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# SCOTTISH ARCHITECTS FEAR REDUCED DESIGN ROLES

Designers say planning shake-up could relegate them to 'technical adviser' jobs

Architects have attacked the Scottish government's shake-up of the planning system, claiming it is reducing architects to the role of 'technical advisers'.

Edinburgh-based Malcolm Fraser, founder of Malcolm Fraser Architects, has written a letter to the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS) and Architecture and Design Scotland (A+DS) raising concerns about the issue.

The Scottish government is implementing the biggest modernisation of the planning system for 60 years under the 2006 Planning Act, and has introduced 'design leadership' into the planning system through what Fraser calls 'design planners', either at outline planning stage or when a full planning application is made.

In the letter, seen by the AJ, Fraser warns that the change to policy 'is leading to "design

planners" demanding effective authorship of proposals (form, windows, colour etc.), thereby removing an architect's professional creative role and reducing us to technical back-up: interior design, technical support and the provision of Professional Indemnity Insurance.'

Neil Simpson of Edinburgh-based Neil Simpson Architects says he is taking part in a planning course to have a better understanding of what he calls a 'flawed system'.

He said: 'The Planning Act means that it really is policy-led design, which is a fundamentally flawed process. It means planners defer to design policy rather than talking about design.'

'I know Edinburgh City Council is beginning to employ architects but it really is a very patchwork strategy. There needs to be more of a dialogue between architects and planners.'

The Scottish Executive's chief planner Jim Mackinnon defended the changes, saying he wanted to encourage local authorities to take a more 'proactive approach', enabling them to play a greater role in 'informing planning decisions'.

He added: 'I really do not see that the approach we are encouraging leads to the architectural function diminishing, far less disappearing.'

RIAS secretary Neil Baxter said the body is taking the matter 'very seriously' claiming that Fraser's letter is one of dozens received on the issue.

'A significant number of qualified architects are advising at a senior level in planning departments, and that has to be a good thing,' he said.

'But if unqualified planners enter the debate then that could become unhealthy,' Baxter added.  
*Richard Vaughan*



# STAFF LAID OFF AS HOUSING CRISIS BITES

Architectural practices across the UK are being forced to lay off staff as the collapse of the residential sector gathers pace.

Some firms have made redundancies as the number of houses being built in the UK falls to its lowest since the end of the Second World War.

Hamiltons director Paul Birch confirmed that the practice – ranked fifth in this year's AJ100 list of Britain's biggest practices (AJ 15.05.08) – had parted company with 15 staff during the consolidation of its three London practices into a single office.

In a move he said was 'driven' by the economic downturn, Birch added: 'We were 245 people but are now 230. Some people decided not to come with us, but yes, we have made a few people – fewer than 10 – redundant.'

London-based HTA Architects confirmed it had made a 'handful' of staff redundant, and had 'lost' others through 'natural wastage'.

And the Manchester-based director of a well-known housing practice told the AJ that his firm 'had been hit on the private-sector-housing side'.

The director added: 'We have

been getting a lot of CVs since the new year, mostly technicians but also some qualified architects. Most seem to be from the commercial sector though.'

Joe English of recruitment agency SIV said his firm had noticed that 'smaller to medium-sized regional practices have stopped recruiting altogether'.

The Construction Products Association has forecast that 147,000 houses will be built this year, some 56,000 down from last year and 93,000 shy of the government's 2016 target of 240,000 a year. *Max Thompson*

## BENSON + FORSYTH WINS IN FINSBURY PARK

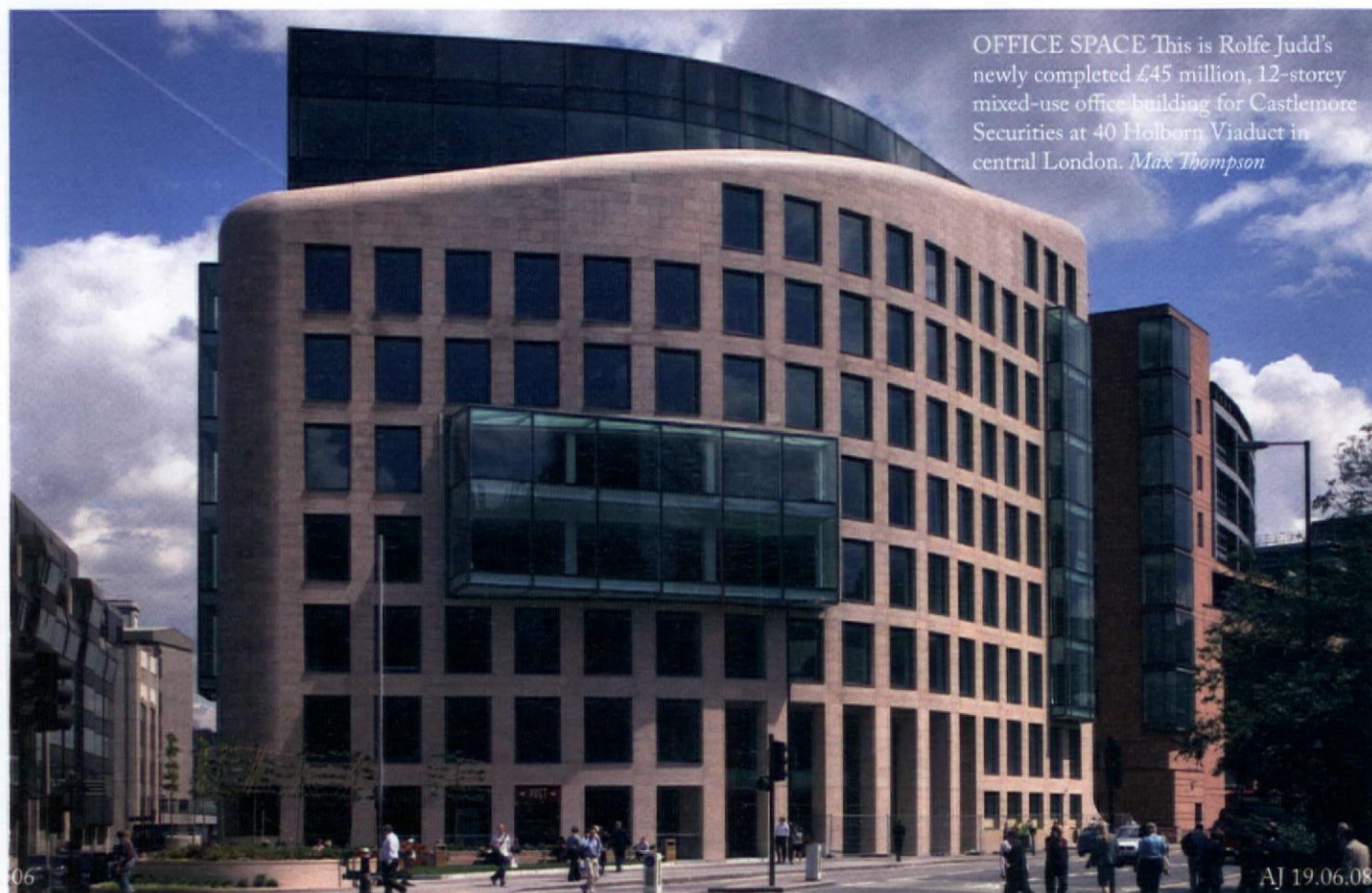
Benson + Forsyth has won the competition to redevelop the City North site in Finsbury Park, North London.

The practice saw off more than 60 entrants to scoop the RIBA-organised contest, and was chosen ahead of finalists Studio Egret West, John McAslan + Partners, FLACQ and Panter Hudspith.

All five shortlisted firms were asked to come up with schemes to 'improve the quality of public spaces' around Finsbury Park station and 'provide a range of land uses including residential, retail, offices, conference space, restaurants and cafés'.

*Richard Waite*

**OFFICE SPACE** This is Rolfe Judd's newly completed £45 million, 12-storey mixed-use office building for Castlemore Securities at 40 Holborn Viaduct in central London. *Max Thompson*





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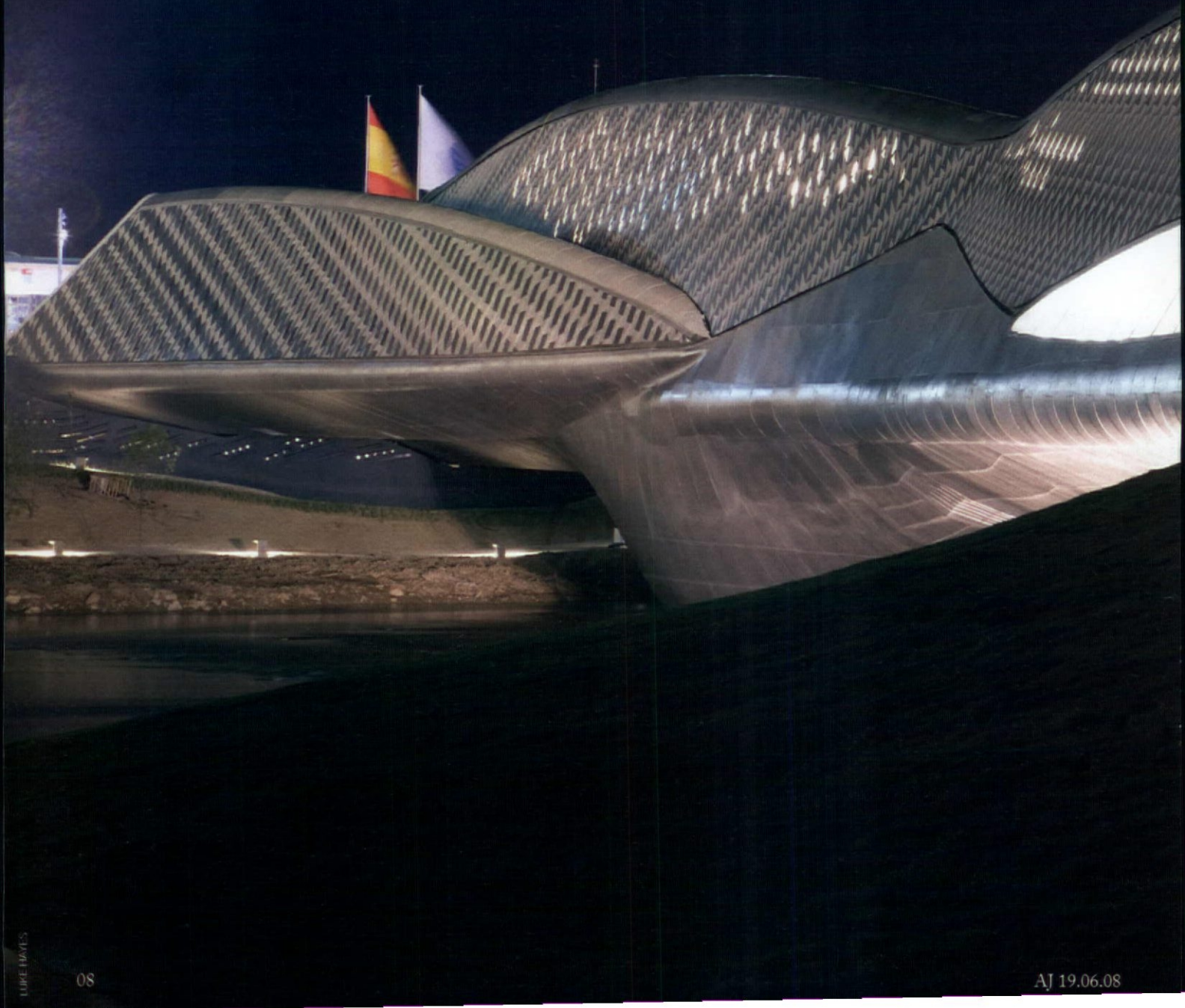
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## ZAHA BUILDS BRIDGES AT THE ZARAGOZA EXPO

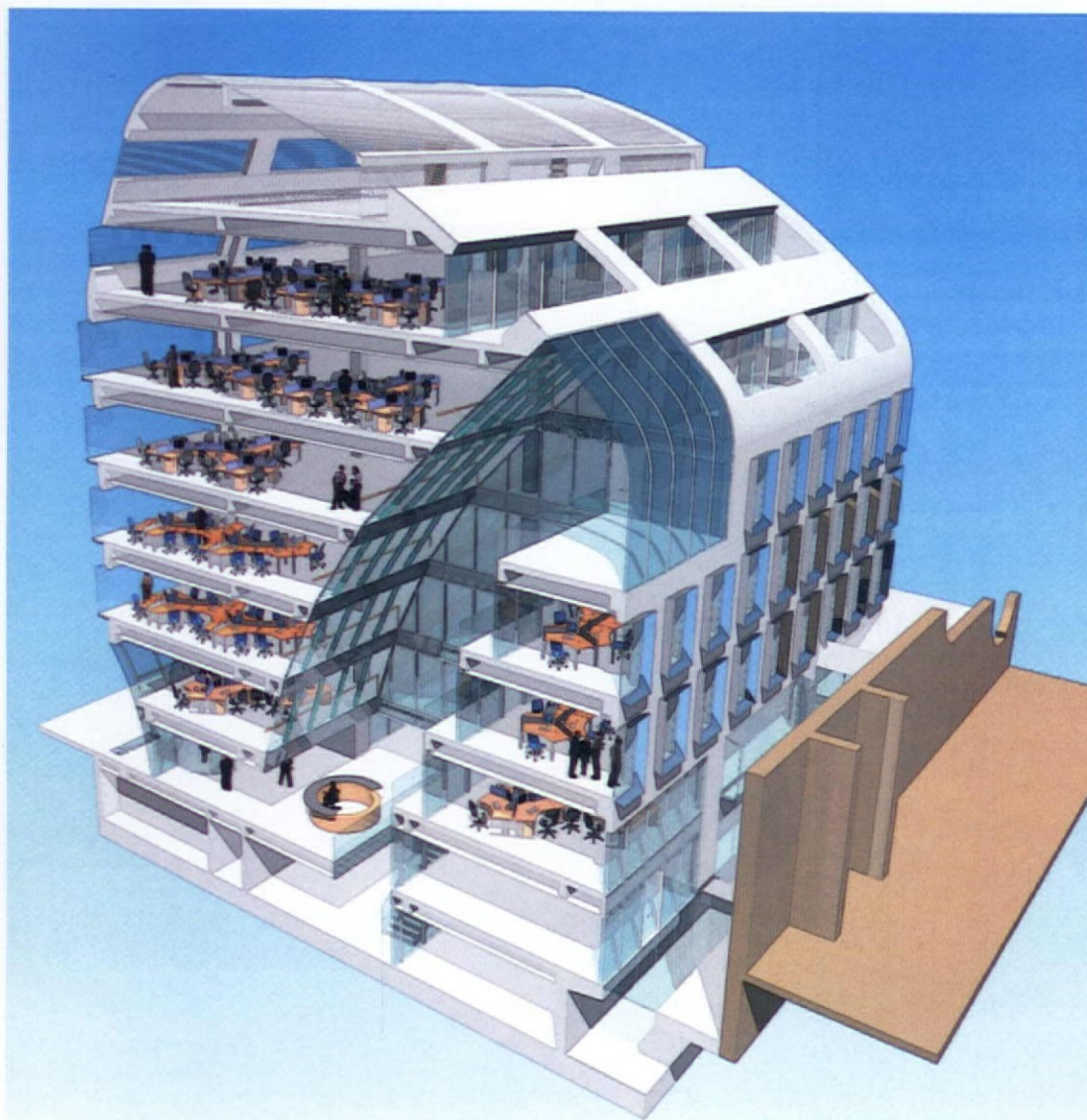
This is Zaha Hadid's Bridge Pavilion over the Ebro river in Zaragoza, Spain. Opened last Friday (13 June), the 270m-long bridge is the centrepiece of the Expo Zaragoza 2008, which runs until 14 September.











## COURTLY NEIGHBOUR

This is Avery Associates' eight-storey office building next to the Old Bailey in the City of London. Currently on site, the Portland Stone-clad scheme, which has been designed in association with Sidell Gibson Architects, lies on 7-10 Old Bailey, a stone's throw away from Make's 'donut' at number 30. Avery Associates founder Bryan Avery says the windows on the front elevation are designed to resemble Juliet balconies to allow office workers to 'view the comings and goings next door'. *Max Thompson*



## THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

### MCASLAN TO MEET CABE OVER ST PAUL'S SCHEME

John McAslan Architects is to hold talks with CABE after the design watchdog said it was unconvinced by the practice's designs for 5 Cheapside, next to St Paul's Cathedral. CABE said: 'We cannot yet support this planning application and wish to see the scheme evolve.'

### CUTTY SARK SCHEME LIFTS OFF

Grimshaw and Youmeheshe's Cutty Sark conservation project has taken a major step forward with the removal of the ship from its dry dock. The final piece of planking was taken away on Tuesday (17 June), allowing the 138-year-old tea clipper to be lifted 3m and creating a new visitor space beneath the hull.

### LEACH RHODES WALKER LEAVES HOTEL JOB

Leach Rhodes Walker (LRW) – the Manchester-based practice which recently bought itself out from the doomed Erinaceous group – has been replaced on Liverpool's half-built Layla Hotel on Thomas Street by Falconer Chester Hall (FCH). The reasons behind the change remain unclear, with both parties claiming they had instigated the move.

### ZAHA SCHEME DUBBED 'AWKWARD' BY CABE

Zaha Hadid's proposed extension to the Middle East Centre at St Antony's College in Oxford has been branded 'awkward' and 'in constant competition with its neighbours' by CABE. The commission said the extension – a Corian-clad link between two Victorian buildings – needed to be more 'sophisticated and delicate' to relate to the North Oxford conservation area (see *letters* on page 24).

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Built-in Oven



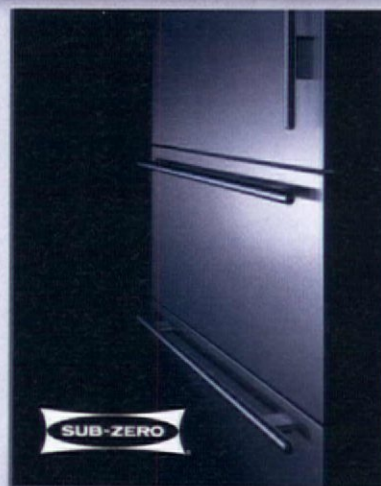
Wenge Cabinetry



Crema Marfil Italian Marble Worktops



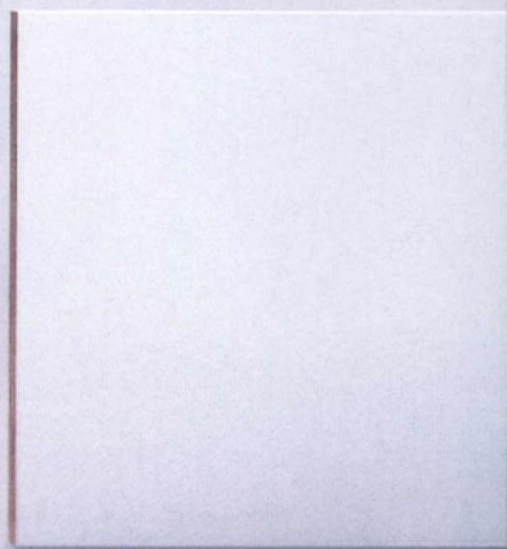
Brushed Black Stainless Steel Back Splash



Built-in Refrigeration



Electric Cooktop Module



Lacquered Oak Cabinetry



Smoked Oak Floor

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shaping our urban landscape

THE REGENERATORS #4

MIRANDA PLOWMAN

# 'WE DON'T JUST WANT FASHION-LABEL ARCHITECTS'

*Richard Waite* meets Miranda Plowman,  
who is plotting the revitalisation of north  
Sheffield from her Portakabin base





The nerve centre for the regeneration of north Sheffield is a tatty, green, heavily bolted, bunker-like Portakabin.

