

10.07.08

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From Atoms to Patterns  
*How Festival of Britain  
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AJ

# CASTLEFORD BRIDGE

*McDowell + Benedetti's crossing  
is key to the world's first televised  
regeneration project – page 22*







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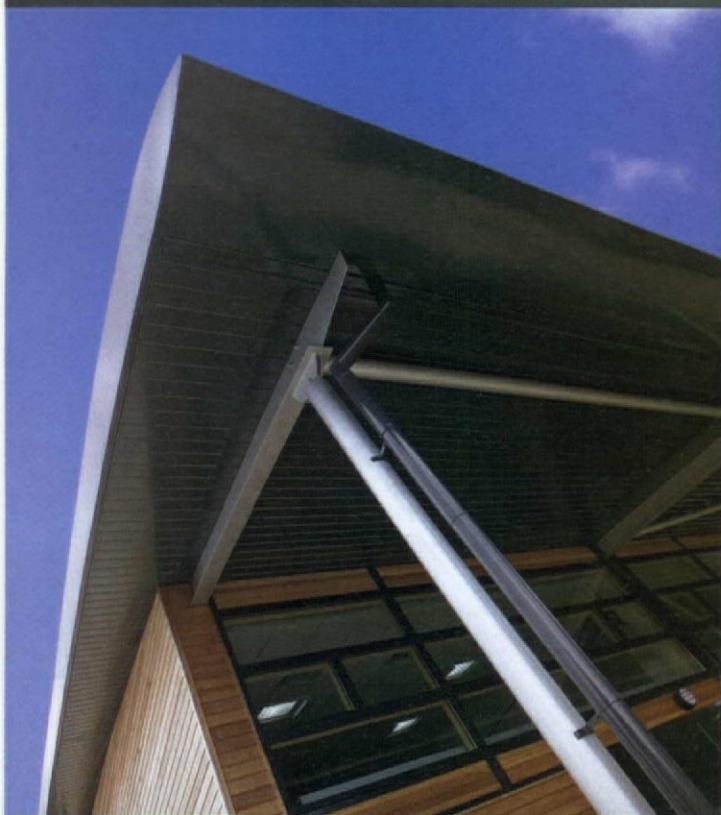
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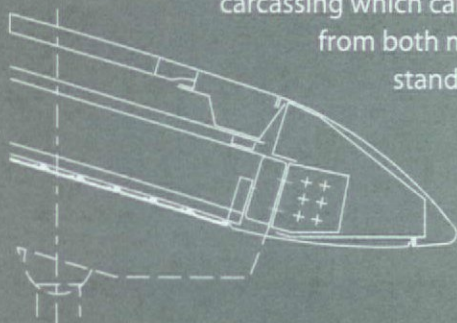




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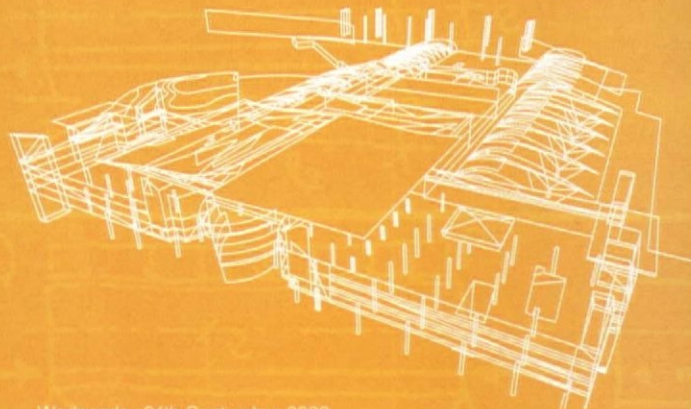
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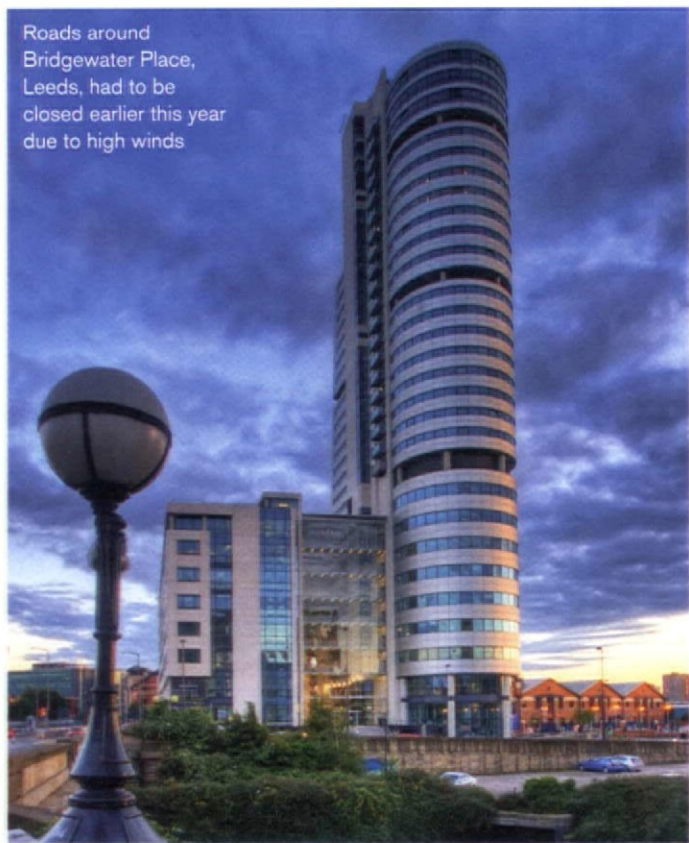
\*[www.architectsjournal.co.uk](http://www.architectsjournal.co.uk) 23rd June 2008



## FINS MAY SOLVE AEDAS TOWER'S WIND GRIEF

Retrofitting planned for Leeds skyscraper to combat 'dangerous' winds at base

Roads around  
Bridgewater Place,  
Leeds, had to be  
closed earlier this year  
due to high winds



Aedas may add 'fins' to its 32-storey Bridgewater Place skyscraper in Leeds – the tallest tower in Yorkshire – in a bid to reduce the effects of 'dangerous' winds around its base.

During storms earlier this year roads had to be closed next to the city-centre office and residential block, known locally as the Dalek, and roadside barriers were later installed on Water Lane to protect pedestrians.

According to reports people had been knocked into the street by gusts and others had their glasses blown off their faces.

Now Aedas has admitted it is working with Bovis and the BRE to 'identify possible solutions' to what Leeds City Council described as a 'wind-tunnel effect'.

The practice's regional director Michael Gardner said: 'We are presently retesting the base design and developing a test concept that mimics the current site conditions.'

He added: 'Data collected on site, combined with test results, will help inform the assessment of mitigation measures and ultimately assist with the selection of appropriate actions.'

Leeds-based engineer Garry Palmer, a director of advanced design and sustainable development at Faber Maunsell AECOM, believes the Aedas team will be primarily looking at how to mitigate 'vortex shedding on the leeward side' caused by westerly winds.

He said: 'There are a number of issues that should be considered... the curvilinear facade and its orientation as well as the very close proximity of the building to the junction of busy roads and pedestrian routes.'

It is understood solutions being considered include the addition of canopies above entrances, the introduction of street architecture and adding vertical fins to the facade. *Richard Waite*

## ATHLETES' VILLAGE CUTS CONTINUE AS MAKE TOWER IS MOTHBALLED

Make's 30-storey residential tower at the heart of the £2 billion London 2012 Olympics Athletes' Village has been mothballed, the AJ can reveal.

Last week it emerged developer Lend Lease had scaled back

the number of homes proposed to house the London 2012 Games' 17,000 athletes from 4,200 to 3,300 (AJ 03.07.08).

According to a source close to the Make project, the design team had been 'aware the

development was likely to stop' for some time. However it is unclear whether a sister tower by Ian Simpson Architects has also been put on the back-burner.

Neither Lend Lease nor the Olympic Delivery Authority were

available for comment.

Meanwhile it has emerged that Make's Middlesex Hospital scheme for developer Candy & Candy has also been held up – but is expected to restart later in the year. *Richard Waite*



# RIBA WINS UIA BACKING IN CLIMATE BATTLE

The RIBA has claimed a major victory in its fight to combat climate change by gaining the backing of the International Union of Architects (UIA), which represents 1.3 million architects.

The UIA has agreed to adopt the contraction and convergence model (*see box, right*), which the organisation sees as the most viable way of limiting the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere.

RIBA president Sunand Prasad has always regarded backing from the UIA as fundamental to setting the construction industry a target ahead of the 2009 UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Prasad, who secured backing at the 23rd World Congress of Architecture in Turin, Italy, at the end of last week, said: 'It is a major

milestone in what has become my personal crusade. It means we can mobilise a worldwide body to lobby the Copenhagen summit in 2009. It gives architects a much-needed clarity to explain to clients why we are doing this.'

He added: 'It gives a chance to get a wider agreement on contraction and convergence from other industries.'

Hunter & Partners' head of sustainability, Tim Ashton, said: 'It would be pessimistic to say that Sunand's achievement is likely to be like throwing a pebble in the ocean – will all nations of the world sit up and take notice?'

'But it is incumbent upon us all to take personal responsibility, and small substantive steps are probably the quickest way to arrest climate change.' *Richard Vaughan*

## CONTRACTION AND CONVERGENCE

- Conceived by Global Commons Institute in the early 1990s
- An equitable strategy to reduce global CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations to a safe limit (between 350-450 parts per million by volume)
- Contraction is based on an agreed reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in countries per capita
- Convergence is based on CO<sub>2</sub> allowances agreed between countries with the aim of meeting an equal, per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions allowance
- Works on the basis that poorer/developing nations are entitled to let their emissions rise, while first-world countries reduce theirs

## THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

### UIA VICE PRESIDENT GIANCARLO IUS DIES

The vice president of the International Union of Architects (UIA), Giancarlo Ius, has died on the eve of the closing day of the 23rd World Congress of Architecture in Turin, Italy. Ius died on Thursday 3 July, hours before he was to learn if he was to become president of the organisation.

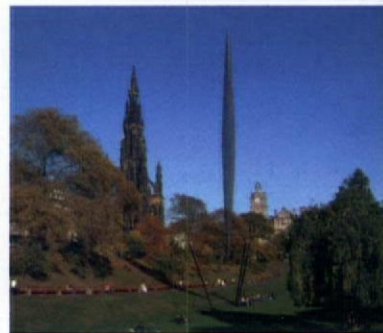
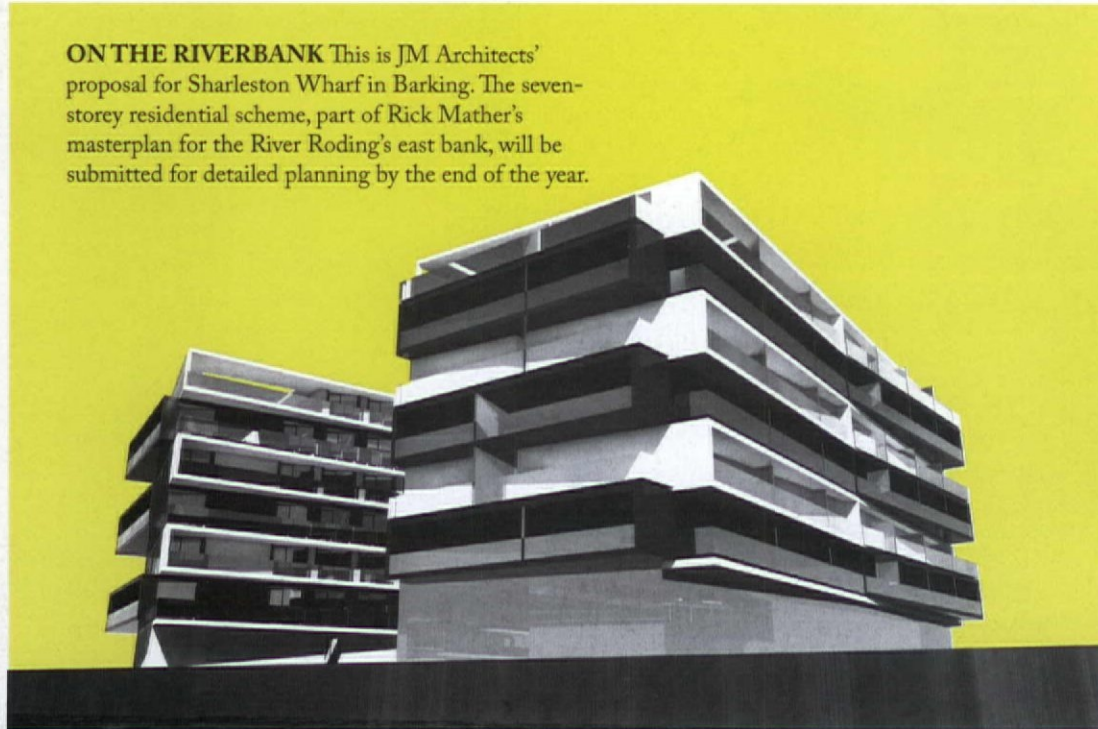
### DESIGN QUALITY CHANGE WRITTEN INTO HOUSING BILL

A lobby group led by former architecture minister Lord Howarth and the RIBA has succeeded in ensuring the new Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) champions good design. Last night (7 July) the government agreed to an amendment to the Housing and Regeneration Bill, giving the HCA a statutory duty 'to contribute to design quality in new housing'.

### FUTURE OF SKYLON TO GO TO PUBLIC VOTE

The public have been given the chance to vote on the proposed location of a 'reborn' Skylon – a replica of the 1951 Festival of Britain icon. Launched this week, the Re-build the Skylon Campaign website ([www.votehorskyon.com](http://www.votehorskyon.com)) shows mock-ups of the planned 90m-tall structure in 10 locations around the country (*seen below in Edinburgh*).

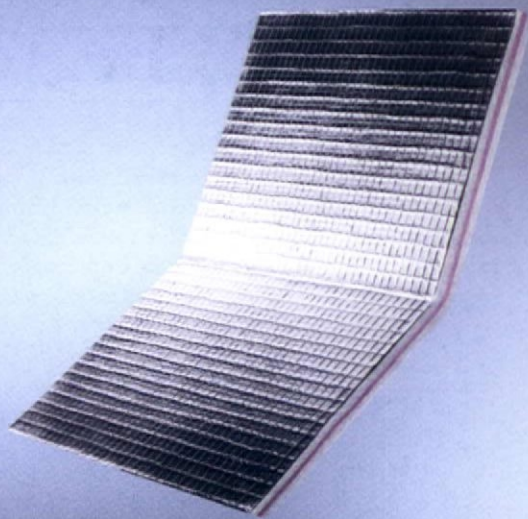
**ON THE RIVERBANK** This is JM Architects' proposal for Sharleston Wharf in Barking. The seven-storey residential scheme, part of Rick Mather's masterplan for the River Roding's east bank, will be submitted for detailed planning by the end of the year.



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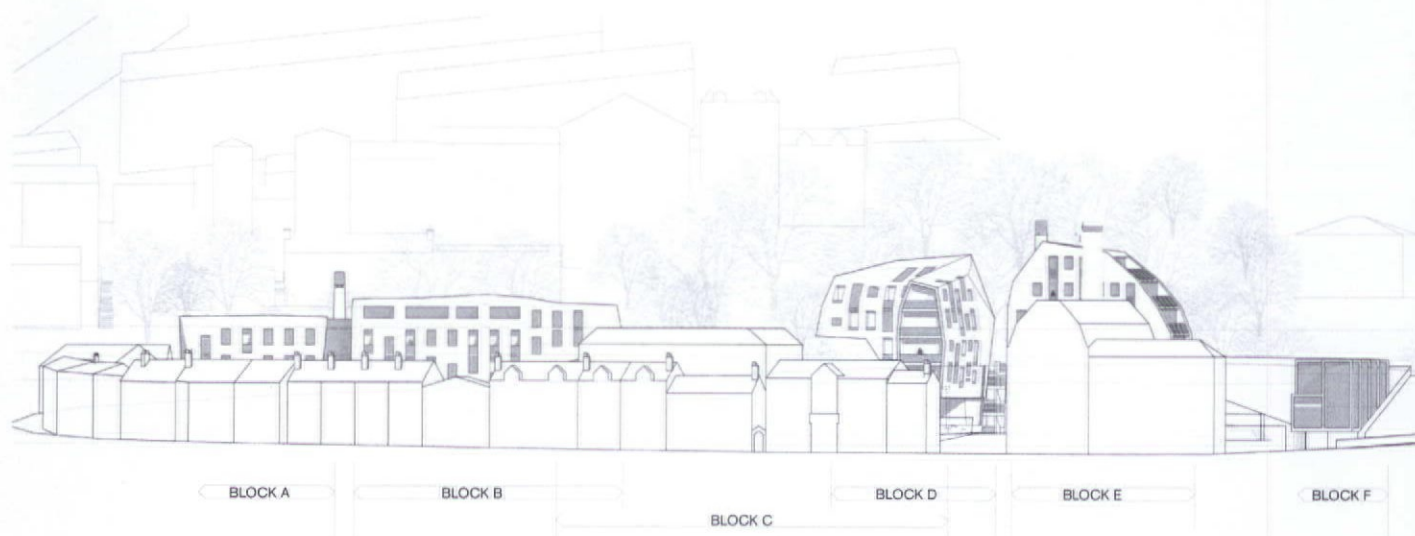
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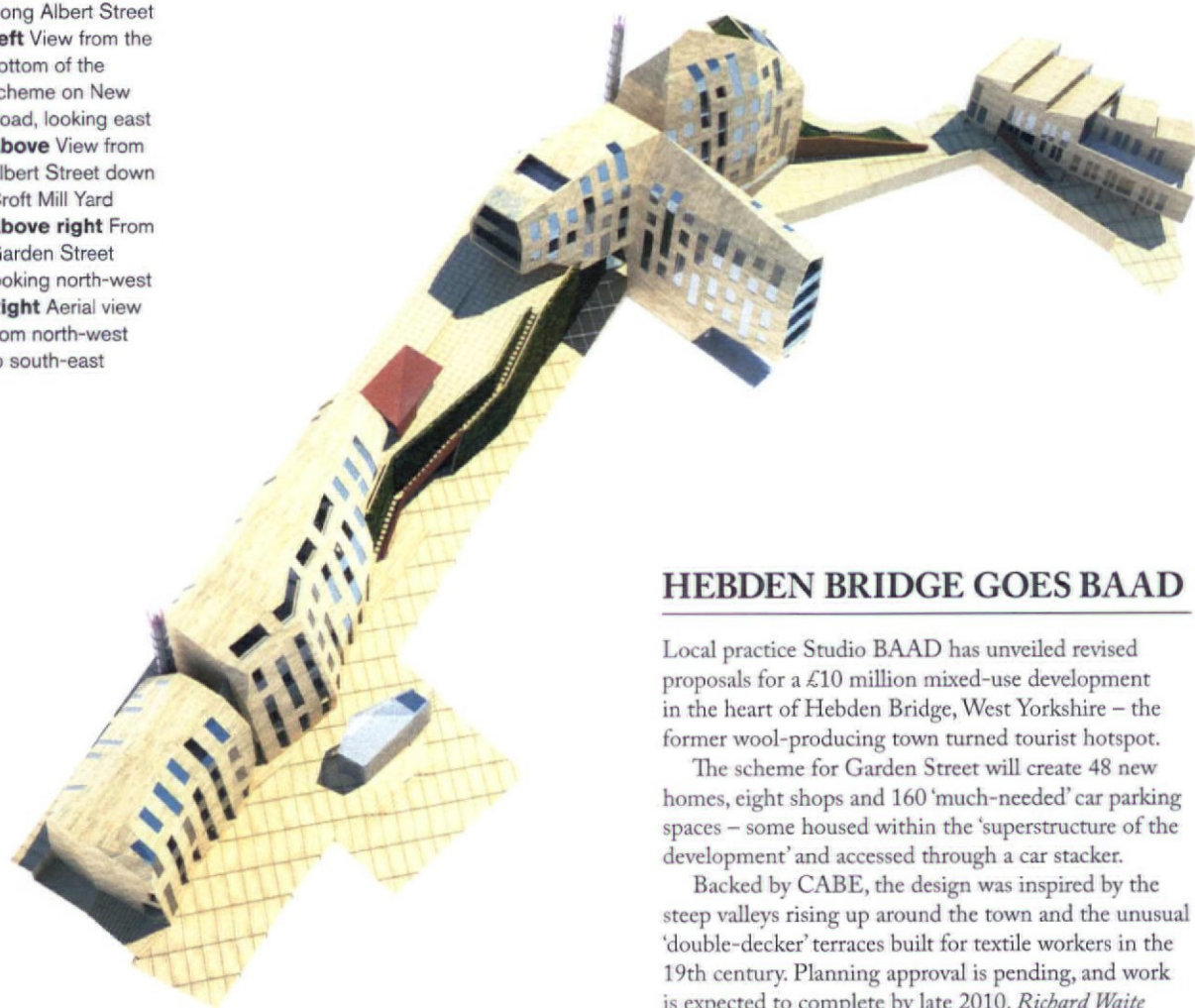
**Top left** Elevation along Albert Street

**Left** View from the bottom of the scheme on New Road, looking east

**Above** View from Albert Street down Croft Mill Yard

**Above right** From Garden Street looking north-west

**Right** Aerial view from north-west to south-east



## HEBDEN BRIDGE GOES BAAD

Local practice Studio BAAD has unveiled revised proposals for a £10 million mixed-use development in the heart of Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire – the former wool-producing town turned tourist hotspot.

The scheme for Garden Street will create 48 new homes, eight shops and 160 'much-needed' car parking spaces – some housed within the 'superstructure of the development' and accessed through a car stacker.

Backed by CABA, the design was inspired by the steep valleys rising up around the town and the unusual 'double-decker' terraces built for textile workers in the 19th century. Planning approval is pending, and work is expected to complete by late 2010. *Richard Waite*



This image  
FaulknerBrowns'  
design for the  
Canoe Centre  
pavilion

Right MVVA's  
landscaping plan  
for the site, with  
the pavilion seen  
to the centre



## ODA REVEALS CANOE PAVILION

The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) has released these images of FaulknerBrowns' pavilion for the Broxbourne White Water Canoe Centre in Hertfordshire, linked to the Olympic Park by the River Lea. The landscape design is by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA).

