

17.07.08

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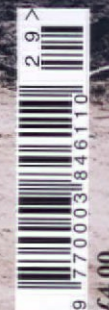
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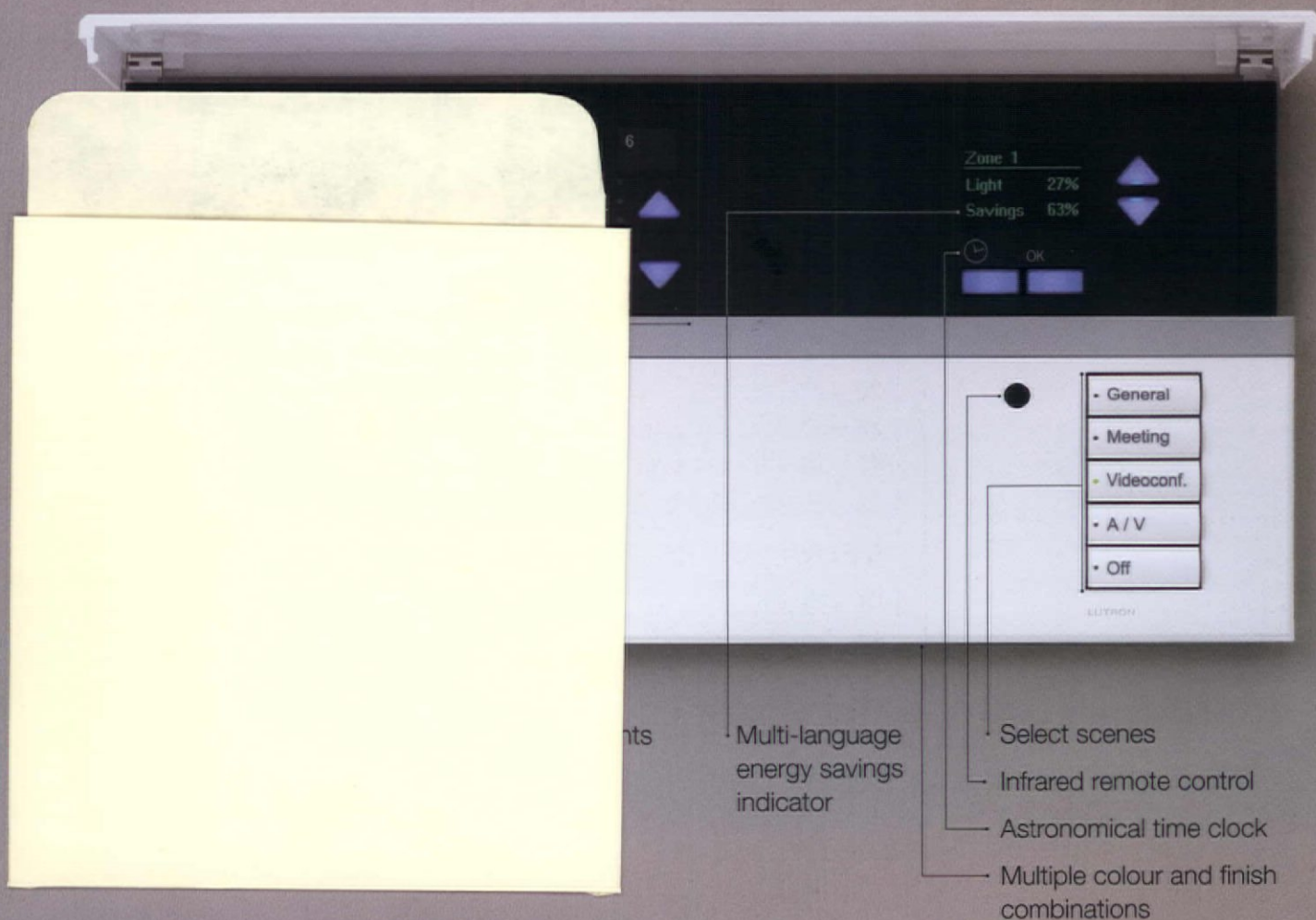
KIELDER OBSERVATORY

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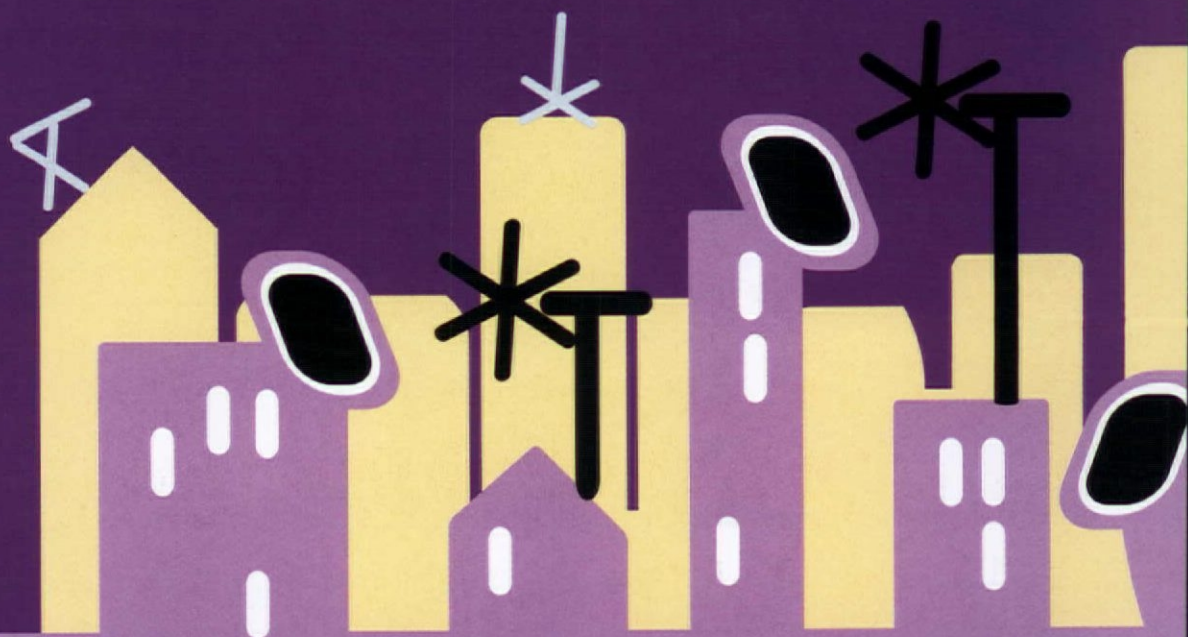
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News



AHMM ACADEMY REVEALED

This is Allford Hall Monaghan Morris' (AHMM's) proposed Chobham School in the Athletes' Village. Backed by developer Lend Lease, the 1,800-pupil school is being delivered as part of the government's city academy programme, under Building Schools for the Future.

ODA MAY SEEK HOUSING ASSOCIATION CASH

Credit crunch leaves developer struggling to raise money for Athletes' Village

The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) could be forced to ask for government money originally earmarked for London's Housing Associations to fund the Athletes' Village development.

The downturn in the economy, especially in the house-building market, has left developer Lend Lease struggling to raise its half of the £2 billion needed for the scheme, as money lenders become increasingly unwilling to invest due to falling property prices.

A senior ODA source said: 'If the banks don't lend, then there

would be other possibilities open to us. The government gives out approximately £1 billion every year to London's Housing Associations, so that could be a funding route.

'The government has to meet with its International Olympic Committee obligations. There will be very little housing built in East London in the next few years, so by 2013 there will be a strong demand for housing in this area.'

Communities and Local Government refused to comment,

but claimed that 'all of the £8.4 billion' it has allocated to support the national delivery of affordable homes 'was needed'.

Tom Dacey, chairman of Southern Housing Group, expressed surprise at the claim, adding: 'I'm sure there would be other areas of the exchequer that could be raided before they went for Housing Association money.'

The news comes nearly a month after ODA chairman John Armitt admitted the government would 'have to come in and support the village financially'.

A National Audit Office report on 20 June warned that the deal between the ODA and Lend Lease could collapse entirely, and last week the AJ reported that Make's 30-storey tower at the heart of the scheme has been mothballed (AJ 10.07.08).

Lend Lease – which declined to comment – has already been forced to scale back the 4,200 units proposed to house the 17,000 athletes attending the 2012 Games to 3,300 (AJ 03.07.08).

Richard Vaughan

AEDAS GETS COMPLEX

Aedas has unveiled its proposals for a new 54,000m² civic and cultural complex in Singapore, featuring a 5,000-seat theatre and a 40m-high foyer.

Richard Waite



OUTLOOK BAD FOR WALBROOK 'CLOUDS'

The distinctive 'cloud' elements designed to top Atelier Foster/ Nouvel's Walbrook Square scheme in the City of London may be cut back or even axed to save costs.

The scheme, which gained planning permission last year, consists of four blocks around a central square between Cannon and Queen Victoria Streets. Each block will be capped by different lightweight elements or 'clouds'.

However, a source close to the scheme – the lease of which was sold by Legal & General to Spanish developer Metrovacesa

for £250 million – claimed Metrovacesa is desperate to save money as the gloomy economic situation continues.

'The expensive bit that sits on top does not make sense in this climate,' said the source. 'It is possible that they will dumb down the scheme.'

'A consequence is that they may have to think about new architects,' the source added.

A Metrovacesa spokesman said: 'We are working with Nouvel and Foster in order to improve the project. We have not made any definite decisions about the design.' *Max Thompson*

RMJM FUNDS MINORITY ARCHITECTS OF THE FUTURE

RMJM has pumped £1 million into a new initiative with the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust to get black and ethnic minorities to join the profession.

The three-year scheme includes a national competition which will see six youngsters win an 'intensive' introductory course to architecture at Harvard Graduate School of Design the USA.

RMJM will also help run workshops in 'underground' British inner-city venues.

According to the RIBA, only 2 per cent of practising architects in the UK are from minority backgrounds. *Richard Waite*

Read more on this story at

WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK

THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

AQUATICS CENTRE JURY FORESAW HIGH COSTS

Potential problems with the roof of Zaha Hadid's over-budget Aquatics Centre for the London 2012 Olympic Games were spotted by the competition jury back in 2004, it has emerged. In a document released by contest organiser the London Development Agency, judges highlighted 'organisational issues' and a 'maintenance concern over the timber ceiling in [the] aggressive pool hall environment'.

PRIVATE SCHEMES EXEMPT FROM 'PARKER BORIS' STANDARDS

London Mayor Boris Johnson's Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning Simon Milton has implied that the proposed reintroduction of the Parker Morris space standards in London will not apply to private developments. Speaking at the Planning in London in a new Political and Economic Climate conference on 14 July, Milton only linked the standards to new social housing.

LEEDS LUMIERE SCHEME MOTHBALLLED

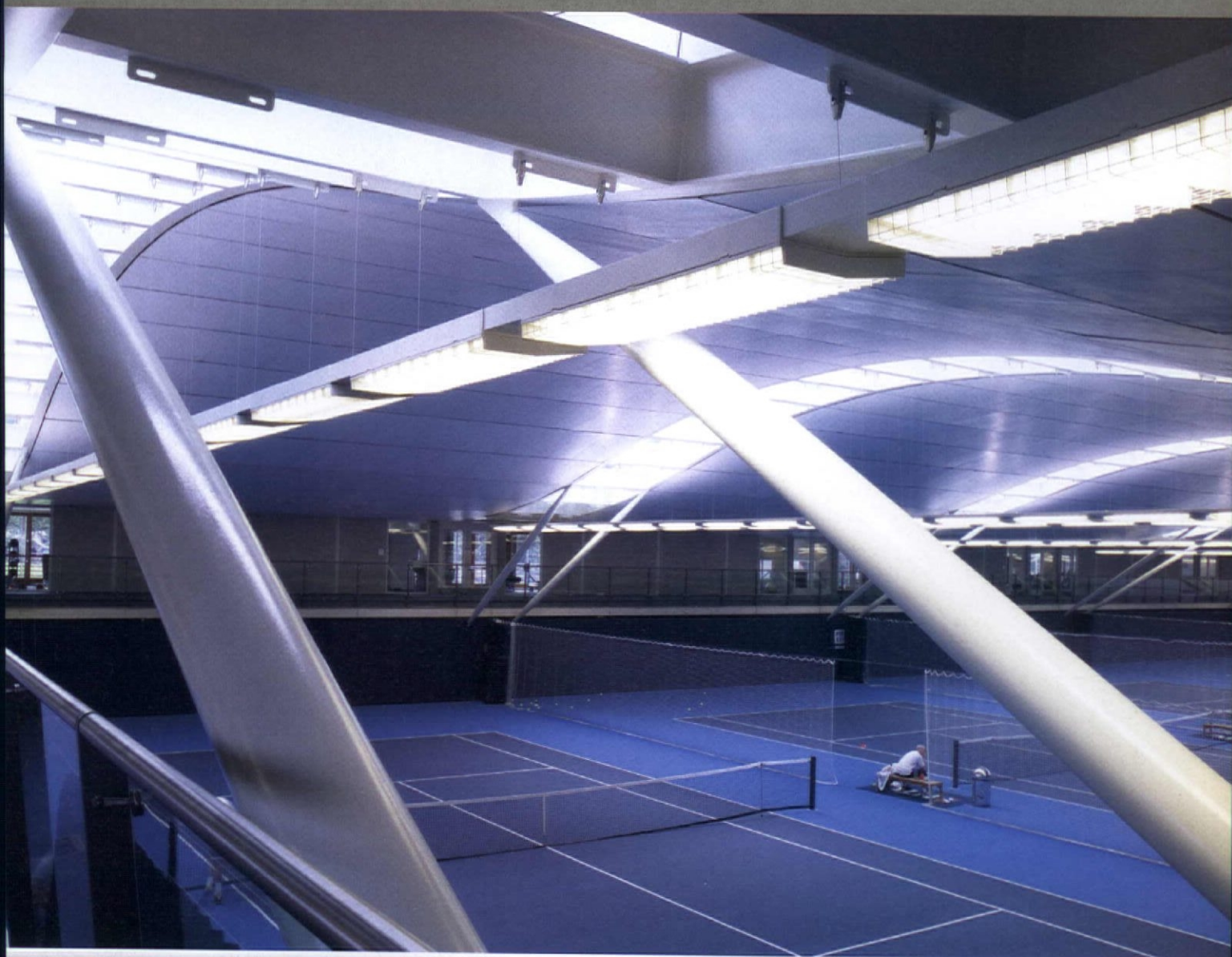
Ian Simpson's twin-tower Lumiere scheme in Leeds has been indefinitely put on ice. Developer KW Linfoot blamed the lack of available finance for the decision to stop further work on the 173m-high, £220 million city-centre project.

