

29.05.08

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screw for the job – p42*

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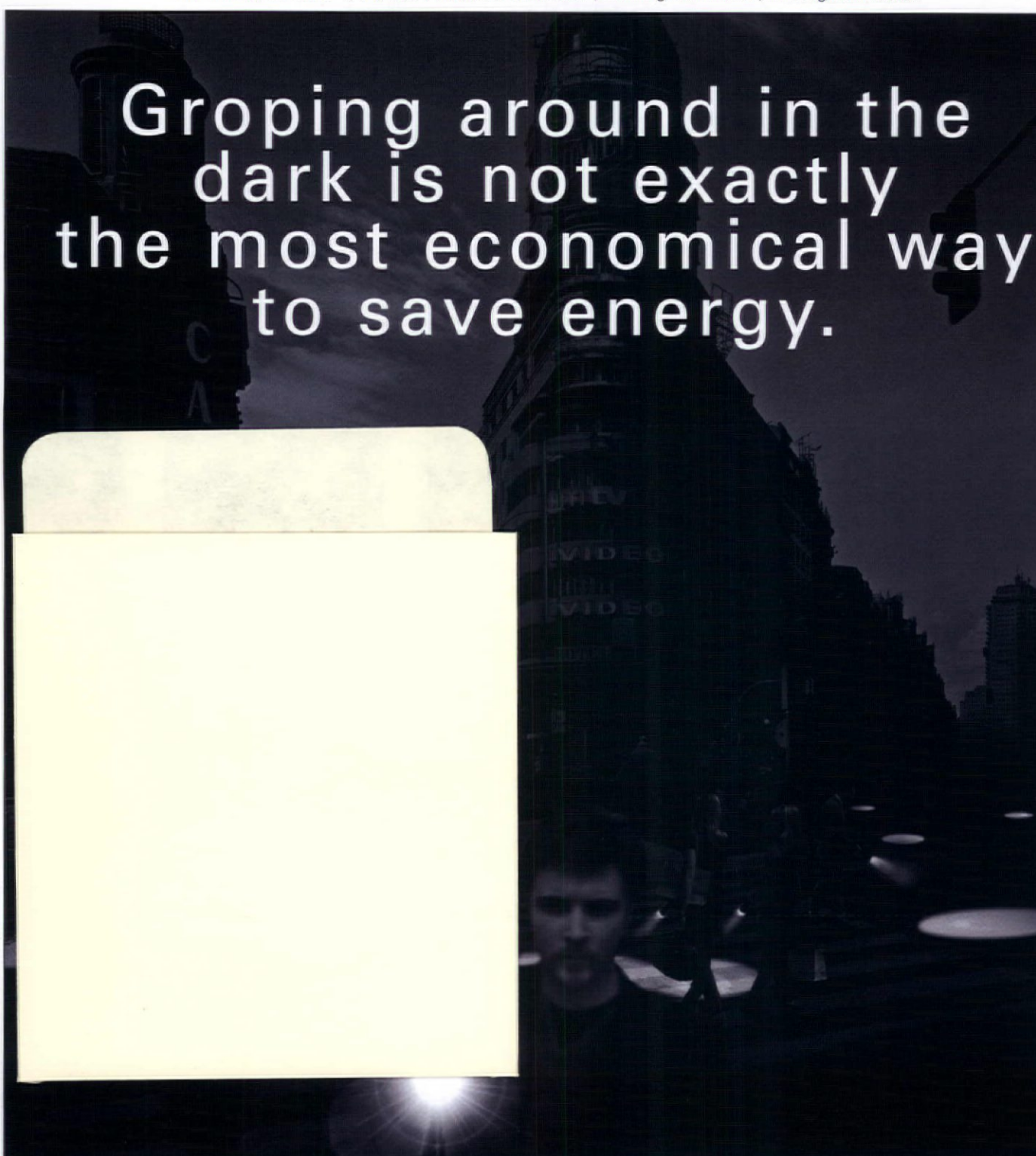
AJ

CULLODEN BATTLEFIELD VISITOR CENTRE

Gareth Hoskins Architects' memorial near Inverness – page 24

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URBAN SPLASH



*The Tribeca Infobox design competition has attracted entries from some of the most exciting young architects in the country. The winner will see their proposal for a £500,000 marketing pavilion built next summer. The building will be the public face of a 720-unit housing development which will be built by award-winning developer Urban Splash on Great George Street in Liverpool over the next eight years. Come and see the beautiful, the radical and the strange in a unique exhibition of architectural models and ideas.

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Till takes over at Westminster University p6

Munkenbeck + Marshall set to split up p10

Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners' Mike Davies proposes car-free Thames links p12

News

Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners had planned to extend IM Pei's 1986 building



ROGERS LEAVES TROUBLED JAVITS JOB

Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (RSHP) is to play no further part in the high-profile redevelopment of the Javits Convention Center, in New York.

The split follows a two-and-a-half-year-long saga which has seen Roger's original competition-winning plans to expand the existing 1986 IM Pei building (AJ online 28.09.05) significantly scaled-back.

According to local sources, the Jacob K Javits Development

Corporation board feared incurring a further \$20 million (£10 million) in architectural fees for what is now being described as a much smaller renovation and 'modest extension' project.

The board had already aired its concerns over an estimated \$41 million (£20 million) in fees (spread across 25 different consultants), racked up on the initial, aborted scheme which would have created 130,000m² of additional exhibition space as

part of a \$1.4 billion (£700 million) overhaul.

That plan was ditched earlier this year amid growing uncertainty about land around the centre earmarked for the scheme.

However it is understood RSHP's US collaborators on the project, FXFowle, will be retained by the scheme's backer, the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC).

ESDC spokesman Warner Johnstone said: 'RSHP – in full

agreement with the ESDC and its joint venture partners – believes that the present objectives are best served by the client working with a local team and has withdrawn from its role as lead designer.'

RSHP, which landed the job in 2005, refused to comment.

One source close to the project said: 'The designs are still being worked up from the [RSHP] plans. It'll be a good project for New York.' *Richard Waite*

JEREMY TILL TO HEAD WESTMINSTER SCHOOL

Jeremy Till is to leave Sheffield University to take up the top post at the University of Westminster's school of architecture and the built environment in London.

The move to the capital ends a nine-year-long association with the South Yorkshire university, where he is currently the director of architecture.

Till, 51, will become dean of the Westminster school in October and will replace outgoing dean Alan Jago who has moved up to a pro-vice chancellor role.

In 2005 Till unsuccessfully ran to become chairman of the

Architectural Association – and was beaten by Brett Steele – although later that year he was chosen to curate the 2006 Venice Biennale and focused his exhibition on the regional cities.

According to a spokesman from Westminster, Till is a 'sometimes controversial design critic' who has 'cemented himself as one of the leading figures in UK architecture.'

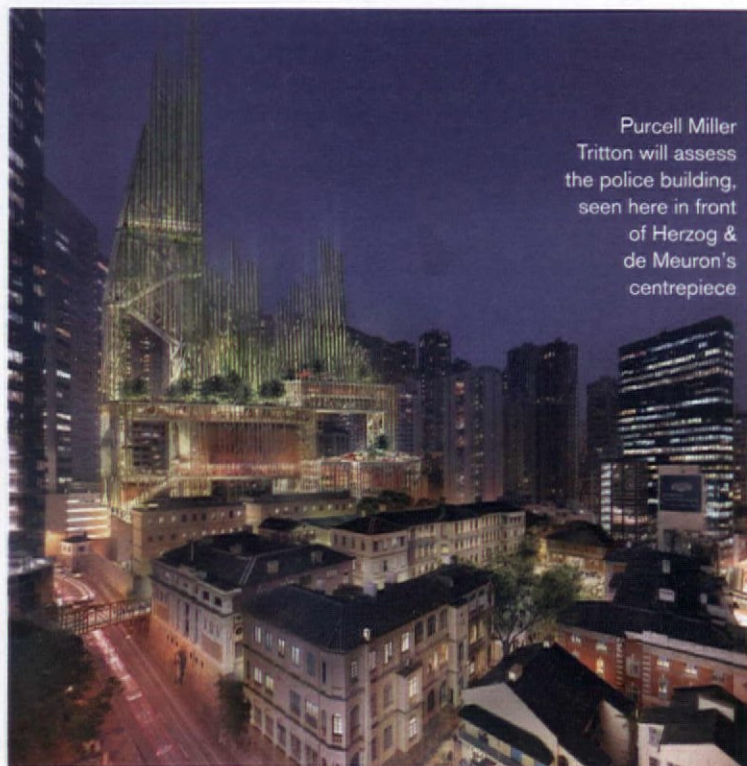
Till said: 'The built environment is such a complex beast that it needs a range of approaches to address any issue; Westminster is one of the few places in the country that is able to provide

this joined up-research and thinking.

'It is also an opportunity to contribute to the development of one of the world's great cities. I am interested in the idea of the public intellectual – how academics might contribute to the wider good; the school is in a perfect position to do this in relation to urban and design issues that will be critical to building a sustainable and green future for London.'

Till will keep his role as a director and consultant with his partner Sarah Wigglesworth's practice. *Richard Waite*

PURCELL MILLER TRITTON LANDS HONG KONG JOB



Purcell Miller Tritton will assess the police building, seen here in front of Herzog & de Meuron's centrepiece

Purcell Miller Tritton (PMT) has been appointed to work alongside Herzog & de Meuron (HdM) on its development of Hong Kong's historic Central Police Station Compound (CPSC).

PMT has been tasked with compiling a conservation-management plan for the compound's 27 buildings by the site's owner, the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC).

The centrepiece of the new HK\$1.8 billion (£100 million) regeneration project is HdM's 'porous' cultural complex which, according to the HKJC, has been 'designed to resemble Hong Kong's bamboo scaffolding'.

When completed it will house an auditorium, a black-box theatre, art cinemas, a gallery and a multipurpose exhibition space, as well as food and beverage outlets and an observation deck.

Max Thompson

THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

2008 RIBA AWARDS REVEALED

Allford Hall Monaghan Morris Architects is one of this year's big hitters with four projects shortlisted among the 2008 RIBA Awards. Overall, 92 projects are rewarded by the RIBA, with Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios and John McAslan + Partners each having three schemes featured.

RITCHIE HITS OUT OVER POTTERS FIELDS

Ian Ritchie described Southwark Council and developer Berkeley Homes' decision to drop his practice from the Potters Fields scheme on the South Bank as 'regrettable' and 'beyond the issue of architecture'. Ritchie, who designed eight cylindrical residential towers for the site, was dumped in favour of Squire and Partners last week after an agreement was brokered between the council and the developer.

NEW URBANIST DUANY JOINS THE BRE

American architect Andrés Duany, the man responsible for new urbanist town Seaside, featured in the hit movie *The Truman Show*, has joined forces with the BRE. Duany, who is also working on a 5,000-home masterplan near Inverness, will work with BRE to launch the dynamic masterplanning programme. This scheme will help create more sustainable communities, with the first earmarked for Hertfordshire.

FINAL CALL FOR TENT LONDON ENTRIES

This year's Tent London event is calling for final entries from as-yet 'unrecognised architects' to test their mettle in its 2008 'fast-architecture competition'. Part of the London Design Festival, the Workspace Group Urbantime Project is calling for the design of a 6 x 5 x 4m structure that can be built in 48 hours and disassembled in 24. The final deadline is Tuesday 10 June.

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SCHÜCO

What is SCHOSA?

SCHOSA is the Standing Conference of Heads of Schools of Architecture; it is a body that represents the heads and through them the schools that they are part of. It's described as a standing conference because it is an ongoing conversation. We meet regularly during the course of the year and once a year we have a conference. That conference meets for a day and a half to discuss issues relating to education, such as Europe or climate change. It's an opportunity for us to share good practice and discuss ideas.

And what are your hopes for the future of the organisation?

SCHOSA has been extraordinarily effective in representing the schools and lobbying for change,

and sharing thoughts with third parties, most notably with the ARB and the RIBA. And that has led to the process we are now involved in, which is the creation of a single QAA [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education] benchmark covering the full five years of architectural education. That offers the possibility of there being a single point of reference for the ARB, QAA and the RIBA.

And what are the advantages of that?

There are several. The most critical one is that the QAA benchmark is a much less onerous process for validation and prescription, and crucially allows for more flexibility in designing our courses and more flexibility in where we deliver the criteria,

which allows for more creativity, more specialism and diversity.

What else can SCHOSA achieve?

I think SCHOSA is a very rigorous forum for testing and sharing conversations around education and education's relationship to research, to practice, to consultancy and to our students. I want SCHOSA to become active in all of those debates, where those seeking opinions about the future of architectural education can come and talk. We should be able to speak with a collective voice.

Tell me about your academic career.

I graduated in 1983 [from the Architectural Association] as part of the group NATO [Narrative

Architecture Today]. It was a time when there was a very particular economic situation in relation to Thatcherism and a strong relationship between practice, education and what was happening in the art world and politics. I eventually took over Diploma 10 [a diploma unit at the AA] from Nigel Coates. We worked in quite difficult political environments – in West Belfast during the peace process, in Tiananmen Square just after the riots. And of course in London.

What did you do when you took over as head of London Metropolitan University's School of Architecture in 2000?

Under Helen Mallinson's leadership the school had been incredibly strong and I was very privileged to inherit that. I would

'WE NEED A COLLECTIVE VOICE'

Robert Mull, newly elected head of the Standing Conference of Heads of Schools of Architecture, tells *Kieran Long* that the organisation will become more strident in the debates surrounding architectural education



say I brought this concept of the duty of care. It's a diverse school, but there's a marvellous sense of responsibility to something beyond just architectural culture.

How do you answer those who say universities are not preparing students for practice?

There are very many models of what constitutes preparation, from skilling to enabling students to have enough self-confidence to be effective in the workplace. I think it's a partnership between all parties to refine what the correct mixes of those different skills should be. I've seen a genuine change in the last eight or nine years in the way that students see their duty of care. They are absolutely concerned with doing something useful, exercising responsibility to

society, addressing issues like climate change, and a lot less interested in the currency of fame. That gives me optimism.

What other challenges are there for architectural education?

We are all extremely worried about funding changes. We are beginning to understand the effect of top-up fees, and the potential lifting of the cap on top-up fees, which could happen as early as 2009, which would mean that the amount of money that a student will need to borrow would rise dramatically. We all feel that students whose backgrounds mean they have a fear of debt will slowly and quietly move out of the system, and that the profession and education will be impoverished as a result of that.

WHO'S WHO IN SCHOSA

- The heads of all 42 RIBA- and ARB recognised architecture schools in the UK (and those with candidate status) are members of SCHOSA.
- The previous chair was Kate Heron, head of the University of Westminster School of Architecture.
- The vice chairs are Iain Borden (Bartlett), and David Porter (Mackintosh School of Architecture, Glasgow).
- The council also includes: Peter Beacock (Northumbria University), Gordon Murray (Strathclyde University, Glasgow), Oren Lieberman (Kent Institute of Architecture and Design), Signy Svalastoga (University of East London), Richard Parnaby (University of the West of England, Bristol) and Geoffrey Makstutis (Central Saint Martins, London). The secretary is Chris Ellis.

MUNKENBECK + MARSHALL BOSS CONFIRMS SPLIT IS PLANNED

After months of speculation, Stephen Marshall of Munkenbeck + Marshall has confirmed that the practice is planning to split.

Marshall and co-founder Alfred Munkenbeck currently operate out of separate London offices – Marshall from one in Islington and Munkenbeck from one in Shoreditch – and employ a

total of 28 architects between them.

Marshall refused to put a date on the official split, but said the separation, which follows more than 20 years of partnership 'would happen'.

Although Munkenbeck denied the split was planned, a source at studio confirmed the state of affairs and told the AJ that

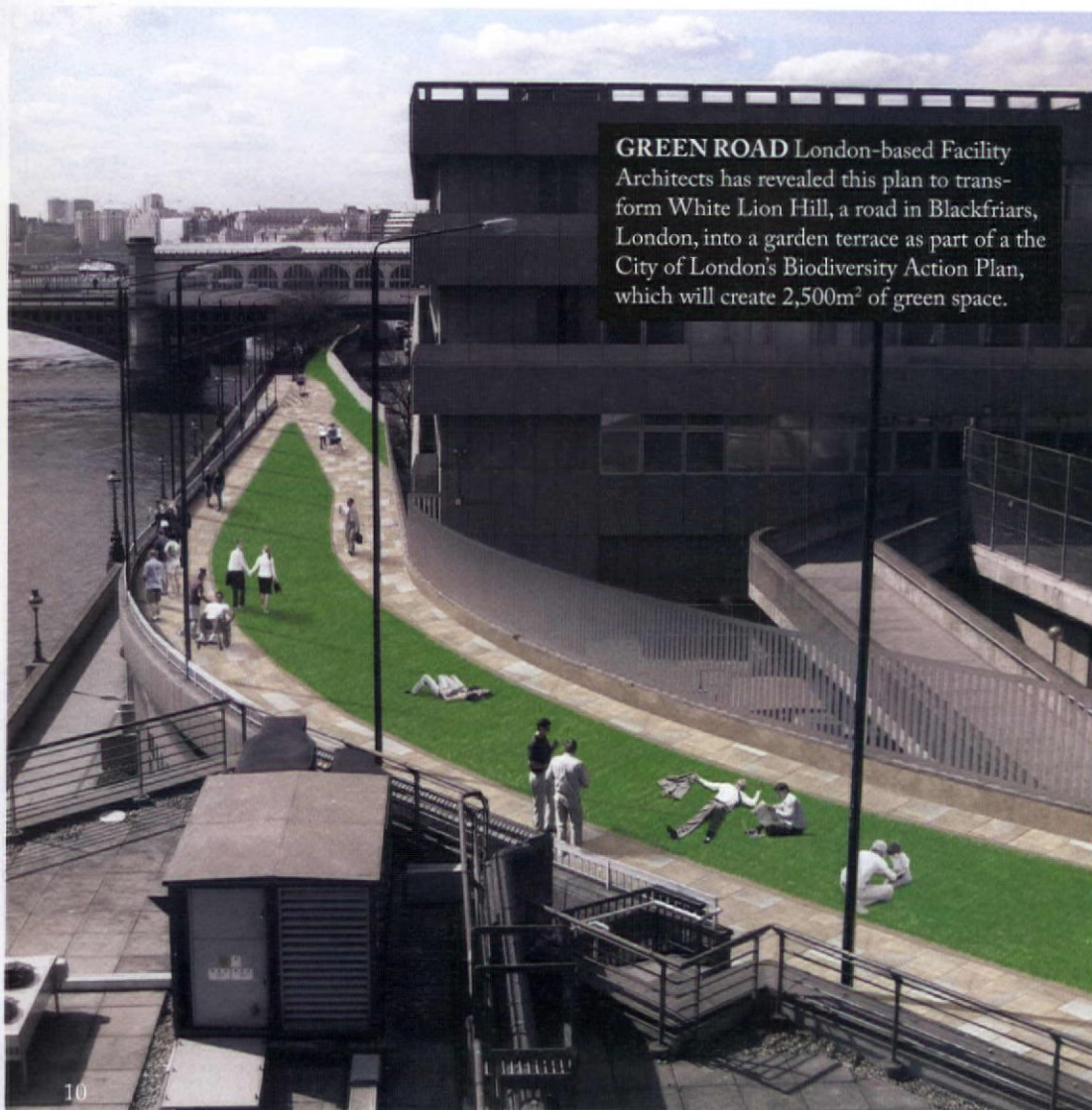
despite having 'one accountant working for both', the offices effectively 'operated separately'.

