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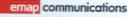
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CAN WE MATCH THE AMBITION OF THE OTHER COUNTRIES ON THE STIRLING SHORTLIST?

By Kieran Long

By the time you read this, I'll be on a plane with my fellow jurors to begin the Stirling Prize judging. We'll be on a six-day schlep to see Dresden Station, Marbach Museum of Modern Literature, the America's Cup building in Valencia, the Casa da Música in Porto, the Young Vic and Windsor Great Park visitor centre.

The prize is British, but there are only two UK buildings on the list. They are also the two smallest and cheapest. The rest are iconic projects, built in medium-sized European cities (not capitals) through a combination of civic ardour and architectural ambition. The UK is going through a building boom, with housing, trophy office buildings, shops and hotels going up apace. But where are these buildings on the Stirling list?

AJ contributor Edwin Heathcote wrote in the *Financial Times* last week (31 August) that architecture produced in this country is overrated, and that the reality of our cities was an intellectually vacuous and cosmetic contemporariness. It seems to me that to be frustrated with the Stirling Prize is to be disillusioned, like Heathcote, with the highest level of British architecture.

The debate among the jury, as I wrote recently (AJ 26.07.07), will be poised between the iconic and the modest. But the bigger question is whether the UK can match the ambition of the other countries on the shortlist. Germany has been in a seemingly endless recession, but has had four buildings on the Stirling shortlist in the last three years. The Portuguese and Spanish economies are nowhere near ours in size or strength, but they too are well represented.

As Stephenson Bell's Quay Bar, shortlisted in 1998, comes under threat of demolition (see pages 12-13), we have another sign that we don't value high-quality commercial architecture. What the UK understands is speculation, and the containers for that speculation are unlikely to be among the greatest buildings of our age.

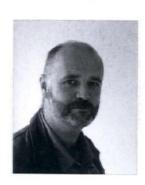
CONTRIBUTORS



Jaffer Kolb, who writes the Building Study on the John Rylands Library on pages 29-35, is the AJ's new features editor and holds a masters degree in urban-planning studies



Sam Jacob, who looks at how the O2 Arena fares as a venue on pages 24-27, is a founding director of FAT and professor of architecture at Yale University



Johnny Rodger, who reviews the Shifts exhibition at Glasgow's Lighthouse on page 44, is a writer who teaches at the Mackintosh School of Architecture

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- · Six breaking stories in a daily email alert



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FRIDAY 31 AUGUST

- Allan Murray comes up against his latest opponent in Edinburgh – the Church
- Henning Larsen plans 'ambitious' diamond tower for Dublin
- Hakes Associates unveils Media Wall for rundown shopping centre in Liverpool (below)
- Developer confirms plans for floating homes on Preston's River Ribble



THURSDAY 30 AUGUST

- London 2012 Olympic Handball Arena shortlist unveiled
- Pick Everard snaps up Derbybased Rothera Goodwin
- Austin-Smith:Lord starts work on listed Huddersfield warehouse (left)
- Beetham Organisation angrily refutes accusation of illegal timber use



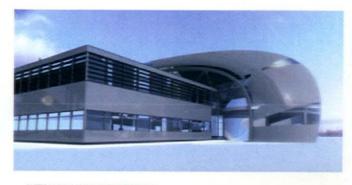
MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER

- Zaha Hadid named third most powerful women in the country
- Rem Koolhaas gets involved in giant 'tomb' pyramid proposal in Germany
- RMJM's Gazprom 'could threaten St Petersburg World Heritage status'
- 'We won't do an SMC' says Capita Architecture boss

TUESDAY 4 SEPTEMBER

- · Art exhibition takes you inside the mind of Will Alsop
- Gillespies draws up scheme to revamp down-at-heel Peckham
- Plymouth Civic Centre listing furore rolls on
- Foster scoops an Aga Khan Architecture Prize for Malaysian university (below)





WEDNESDAY 5 SEPTEMBER

- London Underground stalls Blitz memorial despite PM's backing
- Newsnight presenter backs Malcolm Fraser ballet project
- · Atkins unveils its Liverpool Academy scheme (above)
- David Morley Architects starts Loughborough University lab

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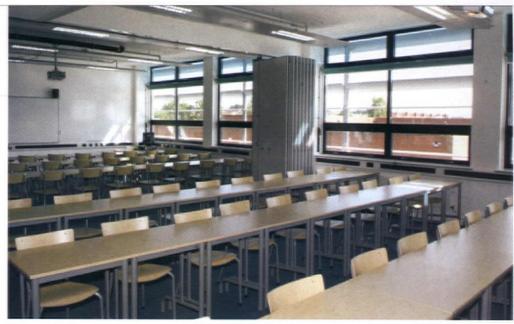
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The cost of a bid under the Building Schools for the Future scheme equals that of building a new primary school (£3-4 million), an education expert claims

BSF 'THROWS CASH AT FAILED BIDS'

By Richard Vaughan

The 'ludicrously' expensive Building Schools for the Future (BSF) procurement process costs the equivalent of a new primary school per bid, a leading schools specialist has claimed.

Ty Goddard, a former government schools advisor and managing director of School Works, a not-for-profit schools advisory organisation, has told the AJ that millions of pounds is being wasted on the procurement process alone.

Goddard said: 'In the recent Education and Skills Select Committee report [published on 9 August], there was a distinct lack of focus on the procurement process. The procurement methods are crackers. We are currently losing the equivalent of a primary school per bid. The system is a nightmare for the local

authorities and it's a nightmare for the supply chain.

'We should be able to design a procurement process that isn't so Byzantine and wasteful. The government should be listening to the industry. If it did it would realise you can still have competitions and it can still have the supply chain, but with a more efficient procurement process.'

New RIBA president Sunand Prasad has backed Goddard's claims, adding that more thought needs to be put into the process if the government's £45 billion initiative to update and rebuild every secondary school in England is to be a success.

Prasad said: 'Without wanting to throw wild figures around, anything upwards of £1 million can be spent per bidder in the BSF scheme.

'The client needs to be doing a great deal more work before the bidding process actually begins. They need to get the brief together, with concept designs, before going to the market.

'As the current system stands, two-thirds of the design work is being wasted. The client should not be using the bid process to finalise its thinking. It should be able to put together a detailed vision for its school outside of the procurement process.'

In a typical bid, three contractor-led consortia will battle for the lucrative contract with the local authority, each designing approximately three schools up to RIBA stage D. Once the preferred bidder is chosen, the remaining detailed designed schools are thrown on to the rubbish pile.

Partnerships for Schools (PfS) – the organisation charged with delivering the ambitious BSF programme – said it is aware of the industry's concerns, but added that at present the procurement process is the only viable method.

PfS chief executive Tim Byles said: 'European legislation states that at least two people must be involved in a bid until a winner is announced. We try to get down to two people as soon as we can to minimise wastage. But it will still mean there will be sample schemes that won't be successful.'

See Agenda overleaf.

AGENDA



1.

BSF - IS IT MILLIONS WELL SPENT?

By Richard Vaughan

As the row continues over the profligacy of the procurement process in the government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme, Bristol City Council is quietly applauding itself after opening the first school completed under the initiative.

The Bristol Brunel Academy was designed by Wilkinson Eyre Architects at a cost of £24 million, and Bristol Council believes every penny spent by the private sector was a penny well spent.

Bristol council's PFI leader Gordon Clements says, 'We asked each architect to design the four schemes we needed up to RIBA stage D.

'And from our point of view, it gave us a much better idea of what would be built, and gave us higher levels of design understanding. 'Sorry if that means more work for architects, but we want value for money. We are spending an awful lot of public money and it's thoroughly in our right to demand as much as we can,' Clements adds.

The government's £45 billion initiative aims to rebuild or refurbish every state secondary school in England, but architects and contractors alike are calling for the procurement methods to be reviewed.

As revealed in this week's main story (page 9), the cost of a primary school is wasted each time a consortium battles for the lucrative projects.

The rewards can be huge – if successful, the preferred bidder will design, build and refurbish every school in that local authority. But if the contractorled consortium is unsuccessful,

then the contractor could have gambled millions on nothing.

Partnership for Schools (PfS), which is delivering the BSF initiative, says the procurement process comes to 'around 1 to 1.5 per cent of the total capital cost of the entire project'; however, many believe the cost to well exceed this.

These figures become even more galling then, when one considers that three consortia are currently vying for Birmingham's £1 billion BSF contract. This means those shortlisted – Bovis Lend Lease, Land Securities and Galliford Try – will spend at least £10 million between them for nothing.

The money spent goes not only on consultation fees for architects and engineers, but for facilities management and IT technology consultants – as





1, 2 & 3. The Bristol Brunel Academy, by Wilkinson Eyre, is the first school to be completed under

government's BSF scheme

all new schools have to be upgraded. The list goes on.

Richard Green, a director at Capita Architecture, which is involved with BSF projects in Nottingham and Lancashire, says around £2 million was spent by each of the three bidding consortia for the Nottingham contract.

'The issue of wastage in the procurement process is very real,' he says. 'The work is incredibly intense, and you, and as many as three other architects, are effectively losing three to four months of your life, and if your bid is not successful your work is just disposed of. The waste of effort is most profound.

'We shouldn't have to design to stage D, it should only go as far as outline planning. and then the preferred bidder should be chosen."

John Waldron, a consultant at Architecture PLB, is part of an RIBA group currently speaking to the government about the BSF process.

He raises the issue of having a small pool of designers all bidding for the same jobs. He says: 'There is a concern that there is a finite group of designers with the required expertise, who are all competing with one another. It means the competitive dialogue process is tuing up people for too long periods.

'There are one or two local authorities which do things a little differently. The London Borough of Greenwich procures a partner first to help them formulate what is needed and then a competition is held for a designer, and then contractor.'

He adds: 'While we understand that the local authorities want to get the most value for money - there is an awful lot of work at the moment - the process could end up in people going elsewhere for their work.'

The spectre of designers being put off BSF work is a major concern for the likes of Bristol Council.

The council's Gordon Clements says: 'Our major concern is capacity. Soon each local authority will want the best designers - but will theu have the capacity to take on the work?'

Unless other local authorities consider this problem like Greenwich has, Clements' fears over capacity could become a stark reality.

