield may have the edge over his rivals but, according to bookmaker William Hill (whose odds are quoted over the next four pages), his America's Cup building is level-pegging with OMA's Casa da Música (which qualifies for Stirling because of

OMA's membership of the RIBA) and Glenn Howells' Savill Building with odds of 3-1. Chipperfield's other scheme – the Museum of Modern Literature – has been put at 5-1.

Glenn Howells, who was on the judging panel for the RIBA Awards, from whose winners the Stirling Prize is selected, expressed surprise at his building's joint favourite spot: 'Even though I was close to the process, I didn't think the building would do so well. Just to get shortlisted is fantastic; I am bowled over.'

Chipperfield may have taken the limelight, but Birmingham-based Howells says his practice's presence on the shortlist is particularly special.

'We are a rare beast,' he said, 'a regional practice on the Stirling shortlist.'

### PREVIOUS WINNERS

- 1996:** Stephen Hodder, Centenary Building, University of Salford
- 1997:** Michael Wilford, Musical School, Stuttgart
- 1998:** Foster + Partners, American Air Museum, Duxford
- 1999:** Future Systems, Lord's Media Centre, London
- 2000:** Alsop & Störmer, Peckham Library, London
- 2001:** Wilkinson Eyre, Magna Centre, Rotherham
- 2002:** Wilkinson Eyre, Gateshead Millennium Bridge
- 2003:** Herzog & de Meuron, Laban Dance Centre, London
- 2004:** Foster + Partners, 30 St Mary Axe, London
- 2005:** EMBT/RMJM, Scottish Parliament Building, Edinburgh
- 2006:** Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners, Barajas Airport, Madrid





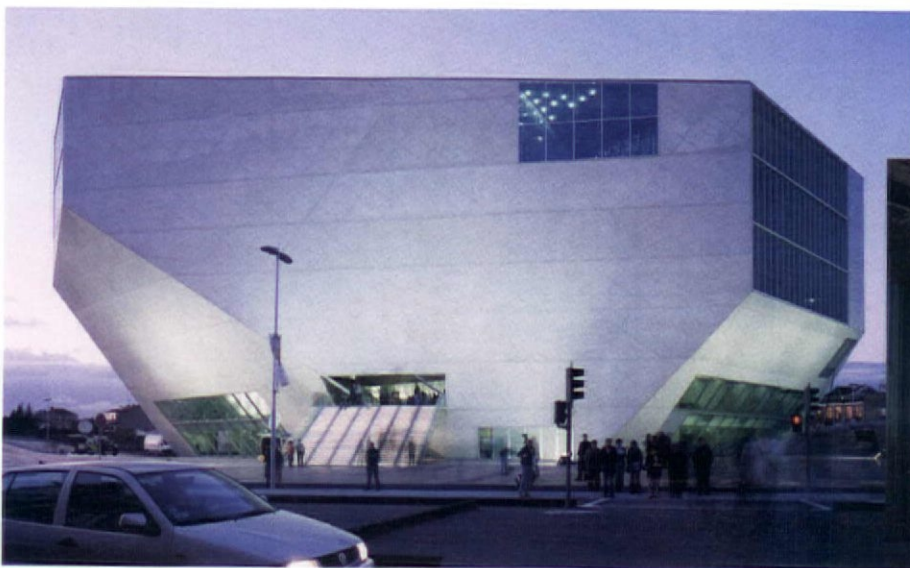
JÖRG VON BRUCHHAUSEN



CHRISTIAN RICHTERS

DAVID CHIPPERFIELD ARCHITECTS  
MUSEUM OF MODERN LITERATURE,  
MARBACH AM NECKAR, GERMANY  
Latest odds: 5-1

OFFICE FOR METROPOLITAN ARCHITECTURE  
CASA DA MÚSICA CONCERT HALL, PORTO,  
PORTUGAL  
Latest odds: 3-1



PHILIPPE RUAULT





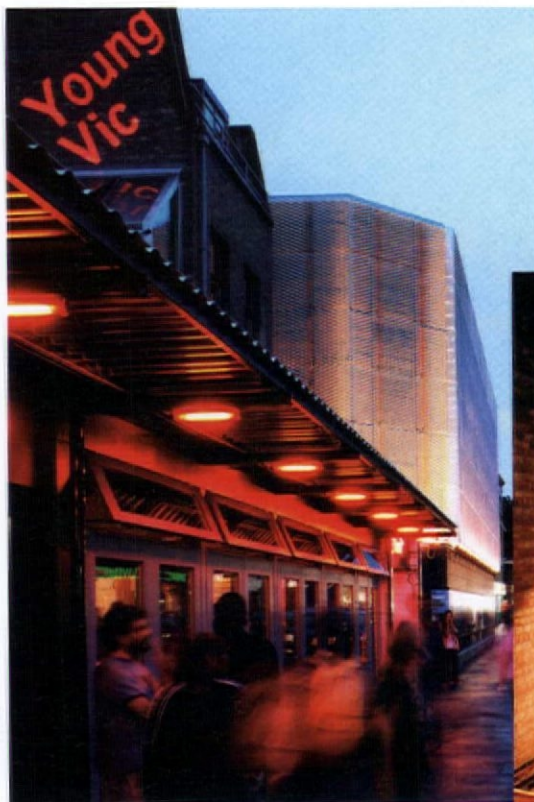
DCA



RICHARD WALCH

DAVID CHIPPERFIELD ARCHITECTS  
AMERICA'S CUP BUILDING, VALENCIA, SPAIN  
Latest odds: 3-1

HAWORTH TOMPKINS  
YOUNG VIC THEATRE, LONDON  
Latest odds: 7-1



PHILIP VILE



# THE SIX CONTENDERS ASSESSED...

By Andrew Mead

*The AJ's Reviews Editor appraises this year's Stirling Prize shortlist and offers up his opinion on who might emerge victorious.*

This year's Stirling line-up pitches the would-be icon of OMA's Casa da Música against Haworth Tompkins' self-effacing remodelling of the Young Vic theatre, and the grandiose civic landmark of Dresden Station, which has been redeveloped in a High-Tech spirit by Foster + Partners, against the rusticity (albeit sophisticated) of Glenn Howells' Savill Building.

And then there's David Chipperfield. His America's Cup building is a stage awaiting race days, when the viewing platforms

come alive with crowds. Empty, it exemplifies the the rigour and repose that is his practice's hallmark. But the practice's Museum of Modern Literature is a much more demanding commission that sees Chipperfield at his most thoughtful. With its reinterpreted Classicism, its fusion of solidity, sobriety and elegance, it dignifies its literary contents, suggesting that, here at least, culture and history are taken seriously.

It's not striving to be an icon, like OMA's Casa da Música. For all its ingenuity (seen mostly in the circulation) there has to be a question mark against this building. It almost totally forgets urbanism and is happy to be alien.

With the task of redeveloping Dresden Station, Foster + Partners was on familiar ground. Since the Royal Academy's Sackler Galleries of 1991, the practice has integrated its own aesthetic with historic buildings, and of course it's at home with big sheds. But hasn't the Stirling Prize rewarded this strain of architecture amply already?

Glenn Howells' site for the Savill Building is by long-established gardens in a Royal Park, and to create anything of architectural significance in such a setting is a triumph. But all the architecture is in the long undulating timber gridshell roof and that's maybe not enough for it to win.

Working with William Howell's 1970 building at the Young Vic Theatre, Haworth Tompkins has realised an ego-free amalgamation of new and old. This is intelligent accretive architecture. But maybe there's just not enough obvious new work here for the Stirling judges?

There certainly is at Marbach. And if the judges do choose the Museum of Modern Literature as the winner, they'll be making a statement that there's more to architecture than a signature style; that historical precedent can inform a building without it simply becoming a pastiche; and that culture is valued in itself, not as a branch of the entertainment industry.



**FOSTER + PARTNERS**  
DRESDEN STATION REDEVELOPMENT,  
DRESDEN, GERMANY  
Latest odds: 5-1



NIGEL YOUNG



## NEWS IN PICTURES

### SHANGHAI EXPO ENTRIES REVEALED

The six shortlisted entries in the competition to design the British Pavilion for the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai have been unveiled. The six firms were whittled down from 47 entries in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office competition and will be publicly unveiled today (26 July) at the V&A Museum in London. The practices are: Zaha Hadid; Marks Barfield; Draw Architects; Avery Associates; Heatherwick Studio; and Eight, which is a team headed up by John McAslan + Partners that also includes Nord, Carmody Groarke, Brisac Gonzalez, Project Orange and Surface. The theme for the £10 million pavilion is 'Better City, Better Life' and it will showcase British culture, sport, education and business, as well as 'highlighting and promoting policies and technologies in low-carbon urban developments'. The V&A exhibition runs until 19 September when the winner will be announced.

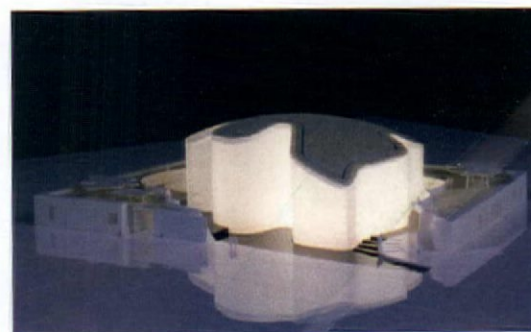
*By Richard Vaughan*



Draw Architects with Arup



Marks Barfield with Arup

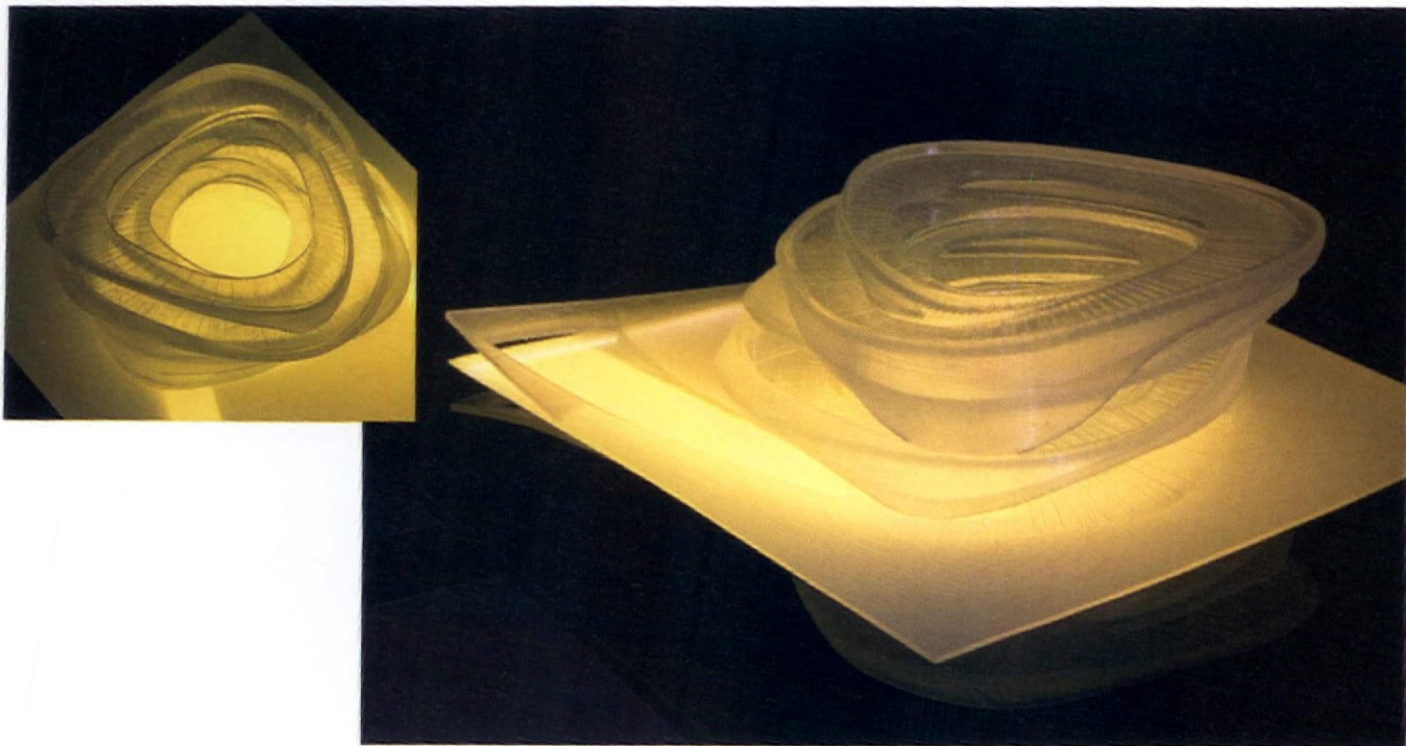


Avery Associates with Adams Kara Taylor

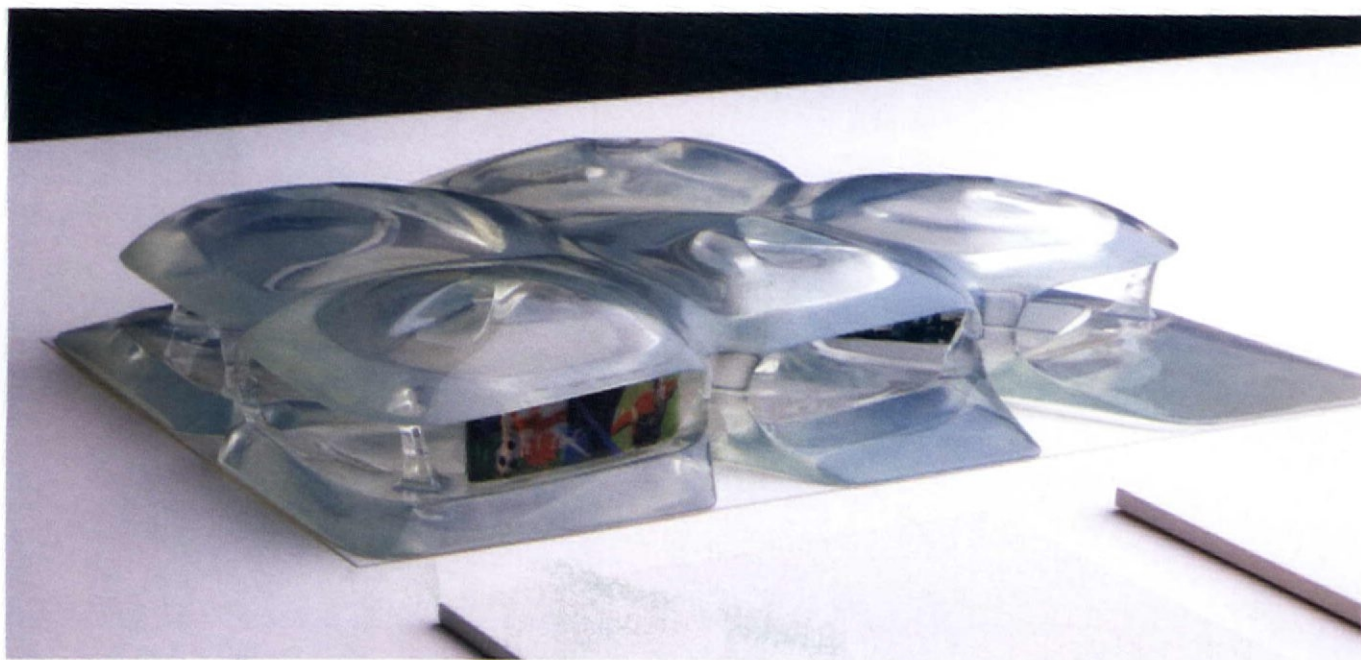


Heatherwick Studio with Adams Kara Taylor





Eight with Arup



Zaha Hadid Architects with Arup



# HAS COOPER GONE FAR ENOUGH?

By Clive Walker

Yvette Cooper's eagerly awaited Housing Green Paper, unveiled this week, has received a cautious welcome from key players within the industry. But while the Housing Minister's commitment to quality volume housing is applauded by the RIBA, CABI and the National House Building Council, the same groups say the paper could do more to achieve its goals.