In November the firm was one of six to be singled out by Lend Lease to draw up plans for the core of the Athletes' Village from an initial shortlist of 47 practices.

However, while Glenn Howells Architects, Ian Ritchie Architects, Lifschutz Davidson

Sandilands, Penoyre & Prasad and Patel Taylor were officially appointed alongside 13 other practices last week (AJ online 21.05.08), Munkenbeck + Marshall is still awaiting news. *Max Thompson*

See Stephen Marshall's Courtyard Pavilion at Roche Court, Salisbury on page 48



CABE MAKES ITS DEBUT AS CLIENT

Block Architecture is preparing to unveil its CABE-commissioned installation in Victoria Square, central Birmingham.

The under-wraps construction – CABE's first ever design commission – will signal the opening of the watchdog's inaugural Climate Change Festival, to be held in the city from 31 May to 8 June.

Matt Bell, director of campaigns at CABE, promised that the festival would 'turn the debate about climate change on its head'.

Although Bell refused to divulge the nature of the winning design before it is erected on Saturday morning (31 May), he said it was a 'familiar object' that had been 'lifted from its usual home and into a city square'.

He added: 'Block Architecture has designed something intended as a poke in the eye, challenging us to think again about the design of the city and the sources of energy needed to power it.'

For further information visit www.climatechange festival.org.uk. *Max Thompson*

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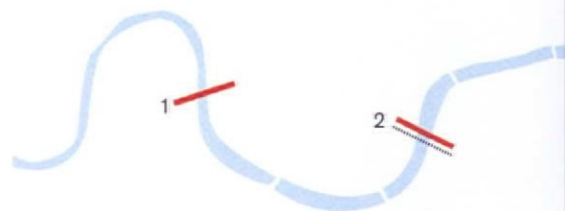
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CROSSING THE THAMES



In the wake of suggestions that Transport for London's proposed £500 million Thames Gateway Bridge in East London should be replaced by cable cars, Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners' *Mike Davies* reveals the firm's proposals for a swathe of car-free river crossings



Once, the River Thames provided a huge defensive barrier and a channel for commercial activity, allowing the City of London to develop into a key trading centre. In recent years, however, the river has become a strong focus for social and cultural activity. With London's population increasing, there is growing recognition of the huge social and economic importance of new river crossings, and the positive impact they can have on opening up previously inaccessible parts of the capital and regenerating parts which have fallen into decline.

As early as the 1890s, Horace Jones' Tower Bridge provided a pedestrian walkway from the rapidly growing area of Bermondsey to Tower Hill. A century later, Foster + Partners' Millennium Bridge has been one of the most spectacular contributions in recent years to demonstrating the very real benefits that new pedestrian links can bring to the evolving cultural and residential quarter around Tate

Modern. Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners' 1979-83 proposals for Coin Street, a little further along the Thames, offered a new pedestrian bridge, springing from the main axis of the scheme beside the Oxo Tower on the south side to Temple and Embankment on the north side. While this was not realised, as a practice we have often speculated on different schemes for improving pedestrian and cycle access across the Thames and its tributaries.

Although our original proposal for the link road bridge across the River Lea in the early 1980s was initially rejected by the now-defunct London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC), the LDDC eventually took the scheme forward, and it has now become a critical component in the infrastructure of East London. Also in the 1980s, our masterplan for the 'Royals' – the Royal Victoria, Royal Albert and King George V Docks – was an urban design

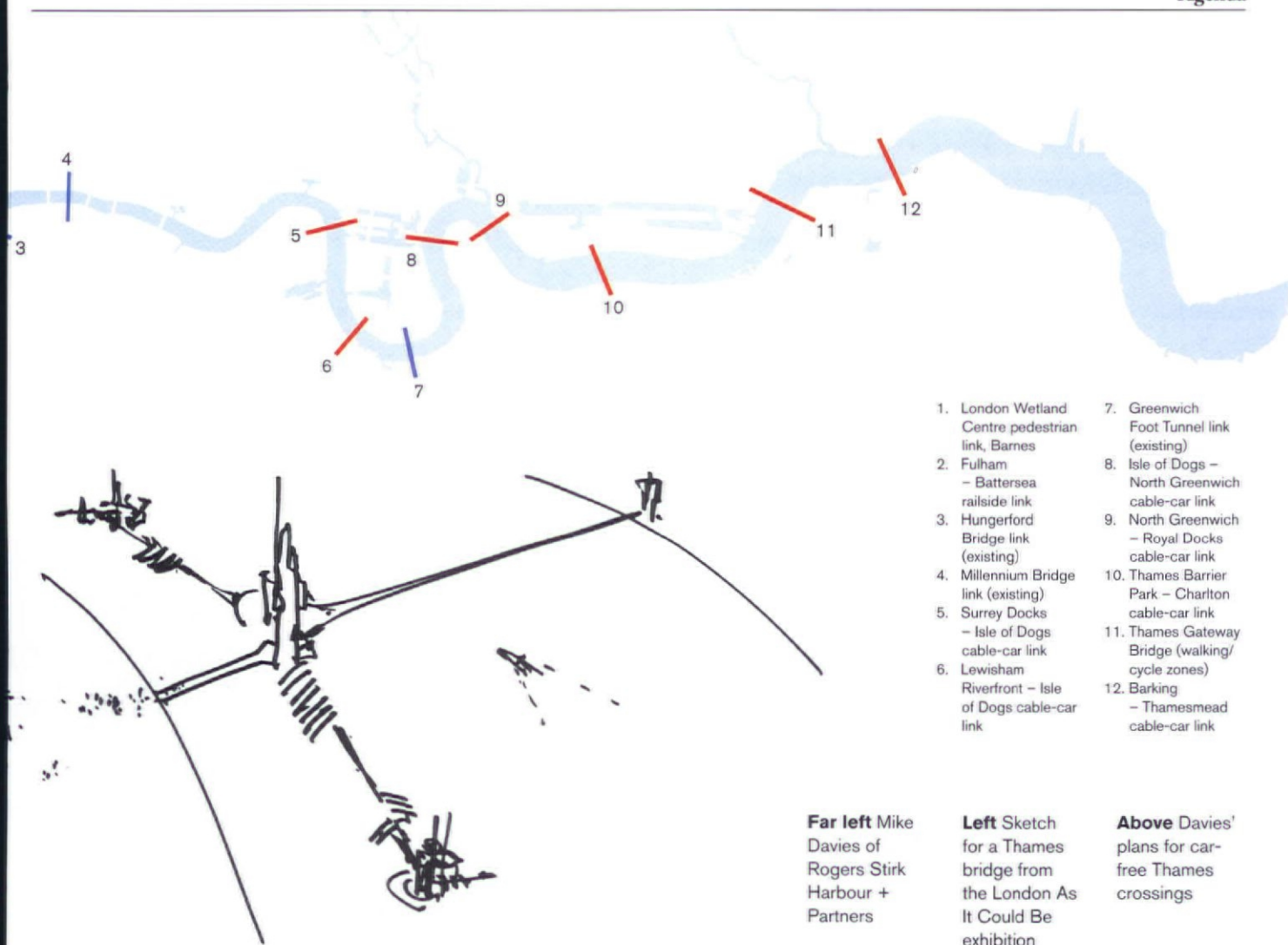
strategy which included the implementation of the East London River Crossing, a major road, cycle and pedestrian route linking north and south London, which is still unrealised today.

The London As It Could Be exhibition at the Royal Academy in 1986 put the Thames at its heart. It proposed a pedestrian bridge and an aerial 'people shuttle' linking the South Bank to Northumberland Avenue and Trafalgar Square. If this had been built, it would have seen the relocation of Charing Cross rail terminus to Waterloo station on

The London As It Could Be exhibition put the Thames at its heart

the South Bank, and the creation of a new lightweight pedestrian bridge to replace the bulky Hungerford railway crossing.

In fact, an alternative realisation of this concept can now be seen in Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands' two spectacular



1. London Wetland Centre pedestrian link, Barnes
2. Fulham – Battersea railside link
3. Hungerford Bridge link (existing)
4. Millennium Bridge link (existing)
5. Surrey Docks – Isle of Dogs cable-car link
6. Lewisham Riverfront – Isle of Dogs cable-car link
7. Greenwich Foot Tunnel link (existing)
8. Isle of Dogs – North Greenwich cable-car link
9. North Greenwich – Royal Docks cable-car link
10. Thames Barrier Park – Charlton cable-car link
11. Thames Gateway Bridge (walking/cycle zones)
12. Barking – Thamesmead cable-car link

Far left Mike Davies of Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners

Left Sketch for a Thames bridge from the London As It Could Be exhibition

Above Davies' plans for car-free Thames crossings

suspension footbridges on either side of the rail link, which opened in 2002. These walkways have already made a significant contribution to improving the accessibility of the area around the South Bank complex, and they demonstrate the power of strategically-placed crossings to transform riverside walkways into pedestrian-friendly havens.

A similar pedestrian and cycle link following an existing rail bridge could be added at Chelsea Harbour between Fulham and Battersea. In addition, near to our own office in Hammersmith we have proposed a scheme for a pedestrian bridge linking the north bank of the Thames with the London Wetland Centre in Barnes. This would, if realised, give visitors on foot and cycle far

greater access to one of London's areas of natural beauty from one of its most densely populated residential parts.

We've also looked at opportunities for implementing cable-car links across the river. Significantly cheaper to construct than pedestrian bridges and with very low visual impact, London could

Well-designed links can become landmarks in their own right

sustain a number of these links at strategic locations. In addition, the much higher clearance constraints to the east of Tower Bridge effectively rule out the construction of viable, fixed pedestrian bridges downstream. We are currently exploring the

possibilities of cable-car links between the Greenwich Peninsula and the Canary Wharf area, and have considered alternative sites such as Surrey Docks to the Isle of Dogs.

Cable cars are by no means a radical approach to addressing linkage issues in urban areas; they already exist in cities across the world, from Cape Town to New York. With few foundation points, slim masts, long spans and virtually invisible suspension wires, opportunities for cable cars can be explored in locations where bridges would otherwise be unacceptable.

Improving connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists across the Thames – especially in East London – is a fundamental element in a green transport

strategy for the capital and beyond. Well-designed links can also create landmark structures in their own right with spectacular views for users.

While I believe that a new strategic road bridge in the Thames Gateway area is necessary to connect the North Circular Road with the southern strategic road links, and to reduce growing pressure on the Blackwall and Rotherhithe Tunnels, any proposals should also include strong provision for cycle and pedestrian use. If this is not the case, then the cable-car option – I am convinced – will offer a low-impact, light-touch solution to the challenge of linking the rapidly growing population of the Thames Gateway in the future.



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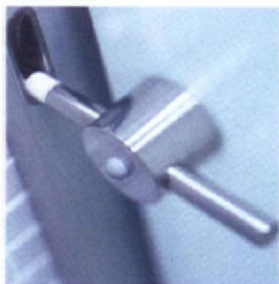
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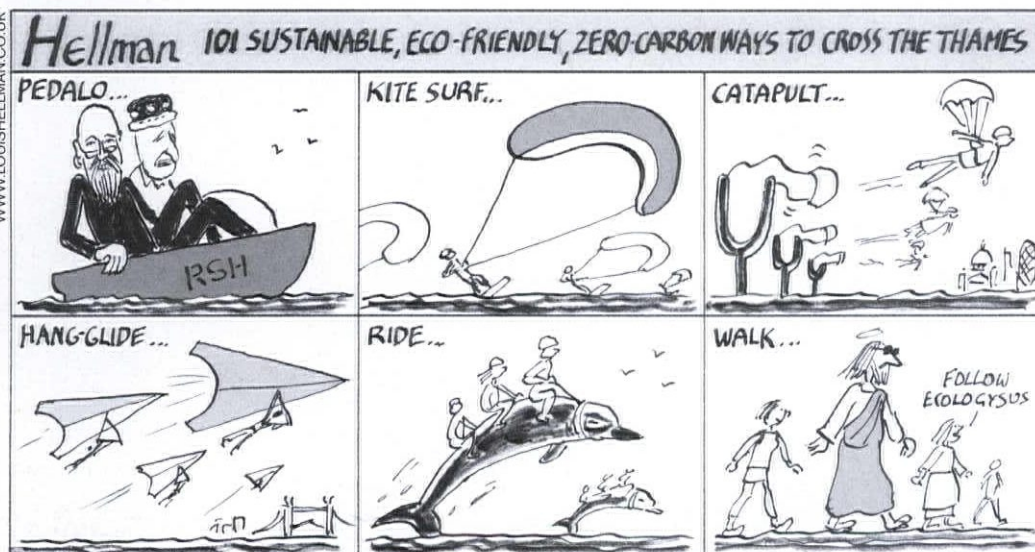
Top pivoted doors enable minimal stainless steel strips instead of large, unsightly metal patches.



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FAN OF THE YEAR

Astragal sends thanks to the unbelievable commitment of Chelsea season-ticket holder **Richard Lines**, senior project manager for Canary Wharf Contractors and speaker at last Wednesday's AJ conference on tall buildings. AJ conferences are pretty important events, but Richard actually chose to pass up his ticket to the Champions League final in Moscow to tell over 200 delegates about his experience building SOM's Pan Peninsula Towers in East London. Richard, we salute you.

STADIUM SALE

The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) admitted this week that it is looking at the possibility of flogging London's £469 million Olympic main stadium – designed by HOK Sport and **Peter Cook** – once the Games have finished. Chicago has emerged as one of the favourites to buy the stadium – the city is in

the running to host the 2016 Olympic Games. Astragal reckons that the idea could develop into a 'flat-pack Games' that could be sold to other host cities. Although while the ODA seems happy to sell temporary stadia, Astragal is unsure that it will also be able to sell meatballs and hotdogs for 80p after purchasing a stadium

PAXO'S PLACE

Astragal was looking forward to a stay at a luxury spa in the Cotswolds over the Bank Holiday weekend with none other than BBC stalwart **Jeremy Paxman**. A couple of years ago the spa, called Lower Mill Estate, was to be site of a mini architectural zoo. A host of names such as **Will Alsop**, **Richard Meier**, **Piers Gough** and **Sarah Featherstone** descended on the estate to design a selection of lavish villas, but it now looks as though only Featherstone's creation will be built. Astragal was most looking forward to chatting to Paxo about architecture and baggy M&S

pants. Imagine the disappointment then upon hearing that the estate is actually owned by developer **Jeremy Paxton**... not Paxman.

RAPID RESPONSE

Astragal popped in to visit Southwark Council's head of planning, **Anne Lippitt**, last week. When asked if Southwark and developer Berkeley were close to appointing a replacement for **Ian Ritchie's** Potters Fields scheme (right), Lippitt grinned and said news was 'imminent'. Imminent indeed! By the time Astragal had pedalled himself through Elephant and Castle,

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over Waterloo Bridge, up Kingsway and across Euston Road to AJ operations centre in Mornington Crescent, a bloody press release had appeared! Still, Astragal presumes it was his expert and accurate probing that forced the council's hand.



THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Would you encourage a young practitioner to enter the European competition? (see right for result)

Next week's question: Should we have cable cars in British cities?

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NO 37% YES 63%



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Leader Students are increasingly ready for practice, and firms must help, not exploit them, says **Kieran Long**

We are entering university degree show season, a time of appraisal and assessment for students, but also for schools of architecture themselves. They will no doubt face the usual carping from recruiters about their graduates' lack of readiness for practice.

But when I interviewed Robert Mull last week (*see page 8*), he told me that he had seen a real change in the attitudes of students in the last decade. And one has to agree. While there are certain schools whose primary concern is to turn their students into potential starchitects, there are many more attempting to forge links with the communities they are situated in. This is prompted by students as much as by their teachers.

Also, the increased importance of sustainability and the integration of technology teaching in the curriculum (both of which I experienced first-hand when teaching at the University of Greenwich) have knitted together the experimental work of the studio more closely with the realities of practice in ways students have found exciting.