This is also the base for Sheffield City Council's Miranda Plowden who, despite her uninspiring surroundings, has somehow assembled an impressive line-up of both international practices and emerging talent to help with the £200 million transformation of two Housing Market Renewal Zones (Pathfinders).

Among those already working in the targeted suburbs are Dutch firm Mecanoo and Danish practice Schmidt Hammer Lassen (SHL) as well as British names FAT, Letts Wheeler, Zero Zero, Fluid, and landscape architect Gross.Max.

Plowden's official title is programme director for the strategic housing service, and she has been specifically charged with regenerating failing communities in Southey Owlerton and Brightside Shiregreen.

'These areas are very, very depressed,' says Plowden. 'The actual appearance is quite deceptive. There is conventional housing here with gardens, green areas and friendly people – there are no graffiti-covered tower blocks. Yet Southey Owlerton is

in the top 1 per cent of the index of multiple deprivation.'

Plowden's primary challenge is to increase housing demand and diversify the 'residential offer' in both areas, currently home to around 70,000 people. In Brightside Shiregreen the programme is about improving what's there, including one of the first social housing estates, built following an architectural competition in 1900.

However, for its western neighbour Southey Owlerton, regeneration means huge 'transformational change'. Plowden describes the area as a 'badly realised' attempt at an Ebenezer Howard-inspired Garden City with inflexible, two-bedroom semis.

### 'The actual appearance is deceptive – these areas are very, very depressed'

She says: 'It is effectively a large council estate, with no mix of tenure type. It's a monoculture of semi-detached housing – the same designs built regardless of whether the plot was in a valley or on a hill.'

Of the 15,000 council-owned properties in the Southey Owlerton area, around 1,200 have been pulled down, a process which started in the late '90s following a dramatic fall in the demand for social housing.

Although the anti-demolition clamour was not as vocal as in other Pathfinder zones – such as in the North West where large swathes of Victorian terraces were threatened with the bulldozer – there was still considerable local concern. Yet Plowden insists 'the argument for demolition was pretty clear cut'.

She says: 'The council just had too many outdated houses – most with real limitations on how they could be adapted. As well as making space for new homes, the

demolition also helped address problems such as streets which turned their back on local parks.

'But not everyone could understand that there needed to be change. And when it comes to knocking down your own house it becomes very personal.'

This was exacerbated, by what Plowden calls, an unhelpful 'top-down' study carried out by the council, which recommended large-scale bulldozing. It was in response to this (in 2000) that Plowden first became heavily involved in north Sheffield, helping locals through a community-led partnership called the Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration (SOAR).

She says: 'The community forum was too young as an

organisation to effectively engage and hadn't been strongly involved in the study. So we started drawing up a new grass roots-led masterplan.'

With the help of CABB, landscape architect Grant Associates and the Sheffield School of Architecture, the 'light-touch consultancy' slowly emerged as a set of detailed plans outlining an overarching vision for the neighbourhoods. These site-specific documents were eventually adopted by the council's cabinet in 2005.

At this point Plowden's role flipped from poacher to gamekeeper. Having worked 'on the side of' the community she moved into the housing service where she began the task of delivering 1,900 new homes and overseeing the sale of sites to like-minded developers.

Plowden professes a 'romantic ideal for aspirational, high quality architecture' and public spaces. 'You only get one shot at this and

### MIRANDA PLOWDEN – A REGENERATOR'S CAREER

- 1979-83** Studies classics at Oxford University
- 1985-87** Studies landscape design at Sheffield University
- 1991** Joins the Sheffield Development Corporation as head of environment programme
- 1992** Completes part-time studies in urban design at Oxford Brookes
- 1995** Joins Groundwork Dearne Valley to lead village regeneration project
- 2000** Joins community-led Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration team
- 2005** Becomes programme director for North Sheffield's Housing Market Renewal Programme

if you mess up you've lost the opportunity,' she says. 'We have attracted some real talent to work here because of the quality of our early plans and our briefs, but we don't just want a collection of fashion-label architects.'

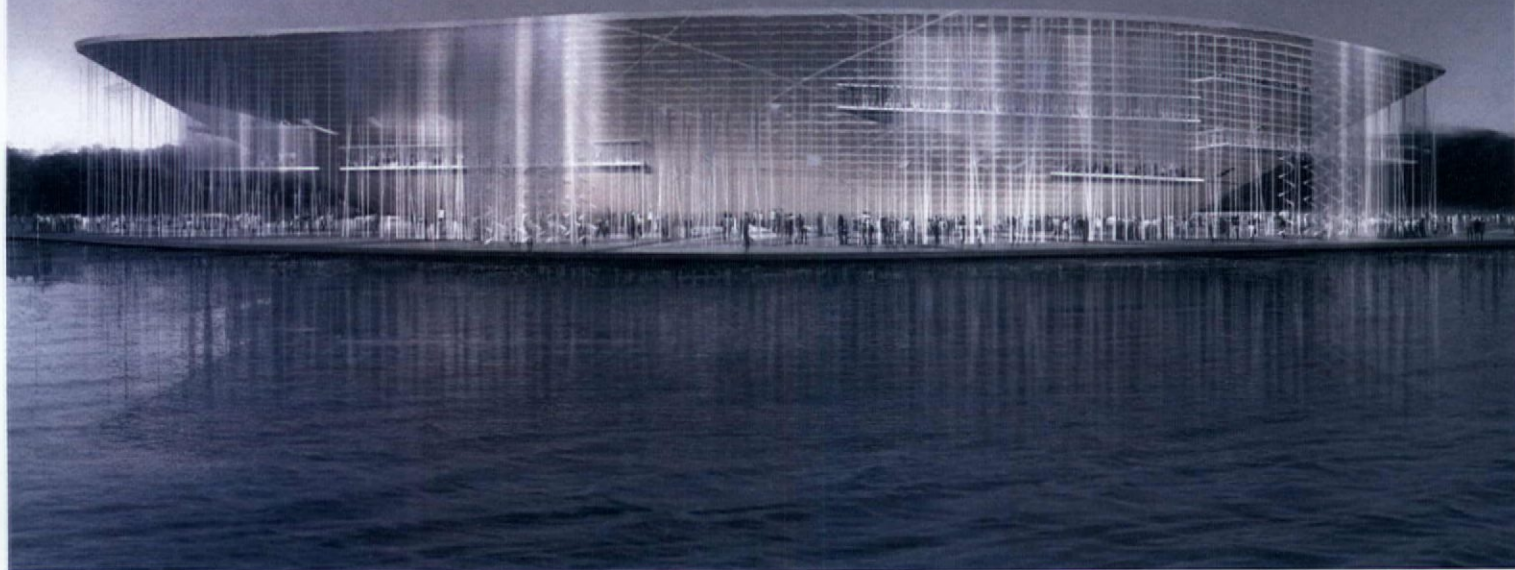
Among the most-anticipated schemes is an ambitious 215-home development in Foxhill for developer Artisan, a library hub by SHL and a project by Stephenson Bell which the council has unusually decided to take on as developer/client after Barratt Homes withdrew.

But progress has been 'painfully' slow. To date only a few parks, including Bask Meadows, by Gross.Max and Grant Associates and some community hubs by Bauman Lyons and Allen Tod have been built.

Plowden says: 'Schemes like Fox Hill mark a step-change in quality so delivery isn't easy. But if you asked if I'd rather things went faster but were done less well. I'd always say no.'



**POMPEY'S NEW HOME** Herzog & de Meuron has unveiled its revised stadium designs for Portsmouth FC. The redesigned scheme features a 36,000-seat arena, housing and a naval training facility. The football club decided to swap sites for its new home to the 'less problematic' Horsea Island area last October. *Richard Waite*



## KERSLAKE PUTS DESIGN AT FOREFRONT OF HCA

Design will be central to the new Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), according to the super-quango's new head Bob Kerslake.

Speaking exclusively to the AJ, Kerslake, former chief executive of Sheffield City Council, said he expects the HCA to become a champion of good design, and that he will work closely with CABI to ensure this.

Kerslake said: 'Design will be very important to the HCA. How it is reflected in the Housing and Regeneration Bill is for the House of Lords to decide, but we

will be utilising the design review process.

'I have seen the power of good design in my previous role [at Sheffield].

'It's particularly important in terms of the housing agenda. There is clearly an imbalance between supply and demand, but there has to be the right quality of housing in quality places. It's not just about houses at any price.'

Kerslake was also keen to place the HCA at the forefront of the debate on sustainability, particularly when it comes to the

implementation of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

He said: 'We have to be an active contributor to the practical implications of the Code, especially when it comes to the higher levels – hence the Carbon Challenge schemes [the first of which will see more than 200 'carbon-neutral' homes, designed by HTA Architects, being built at Hanham Hall in Bristol].

'This will be one of the biggest challenges for the HCA, getting the balance right between growth, sustainability and affordability.'

*Richard Vaughan*

## THE MAC SET TO LAUNCH DESIGN COMPETITION

Glasgow School of Art (GSA) will hold an open international design competition next year to overhaul the site opposite Charles Rennie Mackintosh's famous Arts and Crafts masterpiece, the home of the school.

The GSA announced this week that the Scottish Funding Council had pledged around £50 million to redevelop the aging campus.

GSA spokesman Scott Parsons said: 'This will be a once-in-a-lifetime chance to build near the Mackintosh building. We are sure it will attract a lot of interest.'

*Richard Waite*





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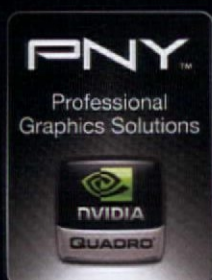
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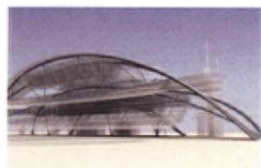
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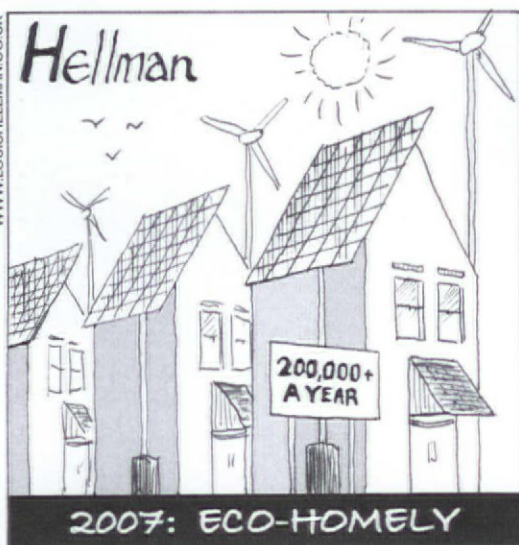
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## GENTLEMAN'S RELISH

**Peter Rees**, head of planning for the City of London, went down a storm at the annual British Council for Offices (BCO) conference in Brussels earlier this month (AJ 12.06.08). Rees, a man who likes to shake things up, was a panellist for the conference's 'What Makes Cities Tick?' debate. When asked which city he would most like to live in, he replied: 'Sydney, because of the men!' For one shocked BCO stalwart sitting next to Astragal it all proved to be too much. 'That is the chief planner of the City of London!' the delegate cried. 'The men in Sydney! He never bloody stops!'

## AIN'T MISBEHAVING

Astragal would like to thank the charming gentlemen from London-based practice Rolfe Judd Architects for joining him to carry on the party after the

BCO's gala dinner. Astragal won't go into details, but it will suffice to say that he was impressed with a certain director's alcohol tolerance, not to mention his ability, while wedged on a sofa between two scantily clad dancers, to sit bolt upright with his eyes fixed on nothing more than the bar.

## HEROES AND VILLAINS

A little bird rang Astragal recently to reveal the word on the street about the two-horse RIBA presidency race between **Ruth Reed** and **Andrew Hanson**. Those in the know think that this one is going to be too tight to call. The observer went on to divulge that the candidates have been likened to two well-known characters: Hanson to London Mayor **Boris Johnson** because he is, according to our source, 'affable, big and bumbling', and Reed to Dalmatian-skinner **Cruella de Vil**! Take your pick, ladies and gentlemen. The choice is yours.

## FLIGHT OF THE CULLINAN

While the rest of the architectural press may have been tumbling over themselves to congratulate **Ted Cullinan** on winning the Royal Gold Medal earlier this year, Astragal is far more impressed by the achievements of some of his underlings. A team from Cullinan's office designed, constructed and flew the record-breaking man-powered 'Cullinan Bird' plane (pictured right) 40m over the Serpentine lake in central London, in the second Red Bull Flugtag competition earlier this month. The team, led by pilot

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**Phil 'the Legs' Graham** and also featuring members from engineer Rambøll Whitbybird and consultancy Element Energy, smashed the previous record of 6m on the craft's maiden, and only, voyage, in front of a crowd of 80,000 people.



## THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Does London need new, architect-designed bus shelters? (see right for result)

**Next week's question:** Did Zaha get it right with her extension to the Middle East Centre at St Antony's College in Oxford?

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## **Annie Spink Award for Excellence in Architectural Education**

### **Call for nominations**

The Royal Institute of British Architects is pleased to announce the fourth biennial Annie Spink Award, presented in recognition of an outstanding contribution to architectural education.

The Annie Spink Award is open to teachers (individuals or groups) who have made a substantial contribution to architectural education in a School of Architecture validated by the RIBA in the UK and abroad. Applicants must be, or have been involved in the development of architectural education and engage with the process of teaching and learning.

The award is financed by the Annie Spink Trust Fund, which was established in 1974 by the architect Herbert Spink FRIBA. He bequeathed the trust as a lasting memorial to his wife Annie, and conceived it as an honour for the 'advancement of architectural education'.

The winner will receive the Annie Spink trophy and £10,000 at a ceremony presented by the President of the RIBA.

**Deadline for nominations: 06 October 2008**

For further information please visit [www.architecture.com](http://www.architecture.com)

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# Leader & Comment



**Leader** The job losses may be starting already, but prudence, not panic, should be the order of the day, writes **Kieran Long**

So, are you laying people off yet? Be honest. The noises are starting that some big practices and housing developers are beginning to shave a few staff off their workforces (see page 6).

It's happening at every scale of practice, seemingly, but we're far from on the headline yet – there are still plenty of people around willing to scoop up decent architects. I spoke to a sole practitioner this week who told me he was 'hibernating' his practice, because his two residential clients had got cold feet in the face of rocky times for the residential market. But it wasn't a great worry – he'd taken a well-paid job at an AJ100 practice, and was

working on a competition for a huge office building in Abu Dhabi. Talk about landing on your feet. At the other end of the spectrum, despite gloom from some quarters, some practices are experiencing an unexpected upside – it's easier to recruit.

A note of caution has to be sounded on the applicants beginning to flood the market, though. You might get more CVs through the letterbox for each vacancy, but they might not be very good. 'I think some practices are taking the chance to get rid of some bad architects', one principal of a medium-sized practice told me, rather cruelly, this week. His advice was to hang on another few months for

the forced redundancies to begin. Blackly pragmatic stuff.

I sat in on a design review panel for a London local authority this week, and while all the projects we saw were residential-led, there was a note of caution in the air. Would any of these come to fruition? Are developers merely banking planning consents to wait for an upturn? If the latter is true, architects will be OK for another six months-to-a-year before things really come to a grinding halt.

It's tricky, at this transitional moment for the market, to see through people's smoke-screens, but prudent practices are beginning to tighten their belts. [kieran.long@emap.com](mailto:kieran.long@emap.com)



**Opinion** The Scottish Futures Trust is an opportunity to promote high-quality design, says **Paul Stallan**

Last month the Scottish government unveiled its plans to shake-up public procurement in Scotland through the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) (AJ 22.05.08). The SFT will be a company that will strategically advise and manage the raising of capital for public projects in Scotland. The premise is that this new approach will deliver the same level of investment as the PFI/PPP model – but at a lower cost to taxpayers.

The Scottish government asserts that PFI/PPP schemes expose the public to unacceptable levels of risk, and generate excessively huge profits to those delivering them. Scotland currently spends £500 million annually on PFI/PPP repayments, predicted to rise to £800 million in 2011.

Prior to the Scottish elections of 2007, the SNP's proposal was that the SFT would issue bonds to raise the cash for public capital projects as, under the terms of the Scotland Act 1998, the Scottish Government is not permitted to borrow. Plans have now changed and the SFT will instead seek to work with local authorities, as they have no borrowing prohibition. The proposal is that multiple councils would bundle together capital schemes to achieve bulk-buying potential to secure more favourable rates.

## **In my experience, procurement is just a means to an end**

The SFT will be tasked with broad strategic delivery, rather than following a single procurement method. Other than projects that do receive complete funding from the public purse, the SFT system will still largely be based on borrowing and funding from private investment. Some of SFT's critics say that this simply makes it PFI/PPP by another name.

How then will the SFT actually help my team at RMJM deliver exemplary designs for our clients? One of the proposals for the SFT

is that it would have a projects review group to maintain design standards.

Do procurement methods impact on the quality of the final design? Architecture + Design Scotland (A+DS) has established that, regardless of procurement method, poor quality is being produced. In my own experience, where mature leadership has been provided and where good design was passionately championed I've found that procurement was just a means to an end and not a determinant factor of the final outcome.

A+DS is working with local authorities to support them in having a more multi-disciplinary input and in-house resource to ensure design is fully embedded at all development stages. Without exception, all the recently recognised excellent school designs in Scotland have been the product of a quality designer and a determined client.

The challenge is for us to use this formulation stage of the SFT to push for design quality as a significant factor and also to incubate and encourage a progressive culture that is confident in architecture and design quality.

Paul Stallan is European design director of RMJM



## Opinion We may not be facing a '90s-style economic recession, says *Nick Lomax*, but it still makes sense to diversify

With immaculate timing we set up practice months before the last recession. It was obvious at the time that an economic correction was about to happen, but the speed and extent of what was to follow took us all by surprise. When we started almost all our work was in private-sector housing. Not only did our work dry up, but we also lost a good deal of fees as some of our clients went into liquidation.