BDP Architects is involved with BSF more heavily than any other practice in the country, and - although it may seem unlikely due to its success rate in the programme - if the practice was to turn its back on the initiative, BSF would be in serious trouble.

Gavin Elliot, a director at BDP, is quick to state he does not want to bite the hand that feeds him, but he does believe the BSF procurement process is an issue.

'The laboriousness of the process is off-putting, and schedules are unforgiving, but we do get paid to do it. However, when you are unsuccessful you do wonder what you put those three months' effort in for.

'In a perfect world I would want the local authority to choose their architect, and sit down with them to talk through the designs, then choose everyone else afterwards."

AGENDA





The state of the s

LAST ORDERS AT DERELICT QUAY BAR

By Richard Waite

Stephenson Bell's Quay Bar in Castlefield, Manchester, is facing the wrecking ball – less than nine years after it was shortlisted for the Stirling Prize.

The bar could be knocked down to make way for an Ian Simpson-designed residential scheme.

Seen as a pioneering project for the city when completed in 1998 (AJ 08.10.98), today the empty building next to the Bridgewater Canal is a haven for crackheads; a boarded-up shell, with broken windows and a leaking roof.

Now it has emerged that the venue, which won a hatful of accolades including a local Civic Society Award, an RIBA Award and honours from the Manchester Society of Architects – as well as its Stirling Prize shortlisting in 1998 – is likely to be demolished under hush-hush proposals being considered by Irish developer Howard Eurocape (HE).

The news has dismayed practice founder and building designer Roger Stephenson. He said: 'I'm very sad to see it go. It was something very special, a bit of a pathfinder.'

Despite early success, the bar failed to attract the crowds and was sold on by its original owner Wolverhampton and Dudley Brewery (also known as Banks Brewery) to developer Urban Splash in 2003 and then on to HE.

During this time the bar underwent a number of rebrandings, but was closed for good in 2005.

Stephenson says he resigned himself to the building's demise when Urban Splash bought it, as he says, 'with the intention of developing the site', but adds that he lays most of the blame on the bar's operator.

He said: 'The original client, [Banks Brewery] had never done anything like this before, and without being insulting, they had no idea on how to run it.

He added: 'We envisaged it as a nice place to have a healthy lunch overlooking the water. But what they tried to do with it ended up turning it into a spit-and-sawdust place.'

Ian Simpson's replacement scheme is understood to be a 15-storey residential-led scheme, believed to be a sweeping, wave-like building, which would also take in the neighbouring HE-owned plot.

The Twentieth Century Society (C20) is among a growing number in Manchester worried about the proposals. C20 spokesman Eddy Rhead said: 'It is always sad to see great buildings in a derelict state, but even more so in the case of the Quay Bar, in that it is so new and still very much fit for purpose.'

He added that he thought the bar, which sits in a conservation area, was '100 yards too far' from the rest of the nightspots to really take-off.

He continued: 'The [building] made a very positive contribution to Castlefield, but I fear that any new scheme on this site may not be as sympathetic or as successfully handled architectually.'

Neither Simpson nor HE would comment on the progress of the plans, and Manchester City Council said it had yet to receive any application for the plot.

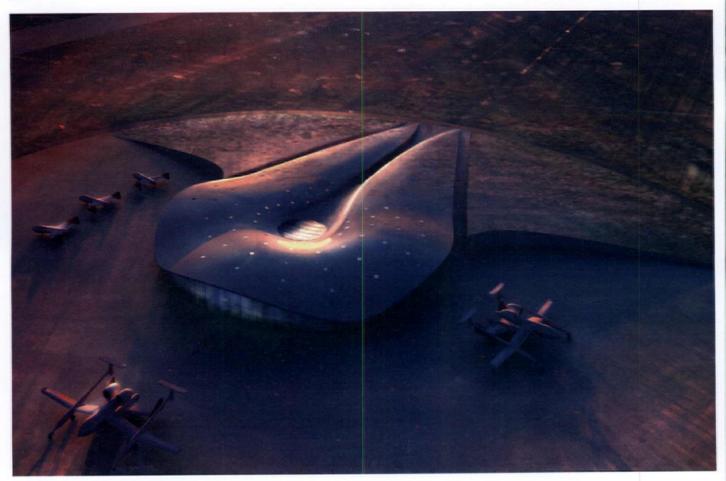


1 & 2. Stephenson Bell's Quay Bar as it was in 1998 (left) and in 2007 (right) 3. The Stirling-shortlisted building is now a notorious hang-out for drug users

NEWS IN PICTURES

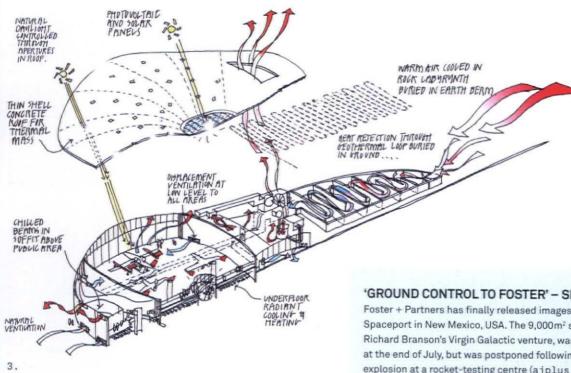


1.



2.





1 & 2. The New Mexico scheme has to be sensitive and low-lying (15m-high), while housing a spaceship hangar and an astronaut terminal 3. Sketch showing energy and ventilation strategy

'GROUND CONTROL TO FOSTER' - SPACEPORT UNVEILED

Foster + Partners has finally released images of the world's first Spaceport in New Mexico, USA. The 9,000m2 scheme, the new home for Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic venture, was supposed to be unveiled at the end of July, but was postponed following a fatal launch-pad explosion at a rocket-testing centre (ajplus 30.07.07). Housing a spaceship hangar, an astronaut terminal and a control room, the lowlying building has been designed to blend into the desert landscape and minimise the impact on the historic El Camino Real mission trail nearby. Describing the practice's competition-winning scheme, senior project architect Grant Brooker, said: 'Any building here has to be very sensitive. The scheme grows from the ground yet is a very practical interpretation of the brief.' The project could complete as early as 2009. By Richard Waite



TAKING RESOURCES AWAY FROM HOUSING-MARKET RENEWAL COULD UNDERMINE OUR MAJOR CITIES

Howard Bernstein, chief executive of Manchester City Council, discusses how the Housing Green Paper, unveiled by housing minister Yvette Cooper on 23 July (AJ 26.07.07), will affect the UK's cities.

The Green Paper clearly demonstrates that housing is central to the priorities of the Brown government. The Paper's emphasis on the need for affordable access to housing, for improved design standards, and for a step-change in sustainability, is to be welcomed, as is recognition that housing supply needs to increase outside the South East.

When considering how these objectives can be delivered, we must be mindful of the realities in the north of England, and, in particular, the major cities such as Manchester, which are doing so much to drive growth in economic activity and employment, thus generating significant change in the housing market.

Our cities represent major opportunities to manage growth in the most sustainable way. The development of new housing, built to exacting environmental standards, must not be restricted to new, freestanding eco-towns, but must form a key element in the renewal of our major cities.

In areas such as north and east Manchester there are huge opportunities to create sustainable mixed communities at the heart of a city which is the single largest generator of employment in the north of England. If seized with imagination, these opportunities could lead to significant gains, not only in the construction and life-cycle costs of new homes, but also in making massive cuts to unsustainable commuting.

We must recognise that housing-market renewal in a city such as Manchester is fundamentally a growth agenda, not a mechanism for dealing with historic low demand for housing. Our agenda at Manchester City Council is the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods, where we provide opportunities for residents to locate and remain in the city.

There is a danger that the Green Paper will promote differentiation between market renewal and growth agendas. This, in the case of major cities such as Manchester, is a false distinction. Any diversion of resources away from the continued renewal of our urban centres puts at risk the achievements of neighbourhood renewal, and could undermine

the ability of our cities to continue generating significant contributions towards the economies of their regions.

Similarly, it is essential we recognise that the challenge of affordability manifests itself in very different ways in different parts of the country. In those urban areas which have been characterised by significant provision of social housing, it is essential that we find sophisticated, locally sensitive strategies to deliver affordable access to high-quality homes. Attempts to manage the housing market in order to create differentiated product will serve to render local housing markets, which will become subject to significant volatility in the future, insufficiently flexible to remain sustainable.

The government has set out a bold vision, but it is far from clear whether or not the capacity or resources exist to deliver its targets. What is certain is that our major cities can make a real contribution to the delivery of the government's objectives. However, they will only do this if the Green Paper enables the development of a policy framework and delivery mechanisms that respect the realities of the housing markets in those cities.



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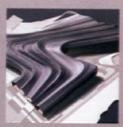
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LETTERS / ZERO-CARBON HOUSING

We have had an extraordinary response to our article last week on the cost of zero-carbon homes. Here are just a few of the letters we received.



INSULATION AND AIRTIGHTNESS IS THE KEY ISSUE

At last we have some realistic thinking about the zero-carbon target. I support the view that the cost will be about £80,000 extra per dwelling. Photovoltaic cells should be replaced by cheaper sources of renewable electricity from wind farms, tidal barrages, or hydropower, but not biomass. Then a budget of say £30,000 per dwelling will cover improved construction and equipment.

We should build so that no heat has to be added for a reasonable temperature. Insulation and airtight construction is key. The difficulties are not too bad; the target is feasible, although it is easier with a small dwelling than a large one.

We have to aim for a zero-carbon society – starting with houses – at whatever cost.

Max Fordham, founder, Max Fordham LLP

THE UNGLAMOROUS STUFF MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

We'd probably be better investing the money needed to get from Code Level 5 to 6 in upgrading the existing stock.

A serious issue referred to in the article is airtightness. The little coverage it does get in the press seems to mostly blame the lack of skills in the construction industry, though the design of interfaces has as much impact. As with so much in sustainability it is the unglamorous stuff that actually makes the real difference... Peter Fisher, associate, Bennetts Associates

WE MUST STOP LOOKING AT HOUSING IN ISOLATION

There is absolutely no reason why all new houses should not be zero-carbon by 2016. An obstacle to this is our blinkered approach to the issue and our compartmentalised planning process.