The next step is to get further integration with practice, and that process is two-way. Firstly, practices and students stand to benefit from initiatives like the RIBA's teaching practice scheme (a call for interested practices went out in the 24 April RIBA Bulletin). The potential for students to understand the culture of practice in this context, while

earning money, is surely a win-win proposal. But practices must also adopt part of the attitude that Mull describes – a responsibility to things beyond architectural culture.

To use Jeremy Till's (the new head of the University of Westminster architecture school) terms of reference, architecture schools are not and should not be turning out 'oven-ready turkeys' to slot into a CAD station in your office. They are there to produce well-rounded individuals with the potential to take on a multitude of roles in the profession. If practices see the teaching practice programme as a way to get ahead in a competitive recruitment market, everyone will lose out. kieran.long@emap.com

Opinion Will Alsop is wrong if he thinks artists can supplant landscape architects, says **Martin Kelly**

As always Will Alsop has got us thinking from another perspective ('Dear Mayor of London', AJ 01.05.08) and it is an engaging idea to consider that first ideas for the built environment – buildings as well as spaces – should be approached from an artist's viewpoint. However dreams must, as always, be tempered by reality.

While I fully agree that we must continue the programme of improving our public spaces in London, and making them exciting and dynamic, we need to adopt the correct approach and utilise the appropriate skill base. The creation of interesting public spaces for people is achieved by a carefully considered fusion of ideas from a holistic multi-disciplinary team, including landscape architects, artists, architects, space planners, use and movement experts, urban designers, engineers, sustainability specialists, lighting

experts, heritage consultants, promoters/developers and community stakeholders. Landscape architects regularly co-ordinate these roles to deliver this approach.

Of course, artists can take a key role in the teams that deliver interesting public spaces in London, and often assist in both the development and the delivery of the vision. Ironically, this team approach is adopted to prevent the public spaces from becoming institutionalised – at the heart of Will Alsop's criticism – and is fundamental to the delivery

A team approach prevents public spaces from being institutionalised

of unique and exciting spaces. In short, interesting public spaces cannot solely be delivered by any one design profession. To my mind, this smacks of a dangerous renaissance man approach, paper designs that never reach reality. I think it would be reasonable to say that, while artists have an important part to play in the creative design process, they are not pre-eminent, and to suggest such an approach is rather naive.

If Alsop thinks that the landscape architect's role is still solely to identify the species and genus of trees in London

(whether they can or not) then I would like to suggest that he is probably working with the wrong landscape architects!

Finally, Ken Livingstone may well have spent a lot of money improving Trafalgar Square, the success of which is questioned by Will Alsop. However, it is again ironic that this project was delivered by an architectural practice [Foster + Partners] not by landscape architects. Perhaps if the landscape profession had been more actively involved in the design of this project, it may have been better than it was before.

In summary, and contrary to Will Alsop's view, my message to the new Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, is to harness the skills of landscape architects and those best placed to deliver interesting public spaces in London.

The new mayor should treat with extreme caution the advice of those who focus on the design of buildings and not the spaces between them. Architects and landscape architects needs to work together and celebrate each other's strengths and areas of expertise to improve the urban realm for all. [Martin Kelly is managing director of land planning consultancy Lovejoy Capita](#)

Email comment@architectsjournal.co.uk



Patrick Lynch finds that Le Corbusier's Ronchamp Chapel is all about his mother

Some architects, including Alvar Aalto, Le Corbusier and Colin St John Wilson, feel the need to share their experiences and struggles with us in their writing. Vainglorious suffering is in the job description, of course, with a heady dose of self-justifying hubris and sometimes a shot of irony to leaven the pomposity.

There are strong traces of messiah complex in most architects, and this comes across as a

The origin of this audacity lies in part with Le Corbusier, and Flora Samuel's across several books research teases out his complicated relationship at home. She notes that when he was at the RIBA to receive the Gold Medal in 1953, his mother insisted on telling surprised journalists what a good and clever boy his brother was. Samuel writes wonderfully about the way Corb's mother Marie is venerated in

the Christian chapel into a much older form of devotion to feminine nature.

At Cambridge, my old friend Tim Bell wrote an essay called 'Corbu: La Mère et Le Mer', which put forward the premise that Corb's drowning off Cap Martin shortly after the death of his mother wasn't a coincidence. When I asked Tim what any of this had to do with architecture, he replied: 'I'm not so sure, but that was exactly the question that my supervisor Joseph Rykwert asked too, and I couldn't really answer him either.'

Sarah Menin's research has led her to conclude that Aalto's early loss of his mother threw the boy on to the consolation of forests, where he played alone while his father worked as a forester. In later life, he confessed that he preferred to specify timber for interiors because 'the origin of materia is mater', and that wood 'is most like human fibre'. This is so achingly affecting that I cannot help feeling for the grieving boy Alvar, talking to the trees, trying to make them talk back to us.

A mussel shell is embedded in the chapel's concrete in homage to Venus

need to help others. Wilson prefaced his book *Architectural Reflections* (1992) with Aristotle's view that the pursuit of goodness and truth entails distinguishing between 'appetites' and 'need,' and Wilson implies that good architecture resolves the conflict between them. We are taught that good design unites necessity and desire, making a pleasurable synthesis that approaches an ideal of goodness, and good practice is often confused with spiritual or moral values. Aristotle is clear that while we might desire ideals, ethics are based upon 'practical wisdom', and an ethical pursuit like architecture is thus neither science nor art. Ethics derives from ethos, a way of life, and so, presumably, architecture does too.

A malign version of this 'need to help' can be seen in 20th-century attitudes towards housing. Modernist housing liberated us from front doorsteps and gossip and dirt (see right), providing instead fresh air, distant views and sunlight. 'New typologies', as Peter Smithson said, that 'people need time to get used to'.

both the stained glass and the spaces at his Ronchamp Chapel. The door by the revolving statue of Mary is opened by grasping an hourglass-shaped handle, and a mussel shell is embedded in the concrete in homage to Venus, intimating that outdoor worship transforms



'Front doorsteps and gossip and dirt': a photograph by Nigel Henderson of post-war East London

Sam Jacob. Vernacular pizza toppings are the new critical regionalism

Decisions we make about what we eat are shot through with ideas of the natural and artificial, the synthetic and the real. Perhaps our concern over food is so acute because it is the most intimate interface between the industrialised world and us: from field or factory to orifice.

Food is a kind of compressed urbanism – a product of spatial organisation, of place (in the case of regional produce) or placelessness (in the case of processed products). The miles clocked up by vegetables, meat and fish on their journey to your plate can be a pathway through complex logistical maps involving an expansive architecture of infrastructure. These routes are attempts to cheat geography, climate and season. It's the same deal that was struck by Marlowe's Dr Faustus with Mephistopheles, only with technology taking the place of satanic magic. Marlowe uses the idea of out-of-season fruit as an expression of human

desire to over reach into the realm of the un-natural (and therefore ungodly) – and if you listen to recent celebrity chef rhetoric, we are just as morally troubled by our own out-of-season plenty.

Provenance of produce reassures us, just as the materials with which we construct our environments do. Provenance has value because it provides a marker in the shifting sands of globalisation. The idea of place is a means to resist the effects of globalisation: the abstractions of high capitalism and instantaneous electronic communication.

One of these markers is the EU's controls limiting the reproducibility of regional produce in global agriculture. For the EU, this is a political act – a preservation of European intellectual property. Thus the value of thousands of years of European culture is preserved within a regional name, ensuring that Californians or Australians

can never make Champagne. Could other regional characteristics become equally legally enforceable? Should half-timbering, Venetian Gothic, Swedish farmhouses or drystone walls be equally protected?

The International Slow Food Movement argues for the link between place and produce. Things like the Cornish pilchard, the Chilean blue egg hen and Bosnian sack cheese are preserved not just because of their regional provenance, but also of because of the particularities of their production. But Slow Food relies upon the mechanisms of a globalised world – of networks of distribution – to preserve these local peculiarities – an inherently ironic relationship.

These are battles over an idea of the vernacular. They are the same concerns that we have over place – where difference is threatened, where varied typologies are replaced with standardisations. *Critical Regionalism* might be the title of a new TV series starring Heston Blumenthal, as much as critic Kenneth Frampton's architectural response to the perceived 'placelessness' of Modernism.

In a global context, vernaculars shift, and as they do, the values of difference, exoticness and so on shift too. Think of Neapolitan pizza mutating into a deep-pan Americanised version, which in turn is re-exported with squid topping in Japan or Tandoori chicken in England. Maybe in these pizza hybrids we can glimpse a new global vernacularism – you might call it open-sauce design. Perhaps rather than simply resist the perceived erosion of the specificity of place, we should cook up new vernacular versions: post-authentic syntheses of histories, cultures, materials and crafts that chart the changing concept of context.

Below and below right 'Open-sauce' design – a hamburger and hotdog pizza and a macaroni cheese pizza





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Letters

Please address letters to: The Editor, *The Architects' Journal*, Greater London House, Hampstead Road, London NW1 7EJ, fax 020 7391 3435, or email shumi.bose@emap.com to arrive by 10am on the Monday before publication. The AJ reserves the right to edit letters.

EXCESS CONSUMPTION

It is a very good thing that 'out of town' shopping is at last being reassessed ('The Mall Comes Back to Town', AJ 24.04.08).

However, the message of the letter written by Adrian Griffiths of Chapman Taylor ('Urban Wizards', AJ 15.05.08) – that the mall is a 'primary catalyst for major redevelopment', with 'the blending of architecture and design' creating 'mixed-use, retail-led' places – is never going to provide meaning or durable reason for an integrated formation of urban habitat.

Does Griffiths really mean that shopping has become and should continue to be the catalyst for creating the best places to live? A programme for a well-tempered, compact and efficient city cannot be based on a mundane function alone, and must consider the intertwining of our secular and other worldly aspirations with the planet's available resources, including its climate and the location of habitation.

Architects and urbanists, who have a major influence and

impact on our infrastructures, should avoid waste and self-indulgence. Above all they must re-examine how much some of us need to consume. That is, they must re-assess our standard of living before coming up with any guiding wizardry for the future.

The encouragement of excess in the face of having to consume less is clearly absurd, and making shopping a catalyst for urbanism is clearly forlorn.

Julyan Wickham, Wickham van Eyck Architects, London W2

UNDERVALUED

Prior to establishing my own practice four years ago, I had the good fortune to work throughout Europe, from the Netherlands to Norway. I then worked in Richard Rogers' studio in Tokyo before moving to America, with work taking me between Seattle and New York.

After returning to the UK, I established Atelier Bill Collaborative Architects in Norwich. It was my heartfelt desire to utilise my knowledge to provide housing to assist the weakest in society; to inform an environment that uplifts the

human spirit and engages with the aspiration of a sustainable, egalitarian 21st century.

But since then, I have endured nothing but abuse and prejudice from planners against Modern architecture, with Norwich feeling decades behind London.

Occasionally some planners have suggested that they like Modern designs, but that the specific location of the project is not the right place for Modern architecture (although I am yet to understand where this mythical site in Norfolk is).

As an architect wishing to design and create architecture, it is unclear why planners in the UK, often without particularly relevant qualifications, have such huge unaccountable power and the capacity to abuse their position.

I want to contribute to society in the UK, so why does local government waste the knowledge and education of architects such as myself? Having worked in many other countries, which have understood the contribution I am capable of making, it seems madness to continue under this planning system.

But equally, why should I have to leave the UK to feel valued?

Jason Bill, Atelier Bill Collaborative Architects, Norwich

KRIER ON CORB

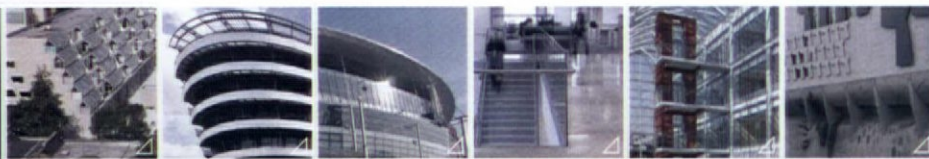
I read with great interest Michael Badu's comments in his letter ('Modern Language', AJ 22.05.08). Indeed, Le Corbusier attempted to develop a grammar and syntax and yet instead of it being universal, his vocabulary is bound up with the use of synthetic materials.

His was a unique talent and it is a tragedy that he should have put such extravagant hopes in shortlived and energy-voracious materials. The translation of his sense of formal drama into the tectonics of natural materials is indeed a great project that lies ahead.

Léon Krier, by fax

CORRECTION

In 'Scotland proposes alternative to PFT' (News, AJ 22.05.08), 3DReid is the practice working on the Clackmannanshire PPP schools project, not Gordon Murray + Alan Dunlop Architects.



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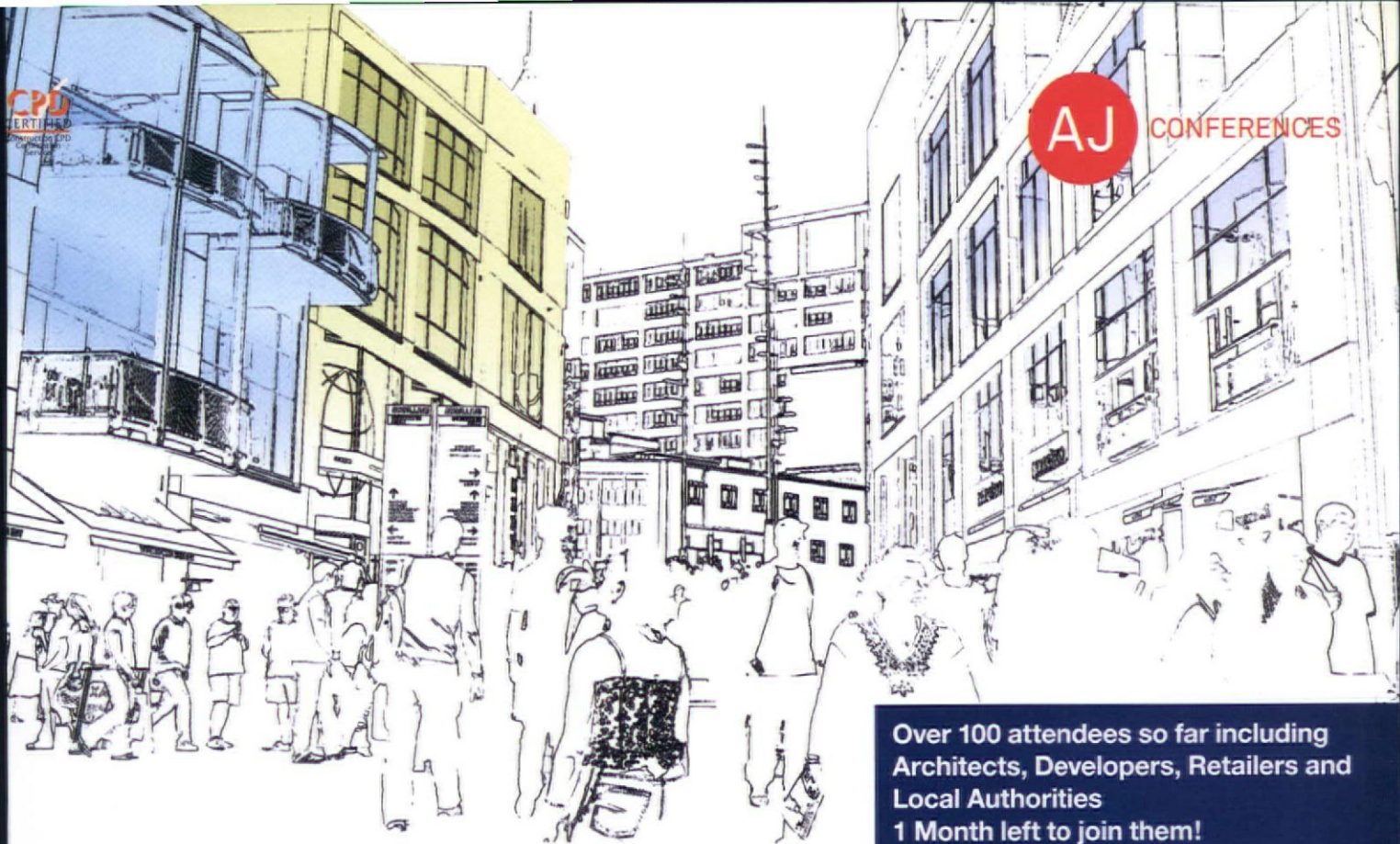
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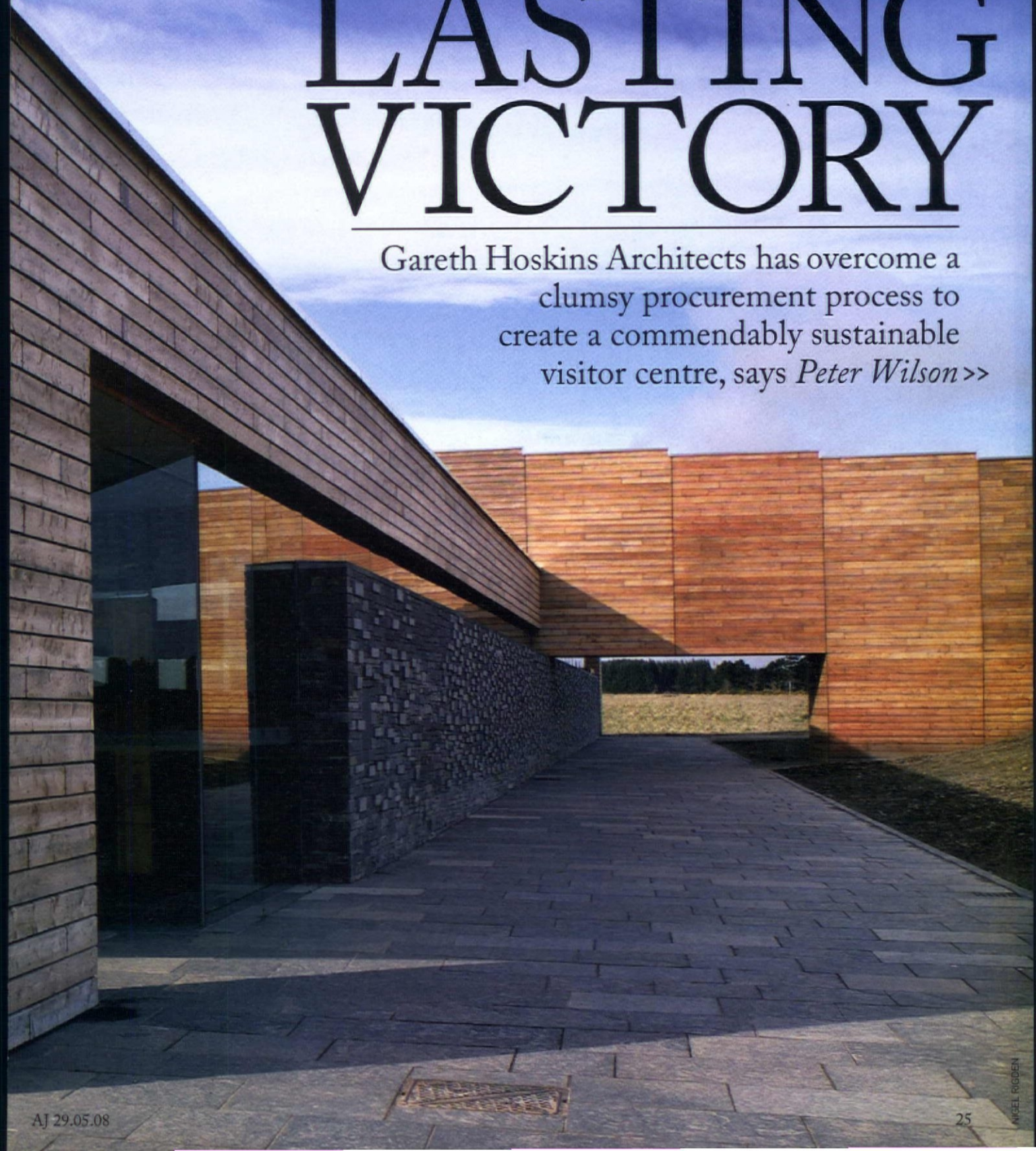
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Culloden Battlefield Visitor Centre, by Gareth Hoskins Architects