Labour has pledged to build at least 70,000 affordable homes a year by 2011, including 45,000 social homes – more than double the number built since 2004. Measures for achieving these targets include creating 14 new Community Land Trusts to boost the supply and financing of affordable housing (*see box opposite*).

Under the proposed legislation, the local councils

that build the most houses will be awarded extra funding, and measures to prevent 'landbanking' by private-sector builders will also be introduced.

Moreover, councils and developers will be invited to 'host' zero-carbon eco towns, with each town providing between 5,000 and 20,000 green homes by 2016.

Crucially for architects, Cooper is proposing a quality-assurance programme to explore 'meaningful' incentives for developers who meet design quality benchmarks. These would include fast-tracking planning applications for developers who demonstrate a genuine commitment to sustainable housing.

RIBA president Jack Pringle says that the Green Paper demonstrates Labour's commitment to design, but he

is doubtful whether measures to accelerate development can be achieved without compromising quality. He also called for RIBA-led local review panels to work alongside CABI.

Pringle says: 'Support for good design is there, but it's essential that quality is not sacrificed in the interest of speed. We are campaigning for a roll-out of design-review panels across the country to support good design, and housing should be subject to these panels. This is a tried-and-tested approach, where members do not mind being judged by professionals capable of judging them.'

'Our proposal is not ad hoc or made up of interested parties like housebuilders and local authorities. Our system is systematic. I do not mind [Cooper's] arrangements but





## YVETTE COOPER'S HOUSING PLANS

- A pilot quality-assurance programme that rewards good design;
- measures to discourage private sector 'landbanking';
- commitment to build at least 70,000 affordable homes a year by 2011 – doubling the amount built since 2004;
- a 'light-touch' review of CABE this autumn;
- no fundamental changes to green-belt planning policy;
- all new homes from 2016 to be carbon neutral;
- areas in the North permitted to bid to be New Growth Points for the first time;
- more affordable homes in rural areas;
- 14 new Community Land Trusts to boost supply and financing of affordable housing; and
- five new zero-carbon eco towns – each with 5,000 to 20,000 new homes.

we need transparent and democratic systems for protecting design standards. This [Green Paper] is well-meaning but there is a lot of subjectivity in it,' he added.

While the paper is a step in the right direction, there needs to be a firmer commitment to the effective management of new community developments to avoid the kinds of mistakes that have blighted the housing experiments of the 1960s.

National House Building Council chief executive Imtiaz Farookhi, who wants to see collective service charges, logical parking and local authority incentives factored into the Green Paper, says: 'There is no reason why this [Green Paper] cannot meet volume, quality and customer satisfaction. But there is an assumption that good design

will deliver sustainable, mixed-tenure housing. Adequate management must exist within new high-density communities, otherwise there can be neighbourhood issues. So this paper is slightly disappointing.'

Also buried deep within the paper is news that CABE is to undergo a 'light-touch' review this autumn, conducted by its two masters – the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The implication here is that CABE can and should be doing more to ensure volume housebuilding is balanced by quality design.

And CABE has played down the significance of the review, its director of campaigns, Matt Bell, insists the timing of the Green Paper

– just days after Gordon Brown ushered in a new Labour administration – is 'excellent'.

'The Green Paper refers to the routine review of CABE's activities to which all non-departmental political bodies are subject. This is a light-touch review to allow us to focus our remit or extend it. It is not a big deal,' says Bell.

The Green Paper builds on the government's aim to 'eliminate poorly designed new housing'. And, says CABE, there are some very welcome mechanisms for achieving this, alongside a restatement of the design objectives of PPS3 (the Planning Policy Supplement which drives housing design).

Among the measures welcomed by CABE are the commitment to sustainable design and the recognition that achieving zero-carbon homes

requires more than modifying existing housing types.

But there are obvious areas where the paper could be stronger to ensure good intentions translate into better homes. In the three-month consultation period, CABE will be demanding that local authorities adopt effective 'metrics' for improving quality. Furthermore, CABE is anxious that new funding streams, such as planning delivery grants, are woven into the legislation.

Bell says: 'The recognition that effectively measuring quality is key to improvement is very welcome and reinforces PPS3. But the proposals on metrics within the paper await definition and lack ambition. The government should expect local authorities to use such metrics, not simply hope that they might,' concluded Bell.



*'Airport carpet, grey dividers, people with problems – it looks a bit municipal to me and that's what I didn't want it to be'*

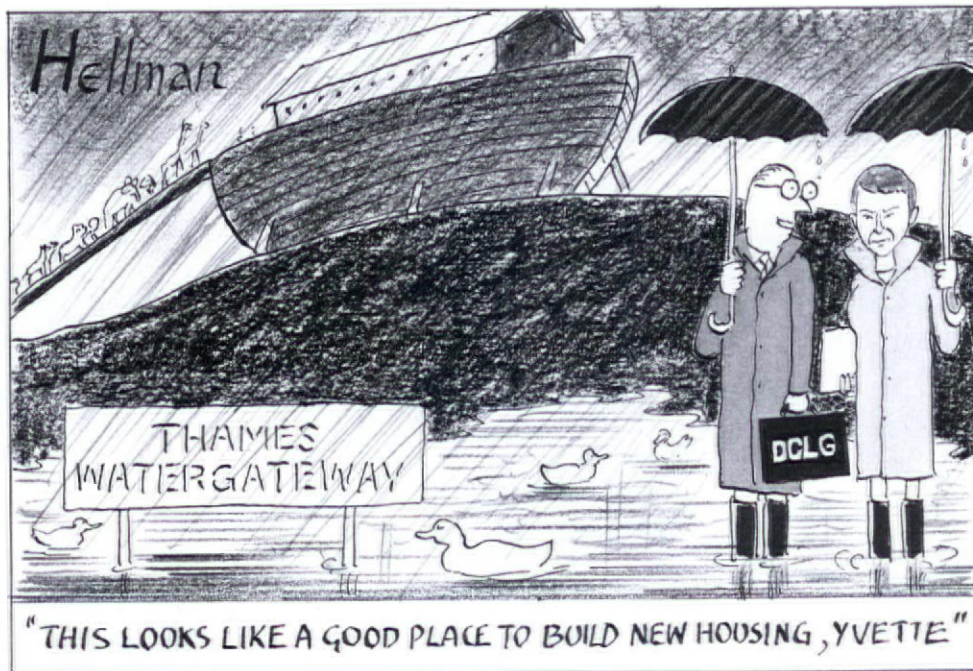
Will Alsop revisits his Stirling Prize-winning Peckham Library.  
*Guardian*, 21.07.07

*'Planners and local campaigners are great at saying: "No." They need to start saying: "Yes please."'*

Minister for Housing Yvette Cooper on the government's housing plans. *Observer*, 22.07.07

*'Some people are fat. Some are tall. I'm a born fighter'*

Eva Jiricna. *Prague Post*, 18.07.07



#### GUITAR HERO

One thing that never ceases to amaze Astragal is the versatility of the architectural breed. And one character he recently encountered displays a talent rarely seen in the species. Introducing two-times air guitar world champion, featured recently on both the *Sharon Osbourne Show* and ITN News, ladies and gentlemen, it's London-based architect **Zac 'Mr Magnet' Monro!** Zac, when not running his own practice, is the organiser of the Official UK Air Guitar Championships 2007, to be held on 3 August in Islington. And he appears to have some lofty ideals for the much-maligned art. As the man himself puts it: 'The ideology behind the movement is that if everyone in the world held an air guitar, they could not simultaneously be holding

a gun, therefore paving the way for world peace.' Mr Magnet also claims that being 'in front of thousands of cheering fans is a purifying experience, an inner battle to beat your fears and free your mind.' Astragal has seen the light and is hanging up his hip flask and reaching for a virtual stratocaster.

#### LIFE AT THE TOP

If awards were handed out for most luxurious architect's home, **Ian Simpson** would surely win with his eyrie at the top of his Beetham Tower in Manchester. With fit-out now nearing completion, this three-storey penthouse includes a south-facing conservatory planted with century-old olive trees in pots sunk down to floor level. Footballers, the target market for the other, lower, penthouses, can only look on in envy.

#### STRATEGIC LOCATION

Astragal was travelling up the escalator at King's Cross underground station the other day *en route* for a rare day trip out of the Big Smoke, and was surprised to see two recruitment ads for quantity surveyor Davis Langdon. Could this have anything to do with the fact that rival EC Harris has opened a new HQ in King's Cross, so this is an ideal way to attract the attention of any staff with itchy feet?

#### MOVING MODELS

The poor diploma students at the Bartlett found themselves a model or two short after their recent end-of-year show. Astragal understands that thieves half-inched a couple of mini mock-ups which had not been firmly secured. Talk about stealing the show.



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Insulated Panels



## LETTERS

### CUT-PRICE ARCHITECTURE IS BRINGING QUALITY DOWN

The profession may well have 'little mutual respect and courtesy', but that is not the whole story (Editorial, AJ 12.07.07). In our experience, clients often change their architects when they acquire sites with planning consents, and there are times when this is a wise move – perhaps the practice is inexperienced or too small for the project, or simply the chemistry is wrong. Fair enough.

What the profession does have is a suicidal tendency to agree cut-price fees. Good architects often charge higher fees, not just because better staff need better salaries, but because good practices give something back to the profession by employing students, supporting training and building a stable structure. We recently lost two projects, Paynes & Borthwick's Wharf in Greenwich and the former South Bank University, when the sites changed hands after planning consent. The reason given was that the fees quoted by the incoming architects were less than ours.

Time will tell what the quality of the architecture is like on completion and whether the architects are still in business. The message is that this insidious process of supplanting the original designer doesn't just hit big-name architects but also those of us running sound professional practices. The result is that quality suffers as does the financial stability of the profession.

*John Assael, Assael Architecture*

### HOUSEBUILDERS PRODUCE CRAP BECAUSE IT SELLS

From our professional perspective it is true that the majority of what housebuilders produce is crap ('How to solve the housing riddle', AJ 19.07.07). But clearly housebuilders tailor quality to the demands of the market. The British public is not demanding any higher quality than 'crap'. The answer is not 'a partnership between the public and the private sectors' as Elliot Lipton suggests.

Effective partnerships can only exist between those sharing common goals. The goal of housebuilders is profit; the goal of architects design. A partnership between the two will be nothing more than spin. If the public demanded cathedrals to live in, our streets would be lined with them. Housebuilders are a function of a market economy and it is ridiculous to accuse them of poor design quality when they sell to a market which demands 'Noddy' houses.

Short of revolution, there are only two hopes to avoid 'Noddy Britain' – change market aspirations or police the market. The first could be achieved by political action: education of the public in architecture by a mass TV campaign. But it would not be a vote-winner and is unlikely to happen under a prime minister who has been driving public procurement towards market-led PFI.

The second can only be met by a planning system run by architects. Assuming politicians really care if we live in 'Noddy Britain' or not, this could be achieved by major reforms in the education and training of planners. But it will be too late by then, as Gordon is a man in a hurry.

Perhaps architects need to set up as housebuilders. I doubt if they would make a profit... Bring on the revolution!

*Paul Latham, director, the Regeneration Practice*

### A WELL-CRAFTED BUILDING IN THE WRONG PLACE

I wish to take issue with statements made by Kenneth Powell in your Building Study on the UCL Cancer Institute (AJ 19.07.07).

The statement that the demolition of the Rockefeller Nurses Home was 'uncontroversial' is quite untrue. The local community, led by the Charlotte Street Association and supported by ward councillors and the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee, strongly opposed the demolition of the building on the grounds that it should be retained for housing. Little social housing had been provided in Fitzrovia for many years and there was a need for key-worker housing.

The first planning application was rejected and went to appeal, but in the interim a second application was submitted and finally approved amid some controversy.

The glass facade of the Grimshaw proposals may have disguised the incompatibility of scale with the adjacent buildings but it posed a problem of light pollution; in the short term to the maternity hospital, and in the longer term to the housing which will appear on the site as part of the Section 106 Agreement with the new hospital development. So the terracotta louvers were introduced – not to link the building visually with the former hospital building but to counter light pollution – and this has proved ineffective when viewed from the maternity hospital.

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The building should not have been on this site. It is a gross over-development and has no working links with adjacent buildings. It certainly does not achieve, as claimed, a sympathetic conjunction between the listed buildings, but, at another location, and with the omission of the terracotta louvres, it could have been a handsome addition to the urban landscape.

However, the author's assessment gives the impression of a 'well-ordered' building, a well-crafted building with attention to detail, and that gives us some hope that it will provide a good working environment for researchers; a benefit for some in having this most unsatisfactory building in Huntley Street.