This experience has informed everything we have done since. We have diversified into as many sectors as we can – we are still working in the housing and commercial sectors but this is now complemented by commissions in education, healthcare, research, leisure and more. We have also undertaken many of our larger-scale projects in collaboration with other architects – most notably with Bennetts Associates on the Jubilee Library in Brighton – thus avoiding too fast a rate of expansion and reducing the need to reduce staff in a downturn. We have also expanded our portfolio overseas, where collaboration with local architects such as Leigh & Orange in Hong Kong and Hames Sharley in Australia has helped, and we have

### The background economic conditions today are nothing like as bad as in 1990

deliberately selected markets that we believe will not be too affected by economic performance in the West. This is demonstrated by our work in Libya, where we have taken on a number of projects in the public sector, including 10 faculty buildings for Al Fateh University and a Divers' Training Centre for the Petroleum Institute.

As all architects know, to diversify, to find collaborative partners, and to find new markets takes time. However, the current

situation does not feel at all like what happened in those months after we first set up. In fact I think it is very dangerous to use the 'R' word in this instance, which will only become a self-fulfilling prophecy if we continue to talk in these terms.

A credit crunch brought about by problems in the banking sector does not necessarily mean a full recession in the UK's built-environment sector. The background economic conditions today are nothing like as bad as in 1990, when we had high inflation, high interest rates and high unemployment. In addition, back then we didn't have a government committed to public spending, or required to provide for the Olympic Games, and back then the Chancellor stoked up demand for housing by giving six months' notice that he would stop double mortgage relief to couples. The latter point was a distortion of the market with profound consequences. The current distortion is the paralysis of the mortgage market. However, the desperate need for housing in some parts of the country has not changed and the

government cannot afford to ignore the issue. In the short term private developers may try and sell some of their developments to housing associations, but this will be limited to non-Housing Corporation funding as very few will comply with Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. Furthermore, many architects are not yet seeing the crunch as developers are seeking to get planning consent on sites for asset valuation, not because they will build them out.

Unfortunately, the decline in the housing and commercial markets is having an impact on confidence; we have seen the first casualty of this: our client for a hotel in the North of England has put the project on hold for no other reason. I would recommend for those practices involved in private housing and commercial developments who have not already diversified to start now.

Nick Lomax is managing director and co-founder of LCE Architects

See news piece on page 6. Email [comment@architectsjournal.co.uk](mailto:comment@architectsjournal.co.uk)







# Aldo van Eyck's polymathic genius has inspired both praise and jealousy, writes Patrick Lynch

The recent publication of the collected writings of Aldo van Eyck follows some excellent scholarship by Francis Strauven and Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis. Strauven's biography (*Aldo van Eyck: The Shape of Relativity, Architectura & Natura*) is really an intellectual history, and traces the influences on van Eyck, from the William Blake-loving headmaster at his school to the artistic and cultural figures that he met while stranded in wartime Zurich. Lefaivre and Tzonis have also written a sort of existential study in character (*Aldo van Eyck: Humanist Rebel. Inbetweening in a Postwar World*, 010 Publishers), and you gain the impression that if he had not studied architecture van Eyck would have made a brilliant writer or academic, but then he was these things too.

I'm irritated by the lazy suggestion that he wasn't really a good designer. It's as if because he could write so well, van Eyck was less of an architect. People don't say such things about

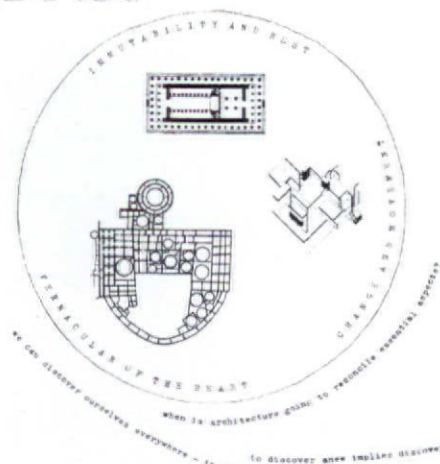
Le Corbusier, and he published 58 books. People don't like polymaths, they make the rest of us feel insecure, and van Eyck's thinking cuts away all the vain rind that protects weak ideas from criticism. But then architects are supposed to be a combination of different types of people, and the struggle to reconcile this makes us able to empathise with others. It must hurt some people to read van Eyck's bravura descriptions of when snow falls on cities, since the pleasure children find in nature in the city is the polar (ahem) opposite of the upright profession that values efficiency over playfulness and contemplation. He is the counterpoint to those British architects for whom culture begins and ends with aircraft.

Much of van Eyck's research was concerned with proto-typical situations rather than with objects, and much of the vocabulary that we use today to discuss design is his. For example, 'ludic spaces', 'the in-between', and 'the mat', 'interstitial spaces', 'laconic spaces', 'the everyday' were phrases which van Eyck used to describe his anthropological approach to architectural history and design, and influenced the work of his friend Joseph Rykwert and his many students, as well as the new generation of architects in Britain today.

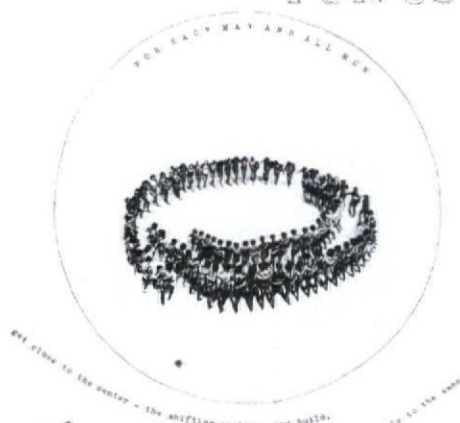
Van Eyck's studies of the Dogon people in Mali, presented to CIAM Otterlo congress in 1959 ('Modern Architecture and Dogon Culture') describe the origins of architecture

## His thinking cuts away the vain rind protecting weak ideas from criticism

BY US



FOR US



as a dance: 'We can discover ourselves everywhere - in all places and ages - doing the same thing in a different way, feeling the same, reacting differently, reacting differently to the same... the shifting centre.' Francis Strauven thinks that van Eyck uniquely managed to overcome the paradox of modernity; in his interpretation of the Otterlo circles, 'architecture has to deal with the "constant and constantly changing" human reality, i.e. not only what is different from the past but what is the same'. 'FOR US': the spiral of dancers is captioned 'for each man and for all men', and is placed beside and equal to the architecture - 'BY US'. As a spatial-temporal event that structures itself, the dance is interpreted as a symbol of cultural renewal; in flux and transformation; unstable and revolving.



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must focus on the existing stock  
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as creating new ones.'**

(Margaret Hodge, 14th May 2008)

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## STUDENTS NEED RETAIL THERAPY

What interests me most about retail design is the design of space (and public space at that) that is used over the course of a year by millions, yes millions, of people. This probably puts it on a par with the design of major airports or transport interchanges.

A 40,000m<sup>2</sup> mall in Coimbra, Portugal, has a visitor volume per year of six million. The design skills required for this are not insubstantial and, ironically, these are examples of where the client and the architect really work hard together to cater for the well-being of the public. How many of us out there really think of the user before we think of the 'visuals'?

BDP and Multi Development UK's Victoria Square in Belfast (pictured below) (AJ 24.04.08) should be looked at seriously by all concerned with city centres

and public space. And while we're at it, why not get architecture students to go over there and figure out why it works so well?  
*Mario Sua Kay, Lisbon, Portugal*

## BOOK SEEKS STORIES

I am working on a monograph about Aldington Craig + Collinge for publication by the RIBA in collaboration with English Heritage and the Twentieth Century Society, as part of a series of books on 20th-century British architects.

I would be glad to hear from anyone who had contact with Peter Aldington, John Craig and Paul Collinge, whether in practice or through teaching, by email on [a.powers@gre.ac.uk](mailto:a.powers@gre.ac.uk) or by mail to the University of Greenwich's school of architecture and construction.

*Alan Powers, University of Greenwich, London SE10*

## FROM WWW. ARCHITECTS JOURNAL.CO.UK

Responses to 'Zaha's Oxford college extension branded "awkward" by CABE' (AJ online 16.06.08):

Flashy, self-indulgent forms again.  
*Anonymous, Birmingham*

I think it complements the buildings around it. I can hardly call that Brutalist and quite ugly concrete edifice next door a masterpiece, so what's wrong with placing a beautiful building in this setting to enhance this area? As long as it is executed to a high standard, I have no issue.  
*Anonymous, Sydney, Australia*

On the positive, I love the form and the anticipated spaces I can see inside. I think there will be wonderful spaces created. However, I have to agree, contextually it doesn't work. It looks to be a very sculptural building, but it seems to be 'plonked' into place without any regard for the surrounds.

Many contemporary styles can work with older styles. In this case, I can't see that marriage. But this is based on what I perceive from the pictures provided. It could work from other viewing points. Unfortunately not from those provided.  
*Anonymous, Newstead, Australia*

I think in the context of this being an overt statement of an intervention by Zaha Hadid, it is extremely contextual. Mind you, I always find she's successful in that regard.  
*Anonymous, Cardiff*

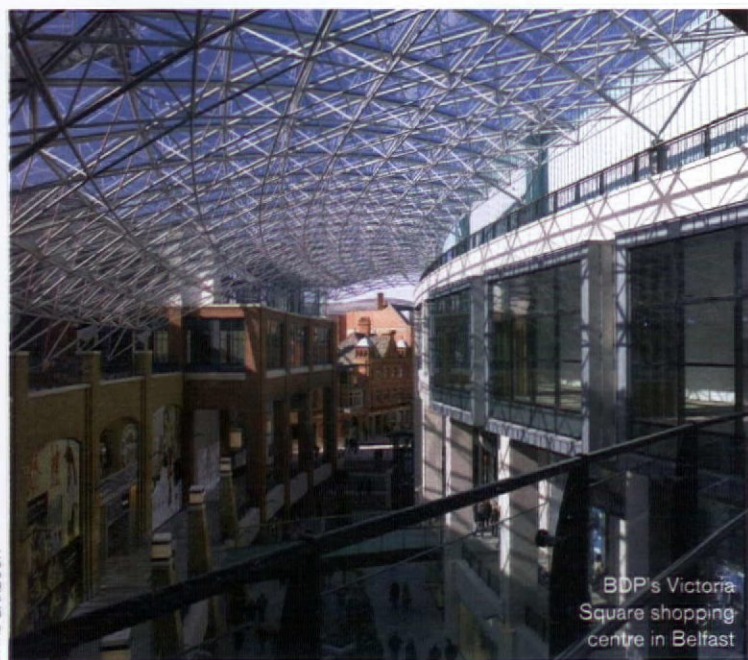
Why is 'an appropriate contextual response' so frequently seen as a predictable adoption of the proportions and materials of a bygone age? Within these constraints Zaha would need to find a site within a futuristic space colony to justify her beautiful form-making. Lets get into the 21st century and catch up with the sculptural progress in the (unrestrained by planning) automotive/aerospace and product-design worlds.  
*Anonymous, Cardiff*

Nice concept, but it does look awkward with the existing buildings. It's the location which isn't right. The building itself looks great, but it's not in keeping with the surrounding buildings.  
*Anonymous, Wakefield*

It may be a beautiful form in its own right (very zeitgeisty), but does it have anything to do with the context? I fear we will look back at such interventions in the future and see them as the carbuncles so many of them are.  
*Anonymous, London*

Looks beautiful. There are many projects which don't deserve to be built. Not this one!  
*Anonymous, Fleet*

It looks beautiful to me. I know that feeling when you design something from your heart and some committee calls it 'awkward'. It's soul destroying. I guess this is the problem of trying to express a personal vision within a public art. It's just so frustrating. There is so much awful stuff going on which ticks all the collective boxes. Just let Zaha do it!  
*Maurice Shapero, Manchester*



BDP's Victoria Square shopping centre in Belfast





Marcel Breuer - Wassily Chair 1925.

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# COME ON, FEEL THE NEUES

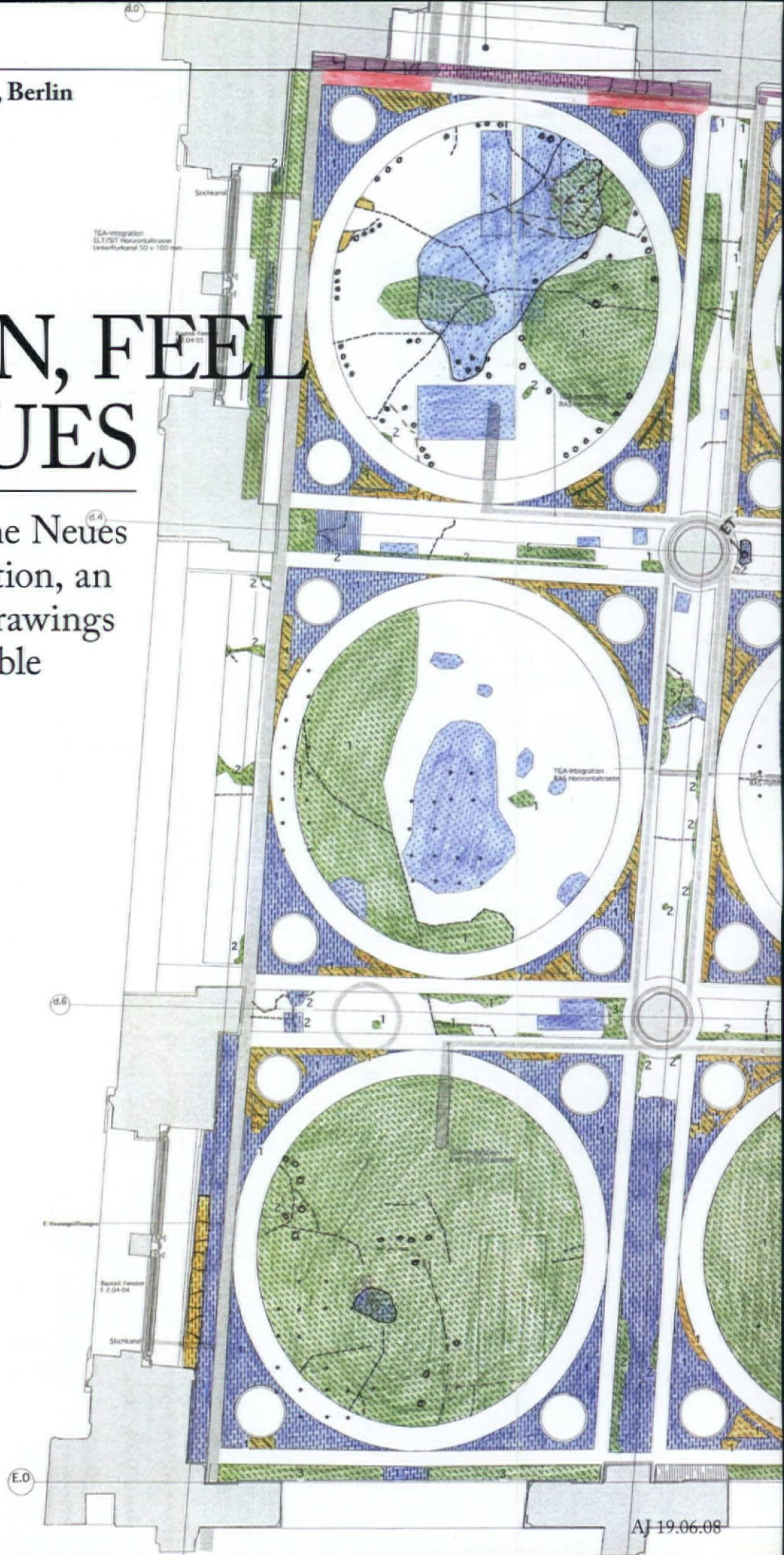
As the restoration of the Neues Museum nears completion, an exhibition shows the drawings that have made it possible

On 20 June, a partial set of drawings laying out the restoration of Berlin's Neues Museum will be on view at London's Sir John Soane's Museum. These six drawings are authored by David Chipperfield Architects, the chief architect for the Neues Museum, in collaboration with restoration specialist ProDenkmal, and are used by all the consultants, including restoration architect Julian Harrap Architects.

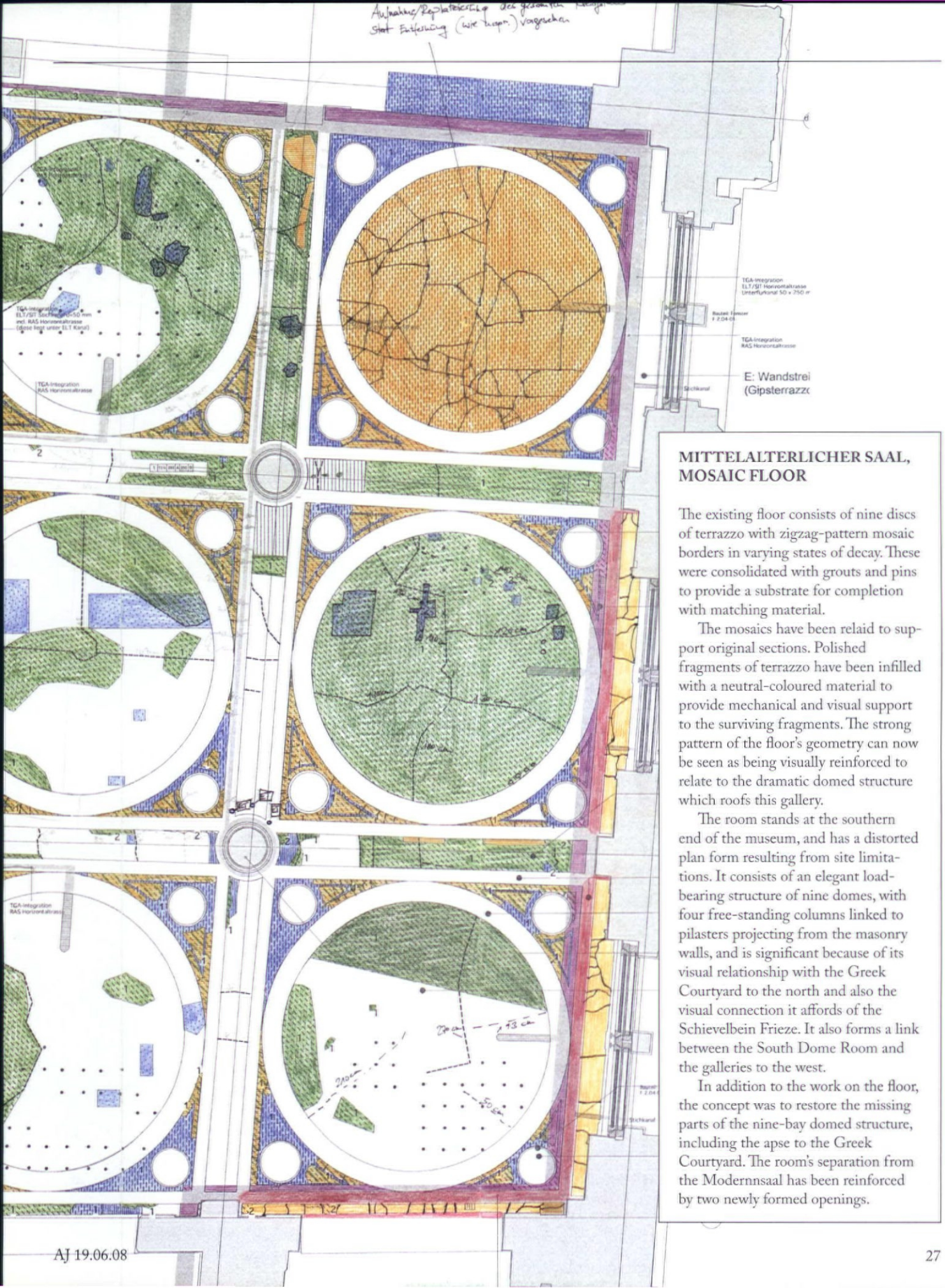
They were chosen by Rik Nys and Martin Reichert of Chipperfield, and illustrate the range and scope of the work undertaken, including repairs to floors, ceilings, stairs and, structure. Explanatory text and photographs will accompany the drawings, which will remain without specific annotation.