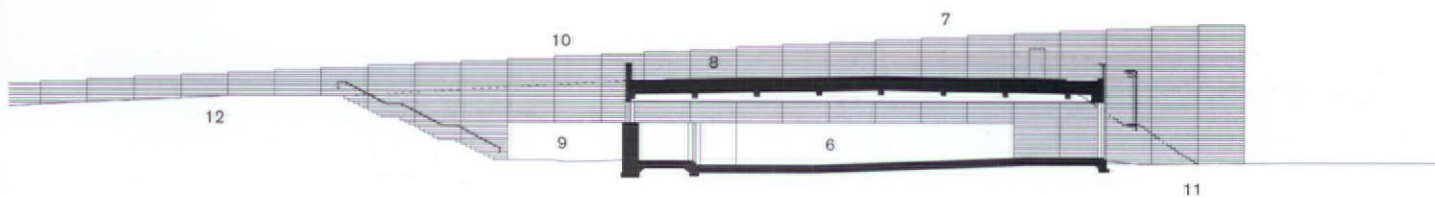
LASTING VICTORY

Gareth Hoskins Architects has overcome a clumsy procurement process to create a commendably sustainable visitor centre, says *Peter Wilson* >>





- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1. Dry-stone wall leading from car park into the building | 4. Restaurant and servery | 8. Green roof terrace | 11. Escape stair from green roof |
| 2. Staff accommodation | 5. Education suite | 9. Direct access to battlefield | 12. Landscaped berm/ramp to green roof |
| 3. Kitchen | 6. Main exhibition space | 10. Public access/bridge to green roof | |
| | 7. Natural ventilation of exhibition space | | |



Cross section

Left The building is clad in untreated larch, sourced from within a 95km radius

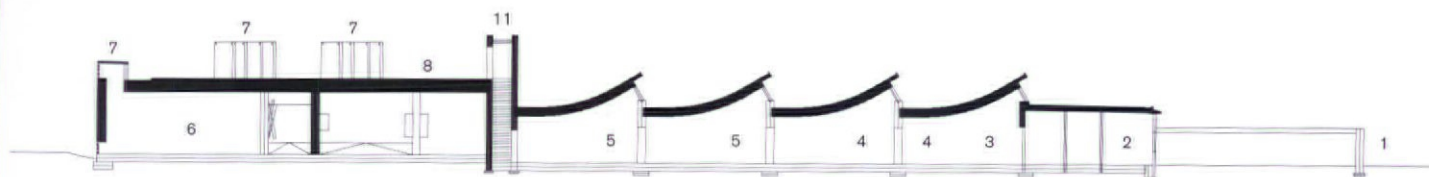


Visitor centres are something of a Cinderella building type: never the bride, always the hand maiden to the main attraction. The first example of a purpose-designed visitor centre in the UK – the Landmark Visitor Centre – opened at Carrbridge near Inverness in 1975, with the (now much changed) building featuring timber cladding and displays designed by the *éminence grise* of exhibition design in Scotland, architect John L Paterson. Fast-forward 33 years to another site near Inverness and another visitor centre, this time at Culloden. Designed by Gareth Hoskins Architects, this centre is still dominated by timber cladding, but it is the building's sensitivity to its site and its environmental credentials that single it out from more mainstream designs for visitor centres, a design response invoked in part by tight planning constraints on heights, views and materials.

Culloden is still an emotive word for Scots, a reminder of one of the blackest days in the country's history and one that has impacted ever since on its national culture, governance

and identity. But Culloden is more than just the story of the 1745 Jacobite Rising; home to a number of scheduled ancient monuments, this bleak moorland 8km from Inverness is recognised as a site of national and international significance. It would be fair to say, however, that until the new £9.4 million visitor centre opened last month, the many visitors attracted to the battlefield would have been hard put to understand what actually happened here on 16 April 1746. True, a small interpretation centre had existed here for many years but its quality had long been recognised as incompatible with the importance and popularity of the location. Moreover, detailed archaeological research showed that it had been built on the position of the government army's second line, so the National Trust for Scotland (NTS), the >>

Culloden is a reminder of one of Scotland's blackest days



Long section

This page A
landscaped berm
gradually inclines and
leads visitors to the
building's green roof





This image Scalloped roofs provide shade and shelter for terraces

Below centre The building's low profile reduces its exposure to cold northerly winds

Below right The battle lines on 16 April 1746



site's protector for more than 70 years, took the decision in 2004 to relocate the visitor centre to another position away from graves and artifacts and to hold an architectural competition for its design.

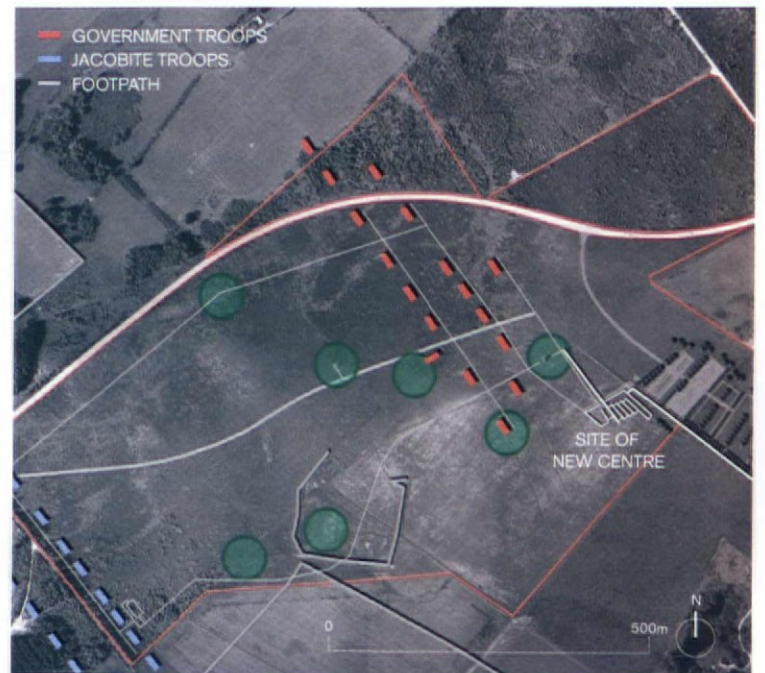
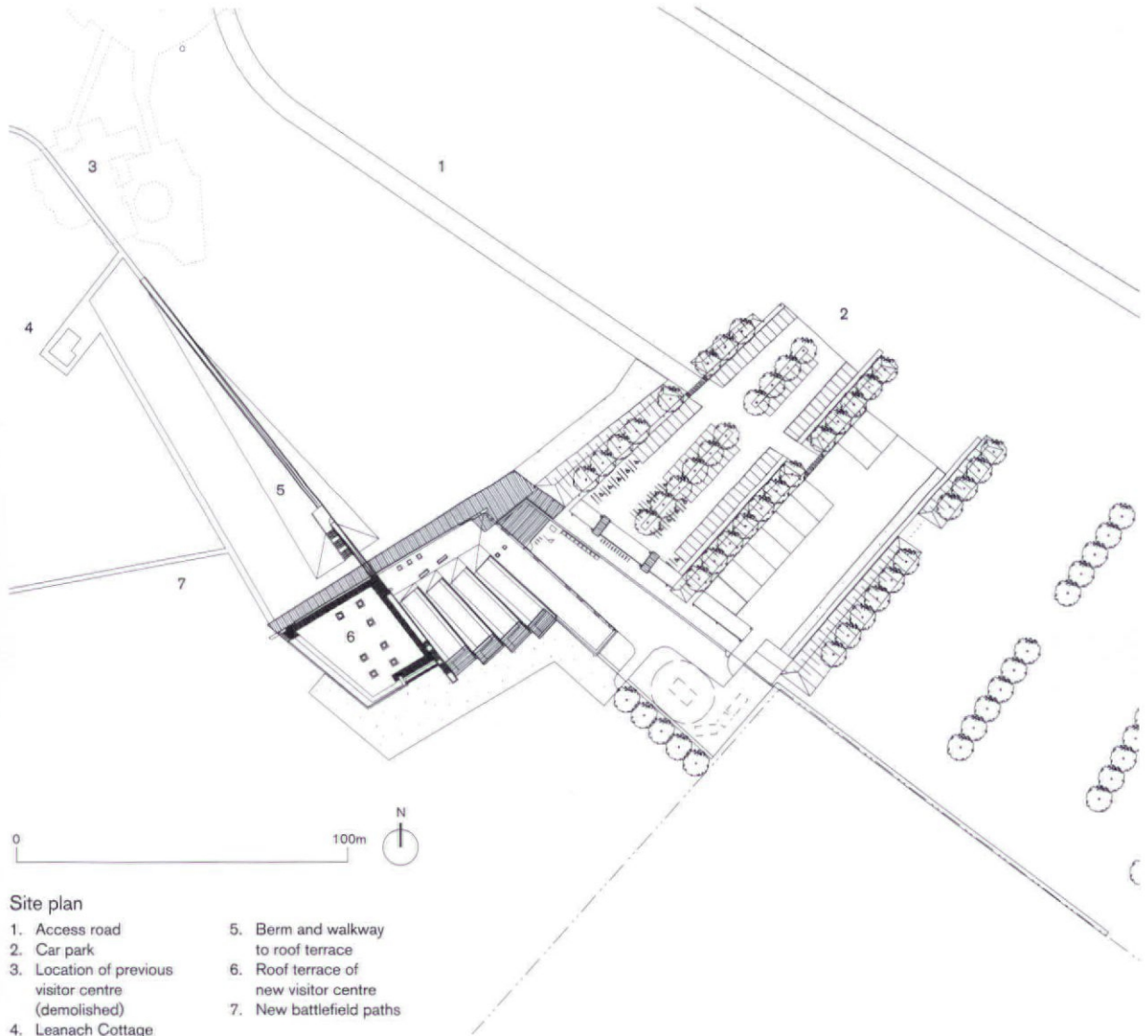
Gareth Hoskins Architects' winning solution is three times the size of its predecessor and designed to service a quarter of a million visitors each year. The new building houses exhibitions and other interpretive technologies to explain the battle itself, with additional education and conference facilities for those who want to explore the subject in greater detail. There is also a 250-seat café/restaurant, a shop and staff/ancillary accommodation.

The project is anchored between an existing field wall and an 80m inclined berm

aligned with what had been the rearmost government lines, a strategic design move that screens visitor traffic from the battlefield while also guiding visitors on to a planted roof terrace that provides panoramic views across the site. When the centre is closed, access to the battlefield is gained via the portal formed by the bridge to the roof, the route to which passes a stone memorial wall for the 1,200-plus combatants who perished there.

The form of the building itself is conditioned by many factors, with its small surface-to-area ratio helping to minimise heat loss and its low profile reducing its exposure to cold, northerly winds. The centre's structure comprises a steel frame on a concrete floor slab with highly insulated timber walls >>

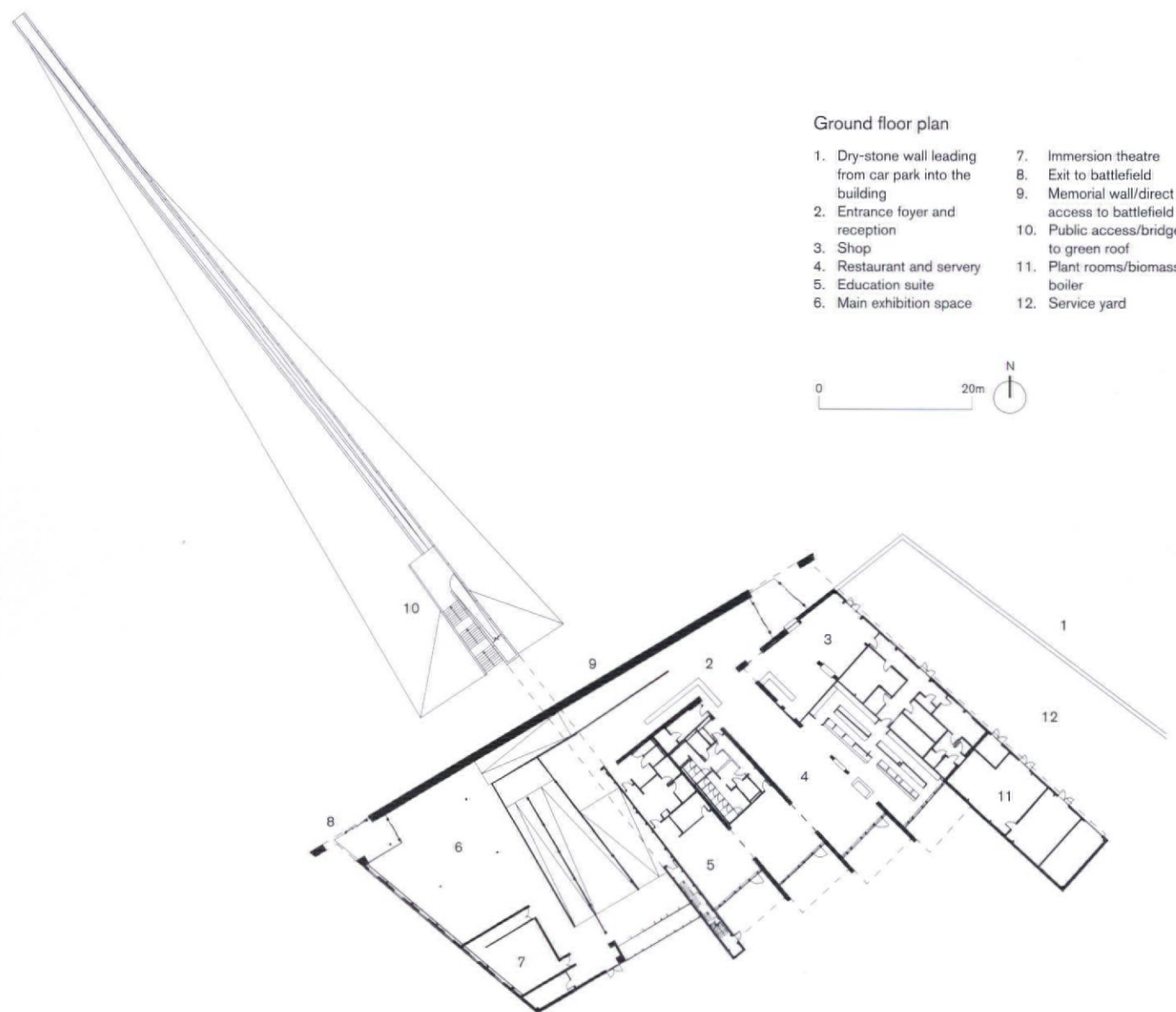




This image

International design firm Ralph Appelbaum Associates was responsible for the unnecessarily flash exhibition design