KUMA PROMOTES SUSHI ARCHITECTURE

Japanese architect Kengo Kuma has criticised the designs of Frank Gehry and other contemporary architects, and claimed they could learn a lot from how sushi is made. Speaking at the Royal Academy of the Arts (RA) in London on 14 July, Kuma said: 'I think the 20th-century is not a good time for architecture.'

Read all of these news stories in full and more online at

WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK



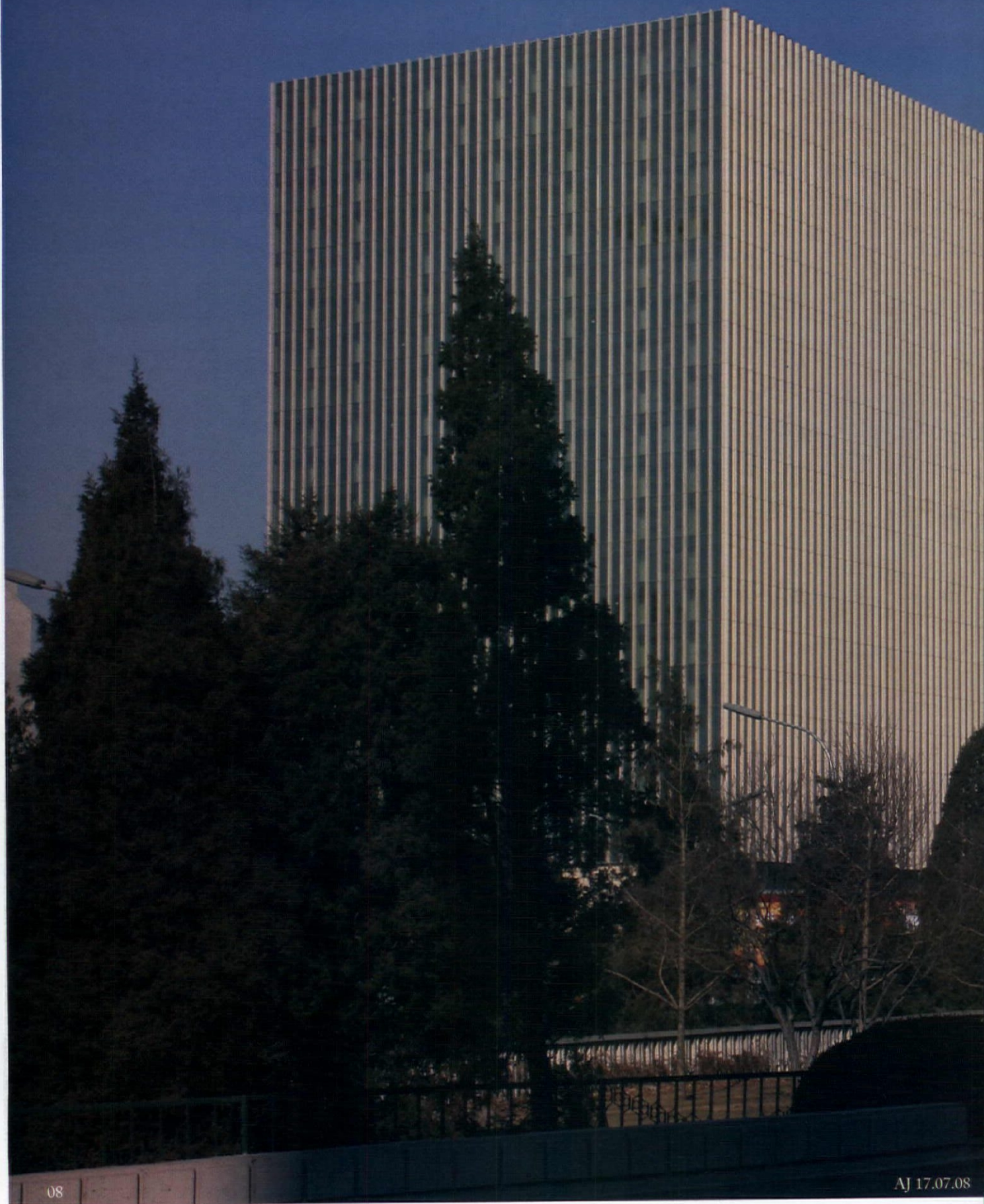
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FARRELLS' CHINA PETROLEUM HQ OPENS

This is Farrells' China National Petroleum Corporation headquarters on the Second Ring Road to the east of Beijing. Formed from four 24-storey, L-shaped towers that share a common base, the building has a floor area of 201,000m². *Max Thompson*

ECO-TOWNS ARE IN THE WRONG PLACES, REPORT CLAIMS

The government's proposed eco-towns are in the wrong locations, and the whole initiative should be renamed if it is to be successful, says a report released this week.

Eco Towns and Beyond, a paper written by housing specialist PRP Architects, urban designer Urbed and lobby group Design for Homes, says the government should reconsider its decision to site eco-towns in rural locations only and concentrate on urban extensions with existing planning permissions.

Andy von Bradsky, managing director of PRP, said: 'There are a lot of places, which have got a consent, where housebuilders can't move forward because of their own market issues. Ought we not to be looking to those places, instead of new ones? That seems to be a more logical

position in the context of a changed economy.'

The report, which takes lessons from European eco-developments such as Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm (see leader on page 16), recommends placing eco-towns on brownfield sites with existing planning permissions. 'The cost of getting infrastructure into [eco-towns], and the carbon emissions in terms of transport to and from them, raise a whole series of questions around the locations,' said von Bradsky. 'If you have an urban extension you don't have to pay for new everything.'

The eco-towns effort has been beset by the crashing residential market, local opposition in areas in which they are proposed and unfavourable comparisons with post-war New Towns (AJ online 11.07.08). Von Bradsky also

questioned the name of the initiative. 'The term eco-towns is an unfortunate one, because you should be applying the same principles to any large-scale development,' he said.

Report co-author and Urbed director Nicholas Falk said: 'Successful European eco-towns are closely linked to thriving urban conurbations, where there is a demand for housing. None of the projects we looked at are standalone settlements.'

Consultant PricewaterhouseCoopers is also carrying out research into the procurement and funding models of eco-developments outside the UK in order to look at more commercially viable alternatives to the British model. Its final conclusions will be released in September. *Kieran Long*



From left to right
AJ editor Kieran Long, winners Alicia Pivaro, Joe Morris and Fiona Scott, and judges Colin Bloch of sponsor RPS and Mark Brearley of Design for London

TRIO SCOOPS URBAN DESIGN SCHOLARSHIPS

Three young architects have been selected as winners of the AJ/RPS Urban Design Scholarships.

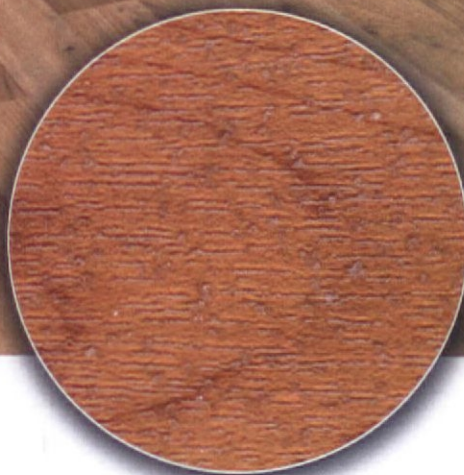
Joe Morris of Duggan Morris Architects, Fiona Scott of Gort Scott Architects, and Alicia Pivaro will team up with a mentor from Design for London to work up an urban design project of their choice for a maximum of six months.

Each scholar will document their progress on www.architectsjournal.co.uk, culminating in an exhibition and the publishing of their finished work in the AJ. *James Pallister*

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THE REGENERATORS # 5

CLIVE DUTTON

A series of profiles of the people
shaping our urban landscape

THE MAN WITH THE BIG CITY PLAN

Birmingham City Council's
Clive Dutton tells *Richard Vaughan*
he wants 'England's second city'
to rival New York and Amsterdam



Standing on the 25th floor of Birmingham's Alpha Tower, the city is laid out in front of Birmingham City Council's director of planning and regeneration Clive Dutton as he explains the council's Big City Plan.

From the tower, Dutton can oversee the major development projects taking place below him. And there are a lot of them; Birmingham has £17 billion-worth of new-build schemes on its books – equivalent to almost twice the cost of the London 2012 Olympics.

Dutton says his chief aim is to establish Birmingham as one of the 'most liveable' cities in the world within the next 10-15 years. This is a goal that will be measured using the Mercer Index, a quality-of-living survey released annually, and in which Birmingham lies 56th. London is the only UK city above it at 38.

'Our aim is to be in the top 20,' says Dutton. 'Everything we do is with that objective in mind.'

According to Nathan Cornish, Midlands director of developer Urban Splash, which is completing the refurbishment of the city-centre Rotunda, Birmingham has been suffering from an 'inferiority complex' for far too long, and sees Dutton as its remedy.

'Liverpool and Manchester would never stand for being called "England's second city",' says Cornish. 'Clive has done an awful lot to try to shake this identity crisis and has made massive inroads in promoting the assets of good design to the politicians.'

To achieve the transformation of the city, Dutton has turned to urban-planning practice Urban Initiatives to create the masterplan. This will break the inner-ring road, dubbed the 'concrete collar',

'If Birmingham isn't a globally relevant city then the UK isn't cooking on gas'

expanding Birmingham's city centre from 80ha to 800. The Big City Plan, says Dutton, will force central government to pay attention to the city.

'We've never been able to set the true context of the city,' he says. '[The Big City Plan] sets up a dialogue with government that's never happened before. It shouldn't be with intermediaries, it should be a dialogue with the highest levels about how we make Birmingham globally relevant. Because if Birmingham isn't globally relevant then the UK isn't cooking on gas.'

Central to the redevelopment is the regeneration of Paradise

Circus, the city-centre site that houses the soon-to-be-demolished John Madin-designed Central Library, which will be replaced with a £193 million library that a stellar shortlist of seven firms, including OMA and Foster + Partners, is vying for.

The demolition of Madin's library has sparked a rash of controversy among heritage bodies, and now English Heritage has waded into the debate by putting the 1974 building forward for listing.

However, Dutton claims the listing of a building he describes as 'ugly, brutal and dysfunctional' would have no impact on the plans for the new library or for the city-centre redevelopment.

'I'd be very surprised if the architecture minister [Margaret Hodge] listed the building,' he says. 'If, however, there was a decision that defied logic, we would go through a very convoluted process of applying for listed building consent to demolish it.'

Dutton adds, 'We want the best library in the world and we're going to have it. We're not going to wait for anybody.'

To do this, Birmingham Council is underwriting the entire £193 million scheme. The city, Dutton says, won't go about 'can-rattling', hoping for a 'thoroughbred stallion and ending up with a three-legged mule'.

Birmingham has been 'artificially constrained' for 30 years by central government 'telling us what we can and cannot do', Dutton says.

'We've had to think in a different way,' he says. 'We're now thinking on a global scale. We want Birmingham to instantly conjure up images like downtown Amsterdam, Brooklyn Heights or Edinburgh New Town do.'

'We have to reflect what our international competitors are doing, and it can't be done in this 'car-boot sale' approach to urban regeneration that we've seen in the last generation.'

When asked if the current economic climate could be the worst time for a city to be embarking on regeneration, Dutton is characteristically bullish.

'I'm not worried at all,' he says. 'Birmingham is bearing up well and I have had no indication that major projects are pausing or stopping. All these things are cyclical; times will be harder but in the context of a city, it's nothing – it's the blink of an eye.'

CLIVE DUTTON'S CV – REGENERATING THE MIDLANDS

Prior to 1996	General manager of the Black Country Development Corporation; chief executive of Tipton City Challenge
1996–2000	Head of regeneration, Sandwell Metropolitan Council
1998	Awarded OBE for services to urban regeneration
2000–2005	Director of regeneration, JJ Gallagher
2005–present	Director of planning and regeneration, Birmingham City Council
Present	Chairman of the government's annual Sustainable Communities Award

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A LITTLE FISHY

AJ Towers has been the recipient of an anonymous letter with slightly threatening overtones (pictured below). Astragal presumes this is merely an expression of a reader's love of seafood, rather than any kind of poorly veiled threat to the AJ's very own Little Fish columnist, the scrumptious **Jonathan Hendry**.