'While you have this palimpsest of notes and annotations, they're very much computer-generated images', says Soane Museum curator Jerzy J Kierkuc-Bielinski. He adds: 'The drawings most clearly show the process of developing the concept of restoration.' This 'concept', according to Julian Harrap, is to make something that looks whole from afar, but which reveals, upon closer inspection, the scars of its violent past. Here Harrap describes three of the six drawings that will be on view. The project will complete in early 2009.

The Neues Museum, Berlin: Restoration, Repair and Intervention runs from 20 June to 6 September at the Sir John Soane's Museum







## MITTELALTERLICHER SAAL, MOSAIC FLOOR

The existing floor consists of nine discs of terrazzo with zigzag-pattern mosaic borders in varying states of decay. These were consolidated with grouts and pins to provide a substrate for completion with matching material.

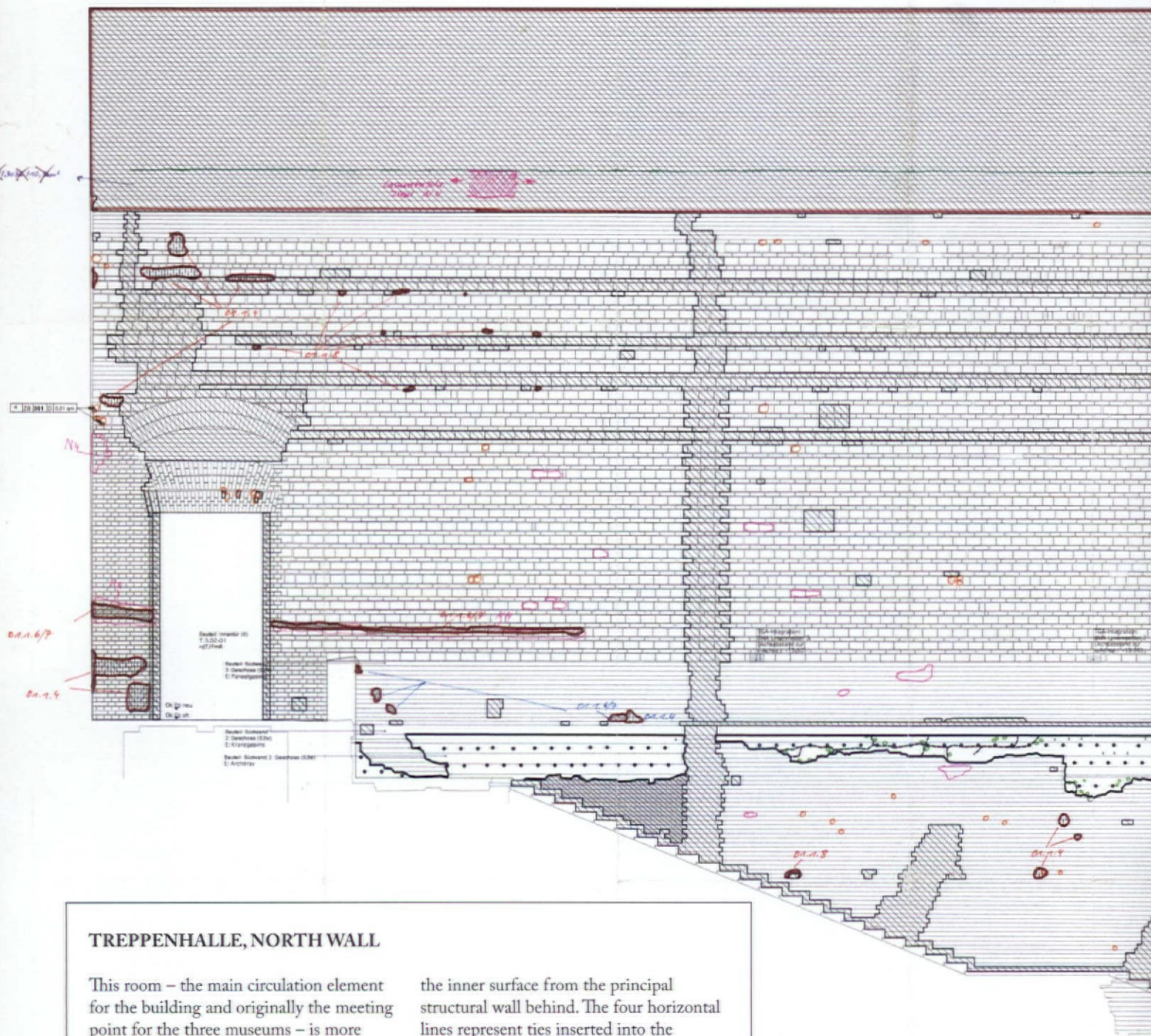
The mosaics have been relaid to support original sections. Polished fragments of terrazzo have been infilled with a neutral-coloured material to provide mechanical and visual support to the surviving fragments. The strong pattern of the floor's geometry can now be seen as being visually reinforced to relate to the dramatic domed structure which roofs this gallery.

The room stands at the southern end of the museum, and has a distorted plan form resulting from site limitations. It consists of an elegant load-bearing structure of nine domes, with four free-standing columns linked to pilasters projecting from the masonry walls, and is significant because of its visual relationship with the Greek Courtyard to the north and also the visual connection it affords of the Schievelbein Frieze. It also forms a link between the South Dome Room and the galleries to the west.

In addition to the work on the floor, the concept was to restore the missing parts of the nine-bay domed structure, including the apse to the Greek Courtyard. The room's separation from the Modernsaal has been reinforced by two newly formed openings.



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## TREPPENHALLE, NORTH WALL

This room – the main circulation element for the building and originally the meeting point for the three museums – is more landscape than building enclosure. We wanted to re-establish Stüler's circulation pattern, including the great staircase. The great gallery on the east elevation has been reconstructed using the original salvaged columns and the door cases to the galleries are to be repaired.

The drawing illustrates the state of disfigurement of the chamber's structure after war damage and subsequent consolidation during the underpinning process. The upper wall consists of alternate bands of red bricks and terracotta blocks providing a cavity construction isolating

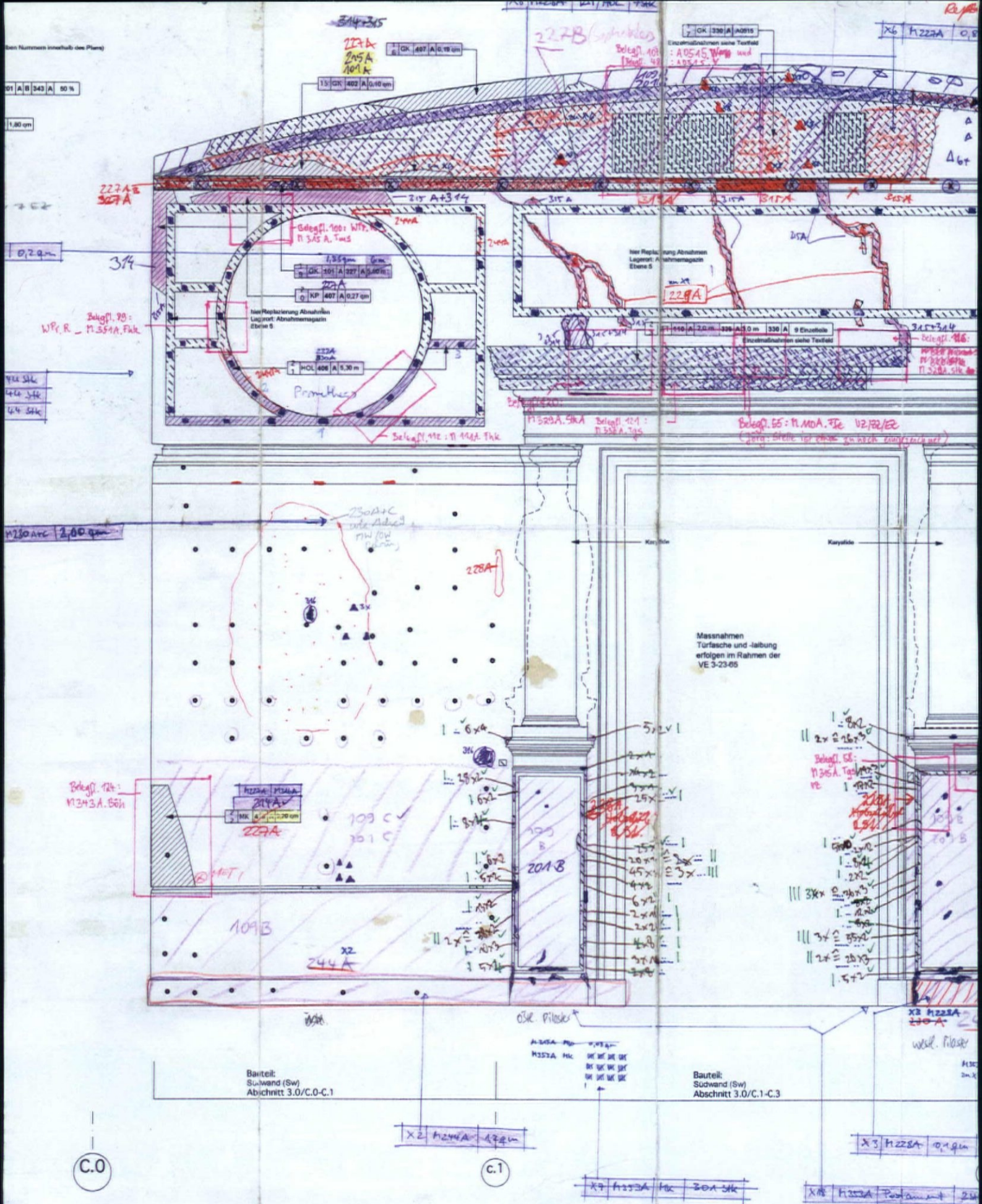
the inner surface from the principal structural wall behind. The four horizontal lines represent ties inserted into the masonry structure while underpinning was taking place.

Originally the team in Berlin wanted to maintain a temporary Beaux-Arts-style brickwork repair, but that was removed and the original terracotta and brick bands reinstated. New terracotta blocks were produced and new red bricks were procured to provide an invisible mending process the wall. At lower levels the outer face was repaired with second-hand salvaged bricks to match the existing brickwork, with fragments of remaining plaster consolidated by pinning and edge filleting.















# MODEL HOMES

Oliver Chapman Architects has developed its style and commercial acumen at this Scottish housing scheme for disabled people, says *Johnny Rodger*.





## Todlaw Housing, Berwickshire, by Oliver Chapman Architects

The modest supported housing scheme at Todlaw, on the edge of Duns (population 10,000), a country town in the Scottish Borders, represents a major innovation in provision of care facilities for disabled people in Scotland. The project comprises 14 fully accessible semi-detached houses and a shared-services facility with 24-hour care for people with substantial disabilities and illnesses. As such it is the first care home in Scotland to be based on a housing model rather than on traditional institutional provision.

What is perhaps the most unexpected news for architects however, is that this innovative project was designed by a young

up-and-coming practice whose previous housing experience consists of one pair of semi-detached houses completed only two years ago. Edinburgh-based Oliver Chapman Architects (OCA) is perhaps the best example of a young practice which has benefited from the proliferation of Housing Associations, and the small and specialist types of housing contracts that have come with them.

Chapman (39) was educated at Leicester Polytechnic under Richard Weston, and after working for Richard Murphy set up on his own 10 years ago. OCA really got its foot in the door, as it were, by building the above-mentioned pair of semis in a remote country

village for Berwickshire Housing Association. Those houses duly won the Scottish Design Awards Best Affordable Housing Design prize in 2006, and since then three larger housing contracts – including the one presently under discussion – have come OCA's way from the same client.

Winning these contracts has of course been vital to the life and creativity of the firm. It has not only been able to develop its own language and palette of forms and structures, but perhaps most importantly it has been dealing with serious institutional players. Berwickshire Housing Association was partnered for this care project with NHS >>





*The eight individual buildings on site are laid out on a so-called 'tartan grid'*

Borders and Scottish Borders Council Social Work Department. Joint funding came from those bodies and also from Communities Scotland. This has meant not only that the firm has had to sharpen its business acumen, but that it has had to adapt its practices to live within the constraints – and meet the benchmarks – of these regulatory institutions.

The brief at Todlaw was for the new supported housing to replace facilities for disabled people which the Housing Association had at Marchmont House. This massive 18th-century former home to the Earl of Marchmont was in remote countryside, three storeys tall, inaccessible, and so unadaptable to purpose that many of its disabled occupants were for years, in effect, prisoners within its walls.

This new care centre is all built at ground level with no need even for ramps. There are footpath links, easily accessible by foot or wheelchair, through the site and across a nearby park directly to Duns town square, and access there to civic and commercial facilities.

The eight individual buildings on site are laid out on a so-called 'tartan grid', with some blocks orientated to imply a predominantly horizontal order, and others on the vertical. This does make for a more lively configuration of views and relationships of forms and pathways between the blocks, but it also, as the architect points out, breaks up the usual serried ranks of cars, gardens, houses that we see in housing estates countrywide. It means that the cars are parked in different configurations at different points, and also partly obscured from view by the buildings.

Supplementing that primary spatial order is the distribution of the buildings on either side of the cul-de-sac. The first building at the south-side entrance is the shared-services facility. The four buildings behind it, all on the east side of the cul-de-sac, are the 'core' units. These houses are for individuals with greater care need and are located closer to the services building, where care managers are based and meals are provided for those who wish to eat communally. The 'core' houses are gathered >>



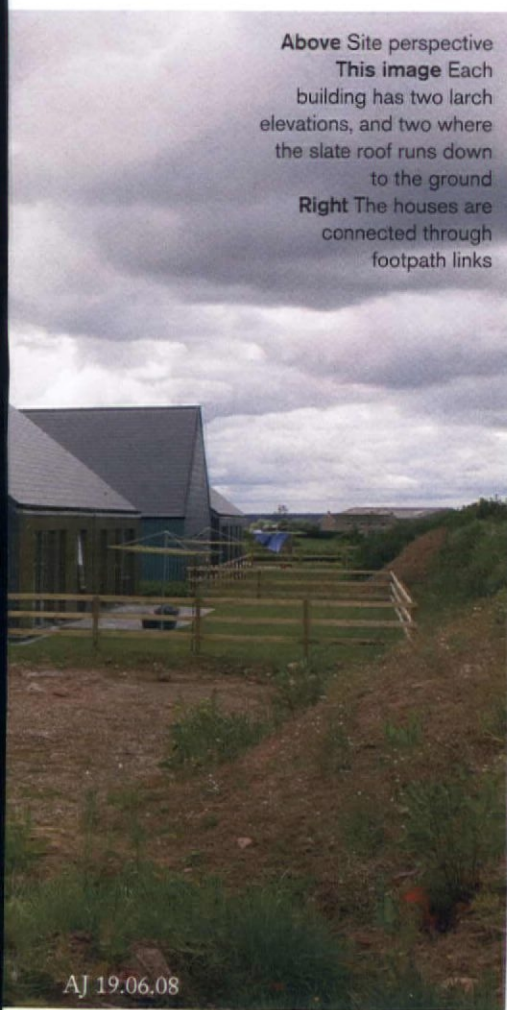




**Above** Site perspective

**This image** Each building has two larch elevations, and two where the slate roof runs down to the ground

**Right** The houses are connected through footpath links







**Above and below**  
The larch-clad facades feature recessed drainage and entrances

**Right** Gabled entrances feature a deep recess, creating a sheltered patio

**Above right** Looking out from the interior of a house along the sheltered walkway

**Centre and far right**  
All the spaces in the interior were planned for a 2m wheelchair turning circle







around the services building by a covered walkway almost like a cloister running between them, edged by beech hedges.

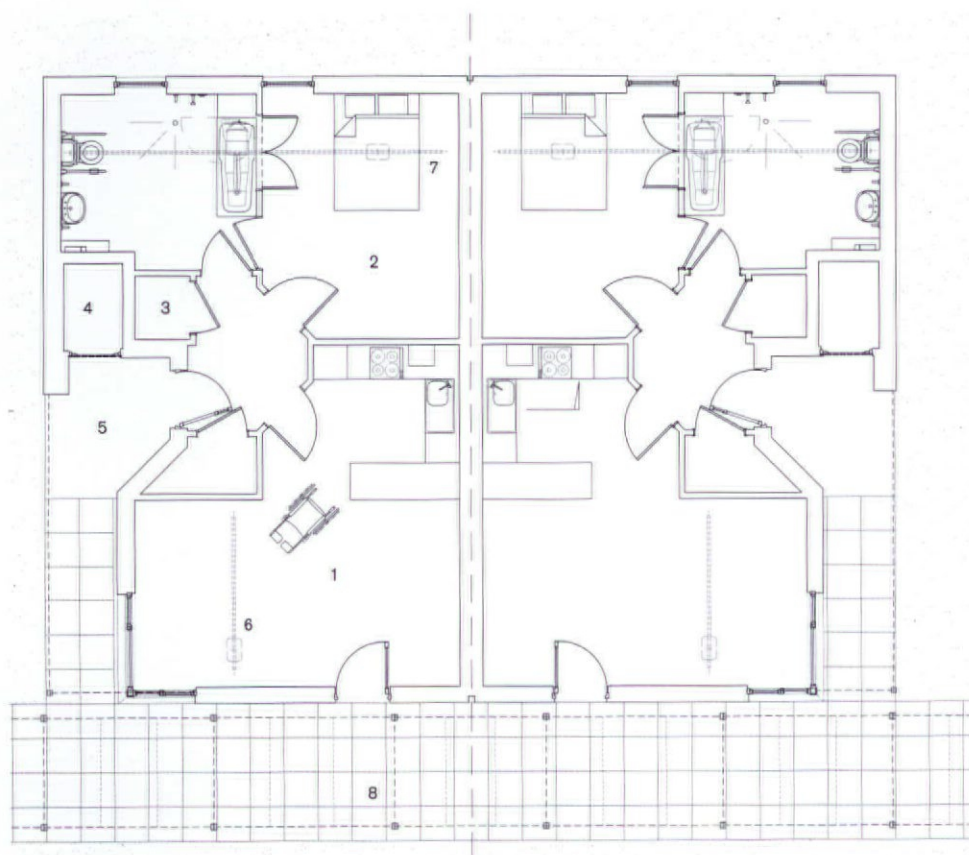
On the west side of the cul-de-sac are a further six semi-detached units for tenants who may be able to lead slightly more independent lives, although these tenants also have relatively easy access to the services unit.