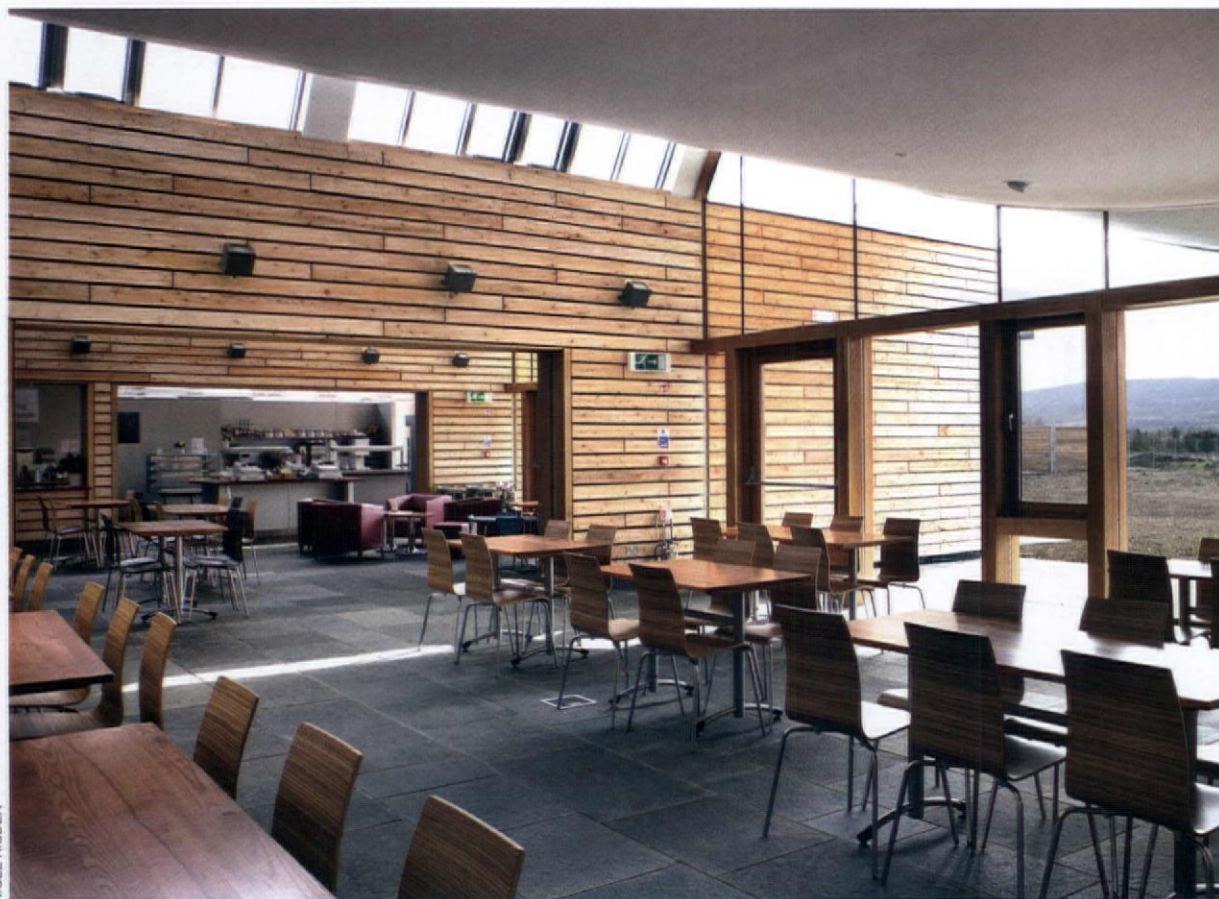
and timber I-beams engineered to support almost 1,000m² of green sedum roof.

Orientation has been used to maximise natural ventilation and glare-free daylight inside the building, the latter facilitated by the use of curved roofs to distribute north-east light via clerestory windows. These scalloped roofs also extend to shade and shelter the building's south-east glazed terraces, with external louvres incorporated into the larch cladding to provide additional shading to the south-facing glass.

And it is the extensive use of this larch cladding that is the most immediately striking

feature of the new centre. The client, worried by the size of the project in comparison with its predecessor, wanted a building that would nestle unobtrusively into its site and use environmentally friendly and locally sourced materials where possible. As a result, the predominant exterior material is untreated Scottish-grown European larch cladding sourced from within a 95km radius. This, together with the finely constructed walls enclosing the service yard that have been formed from site-salvaged rocks and Caithness stone from a quarry some 80km away, meet embodied energy concerns >>

The exhibition fit-out often counteracts the architecture



NIGEL RIGDEN



NIGEL RIGDEN



This image Glazed
terraces provide a
view of the battlefield

Middle left The
restaurant

Bottom left The
entrance area

EWEN WEATHERSPOON

and imbue the building with a strong indigenous character.

But form and construction are only two of the many factors by which a building's success is measured, not the least of the others being the extent to which the critical moves made in the initial design still feature in the final project. In this respect, much is dependent on the contractual route taken, and in this instance NTS' decision to follow a design-build route, which saw the architect novated to the contractor while the services of the exhibition designer (Ralph Appelbaum Associates) was retained directly, has produced an evident gap in co-ordination of the respective design teams' intentions. This decision has arguably been at odds with the

client's ambitions to produce a world-class visitor facility and contrary to the benefits to be had from the design competition process. There is no doubt that the conceptual clarity of Gareth Hoskins' radiated plan for the building has been maintained, but the fit-out of the exhibition makes this difficult to discern in places and indeed too often seems to be acting counter to the architecture. This can be ascribed partially to the late decision to use the main contractor rather than a specialist exhibition contractor to deliver the installation. Coupled with a rush to finish as promised within the Highland Year of Culture 2007, unfortunate conjunctions between interior and exhibition have emerged, not the least being the jarring acoustic >>

*The conceptual clarity
of Hoskins' plan has
been maintained*

collisions caused by overlapping 'interpretive' sound sources. This, combined with a mixture of some fairly clichéd communication technologies and often unnecessary fancy-dan gadgets makes the tour through the building a teeth-grinding experience for the knowledgeable visitor.

Hopefully NTS will trouble to reduce the clashing sound sources to less painful levels, but its ambitions to produce a world-class visitor facility at Culloden will require some serious and self-critical appraisal of what it feels is being achieved by the building's contents. Whether it will do this in the face of the centre's apparent public success remains to be seen, but as custodian of this hugely important site it has a far greater responsibil-

ity to the country's history and culture than the populist and overly commercialised approach it has taken here.

Despite the clumsy procurement process, the architects have successfully maintained their original project concept and produced a highly commendable exemplar of modern, sustainable timber architecture and a visitor facility of genuine quality. In terms of exhibition and interpretive design, the results are markedly less successful and the communicative advances made in this field over the past 30 years are not especially evident here. The exhibition design can always be improved; the architecture, meanwhile, will continue to provide a striking reference point within the battlefield's barren landscape. ■

Tender date December 2005

Start on site date August 2006

Gross external floor area 2,400m²

Form of contract SBCC Scottish Building contract with Contractor's Design 1999 Edition

Total cost £9.4 million

Client National Trust for Scotland

Architect Gareth Hoskins Architects

Structural engineer David Narro Associates

Services engineer Max Fordham

Quantity surveyor Thomas & Adamson

Interpretive designer Ralph Appelbaum Associates

Main contractor Morrison Construction

Annual CO₂ emissions per treated floor area: 14.95 kgCO₂/m²





WORKING DETAIL

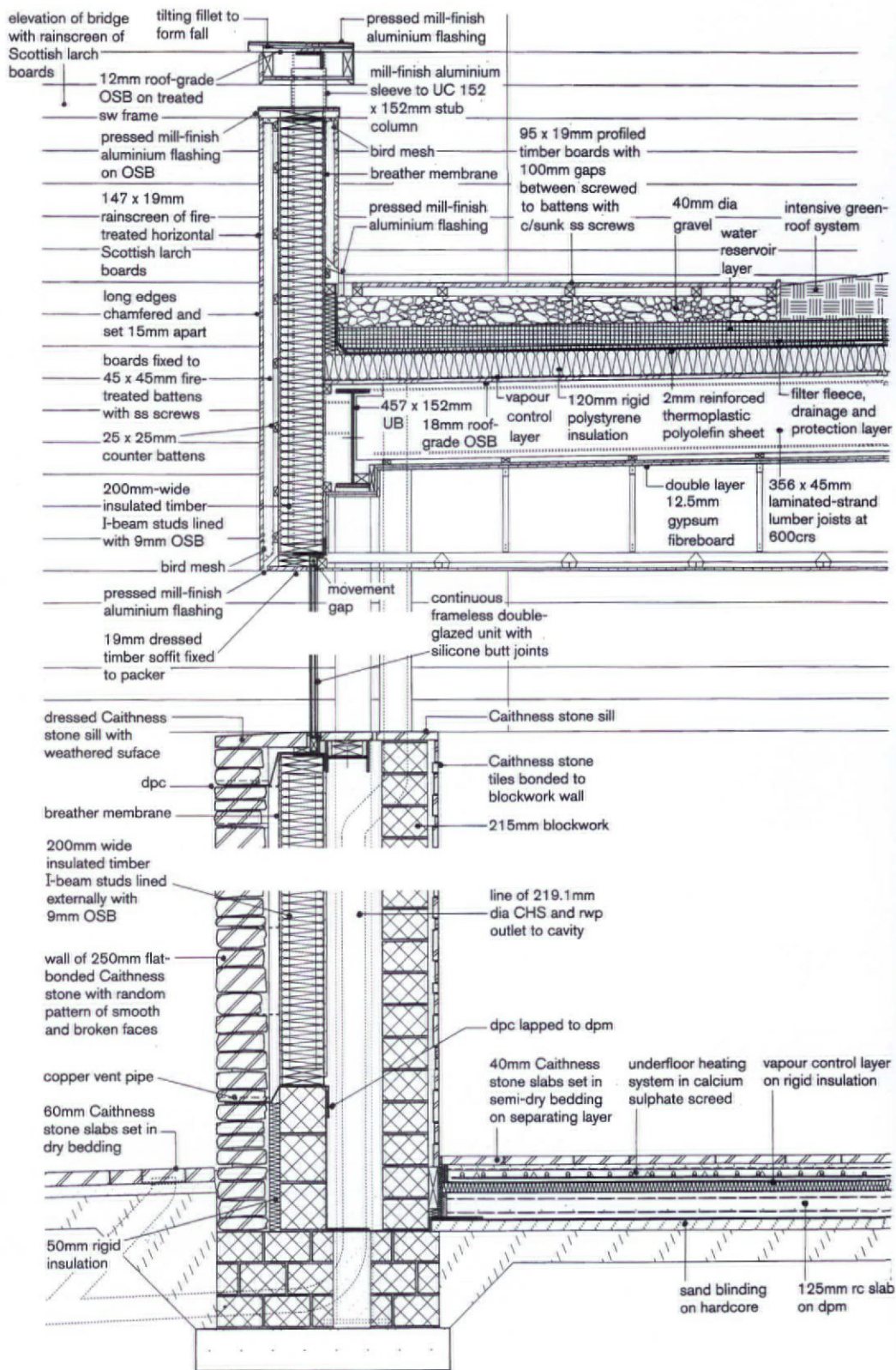
A wall of local stone with a glass clerestory and larch rainscreen

The centre, on the site of the 1746 Battle of Culloden, not only houses the usual visitor facilities and exhibition, but is a physical memorial to the fallen. The long north wall of the building – slabs of local Caithness stone set in random courses of smooth and broken faces – is a memorial to those who died. The wall runs uninterrupted for 60m. A frameless glass clerestory is set above it, together with a deep larch-clad fascia which rises to become the balustrade to a rooftop walkway.

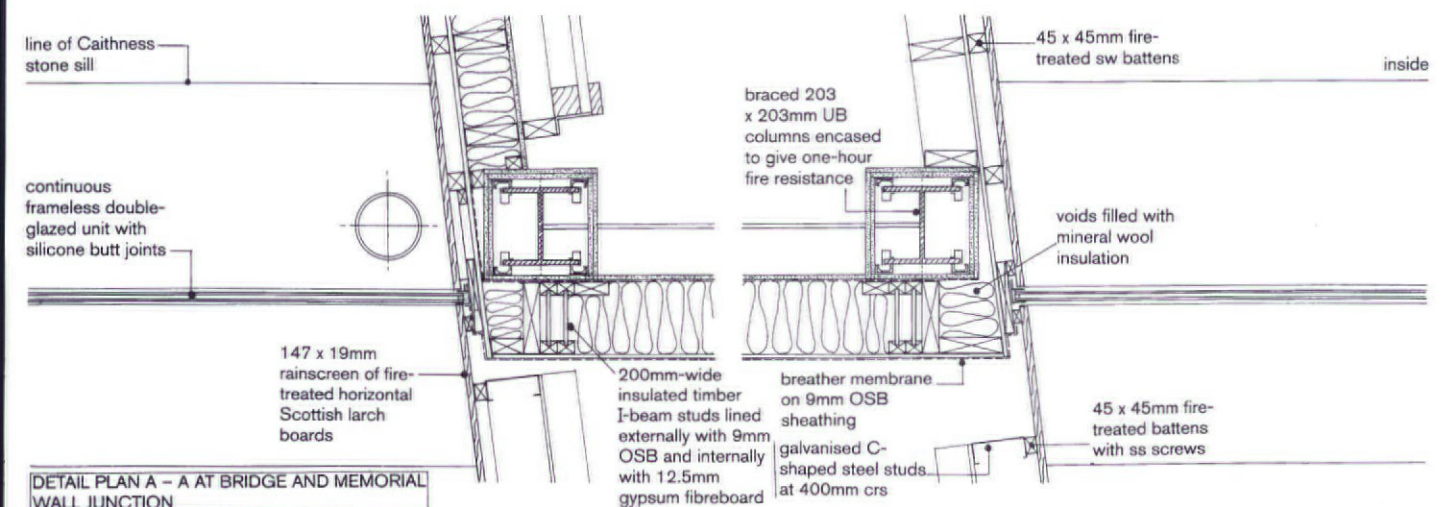
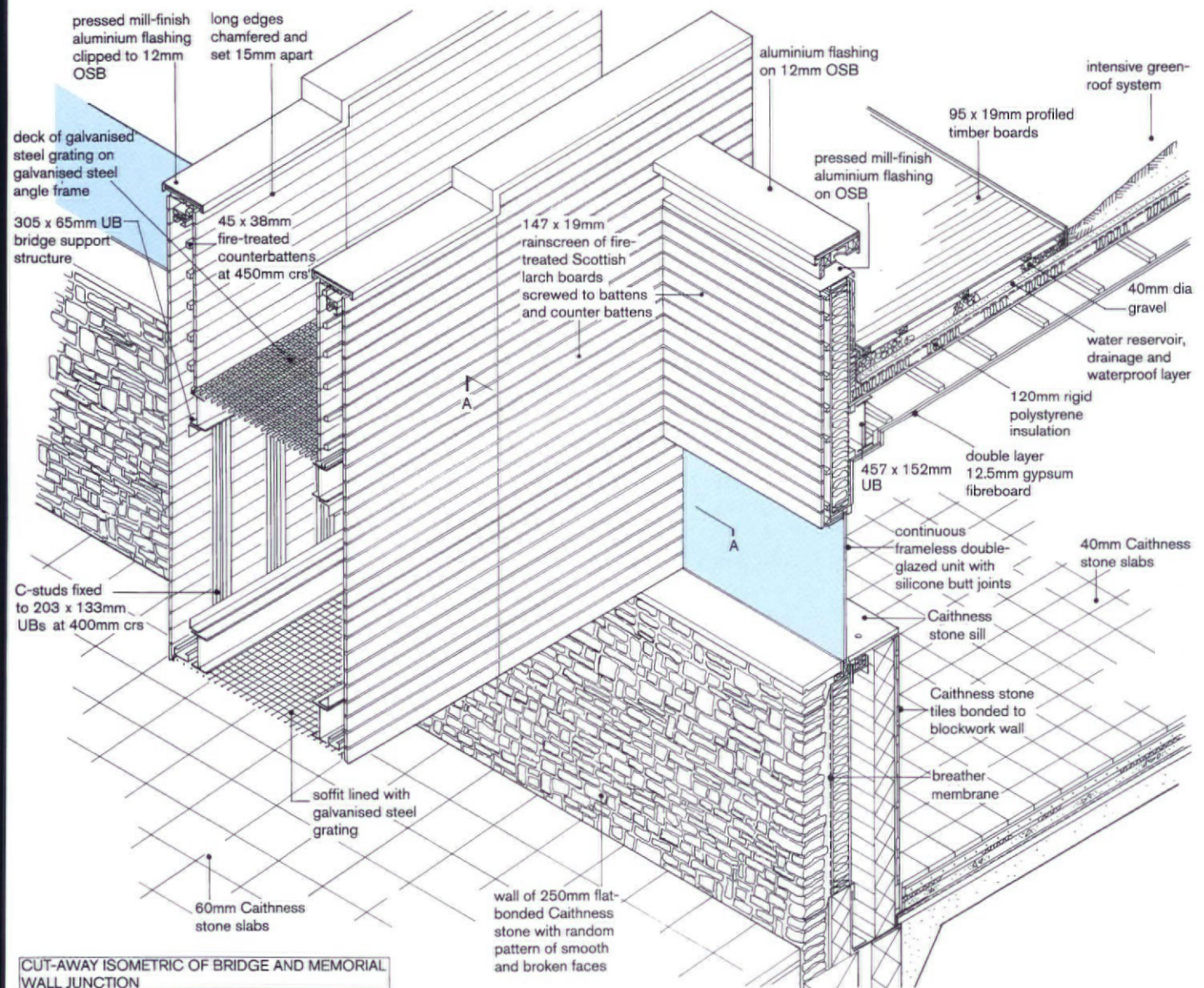
The centre, single-storey and steel-framed, is designed on sustainable principles, with a highly insulated envelope, green-roof system and underfloor heating powered by a woodchip boiler. The memorial wall is over 1m thick, backed with 200mm-thick insulated timber studwork – a cavity wide enough to accommodate steel columns and downpipes and an inner leaf of blockwork faced with Caithness stone tiles. The fascia/balustrade is clad with a rainscreen of 147 x 19mm larch boards, laid horizontally with 15mm gaps. Both stone and larch were sourced locally.

A rooftop walkway gives visitors the chance to view the battlefield panorama. It is reached by means of an earth ramp and a high-level timber bridge that runs into the memorial wall, its position marking the line where British government troops stood. The steel-framed bridge is clad with the larch rainscreen, which continues internally to divide visitor and exhibition spaces.