# REPORT TURNS UP THE HEAT ON PATHFINDERS

Pressure is mounting on the government to reconsider its £2.2 billion Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders scheme following a damning report from the House of Commons' Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

PAC warned that the programme – which has refurbished 40,000 homes, demolished 10,000, and built only 1,000 new homes – was 'creating a risk that demolition sites, rather than newly built houses, will be the programme's legacy'.

The report added: 'It is difficult to determine... the extent to which improvements in the housing market are the result of Pathfinders interventions, rather than broader economic factors.'

The report came on the same day that Housing Minister

Caroline Flint suggested that ShedKM's Chimney Pot Park for Urban Splash in Manchester could act as an exemplar for houses currently under threat of demolition.

Speaking at the Housing Design Awards (AJ online 04.07.08), Flint said: 'Until recently, a street like this would have been knocked down rather than redeveloped'.

But Nathan Cornish, the Urban Splash director behind Chimney Pot Park, which retains only the facades of the original terraces, gave Flint a lukewarm response: 'It is great that Caroline Flint has recognised the scheme, but if she truly means it she will have to change VAT legislation... It is cheaper to demolish than it is to refurb.'

The report comes eight months after the National Audit Office issued a similarly scathing appraisal of the programme, which covers nine deprived areas in the north of England (see box, below). *Max Thompson*

### THE PATHFINDERS

- **Bridging Newcastle Gateshead**
- **Gateway Hull and East Riding**
- **Transform South Yorkshire;**
- **Urban Living** Birmingham and Sandwell
- **Renew North Staffordshire**
- **Manchester Salford**
- **Newheartlands** Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral
- **Partners in Action** Oldham and Rochdale
- **Elevate East Lancashire**

## BORIS UNVEILS LONDON PLANS

Mayor of London Boris Johnson has released a report detailing his forthcoming changes to the London Plan. The document, called *Building a Better London*, will see a complete reworking of London's protected views, and create a new tall buildings plan.

Johnson will be looking for more regeneration opportunities in outer London and will drop the 50 per cent housing target, but keep the target of building 50,000 affordable homes over the next three years.

The Greater London Authority's executive director of policies and partnerships, David Lunts, said: 'This will set London's new policies that will contain London's growth. It is not anti-growth or anti-development.'

The Mayor hopes the changes will feed into a draft London Plan to be released by 2010, with the final document expected by 2012.

*Richard Vaughan*





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# UK-GBC TELLS PROFESSION TO GET ITS OWN HOUSE IN ORDER

The UK Green Building Council's report says the best route to sustainability is for practices to measure their environmental impact, writes *Hattie Hartman*

When it comes to sustainability, good housekeeping is essential. This is the main message of the UK Green Building Council's (UK-GBC) third task group report, issued yesterday (9 July) by the UK-GBC's measuring and reporting task group (M&RTG).

The UK-GBC says the route to more sustainable business practice begins with measuring the impact of one's own organisation. Only then should a company examine the impact of business operations. This may sound straightforward, but a survey conducted as part of the M&RTG work reveals that surprisingly few organisations have started to measure their own carbon footprint, much less social and economic factors relating to sustainability.

The M&RTG, chaired by Lend Lease sustainability director Daniel Labbad, was established in January 2008 to clarify the confusion that surrounds measuring sustainability. As part of the AJ's aim to communicate greater clarity on this subject to our readers, I have participated in the 20-member M&RTG – along with representatives from Quintain Estates, Aggregate Industries, Davis Langdon, Fulcrum Consulting, Bennetts Associates and others – meeting twice a week for six months at Lend Lease's central

London offices. One the UK-GBC's strengths is the cross-industry input which results from its broad membership base. Members range from major developers to small architectural practices – the M&RTG's challenge was to find a one-size-fits-all approach.

The M&RTG initially mapped

## Measuring must start with small steps, as tedious as office utility bills

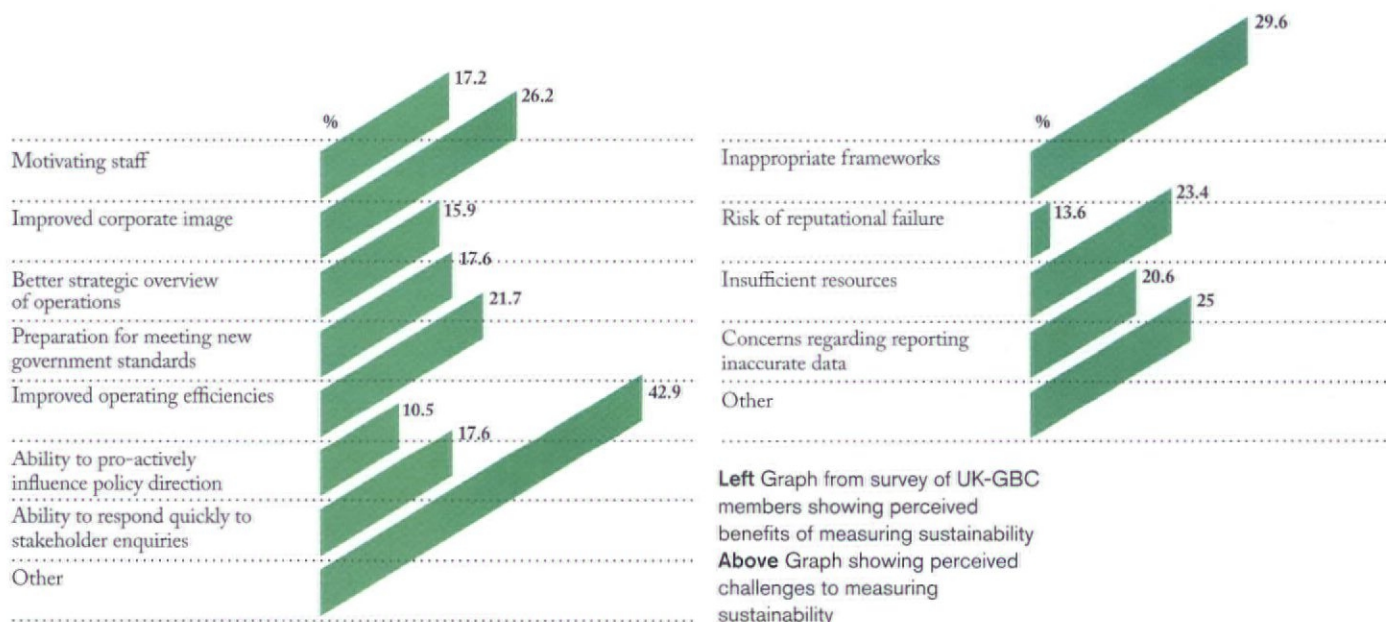
the numerous tools that already exist for measuring sustainability. The acronyms that emerged from this process were as intimidating as the size of the Lend Lease boardroom table. BREEAM and the Code for Sustainable Homes can guide aspects of the design process, but do not address 'how an organisation should strategically embed sustainability in its strategy and decision-making,' according to the M&RTG report. To this end, the M&RTG recommends that the UK-GBC supports the already widely used Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) ([www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)) rather than developing yet another reporting framework, and help to develop a real estate/construction sector supplement to GRI.

A M&RTG survey identified three main barriers to measuring

sustainability: inappropriate measuring frameworks, insufficient resources and concerns about reporting inaccurate data (sustainability measures taken by three surveyed companies are shown in the boxes, right). That's why measuring must start with small steps, as tedious as utility bills (kWh) and travel records (mode and kilometers traveled). The M&RTG report describes measuring sustainability as 'a journey', which takes three to five years to get it right. The M&RTG report sets out the early steps in the process. Labbad says: 'This is not just about measuring and reporting. It's about working through a process to understand how your core business and sustainability come together. It's a lot more than measuring meters; it's about reviewing who you are.' All UK-GBC members will be asked to report back in three years and the UK-GBC will support members throughout the process by running seminars and sharing best practice.

Collecting data impacts financial and administrative staff, and, according to the report, can face inertia despite good intentions. It's not just about gathering data, which in itself is challenging, but also about feeding the data into a business' strategic direction and driving improvement from year to year.





## Foster + Partners

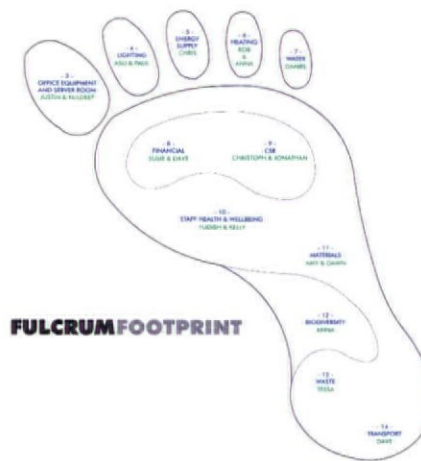
Fosters + Partners has recently started to measure the operational energy requirements of its buildings, air miles traveled by employees and paper and waste production. The practice has developed a four-year Environmental Leadership Plan which includes measures such as improving environmental efficiency of offices and encouraging staff to use lower carbon means of transport and is extending the process to examine the environmental impacts of its projects.

## Marks Barfield Architects

Marks Barfield Architects, which has just over 30 staff members, achieved ISO 14001 after an intensive six-month process which looked at all office systems and ways to reduce environmental impacts. The practice measured its carbon footprint, using an online tool. Measures which have been adopted include waste recycling, a regime for ensuring all computers are switched off, minimising use of artificial light, the replacement of office water coolers with a filter on the tap, and carbon offsets for flights.

## Fulcrum Consulting

Fulcrum is a consulting engineer with 150 staff across six offices. Fulcrum has tackled sustainability measuring over the last year with a target of issuing a Sustainability Report in April 2009. The project, entitled Fulcrum Footprint, aims to document the process as well as provide a snapshot of data. 'It's a gradual process which cannot be done all in one go, and must engage the whole company,' says project leader David Altavet.



## HOW TO GREEN YOUR PRACTICE – ADVICE FROM THE UK-GBC

- Establish organisation-wide sustainability mission statement, based on Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) principles: relevance, completeness and balance, consistency and comparability, transparency and clarity, accuracy and reliability.
- Determine relevant indicators and boundaries for reporting.
- Identify achievable data collection for first year – start small.
- Start with the practice housekeeping, before moving on to projects and services.
- Measure electricity and gas use, transportation and waste.
- Publicly report results.
- Add more parameters in subsequent years.
- Continually monitor progress to determine savings.





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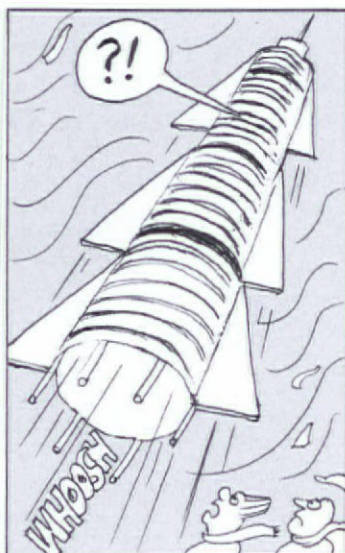
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## SELLING OUT

'Is this architecture?' – a question that architects have pondered for years in the context of Pevsner's cathedrals and bike sheds. But never umbrellas. Or fans. Or light bulbs, doormats, door wedges or USB sticks. Entrepreneurial upstarts from the University of Sheffield have decided that times have changed and architecture needs to confront its 'sell-out side'. They have rebranded the aforementioned goods as architectural concepts such as shelter (06.m<sup>2</sup>), air conditioning (01.m<sup>3</sup> per second, *pictured below*), light (840 lumens), entrance (0.6m), openness (3kg) and memory (1GB) as their contribution to the National Architecture

Student Festival. Astragal is not used to such deep thinking, but does know a bargain when he sees one. Priced from £2 to £10, the best value 'architecture' you are likely to find is on sale at London's Borough Market this weekend.

## LOST TIME

Congratulations to **Anna Liu** of Tonkin Liu for winning the London Festival of Architecture's Architectural Jelly Design Competition (AJ online 07.07.08). Astragal was relieved to hear she made it to the ceremony, no thanks to yours truly. Asked which way it was to the Bartlett by Liu and chums, Astragal confidently pointed towards the Architectural Association, which is of course, dear readers, entirely wrong.

## STAR TURNS

Astragal took a trip to the Fondation Cartier in Paris last weekend to absorb a bit of culture and hang out with his old chum and the foundation's architect

**Jean Nouvel**, who has selected the work for an exhibition of French sculptor César's work. The Pritzker-winning prize fighter was on fine form, wielding cigar and espresso with aplomb. Other superstars in attendance included pint-size Ferrari boss **Jean Todt**, hanging off the arm of action heroine and former Bond girl **Michelle Yeoh**.

## LIFT OFF

Poor AOC. The firm works for two years on its spanking new portable performance space The Lift (*pictured right*) and then is let down by some pesky cranes. After a successful innings in Stratford

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Park, East London, the canvas-covered tent moved to the South Bank for more amateur dramatics, but missed its opening curtain as high winds prevented cranes from dismantling the structure. Astragal finds the easiest way to flatten a tent is to pull the poles out. Or to fall on it when drunk.



## THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Should Robin Hood Gardens have been listed? (*see right for result*)

YES  
40%

NO  
60%

**Next week's question:** Does your practice measure its carbon footprint?

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# Leader & Comment

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## Leader Sustainability might begin at home, but the big picture remains paramount, says *Kieran Long*

The UK Green Building Council (UK-GBC) has decided that sustainability begins at home. Our technical editor Hattie Hartman has been participating in a UK-GBC working group that has concluded that every organisation in the construction industry must get its own house in order before attempting to change the world beyond (*see pages 12-13*). So, you'll be expected to cut down those air miles, recycle your waste paper and turn the lights off in the bathroom, all the while keeping a keen eye on the office gas and electricity meters.

Compare this to the highfalutin rhetoric of the UIA (International Union of Architects), which last week adopted a resolution that commits its members to the policy of

contraction and convergence (*see page 6*). This proposition for a global solution to climate change will demand massive, coordinated action on targets for carbon emissions from the developing world to industrialised nations. The RIBA supports the policy, and tabled the resolution at the UIA conference in Turin last week.

So, which approach is right? It seems to me that the UK-GBC's micro approach is the more useful for individual practices, but like so many sustainability initiatives, it seems to demand commitment to the sustainable cause motivated by a mixture of guilt and self-righteousness.

The UIA's approach, by contrast, is based on an easy-to-understand, global principle

that could, theoretically, halt the growth of carbon emissions. But, and forgive my cynicism, that kind of international consensus on sustainability seems unlikely to happen any time soon.

Confused? You should be. But it's probably a smart thing to perform a kind of double-think. The UK-GBC's advice is practical, but when you're emptying your office's composting toilet, you might sometimes wonder whether it's all worth it. That will be one of the many painful moments where reminding yourself about the global per capita carbon emissions target that contraction and convergence advocates might just get you through the day.

[kieran.long@emap.com](mailto:kieran.long@emap.com)



## Opinion The Heritage at Risk register will help architects preserve our history, says *Rosslyn Stuart*

Earlier this week (8 July), English Heritage published its first Heritage at Risk register. It brings together information on Grade I- and II\*-listed buildings nationally, Grade II-listed buildings in London, scheduled monuments, registered parks, gardens and battlefields and protected wreck-sites at risk. Over the next few years, information on the condition and threats to conservation areas and places of worship will be added, making England the only country in Europe to have a comprehensive knowledge of the state of its protected heritage.

Practitioners will be familiar with the annual publication of English Heritage's Buildings at Risk registers, on which this initiative builds. These have enabled us to understand the issues and extent of the

problem facing the sites and to prioritise action and resources to identify solutions. This strategy has been successful – of the entries listed in 1999, 45 per cent have been removed from the register as their futures have been secured. Only six buildings have been lost. In London, the number of listed buildings of all grades at risk on the register has fallen by over a third, from 939 in 1991 to 572 this year.

Securing the future of a building on the register often takes some years and requires the commitment, determination and imagination of all concerned. Examples such as the sensitive conversion of the Devonshire Royal Hospital, Buxton, by Hall Grey Architects and Donald Insall Associates, demonstrate the distinctive

### Our survey reveals that one in five registered battlefields is at high risk

contribution architects can make to remove a building from the 'at risk' register.

The Heritage at Risk register will be an important and valuable tool nationally and locally for focusing resources, but why is it important for architects?

Firstly, the comprehensive coverage will provide source material for architects involved

in masterplanning – identifying assets that could not only be rescued through incorporation in development proposals, but could also add character to regeneration projects.

Secondly, some places are at risk because unsympathetic development proposals are likely to damage their setting – battlefields and parks and gardens in particular. Indeed, our survey revealed that in one in five registered battlefields and one in 14 registered landscapes is at high risk. A better appreciation and understanding of the significance and sensitivity of such places will help developers and their design teams work up schemes that enhance and benefit from their historic context, rather than detract from it.

Finally, as the Buildings at Risk register has shown, architects are a fertile source of the creativity and energy required to bring historic places back from the brink of irreversible loss.

Drawing attention to such opportunities through our annually updated source-book of historic places requiring urgent attention is the first step in finding solutions.

Rosslyn Stuart is planning and development director (east) at English Heritage

Email [comment@architectsjournal.co.uk](mailto:comment@architectsjournal.co.uk)





## Even architectural plagiarism is preferable to the dogma of process, writes Patrick Lynch

It's the time of year when students show their work to the world and when architects get grumpy about misspent youth. As F Scott Fitzgerald said, it's not that you want to return to a state of innocence; we just want the pleasure of losing our innocence all over again.

The biggest lie told to architecture students is that they need a process in order to make good work. When you look at the ways in which the great architects worked it is clear that the opposite is true. Doubt and changes of heart distinguish the work of Le Corbusier from his brainwashed devotees. Michelangelo is the prototype for the wilfully disciplined

confuse monomania with artistry does not arise from the influence of people with technical or scientific backgrounds, like Zaha Hadid, a maths graduate, on a traditionally humanistic subject like architecture? In maths of course, you get marks for the process of 'working out', even if the result is bollocks.

I know the alternative is often not very pretty, but I'm not sure if this is not a truer reflection of the abilities and talents of students. Even if the best student work is heavily indebted to an architect they have studied, isn't this at least academic and an honest reflection of how our minds work?

Architecture is a professional discipline that cannot retreat into abstractions such as process or individualism. The myth of genius arises from the modern obsession with autistic experimentation by scientists or madmen, and it causes an awful lot of mental suffering as well as producing in the afflicted an inability to grow as a thinker. Their work cannot mature. In a recent biography, when asked how he got to be so good at song-writing, Bob Dylan replied 'copying'.

I don't know anyone who is a really good writer or musician or visual artist or sportsman who thinks that you can take the discipline out of a subject by the short-cut of a method or process. But then we're back to the old problem again of the best not teaching, and what you see on the walls of architecture schools at the moment tells us more about the views of the teachers than what their students really think, I fear.

### In maths you get marks for 'working out', even if the result is bollocks

polymath who allowed his poetry and sculptures to influence each other and whose architecture, like Corb's work, is a collection of paradoxes resulting from mistakes and sudden insights. Aalto spoke about 'the courage of three o'clock in the morning', which enabled him to throw away all the bad work he'd made in the previous months when, just before the competition was due, clarity struck and he could abandon the scaffolding that helped him erect an idea.

I am deeply mistrustful of the mechanistic approach to design-thinking that the word 'process' implies for architecture. It implies mental slavery to bad ideas, dogmatism, obsessional behaviour, lack of dreaming, lack of doubt, lack of creativity, a failure of imagination. I wonder if the tendency to

Villa Fallet, La Chaux-de-Fond, Switzerland, by Le Corbusier (1905)





## Sam Jacob. Hopkins, DeVito and Jolie star in my imaginary remake of *The Fountainhead*

I recently introduced the 1949 movie *The Fountainhead*, based on Ayn Rand's novel and directed by King Vidor, which was being screened at Canary Wharf as part of the London Festival of Architecture.

*The Fountainhead* is the best movie about architecture, but that's not saying much. Unlike lawyers and doctors, architects don't get much screen time. We've never had an architectural version of Dr Kildare, Columbo, or a Quincy RIBA. Architects seem to be almost invisible in movie-land. *The Fountainhead* shows that this is not because architecture is inherently un-transferable to fiction – and proves it can be used to dramatise universal concerns.

It's very much of its time – 1940s America – where idealistic pre-war European Modernism intersected with corporate, American Modernism. It's a dramatic moment where Modernism became denuded of its radical politics. Though 'radicalness' is part of the plot mechanism of *The Fountainhead*, it's a commodified form of radicalness concerned with aesthetics and personal expression rather than utopian politics.

The movie is populated by a series of characters who seem as though they could be with us today – the vacuously successful businessman, the wild idealist, the washed-up hero of a previous generation, the scheming power-

crazed journalist, the client who's got a few ideas about how to improve the design. It's like a cross section of any London Festival of Architecture event.

The dramas between these personalities are played out at the hubristic scale of architecture. *The Fountainhead* uses architecture to discuss ideas of integrity, beauty, love, and truth. It's a Hollywood spin on Modernism's morality, where construction sites become landscapes where individual integrity is played out.

The film is full of brilliant quotes and some superb career advice too: that telling your clients they are wrong is the best way to get ahead. That blowing up your projects when they go wrong is the best thing to do. But perhaps, most of all, that all architecture is tragedy.

At the heart of the narrative is the conflict between heroic singular genius and collective taste. And strangely, though the movie offers these as opposing polarities, it is this territory that was explored by the next generation of American architects and urbanists: from Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown to Peter Eisenman. These are architects who struggle against both the heroic Modern position and the commercial, and find in compromise a new ground for making architecture.

The last 10 years have seen an unprecedented global building boom and we really need a sequel to *The Fountainhead* to dramatise 21st-century positions. Perhaps we could transpose contemporary architectural characters into the film. Or imagine a franchise of *The Fountainhead* played out over the cities, with Anthony Hopkins playing Richard Rodgers, Danny DeVito as Danny Libeskind, Angelina Jolie as Zaha Hadid, or even budding architect Brad Pitt as himself.