The batter is ready,
the fryer is up to temperature,
..... pass me the LITTLE FISH

India and China, how property is being offloaded to gullible Russian investors and, er, how the smart money should be invested in London nightclubs. 'If the music stops completely,' said a metaphorically inclined Rees, 'the best party will still be in London. Under every arch from Vauxhall to Bermondsey people are dancing in nightclubs – that is where people should invest.' Party on dude!

Gallery). But now, the knitting anarchists of London have a new cause – the notorious Aylesbury Estate in south London, which is earmarked for demolition. This summer, residents will come together to fashion a scale model of the estate as 'a permanent reminder and testament to their home for so many years'. And with 50 blocks and over 2,500 homes to create, that's a lot of work. As blog iknit.org.uk says, it's a 'woolly mammoth!'

LEG STRETCH

To help rid himself of his London Festival of Architecture gin sweats, Astragal went on a walk round the benches of

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Southwark, south London, part of **Oliver Froome-Lewis** and **Daisy Ginsberg's** Touching the City project, taking in various installations erected in just five minutes. Highlights included Awst and Walther's pictures of a naked Walther sitting on a bench in the Allies and Morrison-masterplanned Canvey Street; a puppet show featuring three rabbits in Trinity Church Square; and a hammock hung from an advertising hoarding on the Elephant and Castle roundabout. Astragal's urban ramble was finished off with a real, live plain-clothes police officer arresting a young chap just off Newington Causeway. This, apparently, was not an installation.

UNDERNEATH THE ARCHES

City of London planning top dog **Peter Rees** talked to Astragal recently about the continued freefall of the world economy. He opined on the price of rice in

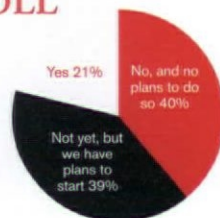
KNITTY GRITTY

First they stitched a blanket for Breast Cancer Care. Then they crocheted a coral reef to highlight the plight of the reef from climate change (currently on show at the Hayward

THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Does your practice measure its carbon footprint? (see right for result)

Next week's question: Vote on the shortlist for this year's Stirling Prize, revealed on Thursday, at WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK





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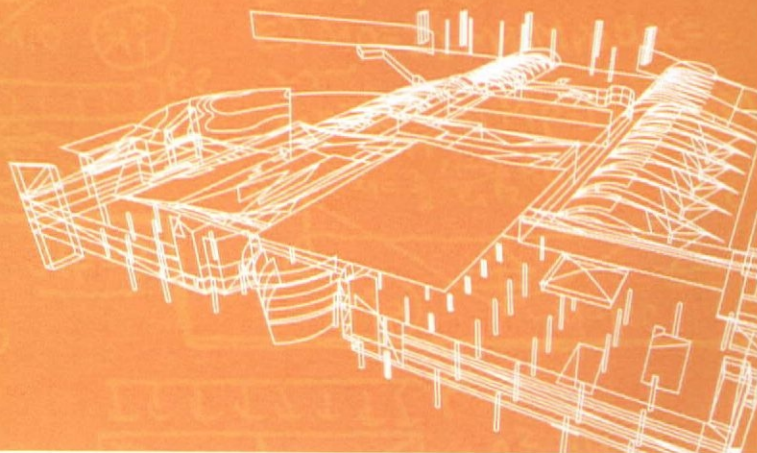
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Leader & Comment



Leader Before building eco-towns, we need to follow Sweden's example and build consensus, says **Kieran Long**

Last week I visited Hammarby Sjöstad, the new district of Stockholm that has become the very paragon of eco-developments. I was there with a bunch of UK housing professionals on a tour organised by Design for Homes.

We wandered the *Gattaca*-like perfection of Hammarby's streets, crossing the picturesque SUDS rivulets, and admiring the stone-render facades, which hide super insulation. We heard about the shit-turns-to-biogas brilliance of the power-generation strategy, and the subterranean waste-disposal system sucking recyclables at 70mph to compactors.

Listening to the development's architects, I was struck by the cultural differences between ecological development in Sweden and the UK. Perhaps most importantly for the

developers, Hammarby has no social-housing element. Sweden doesn't build buildings dedicated to housing people with low incomes. 'We sponsor families, not buildings,' said architect Stellan Fryxell.

I met two Stockholm civil servants while I was in town, who explained the city's approach to sustainable transport and the built environment. When I pushed them about how they could achieve their target of having 100 per cent 'clean' vehicles in Stockholm by 2011 without upsetting some lobby group, they told me that it had to do with the 'Swedish consensus'. There are some things that are not political in Sweden – like cleaner water and air, or the need to consume fewer natural resources. Everyone agrees on these things.

Coming, as I do, from a city where the last mayoral election was partly won because taxi drivers hated bendy buses, this was hard to understand. But Hammarby was not funded by the state, and it is not full of eco-warrior hippies. It is a commercial development where an extremely high degree of co-ordination between politicians, planners, architects, developers, engineers and utility companies has created 11,000 dwellings in around 15 years. The UK's eco-towns programme has fractured communities before a single planning permission has been applied for. It is time to think again about how to build consensus – without it, even Sweden would find it hard to make sustainable pieces of city. kieran.long@emap.com



Opinion By ignoring Richard Rogers, Boris Johnson proves he has potential as London Mayor, says **Gavin Stamp**

I certainly didn't vote for him. Prior to his election, London Mayor Boris Johnson seemed to represent the interests of the selfish outer-suburban boroughs rather than those of inner London, and he was clearly pro-car instead of public transport (his posturing on two spoked wheels was unconvincing given that, as editor of the *Spectator* from 1999 to 2005, he axed my Not-Motoring column while retaining the usual Motoring feature). Johnson declared against plans to enlarge the Congestion Charge area westward and to tax those ridiculous four-by-fours more heavily, while the political party he ornaments has traditionally been the supporter of big business rather than architectural heritage – even though nobody could have been more accommodating to the ruthless

ambitions of multi-nationals than former Mayor Ken Livingstone. And then there was Johnson's lickspittle adulation of George W Bush and his catastrophic policies.

But, as far as London is concerned, I have to admit, so far, so good. Johnson has made many of the right, reassuring noises since his accession to power as Mayor. He has declared against the insanity of a third runway at Heathrow. He has spoken of the scandal of so many properties in London lying empty. He

Johnson's call for more drinking fountains is rather endearing

has defended the Green Belt and 'London's precious green and open spaces'. He has axed Livingstone's gratuitous proposal to transform Parliament Square. And he seems less in thrall to the silly 'visionary' rhetoric of superstar architects than his predecessor. I am disappointed that he didn't immediately sack Richard Rogers, but relieved that he intends to leaven Rogers' pretentious influence with that of a wider panel of advisers.

I know it was only a speech, but it was cheering that at the launch of the London Festival of Architecture, Johnson said that he

liked both Daniel Libeskind in the Holloway Road and traditional Classical architecture, and that he liked each more for its proximity to the other (Comment, AJ 03.07.08). To suggest that 'the genius of London architecture lies in this juxtaposition' hints at a glimmering of understanding that the real character of the capital lies in its unplanned, chaotic, picturesque nature, in which grand gestures are alien. Improvements need to be pragmatic, and local. To call for more drinking fountains across the



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 designed by George
 Grey Wornum

city is therefore rather endearing, and certainly more realistic than the tired old vision peddled by Rogers of making every open space like bloody Barcelona, full of open-air cafés with umbrellas. And to advocate buildings that 'people will want to keep for 100 years and not tear down in 30' is anti-Modernist sanity.

I suppose we must take Johnson at his word, and the word has been enshrined in *Planning a Better London*. Of course this contains the usual verbiage about wanting 'exciting, new architecture and design' but this is balanced by a commitment to cherish and protect the character of this 'unique city'. There is also a welcome commitment to respect the World Heritage Sites in London and to work with English Heritage. It is noticeable that this plan is less *dirigiste*. Johnson says he will use his powers to determine planning applications of 'potential strategic importance' but only 'carefully and sparingly'. Tall buildings, Johnson says, have their place, but he will not impose them on the boroughs, as the previous Mayor was notoriously keen to do.

Of course it is mere words, but it is still rare to find any politician publicly recognising that 'climate change is undoubtedly the most important environmental challenge we face'. And the commitment to 'support the success of all London's enterprises, whether multi-

national or small and medium-sized' suggests an understanding of how healthy cities work and what makes them enjoyable. There is recognition of the importance of public transport in the commitment to build Crossrail and of the problem of 'unacceptable and growing disparities in wealth, health and quality of life. Too many Londoners cannot afford a home'. Too true, but it is doubtful whether the Mayor will be able or willing to tackle one aspect of this problem – that so many of those scandalously empty properties are the second (or third, or fourth) homes of Russian oligarchs and Middle Eastern tycoons.

It may well be that the recession, rather than Johnson, will deal with some of these issues, notably the prohibitive cost of housing

He has axed the gratuitous proposal to transform Parliament Square

and the current tall-building mania. But if he supports the recreation of both the Skylon and the Euston Arch in addition to removing the curse of bendy buses from our streets, then he might even get my vote next time around.

Gavin Stamp is a writer, presenter and architectural historian

Email comment@architectsjournal.co.uk



RENE EHRLHART



Seeing his work built reminds Patrick Lynch of the primary, unconscious aspects of design

Encountering your work built for the first time is one of the strangest pleasures of an architect. It doesn't feel like your work, it feels like something completed by another.

The conscious part of any design gets left behind when the work is going well, and you know when to stop, when to let go, when things are going well. Every time it is different though; you fall back on technique, ways of working, habits, professional knowledge, learned behaviour, tools, tricks, prevarication, oscillation, vacillation, avoidance, sloth, labour, endurance, obstinacy,

hubris, exaggerated rules, prescribed parameters, hard work, changes of heart, ecstatic jumps, mistakes, acceptance, conversation, anecdote, memories of similar things, masquerade, trying things, taking them away again, making up your mind, refusing to settle, repetition, repetition, repetition, resignation, sudden insights, clients suddenly being truthful and somehow knowing when something is right, and surprise when a project, like others, can stand up for itself. Design feels more like discovery than invention.

watching this thing happen to someone else and know exactly what will happen next, where to place your body and what not to do. It grew out of absolute acceptance that I couldn't do the thing I most wanted to do – I couldn't design, I couldn't make anything beautiful, I couldn't even make things work – I was a failure. Things would not congeal, lines would refuse to sit still on the page for me as they did in the work of the people I admired.

I don't quite know why I did this, but I picked up some card I'd bought to make a

I was going beyond myself, in a similar way to the earlier bliss I'd felt at sport

The conscious mind can't articulate all of the information and problems the brain somehow processes. The addiction of late or all-night working sessions is one way of trying to go beyond yourself, when there isn't yet very much to go beyond.

I remember at college there was always as much talk about music as design, but unlike young musicians we were trapped inside a discipline that didn't allow us to make what we were training to do. I built a few things as a student, but their only worth is as exercises. Unlike rock musicians or mathematicians architects are not burnt out by 30, we're hardly begun by 40.

I remember the first time a project really took hold of me and I felt that I was going beyond myself in a way that resembled the earlier bliss I'd felt at sport, when things happen so fast you can appreciate them happening in slow motion, like you're

model with and some of my girlfriend's oil pastels and started to draw on all fours; white pastel on black card. A sharp hard pencil-cut lines into the white marks; big arm-opening strokes of white and correction marks from the pencil, less lines on paper than incisions in lines. Suddenly spaces opened up for me, and I was inside the line, inside the line of thought of the project that had vexed and disturbed me and now was accepting me into its own force and logic and time.

Now I don't know exactly how to replicate this, and yet somehow in our professional lives we have to find the space to appreciate this type of time. Going on site and seeing something almost built takes me back to this primary experience of design. Each time it reveals itself to us, architecture redeems itself, and our doubtful certainties, and fear, and pride.



Marsh View, Norfolk,
by Lynch Architects
(2003)

GREEN GAUGE

Your coverage of the UK Green Building Council's (UK-GBC's) work on measurement and reporting (AJ 10.07.08), in particular your leader, gave the impression that the UK-GBC is recommending that our members should concern themselves primarily with 'good housekeeping' on sustainability issues. This is misleading.

Yes, we acknowledge that companies can start small, but this doesn't necessarily mean just addressing their operations. We are advocating action at the organisational level – which could also include a company's portfolio, projects or services. It is about determining the most significant impacts and putting in place a process that will address them.

By going on this journey together and becoming increasingly ambitious over time, our initiative will go to the heart of how our sector does business. This can play a significant role in reducing the overall environmental impacts of our buildings, and activities within those buildings, that are so essential to tackling climate change.

The comparison with the UIA's (International Union of Architects') adoption of contraction and convergence is also fairly unhelpful. This is not an either/or situation – the UK-GBC's commitment to work with members to use the Global Reporting Initiative is absolutely compatible with national and international strategies and frameworks to reduce CO₂ emissions.