*Bertram Dinnage, Gordon Mansions, Huntley Street*

### LEEDS IS DOMINATED BY LOW-QUALITY BUILDINGS

I read with huge disappointment your edition on the RIBA Awards (AJ 28.06.07) which, for me, highlighted the lack of any quality building work in Leeds. Leeds is increasingly dominated by standard detail and layout Design and Build speculative offices and residential blocks that have been built without any consideration of context, and are designed to achieve the maximum margins for the client and the contractor.

A conversation with city architect John Thorpe informed me that there are significantly more major planning applications a year in Leeds than there are in Birmingham, a city three times the size of Leeds, which suggests there is sufficient demand in the city. However, if we continue to develop Leeds in this fashion, the legacy will be much worse than that of the 1960s.

Speculative development is necessary, but it must be mixed with more quality development.

*Ivan Smith, architect, SMC Gower*

### ASTRAGAL IS MOTORING OFF WITH THE FACTS

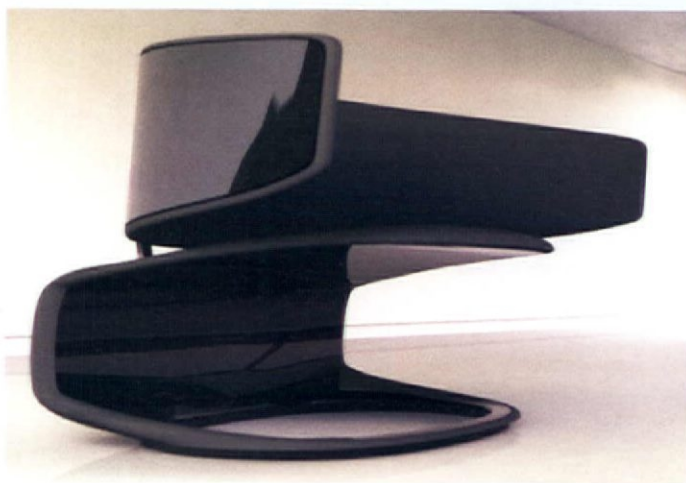
Astragal is heavy on invention and light on facts (AJ 19.07.07). If he or she made the effort to visit the British Museum, they would find my name carved in stone. Any phone call to me or this office would confirm that it was also Norman Foster's own idea for both names to be recorded as architects of the Great Court.

*Spencer de Grey, head of design, Foster + Partners*



### YOUR CHANCE TO DESIGN A CHAIR FOR PRODUCTION

If you have ever designed a chair you thought should be produced, here's your chance. Modus Furniture, one of the UK's top design manufacturers, has got together with the AJ for the second Something to Sit On competition. Modus will produce a prototype of the winner that could become part of its product range. All you have to do is get your chair design down on paper. The closing date for entries is 31 August, and a brief and jury will be in next week's AJ. It is also online at [www.ajplus.co.uk/somethingtositon](http://www.ajplus.co.uk/somethingtositon). The winner will be announced at the AJ's reception at 100% Design at Earls Court on Thursday 20 September, and the shortlist published in AJ 13.09.07 and exhibited at the AJ's stand at the show. Pictured below is last year's winner, Ben Addy's Mull Chair.



Please address letters to: The Editor, The Architects' Journal, 151 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4GB, fax 020 7505 6701, or email [kaye.alexander@emap.com](mailto:kaye.alexander@emap.com) to arrive by 10am on the Monday before publication. The Architects' Journal reserves the right to edit letters.

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## AT ALMOST EVERY POINT THE SPACE YOU ARE IN SEEMS SIMPLE AND SERENE

*By Edwin Heathcote. Photography by James Morris*

It always surprises me that since Brian O'Doherty's superb 'Inside the White Cube', published in *Artforum* and then as a book in the late 1970s, there hasn't been another serious attempt to analyse the building type which has arguably been driving architecture and its public profile more than any other.

From the found space of the lofts in New York's Chelsea and at Tate Modern to the self-conscious icons of the globe-trotting superstars, building art galleries has become a tool for regeneration; for urban branding; for reconnecting to the history of the city's fabric. Galleries are a kind of universal panacea, free from criticism (because art, as we know, is always a good thing); free from a broader social agenda; free to indulge in elitism in a way in which no other building type can.

Yet apart from the emergence of the super-gallery – wonderful buildings like the Bilbao Guggenheim or Museum of Modern Art, New York, which paradoxically fail to fulfil their brief to effectively display art – galleries remain very much where O'Doherty left them. There is still the found space, the industrial shell reconfigured to accommodate the most robust contemporary sculpture and installation. And there is still the purist white space, the sanitised temple to the contemporary sacred relic in which nothing must interfere with the holy of holies, the supposed neutrality of which O'Doherty exposed as nonsense.

It is rather wonderful then to visit a little group of buildings which sit in the shabby no-man's land between two of London's most painfully trendy bits, Islington and Hoxton. This

ensemble, which embraces Victoria Miro's old and new gallery and the Parasol Unit Foundation for Contemporary Art, tells the whole story (bar, thankfully, the icons). And tells it fluently, effortlessly and convincingly. Art, you will think after seeing these spaces, doesn't need any new typologies, it's doing fine with these.

The newest addition to the ensemble sits above the old industrial brick building which houses the much-admired Parasol Unit. The mongrel lineage of a conception by east London-based Claudio Silvestrin and an execution by Michael Drain, it seems, like many mongrels, sharper and brighter than it may have been as a thoroughbred.

It is an astonishing gallery space, a brilliantly lit volume which seems to evoke the focused, grounded and slightly eccentric Modernism of Portugal more than it does the fussy minimalism of England or the trying-too-hard boho-chic of New York.

However, it needs to be seen in the context of the ensemble because this is nothing like a self-contained gallery. Conceived as a private space for Victoria Miro to display her art and show VIP clients around, it is partly the result of her devastating losses from the 2004 Momart warehouse fire, a reaction to off-site storage. The new gallery must be entered through the original gallery at number 16 Wharf Road, a superb earlier conversion by Trevor Horne which exposed the latticework of the timber ceiling structure, through which the glazed roof is seen – creating a hugely complex picture of a view usually only found in derelict structures. Once the visitor has gone through the old

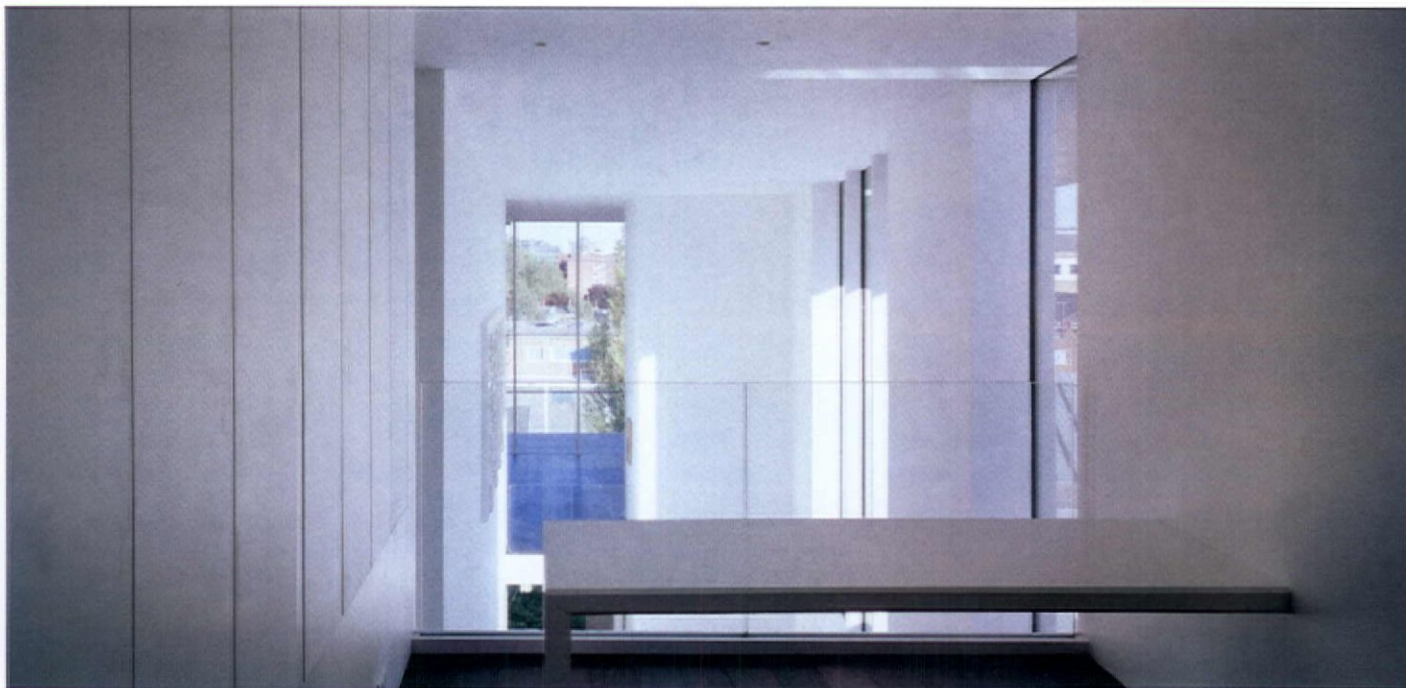




1. The atrium is the most complex space in the addition

ARTWORK L TO R: IAN HAMILTON FINLAY, LA RÉVOLUTION EST UN BLOC, 1992; ALICE NEEL, LUCILLE RHODES, 1976; IAN HAMILTON FINLAY, THE SEAS LEAVES THE STRAWBERRIES WAVES, 1991





2. View from the topmost part of the gallery towards the backdrop of east London

gallery the eccentric journey takes you out to a decked garden at the rear which backs on to a spur of the Regents Canal and back in via the Parasol Unit.

That gallery, designed by Michael Drain for the not-for-profit art foundation, opened two years ago and exemplifies the finer end of the found-space approach. Rusty columns rise from an exquisitely polished concrete floor, and the chamfered-concrete beams and columns are exposed and whited out again. It is among the least intrusive and most accommodating of contemporary art spaces in the city.

It is the next step, though, that has been most surprising. The new gallery is reached by a hugely theatrical 72-step staircase ascending six long flights along virtually the whole of the side of the plot. Contained within an oppressively narrow (850mm) shaft, with no handrail, the staircase sucks you up towards the light over an extraordinary 10m height. It is something halfway between the films of Michael Powell & Emeric Pressburger and Aldo Rossi, a powerfully surprising injection of Baroque intention into the minimalist body.

The stairs deposit you into a lofty and impressive gallery space dominated by raking views over the city. The ceiling is 6m high, allowing flexibility in hanging, and a simple, central spine rooftop ensures an even distribution of daylight throughout the plan. But it is the expansive windows atop the stair vista that draw the eye. Using 5.5m-high glass panels the architect creates an awesome picture of the sky in which only the bottom fraction is

dominated by the building fabric that seems so dense a few floors below. The view is seamless thanks to the external cantilevered deck terminating in structural low-iron glass panels capped at waist height by a slender strip of dark anodised aluminium.

The overwhelming emphasis on the view ensures that you are always aware of the city as background to the art – the gallery provides its own context beyond the whiteness of the walls. In this, the ambition seems to be more redolent of a public gallery, a civic building with a remit to make that connection between context and object, rather than the more traditionally neutral private gallery, the firm intention of which is internalisation and the focus on the object for sale. It also opens up the interior to the exigencies of the London sky and the dramatic changes in light.

The gallery opens out on to a deep balcony, intended as a space for receptions and events held against the backdrop of east London – the roofs that shelter the highest density of artists in Europe, as we're so often told.

At one level above the gallery sits a small private office and library adjacent to another large clerestory opening, a composition somewhere in the vein of Tony Fretton taking a holiday in 1980s Spain. Just beyond the office is one of the building's key gestures, a large Ian Hamilton Finlay neon work (*The Seas Leaves the Strawberries Waves*) which sits in a tall atrium and is clearly visible to the city beyond through that window. It gives off a cool blue glow, an arty butcher's-store fly-trap and an intriguing motif as the building fades into the twilight.





3. A simple central spine rooflight illuminates the main gallery

ARTWORK L TO R: TAL R, LORDS OF KOLBOJNIK 2002/2003; GRAYSON PERRY, IN PRAISE OF SHADOWS, 2005; ALICE NEEL, MOTHER AND CHILD, 1930; PETER DOIG, CONCRETE CABIN II, 1992

The atrium is the most architecturally complex space in the building, not a *raumplan* device of creating interest and variety through intersection but rather the point at which everything becomes clear and the plan clicks into place. The high white walls and the continuous dark, oiled wenge flooring create a seductive but slightly disorientating effect, a seamlessness which makes you lose your position in the space so that you begin to rely on the skyline and glimpses of the atrium for orientation. Everything that places you is attenuated, super-sized.