Ray Collins (left) and Gary Cooper in *The Fountainhead*





## CALL TO ARMS

I generally agree with Justin McGuirk's breakdown of the ManTowNHuman Manifesto (The Critics, AJ 26.06.08, *pictured below*). It rails aggressively against almost everything we currently do, damning our profession's pretensions as much as well-intended government regulations.

ManTowNHuman has no visual propositions and, in my view, some potentially contradictory ambitions. It provokes and promotes change, and aims to galvanize what I suspect most of our profession already knows. Isn't that what manifestos do best? But does ManTowNHuman achieve it?

I'll use sustainability as an example. ManTowNHuman suggests that some regulations are not just stifling design, but are also counter-productive. Those who practise will know that box-ticking and mechanical appendages to the building can meet the 'Excellent' standards that even building-control officers know would increase the carbon footprint if implemented. The result is proposed inner-city buildings with wind turbines that don't hold their own carbon equation. The turbines cannot be used to optimum level in case their vibrating frequency and noise disturbs inhabited spaces.

It is unfair to summarise ManTowNHuman as anti-sustainability – it just points out the uncritical, tired and some-

times cynical manner in which sustainability is adopted. The manifesto is the start of one debate among many others, and it encourages problem solving in, dare I say it, a poetic way. Something we all started doing this for.

*Amin Taba, Amin Taba Architects, London EC1*

## NO CLEAN SHEETS

In 1969, when I was studying architecture, I became aware that although our lecturers taught us to think in four, five or even six dimensions (time/movement/energy) we were still thinking in far too few. Like Escher's graphics, it is possible to draw a scheme up

in too few dimensions, but it certainly won't work in reality.

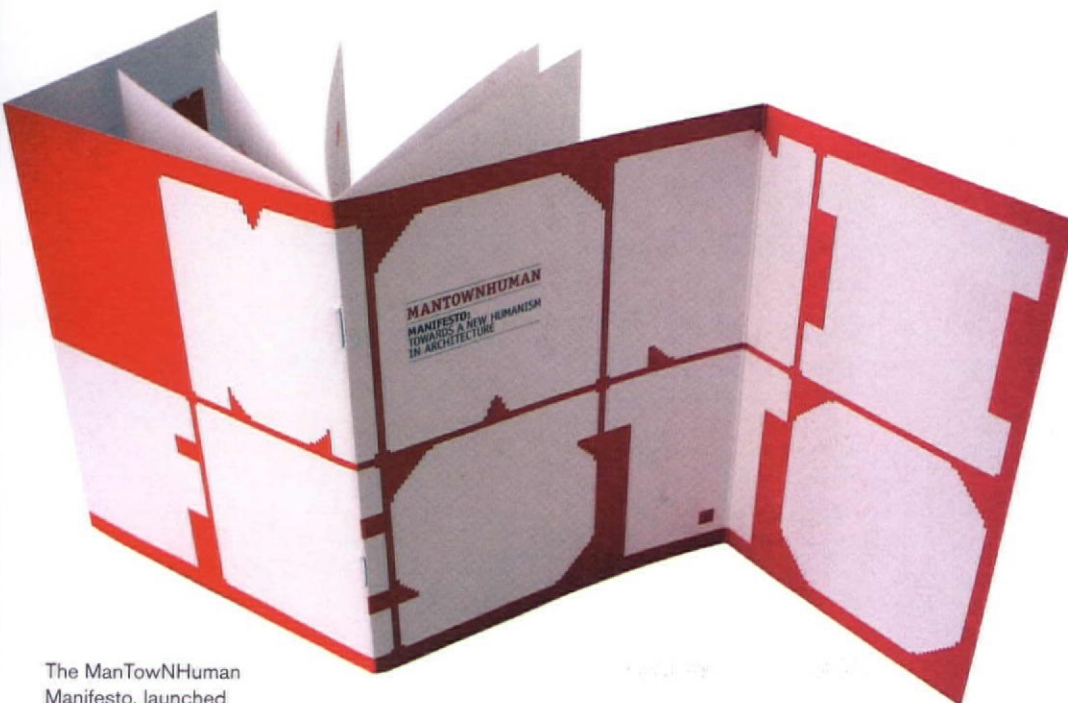
To have some idea of how unholistic such designs are, I would ask schools of architecture to include a stack of further reading from other disciplines that inform the design of our environment. I intentionally do not limit myself to the built environment, as the effects don't stop there (e.g. *Jigsaw Cities* by Anne Power of the Sustainable Development Commission). We are never ever in a 'clean sheet' scenario even if we are on the greenbelt.

As we have taken it upon ourselves to redesign the world, and as architects are taught almost as well as anyone to design something that actually works, I think all schools of architecture need to broaden their remit and learning base.

We, Better Environmental Vision for Edge Lane (BEVEL), are fighting to save our homes in Liverpool from demolition. We have put together an alternative scheme to that of English Partnerships and developer Liverpool Land Development Company, as we know our patch intimately. In order to do something worthy when designing for people, it is an obligation for the exercise to be much more than a personal ego trip, or we risk designing a world that doesn't actually work.

Then we need to look towards gradually dismantling the various faulty and mostly intangible structures that we have developed over the centuries, and learn how far re-invention is a good idea. And then we might stand a chance of making it through the next couple of centuries, and even beyond.

*Elizabeth S Pascoe, Liverpool*



The ManTowNHuman Manifesto, launched on 3 July



‘There does not seem to be a single building in Castleford town centre which would justify a mention,’ said Nikolaus Pevsner in 1959. Nearly 50 years later that description still rings horribly true.

*By Richard Waite*

Now the deprived West Yorkshire former mining town, south east of Leeds, is to be the ‘star’ in its own Channel 4 programme. *The Castleford Project* – to be screened over four weeks from mid-August – is a show about the town’s regeneration to be hosted by *Grand Designs* frontman Kevin McCloud.

Stepping off the train it is not immediately clear what improvements the TV cameras have brought. It is not even clear where the centre of town is. Visitors are greeted by an unlinked hotchpotch of scruffy pubs with fake leaded-windows, tired ‘60s blocks such as the low-rise British Legion building, and the back of a bingo hall. An uninviting, dark passage

leads through to the shopping ‘strip’ (the town is nicknamed Cas Vegas by the locals – its equally deprived neighbour Pontefract is dubbed Ponte Carlo).

Never glamorous, the town has had it particularly hard over the last 20 years. The pits closed in the mid-’80s and early ’90s. The town’s factories, which once made napalm for the US and at one time produced more glass bottles than anywhere in the country, also shut their doors.

As a result male unemployment among the 40,000-strong population rose to 20 per cent and even today parts of the town rank in the bottom five per cent of the most >>





Buildings in the centre of Castleford, a town being transformed in Channel 4's regeneration programme *The Castleford Project*







CASTLEFORD'S  
REGENERATION PROJECTS  
(SEE PAGES 25-29)

1. Sagar Street Gallery
2. Cutsyke Playpark
3. New Fryston
4. Henry Moore Square
5. Ferry Fryston Green
6. Wilson Street
7. Market restoration,  
Carlton Street
8. Tickle Cock Underpass
9. Castleford Bridge
10. Riverside masterplan
11. Breeze apartments  
(proposal)
12. Transport interchange
13. The Forum

impoverished areas in the UK, according to the government's indices of deprivation.

'I love Cas as much as anyone but I still think it's a dump', says local Alison Drake, one of a network of community champions who became integral to the making of the Channel 4 programme. 'We don't ever talk about the good old days – we know really they weren't the good old days – people suffered too much for them to be good.'

But, despite the hardships, Castleford clung onto its strong sense of community and managed to retain its friendliness. 'There is a tradition here of watching each other's backs. Not just underground in the pit, but

elsewhere in the community', says Drake.

'And people just want better.' It was this spirit that persuaded Channel 4 to pick Castleford in 2003 after considering more than 100 towns for a show about urban regeneration.

David Barrie, the consultant project director and executive producer for *The Castleford Project*, says: 'We looked at different places in Britain that exemplified the issues confronting regeneration efforts and where we felt a light-touch approach could work.'

'Cas won because it had a very committed community wanting to make a future for the town, as well as a series of small-scale public-realm projects that were relatively do-able.'





## 1 SAGAR STREET

The new gallery and exhibition space in Sagar Street – a renovation of a abandoned shop – was the first of the 10 Castleford Project schemes to complete in 2004. Leeds-based Carey Jones oversaw the revamp.

## 2 CUTSYKE PLAYPARK

Leeds- and Sheffield-based Allen Tod Architecture teamed up with Leeds' Estell Warren Landscape Architecture to design this adventure playforest on the site of a former allotment in Cutsyke. The scheme opened in June 2005.



## 3 NEW FRYSTON

Funded by English Partnerships, Martha Schwartz's £1 million 'village green' for New Fyston, a former mining village on the outskirts of Castleford, has received a mixed reaction since completing in 2005. Locals have nicknamed the central sculpture 'Martha's Finger'.

*'I love Castleford as much as anyone but I still think it's a dump'*

Castleford had already been included in Yorkshire Forward's Urban Renaissance programme under a Five Towns banner alongside Normanton, Pontefract, Knottingley and Featherstone in 2002. A Town Centre Partnership had been set up the year before to look at regeneration.

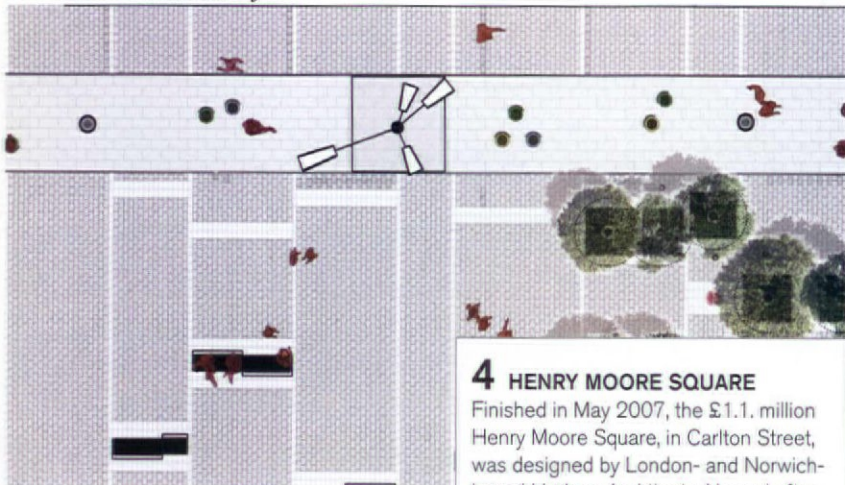
However, the programme-maker (Talkback) realised the only way it would be able to achieve anything (at least in a short, television-friendly timescale) would be through 'bottom-up' micro-regeneration. With an initial investment of only £100,000 available from the Channel 4 coffers, Barrie wanted to steer away from 'mega-

masterplanning' and instead deliver the first steps to kick-start wider regeneration.

He began by gathering a team of regeneration experts, including developers Chris Brown of Igloo and Peter Rogers of Stanhope, and started working with Wakefield Metropolitan District Council to identify projects. Other stakeholders such as the Coalfield Regeneration Trust, English Partnerships, Yorkshire Forward and the Arts Council were also brought on board.

Channel 4 also set up a process to involve the community in the choice of projects, their scale, the designers and, ultimately, the designs themselves. >>





#### 4 HENRY MOORE SQUARE

Finished in May 2007, the £1.1 million Henry Moore Square, in Carlton Street, was designed by London- and Norwich-based Hudson Architects. Named after the Castleford-born sculptor, the scheme features granite paving and tubular-steel and wood-weave benches.

#### 6 WILSON STREET

The Wilson Street project, designed by Allen Tod, includes new traffic-calming measures and the planting of mature trees to improve 'the street scene'. The first phase completed in 2006, with further improvements planned.



#### 5 FERRY FRYSTON

The Ferry Fyryston Green was finished in July 2005. Designed by landscape planner Parklife, the project improved play facilities.

#### 7 MARKET

Hudson Architects masterminded the relocation of the outdoor market from behind the Carlton Lanes shopping centre. The scheme was originally much more bold, featuring foldaway stalls, but the council chose a safer option, which opened in 2006, following teething problems with the early prototype.



Ten schemes dotted around the town emerged through this consultation. They ranged from the very small – a children's play park – through to large greens, town squares, underpasses and McDowell + Benedetti's bridge over the Aire – by far the most impressive of the projects (*see pages 30–33*).

A longlist of architects was chosen through an international competition, followed by a community-led selection process (organised by architect Roger Zogolovitch and regeneration consultant Lee Mallett). As a result local groups helped pick the likes of McDowell + Benedetti, DSDHA and Hudson Architects.

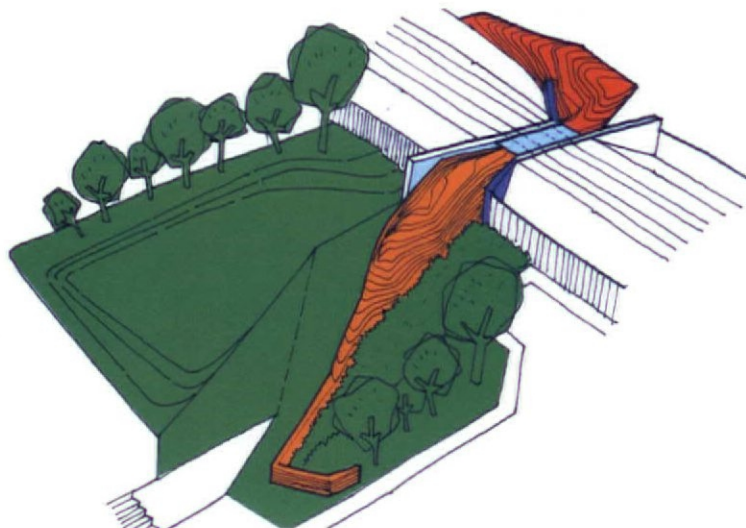




MARTIN PRESTLEY

## 8 TICKLE COCK UNDERPASS

Five years in the making, London-based DSDHA's Tickle Cock underpass was officially unveiled two weeks ago. The scheme marks one of the busiest entrances into the town and can witness a footfall of more than 10,000 people on a Saturday. Designed in collaboration with artist Martin Richman, the scheme has transformed a dark subway into a welcoming gateway, complete with red, flocked-rubber seating. Project architect Sam Potter said: 'We saw this 'portal' as one of the main priorities to get right for the town and something Castleford could be proud of. Although value-engineered, it is still faithful to our original designs.'



*'Castleford has a very committed community wanting to make a future for the town'*

The first schemes were completed in 2004 and the majority have been well-received, with the possible exception of Martha Schwartz's new public space at New Fryston with its single finger-like sculpture – taken as an abusive affront by some residents.

Yet despite the relatively modest scale of the individual projects (worth a combined total of £14.5 million) there have been numerous 'creative' battles and compromises. DSDHA struggled to get its full budget from the council for its proposed £350,000 revamp of the dingy, drippy Tickle Cock pedestrian underpass. The practice has managed to create an ultra-modern gateway and flocked rubber

seating-area from around half the funds it wanted for the busy portal.

Hudson Architects' plans for the relocation of the market, which involved prototype foldaway stalls, was curtailed and a scheme to revamp Sagar Street was ditched. Practice founder Anthony Hudson also admits to being 'slightly disappointed' by the detailing of his Henry Moore Square designs. Meanwhile Sarah Wigglesworth's waterside 'viewing platform' plans remain just that, and a riverside boardwalk next to the McDowell + Benedetti bridge has yet to secure funding.

So what has Channel 4 succeeded in delivering? The programme-makers claim >>



## 9 CASTLEFORD BRIDGE

The showpiece of Channel 4's Castleford Project is McDowell + Benedetti's snake-like bridge running along the weir (see pages 30-33). The £3.2 million pedestrian link over the River Aire opened last week.



TIMOTHY SOAR



## 10 WATERFRONT MASTERPLAN

As well as designing the bridge, McDowell + Benedetti also devised a masterplan to open up the waterfront and link it through to the town (to the south) and to Duck Island (to the north). A cantilevered boardwalk along the water's edge is still being considered.

## 11 THE BREEZE

Architecture2B's proposed 141-flat scheme next to the town's existing road bridge over the Aire has been in for planning since the beginning of the year and is going in front of a planning committee tomorrow (11 July).



*'Regeneration started before Channel 4 came in and will continue after they leave'*

their efforts have helped 'leverage' around £250 million of investment. But according to Wakefield Council leader Peter Box, the project has actually touched on 'only about 10 per cent' of what needs doing.

'If you put a television camera in front of a funding agency you are more likely to get a positive response', he says. 'We are not going to turn up our noses at something that cuts through bureaucracy. It has been a tremendous help. However the regeneration of this town started long before Channel 4 came in and will continue after they've left.'

Plans are already afoot for a much-needed combined transport interchange, designed by

Aedas, and Edinburgh House – the owner of the existing shopping centre – intends to extend retail space across the town centre.

Box admits that there were 'creative tensions' between the council and Channel 4 but thanks the programme-makers for opening the town's eyes to 'less conservative' design.

He says: 'People are talking about architecture on the street – not just about Castleford Tigers [rugby league team] losing by 20 points again.'

But how the council sees the town's regeneration being managed needs defining. Heavy community involvement may not work on larger, more contentious schemes.





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## 12 TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE

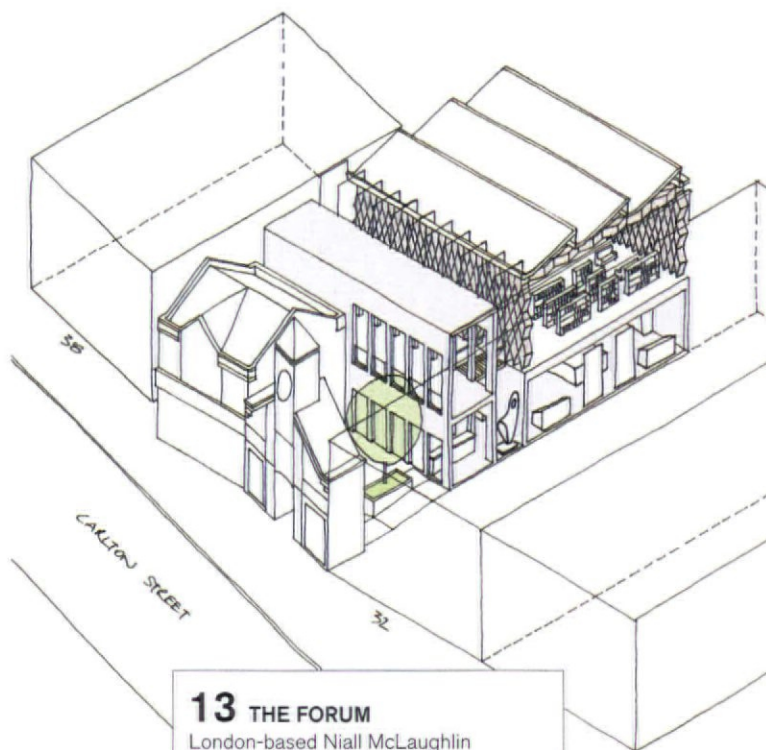
Work is expected to start soon on Aedas' rail and bus interchange. The £14.3 million development, which will sit next to the existing station, won planning permission in February 2007.



Nick Brown, from Architecture2B, which faced a 'hostile' reception when outlining plans for a residential scheme alongside the river, said: 'Despite all the work done as part of Yorkshire Forward's Five Towns Initiative, and the interest generated by Channel 4, there is a startling lack of vision for how to resolve the issues and help Castleford move forward.'

'The town needs strong political leadership; an individual or small group that have the mandate to deliver change, and the ability to bring the community together.'

Channel 4 has successfully put Castleford in the public spotlight. Somebody needs to make sure it isn't turned off. ■



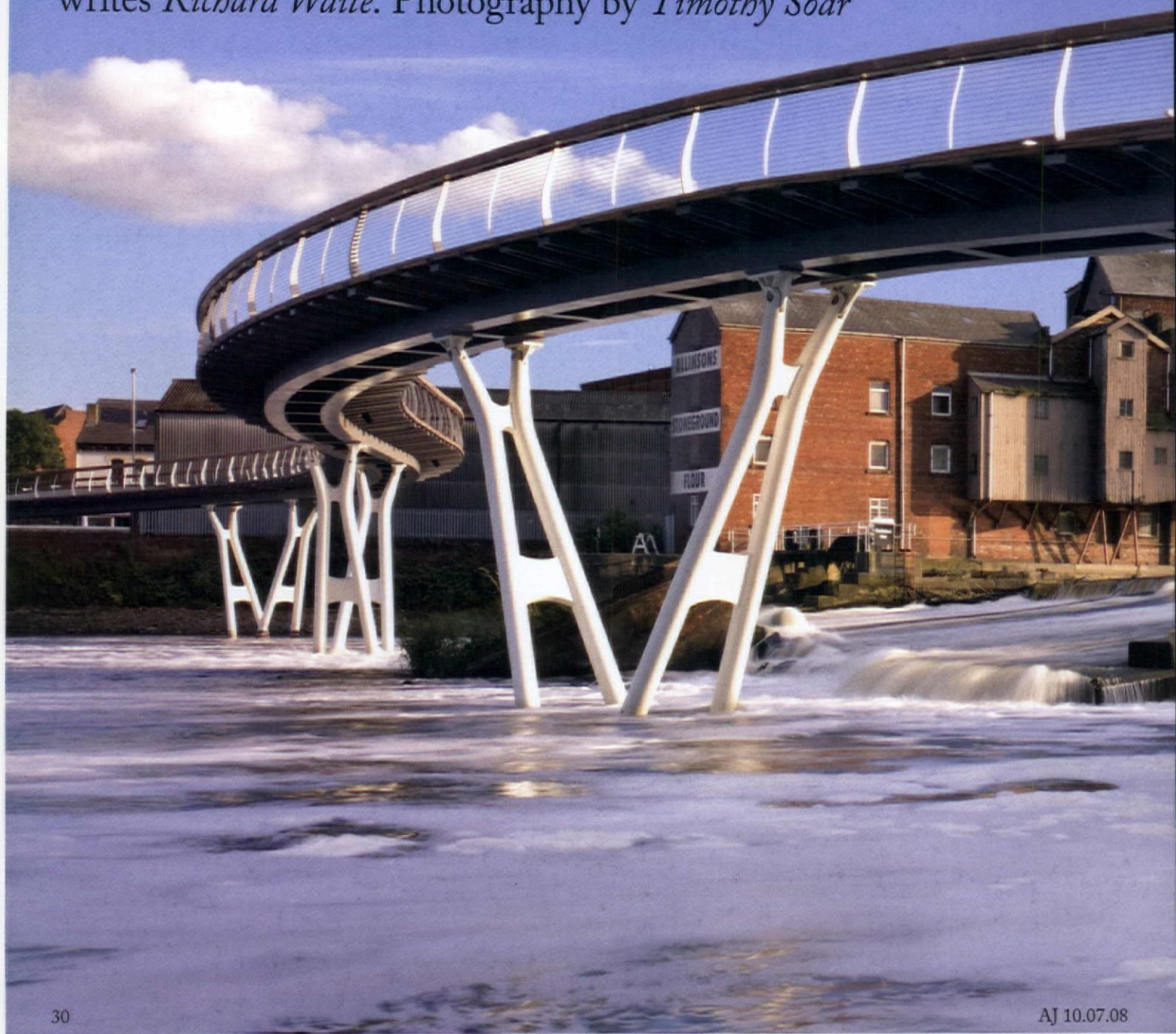
## 13 THE FORUM

London-based Niall McLaughlin Architects' competition-winning library and museum proposals have gone through various designs over the last three years. The scheme will be built behind the entrance to the old market hall and next-door library.