All the buildings are timber framed and gabled, with rainscreen cladding in stained larch, and fibre-cement slated roofs with no service penetration. The whole site has a trim, smooth aesthetic which contributes to its quiet, modest but intriguing domesticity.

One telling feature here, demonstrating OCA's delight in playing with forms, is to note how each building has only two larch elevations, and on the other two the slated roof runs literally, and smoothly, down to the ground. The intrigue is heightened when we intuit some pattern in the interplay of these different elevations between all the buildings on site. All is revealed when OCA admits to turning constraints into design features. The two slate-covered elevations on each building are those facing the outside of the scheme, and fully cover fire regulations against timber walls. Thus is imposed another spatial >>

*The project's unruffled aesthetic is developed on the exterior*

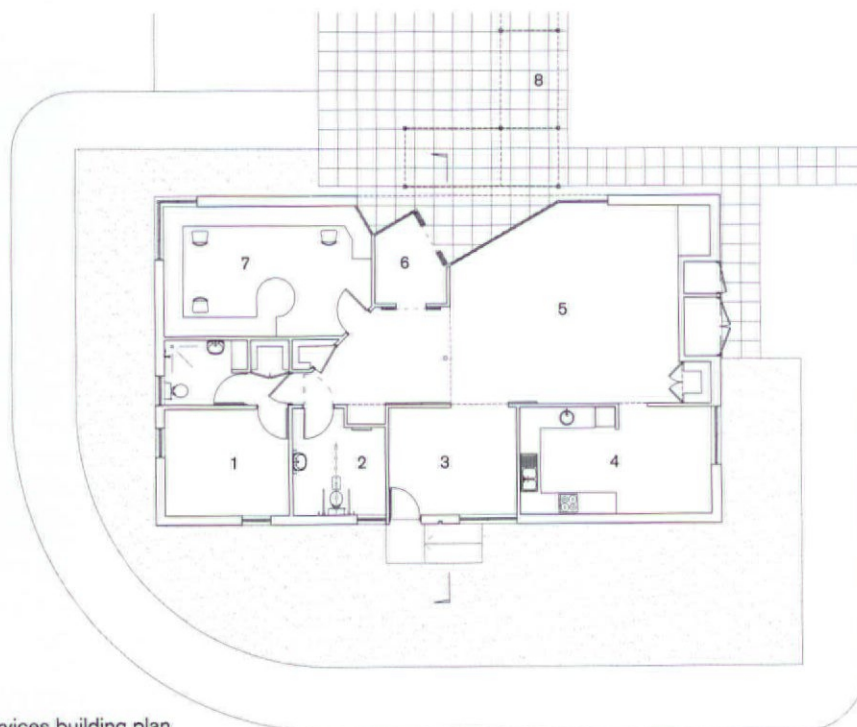




1. Living, dining, kitchen
2. Bedroom
3. Storage
4. Bin store
5. Covered entrance
6. Ceiling-mounted track and hoist for transfer between wheelchair and easy chair
7. Ceiling-mounted track and hoist for transfer between bed, bath, wheelchair commode chair and WC
8. Covered walkway

0 5m

House type A plan

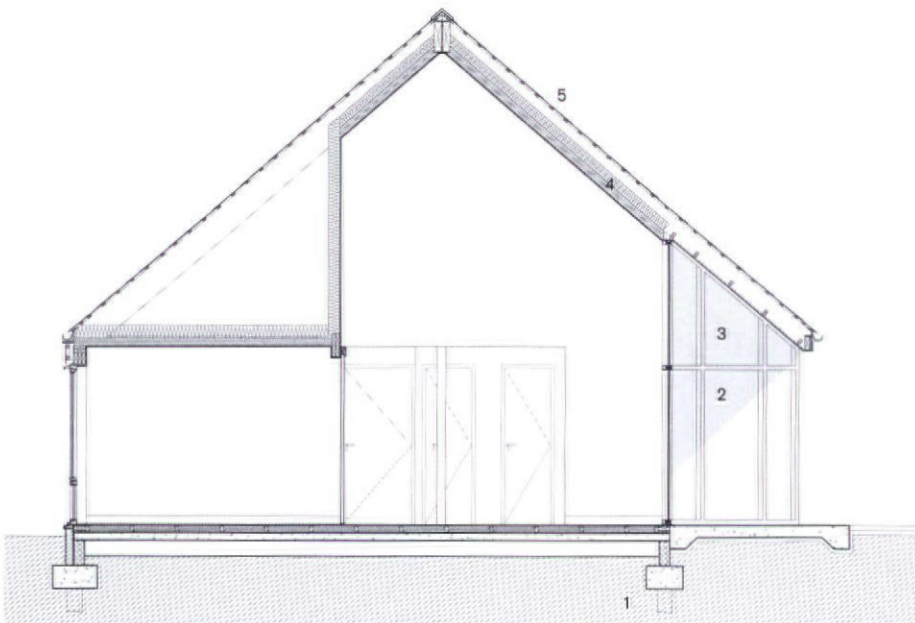


1. Staff room/guest bedroom
2. Accessible WC
3. Storage
4. Kitchen
5. Living area
6. Covered entrance
7. General office
8. Covered walkway

0 5m

Shared-services building plan





Section of shared-services building

1. Vibro compacted pile
2. Angled, glazed entrance
3. Stained larch-clad soffit of entrance
4. Insulated pitched rafters
5. Fibre-cement slates

order whose playfulness belies its utilitarian provenance.

The project's unruffled aesthetic is developed further on the exterior by such details as the recessed downpipes and entry areas to each unit. Those houses with gable entrances are recessed further under the eaves, so that a sheltered patio-type area leads to the doorway, and the overlapping planes of the relatively massive gable act as a clear symbolic demarcation of threshold.

Once inside the house, we find that the architect had to conform to stringent Community Scotland cost parameters and space standards for wheelchair users. All the spaces in the interiors were planned for a 2m wheelchair turning circle (rather than the minimum 1.5m) and just allowing for this factor alone in planning greatly inflated the footprint of the project. Special needs, such as

some tenants' requirement to be washed horizontally in a shower and moved around the bathroom horizontally had to be catered for. This has been done by installing tracks and hoists in the ceilings of all units, which are supported by steel beams running wallhead to wallhead. The hoist is an armature that essentially links the bedroom, the bathroom and the WC, and the room configuration solidified around its operation.

Another interesting feature of this architect's development is how it has allowed its architectural language to develop and cater for different situations. What was originally developed as a language for suburban residential purposes is deployed here to different effect in the shared-services facility. There are several specialist spaces for staff, kitchen, treatment etc., but what impresses most is the main hall. Simply by opening up

the ceiling to the height of the pitched roof, and fitting a glass wall at a welcoming angle, this building – still the same dimension as the others on site – becomes a public building, with authority over the rest.

It is true that there is only a limited palette here and that this is small scale, and off the beaten – and therefore polemical – track, as it were. It's unlikely to provoke anyone to strong opinion that is to say, except its tenants, who do seem immensely well pleased with their new facility. And of course, their carers too, who seem equally impressed.

It seems that this project, and indeed this particular architect's profile ought to be some sort of case study or role model for young architectural talent keen on a breakthrough. If they can only find a housing association to give them the smallest of breaks, then...

Unfortunately the truth is that the heyday of small specialist contracts for affordable housing with local housing associations in Scotland may be coming to an end. The Scottish Government announced in mid-April its intention to greatly expand social housing projects. This may sound like good news. But perhaps it is better news for some than others, for the fact is that this new initiative will probably depend largely on regulation of major contracts between developers and large and established architectural and construction firms. The likelihood then is that new talent will be squeezed out of this market and yet another route to architectural development shut down for good. ■

**Start on site** August 2007

**Contract duration** 13 months

**Gross external floor area** House type A: 61.3m<sup>2</sup> (four units); House type B: 59.3m<sup>2</sup> (two units); House type C/D: 75.6m<sup>2</sup> (eight units); Shared-services building: 154m<sup>2</sup> (one unit)

**Form of contract/procurement** SBCC JCT 2005

**Total cost** £1.4 million

**Client** Berwickshire Housing Association

**Architect** Oliver Chapman Architects

**Structural engineer** David Narro Associates

**Services engineer** RSP Consulting

**Quantity surveyor** D I Burchells

**Planning supervisor** Richard Amos

**Main contractor** James Swinton and Co

**Annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** House type A: 39.15kg/m<sup>2</sup>; House Type B: 38.79 kg/m<sup>2</sup>; House type C/D: 34.39kg/m<sup>2</sup>; Shared-services building: 32.47kg/m<sup>2</sup>



## WORKING DETAIL

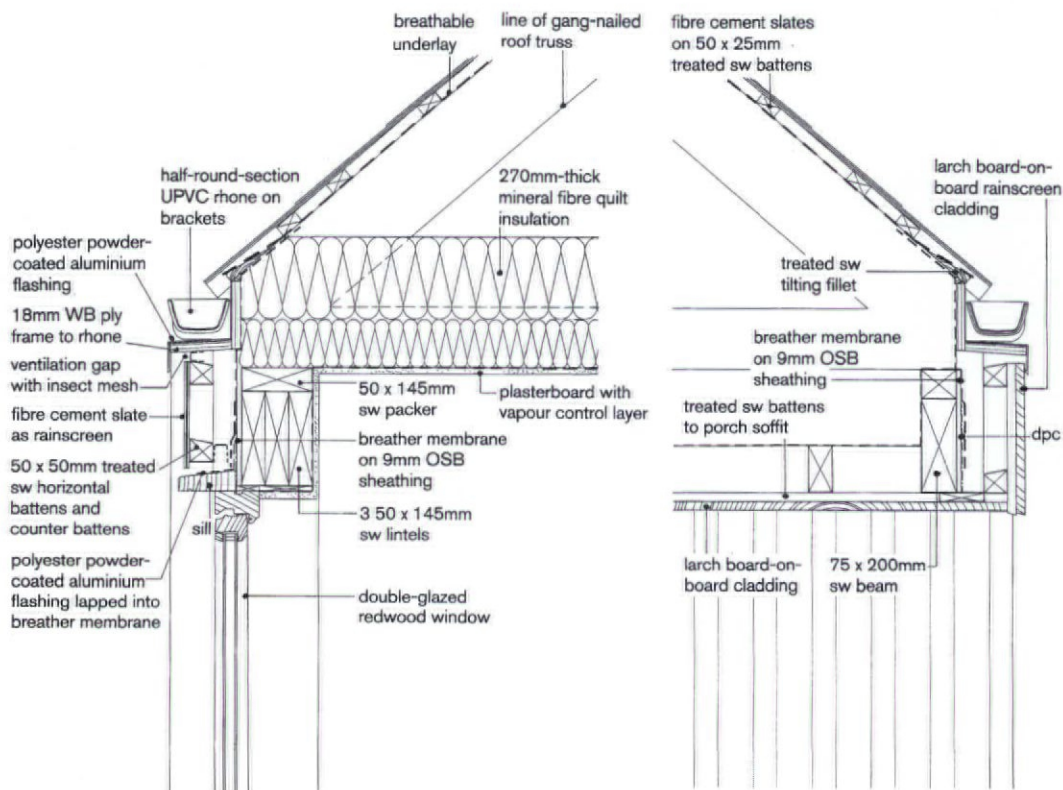
### Single-storey houses with larch and fibre cement slate rainscreen facades

The 14 single-storey houses, for wheelchair users with disabilities, are designed to meet the care needs of the tenants. The materials used – insulated timber frame and larch board or fibre cement slate rainscreen, gang-nailed timber trusses with fibre cement slate roof covering – are chosen for their sustainability and are a refreshing change from the harling and concrete roof tile tradition. Each house has two timber and two slate-clad walls; slate is used for walls near site boundaries to fulfil Building Regulation requirements.

The front-door entrances are recessed to provide shelter while avoiding projections or secondary roofs. In one house type the door is set on the long facade and recessed behind the fascia. In the other house type the door is set in the gable wall, one half of which is recessed from the ridge to act as a shelter, with the projecting end corner of the pitched roof supported by a beam and post.

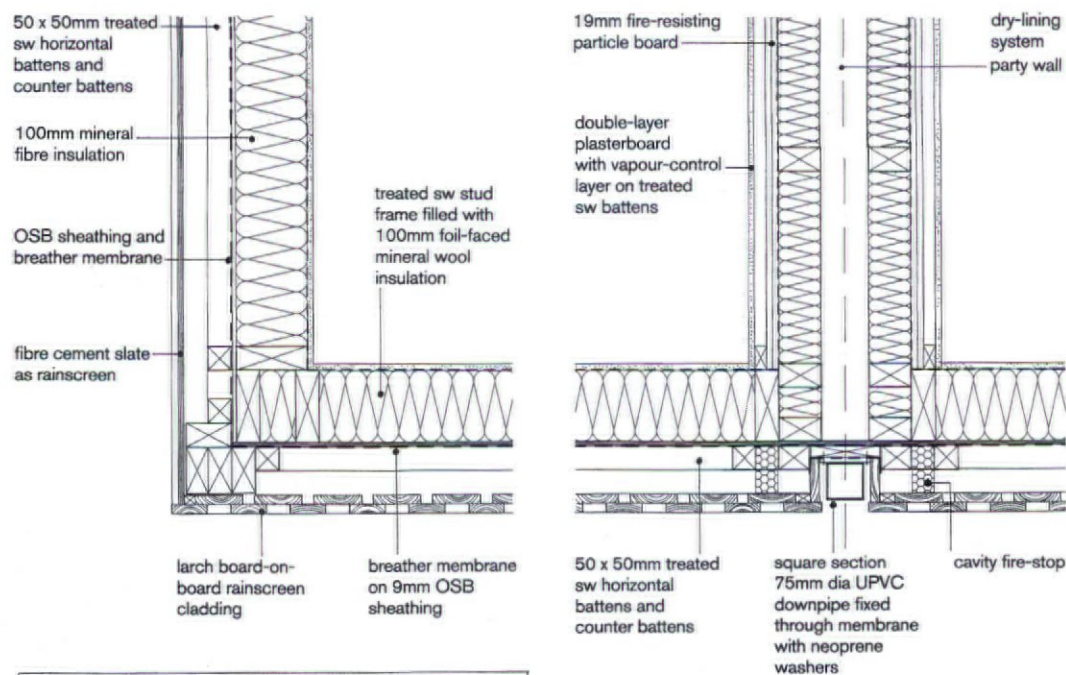
The larch board-on-board rainscreen was chosen to give the timber-framed houses a 'thicker' feel and to allow rhones (gutters) and downpipes to be concealed within its thickness. The 50 x 50mm horizontal battens and counter batten supports are thick enough to accommodate a standard half-round rhone. The downpipes are sized so that only one is needed on each facade; they are positioned mid-facade, at the party wall, to minimise intrusion. Projecting verge boards are avoided. Instead a proprietary verge closer is used which, like the tiles, is slim and unobtrusive.

*Susan Dawson*



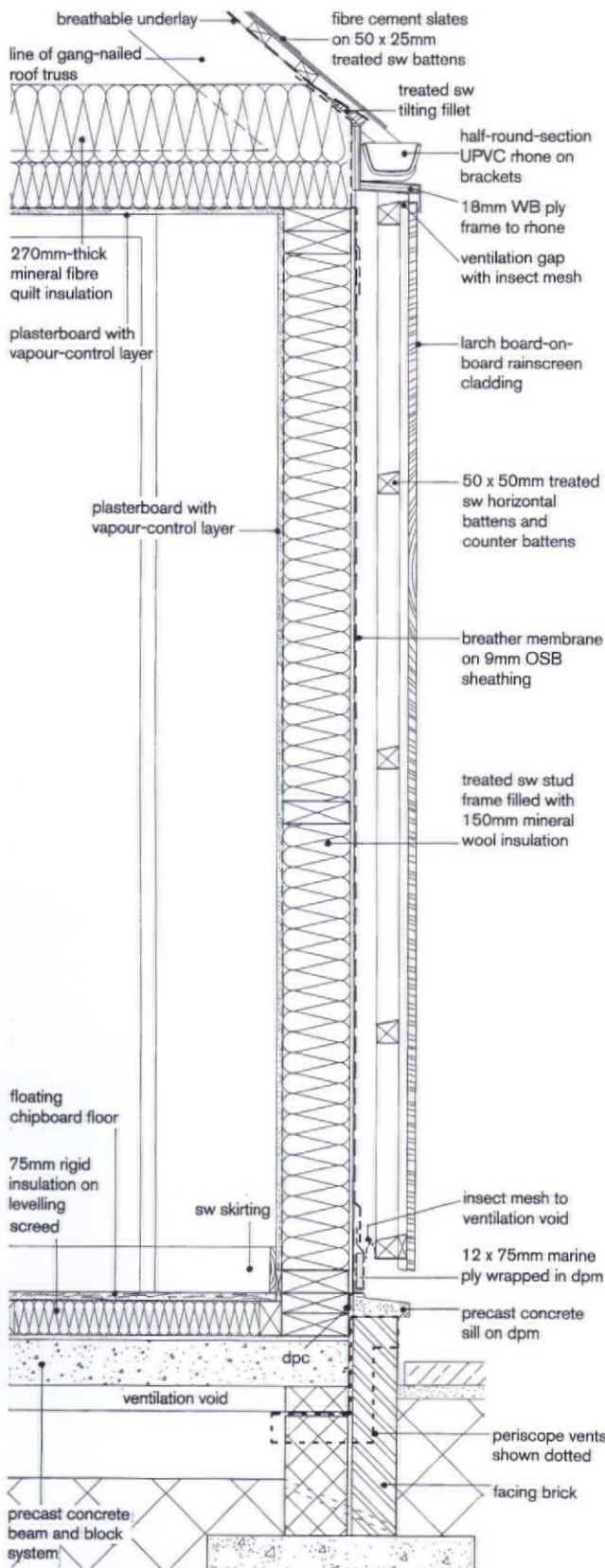
DETAIL SECTION THROUGH SLATE WALL AT A - A