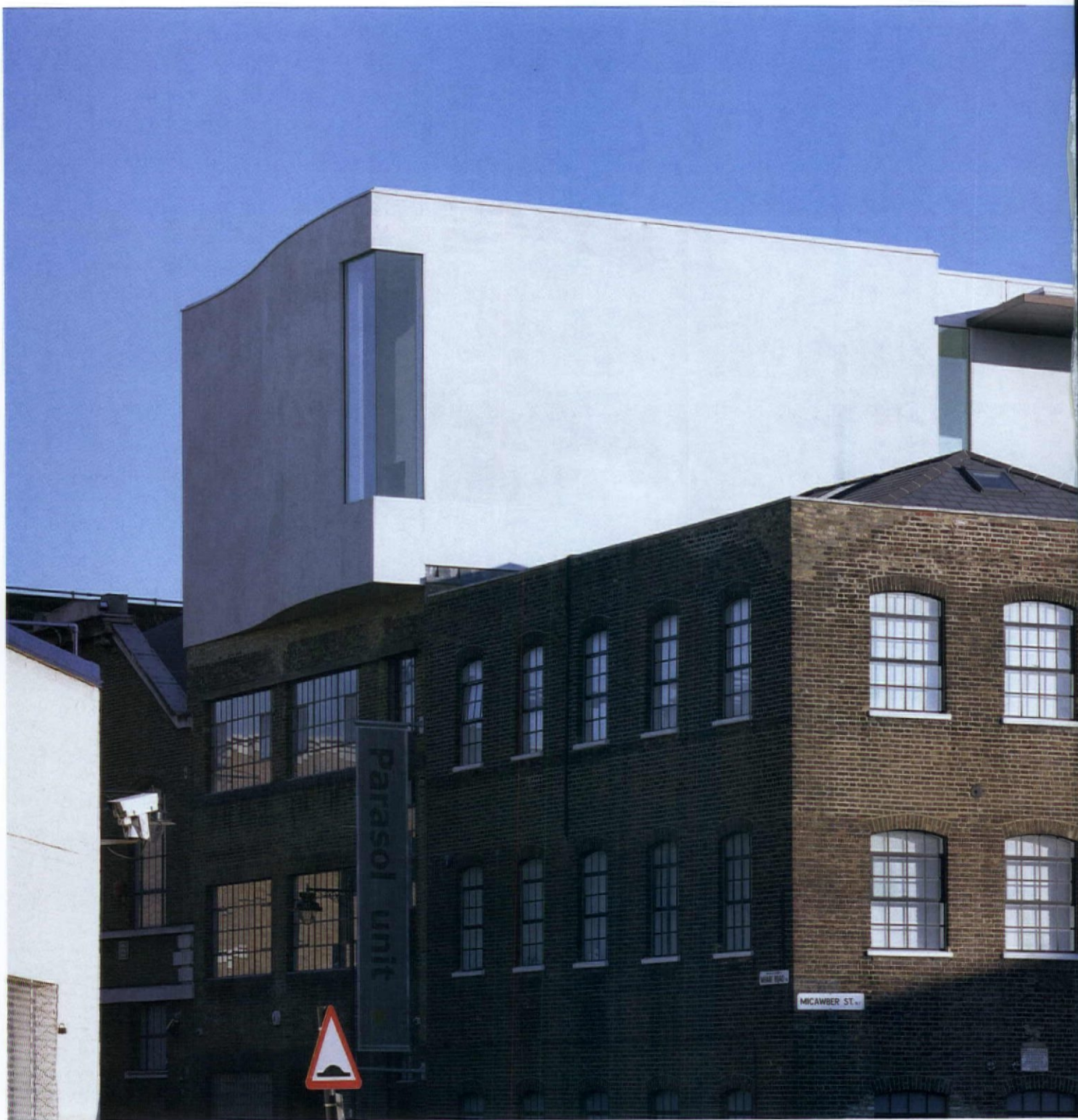
When I initially approached the building I barely registered this huge two-storey box sitting atop the brick structure. Whether that was due to the neutral tone of the render melding into the grey of the sky or because I was rapt by the juxtaposition of a drive-in McDonalds next door, its golden arches providing a wonderfully Pop foreground, I don't know. But on my way out I looked more carefully, and was profoundly surprised. A gentle S-curve partially overhangs the street, coolly emphasising the separateness of the structure without making a big deal of it. This is a subtle and unobtrusive addition despite its size. Around the corner the south-facing balcony is sheltered by a canopy faced in bronze-anodised aluminium (which the handrail/balustrade cap had alluded to).

From both outside and in there is a paradoxical quality to the gallery. This is an extremely complex and competent sectional building of a type rarely found in Britain. The more you look, the more you are intrigued and impressed. Yet at almost every point

the space you are in seems simple and serene. It is exactly the way it should be, complexity allowing not contradiction but concentration. If I had any criticism it would be that, after those complex spatial games, the elements resolve themselves almost too readily, too completely. Every opening seems to line up perfectly with everything else, a slit in the wall segues into a rooflight, the impossibly slender mullions line up exactly at a single point at the bottom of the stairs to give the impression of an unframed, open sky. A few slight discontinuities may just have brought a little more emphasis to key moments. The building is, though, admirably but not anally detailed throughout and, although it lacks the toughness of Drain's earlier gallery for the Parasol downstairs, it looks to the scraggy local rooftops and the infinite variety of the shifting clouds and light to bring life into its heart.

There is probably nothing new here. The section is fascinating, the journey through the building is eccentric, the views and the mechanics involved in creating the openings to allow them are formidable, the lighting is good, but it has all been done with a lightness of touch and a skill which belies the youth of Drain's practice. This is not a radical gallery; it adds little to the debate about the politics of found space versus the white cube other than a juxtaposition which allows you to judge the typologies side-by-side in an identical urban condition. But as the big arts institutions continue to conceive ever more outlandish architectural logos, it does show what can be done with an ambitious and thoughtful client and a blend of architectural and cultural intelligence.





4. The overhanging S-curve of the rooftop extension subtly emphasises the separateness of the structure







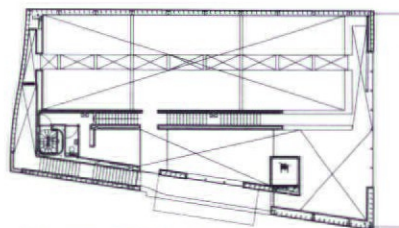


5. The staircase concealed between the main gallery and the atrium

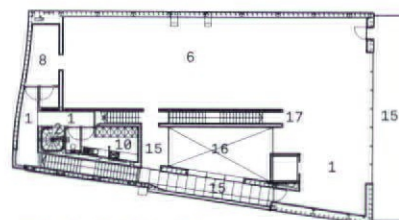




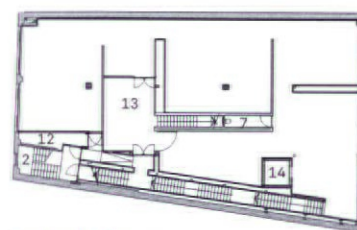
Site plan



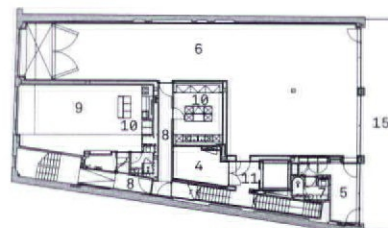
Fourth-floor plan



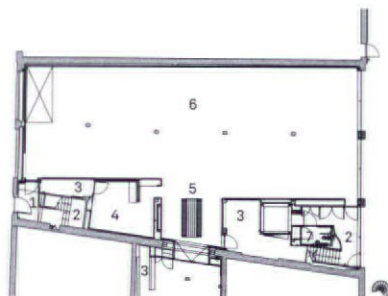
Third-floor plan



Second-floor plan

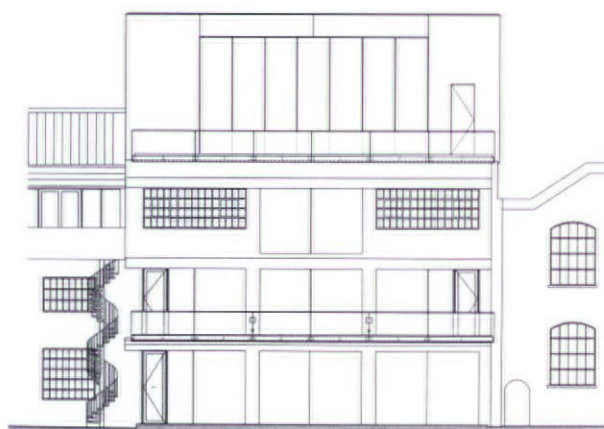


First-floor plan

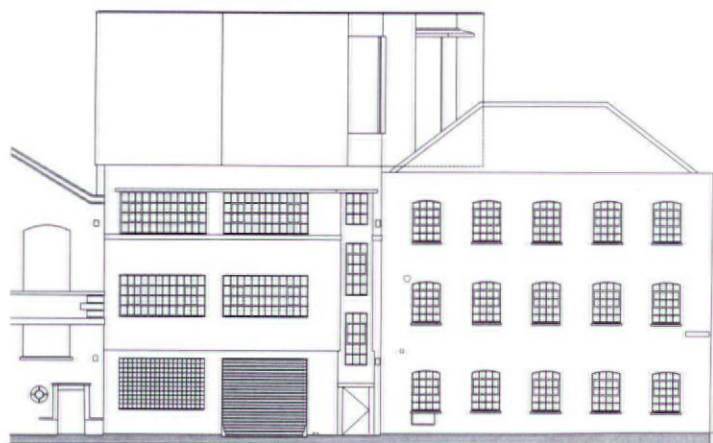


Ground-floor plan

- KEY
- 1 LOBBY
  - 2 ESCAPE STAIR
  - 3 STORAGE
  - 4 VIDEO ROOM
  - 5 READING SPACE
  - 6 GALLERY
  - 7 WC
  - 8 CORRIDOR
  - 9 LIVE/WORK UNIT
  - 10 KITCHEN
  - 11 ENTRANCE
  - 12 PLANTROOM
  - 13 ENTRANCE LOBBY
  - 14 LIFT
  - 15 BALCONY
  - 16 VOID
  - 17 CENTRAL STAIR LANDING



East elevation



West elevation





## Credits

Tender date

Not tendered: management contract

Start on site date

November 2004

Contract duration

24 months

Gross external floor area

Second floor: 460m<sup>2</sup>; third floor: 510m<sup>2</sup>; fourth floor: 40m<sup>2</sup>

Form of contract

JCT Standard Form of Management Contract 1998 Edition

Total cost

Confidential

Client

14 Wharf Road Management Company

Executive architect

Michael Drain Architects

Concept architect

Claudio Silvestrin

Structural engineer

Fluid Structures

Quantity surveyor/planning supervisor/project manager

Stace

Services engineer

RYB:Konsult

Main contractor

ISG Interior Exterior

Fit-out contractor

Wright Gallery Services

Selected subcontractors and suppliers

*Glazing* WRC Architectural Glass; *stone supplier* Pisani Stone;

*stone installer* Wilson & Wylie Contracts; *render* Alumasc;

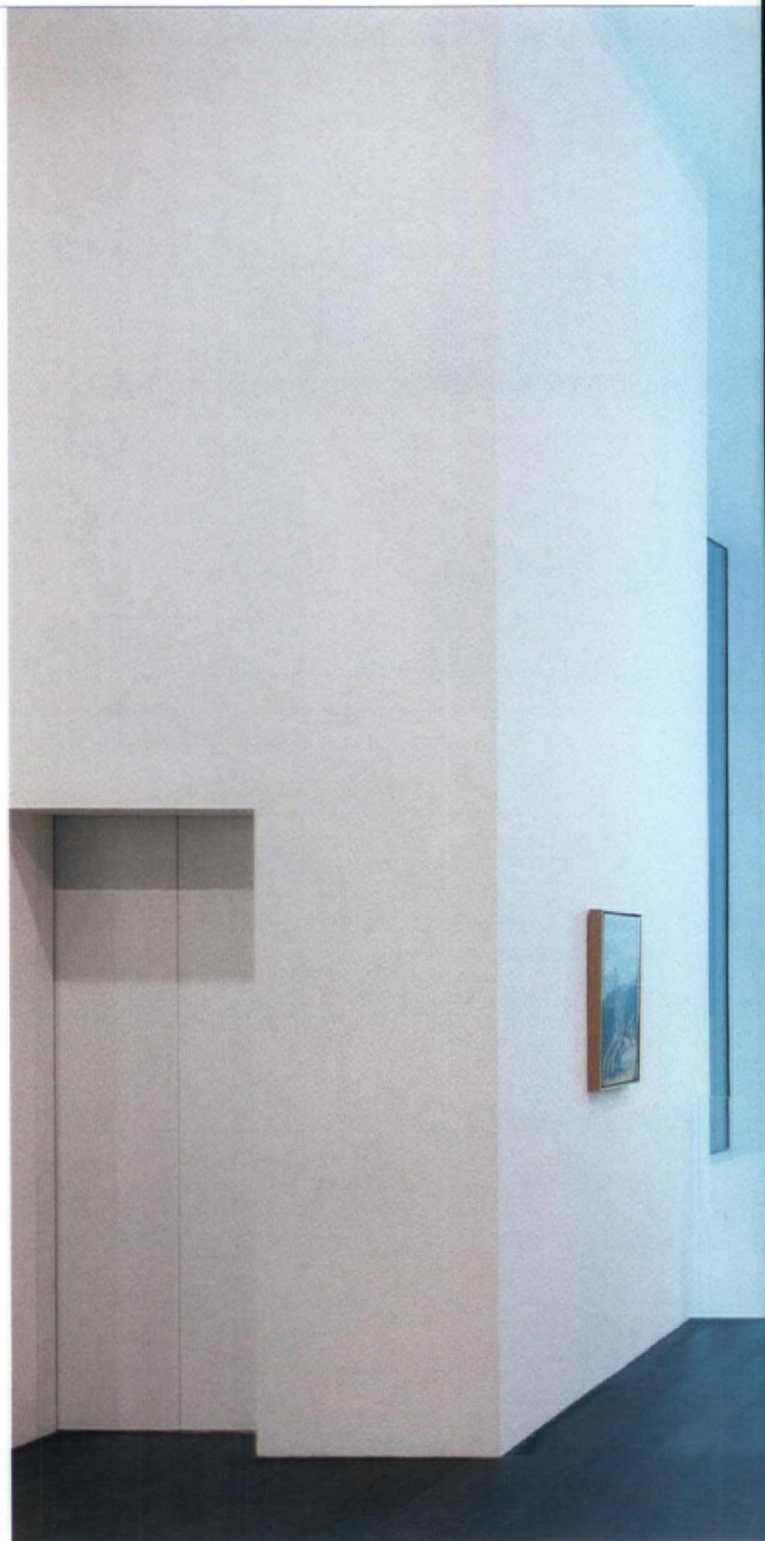
*anodised aluminium* S & G Aluminium; *roofing membrane to*

*balconies* McCormick Flat Roofing; *steelwork* Bourne Special

Projects; *doors* Calanpoint Contracts; *steel doors* Fitzpatrick

Doors; *mechanical subcontractor* IES Mechanical; *electrical*

*subcontractor* Essex Electrical; *CCTV security* Royce Security



6. View from the east end of the addition, showing the atrium and main gallery





ARTWORK L TO R: DAVID HARRISON, JACK BY THE HEDGE, 2004; IAN HAMILTON FINLAY, LA RÉVOLUTION EST UN BLOC, 1992; ALICE NEEL, LUCILLE RHODES, 1976; ALICE NEEL, MOTHER AND CHILD, 1930; PETER DOIG, CONCRETE CABIN II, 1992; CONRAD SHAWCROSS, CONTINUUM, 2004