Goals for housing are circumscribed by being just that: goals for housing. Housing does not exist in isolation, it is a component of a wide range of human activities and their processes.

For example, housing often lies close to farming or manufacturing. Farmers are desperate for new sources of income. Sensitive stewardship of energy crops could provide fuel right on the doorstep of housing developments. Many industries have large surpluses of energy or energy-generated materials which, with a

little cross-sector management, could supply housing projects. Where there's muck there's energy – energy from waste can be delivered straight to housing projects.

Of course it is important to design highly insulated, airtight houses with materials from impeccable sources, but we also need to think outside the housing box.

David Lloyd Jones, director, Studio E Architects

GOOD DESIGN CAN QUICKLY PAY FOR ITSELF

Your article makes no distinction between one-off projects, where the costs of meeting the highest level of the code will undoubtedly be high, and medium to large schemes, where an economy of scale comes into play.

The costs you quote seem to be cobbled together by someone with little or no practical experience of the industry. HTA is currently finishing a Code Level 4 scheme where the increased costs are minimal. Part of the reason for the low cost in this case is the fact that the scheme was designed to be energy efficient from the beginning.

Good design, where the designer makes best use of orientation, reliable technology and the available skills and materials, can quickly pay for itself in this context.

Rony Bergin, head of sustainability and innovation, HTA Architects

FLEXIBILITY WILL ALLOW FOR MORE EFFICIENCY

It is worth noting that a zero-carbon house will have dramatically reduced (or perhaps even negative) energy bills. As energy prices increase, this type of housing will become increasingly valuable.

Renewable energy generation is not always most suitable at the household level, as greater levels of efficiency and cost-effectiveness can be achieved on a community scale; for example, through a community owned wind turbine or a biomass district heating system. Zero-carbon housing developments must be given the flexibility to incorporate these technologies.

Lucy Stone, Centre for Alternative Technology

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LETTERS

HIGH-DENSITY HOUSING MUST BE HUMANE

Density, particularly when applied to residential development, is a dangerously misunderstood and misleading guide to how we should design and 'regenerate' our villages, towns and cities. On their own, political targets for new housebuilding programmes can be a social and aesthetic route to urban failure, as we know from bitter experience. Adding brownfield land to the mix, as the government is now doing in the Housing Green Paper (AJ 26.07.07), places further demands on the unwary architect, urban designer and planning department.

High density does not have to mean disaster. Nor do successful high-density schemes have to resemble Notting Hill. From where I am sitting in the Golden Lane estate, the original part of the Barbican in the City of London, the buildings I see are mostly forgettable concrete (apologies to Chamberlin, Powell and Bon), but their arrangement creates an atmosphere which is humane, urbane and safe. In the right hands, density can work.

This is not the usual resident's response to high-density environments of this kind. So why does it work here and what lessons can we learn? Clearly it is to do with the nature of the spaces created and the shared experience of these spaces. The successful designer will draw from tested theory and then, cautiously and carefully, develop concepts by adding their own personality to the project.

Now we have a breathless new Housing Green Paper. Certainly green, though probably not in the sense that the Department for Communities and Local Government intended. In it, the government remains committed to building three million new homes in the next 15 years or so, mostly on 'brownfield land'. And high density, of course.

Termites are accustomed to building high-density housing on 'brownfield land' from instinct, not regulation, but we are not good at it. My general experience of 'brownfield land' defines places where nobody has ever lived, and probably has never wanted to live. While my apartment in the Barbican is certainly built on recycled land, it is urban land, involuntarily cleared by airraids. How far, I wonder, is its historic urbanity and its architecture a significant factor in its success?

My point is that the high-density/brownfield axis is placing an enormous burden on the design profession – and on the management of housing and communities – to create the humane and urbane atmosphere which makes crowded houses a pleasure to inhabit. As yet, I don't see an adequate response.

We can – and must – do better. Designers and planners who are prepared to stand up to the barrage of conventional wisdom and challenge what they are being offered resemble that lone figure confronting the tanks in Tiananmen Square. And they will probably come to the same sticky end.

This is not another assault on government policy – we obviously need more affordable housing and it is clear that we need to recycle brownfield land. Sprawl is not an option. In its own way it threatens the formation of places; in the Thames Gateway, for example. But implosion rather than explosion is the way forward.

It can be done. My great friend Reg Ward, the first CEO of London Docklands, discovered that sense of place, not a rubber-stamped masterplan, was the core element that created the urban fission to unfold development with both quality and density.

Many people live in crowded environments at high density, and many more are likely to do so in the future. My appeal is that we, as professionals, design these inevitable new homes and environments with very tender care.

David Price, London EC1

DISABLED ACCESS FALLS SHORT AT THE FIRST HURDLE

Can anyone design access use and bathrooms for the disabled? I am confined to a wheelchair and therefore have to negotiate my way round attempts by designers to accommodate me.

External and internal access is so often a failure, before even entering a toilet or bathroom. Designers fail, for example, to realise that a wheelchair has to have room behind to swing round. Another problem is that doors are often hung the wrong way round. I could go on and on.

It is not until a design is made and put into use that the problems arise. I am so incensed with this lack of thought and



waste of money that I would be happy to test out new buildings or look at drawings to evaluate their practicality for free, except, of course, for travelling costs.

David Dottridge, Tunbridge Wells, Kent

PVC'S BENEFITS ARE BEING OVERLOOKED

I agree with Calum Forsyth, new president of the British Plastic Federation (BPF), who has stated that the industry needs to work together to address the environmental backlash against PVC.

The industry is keen to talk about reducing VAT and Window Energy Ratings but seems to be less interested in what is potentially the biggest threat. Back in the 1980s, we fought hard for PVC and its benefits. We are now taking it for granted that people know the benefits of PVC - but they don't unless we tell them and keep on telling them. To paraphrase Forsyth, we must ensure that the public's perception of plastic is part of the solution, not part of the problem.

On behalf of the PVC industry, the BPF is countering the attack from timber with hard facts, but we need active support from every level in the supply chain - systems companies, fabricators and installers. Companies who sell to the homeowner are the most important link in this campaign. Spectus has produced its own environmental brochure which debunks the muths and presents the facts for fabricators and installers to use when selling in the home.

There is a great deal of misinformation being put about concerning PVC and its effects on the environment by the timber industry and some environmental organisations. We must work together to counter this misinformation and the false perception that is being created.

Sam Kennedy, managing director, Spectus Systems

HKR REMAINS ON EALING'S ARCADIA SCHEME

We wish to correct what we believe to be misleading reporting in the opening paragraph of 'HKR trumped by Foster in Ealing', (AI 16.08.07). It is totally untrue to state that HKR has been replaced as lead architect on the Arcadia shopping centre scheme in Ealing, west London.

For the record, HKR is masterplanning the scheme; is directly responsible for all the retail, leisure, transport and public realm areas; and has designed over 70 per cent of the project. HKR was involved in the selection of the architect to design the tower in the north-east corner of the site and is pleased that a combined team is now able to deliver what will be a stunning and iconic scheme in an important part of London.

Readers of the AJ will know that it is not unusual to have combined design teams in projects of this kind, and as a result it is important that the pool of talent upon which the client can call is both diverse and strong.

We expect to be entering the Ealing scheme into the planning process in the coming weeks. Jim Duffy, group director, HKR Architects London

'GAS-GUZZLING STONE' NOT WILKINSON EYRE'S

There seems to be a lot of confusion surrounding the Bath Southgate project.

To clarify, the stone referred to in your article ('Bath stone for Wilkinson Eyre's Southgate scheme to make gas-guzzling trip to Italy', ajplus 15.08.07) relates to the retail development designed by Chapman Taylor and under construction by Multi. This has nothing to do with Wilkinson Eyre Architects.

A minor part of the project involves the relocation of the bus station to alongside the railway station on a site previously and partly occupied by Churchill House. This bus station, which has been designed by Wilkinson Eyre, received full planning consent in 2001 and is due for completion in 2009.

As with most projects in Bath, there has been a certain amount of local objection about the use of contemporary materials, but the design was favourably received by the Urban Regeneration Panel and the project is well under way. Chris Wilkinson, Wilkinson Eyre Architects

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 to arrive by 10am on the Monday before publication. The Architects' Journal reserves the right to edit letters.

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'I find her full of imagination, although I wouldn't want her to design a house for me: I'm a plain, simple, practical guy'

Terence Conran on Zaha Hadid. Observer, 02.09.07

'Surely the worst panorama of architecture in the centre of any European capital'

Edwin Heathcote on the banks of the Thames.

Financial Times, 31.08.07

'My inspiration
has always
been that of
the old Italian
Communist Party
– the best salami
for everyone!
Design is (at least
meant to be) the
ultimate in pop
acceptability'

Stephen Bayley. Observer, 02.09.07

CAFÉ SOCIETY

After bemoaning the culinary failings of his new Camden home last week, Astragal was delighted to be contacted by Finch Forman, lead architect on the restoration of new AJ HO Greater London House. Finch Forman had desperately tried to push through a lovelylooking glazed restaurant on a corner of the building (pictured right), but was denied by those villains at Camden Council. Boo! Instead of the proposed trendy eaterie, the site currently hosts, um, a car pound... Still, as the (Islington-based) chaps at Finch Forman point out, 'at least the hoardings hide the empty chicken boxes.' Don't rub it in...

AMIN'S BEST FRIEND

It was a full house for the much-anticipated AJ King's Cross Charrette party at the Building Centre last Thursday (photos below). The Argentsponsored soirée was so packed that not everyone could squeeze into the central London architectural hotspot - most notably absent was Amin Taha's whippet, Lou Lou, who was tied up outside befriending all the smokers. Among those enjoying the free-flowing wine were Maurice Shapero, Stuart Piercy and, to Astragal's delight, the



(NOT) GOING DUTCH

Astragal rolled into a cab after the King's Cross Charrette bash, and began chatting to the cabbie, who, it turns out, is friends with Tom Koolhaas, heir to Rem's throne. The driver revealed stories of parties at Casa Koolhaas as a 16-yearold, and reminisced about the spa and jacuzzi in Rem's north London pad. Apparently Rem Ir, who now lives in LA, is about to get married in his native Netherlands, but the best man is banned from setting foot in clog country and has to deliver his speech via satellite link-up. Astragal wonders what a man must do to be forbidden entry to Holland ...