Susan Dawson



DETAIL SECTION THROUGH MEMORIAL WALL



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In this section Building from the top downwards // Big Fish Little Fish // A guide to screws, nails and bolts

Technical & Practice

Big Fish Little Fish

Jonathan Hendry of Jonathan Hendry Architects escapes to the city

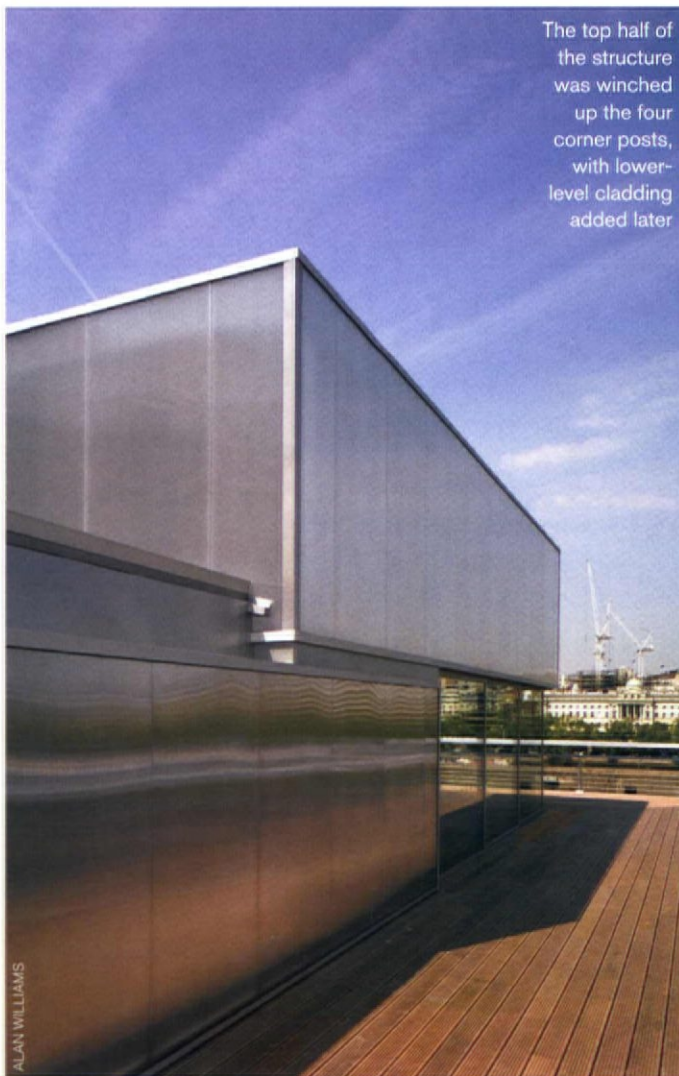
The scaffolding on our project in Lincoln has been dropped, so I pop by on the way to London. The excitement is overwhelming as I turn the corner, getting a glimpse of the building for the first time. It's taken over two years for this moment to arrive. I stand back in the street, digesting the scale, materiality and detail. My eye is drawn to a lintel above the retail unit at street level – it bows. On closer inspection I discover that it's been installed upside down. My heart sinks.

I leave for London to be a guest speaker on Channel 4's *Grand Designs Live*, which gives me the opportunity to talk publicly about our work for the first time. I find this very rewarding, and I have the chance to follow the construction of Kevin McCloud's eco-house.

I return on Monday, the day before a planning decision for three townhouses. Speaking to the case officer, I'm told they can't divulge any information relating to the decision. I suggest they look at the case file, as I've had several pre-application meetings and have been told the scheme is acceptable. The following day the case officer calls to say the scheme is going to be refused, because 'I don't like the flat roof'. I contact his boss, who I had the pre-application meetings with, and I'm told, 'The case officer has convinced me differently'.

I leave the studio for home asking myself: Why?

Next issue: John Preve of Make



The top half of the structure was winched up the four corner posts, with lower-level cladding added later

CONSTRUCTION GOES TOPSY-TURVY AT THE NATIONAL THEATRE

Perched on top of Denys Lasdun's Grade II*-listed National Theatre in London is an intriguing translucent box of a building, which cycles through a range of colours at night. Temporary and demountable, it is licenced for summer use over five years.

The theatre needed a place for parties and receptions that was

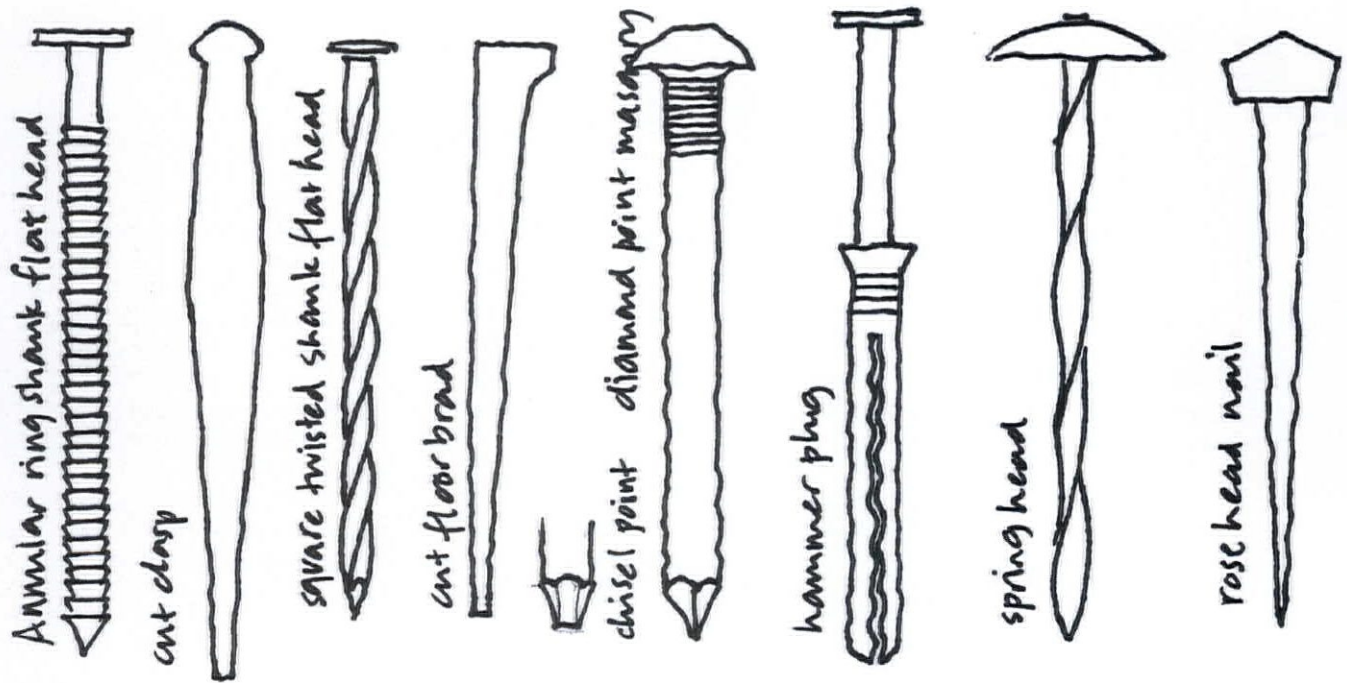
large enough and acoustically insulated from the auditoria. The only available space was a high-level roof, overlooking the sweep of the Thames, and near to the fly tower and other service elements. Architect A-EM Studio's design echoes these simple forms, and was low enough to satisfy the planners.

The roof has no live loading capacity beyond the very limited amount required for maintenance. So, beneath the sustainably sourced hardwood deck, there is a heavyweight steel structure which spans between the few points where it is possible to transfer loads to Lasdun's original building.

The new building, says A-EM's Pascal Madoc Jones, is 'essentially a marquee', but one that has to withstand the wind loads in its very exposed position. After toying with ideas of inflatables and stretched-skin structures, A-EM came up with the current solution, which uses a lightweight triangulated steel structure clad in clip-on polycarbonate panels. Scaffolding at this height and with the loading problems would have been impractical, so the building was designed to be self-erecting. A-EM called on the National Theatre's advice and had a 'miracle find' – a company called Delstar that specialises in theatrical construction and lifting.

Working with Delstar, A-EM devised a solution that allowed the top half of the structure – which included the 'super truss' at mid-height, the stretched fabric roof, and the upper-level cladding – to be built on the deck and then winched into position up the four corner posts. Once this top half was in place, the lower level of cladding was added.

The building itself couldn't be simpler. The main, flexible space has a polycarbonate-glazed oculus in the centre of the roof. At one end there is a serving area for caterers. On a summer evening, with the walls slid open, this is one of the most exciting and commanding venues in London. *Ruth Slavid*



FINDING THE FIXING THAT'S BEST FOR YOU

In this latest Shortcut, *Austin Williams* looks at the types of screws, bolts and nails on the market, and how to use them

SCREWS

The Construction Information Service suggests that BS 1210, (1963), 'Specification for Wood Screws' is 'obsolescent but still relevant', predominantly because many of the referenced British Standards are now obsolete. Even though the dimensions in the standard are written in inches, this is not enough to condemn it, being just one more of those British construction industry curiosities which says that it is

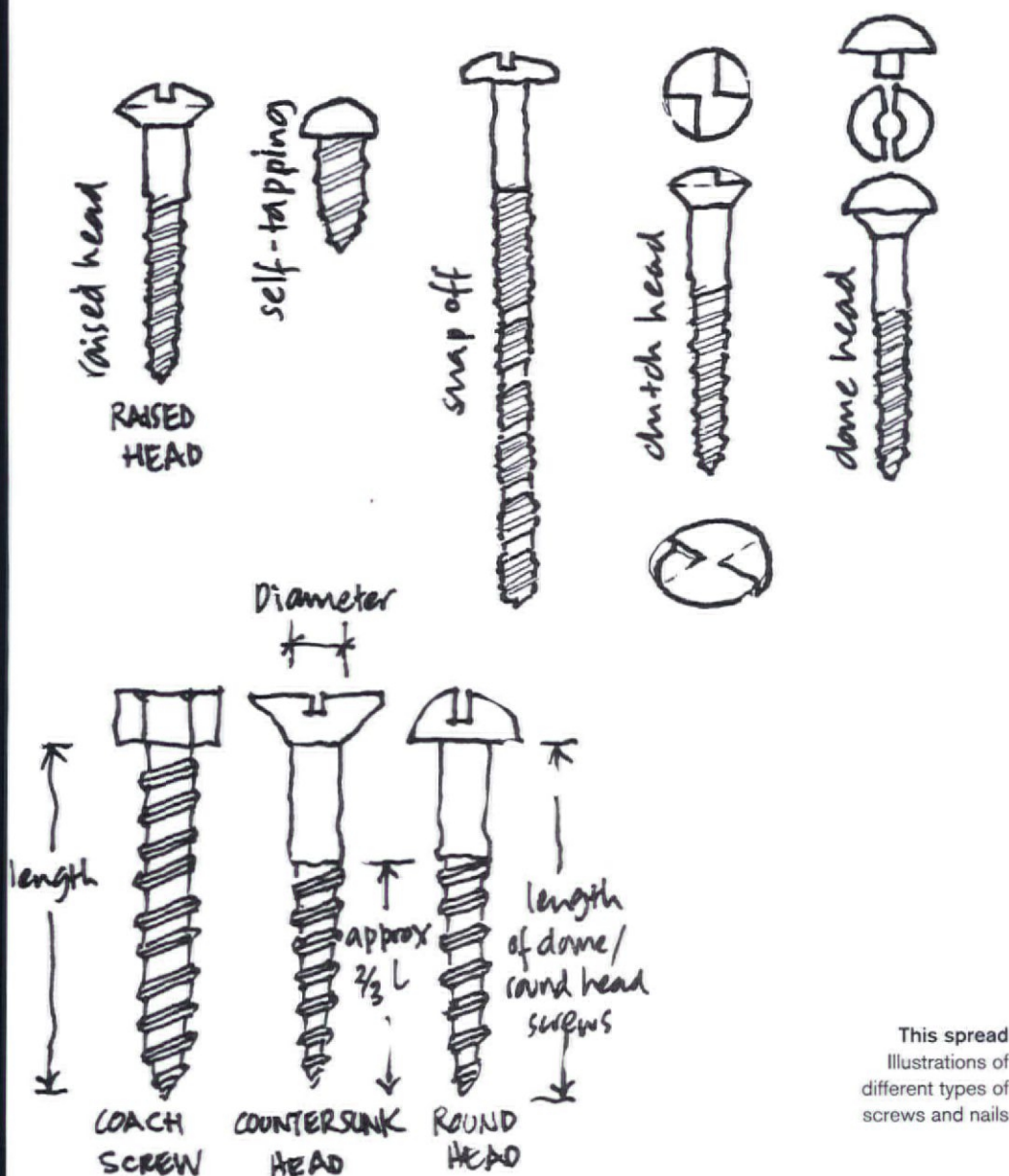
still legitimate to measure certain things in imperial units. But even though the standard has now been in force for 45 years, there is still an uncorrected howler in Annex G, where the final calculation factor has been written t_1/t_2 instead of t_2/t_1 ! Fortunately this error has little significance for architects and designers.

In order to comply with the standard, all screws must have a minimum tensile strength of

550N/mm² – although this regulation excludes coach screws – and must also have a shank diameter greater than 10mm. In order to address some of these issues, a new suite of British Standards for screws (BS 1580: 2007) has just been released... although there is still no European Standard.

NAILS

Wire nails date from the late 19th century. Before that, 'cut



This spread
Illustrations of
different types of
screws and nails

GAUGING YOUR SCREW

Screws are specified by gauge (determined by the major diameter, usually across the non-threaded portion of the shank) and length (from the top of the head to the gimlet point). This does not include the extra height of round- or dome-headed screws.

To check whether two screws are the same, hold them next to one another with the head at opposite ends – if their threads mesh together then they have the same pitch.

The relationship of gauge and diameter is shown below:

| Gauge | Major diameter |
|-------|----------------|
| 6 g | 3.5mm |
| 8 g | 4.2mm |
| 10 g | 4.8mm |
| 12 g | 5.5mm |
| 14 g | 6.3mm |

Screws with a diameter greater than 5mm should be turned in pre-drilled holes to prevent splitting the wood.

When driving brass or aluminium wood screws into hardwoods, the torque required can often exceed the shear resistance of the metal – consequently the head may snap off. It is advisable to use a steel screw to cut the thread.

nails' were common, punched out or guillotined from a flat plate of rolled iron.

Nails, staples, wood screws, coach screws and bolts are all variants of dowel fasteners. The Timber Research and Development Association (TRADA) points out that all of them may be used for laterally loaded connections, but for axially loaded connections only nails, screws and bolts are normally to be used. As such, nails are normally required

to resist just the shear forces at the interface (or interstice) between two or more joined materials.

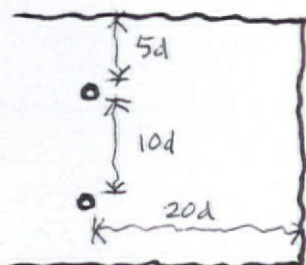
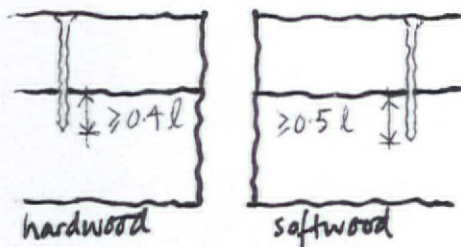
Eurocode 5 'Design of Timber Structures', which outlines the common rules for the use of structural timber in buildings, specifies a minimum tensile strength and provides design procedures for all of these fasteners. Eurocode 5 will replace BS 5268 in the next two-to-three years, but until then BS 5268-2

references compliance standards for fasteners that it covers.

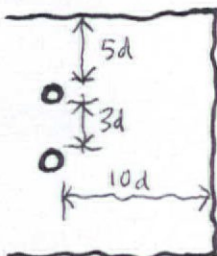
When joining together two pieces of hardwood, at least 40 per cent of the nail length must extend into the lower portion; when joining softwoods together, that length should increase to at least 50 per cent. When hammering nails with a diameter of more than 5mm into hardwoods, pre-drilled holes should be used to avoid splitting the timber. Similarly, for nails more than

100mm long, pre-drilling is recommended. To ensure a good grip, the hole should be no more than 80 per cent of the nail diameter. Pre-drilled holes should be positioned at a distance at least 10 times their diameter from the end grain of hardwood; where there are no pre-drilled holes, nails should be positioned at least 20 times their diameter from the end grain.

When using a nail gun, be aware that firing the nails into >>



Min nail spacing in undrilled holes



Min nail and screw spacings in drilled holes

This page
Illustrations
showing spacing
for screws and
nails defined by
BS 5268-2

unsupported 6mm plywood, say, or into any other thin material that is not directly located over a timber stud or a similar substrate, will result in the nail being shot straight through the material with the velocity of a bullet.

BOLTS

For bolted connections, washers must have a minimum external diameter and thickness three times the diameter of the bolt (the hole itself may be up to 2mm wider than the bolt). TRADA recommends that the thickness of washer must be both 0.25 times the diameter (in 'Wood Information, Section 2/3 Sheet 36: 2003)

and 0.3 times the diameter (in 'Wood Information, Section 2/3 Sheet 52: 2002').

PERFORMANCE

When comparing the jointing performance of fasteners of equivalent diameters it is key to consider that:

- nails generally have the advantage in terms of lateral load-carrying capacity;
- screws have better axial withdrawal resistance; and
- dowel joints provide higher load-carrying capacity. ■

Austin Williams is the author and illustrator of NBS Shortcuts. Visit www.thenbs.co.uk

SCREW AND NAIL USES

Countersunk screws

Primarily for fixing timber to timber or metal to timber into a pre-drilled hole. These screws' shanks have a range of diameters from 4-8 mm.