## A BALCONY WITH A GLASS BALUSTRADE

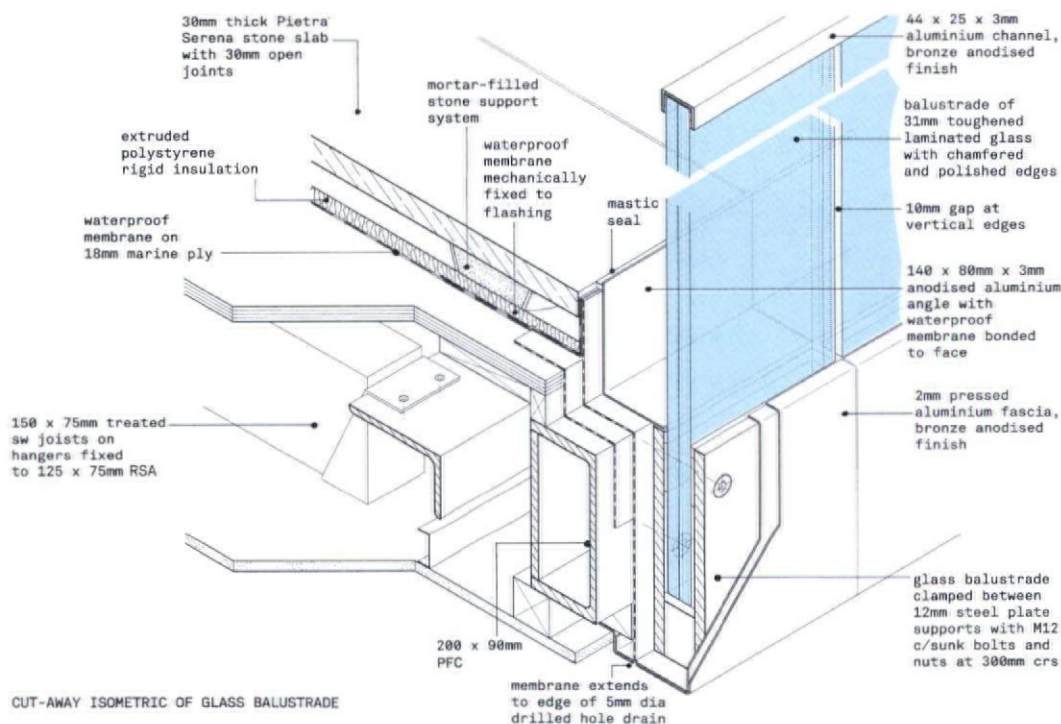
Third and fourth floors have been added to the original warehouse. The new steel-framed structure is clad with cementitious board and Alumasc polymer-modified render.

On the third floor a cantilevered balcony runs along the east wall, which is largely glazed. The 38mm frameless double-glazed units, 1,550mm wide and 5.5m high, are set between polyester powder-coated 60 x 180mm RHS mullions which act as wind posts. At the head the glass is set between pairs of steel angles, separated to give a thermal break, with the DPM dressed over the outer angle. Another pair of angles secures the glass at the foot.

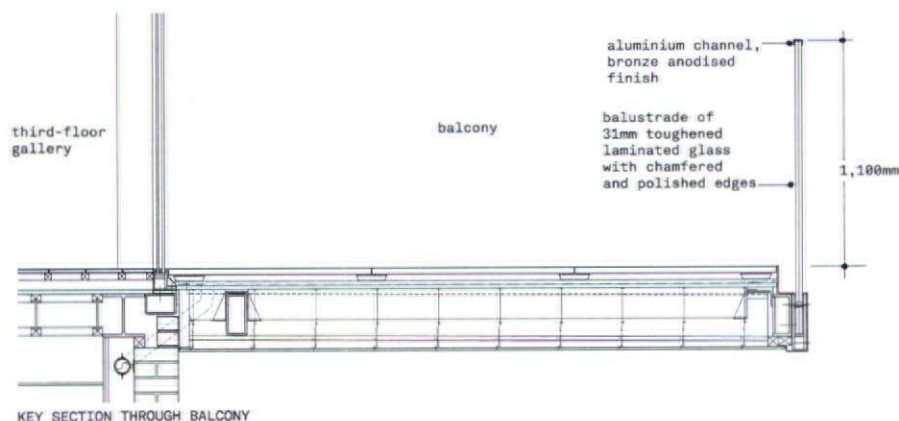
The balcony is a steel-frame cantilever with timber-joist infill, ply deck and waterproof membrane. It is paved with Pietra Serena stone slabs laid on a mortar-filled support system, with 3mm open joints for drainage.

The balustrade is a series of 31mm-thick toughened laminated low-iron glass panels topped with an aluminium channel to protect the edge of the PVB (polyvinyl butyrate) laminate. An 85 x 130mm recessed slot runs between the glass and the stone slabs, creating a shadow gap which conceals the bottom edge of the glass and any dirt-laden rain splashes. Rainwater drains from the slot through 10mm gaps between the glass panels.

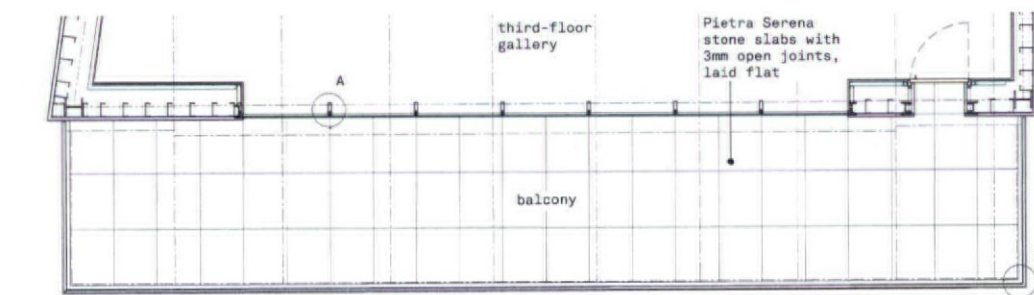
By Susan Dawson



CUT-AWAY ISOMETRIC OF GLASS BALUSTRADE

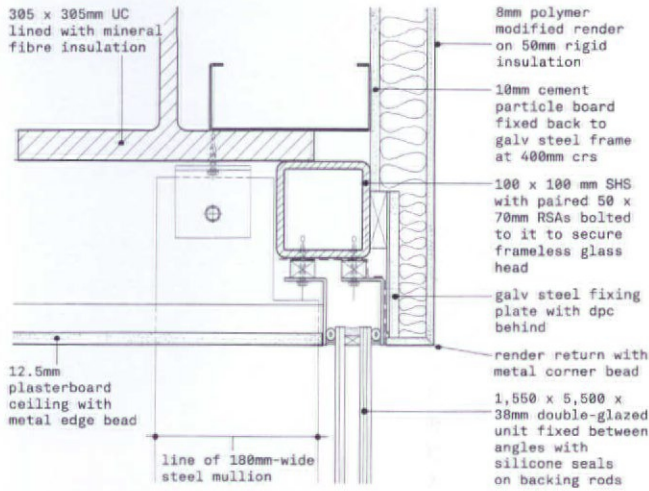


KEY SECTION THROUGH BALCONY



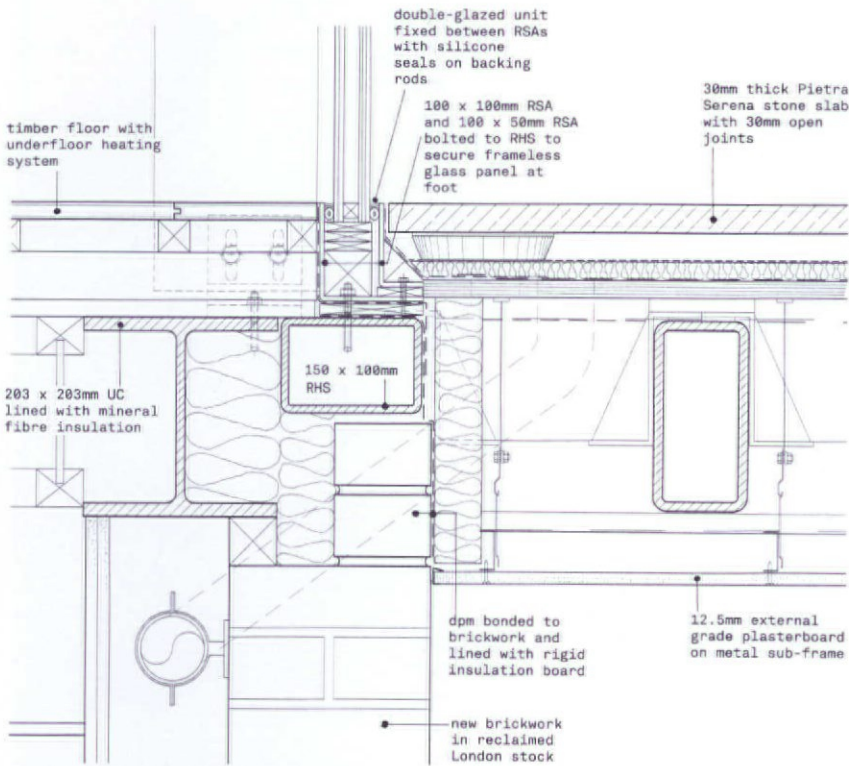
KEY PLAN OF BALCONY



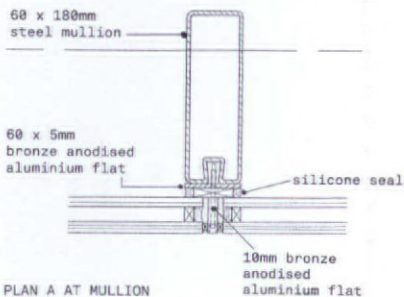


44 x 25 x 3mm aluminium channel, bronze anodised finish

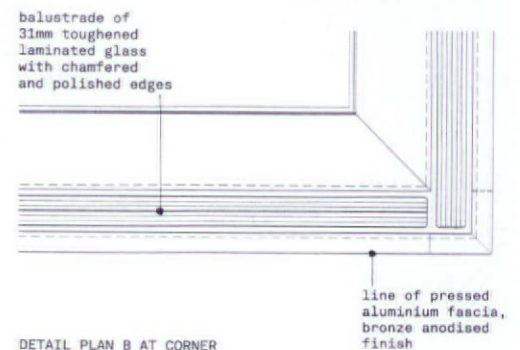
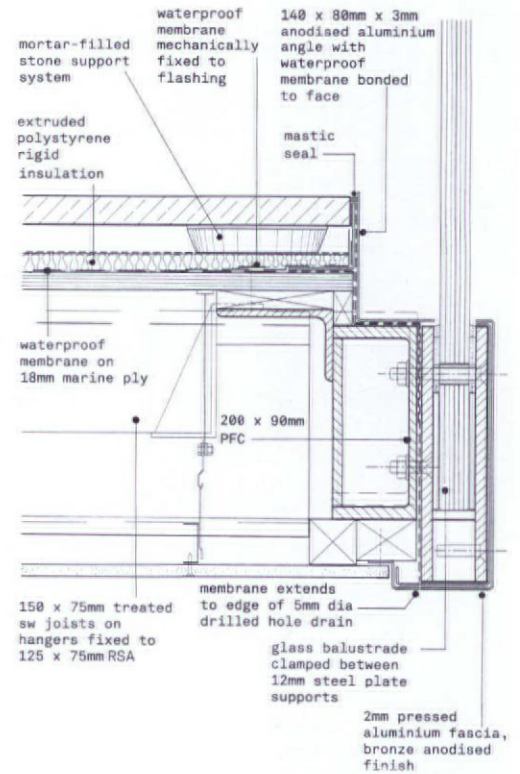
balustrade of 31mm toughened laminated glass with chamfered and polished edges



DETAIL SECTION THROUGH GLAZING AND BALCONY

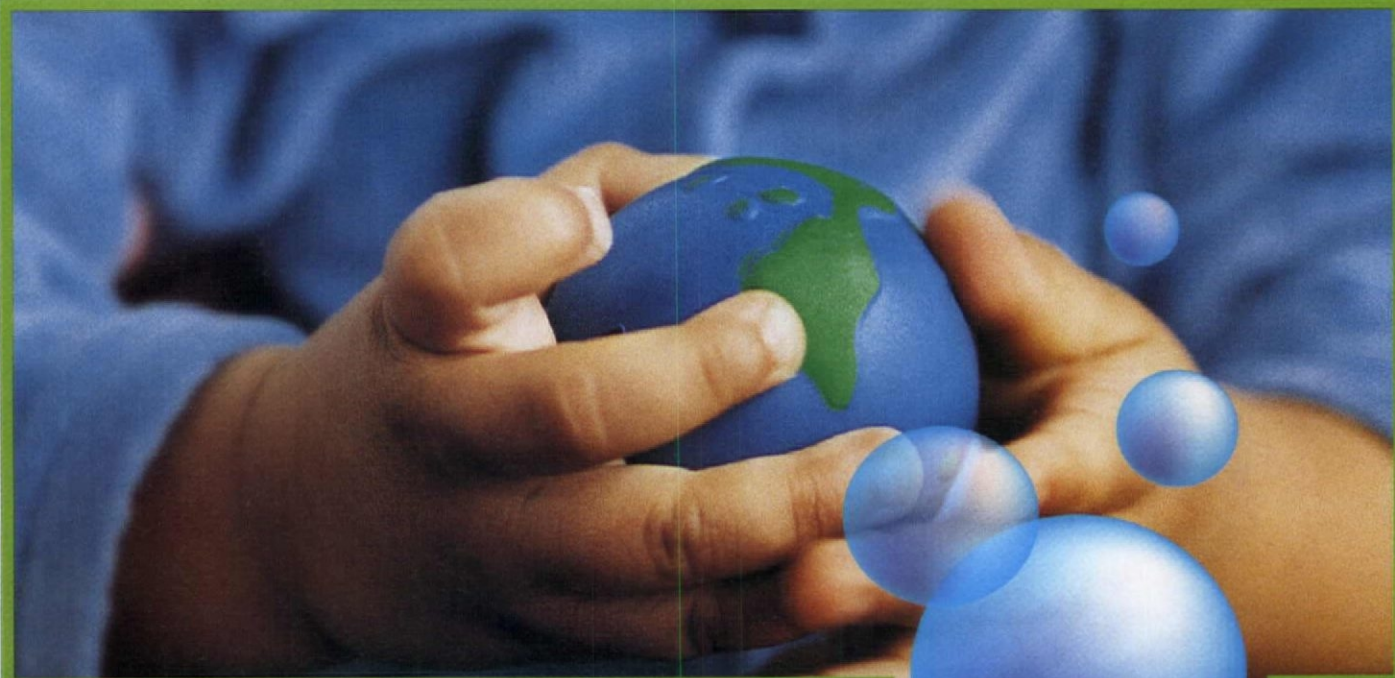


DETAIL PLAN A AT MULLION



DETAIL PLAN B AT CORNER





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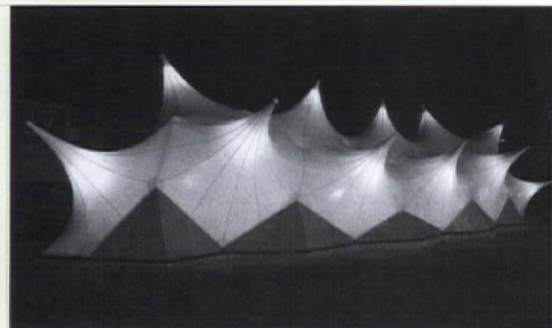
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1.