WHOLE LOTTA LOVE

Rob Firth – head of Capita Architecture – is sports mad and a devotee of those masters of rock, Led Zeppelin. So, imagine his joy when the Zep's legendary front man, Robert 'feel the juice run down my leg' Plant, pitched up in Firth's hometown of Monmouth, South Wales, sometime in the 1980s and got stuck into the local sports teams. Not only did Plant play cricket for the town for a season, he also organised a rugby match with the local borstal school and even managed to score a try. Firth's highlight from those heady days? Zep's 'fifth member', Roy Harper's girlfriend, streaking across the cricket pitch. Firth said she wasn't all that, but the incident at least lines up a choice Zep pun: Hats Off to (Roy) Harper's girlfriend.

Hellman is on holiday.







[Between us, ideas become reality.]

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1. The former Millennium Dome - renamed the 02 - now houses the 23,000-capacity 02 Arena, designed by HOK

SIGN 'O' THE TIMES

The O2 has been heralded as the rebirth of the much-maligned Millennium Dome in Greenwich. But how does it really work as a venue? We sent FAT's Sam Jacob along to find out.

Diminutive pop star Prince is a lot funnier than his muso reputation might suggest. He kick-starts his show at the O2 Arena - in the former Millennium Dome in Greenwich, south-east London - with 1999, as if reminding everyone of the venue's traumatic birth. His '80s-MTVexistentialism might have served as an epitaph for Britain's lacklustre state-sponsored millennium show: 'Two thousand zero zero party over, oops out of time.'

In the intervening years, Richard Rogers' Dome has been cleared of its well-meaning, stilted, clunky edutainment and redeveloped by the Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG) as the O2. As far as phase one goes, that means a 23,000-capacity indoor arena, designed by HOK, a music club,

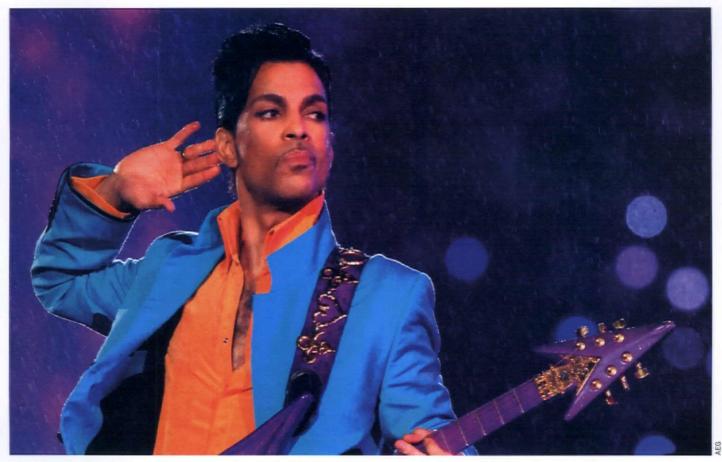
an exhibition space, and what's called an 'Entertainment Avenue', featuring an 11-screen cinema, bars, restaurants, a temporary beach, and various blow-up or tented-in objects. (But no super-casino). More entertainment facilities are pencilled in for phase two. All of this shelters under the Dome's skin, inheriting its external appearance like a hermit crab in a shell.

A whole entertainment district. That's a lot of stuff. But once inside the O2, I can't see any architecture. The mass that one would traditionally expect to support this complex programme seems to have vanished. Think of the flytowers of the National Theatre, expressed as blank blocks of concrete mass in the skyline, or of the Royal Festival Hall, where the auditorium hangs

over the concourse like an egg in a box. Or think of the new Wembley Stadium, where the great arch loops into the sky as statement of how the building is engineered. There is no evidence of this sort of architectural expression here. Even the huge arena at the building's centre is almost imperceptible.

What you see instead is ephemera: a giant light sculpture, signage, screens, guitars on plinths, posters, palm trees, some stage-set-ish scenography, and a lot of people. Even at 2am, there are still visitors disembarking the Thames clipper to head into the O2.

The O2 is the UK's most complete example of a US-style entertainment quarter. The explicit ambition is to pull entertainment activities that



2. Prince's 21-night residency precedes such crowd-pullers as the Ultimate Fighting Championship

one might associate with metropolitan life and plug them into the core of the arena.

Its scale and ambition is different to anything we've seen before, and is matched by the O2 Arena's shock-and-awe opening programme: 21 nights of Prince; Barbra Streisand; the Rolling Stones; Bill Clinton; and the premiere of The Simpsons Movie. Upcoming events include National Hockey League games (featuring AEG-owned teams), basketball, the Tennis Masters Cup, the Ultimate Fighting Championship, the White Stripes, Festival of Scouting, Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs, and Jeff Wayne's Musical Version of The War of the Worlds. Later it will host the 2009 World Gymnastics Championships and the 2012 Olympics artistic

gymnastics and basketball events. The event calendar crystallises the diversity of contemporary entertainments and demonstrates the complexity of the venue's requirements.

To understand how the building works, you need to understand how AEG works. The group's business plan is the generator here.

AEG also owns, among other things: Clarity Media Group (newspaper publishing), Walden Media and Bristol Bay Productions (film companies), Regal Entertainment Group (the largest movie exhibitor in the world), AEG Teleworks (broadcast centre), Bounce (event marketing), and Network LIVE (live digital entertainment provider). What you see in the makeup of AEG is a pattern of reciprocal companies whose

function is either content

The synergetic nature of the relationships is illuminated by the following: David Beckham became content purchased by US football team LA Galaxy (owned by AEG) in order to fill the team's Home Depot Center stadium. The \$150 million (£75.5 million) Home Depot Center complex was developed and is operated by AEG. The Home Depot is also home to the LA branch of the David Beckham Academy. The academy's other site is

'Prince kicks off with "1999", as if reminding everyone of the building's traumatic birth' here, in the shadow of the O2. This is business as an entire ecosystem.

Under these conditions, the idea of what architecture is transforms. The O2 isn't a building; it is an apparatus – a mechanism for putting on multiple shows, events and experiences simultaneously and in rapid succession. Maybe that's why you can't see any architecture.

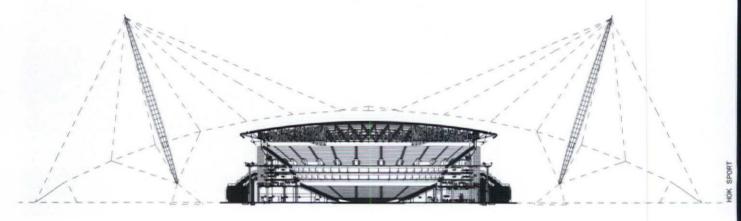
Technically, the O2 Arena can switch from Prince's stage to the Rolling Stones' then back within two days. It has on-site parking for 18 articulated lorries and is reconfigurable for centreand end-stage set-ups for ice hockey (the stage base is a constantly maintained ice rink), basketball, and boxing. Attention to its performance is detailed: when the arena seats

COMMENT / SAM JACOB

- 3. Escalators are bathed in ultraviolet
- 4. The arena inhabits the former Millennium Dome 'like a hermit crab in its shell'
- 5. A doughnut-shaped simulated street scene encircles the arena just under the skin of the Dome



3



4.

flip up, they have a padded underside making sound checks closer to the acoustic performance of a soft and fleshy audience. The arena is designed to generate ticket-value. It's arranged in tiers – just like those other new venues (also designed by HOK Sport): Wembley and Arsenal FC's Emirates Stadium – where you can purchase your way through multiple levels of service and comfort.

The model was developed at AEG's multi-sport Staples
Center in Los Angeles – home to the NBA's LA Lakers and the NHL's Los Angeles Kings among others – where celebrity fans sit as close to the action as possible and, to enhance their experience, walk off court with the teams and head into a 'chairman's room', where the players join them post-shower.

Proximity to the experience is what's on sale.

Buildings like this aren't objects but perpetual events. And everything becomes an event: materials are sensations, lighting is an effect, circulation is theatre. Textures communicate ideas of quality and value. This surface-mounted stuff is ephemeral, metaphorically glued together with low-tack adhesive. The visible realm of the O2 Arena is often formed with graphics, lighting and screen-based or projected media. It's as though

'The arena is arranged in tiers, so you can purchase your way through layers of comfort'

the surfaces are always provisional and might flicker into other guises at any moment – what you might call programmable space.

From the ground-floor faux city, escalators whose vertical drama is escalated by being bathed in ultraviolet take you up to the Vue cinema. You glide past one of the Dome's trademark yellow Skylon-esque support towers, whose engineering has been dragged up to look like a fruit-skewered cocktail stick in a piña colada. A huge picture of Tutankhamun's death mask advertises the forthcoming exhibition, and is positioned next to what looks like a piece of the Chrysler Building flattened by a car-crusher. Back on the ground floor, the IndigO2, a more-intimate venue with a capacity of 2,300,

is housed inside a piece of faux-Miami Beach Art Deco that leads into the 'architecture' of the Entertainment Avenue, designed by RTKL. The language is - inexplicably drawn from 1930s Americana. The fake facades wrap around the arena to form a doughnut of 'street' scene with bars and restaurants on ground and first floors, like a three-storey Broadway twisted into a ring road. It's the most solid part of the whole place, but captures exactly the wrong aspects of cityscape. Instead of manufacturing a sense of authentic neighbourhood, it recalls the useless dead weight of building. It's not just the seemingly arbitrary retroreferences, it's also its realness - the bricks, the steel, the authentic architectural detailing make it seem a step backwards.



If you really want to be in a street, rather than a strange glowing hallucination of entertainment caught between hedonism and high security, with your only route out of this isolated satellite a 30-minute boat ride along the tar-black Thames, then you should never have left Soho.

The integration of sponsorship is integral to its workings. Mobile-phone firm O2 secured the naming rights in a £6 million-per-year deal, and along with that came opportunities to create O2-branded spaces – a stretch-rubber cave with bubble tanks behind the bar, and a venue for O2 customers who can text their way past an electronic door policy. Beyond this are more subliminal associations: the bubble light-sculpture in

the grand foyer, the front door in the shape of a giant O, which swallows up visitors. Colours and graphics bring more brand synergy. All this serves to remind that the O2 is a corporate entity, so you have your fun on their terms.