Jeremy Sumeray, director of strategy,
UK Green Building Council

MOVIE MAGIC

Reading Sam Jacob's lovely piece on *The Fountainhead* (AJ 10.07.08), I couldn't help but want to point out one little thing. If he'd read my book *Second-Rate Hollywood Blockbusters Featuring Architects* (now, unfortunately, out of print) he would have noticed that, far from being ignored by the film industry, architects are everywhere. You just have to watch the right films.

There's *Indecent Proposal*, in which architect Woody Harrelson is bankrupted by building his house and has to sell his wife Demi Moore to Robert Redford. There's *Intersection*, in which Richard Gere plays a successful architect married to Sharon Stone. The execrable chick flick *Sleepless in Seattle* has Tom Hanks playing an architect. There's Paul

Newman in *The Towering Inferno*, Anthony LaPaglia in *The Architect* and, of course, Brian Dennehy in *The Belly of an Architect*.

In fact, architects are all over Hollywood like a rash – it is film-making code for establishing that the character is a decent human being.

Finally, I think Danny DeVito is miscast as Daniel Libeskind in Jacob's *Fountainhead* franchise – a role which should obviously have gone to Bingo from the Banana Splits.

Eddie Heathcote, architecture critic,
Financial Times

FULL CIRCLE

As the production editor of the AJ from 1954–1960, it gave me a great feeling of continuity to see the exterior of my flat (*seen in the image below*) in the Accordia

development in Cambridge illustrated in the opening photograph of the feature on the RIBA Awards in AJ 03.07.08.
William Slack, Cambridge

CORRECTIONS

In the RIBA Awards issue (AJ 03.07.08), the client for Bijlmer Arena Station was Prorail/City of Amsterdam, not Infraprojecten.

Daniel Labbad, chair of the UK Green Building Council's measuring and reporting task group (Agenda, AJ 10.07.08) is chief executive officer of Lend Lease Retail & Communities – UK.

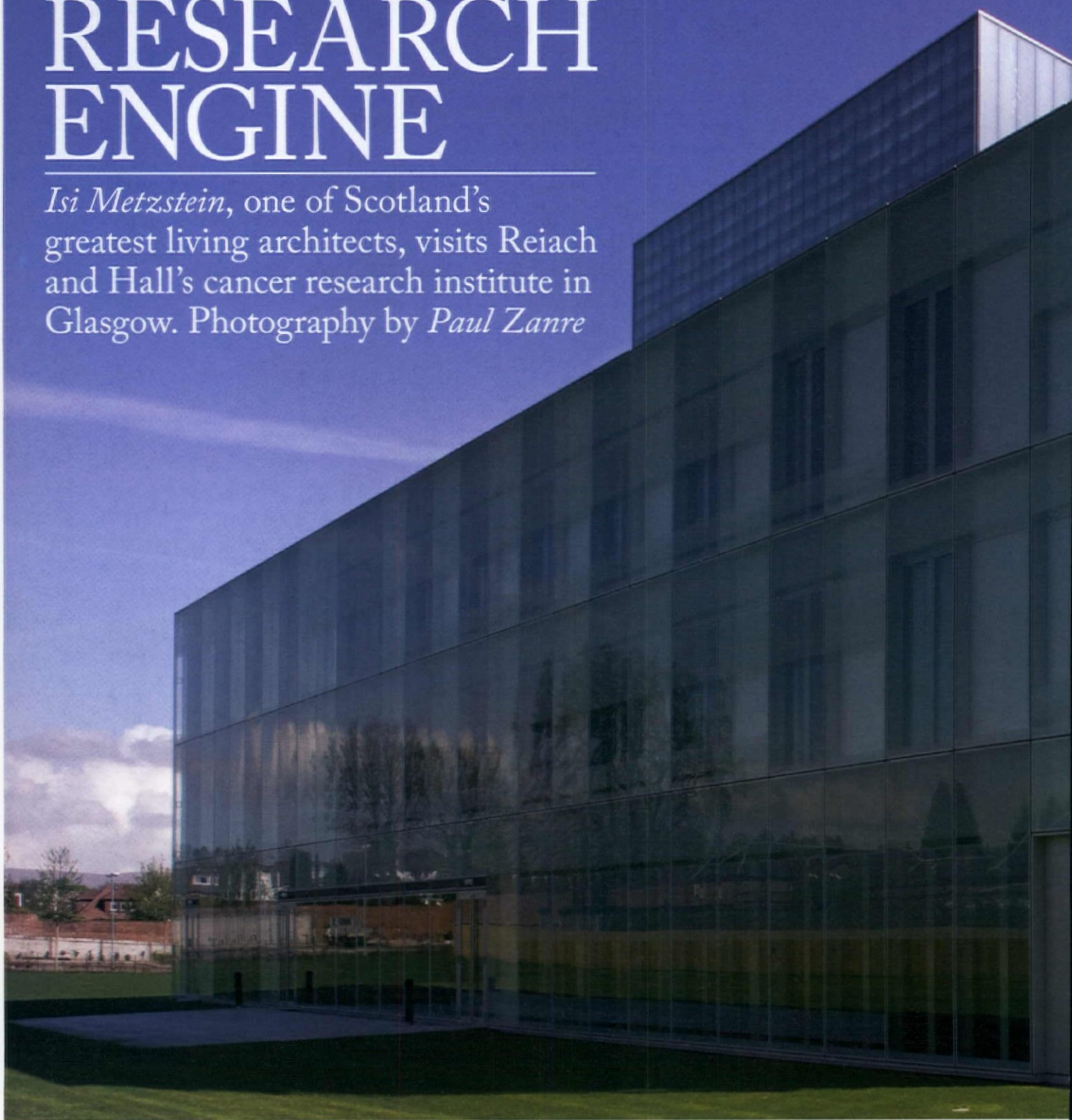
In AJ Specification 06.08, Marmi Ltd provided the stonework package for Hamilton's Montrose Place.




Beatson Institute Cancer Research Facility, Glasgow, by Reiach and Hall Architects

RESEARCH ENGINE

Isi Metzstein, one of Scotland's greatest living architects, visits Reiach and Hall's cancer research institute in Glasgow. Photography by *Paul Zandre*





A recent stimulating visit to the much-admired and richly awarded addition to Reiach and Hall Architects' Pier Arts Centre in Stromness, Orkney (AJ 05.07.07), raised expectations for the Beatson Institute. The Orkney building is an exemplar of sensitive architectural coexistence and contextuality, gracefully taking its place among existing buildings. Its form, simultaneously justified by internal and external circumstance, is enclosed

by a convincingly complex, responsive and relaxed carapace.

The same cannot be said of the Beatson Institute, situated in north-west Glasgow on the Garscube Estate (which was a private landed estate until 1948 and now houses University of Glasgow buildings). In fact, the Orkney arts centre and the Beatson building are sharply contrasting, revealing Reiach and Hall's versatility and throwing a bright light on contemporary architectural schizophrenia.

The Beatson Institute's preconceived Hi-Tech formalism suggests that any fraternising with preexisting and adjacent developments on this site would interfere with its purpose, which justifies its existence and form. >>

 the Beatson institute for cancer research



Above and right

The Beatson Institute is sited in north-west Glasgow's Garscube Estate, on its own lawn within a walled garden

Below The building is 'stretch-wrapped' in storey-high glass panels

Far right The link to the 'plant stockade'



The new building sits on its own lawn within a walled garden, carefully concealing a rather odd corridor link to an existing building and a 'plant stockade', which is both discrete and discreet. Its elegant and highly 'Modern' style serves the apparent intention of separateness. Its don't-touch external air invites respect but not affection; its interiors are beautiful, a machined research engine appearing to resist human violation. The image is that of a highly specialised and expensive institute intended to attract and retain top-quality researchers. If that is the client's intention, it is a triumphant success,

although one may feel the overttness of this intention is somewhat overstated.

Consciously or unconsciously, the building follows Foster's Willis Faber & Dumas headquarters in Ipswich. In this case, the form is rectangular, but the buildings share a roundness, storey-high glass panels, extreme transparency and inevitable entry problems. The severe preemptive geometry of this pre-packaged formalism, combined with the absence of front or back, means that entry – an invariant element of architecture – continues to be unresolved. Modern architecture is particularly susceptible to this



The facade, while conceptually simplistic, is highly complex and technically brilliant

shortcoming, and typically buildings such as Niemeyer's Brasília Cathedral and Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin recklessly avoid the issue. The undeterred return to unsolved, or unsolvable, architectural problems is either heroic or foolhardy or both. In any event, it is a fascinating attempt to square this architectural circle.

Essentially, all buildings are parcels of single or closely-packed, multi-cell volumes of varied plan and sectional ordering. The wrapping, with the possibility of local variations in stiffness, thickness, transparency, colour and texture has an intense capability of artistic and functional orchestration, and thus an opportunity for combining artistic self-expression and public pleasure.

Recent and current practice is heavily into two types of packaging – a loose bubble or a tight stretch-wrap. While each is very different in form, their generality, and the priority given to technical performance, paradoxically manage to disassociate the facade from internal and external obligations. The highly seductive stretch-wrapping technique deprives architecture of much cultural and historic richness.

The choice by Reiach and Hall of a stretch-wrapped building, which largely delegates design outcome to friendly technologists and willing computers, is possibly unselfish and admirably unegotistical. The facade, while conceptually simplistic, is also a highly complex and technically brilliant tour de force that is essentially subcontracted to the glass-curtain-wall supplier. The design of the fritted glass wrapping is generously attributed to an artist but has the beauty of an industrial or product design. However, its perfect autonomy also divides it in a difficult-to-understand but easily recognisable way from architectural complexity. Its pristine ambition is vulnerable to pragmatic necessity and this exposes the manifest weakness of >>

The building has the air of a gigantic, carefully neglected abandoned aquarium

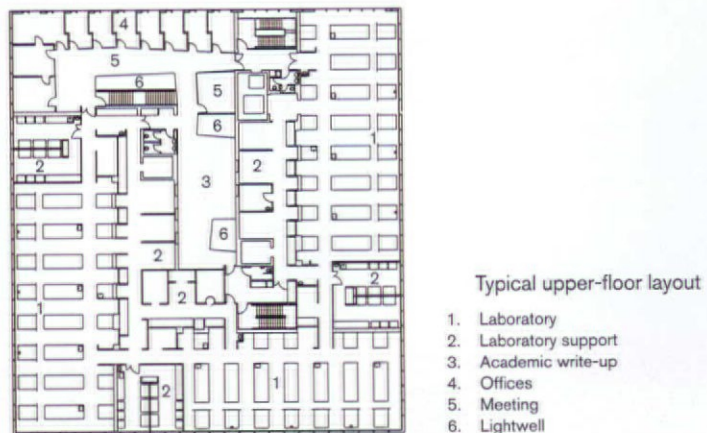
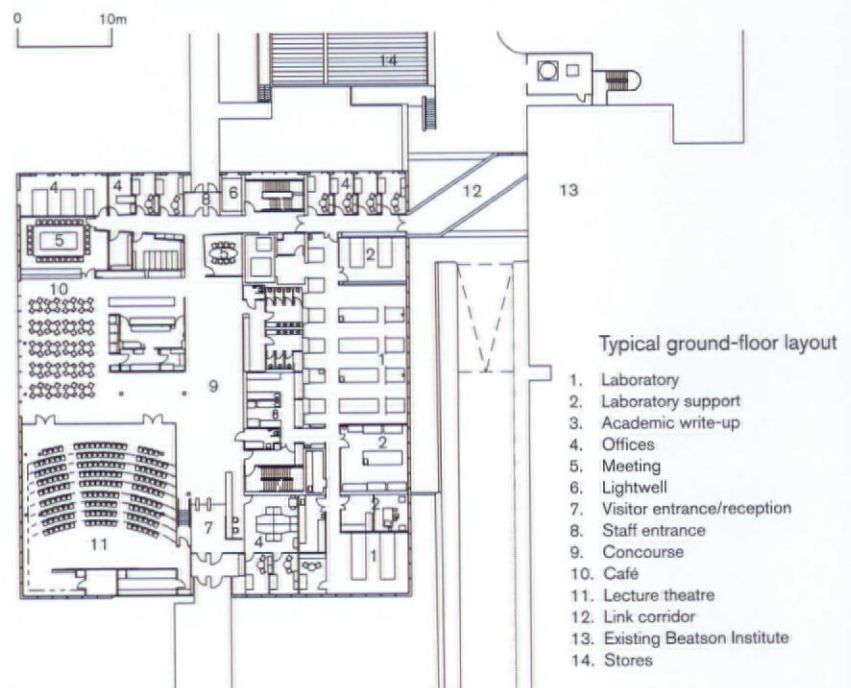
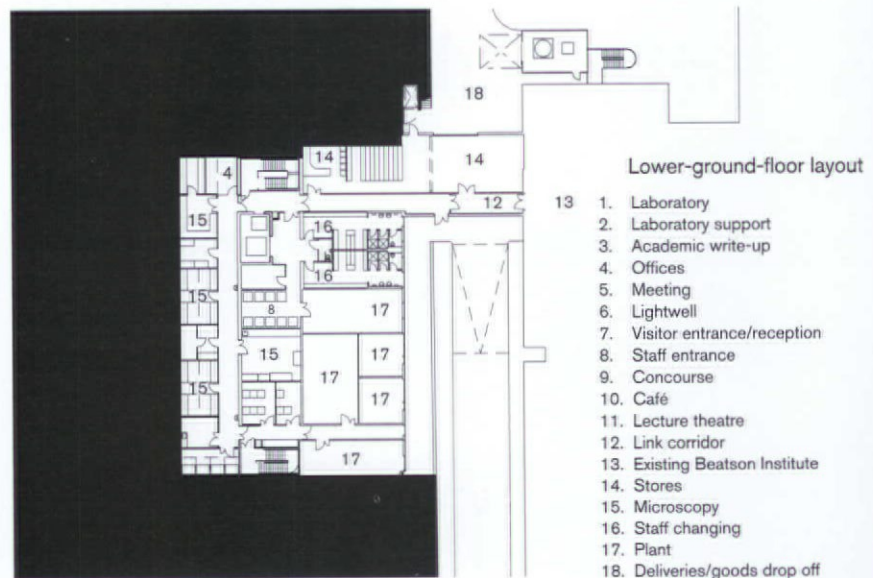
the current plethora of stretch- and bubble-wrapped buildings whose motivation is primarily image-making. The absence of strong top-ness, bottom-ness and end qualities in this genre gives this building an attractive, somewhat melancholy air of a gigantic, carefully neglected, abandoned aquarium. Oddly beautiful in an oddly non-architectural way.