## MONICA T PRICE DECORATIVE STONE THE COMPLETE SOURCEBOOK



2.

1. Facade Technology – the Cutty Sark Visitors' Centre at Greenwich (Events)

2. Find out what paved Chatsworth House (Books)

## THIS WEEK ONLINE

• Paints and Finishes is the new area in our Materials and Components section. There are articles on specifying paints by brand, not just colour, to take advantage of sophisticated technical requirements. Also covered are decorative paints; varnishes and waxes with the lowest possible amount of volatile organic compounds, for use on timber; and examples of special finishing effects. There is a guide to free resources online, plus indicative costs for paints and finishes. See all this at [www.ajplus.co.uk/materials](http://www.ajplus.co.uk/materials)

## NEWS

• The RIBA Chartered Practice accreditation scheme replaced the RIBA Register of Practices on 1 July. This was prompted by clients wanting more rigorous quality assurance from RIBA accreditation, particularly for client services. The new system will also include more extensive requirements for employee health and safety, employment policy, and CPD. In addition, member practices will be monitored more regularly. For information email [charteredpractice@inst.riba.org](mailto:charteredpractice@inst.riba.org) or visit [www.architecture.com](http://www.architecture.com)

• RIBA president-elect Sunand Prasad and RTPI head of policy and practice Rynd Smith are calling for joint action to push carbon neutrality, including government action to reduce emissions from existing stock and a single code for sustainability. Prasad said: 'Combating climate change is too important to be dealt with in a fragmented way. We must work together to achieve real success.'

## EVENTS

*Scratching the Surface: Facade Technology*

**1 August, 8.30-9.30am**

Building Centre, 26 Store Street, London W1

Simon Beams of youmeheshe on the Cutty Sark Visitors' Centre

[www.buildingcentretrust.org](http://www.buildingcentretrust.org)

*Modern Methods of Construction and Offsite Manufacture Workshop*

**1 August, 9.30am-12.15pm**

BRE Innovation Park

[www.bre.co.uk](http://www.bre.co.uk)

*Low Carbon & Renewable Technologies Workshop*

**8 August, 9.30am-12.30pm**

BRE, Watford

[www.bre.co.uk](http://www.bre.co.uk)

*SBEM Training: Building energy consumption modelling*

**7-8 August**

(repeated 4-5 September)

BRE, Watford

[www.bre.co.uk](http://www.bre.co.uk)

## BOOKS

*Decorative Stone: The Complete Sourcebook*

Monica T Price

Thames & Hudson

2007, £28

Did you ever wonder which yellow marble was used for the columns of the Pantheon or for the paving of Chatsworth House? You'll find the answers here along with good-quality photographs of 300 types of polished decorative stone organised by geological type and compiled by a curator of the Oxford University Museum of Natural History. A rapid historical overview and an introduction to geology is followed by the useful catalogue, which includes information on the primary uses of each stone, as well as its source and whether it is still actively quarried.



## WOLSELEY MAKES NEW BUILDING PART OF ITS GREEN OFFERING

by Hattie Hartman



1.

Has sustainability hit the mainstream? Wolseley UK – the country's leading supplier of construction products and materials with an annual turnover of more than £2.7 billion – certainly thinks so. Wolseley is building a dedicated showroom for green products at the company's 7ha corporate headquarters site in Leamington Spa. Set to complete in early 2008, the £2.6 million 630m<sup>2</sup> Sustainable Building Centre (SBC) by ECD Architects will provide an interactive exhibition area, a 40-seat auditorium, a meeting room, offices and a café and will have the express purpose of showcasing sustainable products and technologies. In itself, this is nothing new, since the UK has seen a string of one-off demonstration buildings proclaiming their green credentials in recent years.

What is new – beyond ECD's incorporation of multiple products and technologies into the building itself, is Wolseley's 'partnering' with various suppliers to distribute its 'approved' green products through their network of more than 1,900 branches nationwide. This means that the SBC is a small project with a potentially enormous impact. Intended as a venue for launches and demonstrations – catering to large local authority and housebuilder clients as well as small builders – it will be open to the public by appointment too.

The idea for the building grew out of Wolseley's corporate sustainability strategy, developed by external consultant Sustain, which in turn recommended a short list of architects, including ECD. At the outset, the project brief was loose, though the agenda was clear: push or develop green products by companies already in

the Wolseley supply chain and identify suppliers with whom they could partner to fill in the gaps.

Wolseley general manager Tim Pollard explains that the company set out to identify an alternative sustainable material or product for every aspect of construction and has categorised the products so they 'mimic the construction process' from substructure through to internal finishes. Only about 30 per cent of the projects now approved were previously in the company's established supply chain. Pollard notes that because Wolseley's largest single product group is central heating – including condensing boilers – the company rode the early tide of interest in sustainability.

ECD provided an initial list of products and materials compiled from sources such as the Green Building Bible, the Association of Energy Conscious Builders and [www.greenspec.co.uk](http://www.greenspec.co.uk), and Wolseley determined which products it would 'approve,' by rating them against the following criteria:

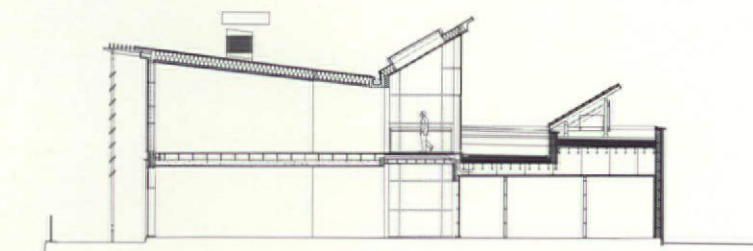
- fitness for purpose;
- quantifiable sustainable characteristics, such as energy or water efficiency, reduced carbon footprint and/or recycled content;
- availability in commercial quantities;
- durability of product for its lifespan;
- reliability of supplier for product lifespan; and
- disposability: reuse, recycle or dispose of in a sustainable way.

Existing suppliers were approached to provide new products, such as Worcester Bosch, a long-term supplier of condensing boilers, which is now bringing ground-source heat



1. Using products such as Cobiast precast concrete is part of Wolseley's strategy for promoting sustainability

2 & 3. The company will also use its Sustainable Building Centre as a hub for its product distribution network



pumps and solar thermal technology into the UK through its Swedish subsidiary. ECD director Mark Elton explains that some of the suppliers operated at a very small scale, and 'it was kind of like Tesco approaching an organic farmer'. There has been an interesting ripple effect on research and development, notably in bringing into the market a UK manufactured triple-glazed window – the lack of which has long been bemoaned by Bill Dunster and others – by Jeld-wen, designed to a brief by ECD which set out target U-values, the specification and spacing of glazing, and the sourcing and treatment of the timber. An indicator of how quickly the market is moving is that this window was developed prior to the Code for Sustainable Homes and the dissemination of PassivHaus standards in the UK. These codes are pushing demand even further.

The site for the Sustainable Building Centre was chosen for its good solar orientation, visibility and ease of access. The SBC's two-storey main gallery wing is oriented east/west with a single-storey block housing the auditorium and non-public functions to the north. The bow-fronted building is compact to minimise external surface area, and concrete was selected due to its thermal mass for both the gallery floor and the exposed first-floor soffit. Where possible, 'green' concrete has been specified, including cement substitutes and recycled aggregates. The highly insulated envelope will be made up of a combination of externally insulated precast sandwich panels, engineered-timber curtain walling and low-emissivity double glazing. All timber will be

sourced through an FSC or PEFC chain of custody, and FinnForest, which was already a Wolseley supplier, will be involved in this process. A sedum roof by Alumasc will be visible from a mezzanine which will also enable close-up views of solar-thermal and photovoltaic installations on the roof.

Hemcrete, Sasmox, phase-change plasterboard and external insulation will be on show at the SBC and have found their way into the Wolseley supply chain. Hemcrete will be distributed through Castle and at the scale at which Wolseley operates there is a synergy with its hire centres, where the required machinery will be available. Phase-change plasterboard, developed in Finland, will be used in the ceilings as a way to introduce thermal mass to the lightweight timber structure.

The SBC broke ground in June with Warwick-based contractor Sol, which had previous experience on Michael Hopkins' Jubilee campus at Nottingham University.

As far as renewables are concerned, solar-thermal, photovoltaics, ground-source heat pumps, and biomass are in, but small-scale wind is out. Interactive exhibitions with displays will measure the impacts of the different technologies so they can be assessed in situ. Microwind will be included as a display to illustrate the drawbacks of this technology at its current state of development – an example of what not to do. David Cameron, and many others, had to find out the hard way.

About 95 per cent of the products are already available through Wolseley. Visit [www.wolseleysbc.co.uk](http://www.wolseleysbc.co.uk)





## CONSULTATION PAPER OFFERS THREE OPTIONS

*By Brian Waters*

An important consultation paper, 'Planning Fees in England: Proposals for Change', which proposes a fee increase of 25 per cent, slipped out with the recent White Paper 'Planning for a Sustainable Future', and is available for consultation until 17 August. The 25 per cent increase (less for householder developments) is to take effect on 1 April 2008, a significant date because it marks the end of the Planning Delivery Grant in its present form. This grant provides cash injections to planning authorities, provided they deliver enhanced performance in processing applications.

The convention that local authorities should pay for activities which benefit the public is disappearing into fond memory so far as it applies to planning (and will soon enough do the same thing in respect of appeals, it seems). This just leaves things like enforcement, where it is hard to know to whom to send the bill.

The aim now is to achieve full recovery of the cost of processing applications, though, as the paper points out: 'For some years there has been a reluctance to increase fee levels fully to meet the cost of the service, because of the perceived poor standard of local authority performance... However, without the necessary resources, local authorities have been unable to attract and retain suitably qualified staff to improve delivery.'

Planning fees jumped by up to 440 per cent in 2005 and the paper says the 'Planning Delivery Grant brought significant improvements in service delivery' and, with the ending of the scheme, 'the issue of planning fees needs to be addressed soon if reported improvements are to be maintained and further improvement delivered'.

Research for the department suggests that the total cost of the development-control service is between £290

and £365 million and fee income in 2005/06 was £232 million.

Kate Barker, in her December 2006 review of the planning system, suggested raising the cap of £50,000 on fees, allowing applicants to pay extra for a premium service. However, she added a proviso that any fee increase be allowed only 'on the basis of a clear mechanism for indicating the higher quality of service that will be delivered as a result'.

The consultation paper offers three options: do nothing; implement a 25 per cent overall increase; or implement a 40 per cent increase. It also calls for an end to the £50,000 cap. It plumps for the middle option and expects planning authorities 'to continue improving so that decision times are brought down even further while maintaining quality'. There is no mention of sanctions to enforce this.

A pilot study has been proposed, which would trial

a premium service with a 20 per cent higher fee, and there is some discussion of authorities setting their own fees in the future.

As noted by Barker, the increasing overlap of planning and building controls suggests a case for the merger of the regimes. Fees that cover the full cost of processing planning applications also open the door to competition. As occurred with Building Regulation, this would not only encourage better performance, but provide sanctions to deal with poorly performing authorities and introduce much-needed private-sector resources to the planning system.

The consultation paper can be viewed at [www.communities.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.communities.gov.uk/consultations). Email comments to [janet.amery@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:janet.amery@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

*Brian Waters is principal of the Boisot Waters Cohen Partnership and director of planning at HTA*





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## GOOGLE ADDS AN EXTRA DIMENSION

So you all have Google Desktop search installed haven't you? That little red-green, ying-yang icon on your toolbar? Install it and you'll probably never bother with Microsoft Search again. On the main Google homepage click More, then Desktop (in the left-hand column) and then Download.

When the icon is installed on the toolbar, click and you have the choice of a fast web or desktop search. A couple of things you might care to search immediately are Microsoft Live Labs's new and amazing Photosynth, which creates 3D versions of buildings (or anything) from 2D photographs. You need lots of them, so all those holiday snaps suddenly have a better purpose than boring your neighbours. The other thing to take a look at is Google's PhotoSketch, which maps photographic images to 3D models. There's a Google TechTalk video on this – just Google 'Photosketch'.

The 3D model will normally be created in SketchUp, which Google bought and released as a free version alongside a Pro version. One practice I know reckons there is so little difference between the two it's worth saving the pro version's extra couple of hundred quid per seat. [sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com](mailto:sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com)

# JOINT NAMES PERIL

'Is it time I hung up my wig?,' I thought the other day, *writes Kim Franklin*. This notion of early retirement was provoked by a recent case summary. 'An employer was not entitled to recover compensation for loss arising from a specified risk where it was required to take out joint names insurance, but had failed to do so'. I thought 'Oh, that looks interesting!' Things have come to a pretty pass when you are enthused by joint names insurance.

So let me share my excitement with you. In *Tyco Fire & Integrated Solutions Ltd v Rolls Royce Motor Cars Ltd* (Judgment 29.06.07), Tyco was installing a fire-protection system at the new Rolls Royce assembly plant at Goodwood.