DETAIL SECTION THROUGH PORCH AT B - B

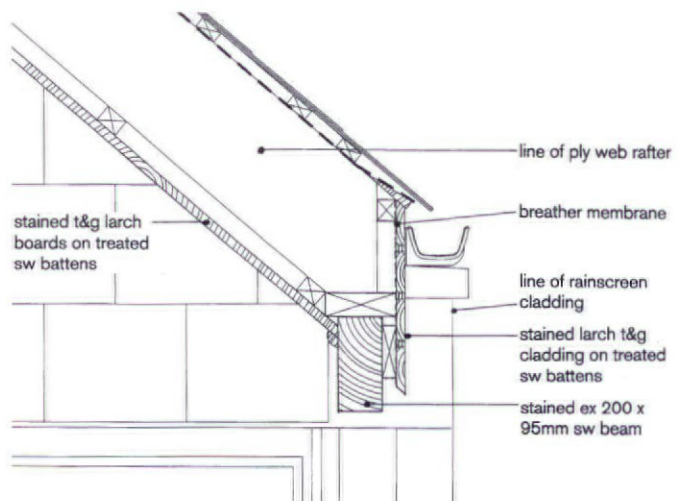


DETAIL PLAN C - C AT CORNER AND D - D AT PARTY WALL

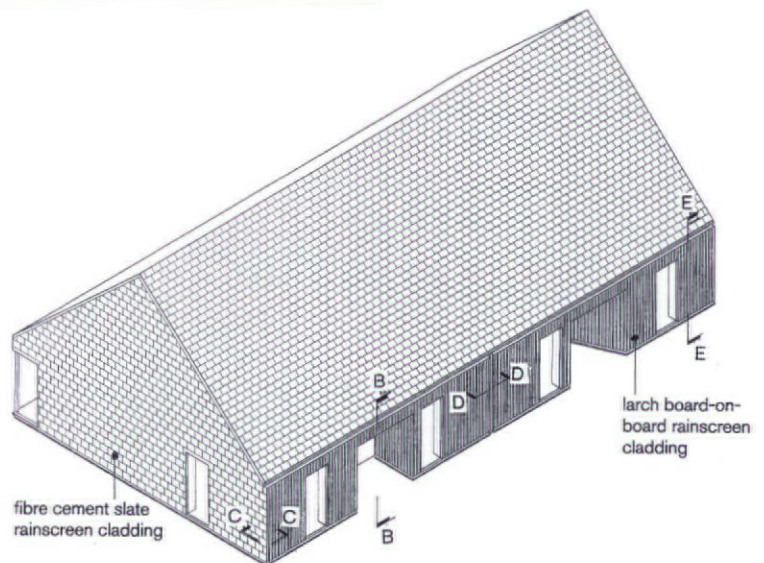




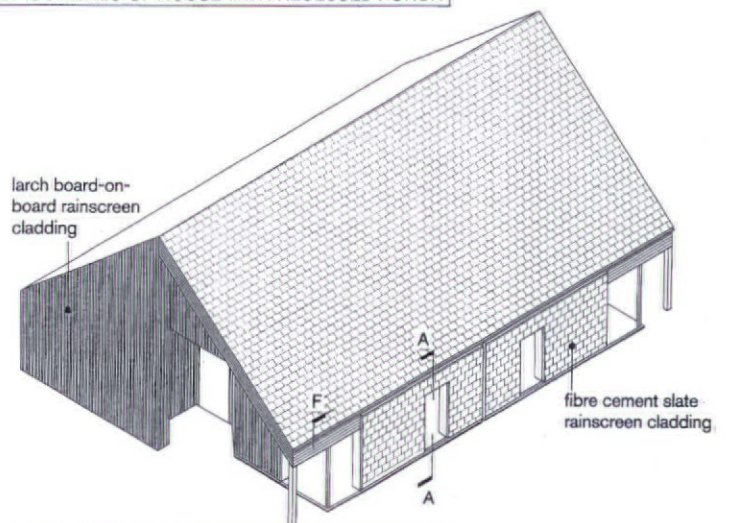
DETAIL SECTION THROUGH TIMBER WALL AT E - E



DETAIL SECTION THROUGH EAVES AT F - F



KEY ISOMETRIC OF HOUSE WITH RECESSED PORCH



KEY ISOMETRIC OF HOUSE WITH RECESSED GABLE





british construction  
industry awards 2008

# 21st Anniversary



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## Big Fish Little Fish

*Jonathan Hendry of Jonathan Hendry Architects struggles with the craftiness of students*

It's that time of year again, when people are dreaming about being on holiday, spending time away from the office unwinding and returning to work revitalised. It's also the time of year when students look for summer work.

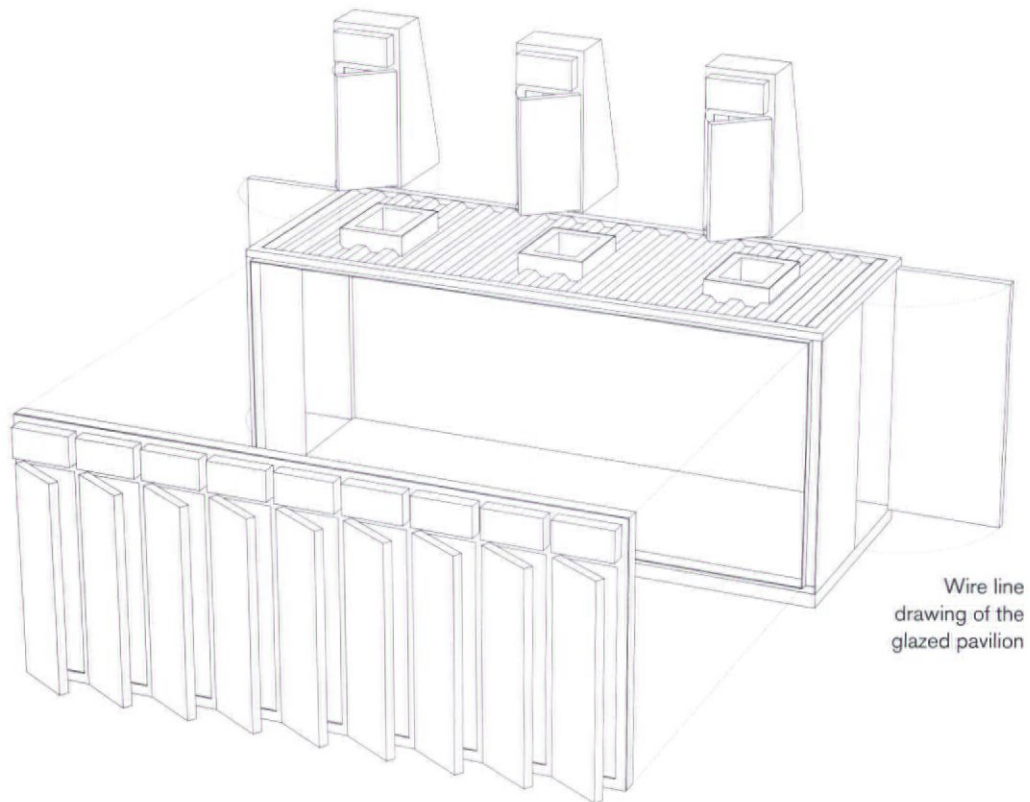
We've been interviewing architecture students with a view to offering a summer job. We found this very frustrating. Their modes of working seem to lack free-hand sketching, modelling with card and a scalpel, and thought processes with clarity. We were bombarded by computer-generated imagery.

The craft of turning your hand and applying pen to paper with a view to testing ideas seems to be a thing of the past. There wasn't any evidence of beautiful hand drawings, and most students seemed confused when asked what they were trying to achieve. Doesn't the skill of an architect depend on being able to quickly transfer an idea from your mind to paper, in order to test that idea before the project moves on to the next stage?

In *El Croquis* magazine (number 68/69), Álvaro Siza said that he had read a text by a composer describing his manner of composing a piece. 'I sit down at the piano, I play the first notes, I stop... I change something and then I continue, but I must change the first part because the second transforms the structure'.

Our search for staff continues.

Next issue: John Preve of Make



Wire line drawing of the glazed pavilion

## PAVILION TESTS SHUTTERED EXTERNAL INSULATION

Deployable external insulation (DEI) solves the conflict between the natural light provided by large windows and the loss of heat through glazing.

Current Building Regulations are geared towards heat loss mitigation. The result, according to Stephen Gage, Bartlett professor of innovative technology, is that 'often [domestic] facades now contain smaller windows than their 19th-century equivalents'.

DEI takes the form of solid insulated shutters that respond to external temperatures, based on the premise that most buildings are unoccupied most of the time and are at their coldest at night.

Using mechanical methods to operate the shutters would have

undermined the sustainability of the strategy, so wax pistons are used instead. 'Wax in the piston melts when it warms and expands with a considerable amount of force,' explains Gage. 'We have created a patented system whereby there are two waxes with different melting temperatures in two different pistons. The shutters open in response to rising external temperatures and shut when temperatures drop.'

Gage, researcher Chris Leung, and a team of Bartlett students are exploring DEI by designing a glazed pavilion. 'Single-glazed units can be used: even with the occupant override, theoretically DEI has the potential to be three to nine times better than a

window at conserving heat energy,' explains Gage.

The modified shipping container will sit in the main University College London (of which the Bartlett is part) quadrangle for the duration of the Bartlett Summer Show (21-28 June). After the show the pavilion will be moved to Trinity Buoy Wharf in East London, where the research group plans to obtain real data by monitoring the pavilion's performance for six months.

'[This] is a dynamic system dependent upon occupancy, which is something that current Building Regulations don't take into account. But I think we can make a case to change this,' says Gage. *Kaye Alexander*



# HR

Suppress your urge to shudder, says *Kaye Alexander*, you need to use human resources effectively to optimise your practice and avoid legal trouble

The term 'Human Resources' (HR) makes some architects' blood run cold. Many will avoid HR at all costs. 'I have known practices throw money at problems like absenteeism and pay-offs, but the problem won't disappear', says Julie Parker of consultancy Working Visions.

Parker and her partner Uta Werner set up Working Visions in 2005 to provide professional HR advice and training to design and architecture companies. With 29 clients on their books, it appears their offer is one plenty of practices see value in. It's a niche market, with only one other sector-specific HR consultancy mentioned by those interviewed for this piece: Evolution, founded by RIBA specialist practice consultant Kate Marks in 2003.

The role of HR is critical to the day-to-day functioning of any business, with recruitment, contracts, training and staff welfare all coming under the HR banner. 'It's about the whole of an

employee's life-cycle' says Marks. HR can be most effective when strategically worked into a business plan, for example through staff contracts. A contract should set out detailed guidelines regarding issues including working hours and measures on disciplinary action. 'If contracts are drafted properly disputes can be resolved amicably and people are happy,' says Parker.

Architecture as a profession has been slow to appreciate the need for dedicated HR management because many architects value design over business strategy, but practices expose themselves to legal action if they do not keep up to date with current legislation. Marks says: 'It is generally legal troubles that start the debate about HR.' The right to flexible working (see AJ 22.05.08) and new immigration guidelines are also particularly pertinent to architecture practices – responding to these requires a rethink of traditional employ-

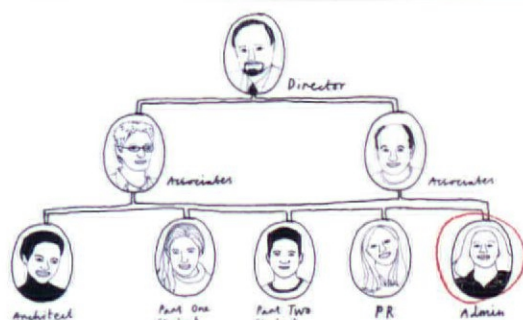
ment structures. Werner also cites the example of the Age Discrimination act. 'Architects still advertise for candidates with "10 years experience post Part 3", but this discriminates against younger applicants and negates the fact that experience does not always equal competence.'

'Architects are often keen to make changes but get scared off by the rigid terminology of HR', says Parker. 'It is about mediating between the two – doing things professionally but also in a way that fits in with the office culture.'

Parker and Werner offer four methods of incorporating HR into practice, which are explored over the following pages and which should help you ensure quality and mitigate legal woes.

Have HR questions of your own? Send your queries to the AJ and Working Visions will select five to respond to. Email [kaye.alexander@emap.com](mailto:kaye.alexander@emap.com). Answers may be published anonymously.





## METHOD 1 Appoint an existing member of staff to take care of HR

Keen to maintain their 'house style', many practices chose to appoint a member of staff to the HR role from within.

When it grew beyond the scope of its previous management structure, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios advertised externally for a HR manager with the help of Parker and Werner. 'We interviewed a range of professionals', says managing partner Julian Gitsham. 'But none of them were

the right fit. Jayne [Rolls] was working for us at the time and knew us well, which was more important than CIPD qualifications, so we gave her the job'. CIPD, or the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, regulates the HR profession.

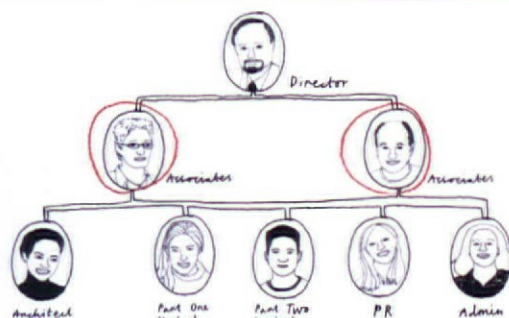
While some in-house HRs like Rolls decide not to go down the CIPD accreditation route, others do. Levitt Bernstein's Nancy Edwards is training for her

Certificate in Professional Personnel Practice in her spare time. Levitt Bernstein moved Edwards into the role of resources manager from an administrative position, and she's supported by a director responsible for HR and an employment-law consultant.

If a firm already has an in-house lawyer or access to good employment-law advice and an accounts team who deal with benefits and pensions, the role

is reduced and a full-time person may not be necessary.

This is the case at Stephen Davy Peter Smith Architects, where HR comes under the remit of practice manager Jacqui Went. 'I have an overview of the practice in financial and practical terms, which makes me well-placed to make suggestions about resourcing and training needs.' Amy Baldwin performs the same role at the UK branch of American firm Hart Howerton.



## METHOD 2 Empower and coach team leaders

Full integration of HR requires top-level endorsement so that it becomes part of the business culture, rather than another box to tick. Simon Sturgis, chairman of Sturgis Associates, had full responsibility for HR in the practice until a couple of years ago when the practice rapidly expanded from 20 to nearly 50 employees and Working Visions was brought in. He says: 'Tasks that had been

subliminal suddenly required a whole person full time. I was used to running everything but suddenly I had to learn to delegate and formalise tasks.'

The practice's management structure was based around Sturgis and six associates. '[Working Visions] didn't try to impose anything on us and we maintained a "loose" arrangement which is critical to our identity. Uta

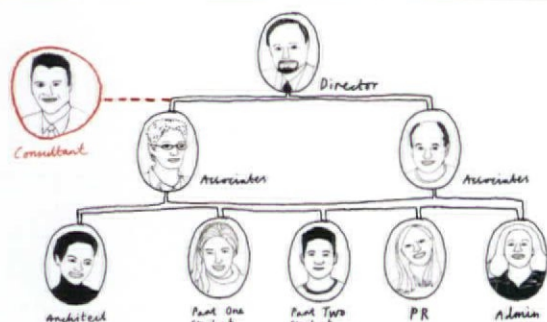
acted as a sounding board so we could express ourselves.'

Sturgis describes the new arrangement as 'assisted organic', whereby he and his associates have clearly defined roles and HR strategy is developed from within. Staff consultation and standard setting are important aspects of this model.

At one time Sturgis was conducting all the staff twice-yearly

reviews himself. 'When you have 50 people it works out at almost two per week, which I just couldn't manage. Now we all know best practice, have contributed ideas and share the load. It was an extraordinary discovery, the number of tasks that came to light for duty of care of 50 people. There is a lot of paperwork, which is a concern, but we are striking the balance between maturity and rigidity.' >>





## METHOD 3 Appoint an external advisor

The case study of Sturgis Associates (see Method 2, page 47) relied on the outside ideas and expertise of external consultants. 'We needed outside professionals to bring in ideas that we wouldn't and couldn't think of ourselves', says Sturgis.

Professional input ensures best practice, especially useful on the ever-changing legal aspects of HR, which require constant research to keep up to date. 'It helped us to help ourselves and see the big picture', Sturgis says. 'We were

given constant feedback and assurance which has given us the confidence to develop ourselves.'

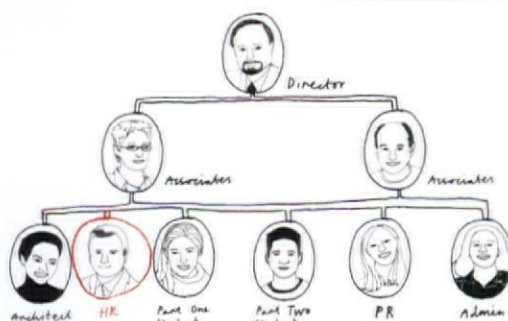
Outsourcing HR can be a permanent solution rather than the 'leg-up' approach that Sturgis Associates employed. This requires the same level of commitment from company management, but has the advantage of perspective and impartiality, whereas gaps and issues may be tempting to gloss over if being dealt with in-house. Kate Marks says 'Even if a company has someone responsible

for HR, it can be preferable to use an external consultant when dealing with sensitive issues such as redundancies.'

Marks is also employed to work on discrete HR projects to fill the gap in specialist employment law. For many practices, some form of specialist external help will always be needed as few have the resources to employ full time professionals to cover every aspect of the business.

Both Working Visions and Evolution HR work on formal

projects for clients and on an ad-hoc basis. This entails both structured regular contact via scheduled sessions with clients (usually top-level managers) and also answering queries via telephone and email as problems arise. Parker says: 'We are there in a supporting role. It only works if we are as convenient as having someone in the office – just without the overheads! Mostly clients just need reassuring that they are doing the right thing. This can be done remotely.'



## METHOD 4 Appoint an in-house professional

John McAslan + Partners is on the verge of instating a full-time dedicated HR role. 'HR has been brought to the fore in the practice' says Natasha Martin, director of finance and HR. 'We have been so successful in doing this that I have become swamped and made us realise that we need a full-time professional.'

At Assael, office manager Leslie Chaplin is responsible for HR, having had eight years previous experience with a law firm. 'My legal background is very helpful' says Chaplin. 'I had no trouble mak-

ing the move into architecture. Where I previously worked the personnel people were under strict instruction not to be flexible and apply every rule to the letter, but you just don't do that here.'

Director John Assael maintains that devolving responsibility to qualified staff is imperative to promoting professionalism: 'We may look corporate, but Leslie is an HR specialist and enables us to do what we do best', he says.

Angela Hughes, HR manager at Grimshaw, says: 'Previously HR was managed by one of the

partners, then the company grew.' The threshold before a practice needs HR varies, but Hughes estimates it at 50 employees.

Broadway Malyan has over 700 staff across its UK outfit and offices abroad, which has necessitated a dedicated HR department of five full- and three part-time staff. HR director Rena Dunn says: 'Investment in HR has given us a competitive edge. We have set up a database to help us complete pre-qualification questionnaires that are now standard when pitching for jobs.'