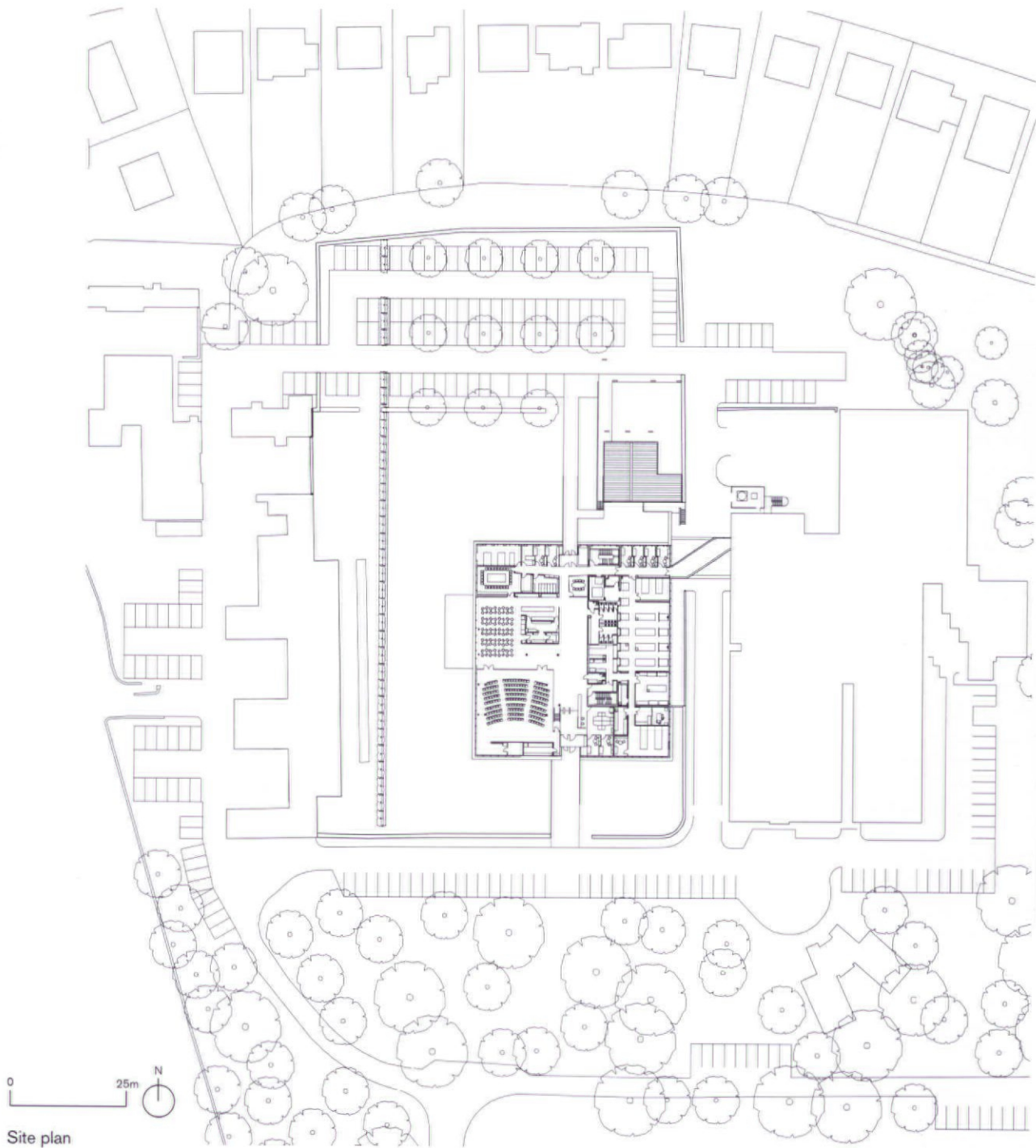
This final form is also victim of a seductive but premature diagram, which results in an ingenious but flawed execution. It is surmisable that the form has been developed from a squarish doughnut ideal. This typology has no back or sides – its notional rear elevation normally subsumed within an atrium – and suffers from inevitable problems relating to locational legibility and contextual obligations, as well as the previously noted entry conundrum.

From the plan, it is possible to discern the remaining traces of a triple-nested racetrack layout and an obvious abandonment of rotational pinwheel symmetry. The schema is not robust or flexible enough to resist or absorb integral programmatic demands related to circulation and isolation. Nor is it immune to additional client requirements, budgetary limitations and other adjustments common in the realities of normal practice.

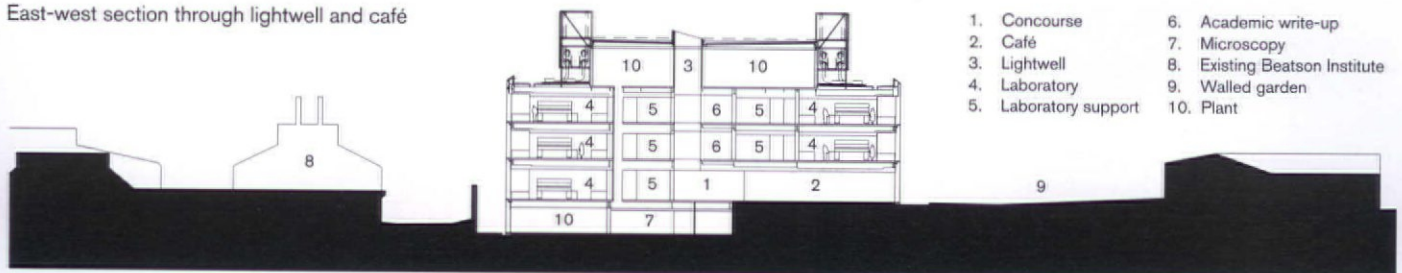
The placing of staircases and the consequent absence of hierarchal vertical movement also complicates the geographical and circulatory legibility. Apart from the subtle modelling of the elegant theatre floor, the section is devoid of any possible manipulation that might have mitigated small room proportions.

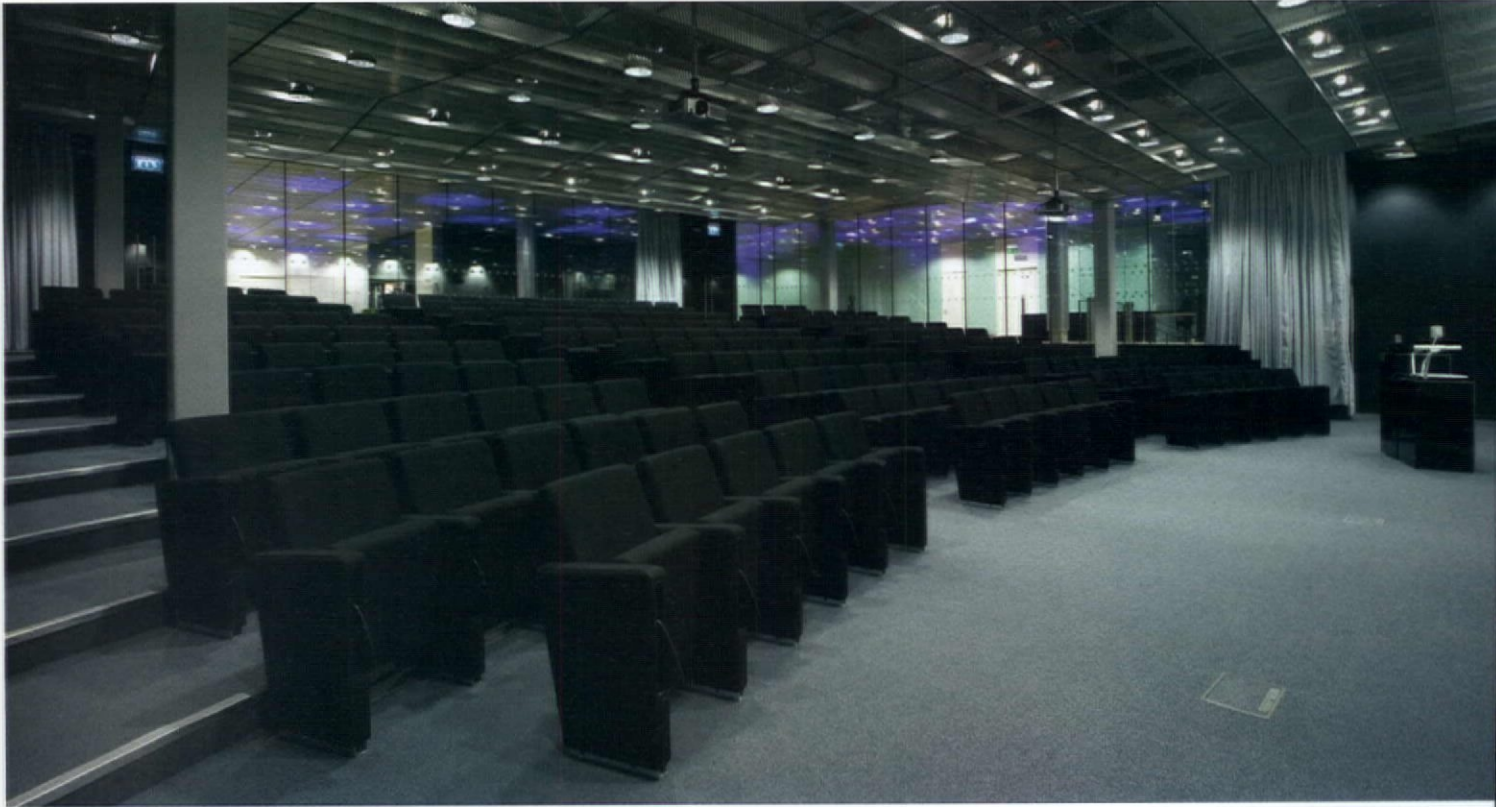
The adroitness and dexterity of the designers in sustaining a considerable part >>





East-west section through lightwell and café





This spread The heavy use of glass provides an open ambience which mitigates the building's complicated circulation and internal layout



of their original design intentions is both admirable and enjoyable, but does not repair or conceal the aforementioned damage caused by and to the original plan and sectional intentions.

The apparent repositioning of a laboratory results in the erosion of the pinwheel and other improvisations. Likewise, the apparently previously 'empty' ground floor has been skillfully taken over, but has created a 'tunnel' which bisects the plan and connects two equally valid entrances, named for 'staff' and 'visitors' rather than front and back. An ad hoc stair and some off-rectangular partitions and internal light wells suggest a tentative but unrealisable redesign.

The unusually high use of glass creates a transparent and friendly ambience, but one that may not survive any future dense use. Similarly, the unusual school-like open-plan laboratories – beautifully designed and inhumanly tidy – must prove their practicality under intense use.

This analysis of the Beatson building has deliberately focused on its inherent architectonics, in contrast to the operational and social reviews currently in the ascendancy. As such it should be read as a critique of the disturbing superficiality of current architecture.

Notwithstanding the above, the Beatson laboratory is certainly an enhancement to the Garscube Estate, and a worthy, if tempered, contribution to Scotland's future architectural heritage. ■

Tender date January 2005

Start on site date March 2005

Contract duration 28 months

Gross external floor area 7,030m²

Form of contract Standard form of Building

Contract; Private with Quantities

Total cost £13 million

Client University of Glasgow

Funding partners University of Glasgow,
Cancer Research UK and others

Architect Reiach and Hall Architects

Structural engineer URS Corporation

Quantity surveyor Turner and Townsend

Planning supervisor Beattie Watkinson

Main contractor Balfour Beatty



SKY GAZING

Charles Barclay Architects' Kielder Observatory is as unlikely as the strange Northumberland landscape it overlooks, writes *James Pallister*. Photography by *David Grandorge*



Kielder Observatory, Northumberland, by Charles Barclay Architects

It's a rickety ride up the 2km farm track that leads to the top of Black Fell, the site for the new addition to Kielder Water & Forest Park's art and architecture programme, Charles Barclay Architects' Kielder Observatory. The building's silhouette shuns the archetypal observatory dome for a type of constructivist rendering of a First World War cruiser. It's an odd-looking building in an even odder place.

Just south of the Scottish border in Northumberland, Kielder is the UK's largest forest at 400km². Not for Kielder is the familiar 'British' countryside of cultivated farmland, scrub and verges. In its place is something more Canadian, or perhaps Scandinavian; dense pines punctuated by small areas of peat moorland. It is stunning.