During the works a connection in the main sprinkler-system supply pipe was neglected, resulting in the escape of a large quantity of water. Tyco fixed the problem and after Rolls Royce had cleared up the damaged stock it brought an adjudication claim for £400,000. The adjudicator obligingly directed Tyco to pay up. Tyco challenged the adjudicator's decision.

It said – and here is the interesting bit – that the contract required Rolls Royce to insure, in the joint names of both parties, the existing structures and the works against perils such as 'bursting or overflowing of pipes'.

Joint names insurance is one of those concepts which is marvellous in theory but not without its practical difficulties. In theory, by taking out joint names insurance, the parties can call upon the policy if the worst happens, without having to argue about who is responsible.

The insurance then foots the repair bill at no cost to the employer or contractor. Some forms of contract also provide for the consequential delay while, for example, the burned-out building is rebuilt.

Practical problems arise when the works are to existing structures which may already be insured. And actually obtaining a joint names policy is not always easy, as any householder who has signed up to the JCT Minor Works contract, and then spent an interesting afternoon on the telephone to their domestic insurance broker, will tell you.

Whatever the reason, Rolls Royce failed to take out joint names insurance. Had it done so, Tyco argued, Rolls Royce could have claimed on the policy for the flood damage at no cost to either of them.

The judge found that the parties had agreed a special contractual regime as to how the risks and liabilities in relation to particular perils would be dealt with. This regime was intended to be a complete solution. If, in breach

of the agreement, the employer failed to implement the joint names insurance, it could have no other claim against the contractor. From now on, employers neglect the contractual insurance provisions at their peril.

This is a vital issue for architects, as too many find that they can't claim against the contractor for fire/flood damage because they are not party to joint names insurance.

Incidentally, the Master of the Rolls has decreed that from next year barristers will not be wearing wigs in the civil courts. So it looks as though I will be hanging up my wig, irrespective of my views about joint names insurance.

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





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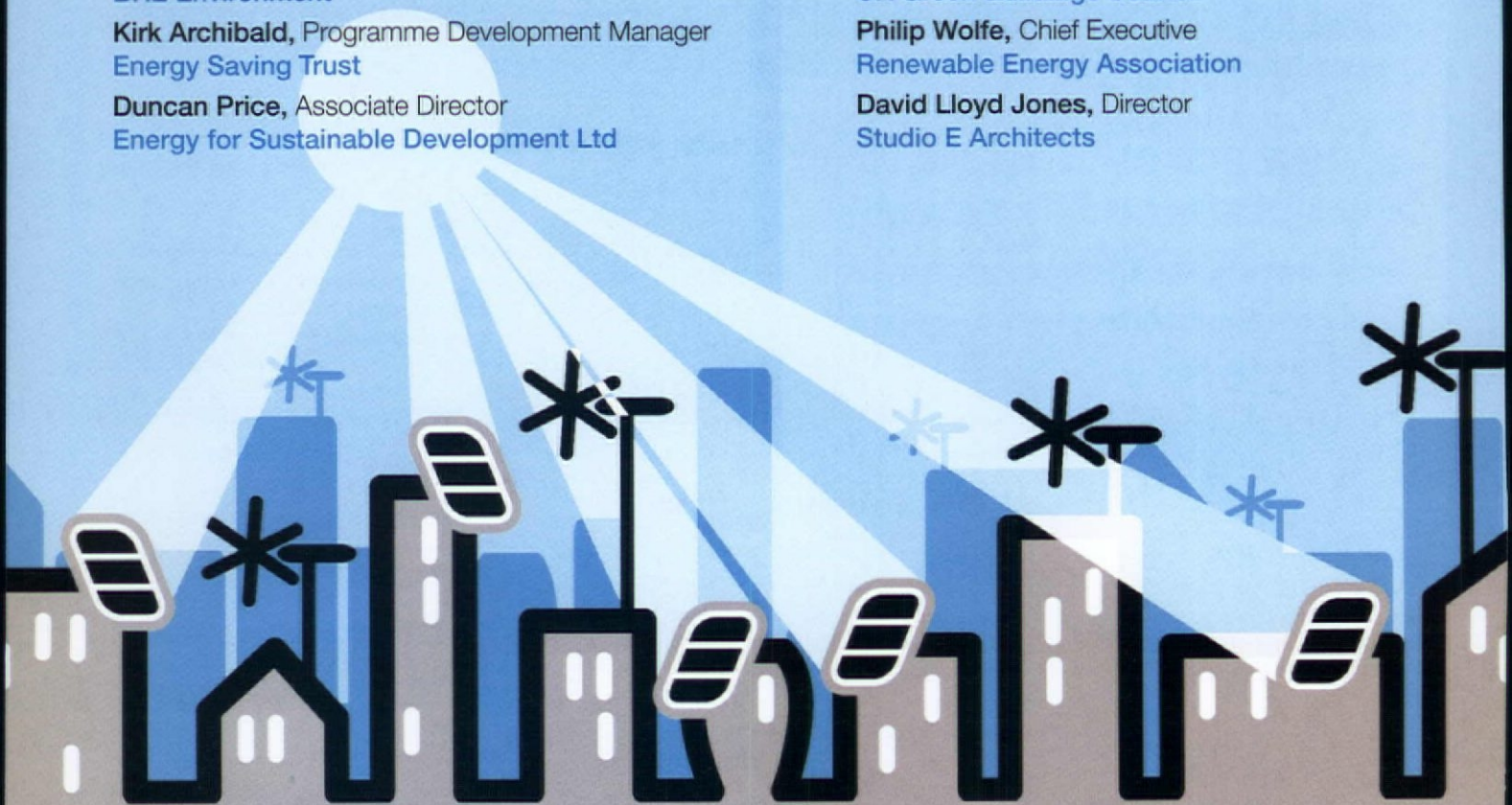
**Kirk Archibald**, Programme Development Manager  
Energy Saving Trust

**Duncan Price**, Associate Director  
Energy for Sustainable Development Ltd

**Paul King**, Chief Executive  
UK Green Buildings Council

**Philip Wolfe**, Chief Executive  
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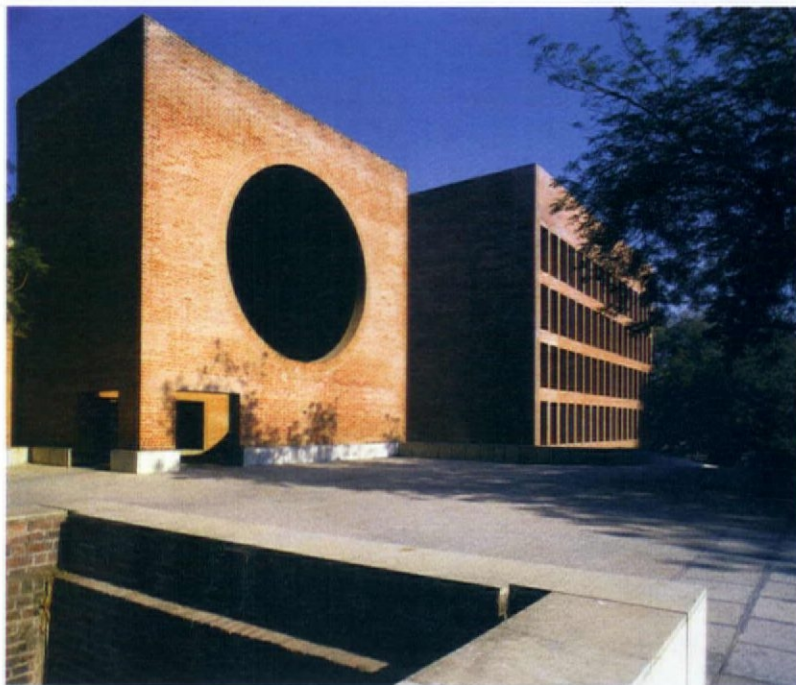


BOOK

By Dean Hawkes

Louis I Kahn: Beyond Time and Style.

By Carter Wiseman.  
Norton, 2007. £35



Louis Kahn's Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad

At a rough count there are over 120 books about Louis Kahn and his work, which must be a challenge for any author. What new insights can possibly be offered? This book by Carter Wiseman claims to be the first 'in-depth biographical study' of the great American architect and, as such, might be expected to open up new territory. The obligation of biography is to recount the life of its subject in a way that goes beyond plain recital of facts to reveal deeper understanding.

Wiseman fills out the details of Kahn's life, from his birth in 1901 – not on the Baltic island of Saaremaa as Kahn maintained, but in the city of Pärnu on the Estonian mainland – to his death in the men's room of New York's Penn Station in 1974. We read about his childhood in the poor streets

of Philadelphia, his education, marriage to Esther, the difficult years of early practice during the depression and his gradual rise to late eminence as both a teacher and practitioner.

Kahn's relationships with women and, in particular, with Anne Tyng and Harriet Pattison, the mothers of his two illegitimate children, are given more detail than is usual and passing allusions are made to other liaisons. As straight biography the life is soundly set out, but the book remains strictly factual, with little analysis and insight, and as such adds little that is new to our understanding of the architecture.

Almost inevitably the greatest weight of the narrative rests upon accounts of Kahn's major built works and it is here that the book's strength

emerges. Interviews with clients and collaborators help to illuminate the circumstances under which the buildings were conceived and constructed.

Important witness into the background of the Yale Art Museum comes from Earl Carlin, who worked on the building for two years after graduation. John (Jack) MacAllister's role as job architect at the Salk Institute is well known, but Wiseman draws new insights from him. Architects Balkrishna Doshi and Anant Raje recall Kahn's first encounter with the culture of the Indian subcontinent in the Indian Institute of Management project at Ahmedabad.

All this conveys a keen sense of the pleasures and vicissitudes of the day-to-day life of Kahn's practice, and the

contribution that was made to his wonderful buildings by those who served him with unflagging loyalty, if with frequent exasperation. Here we glimpse the essential support of individual genius.

If I were forced to recommend just a single up-to-date book on the architecture of Kahn, I would go for Robert McCarter's monograph (AJ 09.06.05). That covers the buildings comprehensively and gives a useful synopsis of the life. For the most intimate insights into Kahn the man, go to Nathaniel Kahn's lovely film, *My Architect*. But Wiseman's book earns a place near the top of the pile.

*Dean Hawkes is an architect in Cambridge*



## BOOK

By Robert Harbison

The Buildings of  
England: Essex.  
By James Bettley  
and Nikolaus Pevsner.  
Yale University Press,  
2007. 939pp. £29.95



1.

Updating Nikolaus Pevsner's 1954 guidebook to Essex must have been troublesome for James Bettley. The county contains one-and-a-half times the number of listed buildings that Norfolk does, but has to squeeze into one *Buildings of England* volume while Norfolk luxuriates in two. Then there's its proximity to London, which blurs its identity: its suburbs are extensions of the East End, and further out, many of its coastal resorts have an East End flavour. Bettley, generally heroic in appreciating the qualities of Essex, momentarily lets his sympathy slip when he reaches Jaywick Sands, humblest and most home-made of Essex resorts.

While it might be an indulgence to give the county two volumes, there is sometimes an overload from condensing it into one. The 'Index of

Architects, Artists and Patrons', for example, occupies 30 densely printed pages, but it includes clues to some of Bettley's best discoveries. Chancels fitted out and decorated by the Revd Ernest Geldart are among the most curious of their era; Bettley has traced dozens of them. Another new presence is the local carver Ernest Beckwith, who plays an important part in early 20th-century restoration of vernacular buildings.

As one would expect, the treatment of wooden roofs, half timbering, early brickwork, and pargetting is more sophisticated than it was when Pevsner wrote the first edition, visiting everything during a single college vacation.

Now a motif in that folksiest of forms, pargetting, on a house in Dedham, has been traced to Borromini. Among

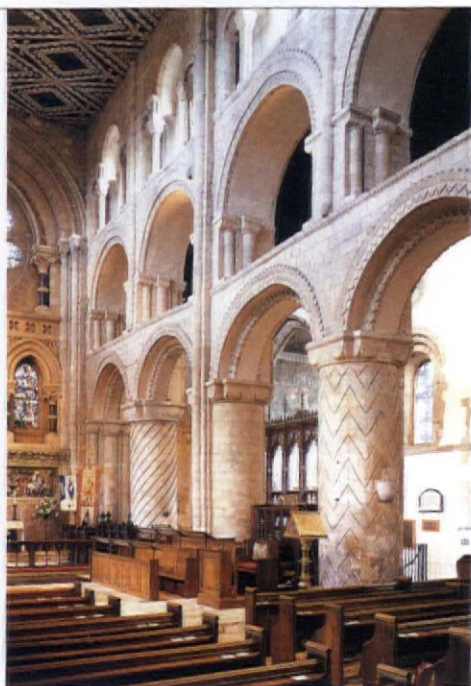
other curious details of this sort is a list of key books in the library of that precocious piece of early Classicism, Hill Hall, now skirted by the M25, an adornment of the western edge of Essex that Pevsner omitted. Some bits of curious lore have had to disappear: the intriguing Belgian typographer was only connected with Layer Marney through a mistake in reading his name. There's some compensation for this loss in new details of a tomb in Layer Marney church of a boy who died in Rio de Janeiro.

Most of the new bulk comes in histories of settlements, histories of large houses (invariably more complex than Pevsner could imagine), and the inclusion of hundreds of buildings that Pevsner either didn't notice or didn't think important. Early Modernist works by Joseph Emberton and

Ove Arup, unaccountably missed by Pevsner, are here, as well as many late 20th-century architects' houses and Sir Frederick Gibberd's garden at Old Harlow, a sculpture-filled eruption of the Modernist Picturesque.

One of the most attractive features of this volume is the constant mention of artists of all kinds who lived in the villages, sometimes contributing directly to the physical form of the settlement but just as often making their presence felt solely in depictions. These too, in a broadened view, contribute to the material presence of places. Mention of figures like the painters Edward Bawden and Eric Ravilious, composer Gustav Holst and photographer Edwin Smith substantially deepens the content, as do the accounts of some patrons' travels, giving one the sense





2.

1. Joseph Emberton's Royal Corinthian Yacht Club at Burnham-on-Crouch, 1931
2. Waltham Abbey

of a wider culture in which architecture takes its place.

Vanished features also work to enrich the feel of places now apparently denuded, with this history lurking beneath the surface – whether on the huge scale of the lost formal garden at Thorndon Hall, or the modest one of the sunken garden of the 1920s at Margaretting or the Japanese garden at Great Totham.