Round-head screws For metal-to-wood connections where there is no countersink.

Raised-head screws For finished items that may have to be removed on regular basis.

Snap-off screws Have a segmented thread to enable reduction in length to suit application, e.g. through-door ironmongery fixing.

Clutch-head screws A flush-head screw with slot designed to prevent it being unscrewed.

Screw cups A pilot hole is needed to accommodate this metal collar, which sits flush with the surface.

Dome-head screws A decorative dome-head finish is screwed into a threaded hole in the top of a woodscrew.

Coach screws Heavy-duty fixing screws to timber or plugged masonry with exposed hexagonal (or similar) head which is turned by a spanner.

Self-tapping screws Often used for fixing relatively thin sheet metal material although can equally be used with plastics, plywood, etc.

Wire nails Usually round in section, the term refers to the method of manufacture, it means any nail made from a cut wire coil. It has a range of diameters from 2.65-8 mm.

Clout nails Commonly 25mm long, these are regularly used for fixing laths, insulation board, partitions and ceilings.

Lost-head round-wire nails Commonly used for timber to timber fixing.

Annular-ring shank nails Serrated shank nails used for fixing.

Square-twisted shank flat-head nails Between 40-65mm long, these are regularly used with hardwoods.

Convex-head roofing nails These have either a chisel or a diamond point.

Spring-head nails Galvanised twisted-shank nail with a large 'umbrella' head, designed to fix boards and sheet materials.

Cut-clasp nails Have a punch head, widening out in the middle of the shank. They are often used for rough-fixing timber to blockwork

Cut-floor brads A flat nail with one vertical side and one angled side. Used primarily for fixing floorboards.

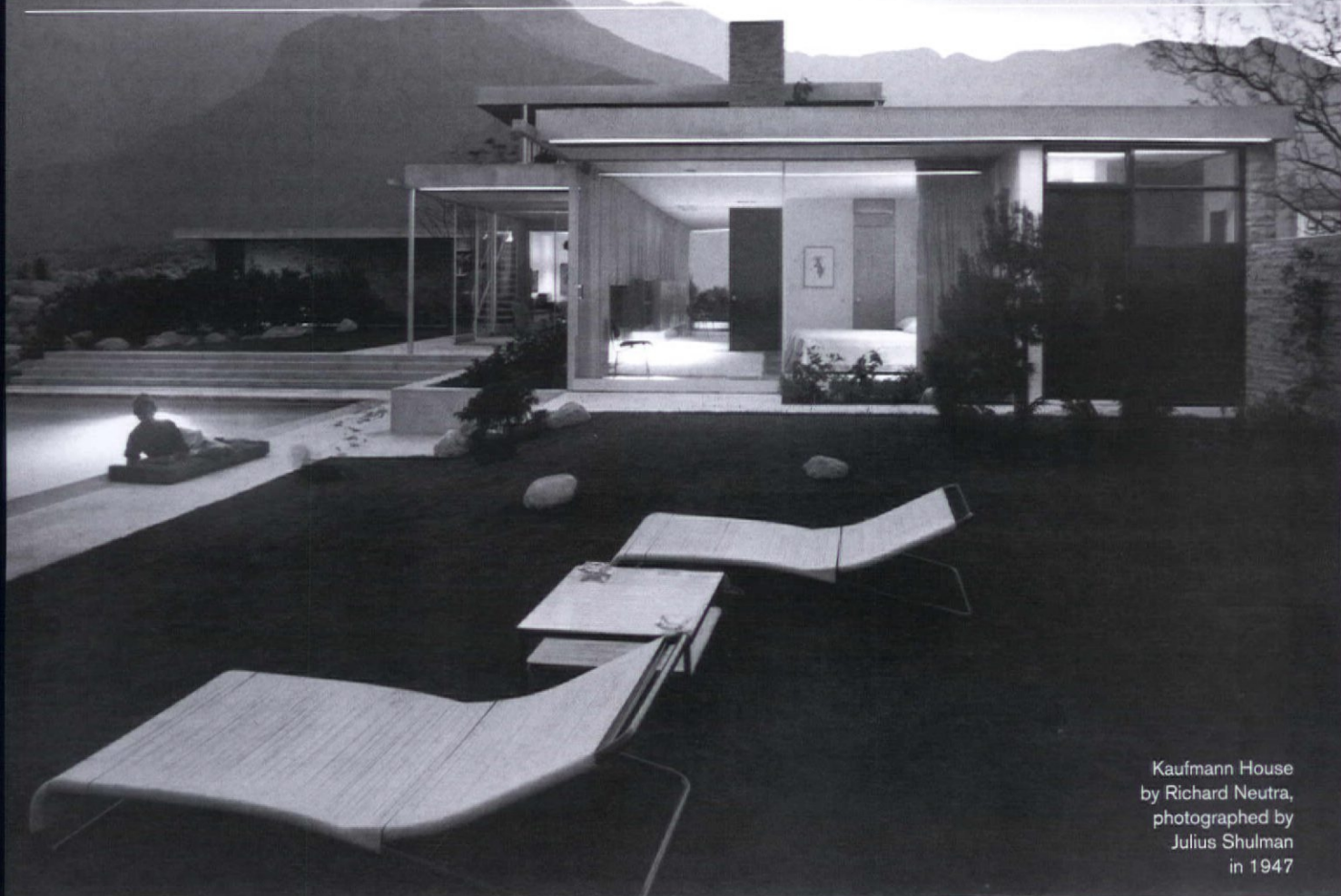
Masonry nails Hardened steel nails, from 12-85mm, for driving into bricks or blockwork with a heavy hammer.

Rose-head flat points The shaft has a long taper in one direction, pinched in just below the head. For use on green timber which will expand around the nail after fixing.

Hammer plugs A plug with a nail inset which is inserted into a pre-drilled hole.

In this section // Julius Shulman // Goodbye
Triangle bookshop // Critics' Choice // Rocky
Court // Chelsea Flower Show // 5 Things To Do

The Critics



Kaufmann House
by Richard Neutra,
photographed by
Julius Shulman
in 1947

BOOK

Shulman's Modernist utopia

Iain Borden reviews this new collection of photographs by 97-year-old Julius Shulman

Julius Shulman: Palm Springs. By Michael Stern and Alan Hess. Rizzoli, 208pp, £28

The building, as English architect H S Goodhart-Rendel (1887-1959) once remarked, is merely the necessary inconvenience that takes place between the initial drawing and the final photograph. Such is the somewhat jaundiced view of architectural photography that many have levelled at the work of American photographer Julius Shulman (b.1910). The claim is that, in Shulman's imagery, the building too often takes second

place to the photographer's art, and that what emerges is not so much a depiction of a building as a real and physical construction, but rather a spectacular image of architecture that happens to use a building as part of its content.

Looking at this new collection of Shulman's photographs might lend some credence to this view. This particular publication, *Julius Shulman: Palm Springs* by Michael Stern and Alan Hess (curators of this year's eponymous

show at the Palm Springs Art Museum in California), concentrates solely on houses and buildings previously shot in Palm Springs, as well as nine new photographs taken by Shulman in 2007. An image like the one Shulman has executed of the Albert Frey House #1 (1941) is clearly a highly skilful construct, using a low camera position, a dramatic diagonal composition of angles, and an explicitly wilful contrast of foreground >>

Julius Shulman continued from page 45

cut-down shrubbery against a background of white rectilinear architecture. The result is as much the creation of photographer Shulman as it is of architect Frey. Similarly forceful photographic invention is evident throughout this book, whether through composition (as with the image of Albert Frey House #1), pseudo-infra-red contrasts (Theodore Sutter House, 1957, by E Stewart Williams), or through a tendency to compose images with artworks and other high cultural icons to the fore (the recently demolished Samuel and Luella Maslon House, 1962, by Richard Neutra). So much, so expected.

And yet Shulman's photography is much more than such a cursory examination might suggest. Firstly, Shulman's most spectacular images must always be set alongside the whole series in which they are produced, as this book makes explicit through its focus on a relatively small number of buildings and related photographic commissions. Thus for every wilful composition, there is also another which does much more to explain the nature



Bob Hope House (1979)
by John Lautner

INTERVIEW

Goodbye Triangle

Derek Brampton, co-owner of the Triangle Bookshop, talks to *Richard Vaughan* about shutting up shop

As students thumb through the remaining books on the half-empty shelves of the Triangle Bookshop, co-owner Derek Brampton speaks to me in the hushed library tones that come from years spent working in book stores. The Architectural Association's (AA's) independent bookshop closes its doors tomorrow (30 May) after 30 years of trading, and the hardbacks, bulging with authority, are flying off the shelves thanks to a 20 per cent discount.

'I think architecture students need books more than anyone. They need inspiration; they seem to eat books,' says Brampton. The

bookseller began his profession more than 41 years ago, after a failed career in the theatre. It was with reluctance that he moved into the book world. 'When I was a drama student, I used to work in Foyles as a summer job,' he says. 'After the theatre gave me up, I enjoyed working with books, so I moved to Tiranti's, a specialist outlet on Charlotte Street.'

By 1979, Brampton and his colleague Alan Young had set up their own shop, also named Triangle, in Kennington, south London, before being invited to move to Bedford Square by then AA director Alvin Boyarsky.

According to Brampton, the early years – when the likes of Rem Koolhaas, Zaha Hadid and Bernard Tschumi were students at the AA – were 'magical'. He remembers that Hadid and Koolhaas were particularly interested in the Russian Constructivists: 'It's very strange, as there seems to be very little in print about them now. They came in after the Charles Jencks Post-Modernist bubble.'

Aside from this anecdote, Brampton claims he has no interesting stories to tell from the past 30 years. He has no favourite books – in fact, he's rarely flicked through the pages of the publications he's sold over three decades. He says he's always been more interested in the art world, but the market wasn't there. 'This was very much a business,' he says matter-of-factly. 'I'm not an architect; I'm a bookseller, first and foremost. People seem to forget this, and assume that because I'm here sitting in the shop I've read everything and I know everything, but I don't. I know the titles, the prices.'

Brampton also says he doesn't recognise the business of bookselling anymore. The

of the building; for every heavily-contrasted exposure there is another which expresses complex tones of light and shade; and for every artwork there is also a person.

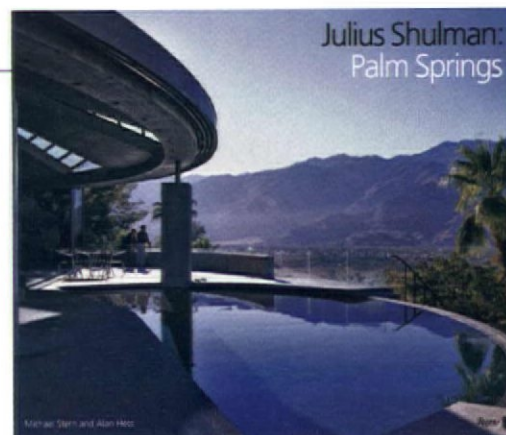
This last aspect of Shulman's work is particularly revealing. Shulman often uses lone figures to lend a simple sense of scale and humanisation. But he is often more subtle, using figures who lounge by a pool, or distribute fruit and drinks, or who laugh and talk – figures, that is, who impart a degree of everyday usage into the architecture, and help connect us as viewers with a sense of

Shulman has captured the notion of Modernist architecture as an everyday art and an extraordinary proposition

ordinariness (if ordinariness can ever be applied to the extraordinary versions of Modernism that Shulman was frequently commissioned to depict). In other photographs, figures emerge as strange ghostly presences, as with the reclining poolside female in one of Shulman's most evocative and moody images depicting the Kaufmann

House (Richard Neutra, 1946) (pictured on page 45) against a twilight sky and mountainous landscape. Or they appear as surreal presences, as with the photograph of Palm Springs Desert Museum (1976) where architect E Stewart Williams himself appears centre-right, framed against a piece of sunlit white concrete as if he had just teleported down from a distant spaceship.

In the end, it is indeed this sense of strangeness, not the photographer's creativity or the everyday ordinariness, which permeates this collection. What Shulman has so clearly captured is the notion of Modernist architecture as being at once an everyday art (built, constructed, real, inhabited), and an extraordinary proposition (new, startling, thought-provoking). He is aided in this, of course, not only by the wonderful imagination of the architects whose work he depicts, but by the science fiction and other-planetary appearance of the Palm Springs landscape, where a palette of bright sun, silhouetted mountains, flat deserts and bleached shrubbery is oh-so-readily contrasted against elegantly manicured lawns and the tranquil waters of immaculate



swimming pools.

Shulman's photographs are, hence, a kind of utopia. A utopia of what Modern architecture might be – perfectly formed, beautifully constructed without apparent effort, artfully composed. A utopia of what life might be – pools, fresh fruit and relaxation, without any hint of worrisome concerns regarding energy, climate change and globalisation. And a utopia of setting – palms, grass, mountains, sun, water. Above all, they project themselves as a deliberately idealised view on all of this – clearly and evidently contrived – the better to reveal this so explicitly to the viewer. ■

Iain Borden is head of the Bartlett School of Architecture

Resume: The Modernist utopian vision persists in these new photographs by Shulman

persona and style of the industry has changed, he says, and publishers are more interested in Waterstone's than the Triangle. 'They go [to Waterstone's], only to find out that the buyer has just come from The Body Shop and they don't even know who Rem Koolhaas is,' he says. 'It's quite disheartening.'

According to Brampton, the golden era for selling architecture books was during the 1980s, although the sheer volume these days is staggering. 'There is so much duplication,' he says. 'And there is also a lot of "vanity publishing", which I probably shouldn't go into. Architects have a lot of books published to say, "I am here", which they need to do. But I have to sell them as something else.'

I ask Brampton if there are any architects or books that he disapproves of, and he admits that he has his 'pet dislikes', but won't be drawn on any names. 'I mean, Foster I can't stand,' he says in the same breath. 'And Calatrava is so overexposed and produces so many publications. He has to be stopped. Thankfully, I have the ability to not stock their books, which I don't. It's too commercial.'

'I had the ability,' adds Brampton, quickly



VALERIE BENNETT AA

Co-owners Alan Young (left) and Derek Brampton (right) in the Triangle Bookshop

correcting himself now that his role as a bookseller has come to an end.

The closure of the Triangle was not without animosity: Brampton had hoped the AA would carry on the Triangle name, but the offer it made was 'insulting'. The AA has now decided to open its own store, and unless an interested party buys the name, the Triangle will cease to exist.

Brampton admits it is a 'shame', but says

he has his retirement to look forward to – although he does have mixed emotions about leaving his shop. 'I'll miss the students and the customers most,' he says. 'The excitement of students discovering things for the first time... It will be sad to leave here, but I'm more excited about having time to travel, to paint, and to actually read books.'

Resume: As of 30 May, life by the book is over for Derek Brampton and Alan Young



Critic's Choice Grayson Perry's show unearths some Arts Council treasures, says Andrew Mead

For a few issues in 1969-70, *The Architectural Review* gave up glamourising buildings and opted for a gritty photojournalistic approach. Among the contributors to this short-lived series (entitled 'Manplan') were photographers Tony Ray-Jones and Patrick Ward, who both feature in a new exhibition at the De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, called *Unpopular Culture*. Focusing mostly on works from the post-war years, it has been selected from the Arts Council Collection by artist Grayson Perry, who has excluded the brashness and banality of British efforts at Pop Art in favour of something more subtle and muted. The show is Welfare State not Swinging Sixties.

On a sunny day at the De La Warr that can be a problem. The blinds come down on all those south-facing windows and works that rely on shifts of tone, not strong contrasts of colour, can be difficult to see. But it's worth persevering, for Perry has unearthed some notable things and juxtaposed them deftly in both the show and the catalogue. Alan Reynolds' *The Village - Winter* (1952) is a study in shades of grey underpinned by geometry; David Hepher finds Mondrian in a housing block in his *Arrangement in Turquoise and Cream* (1979-81) (pictured below); and Philip Larkin's disillusioned poems accentuate the mood. If you can't get to Bexhill by 6 July, the exhibition tours until 2010, visiting Preston, Durham, Southampton, Aberystwyth, Scarborough, Wakefield and Bath. It's a canny rescue act on Perry's part. www.dlwp.co.uk



DAVID HEPPER



EXHIBITION

Marshall's pavilion and Caro's Millbank Steps open at Roche Court. *Christine Murray reports*

New Generation Revisited: British Sculpture from the Sixties and Seventies. Until 7 September, New Art Centre, Roche Court, Salisbury

If you're seeking inspiration, something at the New Art Centre is bound to spark. The sculpture park and gallery celebrated a three-fold opening event this month: the launch of the exhibition *New Generation Revisited*; the installation of sculptor Anthony Caro's *Millbank Steps*; and the opening of the centre's new Courtyard Pavilion (pictured above), designed by architect Stephen Marshall.

The New Art Centre was founded by Madeleine Bessborough in 1958 in Sloane Street, London, but relocated to Roche Court in Salisbury in 1994. The house and orangery were originally built for Lord Nelson in 1804, although he died in the 1805 Battle of Trafalgar before he could take possession.

Located among undulating green plains, the grounds at Roche Court are more measured in scale and manicured in appearance than the broad vistas of the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. As a result, sculpture need not compete as much with the landscape. Based on the *New Generation* show held at the Whitechapel Gallery, London, in 1965, the current exhibition chronicles the radical shift in British

sculpture that took place in the 1960s and 1970s, especially at Central St Martins art school, where Anthony Caro was a teacher. 'People had no idea what we were doing,' says Caro of the era. 'They would see our work and say, "Have you got the builders in?"'