After a few squelchy footsteps in the peat, I remind myself that, far from being an ancient bucolic setting, the forest is, in reality, one enormous, intensive farm. Since 1920, a methodical 50-year cycle of planting and harvesting trees has been followed. As Peter Sharpe, director of the art and architecture programme, says: 'Though it looks natural, it is anything but. The lake, the forest, the moor; this place is more managed than most cities are. The whole of Kielder is a curious artifice.' It's also the darkest place in England, making the site popular with astronomers.

Off a patch of earth loosely described as a car park, I meet architect Charles Barclay, who won the competition for the observatory – which will be used by amateur astronomers >>





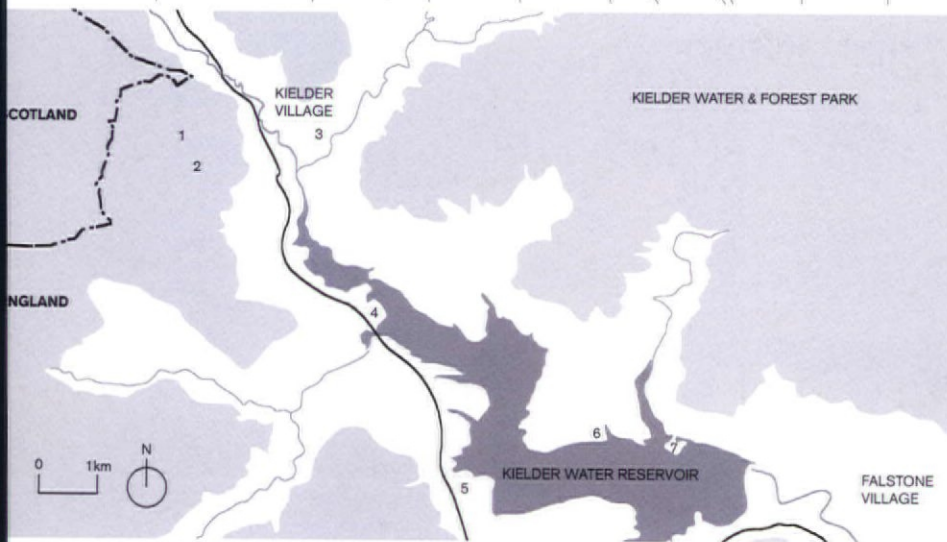
'We wanted it to feel like you were on a ship, away from everything and close to this big sky'

and schools – in 2005, beating 220 other entries. We pass a wheelbarrow and a sawbench – the Douglas fir, redwood and Siberian larch used on the observatory are imported, the forest's Sitka spruce suitable only for paper pulp. Soon we are on deck at the north-west end of the building. 'It touches the ground very gently here,' says Barclay. 'We opted for a pier form that juts out from the slope to give both telescopes a full view of the southern horizon.'

Barclay describes the observatory as a sequence of event-spaces that culminate at the largest of its two turrets. Entering at ground level, a porch shelters the entrance to a 'warm

room' equipped with a wood-burning stove. This is the building's largest interior space, and provides space for astronomers monitoring their telescopes via computer. All the building's electricity needs are met by a wind generator and rooftop photovoltaics. Likewise, the plumbing is 'off-grid', with no running water.

At the end of the warm room is the entrance to the first of the turrets, and the exit to the viewing area and platform that separates the two. Standing on the deck with Barclay, looking out to the Kielder Water reservoir, he says: 'We wanted it to feel like you were on a ship, away from everything



1. Kielder Observatory
2. Kielder Skyspace by James Turrell
3. Minotaur by Nick Coombe and Shona Kitchen
4. Mirage by Kisa Kawakami
5. Mapping by Wolfgang Weileder
6. Belvedere by Softroom
7. Wave Chamber by Chris Dury

- Kielder Water valley
- Higher ground
- Kielder Water reservoir
- Road
- Scotland/England border

Opposite page, top
Two telescopes are mounted on concrete pillars independent of the main structure

Opposite page, left
The small turret seen from the walkway

Opposite page, right
The building's timber supporting columns have poured-concrete pad foundations

This page, above
Site plan

Left Map showing
other projects in the art and architecture programme

else and close to this big sky.'

Both the observatory's turrets rotate through 360 degrees. In another hotch-potch of high- and low-tech, their wooden bulk is rotated manually through a rack and pinion system turned by a 200mm-diameter stainless-steel crank. Inside all this 19th-century engineering are two telescopes of an unquestionably 21st-century nature. The smaller turret houses a Meade 14" LX200 GPS telescope weighing in at 25kg; the larger turret contains a Pulsar Optical 20" weighing 50kg. Shutters to the turrets are controlled through servo-operated hydraulic pistons.

The large turret, its rotating part weighing six tonnes, is accessed by a circular ramp that brings you up to the observation level. 'The exposed metalwork of the shutters hints at the scientific nature inside,' says Barclay. Sticking with it was a good move – the contrast of metalwork and timber gives the building an edge at once sinister and intriguing.

When the Queen opened Kielder Water reservoir in 1982 it was already obsolete. The decimation of the North East of England's heavy industry had removed the need to supply the hitherto thirsty rivers of the Tyne, Wear and Tees. Seven years after construction had

begun, the Forestry Commission had a 200 billion litre-capacity white elephant on its hands. But since then, the Kielder Water & Forest Park has found a new direction as an arts and leisure hub. With this recent history in mind, any idea of the observatory's permanence could be seen as folly. Happily, Barclay's building has a confident humility to it, aware of, but unintimidated by, its context. 'It's got a sort of ephemeral monumentality to it which is nice. It feels like it all could be gone one day and that would be fine,' says Barclay.

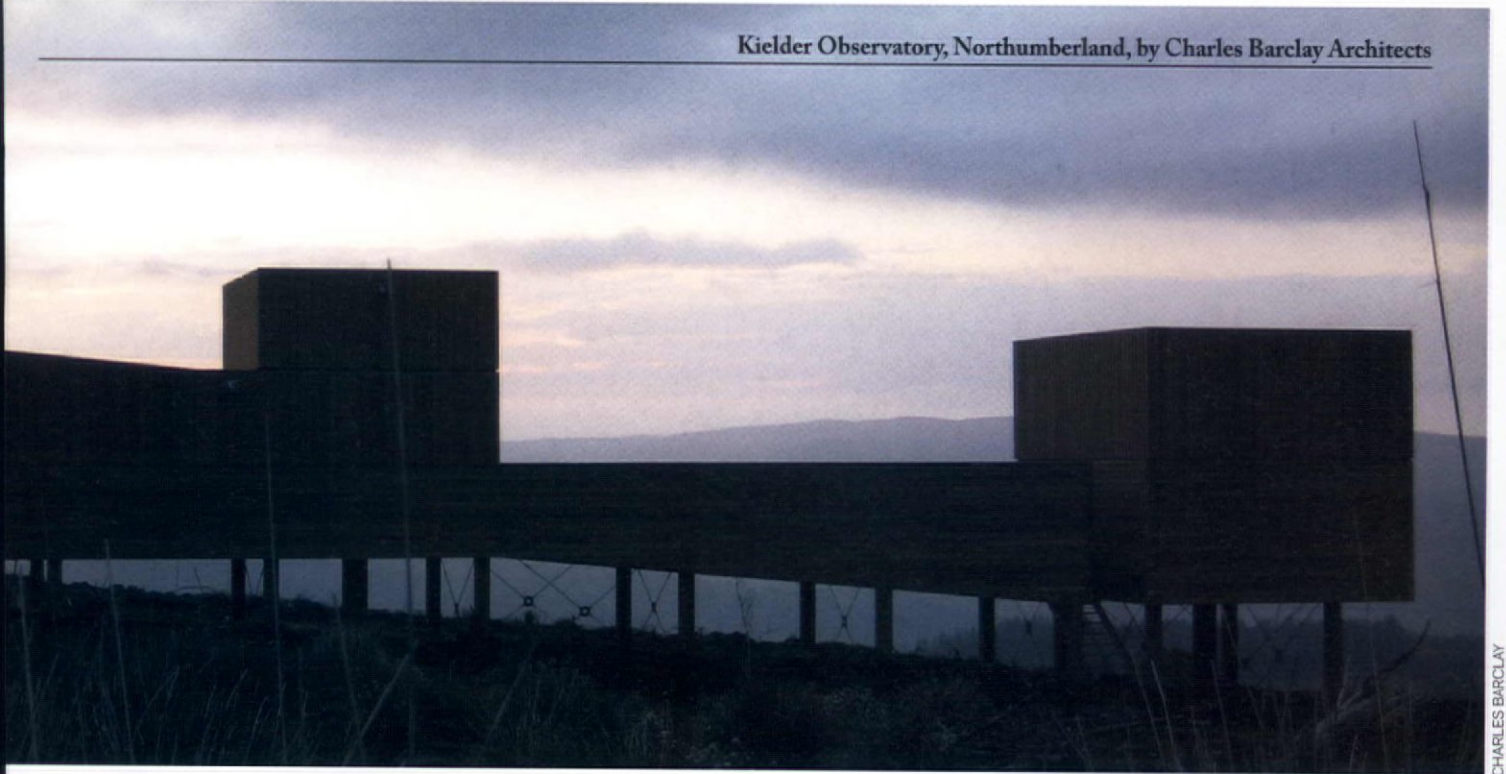
Back in London I find myself evangelising about the strangeness of Kielder, talking to >>



friends about this artificial beauty spot skewed by its dysfunctional adolescence. I run into Maria Smith and Je Ahn of Studio Weave, one of the practices working on the art and architecture programme at Kielder. Their Freya's Cabin project, expected to complete in December, will join installations by Softroom and artist James Turrell. Smith tells me of a planting scheme started by the Forestry Commission to make the lakeside treeline 'more random', and shows me a picture of the lake drained for maintenance, showing the dead stumps of trees cut down to make way for its creation only 30 years ago.

These nuggets sum up Kielder's curious environment of hyper-rationalism writ as natural beauty. Building in this oddity, Charles Barclay Architects has taken advantage of a brilliant opportunity and acquitted itself well. The observatory has a clear and logical purpose that a forestry officer would no doubt approve of. Yet its curious form, primitive and hi-tech duality, and multiple possible interpretations (giant insect, U-boat washed up on shore, simple landscape-viewing platform) is one that meshes perfectly with the contradictions of the site. ■

Start on site July 2007
Contract duration 10 months
Gross internal floor area 100m²
Gross external floor area 136m²
Form of contract/procurement JCT intermediate building contract/single-stage competitive tender
Total cost £415,000
Client Forestry Commission
Architect Charles Barclay Architects
Structural engineer Michael Hadi Associates
Quantity surveyor Burke Hunter Adams
Main contractor Stephen H Mersh
Annual CO₂ emissions Energy requirements are met by photovoltaics and a wind generator



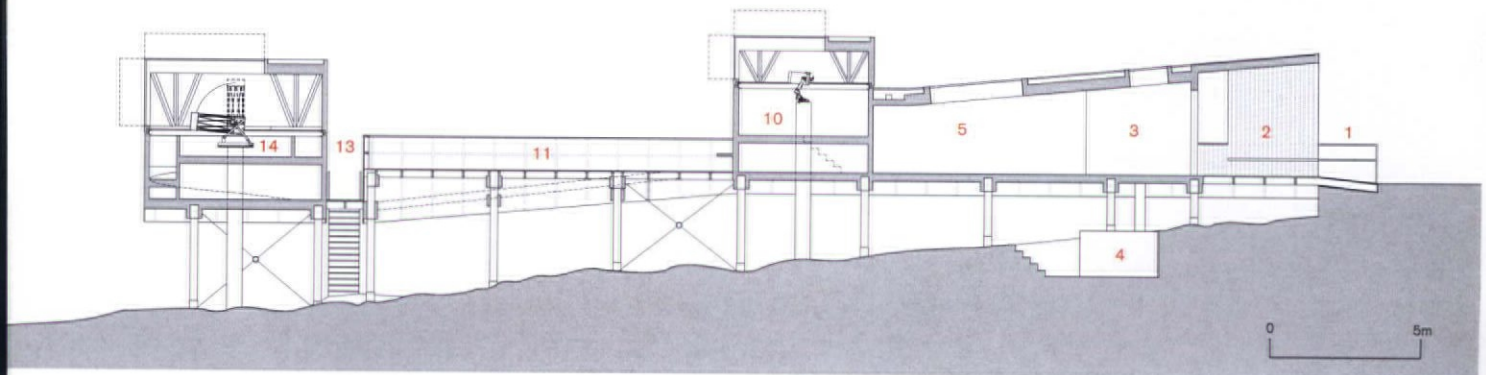
CHARLES BARCLAY

Opposite page, top left View looking south-east towards Kielder Water
Opposite page, left and centre The warm