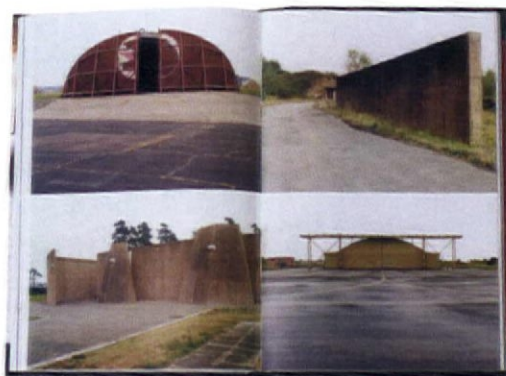
Once or twice in the intricate unravelling of the stages of some country house, I wistfully remembered Pevsner's concision. But Bettley deserves our gratitude for untangling complex histories and bringing much new information to bear on understanding buildings.

The treatment of Waltham Abbey is a telling instance. Even the name – Waltham Holy Cross – turns out to enshrine a grisly 11th-century miracle.

Thus the earliest stages of the building's history are brought to life, but the most interesting changes to this entry come in the later ones.

Pevsner hardly took William Burges' 19th-century interventions seriously, except to rail crossly at their flamboyance, but Bettley sees Burges as an innovator in ideas about how the present comments on the past; still provocative for us today as we attempt to be ourselves while respecting the past.

*Robert Harbison is a professor at London Metropolitan University*



## CRITIC'S CHOICE

*By Andrew Mead*

A few years ago, in their methodical quest to document every conceivable building type, English Heritage historians turned their attention to the miscellaneous structures that were built to defend the UK when the post-war climate turned chilly – the result was *Cold War: Building for Nuclear Confrontation 1946-1989* (AJ 15.01.04). One of its authors was Wayne Cocroft, who, with his EH colleague John Schofield, has now edited a fascinating collection of essays, *A Fearsome Heritage: Diverse Legacies of the Cold War* (Left Coast Press, 336pp, £50).

The editors say that 'it became obvious to us that Cold War material culture was of interest to a diverse group, from archaeologists to artists, historians, sociologists and politicians', and the book reflects this range. So an essay from EH's Veronica Fiorato on the conservation and management of Greenham Common, with its huge concrete missile shelters from the 1980s, is complemented by artist Louise Wilson's more subjective piece on RAF Spadeadam in Cumbria – a rocket-testing facility in the 1960s. Wilson deals not just with the material remains there, substantial though they are, but the stories and myths that are interwoven with the site – its hold on the imagination.

Though not lavishly produced, the book is well and often intriguingly illustrated. The concrete ventilation cubes at RAF Ash in Kent, the only indication of extensive building underground, could easily be an installation by a Minimalist artist. Frank Watson's colour photos (pictured above) give a sense of both buildings and landscape – of places that were hidden 'deep within the idea of the rural idyll'.

One essay considers the Berlin Wall (its traces) as a possible World Heritage Site. On a more local scale, while some sites are still inaccessible, others already have a heritage aura. You can visit the nuclear bunkers at Hack Green in Cheshire ([www.cheshiredaysout.co.uk](http://www.cheshiredaysout.co.uk)) and Kelvedon in Essex ([www.secretnuclearbunker.com](http://www.secretnuclearbunker.com)), but the most evocative site must be Orford Ness in Suffolk, where concrete structures from a former nuclear weapons research establishment stand amid the shingle of what's now a nature reserve ([www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)).

For forthcoming events visit [www.ajplus.co.uk/diary](http://www.ajplus.co.uk/diary)





## BOOK

By Robert Thorne

Big Shed.

By Will Pryce.

Thames & Hudson, 2007.

304pp. £32

Ever since Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace in 1851, the idea of the large-span envelope has challenged engineers and architects. Will Pryce provided the wonderful photographs for James Campbell's book *Brick* (AJ 29.01.04): now, out on his own, he has forsaken solid masonry for the awesome spaces of the big Paxtonian sheds.

Pryce's examples (all post-1975) are organised by building type rather than by engineering typology or architectural idiom. Some inclusions, such as Frank Gehry's Walt Disney Concert Hall or Will Bruder's Phoenix Central Library, are not normally thought of as sheds, but Pryce makes a good case for stretching the definition. It is less clear how he has made his choices – why does Grimshaw's Messehalle 3 at Frankfurt

(pictured above) get in, when von Gerkan Marg + Partner's Neue Messe at Leipzig does not?

Pryce's photographs glorify a succession of vast spaces – airports, sports halls, exhibition halls and factories – but his descriptive text is infected by a scepticism about the need for some of these uses and the role of the shed in the landscape.

As he implies, at a time when structures of ever greater size and bravado are possible, some people are reacting against them (as the distinct lack of excitement about the 2012 Olympics buildings seems to suggest). Maybe unwittingly, Pryce has produced a eulogy to a genre which is now past its prime.

Robert Thorne is a historian at Alan Baxter & Associates



## BOOK

By Andrew Mead

Charles Sheeler:

Across Media.

By Charles Brock.

University of California

Press, 2006. 225pp. £29.95

'Every modern man has the mechanical sense. This feeling in regard to machinery is one of respect, gratitude and esteem,' wrote Le Corbusier in *Vers une architecture* (1923).

In the USA, one person who seems to prove the point is the painter and photographer Charles Sheeler, particularly in the series of works he made in the late 1920s of the Ford Company's River Rouge factory near Detroit.

Designed by Albert Kahn, this was the largest such complex in the US, with almost 100 buildings on a 445ha site, and in both his photos and paintings Sheeler depicted it in the clear 'objective' manner he called 'Precisionist'. Some found the results 'inhuman' but Sheeler (like Le Corbusier) succumbed to these simplified forms.

This catalogue to an American touring exhibition provides a well-illustrated survey of a career that was centred on the built world. Whether at the huge River Rouge plant or among the skyscrapers of Manhattan, in a white-walled Colonial interior or street of derelict mills in Massachusetts, Sheeler brought his ordering instincts to bear.

But what the book completely fails to do is explore this machine aesthetic in any broader way: to trace the connections between Sheeler and his contemporaries in, say, Germany or Russia, and explore the international dimension that Le Corbusier's comment implies. There are a handful of images here that encapsulate a decade, even an age – but Sheeler didn't produce them in a void.



# THE CITYSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW AWARDS 2007

[www.cityscape.ae](http://www.cityscape.ae)



## THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

### THE AWARDS

Cityscape and The Architectural Review have teamed up for a fourth year to organise the Cityscape Architectural Review Awards – 'Design For An Emerging World.' The awards will recognise and promote excellence in Architecture and Design from the emerging world.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Entries will be accepted for buildings or future projects in the developing world: the Middle East, South America, Africa, Central and Eastern Asia and Australasia, excluding Japan, New Zealand and Australia.

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There will also be Special Awards decided by the judges, the winners of which will be picked from entries in the above categories. These categories cannot be directly entered, the shortlists will comprise all suitable schemes submitted in any other category.

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- \* **The Islamic Architecture Award** - for the project that shows particular empathy and understanding for Islamic culture and context.
- \* **The Masterplanning Award** - for the scheme the judges feel is the best masterplanned community

### THE JURY

Paul Finch (Editor, The Architectural Review), Sunand Prasad (President of the RIBA), Ken Yeang (Llewellyn Davies Yeang), Fatih Rifki (American University of Sharjah), Suha Özkan (Aga Khan Awards).

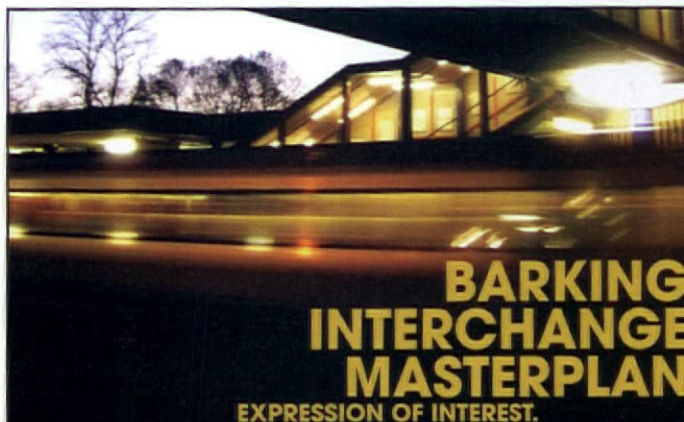
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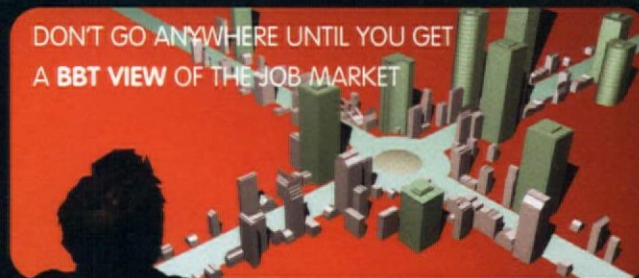
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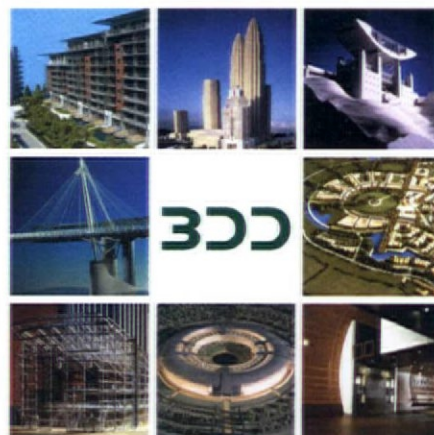


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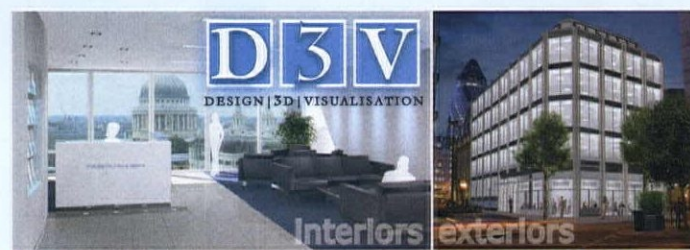
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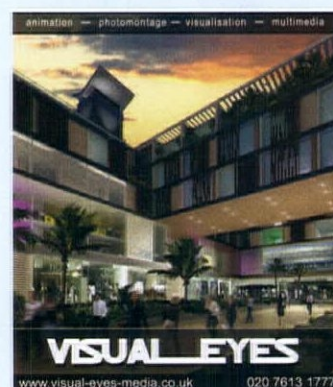
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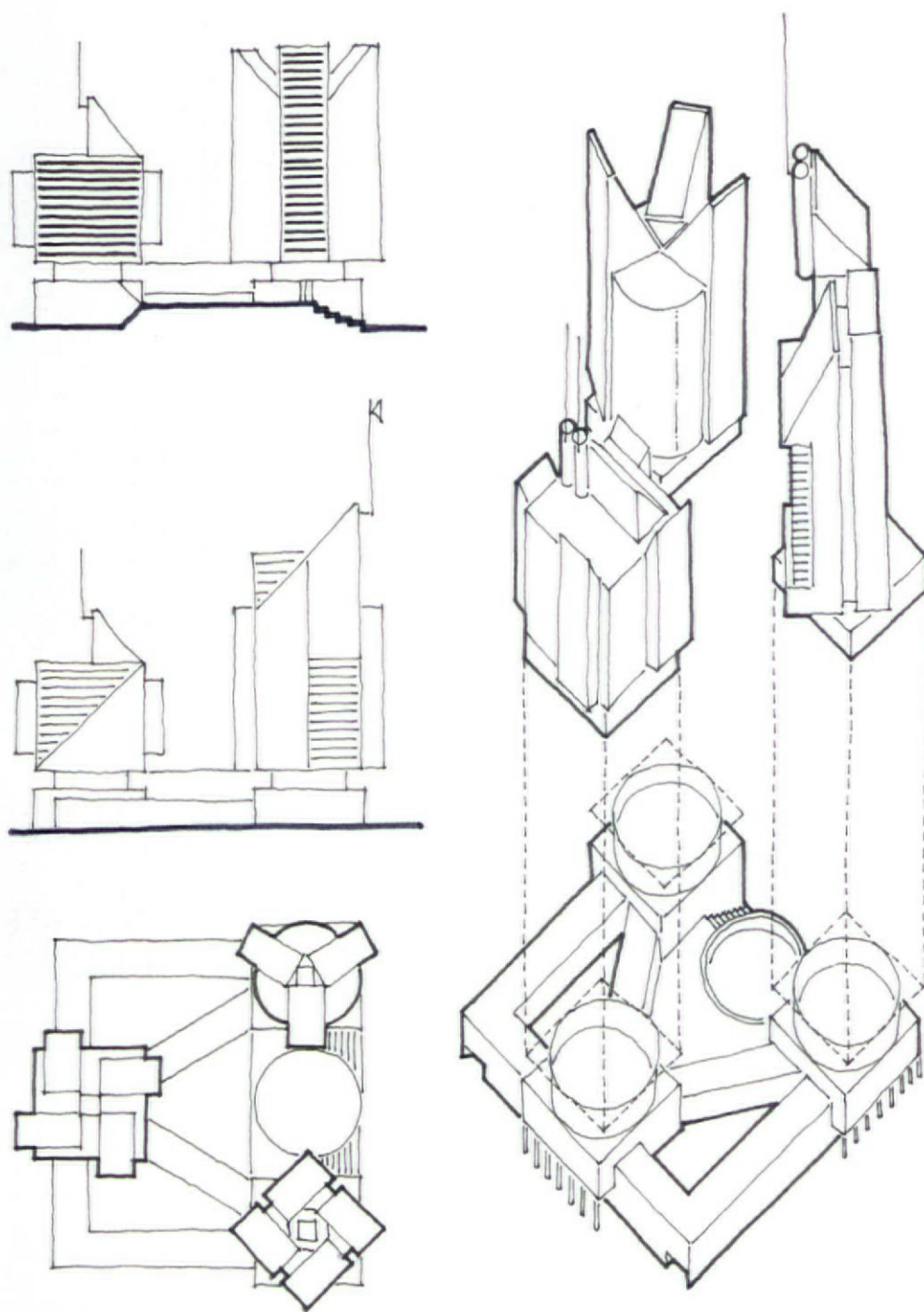
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