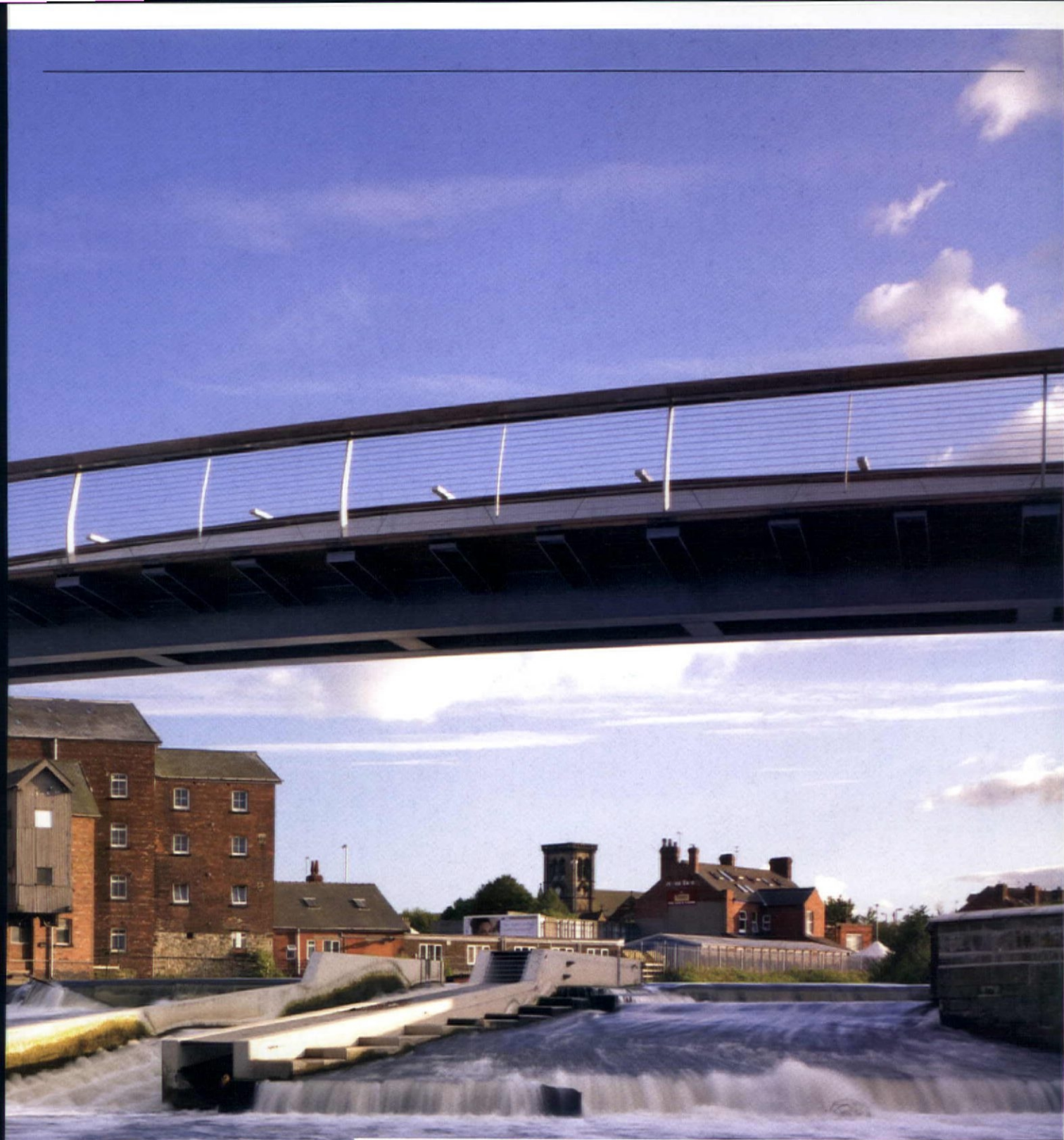


# REGENERATION IN FULL FLOW

McDowell + Benedetti's Castleford Bridge is the most impressive result of the town's TV-led transformation, writes *Richard Waite*. Photography by *Timothy Soar*







An S-shaped bridge is not the quickest way to cross a river. But that is not the point of McDowell + Benedetti's gently curving footbridge over the River Aire.

Not only has the practice created a new public space where the chatty locals can enjoy Castleford's only 'chocolate-box' view, it has also designed a slim-line landmark.

Crossing the noisy weir over the meandering £3.2 million bridge, with its smooth

Brazilian teak (sustainable) handrails has the feel of some Victorian promenade combined with a nature-taming set play. The experience of hanging over broiling waters as you peer through the slats beneath your feet is spoiled only by some shopping trolleys on the neighbouring banks.

Yet for more than a century Castleford shunned the river – once a cauldron of chemical plant and industrial pollutants >>





that often formed into mountains of toxic foam which blew in car-size chunks across the town. Now, thanks to the Environment Agency, the river is virtually pollution free and there is even a new fish pass running up the weir under the northern end of the bridge.

'The town doesn't have many assets, but it does have this weir,' says Renato Benedetti, the project architect and practice co-founder. 'The bridge turns people's attention back on to the river and I can't overestimate the importance of that.'

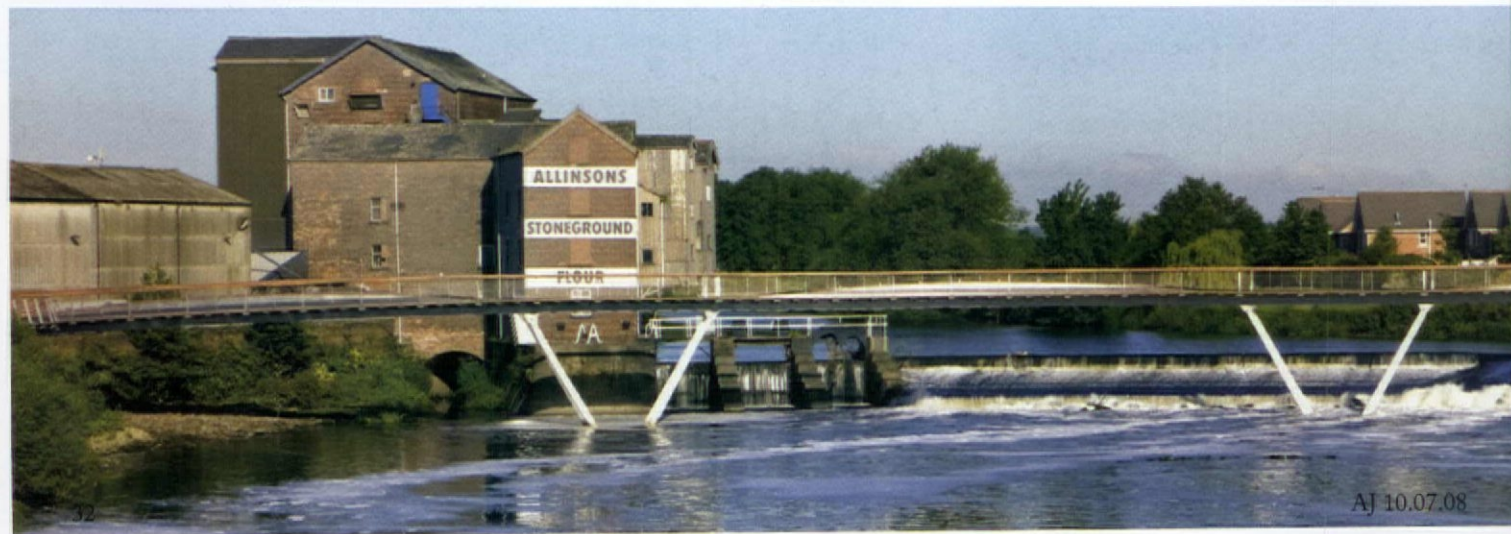
The structure links the town centre with the rows of houses on Duck Island to the north. It means pedestrians no longer have to brave the perilous elbow-to-wing-mirror 'adventure' while battling to cross the 200-year-old road bridge 100m downstream.

However it has taken the practice five years of hard work, one failed scheme and endless 'selling' of the project to get to last Friday's grand opening.

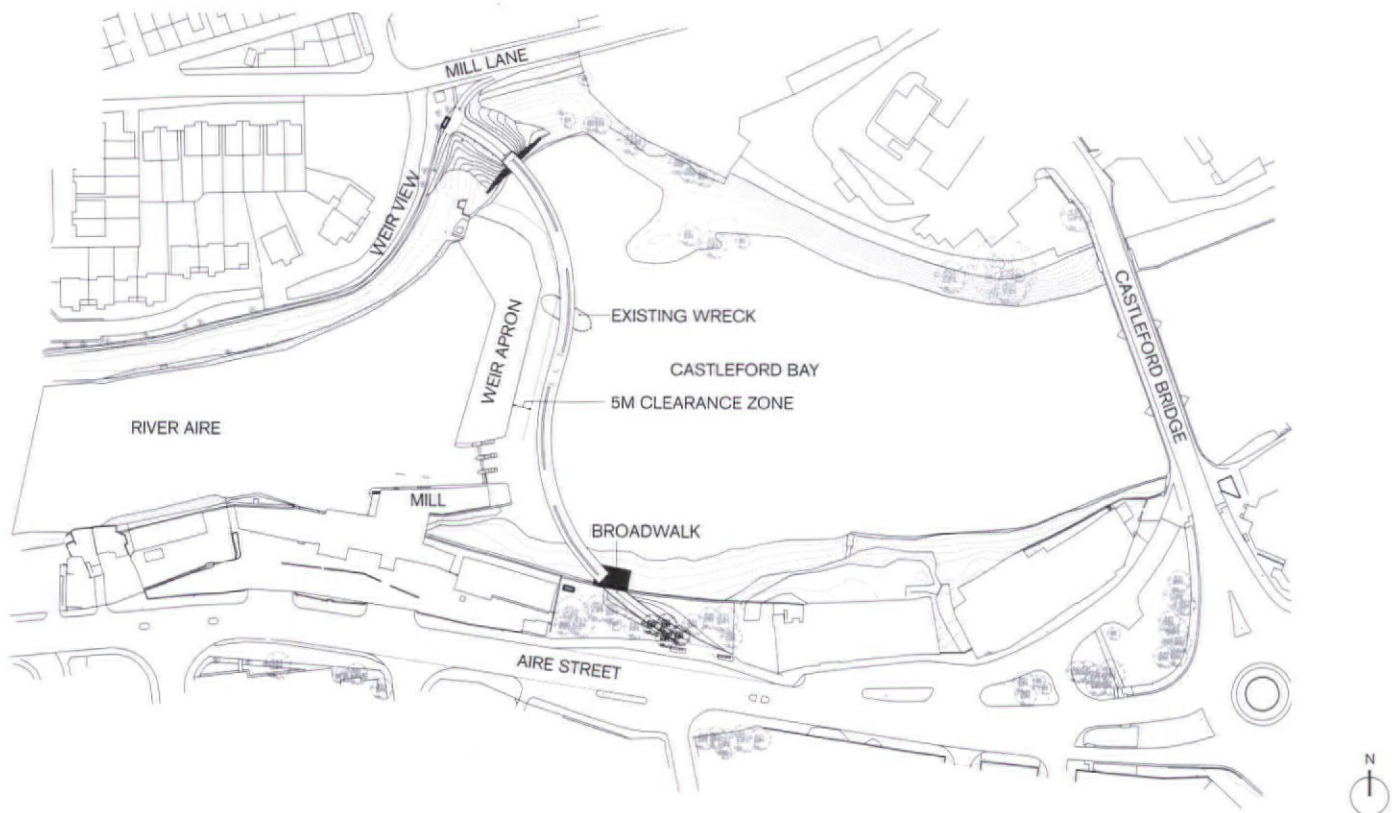
Having been picked by the residents as their preferred architect in 2003 as part of Channel 4's *The Castleford Project* (see pages 22-29), McDowell + Benedetti first proposed a 'floating' bridge set back, upstream from the weir. But British Waterways killed off the scheme, claiming the proposals did not allow maintenance boats to reach the weir edge. So in 2005 Benedetti started again.

The new designs borrow from a failed competition entry for the Millennium bridge over the Thames, drawn up in 1996. To keep the bridge as low and light as possible, Benedetti stole the idea of using the supports between the legs of the bridge as benches.

The bridge, at 131m, is almost twice as long as the first scheme, and at 3.5m nearly twice as wide. This meant the budget –







initially £2 million – also ballooned, resulting in project backers Wakefield Council, Yorkshire Forward and English Partnerships having to stump up extra cash.

Designed to closely follow the bend of the weir, Benedetti says he wanted to build the bridge lower so that the experience of the frothing water below was heightened further – but he was constrained by the ‘one in a 100 year’ flood rules.

Viewed in profile, Benedetti has though succeeded in his aim of creating ‘something truly minimal... like a magic carpet ride’. The three sets of steel legs, piled 15m below the

water level and painted in white, disappear into the foaming landscape beneath.

On the bridge, every beam is curved and fixed in position by a clamping system which avoids any drilling. These ‘planks’ run along the length of bridge rather than across its width, allowing constant views through to the water as you walk along. Benedetti says this was ‘a fundamental’ of the design that he fought to hold on to.

Not everything about the bridge works though. The entrance to the span on the south side has been marred by the ill-thought-out placement of a bus shelter which blocks the

routine up Sagar Street, although the practice has plans for a new, open public space there.

On the same side, the bridge currently possesses a strange stunted outcrop which one day, Benedetti hopes, will ink up to a cantilevered, riverside ‘boardwalk’.

Benedetti himself is also disappointed at the lighting – changed by the contractor – which is no longer flush with the bottom of the hand rails.

Nevertheless, this is undoubtedly a fine, quietly elegant bridge. The quality of thought and delivery has set a high standard for the regeneration projects across the town. ■

**Competition date** November 2003

**Start on site date** January 2007

**Completion date** 4 July 2008

**Bridge surface area** 524m<sup>2</sup> (associated work on both banks 2,210m<sup>2</sup>)

**Form of contract** SFA/99 Sole Appointment

**Total cost** £3.2 million

**Client** City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council

**Architect** McDowell + Benedetti

**Structural engineer** Alan Baxter & Associates

**Civil/hydrological engineer** Arup Water

**Quantity surveyor** Philip Pank Partnership

**Main contractor** Costain





## WORKING DETAIL

### A footbridge with a hardwood deck

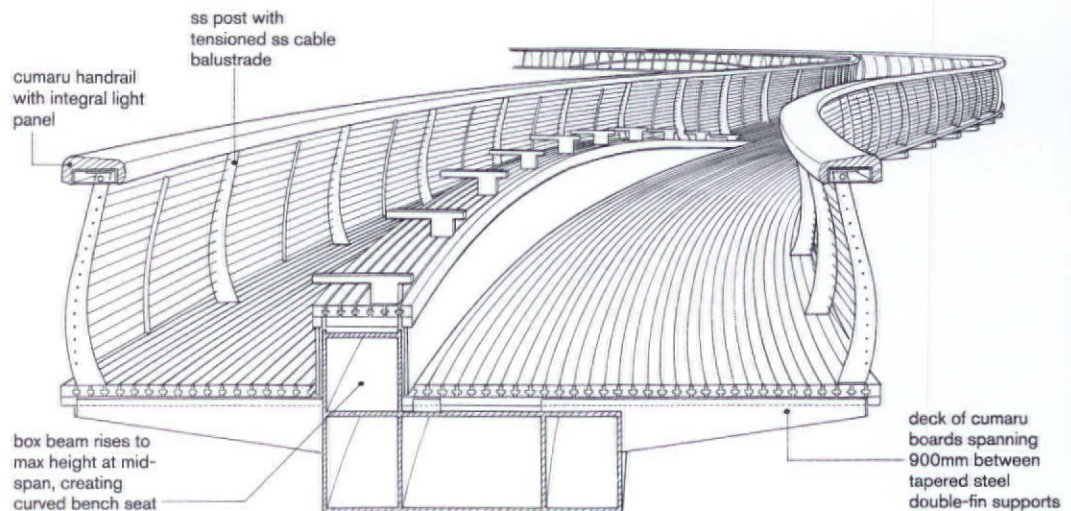
The new 131m footbridge forms a sinuous curve over Castleford Bay, supported on a series of paired and tapered CHS columns set 26m apart. The footbridge structure is a welded box beam, continuous below deck level. At each long span it is augmented by a contiguous 20m profiled upstand beam that rises above the deck, sloping in a gentle curve to reach maximum height at mid-span and falling in a similar way as the next bridge support approaches. The curved structures form a series of benches along the bridge.

The footbridge deck is made of cumaru, a hardwood of 2.5 times the density of oak. The curved 3m-long boards span 900mm between tapered steel fins that project from the box beam. The unique timber-fixing method was designed to create a strong, safe and easily maintained deck without the visual and physical intrusion of surface fixings.

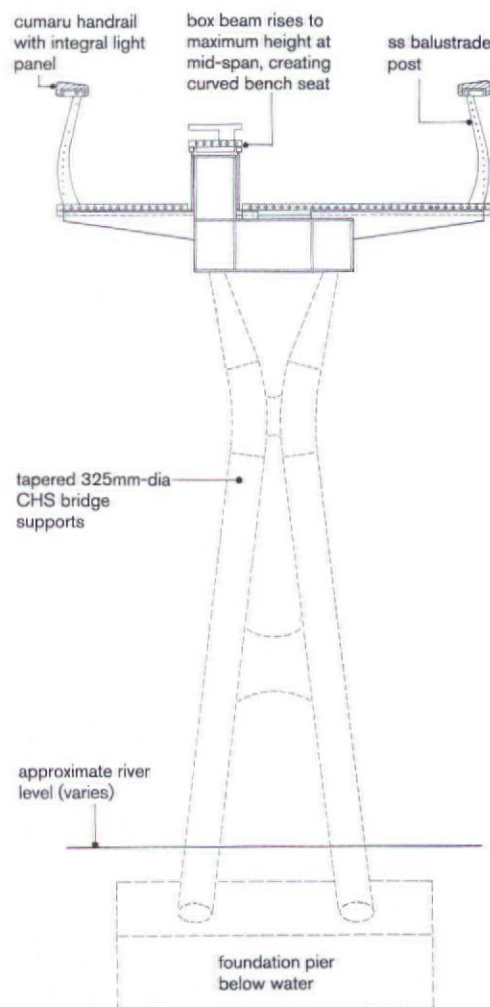
The 64 x 60mm cumaru boards are rebated on both sides to accommodate a series of key-profiled bolts which are fixed to bearers below. When turned 90 degrees the keys slot into the rebates. Each board has a notched edge for a fibreglass anti-slip strip. A total of about 2,600 boards were fixed by 16,000 bolts – if the boards were laid end-to-end they would extend 7km.

The balustrade comprises a series of tensioned 6mm stainless-steel cables running through curved stainless-steel posts. The laminated cumaru handrail houses an inverted 230 x 76mm PFC beam which creates a space for concealed lighting.