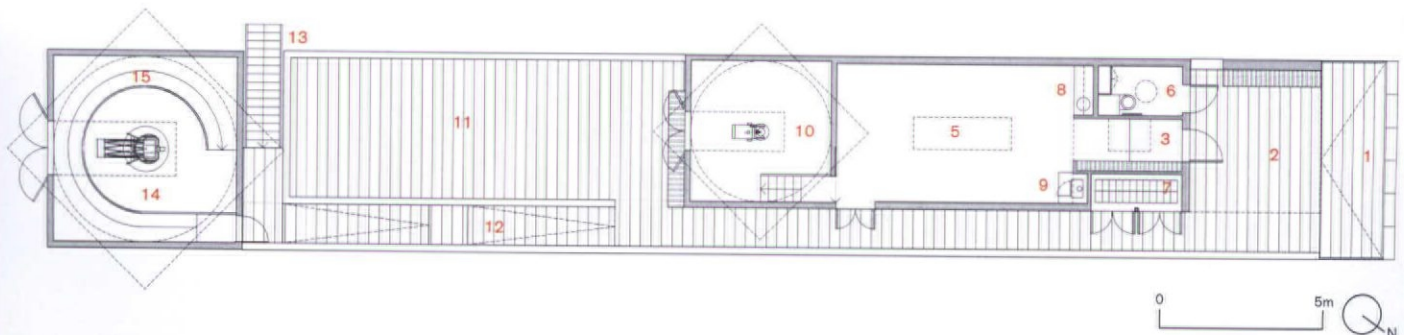
room, which is lit at night with red light to preserve night vision
Opposite page, right The large turret houses a Pulsar Optical 20"

telescope, seen here mid-assembly
This page, above The observatory at dawn. All metalwork, including the cross-

bracing seen here, was installed by John Aynsley Metalwork of Newcastle
Below Section
Bottom Floor plan



- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Entry ramp | 6. WC | 11. Observation deck |
| 2. Covered entrance area | 7. Battery cupboard | 12. Ramp |
| 3. Entry hall | 8. Entry ramp | 13. Escape stairs |
| 4. Composting vault | 9. Stove | 14. Large turret |
| 5. Warm room | 10. Small turret | 15. Circular ramp |





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Parametric modelling p.37 // Buyer's guide to servers p.42
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IT in Practice

The AJ's guide to parametric modelling looks at how the design technology is dividing the profession, and compares the three main software packages on the market

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PARAMETRIC MODELLING

PRACTICAL PARAMETRICS

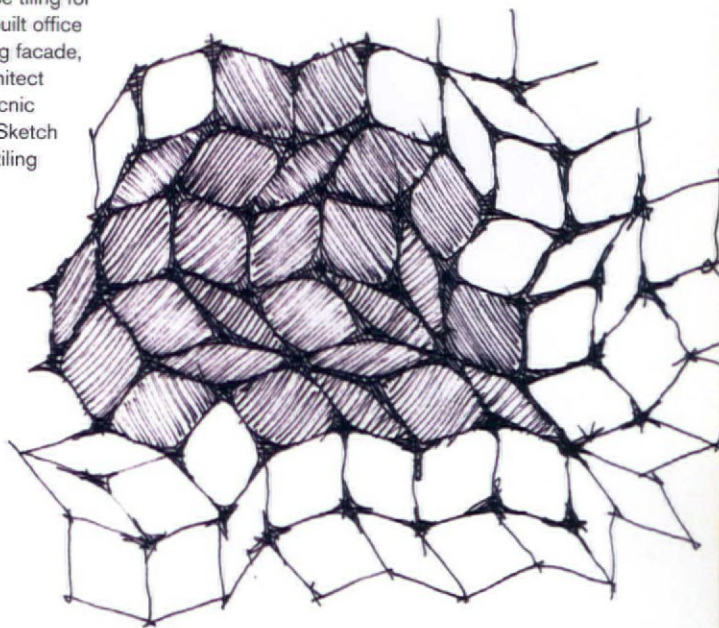
Parametric modelling can produce complicated forms and streamline workflow with ease. *Kaye Alexander* looks at how your practice could use this technology

**WHAT DOES
PARAMETRIC MEAN?**

A conventional 2D or 3D package draws a line in space, the dimensions and position of which can only be manually manipulated. A parametric program enables the user to define rules about that line's exact position and size in relation to others. Adjusting these individual values (parameters) alters the overall design. The advantage of this method is the ability to go through design iterations very quickly and for the overall design to respond to identified real-world conditions. Parametric design is not to be confused with BIM (Building Information Modelling) which is concerned with the build-up of knowledge and managing of data in a single model.



Left Digital Project visualisation of penrose tiling for an unbuilt office building facade, by architect Newtecnic
Right Sketch of the tiling



Parametric software has divided architectural practices into two factions: the haves and the have-nots. Rather than being a reflection of size and turnover, the separation is symptomatic of differences in mindset.

One side is intrigued by the complicated forms that can be generated using parametrics, the automation of workflow and the ability to automatically update the entire model when a change is made. The other is turned off by the unfamiliar architecture that has become negatively

associated with parametrics, the difficult interfaces, the shift in thought processes and the time investment.

Parametric software was first developed in the automotive and aerospace industries. The first architecture-orientated package to be marketed was Digital Project (DP) in 2002, developed by Gehry Technologies, the software company founded by Frank Gehry in 1992. DP is fundamentally related to Dassault Systemes' CATIA – the program used by Boeing to design its >>

AUTODESK

Revit is an excellent BIM tool, but its inability to support complex modelling limits its use in conceptual design.

POSITIVES

- Strong in 2D drawing generation;
- easy to learn with a user-friendly interface;
- good multi-user environment;
- can link to rapid prototyping as surfaces are described;
- licence borrow feature for laptop users;
- Revit Architecture 2009 supports CAD formats: DGN (Bentley Systems); DWF (Autodesk); DWG (Autodesk); DXF (Autodesk); IFC (IAI); SAT (spatial) and SKP (SketchUp). It supports Image formats: BMP; PNG; JPG; AVI; PAN; IVR; TGA and TIF. Revit Architecture 2009 also supports: ODBC; HTML;

TXT; MDB; XLS; FBX and gbXML; and features Mental Ray rendering tool.

NEGATIVES

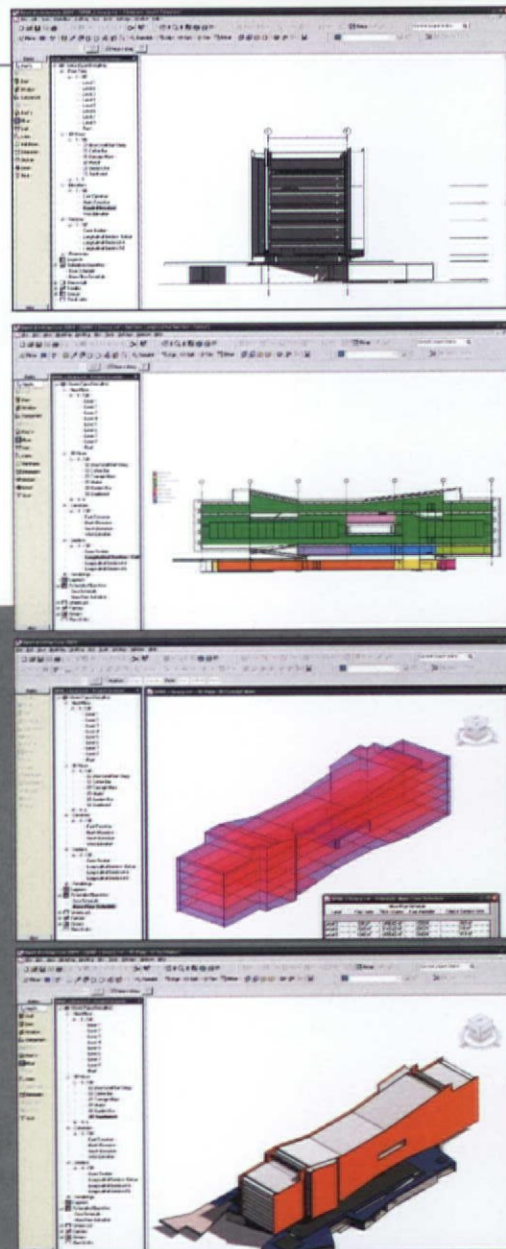
- In-memory software struggles when files get bigger. Faster (64 bit) machines can mitigate this;
- Does not support complex curved surface modelling; and
- Most appropriate after stage C when details are tied down.

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COST

Customer specific. Each partner offers specialised training and support programs.



777 and 787 series aircraft and famously by Frank Gehry for the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao. Autodesk and Bentley soon caught on, successfully marketing their own parametric softwares, Revit Architecture (2002) and Generative Components (GC (2004)) respectively. The suppliers and producers of these three softwares all promise that parametrics will transform architectural practice and revolutionise design. It is tempting to believe them when watching an experienced user at work on a mature model,

seemingly generating endless variations which report back changes. But what is the reality?

FORESIGHT

In order to reap the 'down-stream' benefits, users must exercise foresight when setting the initial parameters for a design. Regular Revit and DP user Tim Lucas of engineer Price & Myers says: 'You have to make the right things adjustable from the beginning, as you can't make changes beyond the scope you set out.' It is easier to make small rather than big design changes. According to

Stephen Griffin, architect at Allies and Morrison (DP user): 'The person modelling should be close to the decision-maker to best predict the parameters that might change.'

Thinking ahead about design possibilities and being disciplined about inputting data requires an 'engineering' approach to design says Andrew Watts, managing director of architectural practice Newtecnic, who is familiar with all three softwares. He says: 'Some architects think it kills creativity but this is the way the profession is going.'

TIME

Parametric software is useful in the automotive and aerospace industries because outputs are repeated and time investment can be written off against quantity. But architecture does not allow for the same efficiency, as most projects are one-offs.

Data inputting is a huge time investment during the early stages and although many design variations can be generated, this does require manually changing values and waiting for the model and associated data sets to regenerate. Depending on the

DIGITAL PROJECT

DP's complex modelling capabilities make it useful at all stages of design for large projects.

POSITIVES

- Excellent at developing custom parametric objects;
- good multi-user environment;
- the nested file structure allows users to add far more detail to a model than Revit, without any memory issues;
- Can link to rapid prototyping as surfaces are described;
- Modelling and engineering can run along side each other;
- Based on CATIA therefore benefits from updates by Dassault Systemes;
- Digital Project supports: DWF (Autodesk); DWG (Autodesk); DXF (Autodesk); IFC (IAI); IGES; STEP. It supports Image formats: BMP; PNG; JPG; AVI; PAN; IVR; TGA and TIF.

NEGATIVES

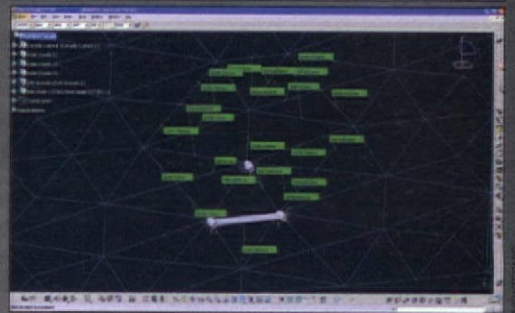
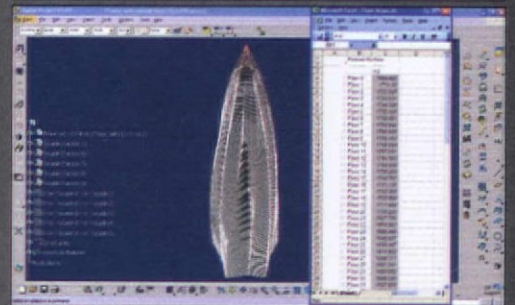
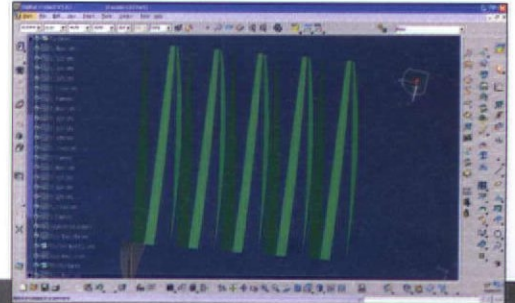
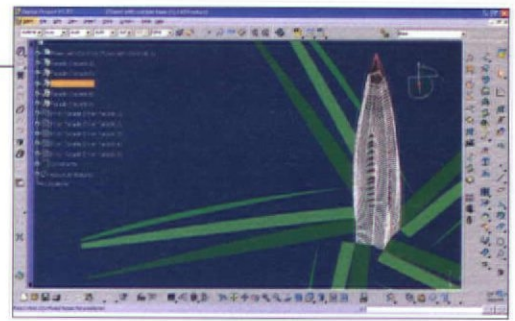
- Less good than other products at 2D drawing generation;
- Slower than GC at creating point geometry;
- Time investment can mean that it is more appropriate to use after basic design has been set.

SUPPLIER

Desktop Engineering,
www.centidesktop.com

COST

The 'designer package' (suitable for architects) costs £9,000 for one licence plus £1,859 annual maintenance. Training costs £1,500 per person. In-house training is available at custom rates



complexity of the project, this can take days to set up. 'It is easy to get carried away,' says Griffin. 'You can script an algorithm that will automatically generate iterations but the mentality of "model once, edit to infinity" can mean you are spoilt for choice. You have to assess usefulness against time cost.'

Consequently, Watts says Newtecnic often uses DP to model and coordinate only after initial design decisions have been made. The practice also sometimes redraws the model in traditional CAD packages (e.g.

AutoCad) to check for unnecessary complexity and to present to contractors. 'Once everyone accepts 3D models as the only description of a building these programs will come into their own,' he says.

ETHOS

Parametric software enables the design of complex geometry, but this is not an inevitable outcome. Griffin bemoans those who blame the software for 'the bad stuff. It is just another way of facilitating design intent. It does not have to impact on aesthetics.'