Dunn and her colleague Lorraine Smith feel positive about how HR is managed in architecture. 'When I first came to architecture I was surprised there weren't more senior-level HR professionals in the sector. But small practices have grown up with it as an inherent part of their business', says Dunn. 'There is a great "people culture" in architecture', continues Smith. What they call a drink together on a Friday night in HR terms would be "colleague engagement". It doesn't matter as long as it happens.' ■



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# BACK TO BASICS

## Contractual provisions for time and money – who benefits?

*Our monthly column by barristers Kim Franklin and Sue Lindsey examines the broad legal issues surrounding architecture. This instalment looks at points that the certifying architect may wish to bear in mind when balancing an employer's and a contractor's desire for compensation for delay.*

Most standard forms of construction contract contain an intricate mechanism designed to balance the rights and obligations of the contractor and the employer. That mechanism is operated by an independent certifier whose job it is to see fair play between the

two. Despite the current vogue for partnering, the interests of the contractor and the employer remain polarised. The employer wants the project completed as quickly and cheaply as possible or to be compensated for delay. The contractor wants to profit from the job generally and to recover any cost overrun that is incurred as a result of late completion.

### WHAT IS AN EXTENSION OF TIME?

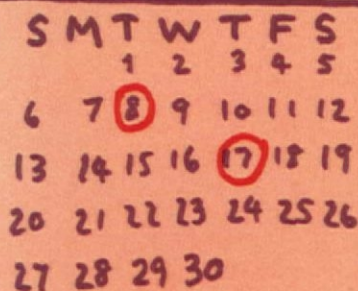
Most contracts tend to stipulate a date for completion. If they don't it is assumed that the parties intended the work to be completed within a reasonable time. Time is said to be 'at large' and it is much harder to show that the contractor is in delay.

Even where there is a contractual completion date, the industry recognises that things can go wrong. The leading textbook, *Keating on Construction Contracts*, takes a particularly gloomy view: 'The completion of the works may be delayed by ordering variations, by late or inadequate instructions, by shortage of materials or delay on the part of subcontractors. The contractor may find that he is required to execute more work or spend more money to complete than he originally estimated. A third party annoyed by dust and noise may make a claim. One or both of the parties may become bankrupt or go into liquidation.'

Anticipating these eventualities, the contract provides for the completion date to be extended in particular circumstances.

*Even when there is a contractual completion date, the industry recognises things can go wrong. Extending the completion date serves the contractor by:*

- *exonerating him from responsibility for a delay;*
- *relieving him of liability; and*
- *entitling him to compensation if there is a delay.*



*Rather than calculate losses, the parties can agree on a pre-estimate of losses.*







*If a contractor is delayed by an employer's variations or late instructions, he may incur additional costs.*

Extending the completion date tends to be seen by the contractor as a good thing because:

- it exonerates the contractor from responsibility for delay;
- it relieves the contractor from liability for liquidated damages;
- it entitles the contractor to claim loss and expense for the duration of the delay.

## WHAT ARE LIQUIDATED DAMAGES?

If a contractor fails to complete a project by the contractually agreed completion date, the employer will be out of pocket. It is not always easy to calculate the extent of the employer's losses. Rather than slog through all the permutations, the parties can agree on a genuine pre-estimate of the employer's losses. This is usually calculated or 'ascertained' at a fixed or 'liquidated' weekly rate and referred to as liquidated and ascertained damages (LAD). If it is a genuine pre-estimate, it is not a penalty, no matter what the parties call it. Traditionally the courts were suspicious of liquidated damages. Now they are delighted by them, since it saves them the job of working out what the actual losses were.

Delay for which the contractor is responsible, or culpable, entitles the employer to claim liquidated damages. If the contractor is delayed by the acts or omissions

of the employer, sometimes called 'acts of prevention', the contractor may instead be entitled to claim loss and expense.

## WHAT IS LOSS AND EXPENSE?

At the time of contract, the contractor calculated their price with reference to the planned duration of the contract. If they are delayed by the employer's variations or late instructions the contractor will incur additional costs. These costs may be in the form of extended preliminaries; that is, the site set-up costs, extended for the duration of the delay, or particular one-off costs, such as the cost of another tower crane to carry out unplanned additional work.

## SO HOW DOES IT ALL FIT TOGETHER?

The contractual completion date, the power to extend time, the entitlement to deduct liquidated

damages and to claim loss and expense are all interrelated. At the fulcrum of these provisions is the completion date. If the project is completed on time then there is no need to extend time, and the employer's entitlement to liquidated damages or the contractor's entitlement to loss and expense are not triggered.

If the project is delayed the machinery swings into action. It is the architect who has to decide what has caused the delay and who is responsible for it. If the contractor is culpable, liquidated damages can be deducted by the employer. If the employer has prevented completion, loss and expense can be claimed by the contractor.

## DO YOU HAVE TO HAVE LIQUIDATED DAMAGES?

No. If the contract does not provide for liquidated damages the employer will still usually be able to claim their actual losses.

They will, however, have to calculate and prove them. But if the parties stipulate that liquidated damages will be '£nil', this will be taken as an agreement that the losses in the event of delay have been pre-agreed as zero and no other damages will be recoverable.

When marvelling at how the contractual provisions for time and money operate it is worth remembering that it wasn't always thus. Traditionally the courts viewed the completion date as sacrosanct. An employer who caused delay by an act of prevention would blow the completion date out of the water, and with it the liquidated damages provisions. The fixed completion date would be replaced by a toothless obligation simply to complete within a reasonable time.

These days the courts are keen to uphold the agreement of the parties, and to ensure that the time and money provisions of the contract are operated as intended.



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# The Critics



Original sketch  
for the Potteries  
Thinkbelt by  
Cedric Price  
(1966)

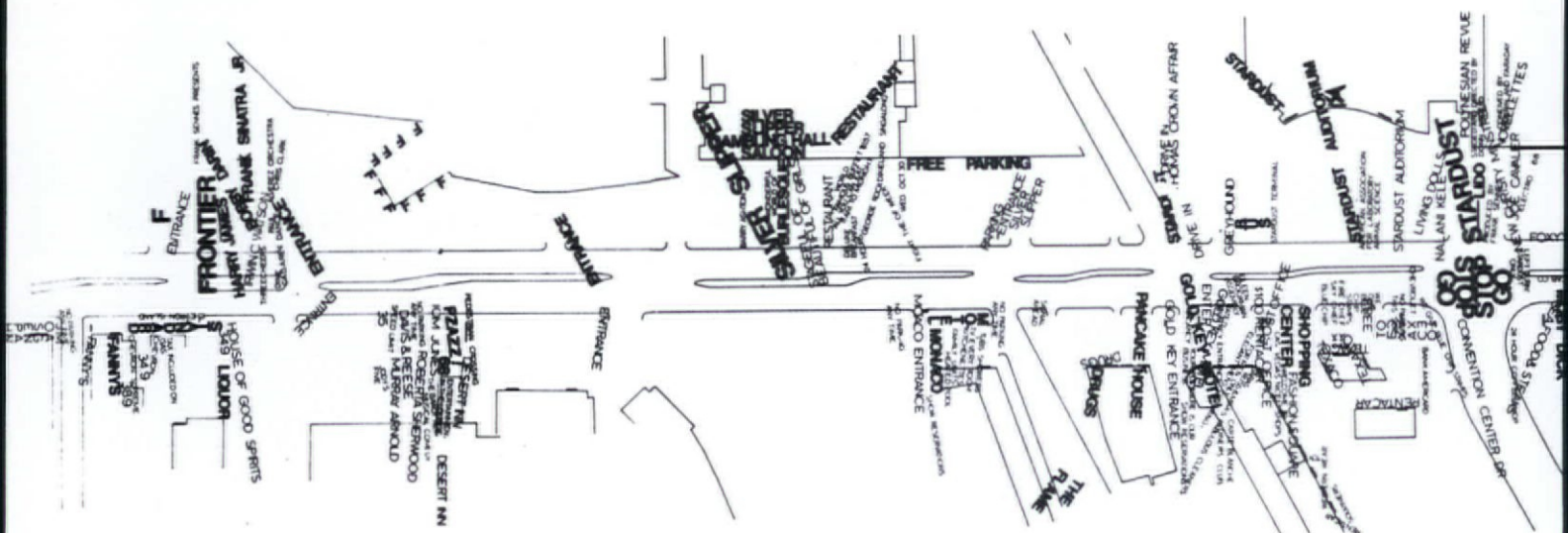
## BOOKS

# Supercrit, not super critical

**Robert Mull**, head of architecture and spatial design at London Metropolitan University, reviews the first two books in the *Supercrit* series >>

*Supercrit* #1: Cedric Price: *Potteries Thinkbelt* and *Supercrit* #2: Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown: *Learning from Las Vegas*. By Kester Rattenbury and Samantha Hardingham. Routledge, paperback. 138pp. £26.00 each





The idea of the Supercrit project was to subject seminal works of architecture to the scrutiny of a panel of critics – hence, the ‘Supercrit’. The series was initiated in 2003 by Kester Rattenbury and Samantha Hardingham, who co-run the Centre for Experimental Practice (EXP) research group at the University of Westminster.

These books document the first two public events, *Supercrit #1: Cedric Price: Potteries Thinkbelt* and *Supercrit #2: Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown: Learning from Las Vegas*. They also bring together project documentation and contemporaneous texts, plus a

verbatim transcript of the live Supercrit event, as spoken by supercritics and attendees.

The first Supercrit, which took place on 5 November 2003, was on Cedric Price’s 1966 Potteries Thinkbelt project, a radical new form of itinerant university that ranged across North Staffordshire. The second, on 16 March 2004, was for *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972) by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, the book which advocated that high architectural culture could learn much from the commercial architecture and signage of the Vegas strip. Arguably – and this is the real point of the Supercrit books – these two

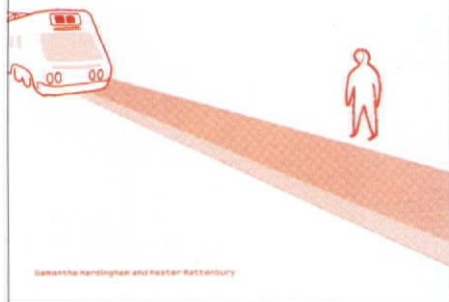
projects continue to exert a fundamental influence on architectural and educational thinking in the UK.

Edited by Rattenbury and Hardingham, both Supercrit books are beautifully conceived and produced. They perfectly capture the energy and impact of the original projects, and document the events themselves with forensic honesty. So, *Supercrit #1* and *#2* are useful and valuable records of two important projects. But, more intriguingly, they succeed in connecting the projects with the present day. In the discussion of the Potteries Thinkbelt the interplay of education, infrastructure and regeneration seems current, and the power of the indeterminate, the incomplete and the provisional – as defined by Price – is as potent now as it was in 1966.

In ‘*Learning from Learning from Las Vegas*’, as Scott Brown described their Supercrit, the concept of the ‘ordinary’ that defines so much of today’s architecture is fully explored by the panel, which includes architects Sarah Chaplin, David Dunster, Robert Maxwell and Sean Griffiths. ‘We’ve got to find out how to be ordinary and interesting, and I think that Denise and Robert have led the way in doing that,’ Maxwell says robustly in the transcript. We also see Sam Jacob of FAT ask Scott Brown if their work is Post-Modern. She replies: ‘Freud said he was not a Freudian. Marx said he was not a Marxist. We say we are not Post-Modernists.’

The presence of the architects (or the lack thereof) is the major difference between the

**Supercrit #1**  
Cedric Price  
**POTTERIES THINKBELT**



Samantha Hardingham and Kester Rattenbury

**Supercrit #2**  
Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown  
**Learning from Las Vegas**



Kester Rattenbury and Samantha Hardingham



Instead, the Potteries Thinkbelt team is


*'I would rather be thrown naked into a herd of sun-crazed elephants'*

Those familiar with the brutal reality of the crit as practised in most of schools of architecture will be either relieved or disappointed by the transcripts. They are tame affairs when compared with those that

**Resume:** Supercrit me – the first two books are a taste of more good things to come



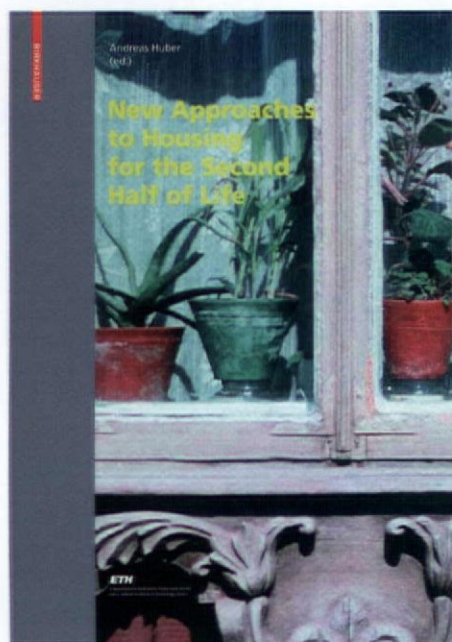
## Between Bridges

 **Between Bridges** shows aerial photographs of things we're not supposed to see, says **Andrew Mead**

The show at Between Bridges, titled 'Autotechnogeoglyphics', features oblique aerial images of the tracks and circuits – usually in the desert – on which manufacturers test-drive cars and other vehicles (*pictured below*). From the window of the plane these asphalt loops and strips are decidedly graphic – the handout rightly discerns a resemblance to the Nazca Lines in Peru, and perhaps one day they'll be just as enigmatic. The photos should be much bigger but they're still instructive. Where is our equivalent of CLUI?







BOOK

*No one likes to think about it, but **Elain Harwood** takes a hard look at housing for old age*

New Approaches to Housing for the Second Half of Life. Edited by Andreas Huber. ETH Zurich/Birkhäuser, paperback. 223pp. £23

'I'm a 50-year-old man, and I like it,' Mark E Smith sings on the latest Fall LP, a reminder of how even the music industry is no longer dominated by the young. *New Approaches to Housing for the Second Half of Life*, a collection of essays by architects and sociologists edited by author and researcher Andreas Huber, assesses our attitudes to growing old through architecture, as well as the growth of housing developments for the active elderly as an alternative to the traditional nursing home.

The models in the book are taken from Switzerland and southern Germany, but are relevant to any Western society. Switzerland had 450,000 people aged over 64 in 1950; in 2006 there were 1.2 million; and by 2050 there will be a million more. Their image is

now represented by the 60-something 'best ager' – an English phrase used by German marketing experts to describe the prime market for holiday cruises and second homes. The baby-boom generation, born in the late 1940s, generally has money and the time and imagination to use it, although extremes between the rich and poor are growing.

Most of us fight the ageing process. In the book, chilling contemplations are extracted from the 1966–71 diaries of Swiss architect and novelist Max Frisch, who writes of the 'foredoomed' 40s and 'doomed' over-50s. 'Praise for an elderly person is invariably linked with the assurance that he still looks relatively young, indeed positively youthful,' says Frisch.

A research project by architectural thinktank ETH Wohnforum evaluated 13 Swiss and German schemes of self-contained flats in special developments, some with care facilities. Interviews with residents were based on post-occupancy evaluation practices well-developed in the United States, but little used in Europe. Not all the schemes are for the elderly alone: some housing associations seek a broader mix, with single mothers particularly welcomed. While the difficulties of funding such projects are specific to local conditions, such well-researched cases do have international value. Despite a great variation

in cost, some built with local-authority support and others wholly private, these flats were rapidly occupied and remain popular. More low-cost schemes are needed, however, as immigrants approach retirement.

Huber's team emphasises the importance of building to encourage sociability, particularly for the growing regiment of elderly single women. They found that formal communal activities are difficult to keep going; more valuable are spaces for informal contact, nearby gardens and shops, and good public transport. Assisted schemes offer

*'Praise for an elderly person is invariably linked with the assurance that he still looks relatively young'*

cleaning services, meals and some nursing care either within the building or nearby, so people can live in their own homes for far longer than before. None can cope with dementia – architecture has no answer for old age's greatest trauma.

The authors call for housing that has plentiful natural lighting and balconies. Common rooms have to be attractive to be used. Full 'barrier-free' housing, without steps and high thresholds, and with wheelchair-accessible showers, remains difficult in





This image  
Möhrlistrasse 110  
residential home for  
the elderly in Zurich  
Below An resident of  
Alterssiedlung  
Dammweg retirement  
home in Bern

conversions, and has not been fully realised even in the new buildings surveyed. Yet, they argue, such schemes are equally beneficial to small children and the disabled, and less hazardous for the rest of us, while estimating the additional cost at only 5 per cent – so long as more lifts are not required.

But how can housing without the architectural devices of stairs, split levels and thresholds be made interesting? In the book's concluding essay, Gerhard Auer, professor of design at Technische Universität Braunschweig in Germany, appeals to the senses: lighting, tactile surfaces, smells and above all, landscaping. But ultimately, he too returns to the joy of roof gardens and climbing stairs. So back to the fitness classes and fighting 50 it is, then.

**Resume:** Do not go gentle into that good night; Rage, rage against stairs and thresholds



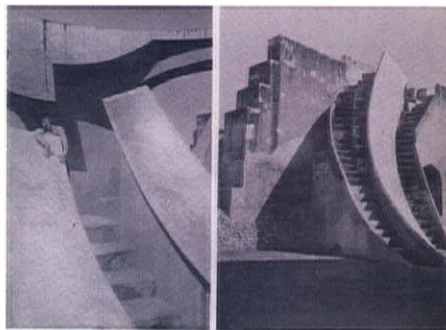
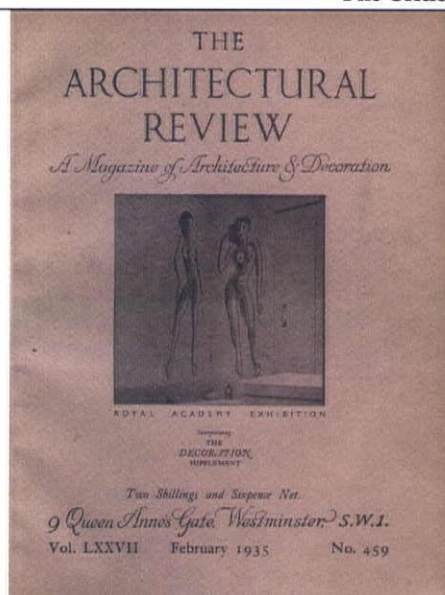
## Back Issues The Delhi Observatory of 1724 was remarkably at home with the architecture of 1935, says **Steve Parnell**

Penelope Chetwode was the first wife of 1930s *Architectural Review* assistant editor, and later Poet Laureate, John Betjeman. She occasionally contributed to the *Architectural Review*, and one such contribution was an eye-opening piece in February 1935 on the observatory at Delhi, built by the Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II of Jaipur in 1724.

Located in Newest Delhi, 'in the heart of the modern capital', the observatory was built to improve on the accuracy of brass instruments, flawed due to the smallness of their size. A human-scale observatory was conceived 'of stone and lime of perfect stability, so that the inaccuracies from the shaking of the circles and the wearing of the axes and displacement of their centres and the inequality of the minutes be corrected'. The result is nothing less than the heavens manifest on earth in a salmon-pink Cubist skateboard park.

The amazing thing is that photographs of the observatory do not seem out of place on the pages of the 1935 *Architectural Review*, where on the accompanying pages Modern, functional forms are photographed to create abstract black-and-white spaces, beautifully composed and stylised to sell the new architecture being introduced to Britain. Although constructed from plastered rubble, the observatory's stairs look as though they are an early experiment in shaping new forms from new materials like concrete, and as Chetwode points out, they are nothing but pure function. There is clearly a reason that this early 18th-century construction is included among the new Modernist forms, and it is surely this: how appropriate and beautiful pure function can be for a Modern age of architecture.