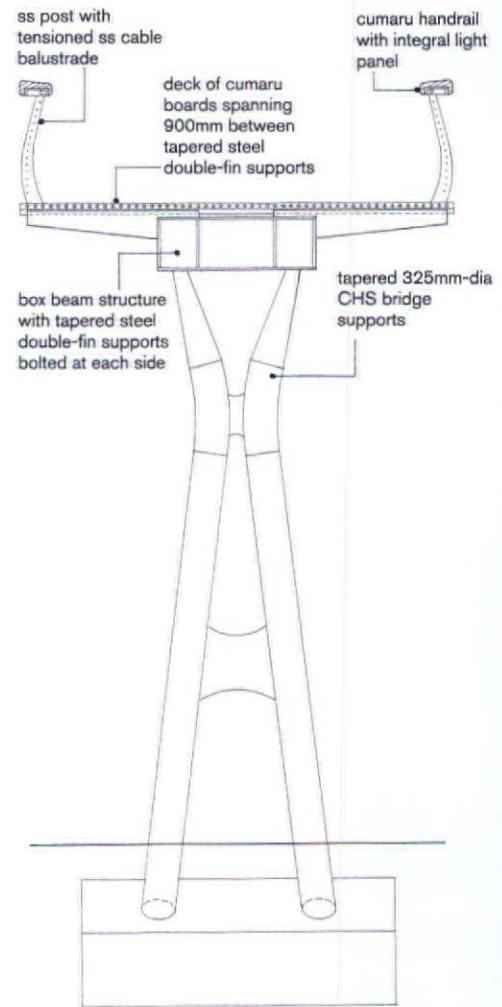
*Susan Dawson*



PERSPECTIVE SKETCH: CROSS SECTION THROUGH FOOTBRIDGE

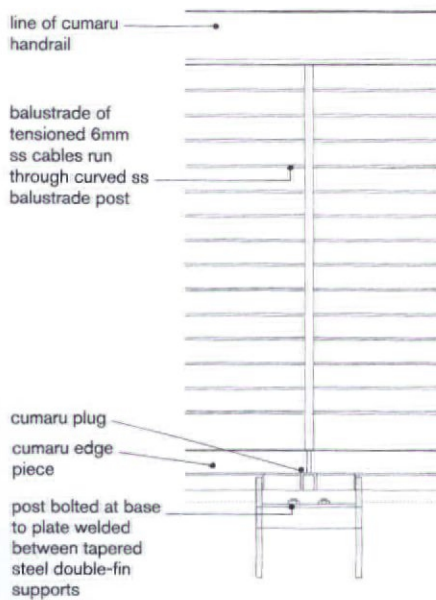


KEY CROSS SECTION AT MID-SPAN

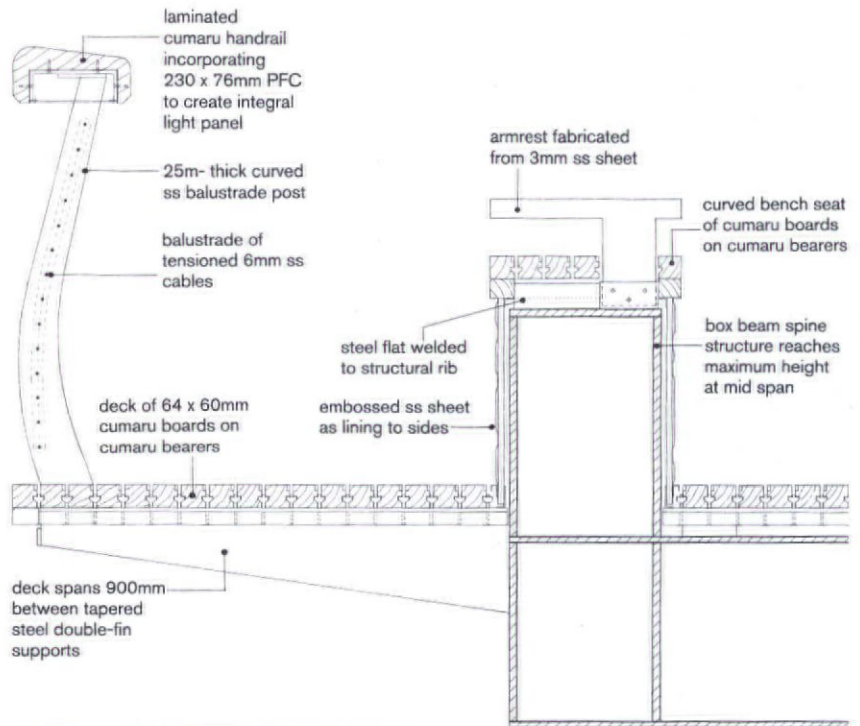


KEY CROSS SECTION AT SUPPORT

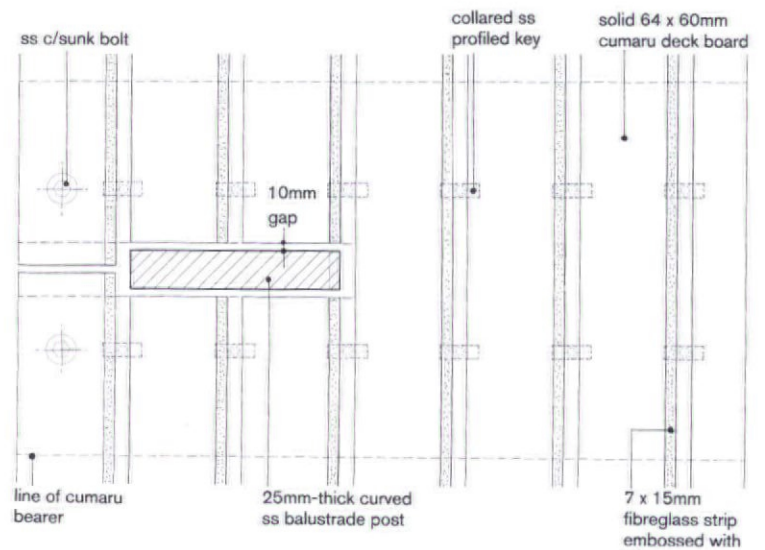
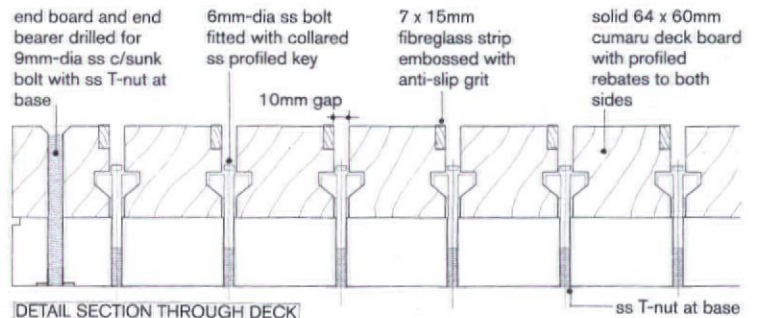
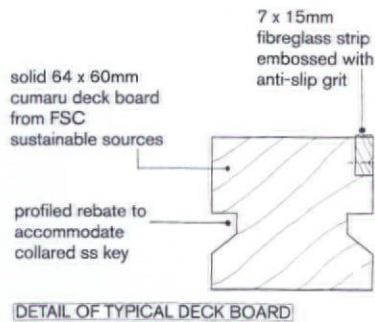




ELEVATION OF BALUSTRADE



SECTION THROUGH BALUSTRADE AND BENCH







british construction  
industry awards 2008

# 21st Anniversary



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In this section Temporary roofing systems // EPC training // Soakaways // Legal

The temporary roofing sheets at Hanbury Hall, under restoration by Rodney Melville and Partners

# ROOFING SYSTEM PROTECTS AND SERVES

Hanbury Hall, a William and Mary-style house near Worcester is, at first glance, a normal vestige of a more stately era. However, this building is rather special – not only was it the inspiration for 'Grey Gables' in the Radio 4 soap *The Archers*, but it also boasts murals by James Thornhill, who

Painted the dome of St Paul's Cathedral in London. So when owner the National Trust decided that the entire roof was in need of repair, weather protection and water tightness was of primary concern. Some 33 tonnes of lead had to be removed from the roof, a task made all the

more difficult by a botched repair job dating from 1953 – roof tiles had been laid on bituminous felt which, unshielded from the sun, had firmly adhered the lead to 18th-century substrate timber boards. Furthermore, the clay tiles on the roof's mansard slopes had been bedded in concrete,

necessitating careful removal. Architect Rodney Melville and Partners specified the Hakitec 750 temporary roofing system to provide a sheltered, day-lit working environment, enclosing the roof within a robust PVC-coated polyester membrane.

The system comprises temporary roofing sheets that can be 'rolled out' mechanically to minimise risk of site injury, while the component system allows for most shapes and pitches of roof, and 3m wide bays can be positioned accurately to accommodate access requirements.

The National Trust has been able to profit from the temporary roofing system by turning the scaffolding into a viewing platform, so that visitors can observe live restoration work. The works have also provided an opportunity to update the building's environmental credentials, incorporating solar panels, water collection and modern insulation materials. *Shumi Bose*

## ARCHITECTS OFFERED ONLINE EPC TRAINING

The RIBA and the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT) have created a members service which will enable architects to train to issue Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) for new-build residential projects.

"This service offers a way for architects to take ownership of the EPC process, rather than paying others to do it for them," says Richard Atkins, chair of the Scottish Ecological Design Association (SEDA), which

helped develop a similar service for the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland.

EPCs will be required for all new-build residential schemes in England and Wales as of October 2008, and they are already mandatory in Scotland.

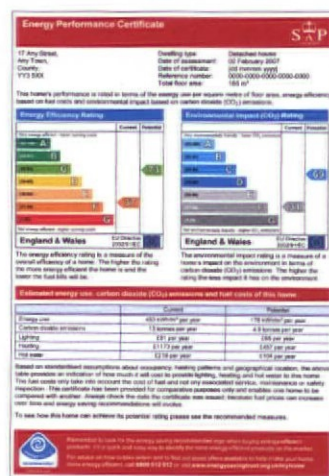
EPC training consists of four online modules equal to eight to 10 hours of CPD. Modules cover 'soft skills', theory and calculations. Mastering the EPC process means architects will be able to use the calculations to test

designs at early stages rather than check them at the end.

Atkins says architects are ideally placed to issue EPCs. "There is a danger that if architects don't grasp this opportunity, it will be like project managers in the '80s and '90s where surveyors jumped in and architects lost centre stage," he adds. *Hattie Hartman*

You can register for the scheme at [www.architectural-epc.co.uk](http://www.architectural-epc.co.uk) or [www.rias-regis.co.uk](http://www.rias-regis.co.uk)

## Technical & Practice



EPCs will soon be mandatory for all new-build residential projects



# SOAKAWAYS

In this latest NBS shortcut, *Austin Williams* looks at soakaways – and finds holes in the ground to be more complex than they seem

Soakaways are glorified holes in the ground into which stormwater is discharged and from which it is gradually allowed to percolate into the surrounding soil. It is essential that a soakaway be sized accurately to make sure that it doesn't overflow and to ensure that all the water is dissipated effectively into the surrounding area.

## THE LEGISLATION

Building Regulations Approved Document H: 'Drainage and Waste Disposal' states that methods of drainage 'other than connection to a public surface water sewer are encouraged where they are technically feasible'. The equivalent Scottish Technical Handbook 'Domestic 3 Environment' says pretty much the same sort of thing, with Section 3.6 adding that soakaways in its jurisdiction should be located 'at least 5m from a building and from a boundary' to ensure that there is no adverse effect on the foundations of the property served by the soakaway or to any neighbouring land. This rule is also contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 14 annex 1 and National House-Building Council (NHBC) guidance.

Ideally, soakaways should be situated on land that slopes away from the building and also away from other soakaways in the vicinity, so that there is no

percolation from one to another. Northern Ireland's Technical Booklet N 'Drainage' was written way back in 1990 and does not contain any details for soakaway construction other than Section N3, which requires that rainwater drains be tested for watertightness, and have adequate falls, flow rates and diameters. Wherever possible, it is advisable to design to the good-practice guidance contained within BRE Digest

if necessary) before discharging into the watercourse. However, where this type of flow intervention is not practicable, and where a sewer connection is inappropriate, soakaways (and other infiltration mechanisms such as filter drains, swales, etc.) provide a possible solution, although a careful environmental impact assessment must be carried out to avoid overwhelming low-lying/ flood plain risk areas.

## Your friendly Building Control officer needs to confirm that the water table is suitably low for a soakaway

365 (revised March 2007).

Soakaway design software is also available from the BRE.

## WHEN ARE SOAKAWAYS APPROPRIATE?

When planning surface-water-drainage layouts, it is important to realise that discharge to a main combined drain is becoming less acceptable and even discharging to a watercourse will require a consent from the Environment Agency. Such approvals may contain onerous provisos for limits on the rate of flow to ensure that the watercourse is not overwhelmed during heavy rainfall. This will necessitate a flow attenuation device, such as a detention basin, in which runoff can be stored temporarily (and which can also facilitate the biological treatment of pollutants

Of course, it is not always possible to build soakaways. For example, they should not be built in ground where the water table reaches the bottom of the device at any time of the year; or where the presence of contamination within the runoff could result in pollution of naturally occurring groundwater.

To assess whether a soakaway is viable, a site assessment needs to be carried out and a long-winded (but relatively simple) calculation needs to be completed. To this end, a trial hole needs to be dug to test the actual infiltration rate into the soil (see diagram on page 42). The hole should replicate the proportions of the proposed soakaway (although the NHBC is happy to have narrow boreholes provided that the rate of flow is averaged

out over various depths and times). The time taken for water to seep into the surrounding ground needs to be taken for several, rapid succession, trial runs. Observations – preferably at different times of the day and year – and negotiations with your friendly Building Control officer are needed to confirm that the water table is suitably low.

These tests should be carried out to determine the capacity of the soil (see Approved Document H2 (AD H2), paragraphs 1.34–1.38). Where the test is carried out in accordance with AD H2, the soil infiltration rate ( $f$ ) in litres is related to the percolation value ( $V_p$ ) in seconds/mm) derived from the test by the equation  $f=10^{-3}/2V_p$ . The storage volume of a soakaway should be calculated so that, over the duration of a heavy storm, it is sufficient to contain the difference between the inflow volume and the outflow volume. The inflow volume is calculated from the rainfall depth and the area drained. The outflow volume ( $O$ ) is calculated from the equation:  $O = as50 \times f \times D$ , where  $as50$  is the area in  $m^2$  of the side of the storage volume when filled to 50 per cent of its effective depth, and  $D$  is the duration of the storm in minutes.

For small soakaways serving a catchment area of  $25 m^2$  or less, a design rainfall of 10mm over >>



## TOTAL RAINFALL IN 10-YEAR DESIGN STORM

| DURATION (mins) | KEY                 | England/Wales | Scotland/N.Ireland |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 30              | [Solid Black]       | 20 mm         | 20 mm              |
| 60              |                     |               |                    |
| 120             |                     |               |                    |
| 30              | [Diagonal Hatching] | 20.4          | 20                 |
| 60              |                     | 20            |                    |
| 120             |                     | 29.5          |                    |
| 30              | [Dotted]            | 20.3          | 19.7               |
| 60              |                     | 20            | 20                 |
| 120             |                     | 30            | 28.5               |
| 30              | [Solid Blue]        | 19.6          | 19                 |
| 60              |                     | 20            | 20                 |
| 120             |                     | 30.25         | 28.8               |
| 30              | [Cross Hatching]    | 19.1          | 18.5               |
| 60              |                     | 20            | 20                 |
| 120             |                     | 31            | 29.5               |
| 30              | [Diagonal Hatching] | 18.7          | 18.1               |
| 60              |                     | 20            | 20                 |
| 120             |                     | 32            | 30.5               |
| 30              | [Diagonal Hatching] | 17.9          | 17.4               |
| 60              |                     | 20            | 20                 |
| 120             |                     | 33.1          | 31.62              |
| 30              | [Solid White]       | 17.1          | 16.6               |
| 60              |                     | 20            | 20                 |
| 120             |                     | 34.8          | 33.5               |

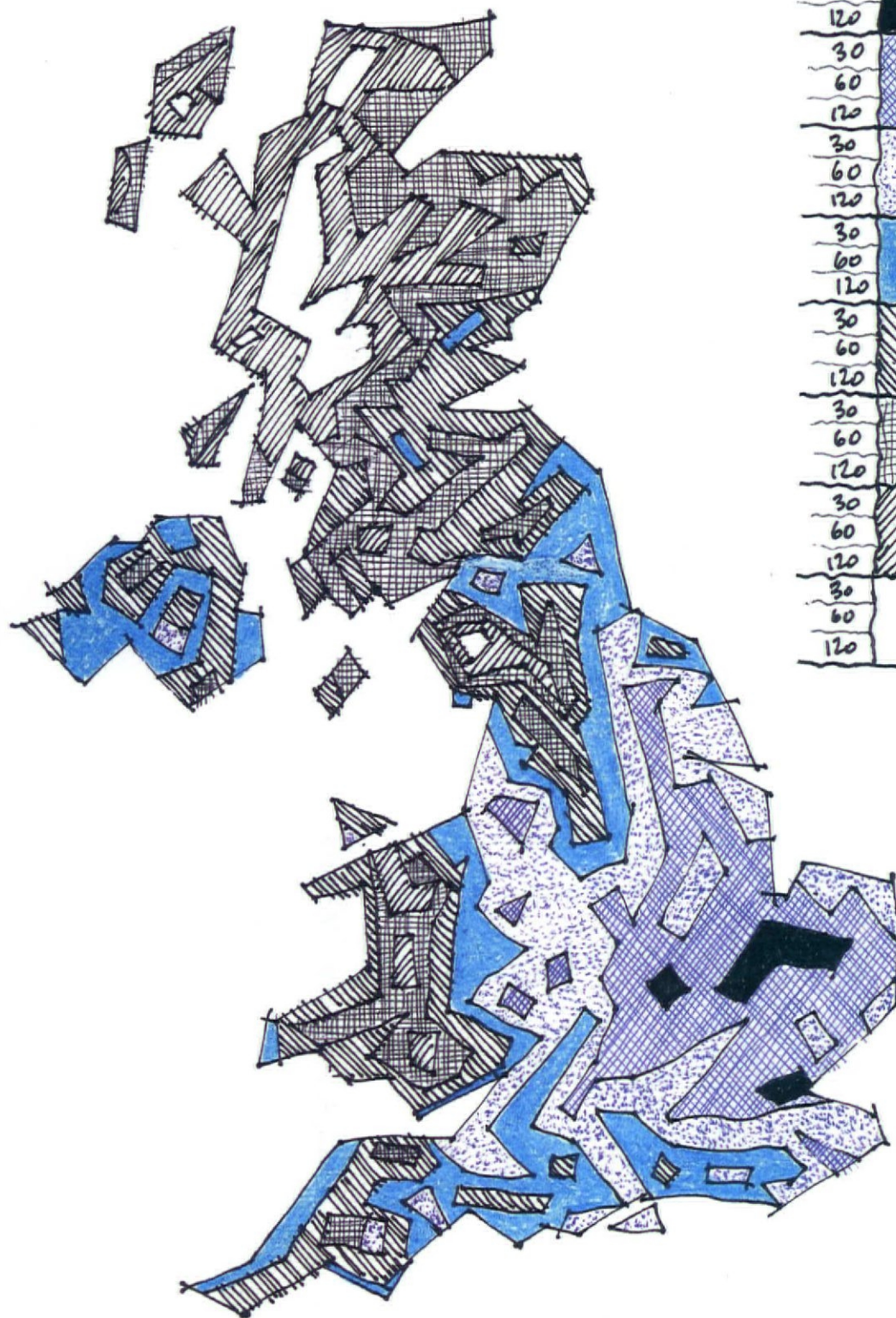


Illustration showing total estimated rainfall for the most severe decadal storm in different areas of the UK

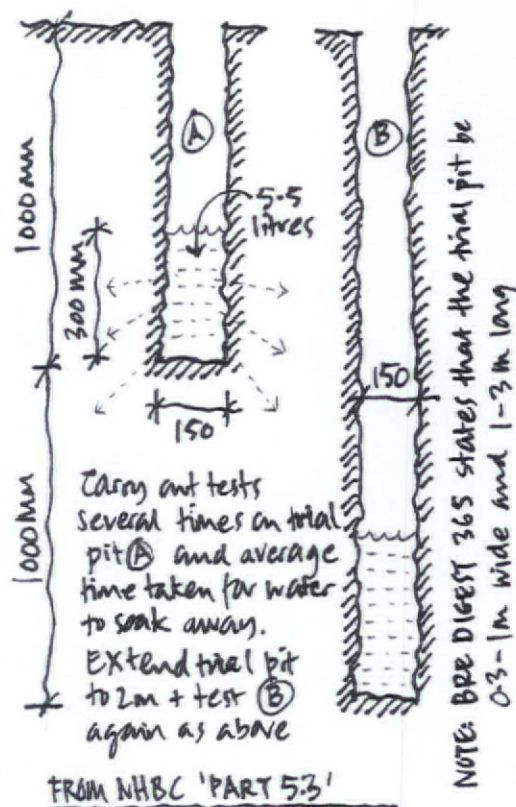


|                                      |     | AVERAGE HOURS TO SOAK AWAY (OBSERVED DATA) |      |      |      |      |     |      |      |      |
|--------------------------------------|-----|--|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|
|                                      |     | 3.3  | 6.6  | 10   | 13.3 | 16.6 | 20  | 23.3 | 26.6 | 30   |
| AREA (m <sup>2</sup> ) TO BE DRAINED | 100 | 1.4  | 1.8  | 2.1  | 2.3  | 2.5  | 2.7 | 2.8  | 3    | 3.1  |
|                                      | 150 | 1.6  | 2    | 2.4  | 2.7  | 2.85 | 3.1 | 3.25 | 3.4  | 3.55 |
|                                      | 200 | 1.7  | 2.25 | 2.65 | 2.9  | 3.2  | 3.4 |      |      |      |
|                                      | 250 | 1.85                                       | 2.5  | 2.85 | 3.2  |      |     |      |      |      |
|                                      | 300 | 2  | 2.7  | 3.1  | 3.4  |      |     |      |      |      |
|                                      | 350 | 2  | 2.8  | 3.25 |      |      |     |      |      |      |

DEPTH AND DIAMETER OF SOAKAWAY SHOWN  
NOTE: DEPTH IS DEPTH BELOW INVERT OF THE DRAIN INLET IN METRES

Above Diagram showing depth of soakaway needed for different drainage conditions

Right Illustration demonstrating how to trial soakaways



five minutes may be assumed to be the worst-case scenario.

### WHAT SORT OF SOAKAWAY IS MOST APPROPRIATE?

Soakaways for small catchment areas of less than 100m<sup>2</sup> are usually 3-4 m deep pits filled with granular material with a particle size of 10-150mm, or lined with dry-jointed masonry. NHBC data suggests that depending on the rate of water infiltration into the ground,

### Soakaways need to be designed to cope with severe weather events

smaller pits may be possible (see diagram above right). A geotextile covering should be laid over the top to ensure that no soil is washed down into the soakaway.

Those serving larger areas should be designed in accordance with BS EN 752-4 or the latest BRE Digest 365. Generally, these will be lined pits, trenches or perforated precast-concrete ring

units (to a similar depth as the smaller versions depending on soil characteristics). Loadbearing plastics honeycomb units are also produced to serve the same function. Very deep soakaways may use an access shaft to connect the lower perforated chamber to ground level.

Whichever design is chosen, the soakaway should accommodate an above-ground silt trap and be designed for a return period of once in 10 years – that is they need to be designed to suit the most severe decadal weather event, but also take into account storms of differing durations to determine the one which gives the largest storage volume.

For domestic situations, a pre-inspection by the local authority may not be necessary. However, before backfilling, a Building Control inspector together with a representative of the sewerage undertakers and insurer/warranty body should inspect to ensure that the system is functioning correctly. Special care should be taken to ensure that inlet (and

outlet pipes or perforations, depending on soakaway design) are free from obstruction and that there is sufficient protection against vehicular access over the top of the pit. A concrete cover may be needed if the chamber is to be concealed beneath the topsoil. These may be either precast concrete components or formed in situ concrete.