Caro attended the launch to unveil his *Millbank Steps* (2005), which has been temporarily relocated to Roche Court, where it awaits a buyer after a bungled donation attempt. The Corten steel structure, 5m high and 23m long, was commissioned by Tate Britain for the artist's retrospective. After the show, Caro offered the sculpture to Westminster City Council, which declined after failing to find a home for it. The sculpture now carries a £2.5 million price tag. 'The papers got hold of how we offered it to Westminster, and now everyone is ringing up and saying, "If you've stuff to spare, we'll put it up for you,"' says Caro, laughing.

He is pleased with the 100-tonne ziggurat-like sculpture's appearance in the grassy field. 'Henry Moore's attitude to the pastoral was to go with the landscape, to be very organic,' says Caro. 'This sculpture works because it is going against the landscape, in the same way that a house goes against the landscape.'

'Indoor sculptures, moved outdoors, tend to be eaten up by the sky and the trees. The scale somehow minimises everything. I think architects understand this, and they know that you have to be very rich with your detail.'

In contrast to the *Millbank Steps*, Stephen Marshall's new pavilion and two previous additions to Roche Court do not challenge the landscape; rather 'they sort of disappear,' says Marshall. 'The trick is that the glass reflects the

The Courtyard Pavilion (2008) at Roche Court by Stephen Marshall, with his Artist's House (2001) seen to the left

older buildings around them.'

His first addition, the Gallery (1998), is a demure glazed corridor that connects the house to the orangery. The second, the Artist's House (2001) (pictured above, seen to the left), was conceived as both guest accommodation and exhibition space, and blends seamlessly into the courtyard. The newly completed Courtyard Pavilion will be used primarily as an informal dining space for the dozen or so people who live and work in Marshall's additions.

'In Madeleine's mind, if you need to add a series of buildings to an old house, the new work should be in a single architectural vocabulary,' says Marshall. He describes his glass structures as 'quite an urban approach for a rural estate, but in a calm way, not trying to scream out, simply trying to be useful.'

Resume: Sculpture, architecture and Caro: three good reasons to visit Roche Court

EXHIBITION

A disappointing year for Chelsea, says Oliver Basciano

Chelsea Flower Show. Closed 24 May at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, London SW3. www.rhs.org.uk

Last year, the Chelsea Flower Show introduced ideas into garden design that had long been a fixture for its contemporaries in architecture, with strong Modernist lines and

an emphasis on conceptuality. Regrettably, this progression largely bypassed the exhibits this year.

In the show gardens, many designs failed to stretch beyond the aesthetic. The collaboration between Diarmuid Gavin and Terence Conran was one of the most high-profile culprits, with its hotchpotch array of twee, spherical topiary and off-the-wall sun umbrellas (pictured below right). Gavin and Conran were not the only ones to revive the art of shaping shrubbery. The eventual winner of Best Garden, Tom Stuart-Smith, also used topiary to create what was very much a gardener's garden, as did Philip Nixon, one of the few to look over the fence at the art world, using strong, angular shapes to reference the architecture of the Tate Modern. And Rachael de Thame owes perhaps more than a nod to Olafur Eliasson and Kjetil Thorsen's 2007 Serpentine Pavilion for her urban garden.

Those seeking strong, structural, space-driven landscaping had to make do with just a couple of exceptional examples. For his Seeking Garden (A Forest Within the Chaos of a City), Chinese product designer and artist Shao Fan sunk his space below soil level, creating a landscape of sweeping walls, minimal planting and decorative elements that took time to discover. Likewise, Gavin Jones' Garden of Corian used the material to great effect, with a sleek bridge and island

seating area, peppered with temperate and structured planting of cacti, grasses and the like.

Counteracting these engineering-heavy creations was Arabella Lennox-Boyd's brilliantly simple *Daily Telegraph* Garden, which consisted of a large rectangular pond framed by a low-level Purbeck stone border. Subtly interrupting the water, a slate path intertwined with a corresponding path of lilies, the pond juxtaposed by a heavily planted area at the far end. This was a harmonious mix of international and artistic references, stripped down to space-creating simplicity: a garden for all disciplines.

Oliver Basciano is press officer at the Architecture Foundation

Resume: A red card for Chelsea and its substandard park design



Diarmuid Gavin and Terence Conran's garden at the Chelsea Flower Show

5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

1 Brighton Degree Show

Visit the University of Brighton's School of Architecture and Design as it unveils its end-of-year show.

31 May-5 June at the Sallis Benney Theatre, University of Brighton. www.brighton.ac.uk

2 Edinburgh Degree Exhibition

The Masters degree exhibition takes place at Edinburgh University this week.

2-27 June at Minto House, 20 Chambers Street, Edinburgh. www.architecture.ed.ac.uk

3 The Artistic Republic of Garston

Artist Michael Trainor opens the headquarters of his mini independent state – a pavilion created for Liverpool's year as European

Capital of Culture.

2.30pm, 31 May, Garston Embassy, Wellington Street, Garston, Liverpool

4 The Clerks: In Memoria

The Clerks, a UK vocal group, will be singing Renaissance music in Victorian 'Cathedrals of Industry' such as Crossness Pumping Station. £15, 7pm, 31 May at Crossness Pumping Station, Belvedere Road, London SE2. www.theclerks.co.uk

5 Street Art

See giant works created on the walls of the Tate Modern by acclaimed street artists including Sixeart, Os Gemeos, and Faile. Until 17 August, front walls of the Tate Modern, London SE1. www.tate.org.uk

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SCHÜCO



AJ ENQUIRY 203

When designing futuristic properties at Clyne Castle, Swansea, Holder Mathias Architects specified the new Schüco RS70 HPS.HI sliding window for the single large rectangular window to the front. It delivers unbeatable performance, excellent thermal insulation and weathertightness in a slimline frame which can accommodate extremely large vents.

STOAKES SYSTEMS



AJ ENQUIRY 202

Verti-Kal is a new panel layout for the Kalwall daylight-transmitting system, with single continuous grids to provide a vertical emphasis. The first project to use Verti-Kal is the Thomas School in south London where Claridge Architects designed individual classroom modules. For further information, visit the Stoakes website at www.stoakes.co.uk

RIEGENS



AJ ENQUIRY 204

Kier London has used state-of-the-art solar-shading products from Levolux at its new HQ in Essex. Walk On brise soleil, partnered by a vertical stack of 200mm extruded aluminium fins, shades the many windows along the building's south elevation from direct sunlight, ensuring that the building is kept cool naturally.

JOHN CULLEN LIGHTING



AJ ENQUIRY 205

The new energy-efficient 1.2W Manhattan LED from John Cullen Lighting is compliant with Part L of the Building Regulations and helps to achieve lower energy consumption. The Manhattan is dimmable and uses a warm, white LED. It is the ideal option for low-glare, low-level lighting to corridors or stair treads.

DIMPLEX



AJ ENQUIRY 206

Approved ground-source heat pump framework supplier Dimplex has helped organisations access grants available to the public sector for the installation of microgeneration technologies under the Low Carbon Buildings Programme Phase 2. Successful projects include an extension at a Norfolk school and a new-build RNLI station on the Wirral.

DIMPLEX



AJ ENQUIRY 207

Dimplex offers support to builders and specifiers who may have been given misleading information on Part L compliance, with a dedicated field specification team and a heating design team who regularly provide guidance over the phone. Dimplex has also created eight top tips to reduce the Dwelling Emission Rate (DER) using electric heating.

AKTIVA



AJ ENQUIRY 208

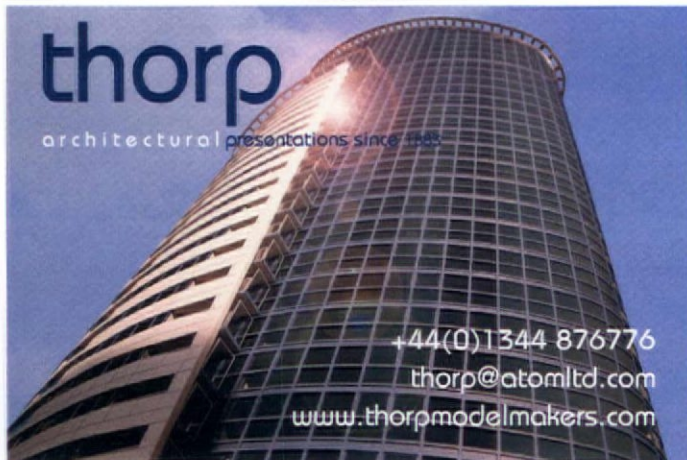
B-Line lights in bronze finish were specified for the Geological Society Library at Burlington House, London. The lights come in lengths of 700-1,600mm and can be joined in a series or cut to length. Integral ballast, ceiling- and wall-mounted, bookshelf and reading-desk versions are available in a wide range of finishes. Visit www.aktiva.co.uk

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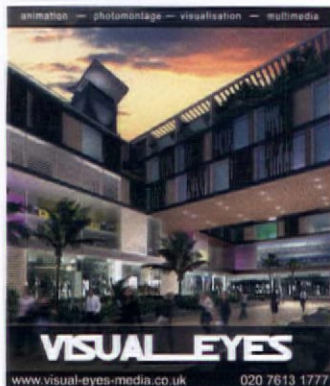
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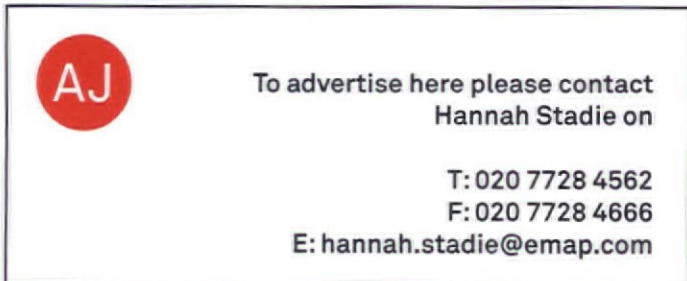
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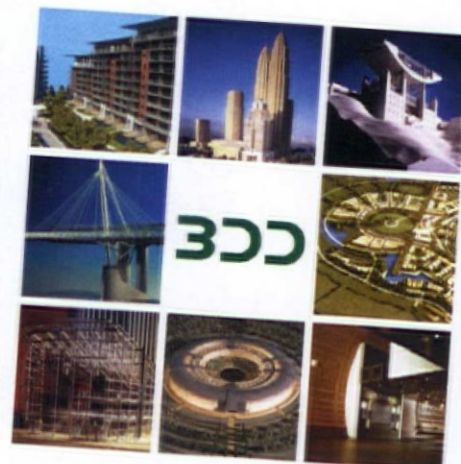
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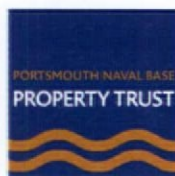
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Architectural Trustee

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust has responsibility for the preservation and re-use of the mainly Georgian and Victorian Grade 1 and 2* Listed buildings in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, one of the largest visitor attractions in the south of England and home to the three great historic warships HMS Victory, Mary Rose and HMS Warrior 1860.

The Trust is seeking a senior member of the architectural profession to join its Board of Trustees which meets in Portsmouth five to six times a year. The Board currently numbers nine Trustees and the successful candidate will work closely with Sir Colin Stansfield Smith CBE in overseeing the design, maintenance and refurbishment work of the Trust.

Previous incumbents of the role have been Sir William Whitfield CBE and Mr Edward Jones.

A modest level of remuneration is paid for services provided to the Trust, along with expenses incurred for attendance at meetings.

If you are interested in the opportunity and would like to discuss the role in more detail please telephone the Trust's Chief Executive, Peter Goodship, on 023 9282 0921 or email pg@pnbt.co.uk

Alternatively, please register your interest in writing to:

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Architects & Technicians **Berkshire / Buckinghamshire** circa £25-£38ph

Not only can this role offer you immediate availability, but also due to the nature of the work and the company type, you can achieve one of the industries top hourly rates whilst having the remarkable opportunity to work on highly interesting and challenging project types in this very lucrative area of the industry. **So don't delay, apply today! Ref: L578 (Hannah or Philip)**

Architect (**Associate / Partner Opportunity**) **Sevenoaks** c£45k Plus Bens

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St Mary's & St Peter's Primary School Expansion

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The London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames intends to invite tenders for the provision of architectural and related design work on the proposed new extension to the St Mary's and St Peter's Primary School at Somerset Rd, Teddington, TW11 8RX.

The appointment will initially cover feasibility work, and subject to the approval of the feasibility study be extended to cover the entire length of the project. The appointment will be an architect-led multi-disciplinary team comprising architect, structural engineer and building services engineers. Quantity Surveying and CDM Co-ordination are being advertised concurrently as separate direct appointments.

The school, diocese and LEA are developing the project jointly and depending on funding source, the diocese may take over the consultants appointment.

The estimated value of the entire services is currently estimated to be £320,000.00

We are seeking applicants who can demonstrate highly developed design skills.

Applicants who express an interest via email or by letter will be sent Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ).

After pre-qualification, up to six consultants who have expressed an interest will be invited to tender.

It is anticipated that the council's tender documents, including the specification for the commission will be issued July 2008.

Interested consultants should return their PQQ documents to London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames, Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham, TW1 3BZ no later than 9th June 2008 marked for the attention of Mr Richard Rollison. Consultants selected to tender will be notified as soon as possible.

Further information can be obtained on the Official Journal of the European Union www.ted.europe.eu or by contacting Mr Richard Rollison on 020 8891 7465 or via email on r.rollison@richmond.gov.uk



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Ian Martin. Don't watch it mate – culture acquires that retro 'rationed look'

MONDAY. 'Architecture', says my lunch companion, 'is frozen carbon'. Unfortunately he's not being sarcastic. That's because my lunch companion is Azzy Bifter, the Liverpoolian secretary of state for entertainment.

Azzy's interested in lots of things at the moment. 'Top of me list right now would have to be the new Indiana Jones film, which is acc. Then the footy, then the telly. Then culture, anything in small doses. Have I said the footy? Eh, graphic novels, Wii Sports. The list is endless. Russell Watson...'

Shyly, he hands over a Cabinet briefing paper and asks me what I think of it. The Entertainment Audit Committee is proposing a new regime of personal 'cultural credits'. People would be given an annual ration of activities such as looking at architecture, or hearing something new and grating on Radio 3. Elitist toffs could exceed their culture ration by buying credits from those who use less of it. Likewise, he chuckles, 'poshies could buy footy credit from Sky, who would pass that credit on to poor people in the form of more programmes. Hey, it's all entertainment, mate. It's all carbon...'

Idiot. I've tried explaining to him that you can't 'wear out' historic buildings by looking at them, any more than you can wear out Beethoven quartets by listening to them, but he's not having it. Several 20th-century landmark buildings face demolition, he says, precisely because 'all that looking, and thinking' has drained them of interest. They've been looked to death. OK, so what about St Paul's? Millions of people see it every year. That's not going to be making way for

boutique offices any time soon...

He leans over. 'With really important architecture, yeah, like St Paul's Cathedral and... those ones on the South Bank, they paint this like clear resin over it, to deflect the tourist gaze. People think they've seen it, but actually their look has just... sort of... skidded off...' He's got a puzzled look himself now. Perhaps he's remembering the stifled laughter during his briefing.

Then, to my horror, he produces the official Optical Engineer's report. It's all true.

TUESDAY. Devise alternative to PFI in Scotland. As an afterthought, *devise alternative to Scotland.*

WEDNESDAY. Azzy calls. *The government's new cultural credit crunch is under way, with proposals for the world's first 'zero-architecture eco-town'.*

THURSDAY. Sketch masterplan for an artificial island off Gravesend in the shape of *Kirstie Allsopp's face.*

FRIDAY. To a symposium in Cambridgeshire: *Fentastic!* It's stuffed with ruffled celebrities such as Stephen Fry and Bill Oddie and the bloke who used to play bass in Blur and it's rubbish. We're all here to be brainwashed into wanting half of East Anglia flooded. The reasoning seems a little cloudy to me, but I suspect it's because there's no museum of slavery in the Fens.

The area was drained in the 17th-century for arable farming. This now turns out to have been an act of evil, as much of the drainage

work was financed by speculators, who were not philanthropists at all. OK, there were the houses and the churches and the crops. But at what price? Reclamation of the land drove out the marsh harriers and the skylarks. One of them may eat the other, I'm not sure, but what do you expect after centuries of brutalising exile?

Summary: *Inhabitable fenland is no excuse for man's inhumanity to birds.* Now we must apologise to everything with a beak and return to medieval normality. Mark my words, reverse-engineering New Anglia is a very dangerous mistake. There Will Be Mud.

SATURDAY. Wake from a nightmare. I've created a disturbing anti-architecture piece for the Arts Council. It's a porous igloo-like structure made of nylon on a frame of plywood dinosaur bones. *Inside hang pendulous internal organs representing the fragility of life and a shared human biology.* But the Arts Council cheque has bounced.

SUNDAY. Cultural data-gathering in the recliner. Ridiculous piece by Darcy in the *Creative on Sunday*. 'In the continuing architectural War on Error, is symmetry the real enemy?'

His premise is that Western democracy is expressed in asymmetrical buildings – 'dollops of freedom' – while fundamentalism enforces its dangerous mindset through mirrored maths. He completely ignores the factionalism of the symmetrical cause. With frontal symmetrists and the axial-planning movement engaged in a deadly civil war, victory for dollops is assured.



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AJ/RPS URBAN DESIGN SCHOLARSHIPS WITH DESIGN FOR LONDON

Do you want to design at the scale of the city? We think the city would benefit if more of you did. So here's your chance to learn the skills and get the contacts to get on with the job.

The AJ, RPS and Design for London are offering three readers the chance to work on an urban design project of their choice with the London Mayor's urban design agency.

Each winner will get up to £6,000, a Design for London mentor, and unique access to the process of urban change. Their participation in the projects will be documented in the AJ, and the work exhibited in early 2009.

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