The revised astronomical tables based on these instruments turned out to be less accurate than hoped, but the observatory itself still exists, albeit surrounded by less sculptural and less meaningful contemporary blocks of flats and offices.



Left: Another interior view of the Jai Prakash. According to the English architect Egmont, this was the "most perfect of all instruments." It is thought that even today the small observatory has built the observatory of centuries. It is in brick and rubble covered with the smooth lime plaster and silver sand, with the several openings to the inside gate. Right: The exterior (plan) of the Jai Prakash. (The rough sketch is by Egmont.)

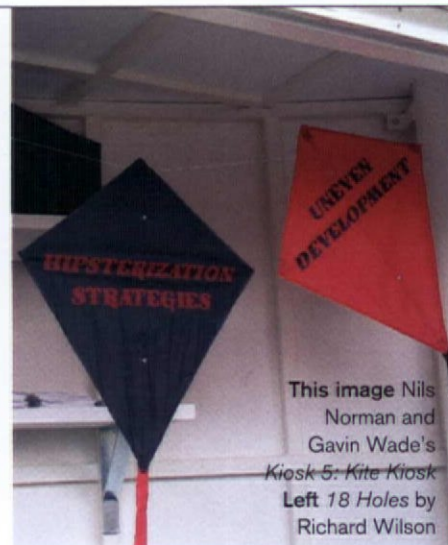
PLATE 10 February 1935



The Delhi Observatory, from an engraving by F. and W. Sharpe, 1818. (The site is 15). To compare the recent photographs of the Observatory with the two engravings published by the 'British and Foreign', (from the engraving of their sketches. The engraving attention for the formal pattern which were laid out before the way to place of the main entrance and the stairs. (Reproduced by courtesy of the India Office.)

PLATE 10 February 1935





This image Nils Norman and Gavin Wade's Kiosk 5: Kite Kiosk  
Left 18 Holes by Richard Wilson

## EVENT

### Folkestone's regeneration starts with this triennial, says **Christine Murray**

Tales of Time and Space, Folkestone Triennial, until 14 September. [www.folkestonetriennial.org.uk](http://www.folkestonetriennial.org.uk)

Art stars and Londoners invaded Folkestone, Kent, this weekend for the inaugural Folkestone Triennial – one of the key components in Roger De Haan's plan to resurrect the dilapidated seaside town.

Formerly owner of the Saga travel empire, De Haan purchased Folkestone Harbour for £11 million in August 2004, and has since developed an amply budgeted, culture-led defibrillation plan that includes a 'creative quarter' in the revamped old town, a harbour masterplan and £38 million City Academy by Foster + Partners, a new university campus by Alison Brooks Architects, a performing arts centre, a literary festival, and a high-speed train link to London (due to open in 2009).

Exhibiting the work of 22 contemporary artists, the Folkestone Triennial is an art festival of extraordinary calibre. Each site-specific work responds directly to the history or current conditions of the town, such as Folkestone's high level of teenage pregnancy, explored by Tracey Emin with *Baby Things* – seven bronze castings of 'lost' baby clothing, which are strewn on the town's railings, benches and promenades.

Artists Nils Norman and Gavin Wade have designed a kiosk based on Lubetkin's 1936 drawings for a structure at Dudley Zoo, selling kites printed with anti-gentrification lines, such as 'Hipsterization Strategies' and

'Uneven Development' (pictured above right).

A highlight is Kaffe Matthews' *The Marvelo Project*, a musical installation created with 15- and 16-year-old pupils from Folkestone Academy. To experience the piece, you ride a bicycle fitted with a GPS tracking system and speakers around town. The musical soundtrack alters depending on your location, occasionally barking orders at you to 'turn left' or 'continue round the roundabout'.

Curated by Andrea Schlieker (who will be a juror for the 2009 Turner Prize), most of the art at Folkestone is ingeniously hidden away – such as Adam Chodzko's film *Pyramid*, screened in a shop with blacked-out windows – and the triennial functions as a kind of treasure hunt, forcing visitors to fully discover both savoury and unsavoury neighbourhoods,

from dodgy council estates by the harbour to the recently completed Coastal Park. De Haan plans on retaining six of the pieces from this and every subsequent triennial, ensuring a future world-class art collection for the town.

De Haan is determined to create an artists' utopia in Folkestone. In addition to the harbour, he's purchased 80 buildings, which he plans to renovate and rent to artists at a low rate for the next 125 years. According to De Haan, 20 of the buildings are complete and fully occupied, and there's a waiting list for the rest. If the quality of his future developments match the quality of this year's triennial, there's a bright, artistic future ahead for Folkestone.

**Resume:** Queer as Folkestone – the artists are taking over

## 5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

### 1 Call for entries: Liverpool

Submit your Merseyside project to the Liverpool Architectural Society's inaugural design awards.

Deadline for entries 4 August. Download an entry form at [www.liverpoolarchitecture.com](http://www.liverpoolarchitecture.com)

### 2 The Neues Museum, Berlin: Restoration, Repair and Intervention

See drawings and models from David Chipperfield Architects' work on the Neues Museum, Berlin.

20 June-6 September at the Soane Museum, 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3BP

### 3 Made in Cambridge

This annual exhibition by the Cambridge

Association of Architects (CAA) features the work of 17 local practices.

Until 5 July, Michaelhouse Centre, Trinity Street, Cambridge CB2 1SU

### 4 Place: A Study of Modern Houses in Cornwall

Artist Sophie Tarbuck explores buildings by Rogers and Foster, among others.

21 June-25 August at The Architecture Centre, Bristol BS1 4QA. [www.architecturecentre.co.uk](http://www.architecturecentre.co.uk)

### 5 Upshot

Alan Williams exhibits his photos of London's highest hidden spaces, including clocktowers, ancient archives and tiny bolt-holes.

Until 19 July, Baylis Terrace, National Theatre, London SE1 9PX. [www.nationaltheatre.org.uk](http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk)



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## CORUS



### AJ ENQUIRY 201

Kier Property Development has used Colorcoat Prisma prefinished steel from Corus on its new distribution units in Enfield. The product has been used as part of Corus Panels and Profile's Arcline and Trisomet wall-panel cladding systems in Metallic Silver and Pegasus colours, and is covered by the Confidex Guarantee for up to 25 years.

## STOAKES SYSTEMS



### AJ ENQUIRY 202

The Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) in Sheffield, designed by architect Bond Bryan, is clad with translucent Kalwall. The centre develops innovative technology solutions for advanced materials. Innovative Kalwall offers cladding solutions for work, study and play.

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

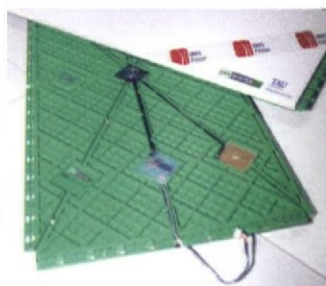
## HÄFELE



### AJ ENQUIRY 203

Hawa Frontslide 60 automatic window-shutter systems have been installed on the first zero-carbon home by a mainstream housebuilder in the UK, the Barratt Green House at the BRE Innovation Park in Watford. The automatic shutters provide a distinctive and attractive external feature and play a crucial part in the technical design.

## TILE OF SPAIN



### AJ ENQUIRY 204

Tile of Spain member Tau Ceramica has collaborated with Pep Torres to create an 'intelligent' floor tile for security or dieting purposes. The Diet Tile is equipped with a weight sensor. A microchip analyses the length of time a person remains on the tile, sounding an audio alarm on reaching a predesignated period.

[www.tauceramic.com](http://www.tauceramic.com)

## KALZIP



### AJ ENQUIRY 205

Manchester's latest landmark attraction – Chill Factor® – uses over 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of two types of Kalzip aluminium cladding: Kalzip perforated facades and Kalbau profiled sheets. Kalzip perforated facades wrap the emergency staircase below the main 15° slope, transforming a functional component into an architectural asset.

## TROAX UK



### AJ ENQUIRY 206

Wire-mesh safety fencing supplied by Troax UK has been used to secure potentially hazardous electrical equipment at a new data centre, recently set up by a leading financial institution. The fencing prevents unauthorised access to electrical-control systems, which are located within a busy walkway in the new building.

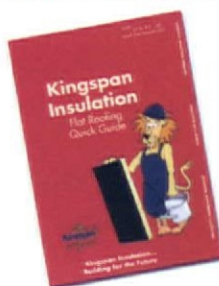
## METAL TECHNOLOGY



### AJ ENQUIRY 207

Metal Technology's curtain walling, doors and casement windows have been used in the natural stone, white render and oak cladding facade sections of a new hotel in Dublin. Completed by architect Consarc, contractor McAleer & Rushe and fabricator Fortress Architectural, this is another flagship development for Carlson Hotels Worldwide.

## KINGSPAN INSULATION



### AJ ENQUIRY 208

Kingspan Insulation has released the latest edition of its *Flat Roofing User Guide*. The user-friendly publication provides specifiers, contractors, stockists and end users with information on the extensive selection of Therma rigid urethane systems, Kooltherm rigid phenolic products and Styrozone rigid extruded polystyrene insulation.

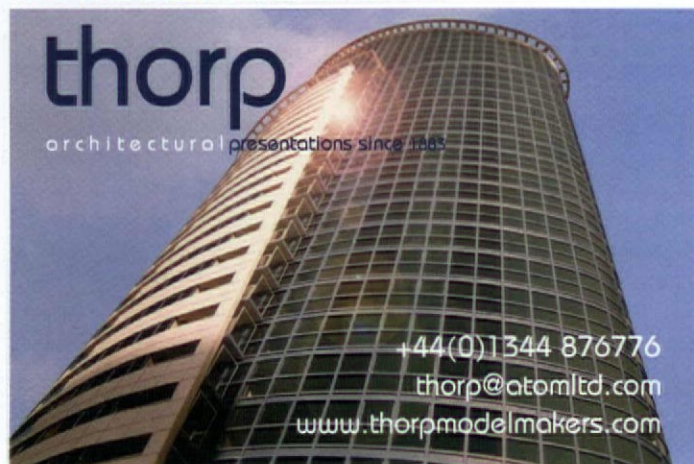


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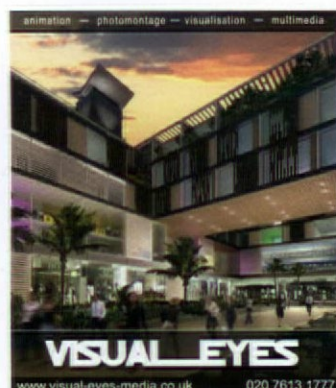
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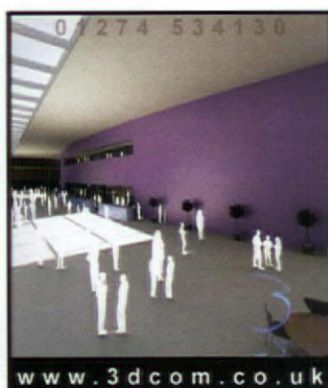
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Please send expressions of interest with a full curriculum vitae to Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive Greenwich Foundation, Old Royal Naval College, 2 Cutty Sark Gardens, Greenwich London SE10 9LW by 18 July 2008. A full job description and supporting information will be sent to those short listed for interview.

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# Ian Martin. A week of Corbusian Skillsets, dogs and breakfasts

**MONDAY.** There's a whining sound coming from the construction industry. I think the boiler's gone. Luckily we're on a three-star PFI contract, so the engineers will be out to fix it as soon as possible. Are we in this afternoon? Most definitely. What's the point of a recession if you can't bunk off at lunchtime?

Relax. Frankie Says Relax. The construction industry has been here before, lessons have been learned. This time we're going to meet the economic crisis head on with a surge of all-day conferences on the theme of Challenges Ahead. Ladies and gentlemen, wake up and smell the coffee and registration.

Only leave me out – I'm allergic to any event involving VAT or a plenary session. OK, I grudgingly admit that **when you're trapped in a conference room with hundreds of 'construction professionals' who haven't had anything for breakfast and don't drink at lunchtime, architects are the least worst.** They are in general an optimistic bunch, and the world would be a better place if their values prevailed.

But still, at the last minute I decide to blow out the Towards A New Corbusian Skillset conference. The flyer starts: 'If Le Corbusier were alive today he would define architecture as the masterly, correct, and magnificent play of masses bundled together in a mixed-equity package of sustainable light...'

Yeah, call me old-fashioned, but an all-day breakfast beats an all-day conference any old all-day.

**TUESDAY.** Lunch with my Modernist friend Richard, who's just been made a Companion of Honour. The perks are rubbish

– **permission to gather kindling in Epping Forest, a barrel of ale and a suckling pig every Christmas** – but he does get to wear some pretty cool robes designed by Stella McCartney. And him an egalitarian liberal! Oh, the irony and the erminery.

The ceremony goes back to the time of Magna Carta, 'companion' being an ancient word for 'someone you have lunch with' and 'honour' meaning 'allegiance to moral principles subject to client's consent'. Richard's unhappy because the forces of destiny now seek to reverse his urban renaissance all the way back to the dark ages, but I see this as a positive thing. Once we've rewound to the 8th century, Tamworth should by rights be restored as capital of England. It would save a fortune on petrol, as people in The North wouldn't have to go so far to make their point.

**WEDNESDAY.** Urban theorist Zavvi Durkheim cancels drinks. Doctor's appointment. **Every time she's in a room full of architects she feels compelled to shout out rude solutions** to hypothetical design problems.

**THURSDAY.** Zavvi rings. **The doctor's diagnosed Charrette's Syndrome.**

**FRIDAY.** London's Freshtival of Larkitecture **begins badly with a cycling breakfast**, then I spend all day travelling from one 'buzzhub' to the next. All very jolly though. Very impressed with the many newly revealed Thames tributaries, only to discover they're just mains leaks.

**SATURDAY.** The long-awaited Dogs of Epic Space competition. Bauhaus the dachshund, trembling with excitement, has been transformed into a miniature version of this year's Serpentine Pavilion. That, or a miniature version of a garden shed destroyed by a fertiliser bomb. His owner Darcy is quivering like an architectural jelly too, and no wonder. There's some stiff competition. Haughty canine celebrities with names like Nipper and Pickles and Salieri parade in an assortment of claddings.

In third place, it's an Old English sheepdog, Fido Eco Sum. He has been entered by the Mayor of London, though not in an Eric Gill way. **Fido's the only entrant with a name in dog Latin, and is done up to resemble a thatched moot hall in Henley.** Second place goes to Ruff-Ruff. This poodle's certainly clever, having spent seven years training as an architect's dog before becoming a mascot for one of our leading developers.

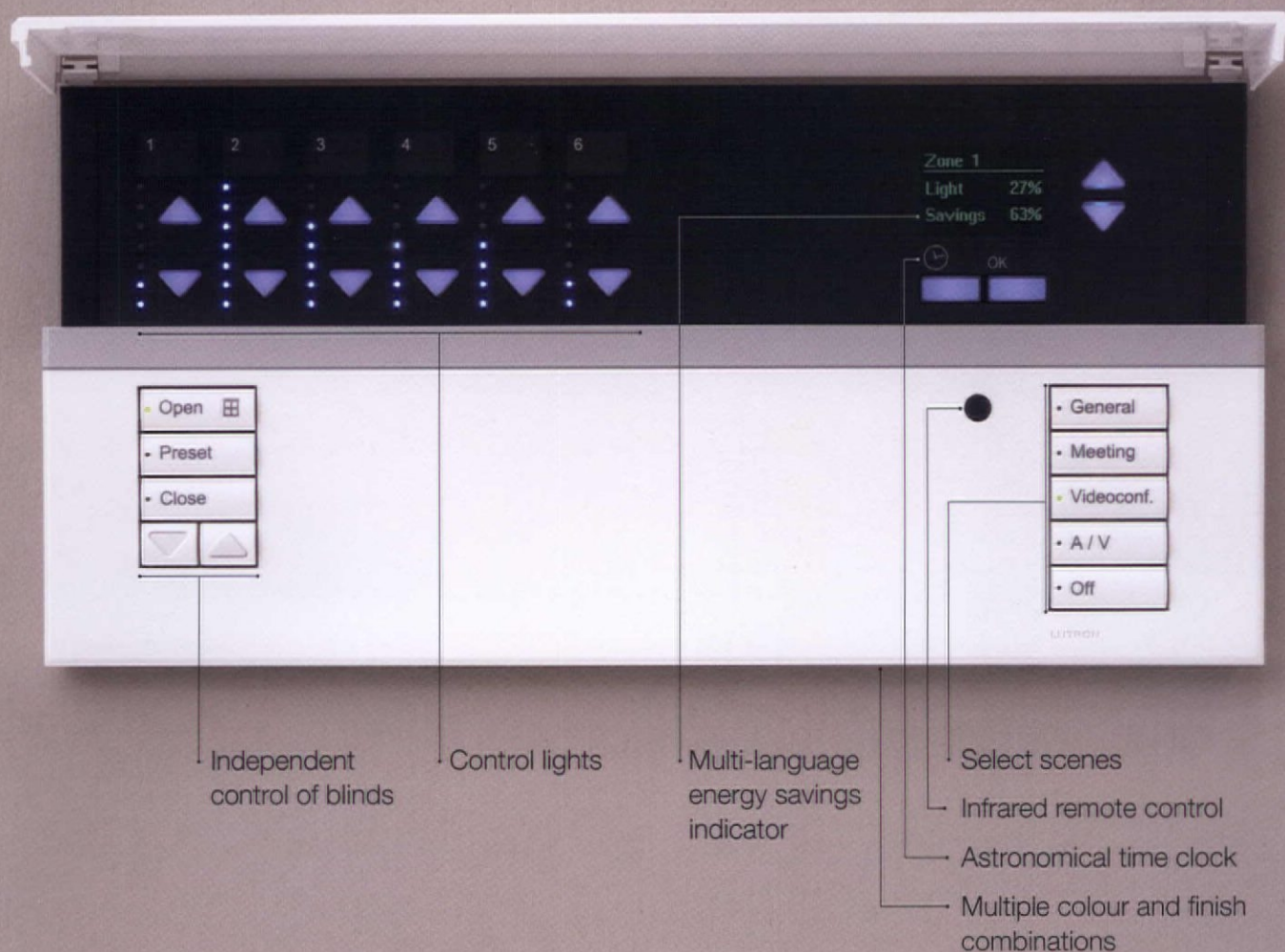
And the winner is... Ovoidia. She's a Basset Fauve de Bretagne and is sheathed in a scaled-down replica of Zaha's proposed extension to the Middle East Centre in Oxford. The judges admired her awkwardness and competitiveness. At one point she bit Bauhaus on the nose. 'Bitch', mutters Darcy, needlessly.

**SUNDAY.** Evoke the dynamic process of architecture by spending all morning in the recliner plagued by self-doubt, over-confidence and moral confusion. In the afternoon, **evoke the dynamic process of engineering by getting pissed with some engineers.**



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