In conclusion, the various regional assemblies, in the Highways Agency, Transport Scotland, Welsh Assembly Government, The Department for Regional Development Northern Ireland manual Design Manual For Roads And Bridges: Design of Soakaways, point out that soakaways 'should be evaluated both with respect to the potential for providing new habitats for protected species (such as water voles and great crested newts) and with respect to the potential for encouraging invasive species'. Make of that what you will. ■

Austin Williams is the author of NBS Shortcuts

### KEY REFERENCES

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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)

Or contact:

RIBA Education Department

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E [john-paul.nunes@inst.riba.org](mailto:john-paul.nunes@inst.riba.org)



# BACK TO BASICS

## How to balance risks and choose the right construction contract

*Our monthly column by barristers Kim Franklin and Sue Lindsey examines the broad legal issues surrounding architecture. This instalment looks at the balance of risk between employer and contractor in common construction contracts.*

### ENGLISH LAW'S LAISSEZ-FAIRE APPROACH

English law has historically been very keen on parties contracting on whatever terms they want, and upholding whatever agreements they enter into. If they want to agree a peppercorn rent, that will be enforceable. Inequality of bargaining power is no cause for complaint (other than for consumers, thanks to relatively recent legislation). A small contractor contracting with a multinational employer will probably be obliged to do so on rather different terms from its larger contractor colleagues.

What contracting parties are actually doing is agreeing on how risks are to be allocated between

them. The same is true in every contract. I pay a window cleaner to clean my windows. The payment includes an amount to reflect the risk he takes in climbing up a ladder with a bucket, which I happily pay someone else to do. The price and payment terms are dictated by the commercial balance between us. If there are lots of window cleaners where I live; the price goes down. If I failed to pay him for several months last year; he insists on cash before he sets foot on that ladder.

The concepts of allocation of risk and commercial balance are very useful tools for analysing building contracts and deciding which type to recommend. Some employers want control over the end result and time certainty for a reasonable fixed cost. That is not realistic, and an analysis of this type explains why.

### TRADITIONAL PROCUREMENT

Often exemplified by 'the JCT standard form', in traditional procurement the employer carries a lot of risk. The benefit to the employer of agreeing to carry those risks is that it retains the powers to get the building that it wants. What risks does the employer carry? While sometimes referred to a 'lump sum' or 'fixed price' contracts, this is something of a misnomer. The

employer is responsible for procuring the design, and retains powers to vary the works. Those variations to the works change the price (almost invariably upwards), so the employer carries the risk of rising costs. There is some cost risk to the contractor insofar as it has to carry out the works that it has agreed to do for the lump sum, and as a result there is frequently tension over which elements of the works are in the lump sum and which are outside it. So with traditional procurement the employer can ensure it gets the building it wants, but has to pay for flexibility to achieve that.

### DESIGN AND BUILD

The contractor bears the costs risk, as it contracts to provide a building for a fixed price. While there may be some provision for the employer to vary the works, this is often very limited. The benefit to the employer of allocating the cost risk to the contractor is cost certainty. What tends to be less certain, and that is a disbenefit to the employer, is the end result. The contractor agrees to a fixed price which it anticipates will allow it some profit. Plainly any cost savings the contractor can make along the way will increase that profit, but the end result may suffer. On the other hand if the contractor



*Some risks are just too great to load on to a contractor, even if it is prepared to take them on.*





*In traditional contracts the employer carries a lot of risk but can get the building it wants.*

*When parties draw up a contract, what they are actually doing is agreeing on how risks are to be allocated between them. It is no good to anyone if one party takes on a risk it cannot bear – therefore the appropriate contract will balance the risks.*

encounters unexpected difficulties, those will push the price up. So the contractor carries the risk of making a loss.

## REMEASUREMENT

There is a theory of risk allocation that risk should be placed where it can best be coped with. Some risks are just too great to load on to a contractor, even if it is prepared to take them on. It is no good to anyone if one party takes on a risk it cannot bear. As a result large infrastructure projects such as tunnels, which tend to be procured by employers with deep pockets, are often done on a remeasurement basis. The contractor agrees to carry out certain activities for a fixed rate, and gets paid for how much of it it does. The cost risk lies with the employer, the benefit to the employer being certainty of getting the required end result.

As an aside, with a large-scale project it is easy to see that it is the employer that wants the

works done, and so the risks of getting it built should rest with them. However this is true of any construction project large or small. If a householder wants to embark on building a conservatory that is their choice, and their risk. The contractor has not asked them to do it. The employer may allocate the risks of undertaking the works between them and the

contractor in a sensible way that hopefully meets their needs, but in the final analysis the risk that is being carved up is all that of the employer.

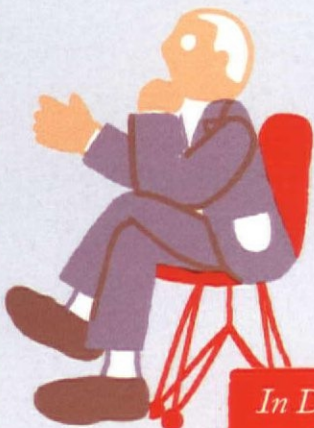
## TIME

Rather to one side of the balance between the end result and price is the risk of time. The last piece in this series (AJ 19.06.08) looked at the interrelationship of time and money in building contracts. Suffice to say here that delay can have cost consequences that most building contracts seek to legislate for those in advance, and that the cost consequences of delay can disrupt what might otherwise be costs certainty for

the parties. But considering time as a standalone risk, there are some circumstances in which an employer must achieve a particular end date, such as is the case with procurement for the Olympics. Clearly if an employer seeks to place such an absolute time risk on the contractor, the contractor will want costs provisions that compensate it for undertaking such a risk.

## WHICH CONTRACT TO USE?

There is perhaps a tendency to pick a contract because it is familiar or because it is recommended for a certain size of project. However it is important not to lose sight of the underlying allocation of risks that each form of contract uses. It is necessary to have an understanding of the commercial balance of a contract and the likely effect of its provisions on the end result and to match this to the parties' needs.



*In Design and Build contracts, the employer has cost certainty, but has less control over the end result.*



Right The chancellor  
occupies a terracotta  
drum, in contrast to  
the adjacent pale,  
rectangular building

## ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

# Xtralite

When the architect of Brunel University's new chancellor building needed a supplier of rooflights, Xtralite fitted the brief

There are some buildings from which you just don't want to look out. Not because the surroundings are too horrible to contemplate, but because what is going on inside needs a degree of concentration that precludes such distraction.

Brunel University was adamant that this was the case for its new chancellor building, effectively a council chamber for the governing body of the university. YRM Architects, which was architect for the university's school of engineering and design, was asked to include the new chancellor building as part of its brief. The university was adamant that it did not want any windows.

The building sits on a busy street, and the university neither wanted passers-by staring in, nor people gazing out during meetings. Other uses that will occupy the building, including performances (there is a sprung floor for dance), will also be inward facing. YRM came up with a design that created a strong contrast to the other, rectangular, pale coloured and glazed buildings on the site – a windowless 14m-diameter drum, rendered in a strong terracotta colour.

'I think that it sits very well on the street,' says Nigel Wooding, associate director of YRM.

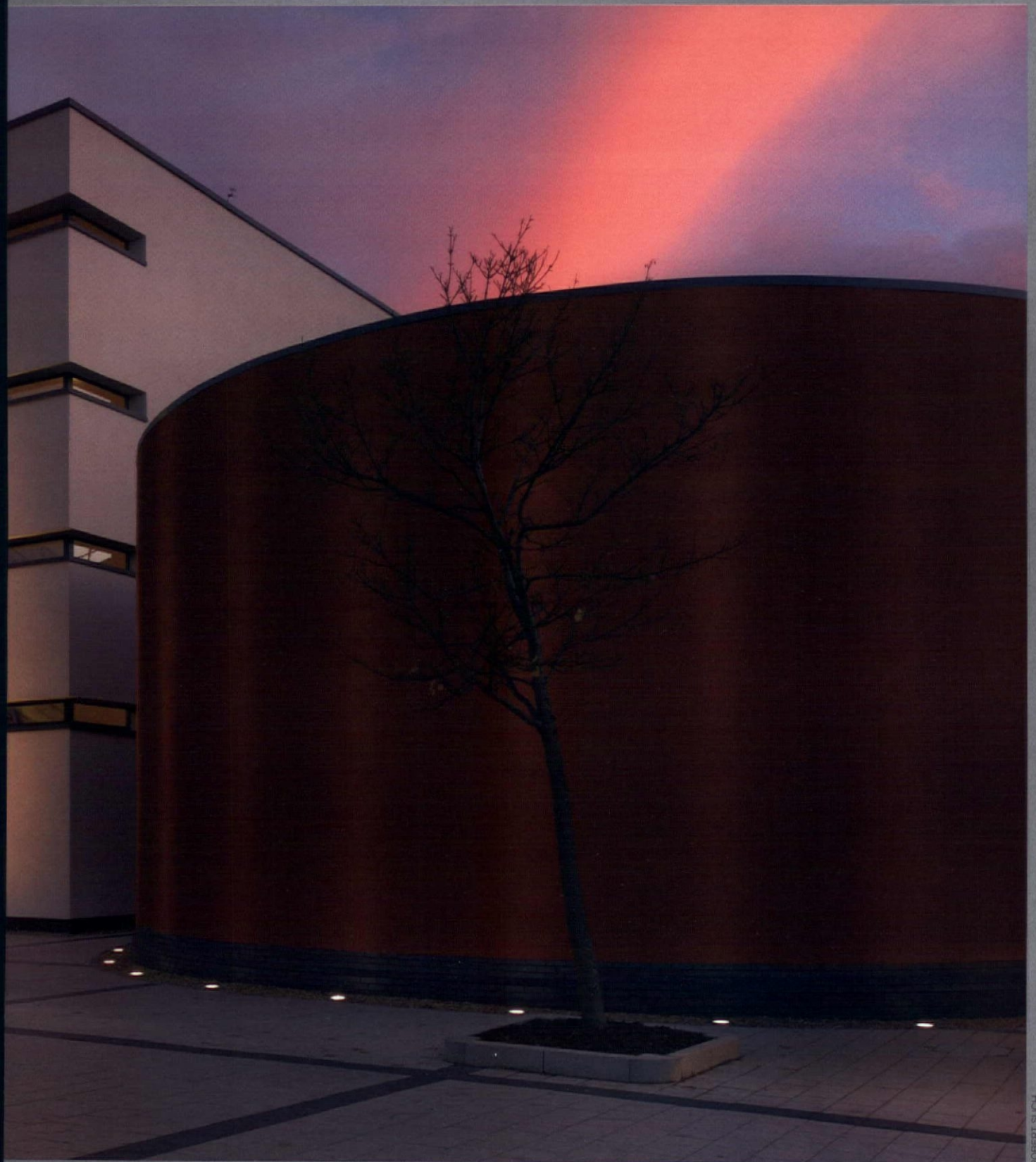
Inside, the space is almost double-height, and when the governing body meets, chairs are arranged around the perimeter, providing the necessary gravitas. But, says Wooding, despite the client's brief that windows were 'not required', as the design developed, 'we thought it would be good to have some top natural lighting. We thought that it's not right to rely on artificial lighting at all times'.

Rooflights do not distract from the inward focus of the room, and the solution that the architect decided upon provides light that bounces off the slightly canted perimeter walls. It has come up with a perimeter ring of 2m-long rooflights, provided by specialist company Xtralite. The rooflights are filled with Nanogel®, a material that consists of translucent 'aerogel' granules, which are highly insulating and diffuse light.

YRM wanted to use a diffused light because it would avoid the need for solar shading and, Wooding says, 'it meant that the glazing didn't have to be cleaned so often'. Fritted or frosted glass would have been possibilities, but they were far more expensive than the Xtralite option, which contains the Nanogel between 25mm-thick >>









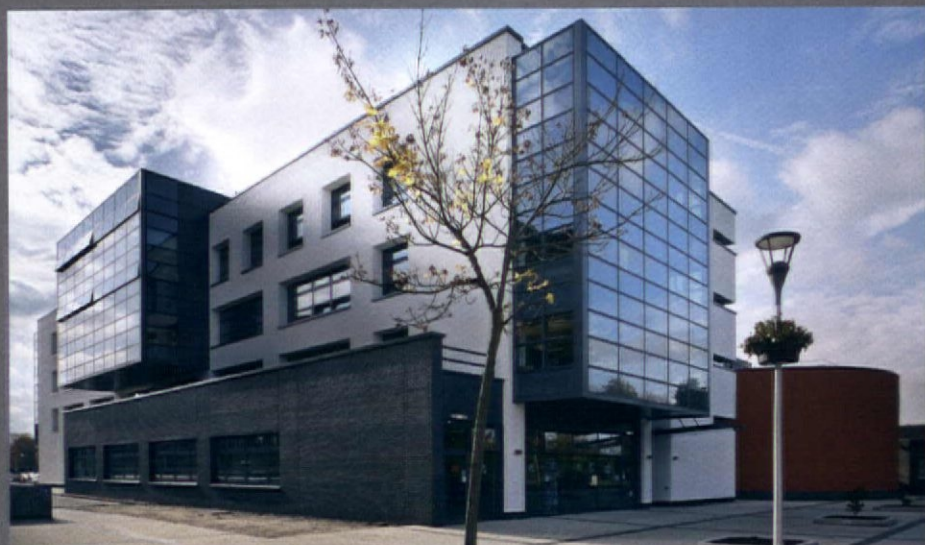




**Left** The ring of rooflights brings in diffused light

**Right** The windowless drum tucks neatly behind the glazed university buildings

**Bottom** The lights are tapered and arranged radially around the perimeter of the roof



ROBERT SUCH

multi-wall polycarbonate. And glass would not offer the acoustic or thermal insulation properties.

YRM, which was appointed in 2005 and designed the building in 2006, was not at that time familiar with Nanogel, but was convinced that it was the right solution. 'We felt comfortable with Xtralite,' says Wooding. 'They met the brief.'

This brief was quite demanding. As the rooflights are arranged around a circle, they had to be tapered. And because of tolerances on the building, the last one had to be made to measure, once all the others were in place. But, says Wooding, you can't spot by eye which one it is.

The rooflights are framed in aluminium and the glazing bars are a dark grey RAL colour above, and white below. Although the rooflights measure

2m-long, from inside the room you can only see a length of about 800mm, in the gap between the top of the wall and the dished ceiling. The ends of the frames are completely concealed, so that the only visible elements are the glazing bars between the segments. This helps to give the ceiling a floating appearance.

Although the drum looks simple, the attention to detail applied to the rooflights is an indication of the care that YRM has taken with the building. Sloping in the walls of the drum is another touch that indicates care has been taken. 'It makes the experience of being in the room more interesting,' says Wooding. It also improves acoustics, limiting the sound reflections that would occur in a perfect drum. Between the dry-lined wall and the external

blockwork wall, air rises from a trough beneath the floor, providing displacement ventilation.

On the roof, which is a steel radial structure, rather like the spokes of a bicycle wheel covered with a single-ply membrane, YRM has designed an elegant hinge-down bridge for access across the rooflights. The hinge mechanism means that it does not cast a shadow on the glazing when not in use. It is vital that the roof is unencumbered, because several of its neighbours look down on it.

The care and consideration given to this building match its serious role. The glazing has an important role to play. As well as enhancing the experience of the building's users, Wooding says that 'in reasonable daylight, you don't need the lights on' – which is what rooflights are all about.



#### Xtralite

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Cabot developed Nanogel technology and its suitability for use in the construction industry. Xtralite is Cabot Aerogel's exclusive partner in the UK for polycarbonate panels filled with nanogel aerogel (used in overhead glazing or facade).

  
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ROOFLIGHTS

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**AJ**



A detailed architectural model of a building complex. In the foreground, a small white figure of a person carrying a bag walks on a platform. To the right is a large, light-colored screen with a repeating geometric pattern of semi-circles. In the background, a dark building with rectangular windows is visible. The scene is lit with strong shadows, suggesting a bright light source.

3DReid

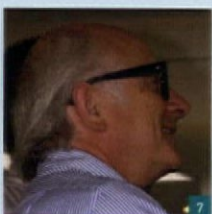
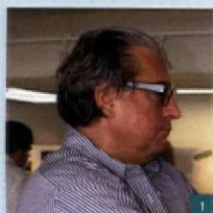
# STUDENT PRIZE 2008

**LONDON FESTIVAL OF  
ARCHITECTURE**  
20 JUNE – 20 JULY  
In association with Design for London



## INTRODUCTION

# 'THE 3DREID PRIZE IS A FASCINATING BAROMETER OF STUDENT DESIGN'



## Judges

Paul Warner (1)  
research director,  
3DReid  
Stuart Piercy (2)  
principal,  
Piercy Conner  
Victoria Harris (3)  
chief executive,  
Article 25 (formerly  
Architects for Aid)  
Richard Waite (4)  
*The Architects' Journal*  
Matt Fairman (5)  
managing director,  
Smoothe

Paul Finch (6)  
editor, *the Architectural Review*  
Peter Murray (7)  
director,  
London Festival  
of Architecture

The annual 3DReid Student Prize is the largest prize awarded by a private practice to a Part 2 graduate. It is also a fascinating 'quality barometer' of architectural education in the UK and an intriguing snapshot of the different approaches of architecture schools across the country. Now in its third year, the award has been previously won by students from Greenwich and the Bartlett.

This year's five finalists, showcased here, were each nominated by their school as the 'best of year'. They were selected from a longlist of 12 competing schools (*see below*) – the largest number of universities to enter this increasingly well-respected award.

Judging such a diverse range of projects was not easy. The jury had to compare rigorously detailed, almost engineering-led proposals with historic-city infill, film-set dramas, eco-friendly 'scavenged' buildings and ambitious, politically driven 30-year demolition programmes.

Despite the widely varied subjects and presentation styles, some general themes can be drawn out. For instance, three of the projects have cinematic elements: the *High Anxiety* feel of Laurence Becker's Ballard-inspired design; the *Birdman of Alcatraz* notion in Tom Doling's Brighton scheme; and most obviously Ross Perkin's Cádiz revival scheme – named the Cinema of Towers.

A number of the proposals feature destruction, with decay seen as a positive or redeeming force. Movement, both physical and psychological, is touched on by all the finalists, as is, in varying degrees, 'spectacle'.

Jury chair and editor of the *Architectural Review* Paul Finch also pointed out that 'four of the schemes focus on the urban fabric, while Becker's "Ballard" project is about

keeping the criminally insane outside of the city'.

After carefully unpicking these threads, the judges agreed that two schemes stood out. Yet it was an almost impossible task to separate Perkin's 'easily understood' but superbly detailed Cádiz cinema project from Michael Scott's 'immense and powerful' Alternative Belfast Peacewall deconstruction proposal – described by one juror as an 'arresting and powerful notion of progressive demolition'.

In the end, Perkin's clarity of thought and effective communication of his ideas won out. He scoops an extra £1,000 in prize money on top of the £800 given to all the shortlisted students.

Models and images of the five projects will be on display throughout July as part of the London Festival of Architecture. Visit 3DReid's gallery space at West End House, 11 Hills Place, London W1F 7SE.

*Richard Waite*

*Page 51 shows detail of Ross Perkin's winning design – see opposite*

## Entrant schools

Birmingham City University  
De Montfort University  
University of Dundee  
University of Edinburgh  
University of Greenwich  
University of Kent  
Kingston University  
University of Liverpool  
London South Bank University  
Manchester School of Architecture  
University of Nottingham  
Oxford Brookes University



WINNER

# ROSS PERKIN

University of Edinburgh

New Worlds within the Old Town of Cádiz:  
El Ciné de las Torres y la Arqueología Romana  
(The Cinema of Towers and Roman Archaeology)

The project aims to reinforce and reactivate an urban block in the old town of Cádiz, which is suffering from the effects of unemployment, urban decay and dereliction. Excavation works have revealed that the block is situated above the remains of a Roman circus. These excavations are an active part of the programme.

In addition, the introduction of key cultural and community-support programmes acts as a catalyst for change and reactivates the spectacle of the circus. A film centre slowly takes root. Cinema-screen spaces are positioned above the world of archaeology and wedged between key existing masonry walls. These are treated as held vessels – like boats entangled in a dry dock, they contain the promise of taking you to a new world.



*'The architecture matches the grain of the urban landscape – it is undoubtedly very elegant'* Peter Murray





SHORTLISTED

## MICHAEL SCOTT

Oxford Brookes University, Centre for Development  
and Emergency Practice

Alter your Native Belfast/Alternative Belfast



*'A visually fantastic proposal where things are taken away to create a new world – the antithesis of the architect's usual approach. It is a bold, brave subject'* Paul Warner

In 1994 when the IRA declared a ceasefire, there were 15 peacewalls separating Catholics from Protestants in Belfast. Today there are over 40 of these 'interfaces'. This 30-year project follows the sequence from event to architecture, to transition, to change. It is a time- and event-based piece of architecture in that it has a beginning, an end and various ad hoc stages of transition over three decades.

These stages seek to create a symbiotic relationship between the Cupar Way peacewall and the people who live by it, while at the same time aiming to erode and deconstruct the wall, manage disorder and provide space for reconciliation.