Outside the O2, Peninsular Square provides the link to North Greenwich Tube. Designed by Barr Gazetas, with landscape architect Whitelaw Turkington, the square has another take on the idea of programmable space. Colourchanging lights are embedded into all kinds of surfaces, so even the solid granite ground becomes an animated surface. Water features and screens are linked to electronic controls that can alter the scale and atmosphere of the square. Provisionalism here is more

'If you really want to be in a street, rather than a hallucination, you should never have left Soho'

a function of a phased masterplan. Green walls formed with bolted-together steel-framed structures holding sedum panels form edges of plots awaiting development. Peninsular Square claims to be the biggest new public space in London since Leicester Square. It suggests that public space is merging with media.

The O2 is not so much a landscape formed of distinct, articulated objects, but rather a haze of events, experienced in a motion blur of consumerism. It becomes a cascade of

experience delivered by just-in-time logistics. Its dual architectural feats are to construct a hidden machine that manufactures endless entertainment opportunities and to make AEG's complex business model a physical entity.

Increasingly, large-scale developers are aiming to extend their involvement beyond building to become operators, delivering content in all its forms: transport, telephony and communications, advertising, finance, food supply and more. This scenario recasts architectural ideas of form and function as content and mechanism. This is a challenge to architects. It simultaneously erodes their traditional role and presents a joined-up world where everything becomes an architectural opportunity.



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AUSTIN-SMITH:LORD/ JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY



BUILDING STUDY

IT'S LIKE EXPERIENCING A MICROCOSM OF THE CITY BEYOND

By Jaffer Kolb. Photography by Ian Lawson

With Ian Simpson's neighbouring Beetham Tower looming over Manchester's Georgian and Edwardian landmarks, it seems Austin-Smith:Lord (ASL) has made the right decision with the design of its recently completed and modest extension to the John Rylands Library. The project, in Manchester city centre, remains dynamic while ultimately secondary in scale and aesthetic punch to the original structure.

But defining what is valuable in the pre-existing Grade I-listed building is a tricky business. Since it was built in 1900 by Basil Champneys, the John Rylands Library has been added to three times. The first addition was completed in the 1920s, the second in the early 1960s and the third in the 1970s. The final instalment was demolished to make room for ASL's and the other two are used for storage and largely inaccessible.

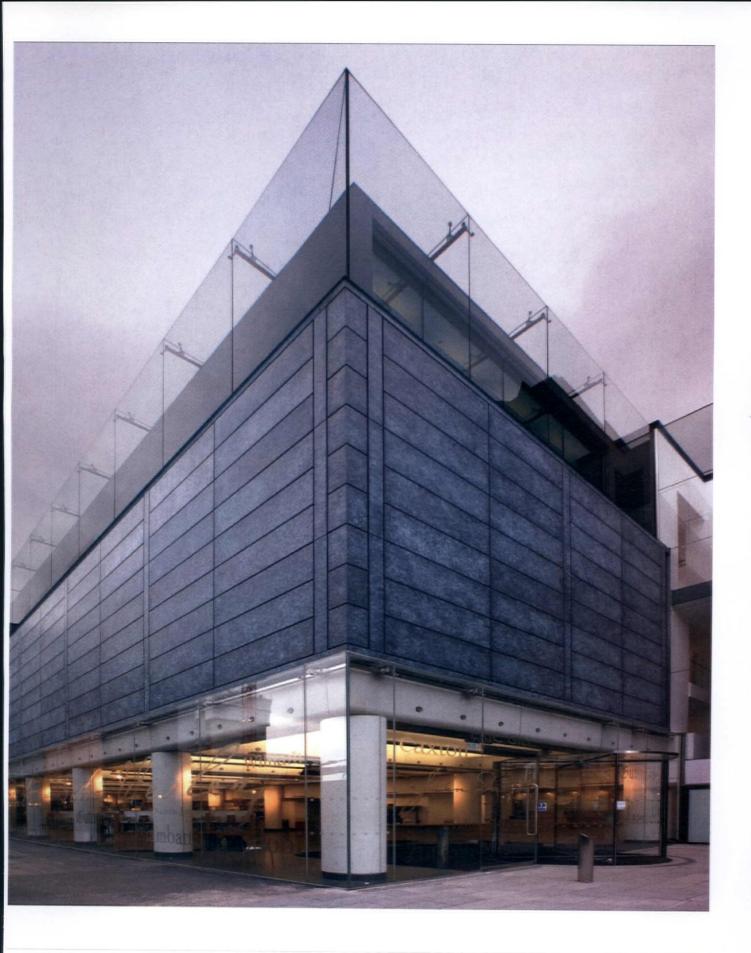
In 2001, ASL's Manchester design team began working on a six-year, £12.5 million scheme for the University of Manchester, which manages the library. This included both a restoration of the existing structure and the construction of a new extension which would house 10,000 linear metres of books and increase accessibility throughout the library. According to ASL design partner Chris Pritchett, the client wanted to restore the existing building then build the extension. 'But from the beginning we could see that we really had to meld the buildings together,' he says, 'It wouldn't make sense to do one at a time.' This approach resulted in the library being closed to the public for slightly longer than the client had intended.

The architect began by rethinking the library's entire circulation system, changing the entrance from a grand street-side atrium to a plaza-side café and bookshop around the corner. This gives visitors a chance to see both the original and new buildings before entering, orienting themselves to the space and design.

From the exterior the buildings are quite different: Champneys', in both its scale, Gothic-revival vocabulary, and aged sandstone exterior, has an ecclesiastical tone. 'Most people think it's a church,' says Pritchett, which is a problem because they don't realise it's a public space. The new building is smaller, boxier and more corporate. Responding to the tripartite arrangement of the original building with its base, set-back upper two storeys and pitched roof, ASL designed its addition in three parts as well. The ground floor is glazed and features white concrete casings for the columns and ceiling fire-proofing. The middle two storeys, which house precious book collections, are sheathed in green-patinated bronze; and the top floor is set back and encased in glass.

The materials and palette of the extension were derived from the existing structure – the bronze echoes bronze details in the original's interior, while the patina relates to its recently replaced bottle-glass windows. The scale and aesthetic of the new building also relates it to new structures and renderings in Allied London's surrounding Spinningfields development.

Inside the extension, green slate floors pick up the exterior bronze panels and carry users through an entrance area into a grand four-storey-tall atrium. This hall connects the original





structure and its multiple extensions. To the east, Champneys' structure peeks through new walls, which hide ASL's concrete and steel structure. Given the complex exterior of Champneys' design, the buildings cannot sit flush against each other and the apse of the second-storey reading room butts into the extension.

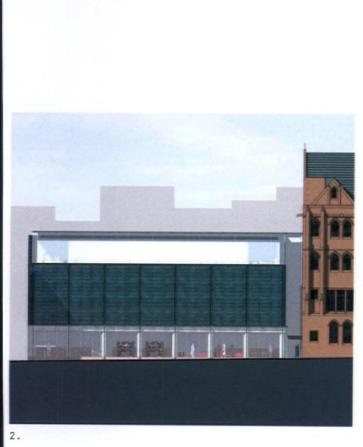
The view from the atrium reveals the architect's task in connecting buildings of differing scales. Because of the requirement for book storage, and because the architect wanted the extension to be smaller than the main building, but with the same number of levels, floor heights between the two are mismatched. As a result, the building contains numerous circulation systems that function in parallel. The public only needs access to the ground and top floors of ASL's and Champneys' buildings, keeping their circulations relatively simple. Employees, however, are worse off. West of ASL's main atrium, the stacks of the new building abut the stacks of the 1920s addition. Because these too have mismatched elevations, they are served by another two staircases, for service use only. Thus the adjacent facilities are inaccessible to trolley-pushing stackers who can't use the (albeit few) stairs that connect them. But the project wasn't designed for employees.

'We really wanted to keep the main player the focus,' says Pritchett, and as such the layout of the dramatic atrium is designed to bring users into Champneys' building. This is accomplished through a threshold that leads to a glass bridge traversing a stairwell and accounts for a 15cm offset in ground levels between the extension and existing floors. For structural and aesthetic

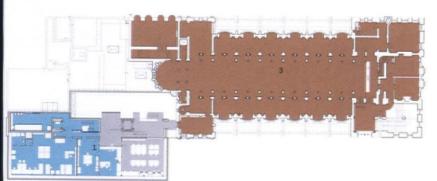
reasons, the original archway was knocked down and rebuilt in sandstone, and now acts as a palimpsest revealing the building's layered history.

Once inside the existing building, ASL's designs go largely unnoticed. Working with conservation architect Lloyd Evans Prichard, the refurbishments included cleaning, new windows, emergency lighting and fire and security systems. The largest new feature is a pitched roof with skylights filtering light into the original clerestories. This is similar to a roof planned by Champneus but objected to by Enriqueta Rylands, the client, for fire-safety reasons. The building is grand, and exhibits doublebarrel as well as fan vaults, stunning masonry, and extensive original detailing. Users pass through numerous double-height gallery spaces and end up at the original entrance. Upstairs is the main room of the existing library - a double-height reading room which remains in use. At the opposite end of the room and through a smaller room to one side is an entrance back into the new atrium, though now users are on the second storey looking down onto the ground floor.

'The main driver of the project was the public circulation; it's a very set promenade,' says Pritchett. Indeed it is: the circular pathway is clearly laid out and demands an ordered progression. But once embarked upon, going from contemporary space to Victorian and back again, is like experiencing a microcosm of the city beyond, and includes its successes and failures in trying to negotiate historical splendour with a modern vocabulary.