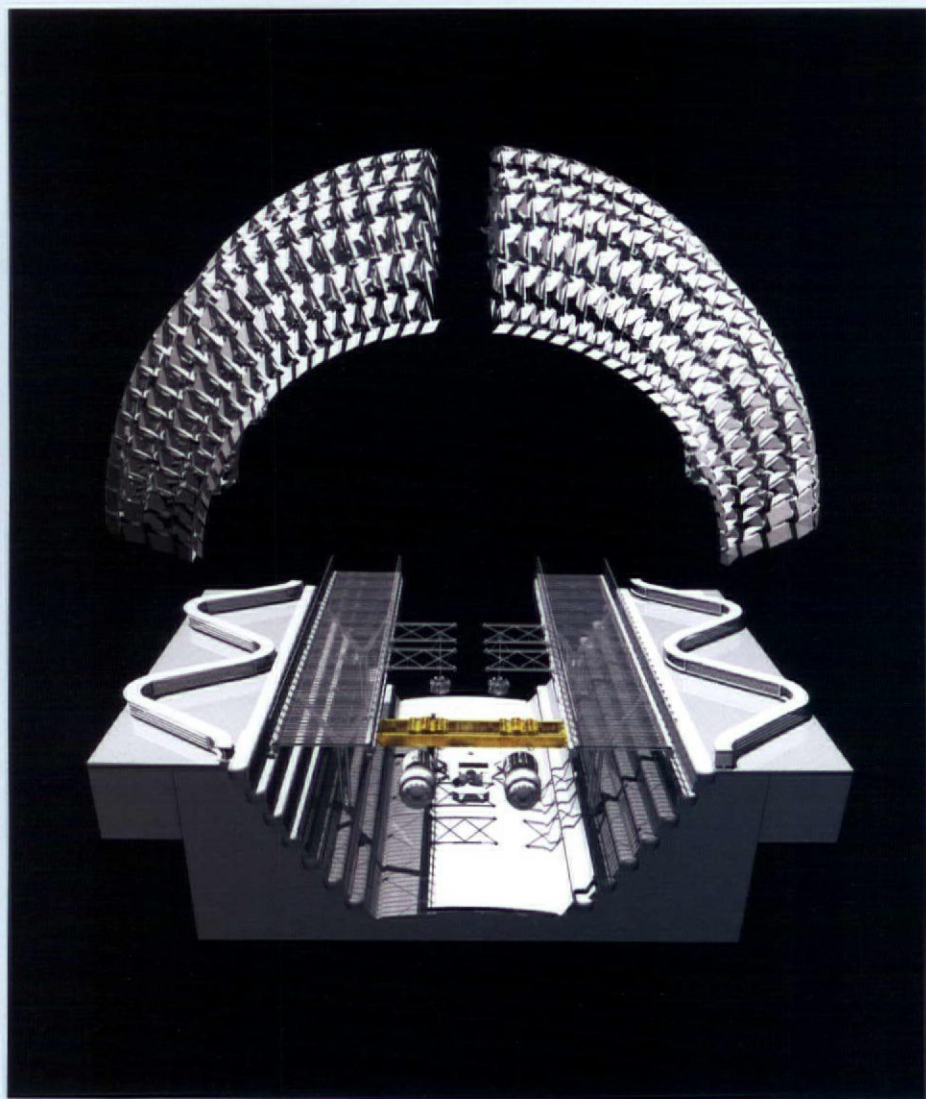


SHORTLISTED

## ALEX DALE-JONES

University of Nottingham

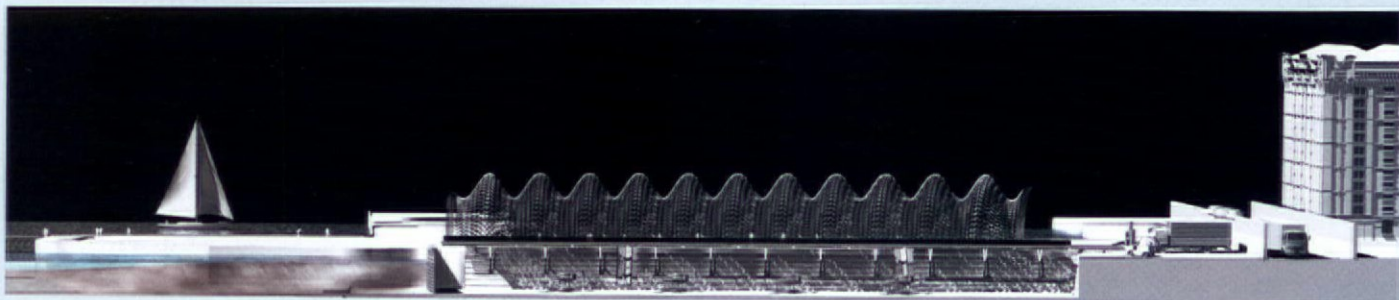
The Water Squares of Liverpool



Liverpool's maritime history has led to an extensive tidal record of the Mersey Estuary collected over centuries. This proposal examines the potential to exploit this data and the progress of the tidal-stream energy industry by introducing a regional observatory for the commercial testing of tidal-stream devices beyond the prototype stage. This would be combined with associated research by the established local oceanographic facility.

The Central Docks – a large area of derelict river frontage to the north of the city centre – has an existing historic wet dock framework in place capable of providing the necessary facilities for such an intervention.

*'A crisp "real" piece of architecture and engineering that also has an environmental timeliness. Convincingly mature and viable'* Richard Waite





SHORTLISTED

## TOM DOLING

Birmingham City University

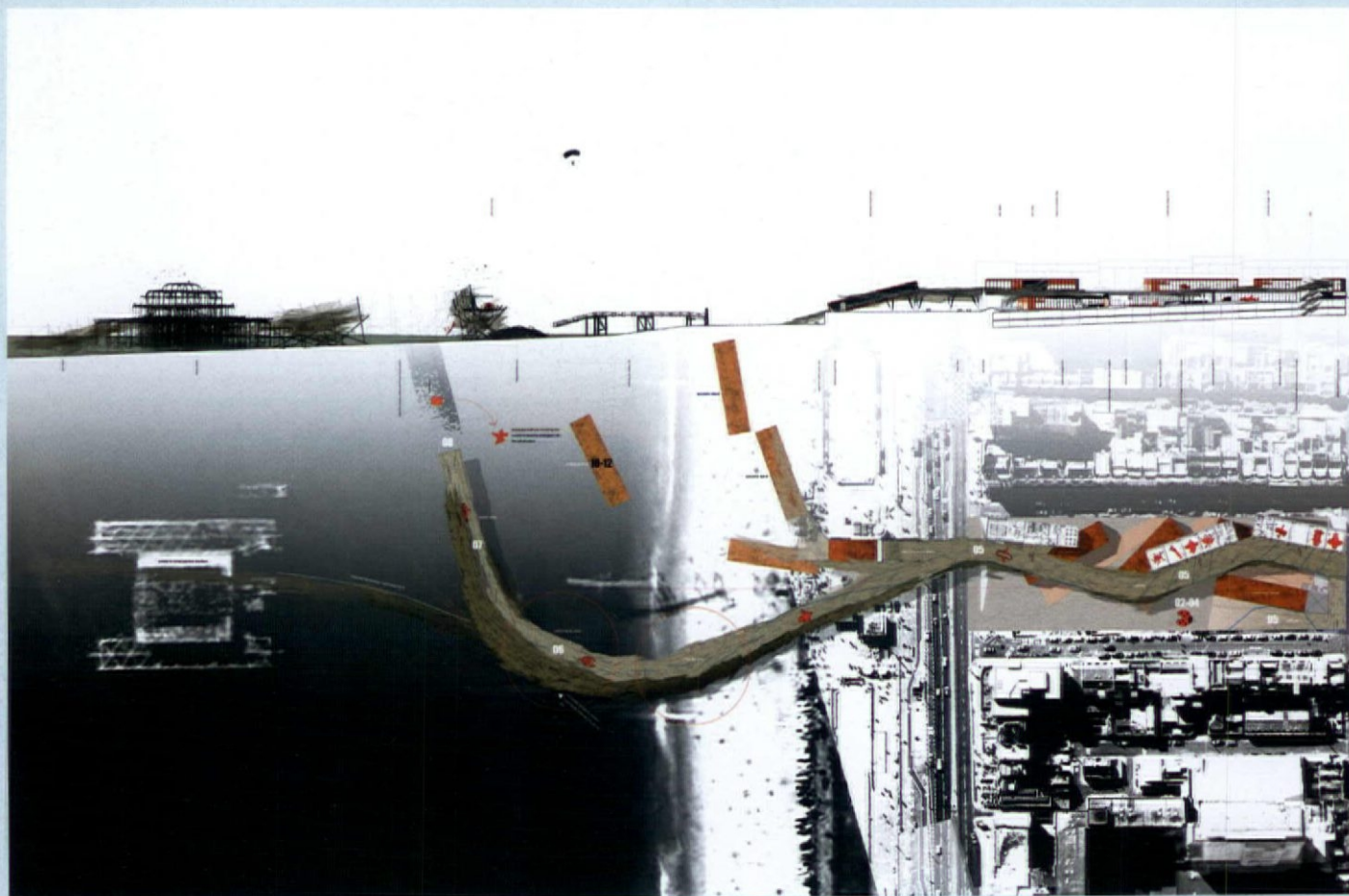
Birdman Pier



*'I enjoyed the idea of building something lovely from scavenged materials'* Paul Warner

This project emerged from a fascination with the ruins of Brighton's West Pier and the public spectacle of its collapse.

From the remnants of the decaying structure, it envisages a new 'events landscape' created from sea debris. Following on from the site's eccentric history of aquatic entertainment, it is formed primarily for a fictional 'Birdman' competition, in which contestants attempt to fly homemade craft off the end of the pier. The programme tracks these machines from their creation and display on site through to their inevitable destruction, where these mangled machines become entangled with both the new structure and the old ruins.





## SHORTLISTED

## LAURENCE BECKER

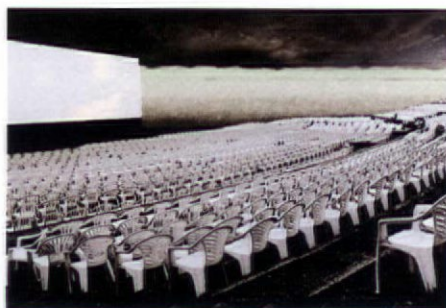
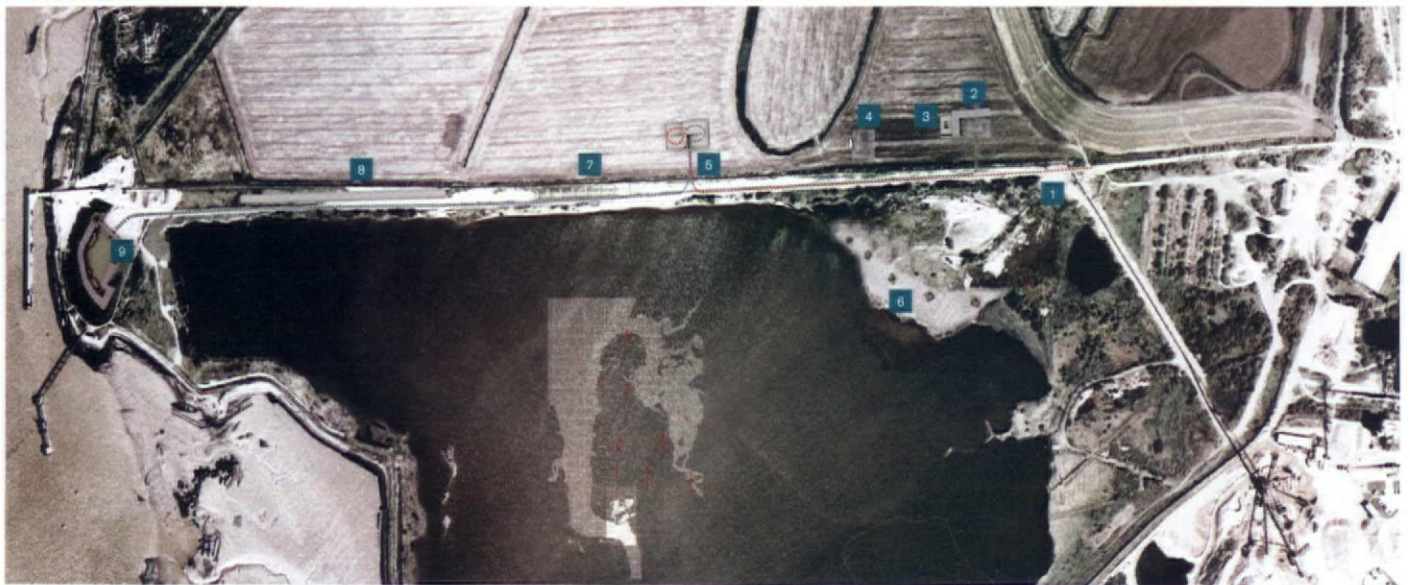
University of Greenwich

A Ballardian Trip of Psychopathological Predispositions:  
An Anti-Social Behaviour Rehabilitation Facility

The proposal engages with the disturbing and often architecturally neglected area of criminal and mental rehabilitation. Its intensity comes from JG Ballard's fragmentary novel, *The Atrocity Exhibition*, where mental illness and reforming of thought are investigated, and from the 'rich and varied' site in the Thames Gateway known as the North Kent 'rust belt'.

The resulting imagery provides a narrative across the site and buildings where the project interlinks fact and fiction, offering a filmic quality with a haunting regard for Hitchcock; the spiralling car park inhabited by a lone ice-cream van and the motel-like 'release' rooms.

1. Security gate
2. Motel
3. Pool
4. Open-air cinema
5. Multi-storey car park
6. Beach and cafés
7. Billboard alley
8. Testing area
9. Institute



*'Filled with interesting references to classic psychological movies. The architecture of a film set'* Victoria Harris



## COMMENT

## PAUL WARNER, 3DREID

## Behind the prize



The relationship between schools of architecture and practice in the UK is certainly not as good as it is generally in Europe and in parts of the USA. That is the reason we set up the prize. We see the prize as assisting the gap between study and practice. Anything that can be done to encourage closer links and communication is welcome – graduates are the lifeblood of the profession and our business's future. For us, the prize is our way of developing an approach to schools in a practical and proactive fashion, which we aim to continue and grow for years to come.

We understand how good design has greater value, and attracting the best design talent who can inject that into the business is of paramount importance. Great design and a successful business go hand in hand.

When we first set up the prize, we were unsure what sort of reaction we would get from the schools, as there are plenty of prizes on offer to students – from individual school prizes to the RIBA President's Medals. We didn't want to be seen as just another prize with no real value. But in our first year the opening night of the exhibition attracted in excess of 130 people; from clients and consultants with a passion for the future of design to the schools and proud families of the shortlisted students. Internally, our staff have also embraced the prize, and are keen to interrogate the quality of work from schools that they graduated from.

The response has encouraged us not only to increase the prize money, which of course is always useful to help clear student debts, but also to open up the exhibition to an even wider audience. We are fortunate to have a gallery space in our London office to display

the finalists' entries. The work has always attracted plenty of debate among our visitors, and this year it is part of the London Festival of Architecture, which allows the students to expose their talents to anyone who is interested in visiting the gallery. We have had plenty of enquiries confirming opening times during the festival, and we are looking forwards to welcoming large numbers of visitors during this period.

We are fairly well aware of the current level of student work through various other connections to the schools via our network of offices, and by virtue of the fact that several of us also teach. But we really enjoy the free-thinking and creativity that is displayed in our gallery every year. This is some of the cream of new UK architecture and we look forward to welcoming even more submissions from schools across the UK next year. British schools of architecture are regarded as among the best in the world, and what we have seen during the three years the prize has been running definitely provides evidence of that.

## The previous winner

*Paula Robertson, graduate of the University of Greenwich, was the first winner of the 3DReid Student Prize. She is now employed by the practice.*

*'The prize was a great opportunity for me to present my work in a practice environment, and to win was very exciting and motivating. Having studied for my diploma part-time, I appreciate the importance of encouraging closer links between practice and schools. It benefits both the practices and the students to enable practical experience alongside the creative environment of university. It is a long, tough course, but the profession is a very supportive one. Prizes and exhibitions assist in critical discussion and debate, and this has certainly helped me in my career to date.'*

*'The prize offers students a fantastic opportunity to compete and exhibit with their peers from other schools around the country'*

**Kevin W Singh, course director,  
post-graduate diploma in architecture,  
Birmingham School of Architecture**



In this section // *From Atoms to Patterns* // Critic's Choice // *Evolving Norms of British Housing* // Summer design shows // 5 Things To Do

# The Critics

## EXHIBITION

### *X-ray visionary*

Architectural critic *Gillian Darley* reviews *From Atoms to Patterns*, an exhibition on atomic and crystal pattern-making for the 1951 Festival of Britain

From Atoms to Patterns: Crystal Structure Designs from the 1951 Festival of Britain, until 10 August at the Wellcome Collection, 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE. [www.wellcomecollection.org](http://www.wellcomecollection.org)

Architects don't often warm to pattern and, largely, the group involved in the 1951 Festival of Britain was no exception. Despite this, the success of the Festival Pattern Group (FPG) – the subject of the current exhibition *From Atoms to Patterns* at the Wellcome Collection (the latest in a consistently

interesting programme since its reopening a year ago) – owed much to the championing of architects and was driven by an unlikely alliance of scientists, industrial designers and manufacturers.

The story of FPG begins in 1946, when an enterprising scientist wondered whether the

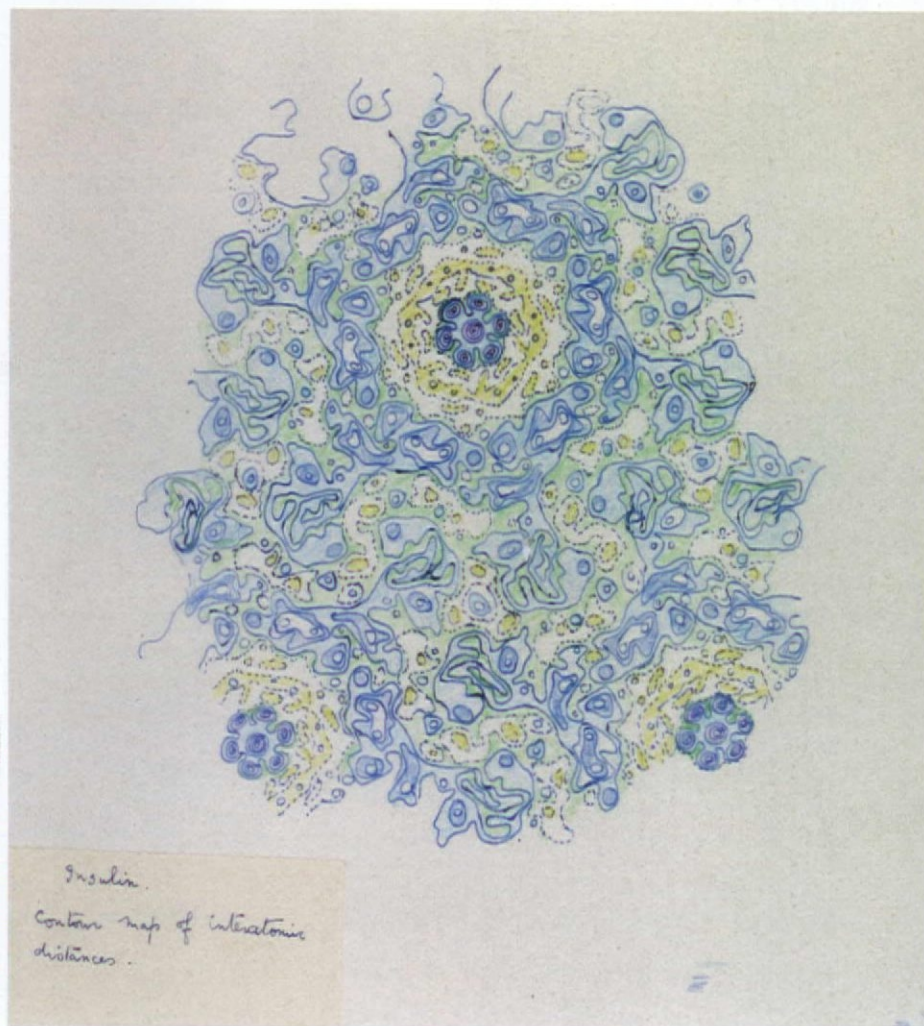
patterns emerging under the penetrating 'eye' of X-ray imaging – the abstract but coherent geometry of crystals and atoms – could be used in design, much as designer William Morris' firm had applied the forms of flowers and foliage to textiles and wallpapers in the 19th century. Helen Megaw, a highly >>

WALL PAPER, the design by Dorothy Hodgkin and Robert Seavant, based on the crystal structure of insulin. Manufactured by John Lane & Sons Ltd., for the Festival Pattern Group and used in the Daphne Restaurant, 1951. Given by the manufacturer, c.1935.

This image Wallpaper pattern inspired by insulin, designed by Dorothy Hodgkin and Robert Seavant in the 1930s

LENT BY THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM





V&amp;A IMAGES/VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

### From Atoms to Patterns continued from p57

respected crystallographer, wrote to architecture practice Design Research Unit (now part of Scott Brownrigg), to suggest as much: 'I think the combination of really attractive pattern with the assurance of scientific accuracy would win a lot of attention.' The results of Megaw's brainchild, which became the FPG in late 1949, have until now been a rather overlooked strand in the history of the Festival of Britain. Lesley Jackson's book to accompany this exhibition explores the subject further and includes the original festival publication, *The Souvenir Book of Crystal Designs*, and Megaw's own unpublished papers on the subject.

Megaw's idea received enthusiastic support from Mark Hartland Thomas, an architect and chief industrial officer of the Council of Industrial Design (a government agency that later became the Design Council). He realised that this progressive vocabulary of pattern could involve leading manufacturers of fabric, ceramics, metalware, linoleum, glass and

wallpaper. The Regatta Restaurant at the Festival site was chosen to be the location for their far-reaching experiment. In total 28 firms were involved and 80 designs originated. The source of inspiration would be celebrated in the name of each product – thus Boric Acid wallpaper, Haemoglobin lace, Quartz carpets and Insulin Rexine wallcoverings entered the lexicon of design.

The FPG brought together some unlikely partners. Nobel Laureates worked alongside leading industrial designers; great Victorian manufacturers alongside modern Anglo-American firms producing plastics and synthetics. Dorothy Hodgkin, a British expert on X-ray crystallography, worked with leading textile designer Marianne Straub. Warner Fabrics (originally silk weavers in Spitalfields, East London), Josiah Wedgwood & Sons, and James Templeton & Co (the leading Glasgow carpet manufacturer) worked alongside ICI, Dunlop, British Celanese, and the English subsidiary of Bakelite.

To a large extent, their in-house designers rose to the challenge. The energy and

optimism that drove this initiative in the grey post-war period, engaging a galaxy of leading firms in an untried and innovative project, is a cheering counter-balance to the usual picture of moribund British manufacture – epitomised by those Kidderminster carpet firms visited by the young Nikolaus Pevsner in the 1930s, whose products and attitudes were those of the 19th century.

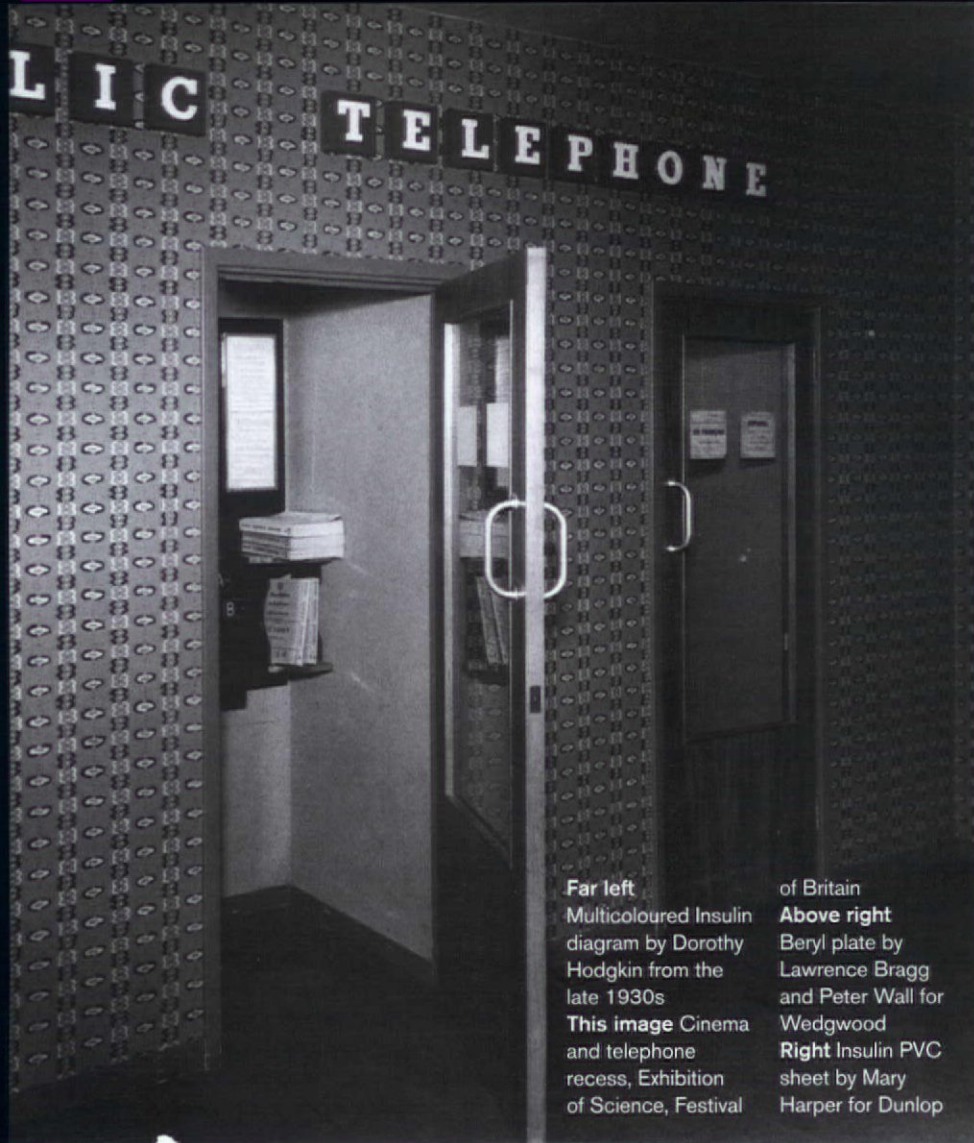
### *Boric Acid wallpaper, Haemoglobin lace and Insulin Rexine wallcoverings entered the lexicon of design*

Some manufacturers worried about the public reception of the products: a director of British Celanese asked whether 'any girl will want to wear a diagram of insulin', but he received his answer at the International Congress of Crystallography in Stockholm in the summer of 1951 (while the Festival was in full swing on the South Bank). The wife of Lawrence Bragg, the celebrated pioneer of X-ray crystallography, attended the event in a multi-tiered evening gown of Beryl lace –



THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES





**Far left**  
Multicoloured Insulin  
diagram by Dorothy  
Hodgkin from the  
late 1930s  
**This image** Cinema  
and telephone  
recess, Exhibition  
of Science, Festival

of Britain  
**Above right**  
Beryl plate by  
Lawrence Bragg  
and Peter Wall for  
Wedgwood  
**Right** Insulin PVC  
sheet by Mary  
Harper for Dunlop



now on show at the exhibition. Gisela Perutz – wife of another eminent figure in the field, Max Perutz – wore a printed rayon dress patterned with horse methaemoglobin. Megaw herself wore an afwillite crepe silk blouse. The men all wore Vanners and Fennell silk damask ties bearing such patterns as China Xlay and Haemoglobin.

The problems that beset the programme were those of the moment: the desperately restrictive post-war economy; the paucity of materials; labour shortages; and lack of funding for the development of new processes and machinery. For that reason, relatively few FPG products went into commercial production, while others, by their nature, were ephemeral. Silversmith Elkingtons was commissioned to provide cutlery, cake stands and breadbaskets for the Regatta Restaurant, but material shortages prevented production and in the end only prototypes could be shown.

Other examples, particularly textiles, were far more commercially successful than could have been expected. The damask silk ties

went on to be a great success on the American market and Vanners and Fennell commissioned more designs in 1954. Warner Fabrics expanded its FPG range of cotton furnishings with one based on nylon (but marketed as 'Helmsley', presumably to avoid confusion). Chance Brothers' figured glass – called 'Festival' rather than the unpronounceable 'Apophyllite' – attracted healthy orders. The

*The problems that beset the programme were those of the moment: the post-war economy; the paucity of materials*

company was encouraged to participate by independent industrial designer J Beresford Evans, after its in-house designer failed to rise to the challenge. As a result, as W G Chance said: 'Architects have in most cases expressed unqualified approval and the glass merchants have not received this new pattern with their traditional gloom.'

Other applications that the builders' merchants might have considered were the laminated plastic sheeting produced by

Warerite, another subsidiary of Bakelite, while Poole Pottery produced a range of tiles from Megaw's work (for example, the zinc hydroxide panel, shown in the exhibition), which it hoped to put into wider production.

Megaw, sadly, did not believe her initiative had gone well, describing it as 'a long sad tale of opportunities lost', despite promising beginnings and a high level of support. As Lesley Jackson's book points out, she underestimated the difficulties faced by post-war companies, struggling to readjust to restricted peacetime conditions and markets. But in the light of this exhibition and Jackson's book, Megaw and her steadfast colleague at the Council of Industrial Design, Mark Hartland Thomas, can now be seen as prophets with honour. ■

Gillian Darley writes on architecture and landscape. She is the author of biographies on John Soane, John Evelyn and Octavia Hill (all published by Yale). Her most recent book is *Villages of Vision: A Study of Strange Utopias* (all published by Yale). **Resume:** Haemoglobin was on the bleeding edge of patterns in 1951





## Critic's Choice

**Frank Watson's**  
photos reveal the character  
of the Thames Estuary,  
says **Andrew Mead**

The landscape of the Thames Estuary has evolved over centuries without anyone thinking twice about 'design'. Depending on where you stand, it can look like a traffic-dominated dystopia, a post-industrial wasteland, or a realm of sky and water that would delight a 19th-century Romantic. Few Thames Gateway developers have shown any sign that they appreciate its better features, but fortunately some other people do – I think particularly of the book by writer Ken Worpole and photographer Jason Orton, *350 Miles: An Essex Journey* (2005).

Now comes a London Festival of Architecture exhibition called Soundings from the Estuary, at the Novas Contemporary Urban Centre until 20 July ([www.soundingsfromtheestuary.com](http://www.soundingsfromtheestuary.com)). It's notable primarily for photographs by Frank Watson, which convey the multi-faceted character of the Thames-side landscape. Cylindrical storage tanks form a pale frieze on the horizon in one image; in another they almost fill the frame, but wild flowers flourish in the foreground. Power stations point tall chimneys skywards while birdwatchers peer through telescopic sights in terrain that's half-water, half-weed (see picture below). A mysterious chamber is earth-mounded to absorb explosions: this area speaks everywhere of its militarised past. The functioning and derelict sit side-by-side – and always the scene is changing with the motion of the tide. We must try to tread lightly here when the credit crunch is over.



This image Allies and Morrison's Highbury Square, two new housing blocks flanking the original Arsenal Stadium in north London

## EXHIBITION

*The British Housing exhibition is an antidote to the 'carnavalesque' LFA,*  
says **Shumi Bose**

Evolving Norms of British Housing, until 20 July at the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, London W1N 4AD

Amid some of the London Festival of Architecture's (LFA's) more carnivalesque events are pockets of activity that are firmly anchored to the ground. Evolving Norms of British Housing is one such show – a small exhibition of new housing design, showcasing 14 practices' recent contributions to this sector.

Curated by Matthew Lloyd of Matthew Lloyd Architects, Alex Ely and Michael Howe of mæ architects, Sam Price of engineer Price & Myers, and urban designer Mandar Puranik, a sense of peer appreciation and critique

permeates the show, lending the exhibition acuity. Broadly speaking, the schemes portrayed are modest in spirit; none seek to assert their own aesthetic individualism. Prosaic concerns and context shape the majority of designs. Most illustrate particular concerns for laconic contextuality, a flexibility, interspatial engagement and, most of all, a fashionable regard for free and unilateral access to outside space.

mæ contributes five housing typologies to the exhibition, which range from a five-bedroom detached house to a two-bedroom terrace. Though claiming to reference 19th-century American domestic architecture, a distinctly English feel is evoked by the graphics, which depict parapets overlooking cricket games and wildflower meadows. An even more bucolic resolve is held by DRDH Architects, with their pattern-book scheme derived from the notion of a village green. Learning from the 'anatomy' of a traditional English village, DRDH's plan focuses on the quality of relationships between the spaces enclosed and defined by the buildings.



In their humble sensitivity, some of the designs seem anthropomorphically communicative. Penoyre & Prasad's Elsdale Street scheme, part of the government's Rough Sleepers Initiative, presents a rounded brick corner which, like a solid and protective arm, nurtures an interior garden. Matthew Lloyd describes a Hawkins\Brown scheme as reassuring and untroubled. Others have perhaps allowed the recent economic tremors to consider building reuse: Tom Russell Architects, for example, has increased ceiling heights in its Milton Keynes development to accommodate future retail space.

The exhibition is accompanied by an excellent booklet. Essays from the curators illuminate their choices, providing a welcome level of analysis to this modest, unassuming show about unassuming architecture.

**Resume:** This show should be to the LFA as a strong black coffee is to a drunkard

#### LINCOLN DEGREE SHOW 2008

### *Ed Frith of Moving Architecture visits Lincoln School of Architecture's show*

Lincoln School of Architecture end-of-year show, now closed, Architecture Building, Brayford Campus, Lincoln LN6 7TS

The School of Architecture at Lincoln (which relocated from Hull in 2003) has a rich tradition: Leslie Martin was its first head of school and Cho Padamsee introduced the country's first work-based learning in the '70s. I was unprepared for the slick new Brayford Pool campus, and for Rick Mather's School of Architecture building. Its vortex void sucked me up and spat me out into studios exhibiting lively student work, with projects ranging from exquisite Formalism to radical politics in urban planning, and with the laser-cutter producing everything from 1:1 studies of musical instruments to market landscapes.

Degree students playing hard included Matthew Rust with his birch-faced ply instrument and star student Mark King with his House for J Ballard (a character from the 1996 film *Crash*). King suspended a crashed car in the exhibition, alongside explorations

of impact sequence through drawing.

If Lincoln deepens its intellectual base, its attraction will continue to broaden.

**Resume:** Unlike its subject matter, Lincoln's show is no car crash

#### WELSH SCHOOL DEGREE SHOW 2008

### *Stephen Cairns reviews the Welsh School of Architecture's degree show*

Welsh School of Architecture degree show, now closed, Bute Building, Cardiff University, CF10 3NB

Muted colours – sepia tones, watery blues, muddy stains – are punctuated with the default bright reds, blues and yellows of environmental modelling software at the Welsh School of Architecture's show. Drawings that register the marks of wear-and-tear on built fabrics also carry the hard calculations of lux and lumens.

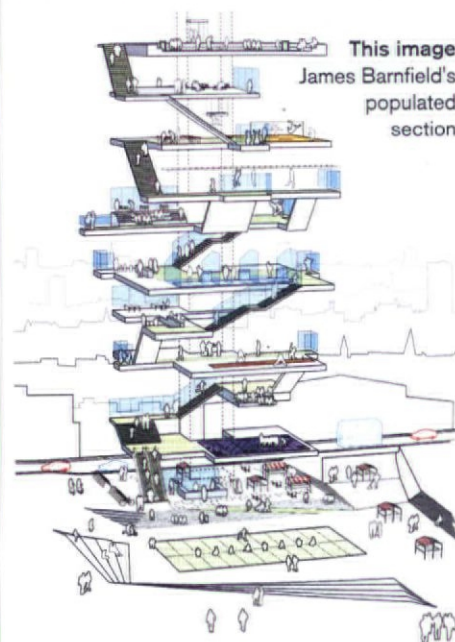
The relationship between the phenomenological and the quantitative is a tricky one, but is given a novel twist by a tight MARCH (Part 2) structure that sees students completing their first year in practices around the country, and returning to Cardiff for the second year, in which they undertake an urban study before proceeding to a thesis project. Students negotiate this curriculum with evident

commitment. There is a strong sense of the experiential, and a revelling in the elements – storms, high tides, floods.

James Barnfield's nocturnal map of downtown Birmingham caught my eye, and his wonderful populated section (pictured below).

Stephen Cairns lectures in architectural design and theory at the University of Edinburgh

**Resume:** A Welsh rarebit of talent at the Cardiff show



## 5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

### *1 The Thames Estuary – A Sense of Place*

A talk to accompany the Soundings from the Estuary exhibition (see *Critic's Choice*).

11 July, 6.30pm at the Tate Modern, Bankside, London SE1. To book a free ticket email [info@soundingsfromtheestuary.com](mailto:info@soundingsfromtheestuary.com)

### *2 Eco Machines*

The Architectural Association's contribution to the National Architecture Student Festival.

Until 30 July. More London Riverside, by City Hall, London SE1. [www.lfa2008.org/students.php](http://www.lfa2008.org/students.php)

### *3 Root Index*

See this exhibition drawn from archive material, film footage and radio to celebrate 60 years of Plymouth's cultural life.

Until 7 September, Plymouth Arts Centre, 38 Looe Street, Plymouth, Devon PL4 0EB. [www.plymouthartscentre.org](http://www.plymouthartscentre.org)

### *4 Sheffield Student Show*

The BA and Masters architecture exhibition continues.

Until 25 July, Lower Ground Floor, The Arts Tower, University of Sheffield, S10 2TN. [www.shef.ac.uk/architecture](http://www.shef.ac.uk/architecture)

### *5 SIX Student Awards for Architecture 2008*

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# Products

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Readers may also obtain information about these products by filling in the enquiry numbers on an AJ enquiry card. Advertisers wishing to promote their products on these pages should contact Hannah Stadie on 020 7728 4562.

## CLAXTON BLINDS



### AJ ENQUIRY 201

Claxton Blinds is one of the leading commercial window-blind companies in the UK, specialising in interior window projects for any requirement. Some notable projects from Claxton Blinds include Tower 42, the Canary Wharf Tower and the Citigroup Tower. For more information, visit [www.claxton-blinds.com](http://www.claxton-blinds.com)

## KALZIP



### AJ ENQUIRY 203

Kalzip's aluminium standing-seam system has been used to clad Newcastle International Airport's new Air Traffic Control Tower. Designed by 3DReid Architects, this distinctive 45m-high vase-like structure boasts several cascading tiers of tapered Kalzip sheets with widths varying between 300mm and 450mm.

## MAPEI UK



### AJ ENQUIRY 205

Mapelast from Mapei is a two-component, flexible, cementitious mortar for waterproofing concrete terraces, balconies, bathrooms, showers, wet rooms and swimming pools. Mapelast is also suitable for large-scale projects such as bridges, dams, tunnels, water-storage tanks, and aqueducts, and can be spray-, brush- or trowel-applied.

## SCHÜCO



### AJ ENQUIRY 207

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

## STOAKES SYSTEMS



### AJ ENQUIRY 202

The devil is in the detail, the detail is in the corner, the corner is in Blackburn's Sixth Form College. Designed by DLA Architecture, this stunning building is a major showcase for Kalwall translucent cladding from Stoakes Systems and its unique diffused daylight ambience. For more information visit [www.stoakes.co.uk](http://www.stoakes.co.uk)

## GEZE UK



### AJ ENQUIRY 204

GEZE UK has launched Powerdrive, a heavy-duty, automatic sliding-door system designed for extra-large and heavyweight entrances. The high-capacity system supports heavyweight glass, metal, uPVC and timber doors up to 200kg. Powerdrive can be fitted easily to single- or double-leaf doors with an opening width of up to 3,000mm.

## VELFAC



### AJ ENQUIRY 206

Velfac now provides a service for domestic or small commercial projects. Each window is made bespoke to design, colour and size specifications, allowing more freedom of imagination. The display is at the Kettering showroom in Northamptonshire. Telephone 01223 897100 or visit [www.velfac.co.uk](http://www.velfac.co.uk)

## INTEGRATED DESIGN



### AJ ENQUIRY 208

The Fastlane Entrance Control range is designed to balance the aesthetic and security requirements demanded by today's architects and modern building design. The range includes optical turnstiles, tripods, entrance gates, barrier-arm optical turnstiles, speedgates, passgates and tailgate-detection systems. [www.fastlane-turnstiles.com](http://www.fastlane-turnstiles.com)

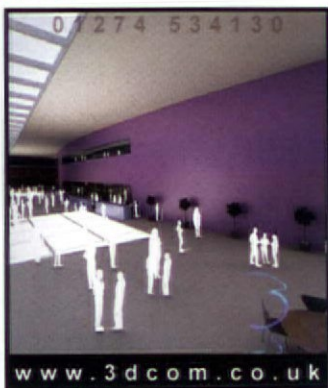
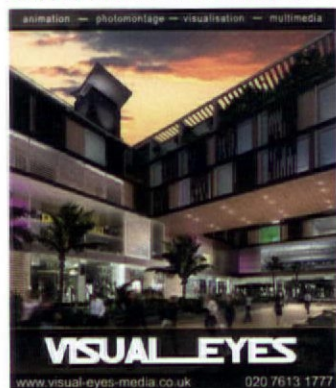


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# Ian Martin. I'd rather destroy Finsbury Health Centre than pimp it out

**MONDAY.** Great excitement at the launch of our campaign to Rebuild The Tampon. This elegant structure, originally known as the Tamworth Pontlevis, was an ornamental drawbridge fixed permanently in the raised position to salute the 1951 Festival of Britain.

A year later it was dismantled. In the '60s the parts were reassembled as a luminescent Christian coffee bar. When the ring road arrived in the '70s, the bits were carted away by community architects and rebuilt as a Claimants' Union office. In the '80s it was converted into a brasserie full of yuppie haircuts and synth drum sounds. By 1998 it had become a chic, retro internet cafe. Now everyone's mincing about with iPhones, so it's scrap again.

The Tampon will rise phoenix-like from its own recycled, sustainable history. **As will Tamworth itself, which is destined soon to snatch back its rightful heritage as capital of all England.** Don't think the Tories aren't interested in this, either. David Cameron's already talking about Tamworth as 'the new Brasília'.

**TUESDAY.** I'm even angrier than my old friend Dusty Penhaligon, the conservacionist.

We're standing in front of Finsbury Health Centre, Berthold Lubetkin's little gem of petrified 1930s socialism, still shining like a good deed in a shitty world. Grade I-listed, but these days hemmed in by three-quarters-scale starter housing and office lumps. Dusty, in common with everyone who dwells in the past, is worried about the future.

Finsbury Health Centre is owned by the NHS. That's us. It's ours. And 'we' are putting it up for sale. The phrase 'not fit for purpose' will no doubt be prominent in the estate management report. 'Couldn't care less who buys it. Long as they preserve it', says Dusty, pulling on a roll-up and squinting into the distance. 'Function follows form. Simple as. Important thing, keep it intact...'

I beg to differ. This building symbolises the way we were. Quaint as it seems, it's what Labour politicians stood for in the 20th century. A public sector that served the working class, rather than the Kuiper Belt of glittering private consultancies orbiting the NHS today. It's perfectly possible that the health centre could be sensitively restored as, I don't know, a boutique spa. Fine. As long as it stays in the public sector.

The prospect of capitalism's flag being flown above Finsbury Health Centre should be too humiliating for us to bear. **I would rather see it smashed up and used as fucking crusher run for Heathrow Terminal 6 than fall into the hands of the enemy.** At first Dusty thinks I'm joking. Then, after some squinting, he's on board. 'Like some architectural Masada, yeah? Just as they're about to hand it over, we blow it up. Finsbury Health Centre lays down its life that others might live. Or whatever. Love it....'

We decide not to tell anyone else for now, in case blowing up a Grade I-listed building breaches any local authority by-laws. Or whatever.

**WEDNESDAY.** Dusty rings. Apparently pulverising listed buildings

for a greater good may just have got a bit easier...

**Our doomed government, reduced these days to pulling faces and admonishing us,** is scandalised to discover that more than four million tonnes of perishable household built environment are wasted each year.

With so much habitable space being thrown away, at a cost of hundreds of pounds per household, the pressure is now on to use up our leftovers. Sadly for Dusty and his crew, the focus here is not building preservation but land. We've now got the epic space equivalent of the arable vs biofuel debate. And with three million new human farms required by 2020, good luck hanging on to that seminal post-war housing with the generous play area.

**THURSDAY.** I have designed a bent tower in Milan, affectionately nicknamed *Il Flaccido*. Despite having won over the critics with its 'soft eroticism' – **AND getting outline planning permission from the Mafia** – the scheme is suddenly controversial.

The bastard Italian prime minister Silvio Mussolini has told everyone it would create a 'sense of impotence'. Predictably, my email inbox is clogged with sarcastic erectile dysfunction spam.

**FRIDAY.** Panic over. He actually said it would create a 'sense of importance'.

**SATURDAY.** Low-carbon lunch with Dusty; neither of us has **fizzy water**.

**SUNDAY.** Form an **architectural jelly** in the recliner.



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