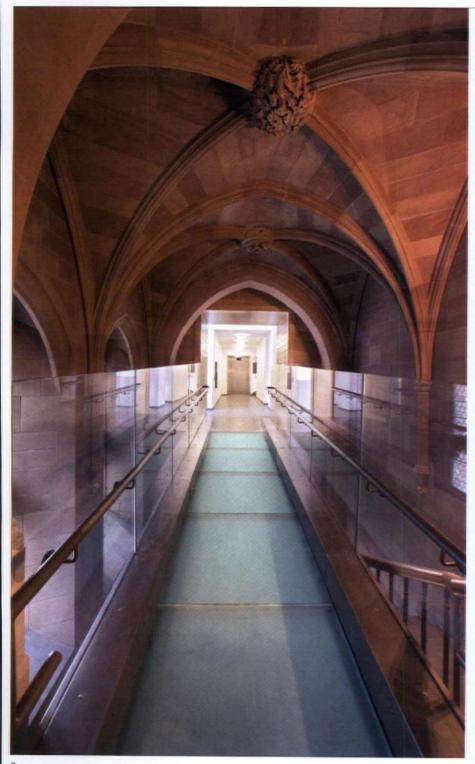


- 1. The extension's top-floor reading room gives users access to the library's archives
- 2. South elevation. Both the original building and the extension are designed in three parts, with the extension's glazed ground storey, bronze-clad middle storey and glass-encased roof responding to the original's base, set-back upper two storeys and pitched roof
- 3. Cross section. Visitors can access the ground and third storeys by the central stairwell and lift core. Additional stairwells serve the book storage stacks used by library employees
- 4. Third-floor plan
- 5. Ground-floor plan

KEY

- 1 ASL'S NEW EXTENSION 2 1920S EXTENSION 3 CHAMPNEYS' ORIGINAL LIBRARY





 Cutaway walls in the atrium frame views of Champneys' original building
 A glass bridge brings visitors from the extension to the main library

Credits

Start on site date December 2003 Contract duration Three years, three months Gross external floor area 2.500m2 Form of contract Standard Form of Building Contract 1998 Edition with Contractor's Designed Portion Supplement Total cost £12.5 million Client John Rylands University Library, University of Manchester Austin-Smith:Lord: Chris Pritchard, Ben Aston, Tomoni Araki, Keith Andrews, Andu Gough, Hoda Nobakhti, Andrea Butter, Glenn Ombler, John Crellin, Wayne Penrith Conservation architect Lloyd Evans Prichard Structural engineer Curtins Consulting Engineers Quantity surveyor Appleyard & Trew Planning supervisor NJSR Chartered Architects Main contractor Linford Building Project manager Davis Langdon M&E engineer Gifford Consulting Engineers Signage and exhibition displays Redman Design Associates Selected subcontractors and suppliers Glazing, curtain walling and balustrades Bridgetown; patination of cladding panels Capsico; cladding panels CGL; slate flooring Aegean; internal joinery Benbow; precast-concrete units Trent Concrete; steelwork Broadhursts; in situ concrete works Framework; mechanical and electrical installations MJN Colston; lifts Kone; fire-alarm systems Defencer; fire-suppression systems Hall & Kay; plasterwork Emerald; sanitaryware MJN Colston; WC cubicles Amwell; timber floors Junckers; ironmongery Essenware Swan; window restoration Pendle Glass; leadwork NorthWest Lead; roof slating Bradford Roofing; stonework and plastering Linford Building



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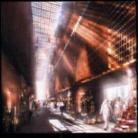


















TECHNICAL & PRACTICE / UPDATE





2.

1 & 2. Potential renewables like biomass are often compromised by the availability of sources — in this case wood pellets

UKGBC WANTS PRAGMATIC, NOT PRESCRIPTIVE, SOLUTION TO CARBON SAVINGS

The UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) says the current debate over the future of the Merton Rule, which requires 10 per cent renewables on new properties, is overshadowing 'pragmatic' debate on carbon savings.

The government is set to address the future of the Merton Rule, named after the London borough which pioneered it, in a draft Planning Policy Statement to be released in the next few months.

The regulation has been adopted by over 150 local authorities but is being reconsidered due to concern over disparate local approaches to carbon emissions and the possible imposition of a national standard.

John Alker of the UKGBC says the organisation backs the rule, but that 'there is a pragmatic aspect to the discussion that is being missed – nobody is talking about what gets maximum carbon sayings'.

UKGBC technical coordinator Jules Saunderson says: 'The Merton Rule has forced people to stand up and take notice, but it can force projects down sub-optimal routes. A blanket standard on renewables is not the most effective route to reducing carbon emissions.'

For example, says
Saunderson, the long-term
viability of renewables in urban
situations is limited, because
biomass is the only consistently
reliable renewable for a dense
urban site. Solar and wind are
unpredictable because they can
be obscured, and earth-coupled
systems require digging, which
is often infeasible.

And biomass is limited by the supply of clean wood that can be turned into wood pellets. 'There isn't enough biomass to go around,' says Saunderson. UKGBC estimates of availability of wood within a 40km radius of London indicate that the supply is only adequate for three years of new housing development, according to the the London Plan.

The UKGBC says it also favours more ambitious

standards for commercial buildings, in line with the targets for domestic buildings in the government's Code for Sustainable Homes.

To this end, Arup is leading a study where several building-services consultants will pool energy-performance data about recently completed office buildings. BRE chief executive Peter Bonfield explains that this data will be peer-reviewed by the BRE so that 'evidence-based standards based on current state-of-the-art technologies can be developed to assess where robust savings can be achieved.'

EVENTS

Part L Seminars

11 Sept, Part 1

13 Sept, Part 2

9:30am - 1:00pm

RIBA, 66 Portland Pl.

London W1

www.merlin-events.co.uk/
buildingregulations.html

Low Carbon and Renewable Technologies Workshop Sept 12, 9:30am-12:30pm BRE Innovation Park, Watford www.bre.co.uk

Introduction to the new CDM
Regulations for Designers
All day workshop
Sept 11, Birmingham
Sept 13, Bristol
Sept 19, Glasgow
www.ciria.org.uk

Network for Comfort and Energy Use in Buildings Sept 20, 18:15 - 21:00pm The Building Centre 26 Store Street London WC1E www.buildingcentretrust. org

TECHNICAL & PRACTICE

MAKING BUILDINGS FLEXIBLE TO HANDLE MATERIAL MOVEMENT

Written and illustrated by Austin Williams

In this latest in our series of NBS Shortcuts, illustrated guides covering a wide range of regulatory and practice issues, we look at how building materials can expand or contract and how movement joints should be used to counteract the effect of this.

All buildings are subject to movement. Clay bricks often arrive on site kiln dried and ready to re-absorb moisture. Aircrete/aggregate concrete blocks, on the other hand, tend to retain moisture during their steam-pressurised autoclave curing process and are more likely to shrink in normal atmospheric conditions. Furthermore, the 'excess' water used in concrete mix to give it suitable workability qualities will gradually evaporate, causing concrete shrinkage and resulting in possible cracks in the concrete itself or gaps between the concrete and surrounding materials.

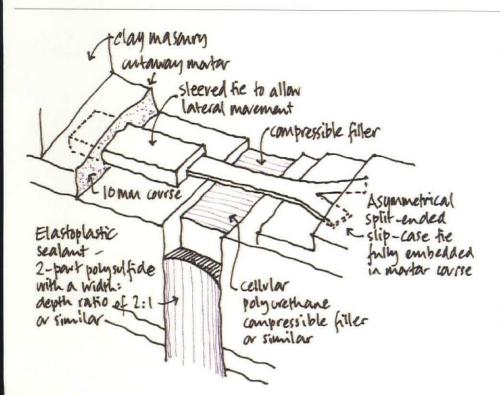
Allowances must be made to accommodate these changes where possible. When fired-clay wall and floor tiles expand, for example, which is particularly likely in warm, wet areas, a soft sealant joint, as opposed to grout, should be included at 3-4.5m horizontal and vertical centres. Also, as recommended in BS 5385, these movement joints should pass right through the thickness of tile, bedding and rendering to the background, and the tiles must not bridge structural movement joints.

A movement joint is a break in the structure that has been designed to accommodate dimensional changes in the materials that make up that structure or structural element. Movement joints are equally appropriate to non-structural applied materials, such as

render or tiling. Where large areas of clay bricks are used in a wall, for instance, the expectation is that they will expand cumulatively, increasing the overall length of the wall, resulting in pressure on neighbouring structures that will not move in a similar fashion. BS 5628 Code of Practice for Use of Masonry, assumes that normal-storey-height masonry walls expand by around 1mm/m over the lifetime of the building, and that this is an irreversible process. This rate of expansion can be minimised if the walls are restrained by buttresses, floor joists, straps, etc. As far as the National House-Building Council is concerned, movement joints in clay-brick walls must be at maximum intervals of 15m (or a maximum 10m in unrestrained situations like parapet walls, etc.).

A movement joint effectively breaks the wall into manageable panel sizes, tied in to the remainder of the wall (or structure) for stability and continuity. In this way, the cumulative expansion can be handled more easily and sensibly. The width of a joint (in mm) should be about 30 per cent more (in numerical terms) than the distance between joints (in metres). So if the distance between joints is 15m, the joint should be (15+5)=20mm wide (although given that this is the maximum spacing, guidance should be obtained from manufacturers to ensure that the chosen sealant is suitable).

In domestic properties, movement joints are not normally required for inner-leaf blockwork, because the 6m dimension at which contraction becomes a significant problem will seldom be reached. However, in larger buildings a 10mm movement joint



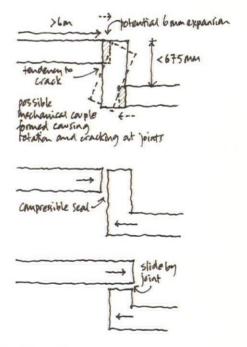
1. A typical movement joint in clay masonry. Expansion joints should contain a flexible filler that can compress to 50 per cent of its original thickness. Filler material should maintain a recess from the face of the wall to accommodate the waterresistant sealant such that the width:depth ratio is 2:1 or 1:1 for elastoplastic sealants or 1:1 or 1:2 for plastoelastic sealants. In masonry cavity walls, at least one end of a slip-case tie must be 'sleeved' to allow the masonry to move around it without dislodging the tie embedment

filled with weak mortar, hemp, fibreboard or cork should be provided in order to accommodate shrinkage in blockwork panels in excess of the 6m dimension.

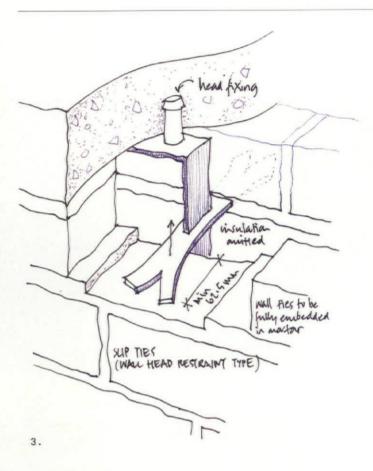
Movement joints should be located at changes in direction or wall-thickness, and start at least one half of the recommended centre-to-centre dimension from a return. They should also run the full height of the element, and joints in the substructure must be carried into the superstructure. In traditional cavity construction, wall ties which would otherwise be fixed at 900mm horizontal and 450mm vertical centres are reduced to 300mm in both directions surrounding the movement joint.

Wall ties play an important stabilising role across movement joints and need to be firmly bedded or fixed in place. BS EN 845 – 1 Specification for Ancillary Components for Masonry, covers various types of masonry ties (superseding DD 140-2 (1987) Wall Ties: Recommendations for Design of Wall Ties). Cavity-wall ties are classified into asymmetrical or symmetrical, horizontal, slope-tolerant or movement-tolerant; the latter being defined as a 'cavity wall tie which is designed to allow large in-plane differential movements of the walls, without generating large shear stresses, by the use of flexible body materials, free-running slot systems, articulated joints or other means'.

BS EN 845 covers a range of wall-tie materials, from copper to polypropylene. Stainless-steel flexible ties between a timber inner leaf and an outer brick leaf should be austenitic stainless steel to grade 1.4301 (to BS EN 10088–1:2005) screwed



2. Where there is a return to a movement joint in a clay masonry wall of 675mm or less and one of the adjoining lengths of brickwork wall is more than 6m, then the pressure exerted by the long wall may rotate the return brickwork. In this instance, a compressible seal or a 'slide-by' joint is required. In a calciumsilicate and concrete masonry wall its length:height ratio should not exceed 3:1



	clay	calcium silicate	scanc. bick) natural of	parapet walls
Joint width (man)	16	10	10	10	10
usual joint spacing (m)	12	7-5-9	6	15-20	half previous figures
Additional information	15 m max spacing	max length: height = 3:1 compressible seals cut max 30 m crs		max Bm from corners	may 1.5 m from corners

3. Slip ties are divided into 'general purpose' and 'wall-head restraint'. Head-restraint slip ties, also known as sliding anchors, restrain a masonry panel to a horizontal structural element such as a floor or roof slab, but allow differential vertical movement between the masonry and the structural element. General-purpose slip ties allow the transmission of shear forces between two adjacent sections of masonry while allowing plane movement

4. Table showing the width and spacing needed for movement joints in a variety of building materials

or nailed to the timber framing members. (Copper should be to ISO 1461, and polypropylene must meet the heat, durability, elasticity and distortion requirements of BS EN 845–1:2003 Table A.3.) When considering the type and placement of wall ties, bear in mind the requirements of sound attenuation in Building Regulations Approved Document E: Resistance to Sound. The dynamic stiffness of a wall tie determines its ability to transmit vibration/sound and 'Type A' wall ties are generally recommended for this purpose. Type A refers to butterfly ties across 50mm and 75mm cavities with a minimum masonry thickness of 90mm, but Type A can also apply to ties of appropriate measured dynamic stiffness to suit the cavity. These are the default choice of wall tie, whereas 'Type B' is required for instances where Type A fails to meet the requirements of Approved Document A: Structural Safety.

Austin Williams is the author and illustrator of NBS Shortcuts. For more information visit: www.thebuildingregs.com

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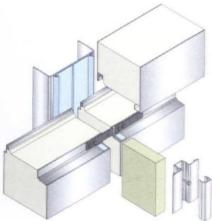
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SADVILLE, OR BUILDING A NEW VIRTUAL REALITY?

When the Inland Revenue starts trying to nab people for not paying tax on transactions carried out in the virtual world, Second Life has just about come of age. But who wouldn't prefer playing computer games to hunting tax evaders?

Of more direct interest to us is Second Life's expanding architectural dimension. I've just had an e-flyer about a Second Life Yona Friedman show; Princeton University has a Second Life campus; there's the Bartlett House (acclaimed by the Guardian as Second Life's most accomplished mansion); and blog Arcspace at www.arcspace.com/ html/sl/html, has set up a virtual community there. 'Twelve high-rise buildings on the beach each with nine two-story apartments and a ground-floor shop.' Arcspace has also joined up with RL Architects and Real Life Education in Second Life.

At http://archsl.
wordpress.com, interesting
and thoughtful topics such as
'Rich Interchange Formats for
Objects in Second Life' and
'The Space Between the Real
and the Other Real' are
discussed. Which leads us to
suspect that, just possibly,
Second Life is more than a
vehicle for young, unbuilt
architects. Or Sadville.
sutherland.lyall@btinternet.com

TIME TURMOIL

Apparently easy questions are often the trickiest, writes *Sue Lindsey*. I struggled recently when asked by an offspring why we had to pay to park in an empty car park. My response – paying the car-park warden – understandably elicited a puzzled frown. A similar expression can often be seen on the faces of construction professionals who ask the seemingly innocent question of how long they remain liable after a project has finished.

The answer is that the time within which a claim has to be brought is governed by the Limitation Act 1980, and periods of three or six (or possibly 12 or 15) years apply to different sorts of claim.

So far, so good. But, in an attempt to limit architects' exposure to claims, the RIBA standard terms of appointment include a clause that says the architect cannot be sued more than six years after the services are completed or after practical completion. This is considerably shorter than the period that might otherwise apply. The RIBA probably included the clause because, as a general rule, construction professionals are at risk of longer exposure than contractors. As a consequence, construction professionals can often find themselves sued after the time limit for suing the contractor has expired. This clause, and what it means, has recently

been the subject of debate in the Technology and Construction Court (Oxford Partnership v Cheltenham Ladies College).

In a reversal of the position that the clause seems intended to guard against, Cheltenham Ladies College tried to use it to extend the time it had to bring a claim. The relevant breaches occurred well before practical completion, but, the college argued, it had until six years after practical completion to bring a claim.

Mr Justice Ramsey disagreed however. He decided that the clause did not displace the protection the architect otherwise had by virtue of the Limitation Act, but that it added a contractual constraint on the time in which the college could bring claims.

Before you cut yourself a piece of cake and eat it, you might pause to consider three things. First, properly advised clients are unlikely to sign up to the clause without amendment, particularly now its effect has been spelt out. They can argue, with some force, that Parliament intended them to have the benefit of the time limits allowed by the Limitation Act, and there is no good reason why they should sign a contract that gives them less.

Second, there is every chance that the clause, if used in a contract with a 'consumer' (anyone acting outside their profession, perhaps someone having work done to their house), might be found to contravene the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contract Regulations.

Third, another question: one purpose of standard terms of appointment is to save the parties the time and expense of negotiating individual terms, so why include a term that many commercial clients will want to renegotiate, and that is potentially unenforceable against non-commercial ones?

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

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REVIEW / SCOTTISH SPECIAL

EXHIBITION

By Johnny Rodger

Shifts. At The Lighthouse, 11 Mitchell Lane, Glasgow, until 14 October



1.

Concern about Scotland's spreading urban midriff in the belt between Edinburgh and Glasgow is nothing new. Back at the beginning of the last century, pioneer planner Patrick Geddes, inventor of the word 'conurbation', coined the term 'Cludeforth' to apply to this whole settlement area. But with the current housing shortage, and doubts about the necessity and efficacy of green belts, a new exhibition at the Lighthouse, 'Shifts', brings a timely fresh look.

Developed through workshops held in April, the show claims to project us 'into the future of Scotland's Central Belt'. On the Lighthouse's invitation four Scottish architectural practices have developed 'scenarios' and propositions that suggest how the area will evolve over the next 50 years.

A sequence of coffin-length cabinets stretches east-west through the gallery, at once imitating and mapping out the geographical spread of the conurbation. We open each cabinet in turn and find details of the various projects.

Once we get over the mind-numbing repetitions of the latest urban and architectural buzzwords (like 'governance') and the obsession of Scottish urban commentators with the success/failure of Cumbernauld New Town as a future city, we find that this exhibition is really about the ways we inhabit and use space now.

To paraphrase curator Florian Kossak's remarks in the introductory video to the show, 'the making of future projections liberates us from the micro-level problems of day-to-day management'. The

problem with the planning and development of Scotland's central belt is that – because it is split into countless different municipal, local-authority, city and town-council jurisdictions – there has never been a comprehensive policy for it.

Yet if there are utopian strains to this exhibition, then the worthiness that inevitably comes along with that is, thankfully, mitigated here by a good deal of historical and critical analysis.

In, for example, 'The Counter Tectonics', practice Cadell2 bases its proposals for 'activating the inter-urban landscape' of 2057 on a most enlightening study of how ancient volcanic and Ice Age action has dictated patterns of settlement here. Beyond the topographical exigencies imposed by such ancient events, we're reminded that attempts to

exploit the resulting geology – the deposits of coal, iron ore and shale – also dictated the nature of human habitation and activity.

Again, when we examine Collective Architecture's 'The Muckle Canal', it is not the somewhat banal vision of a huge canal built through central Scotland over the next 50 years that inspires. It is rather the fine, detailed history in words and images of the actual construction of canals across the industrial belt, and their economic, social, and urban impact over the last couple of centuries.

It's with the 'proposals' of the other two practices, Groves Raines Architects Studio (GRAS) and Voluntary Design & Build, that we see a more concrete examination of the future in relation to the past. GRAS conjures up images of



- 2.
- 1. GRAS' Slow Park proposal, which imagines
- a Pompidou Centre along the M8 motorway
- 2. A view of the exhibition at the Lighthouse

the conversion of the Glasgow-Edinburgh M8 motorway into a 'Slow Park', for public use, and Voluntary Design & Build explores the potential for reuse of what is now pejoratively called SLOAP (Space Left Over After Planning) – the sort of nondescript green spaces and humps of earth we find near motorway roundabouts or housing schemes from the 1960s and '70s.

And it's with this last project in 'Shifts' that visitors can have the most fun.

Voluntary Design & Build has provided a tear-off pad of perspective drawings of the sort of '60s and '70s Scottish low-rise housing developments found in towns like

Cumbernauld, complete with acres of grassed open space around them, and using rubber stamps bearing images of huts, gardens, playgrounds etc, we're

invited to fill up the gaps on the torn-off sheets.

But naturally we all know that when they were created, many architects and planners thought these open spaces were a great idea – they were the orthodoxy of the time. So the satirical edge to this exercise ought never to be lost on architects attempting to create a vision of the future – for today's architectural buzzword is always tomorrow's SLOAP.

Johnny Rodger is a writer who teaches at the Mackintosh School of Architecture in Glasgow.

There will be a seminar at the Lighthouse on Tuesday 2 October to discuss the issues raised by the show and launch the accompanying publication. Visit www.thelighthouse.co.uk



CRITIC'S CHOICE

By Andrew Mead

From today until 9 September this year's Heritage Open Days, co-ordinated by the Civic Trust and English Heritage, will see free access to a wide range of properties across the country (www.heritageopendays.org.uk). They've been staged since 1994 but were prompted, at least in part, by a rather earlier initiative — *London Open House*. This was founded in 1992 by Victoria Thornton, still its director, who ran a company that specialised in architectural tours and had a bulging book of contacts.

Unlike Heritage Open Days, Open House does not limit itself to builings of historical significance. 'We're not about heritage — we're about architecture and quality in design,' says Thornton. That doesn't mean that historic properties are missing from the 600-strong list for this year's Open House weekend (15-16 September) — far from it. You can visit the Grade I-listed little Georgian church of St Mary's, Wanstead, the Robert Adam interiors of Home House, Portman Square, the opulent Victorian state rooms of the Foreign Office & India Office — and much else. But from the start, contemporary houses have always been among the event's biggest draws.

Other public favourites in recent years (along with the Foreign Office) have been Foster's Swiss Re and City Hall and Hopkins' Portcullis House. Thornton's team approaches the buildings' owners individually, and if some targets prove elusive at first – as the Bank of England did, for instance – 'we keep knocking and the doors eventually open'. I asked Thornton if she still had a hit-list, but she said 'not really'; the challenge was more to keep abreast of new developments and try to gain access to them.

Open House has spawned equivalents in Dublin and New York; it's now something of an institution. But when you thumb through the latest programme, it's not just the high-profile attractions that strike you but the broad range of buildings that are featured – workplaces, housing estates, and schools (like Studio E's Larmenier & Sacred Heart, pictured above). The event puts a focus on everyday design and is helping to raise the bar (www.openhouse.org.uk).

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

Malcolm Fraser's The Drum, at Boness, West Lothian

EXHIBITION

By John Deffenbaugh

Test of Time: 70 years of the Saltire Housing Awards.

At the Scottish Executive, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, until 28 September and the Marischal Museum, University of Aberdeen, from 5-28 October

The Saltire Housing Awards, funded by the Scottish Office, were seen as a way of raising the quality of housing at a time when much of the country's population lived in squalid and cramped conditions.

The Saltire judging panel, including prominent architects such as Robert Matthew and Hugh Wilson (of Cumbernauld town centre fame), rewarded local authorities and architects who responded creatively to the demand for new housing. Their findings are presented here on large-scale panels and in video footage, categorised by the prevalent theme of each decade. As a result, 'Test of Time' is not simply a housing retrospective; it provides us with an insight into the psyche of Scotland's politicians and its people at a time of incredible upheaval.

We see the extreme urgency to provide new homes

colliding with a general disregard of traditional forms such as the tenement. Political drive to ensure Scotland was at the forefront of housing design accelerated this process, leading to the polemical developments of citu-centre tower blocks and suburban new towns. Within just over a decade, however, and jaded by the high-profile failures of the 1960s, Scotland abandoned its utopian dream. The stigma once attached to tenements would now afflict Modernist housing, paving the way for a revival in the tenement's fortunes which lasted throughout the 1990s.

By then, the delivery of Scotland's new homes was firmly in the hands of the private sector. As new 'tenements' were being constructed within city centres, rural and suburban areas came to be characterised by brick shoeboxes jockeying for position around disconnected cul-de-sacs. It's telling that while 'Test of Time' categorises the 2000s as 'Suburbia and the Market', only one project, Malcolm Fraser's The Drum (in Boness, West Lothian), is highlighted as an example of successful suburban development.

This raises the question: are we in danger of repeating the mistakes of our predecessors? While Modernist housing is still maligned, there are lessons to be learned from sensitive Modernist developments. Monumental failures in Glasgow's Gorbals continue to overshadow the many successful examples of humane Modernism, which drew on characteristics associated with traditional living but employed a contemporary architectural language to embody the spirit

of their period. Surely this would be a good starting point for new housing developments, rather than relying on a retro language that says little about modern Scotland.

'Test of Time' shows the importance of a balanced view in considering the housing we have inherited, and shows too the dangers of what can happen when entire genres are disregarded. But, promisingly, there are schemes under way, such as Hypostyle's proposals in Craigmillar and the work of Page/Park in both Craigmillar and Glasgow's Gorbals, which hint at the emergence of a contemporary identity in Scottish housing. They take their cue from that earlier humane Modernism and there's not a faux-quoin in sight.

John Deffenbaugh is an architect/ planner in Edinburgh



A selection of the posters that make up GLASmanual

REVIEW

By James Pallister

GLASmanual: a limited edition poster pack on the work of GLAS.

Back numbers of GLASpaper can be downloaded from www.skratchdesign.co.uk/ glaspaper.

GLASmanual can be ordered from j.charley@strath. ac.uk

GLASpaper is no more. The sporadic newspaper produced by a cooperative committed to 'fighting all manifestations of social inequality, exploitation and deprivation [through] theoretical and practical critique of the built environment' has called it a day. If declarations like that have you reaching for the Nurofen, then steady on. This motley crew of architects. teachers, writers and activists succeeded where so many selfconsciously 'political' groups fail - by packing a hefty polemical punch without becoming humourless.

The GLAS (Glasgow Letters on Architecture and Space) cooperative originated in discussions around Jonathan Charley's table at the University of Strathclyde. Its publications were locally rooted but global in outlook, with pieces ranging from the closure of Glasgow's Govanhill pool in the first issue to a trip between the EU states of Estonia and Slovenia in the last – 'On the Edge'. The members set about their subjects with gusto and intelligence, combining reportage, interviews, photography and spoof ads neatly set on (now yellowing) newsprint.

Having realised its intent to be temporary and declared itself defunct, the collective has published GLASmanual – a set of eight posters providing a snapshot of the work it produced in the newspapers, which in turn distils into print the more wide-ranging community action it engaged in. Eight slogans are emblazoned on the claret cardboard sleeve in goldblocked type, each relating to a 'tactic' the group used in

tackling the built environment. The titles are Imagine, Protest, Listen, Observe, Inform, Satire, Critique and Act.

It's apt that the last word is in the imperative - GLAS wasn't afraid of getting its hands dirty. Using a threewheeled Fiat Ape minivan as travelling display-unit, the collective went on its Urban Cabaret roadshow (documented in issue two), touring Glasgow for 14 days and handing out GLASpaper along with tea and biscuits. Reactions were mixed: they were well-received at a Gala Day in Govanhill but chased out of Possil by a gang of youths.

The natty package of GLASmanual will be a boon for agit-prop enthusiasts and typography geeks alike, but the real meat is in the newspapers themselves. They're sometimes grim reading – like the graphic

description of a refugee's journey from Afghanistan to England and back again via speedboat, lorries and internment camps over five years (also in issue two). But if you're plunged into despondency, humour should sugar the pill. A photo from the Urban Cabaret report shows the Ape with Strathclyde police headquarters looming over it, and the tiny van points a large red arrow toward the building's fouer with the caption, 'A cause of inequality, segregation, and repression within the city' - a witty appropriation of the 'I'm with Stupid' arrow.

GLASpaper was light on its feet, with a cheery contrariness that defied any ideological pigeonholing. Even in retrospect, its criticism is invigorating, with a healthy dose of the absurd that stops it ever becoming pompous.



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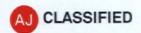
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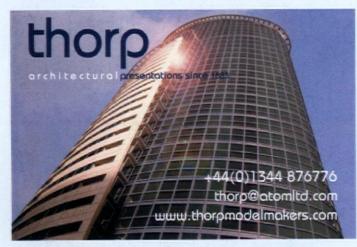


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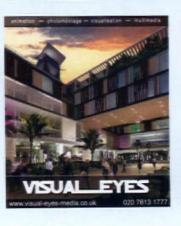








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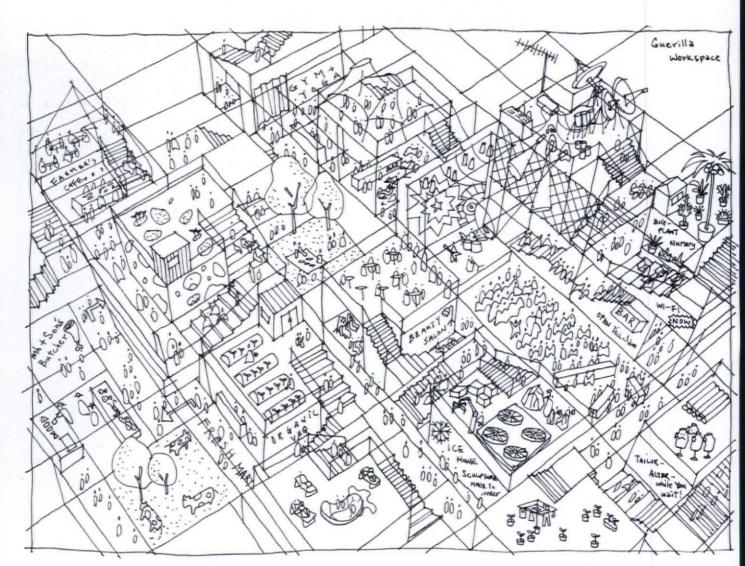




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