'We can use up to 16 programs during design and presentation,' says Watts. 'All architects operate in mixed environments.' Transfer between applications thus becomes a sticking point as the intelligent data built-up is lost between software. Asci Aybars, Design Director at SOM London, which has licences for all three softwares, explains this industry-wide problem: 'Interoperability is critical when a model needs to be exported for analysis, rendering or coordination purposes. It is generally understood that a file protocol

like IFC will enable data transfer between platforms but this has a way to go.' So a model that has been exported into, for example, a rendering package, will not update if altered in the source parametric program and will have to be re-exported.

RESPONSIBILITY

Lars Hesselgren of KPF, who is heavily involved in the development of GC, maintains that if architects are designing it, they have a duty to understand how their complex geometry works 'because this is their chosen >>

GENERATIVE COMPONENTS

Parametric modelling system GC has spent over 25 years in development and has a strong base of users in academia.

POSITIVES

- Good for creating point and line geometry quickly;
- can link to rapid prototyping as surfaces are described;
- integrate with BIM systems;
- supports many industry-standard file input and outputs including DGN (Bentley Systems), DWG (Autodesk), STL (Stereo Lithography), and Rhino;
- each tool has a working example, promoting self learning;
- transaction list records the steps that created the geometry, which can be replayed;
- good for creating customised parametric objects;
- supports complex curved surface modelling.

NEGATIVES

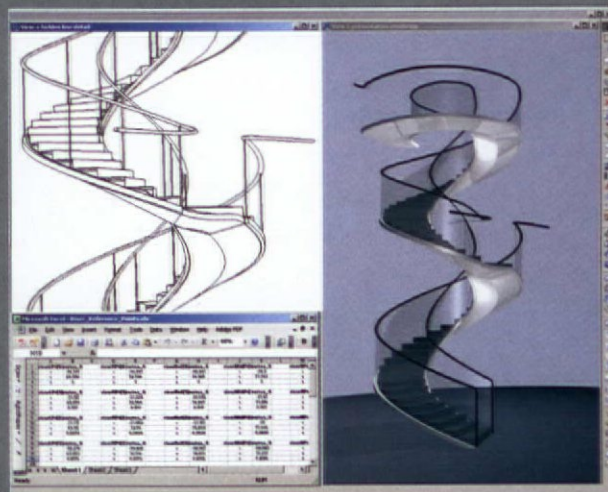
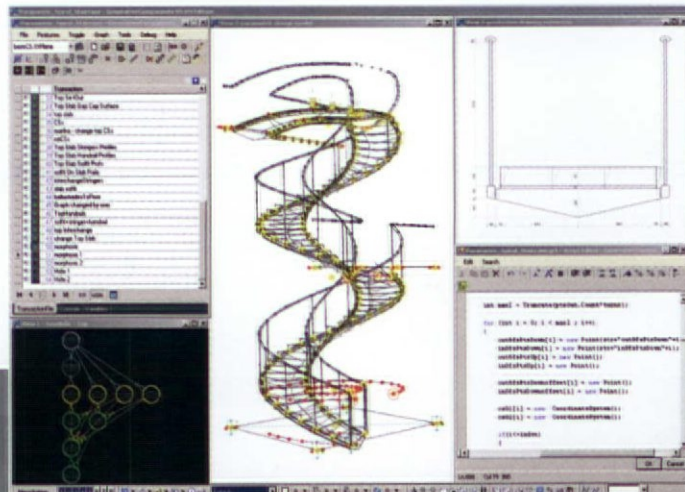
- Complex for new users;
- not a BIM platform, therefore does not support a multi-user environment;
- no real visual interface;
- not a generator of comprehensive plans / sections / elevations but model can be exported to other CAD platforms to produce these drawings;
- complexity of full model can pose problems for handling

SUPPLIER:

www.generativecomponents.com.

COST:

The annual subscription price is £220, but Microstation users can get it for free.



mode of expression. It shouldn't be handed over to engineers.'

By creating precise and resolved models, architects are reducing risk of overspend but this in turn has implications. 'The accuracy of the software is incompatible with the traditional working methods of other building professionals such as quantity surveyors. If I know exact quantities, I expect an exact estimate, but they are unwilling to expose themselves in this way,' says Griffin.

The concept of a model that can be read and edited by all

stakeholders provides huge open-source benefits but it also replicates the disadvantages, making it difficult for architects to monitor design changes after they have handed the model over to the contractor. Should the model then be presented to the owner the architect may risk being sued if the built version does not tally exactly with the model.

IN PRACTICE

Currently relatively few practices in the UK are using parametric software to design on a day-to-day basis, and much of the output

is coming from academia. 'Never have students had such power in the architecture business,' says Griffin. 'The problem is that architects at the top don't understand what the students can do. They see the benefit of endless iterations, but the students don't want to use the software in this way – they want to explore.'

Most practices see parametric software as a way of reducing team sizes by automating workflow. 'This can work for small practices, but here at Foster + Partners we like to have large

teams – to get results you need diverse skill sets,' says architect Hugh Whitehead, a key figure behind the development of GC.

'You need a computer-savvy team with a dual interest in programming and architecture,' continues Griffin.

'If you asked me if I thought parametric software was an inevitable future for architecture, I'd say yes,' he adds. 'But the real breakthrough will happen when a young firm takes on the challenge of redesigning the design methodology to match the new tools.' ■



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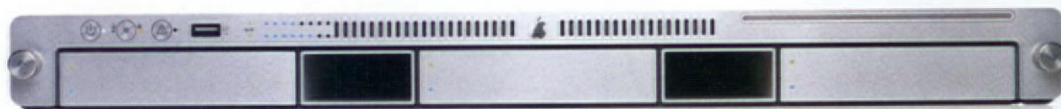
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BUYER'S GUIDE, BY JAMES MORRIS

SERVERS

HINTS AND TIPS

- A server is a piece of hardware which manages access to a centrally stored resource in a network.
- Servers come as free-standing pedestal units or as units that can be stacked in a rack.
- When specifying a rackmount server, the U specification tells you how high the server is. A 2U server is twice as thick as a 1U one, so you will be able to fit half as many in a standard cabinet.
- The most recent Intel quad-core processors pack four central processing units (CPUs) into the space of one – and consume about as much power as a single-core processor of just a few years ago.
- When specifying a server, note that a 64-bit operating system is required to make use of more than 4GB of RAM.
- A server using standard 3.5in serial advanced technology attachment (SATA) disks will offer cheaper storage and higher capacities than those using 2.5in Serial Attached SCSI (SAS). But 15K SAS disks will be faster and usually offer longer duty cycles.



1 APPLE XSERVE

Apple has been applying its famous design skills to servers for some years now. This attractively styled rackmount server comes with one 2.8GHz quad-core Intel Xeon processor, with room for a second for more demanding applications. The 4GB memory can be expanded up to 32GB, and there are three bays for hard disks up to 1TB each. Riser cards provide 16x PCI Express adapter capabilities, plus a choice of PCI-X or 8x PCI Express. www.apple.com

2 DELL POWEREDGE SC1435

Dell's PowerEdge servers always offer good value, and at £1,286 the SC1435 makes a great entry-level 1U rackmount. This buys you a single 2GHz dual-core AMD Opteron, but options are available up to a pair of 2.3GHz quad-core Opterons. The 4GB memory can be expanded up to 32GB, but only two drive-bays are included, so storage tops out at 2TB. www.dell.co.uk



SERVER	FORMAT	PROCESSOR (CPU)	MEMORY
1 Apple Xserve	1U rackmount	Intel Xeon E5462 (4 x 2.8GHz)	4GB DDR2 RAM
2 Dell PowerEdge SC1435	1U rackmount	AMD Opteron 2212 (2 x 2GHz)	2GB DDR2 RAM
3 Fujitsu-Siemens Primergy TX300 S4	Pedestal	2 x Intel Xeon E5440 (8 x 2.83GHz)	8GB DDR2 RAM
4 HP ProLiant ML350 G5	Pedestal	Intel Xeon E5420 (4 x 2.5GHz)	1GB DDR2 RAM
5 VeryPC GreenServer Janus	1U rackmount	4 x Intel Xeon L5320 (16 x 2GHz)	4GB DDR2 RAM



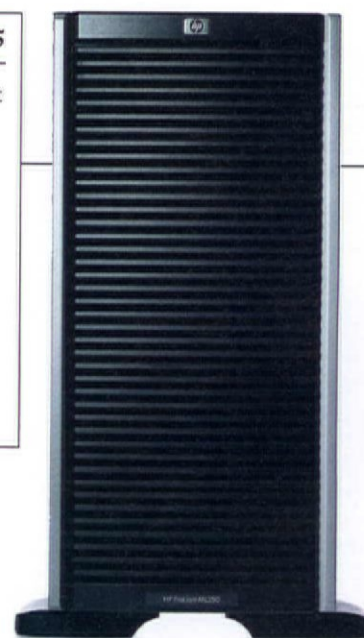
3 FUJITSU-SIEMENS PRIMERGY TX300 S4

Pedestal servers don't have to be the low-performance option. For those without a rackmount infrastructure, the Primergy TX300 S4 packs a lot into a similar footprint to a workstation. Twin quad-core 2.83GHz Intel Xeons are partnered with 8GB of RAM. Two removable bays support six 2.5in hard disks each, for a healthy range of RAID-protected options, which see two or more hard disks used simultaneously. Whether you need performance or storage, the Primergy will deliver. www.fujitsu-siemens.co.uk



4 HP PROLIANT ML350 G5

The ProLiant ML350 G5 is all about flexibility. The basic specification includes a 2.5GHz Intel Xeon, but there's a socket-free second processor should more power be required. The base 1GB memory is a little small, but can be upgraded to 16GB. The hard disk enclosure supports six 3.5in SATA drives, so plenty of storage is possible beyond the initial twin 160GB drives. The ML350 has plenty of room for growing needs. www.hp.co.uk



5 VERYPC GREENSERVER JANUS

VeryPC takes a different strategy to most server and workstation manufacturers. The GreenServer Janus is aimed at providing processing power which isn't at the expense of electrical power. Despite promising a power consumption of under 300W, the Janus is actually two servers in one box, cramming in four quad-core 2GHz Xeons and a quartet of 500GB SATA hard disks. This is not an ideal server for general data sharing purposes, but as a low-power application workhorse it makes a lot of sense. www.very-pc.co.uk

STORAGE	STORAGE BAYS	EXPANSION	PRICE (EXCL VAT)/WARRANTY
300GB 15,000rpm SAS	3 x 3.5in, two free	PCI Express 16x, PCI-X or PCI Express 8x	£2,203/one-year collect-and-return
250GB 7,200rpm SATA	2 x 3.5in, one free	PCI Express 8x	£1,286/three-year on-site NBD warranty
6 x 73GB 15,000rpm SAS	12 x 2.5in, six free	2 x PCI Express 8x, 4 x PCI Express 4x, PCI-X	£3,935/three-year on-site NBD warranty
2 x 160GB 7,200 SATA	6 x 3.5in, four free	3 x PCI Express 8x, 3 x PCI-X	£1,243/three-year on-site NBD warranty
4 x 500GB 7,200 SATA	4 x 3.5in, none free	2 x PCI Express 8x	£3,800/three-year RTB warranty

BUYER'S GUIDE, BY JAMES MORRIS

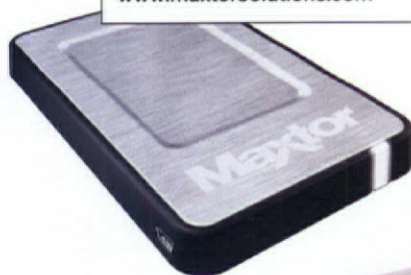
EXTERNAL HARD DISKS

HINTS AND TIPS

- An external hard disk offers additional, often portable, storage for workstations.
- For the ultimate in portability, a pocket drive like the Maxtor OneTouch 4 Mini is your best option.
- A 'direct attached storage' (DAS) device provides greater capacity and more RAID protection options than a basic desktop drive.
- If you want to share storage across multiple workstations at once, a 'network attached storage' (NAS) device connects via Ethernet like a mini server.
- For performance akin to an internal desktop drive, eSATA is the quickest option – if your Workstation offers this connection.

1 MAXTOR ONETOUCH 4 MINI

External hard disks aren't just about expanding the storage of your workstation. They could also be about transferring files which are too large to move over a network. Maxtor's OneTouch 4 Mini can fit into your pocket, yet it has a 160GB capacity. The USB connection doubles up for power, so you won't need a separate supply. www.maxtorsolutions.com



2 WESTERN DIGITAL MY BOOK STUDIO EDITION

At £162, the MyBook Studio Edition is not cheap for a desktop external drive. But it incorporates a whopping 1TB capacity, and offers comprehensive connection options. If you're in need of a big fix of storage, look no further. www.wdc.com



5 IOMEGA 2TB POWER PRO

Iomega's 2TB Power Pro provides 2TB of storage. Spanned across four 500GB disks, you can choose from three different RAID arrangements, for faster performance or to protect your data from drive failure. At £508, it's not cheap, but its abilities are better than average. www.iomega-europe.com



3 FREECOM HARD DRIVE PRO

This unassuming little box packs 500GB of storage. As well as a USB, it also offers eSATA, the external version of the SATA system internal hard disks now used for connection. At £66 exc VAT, you get a lot of storage for your money. www.freecom.com



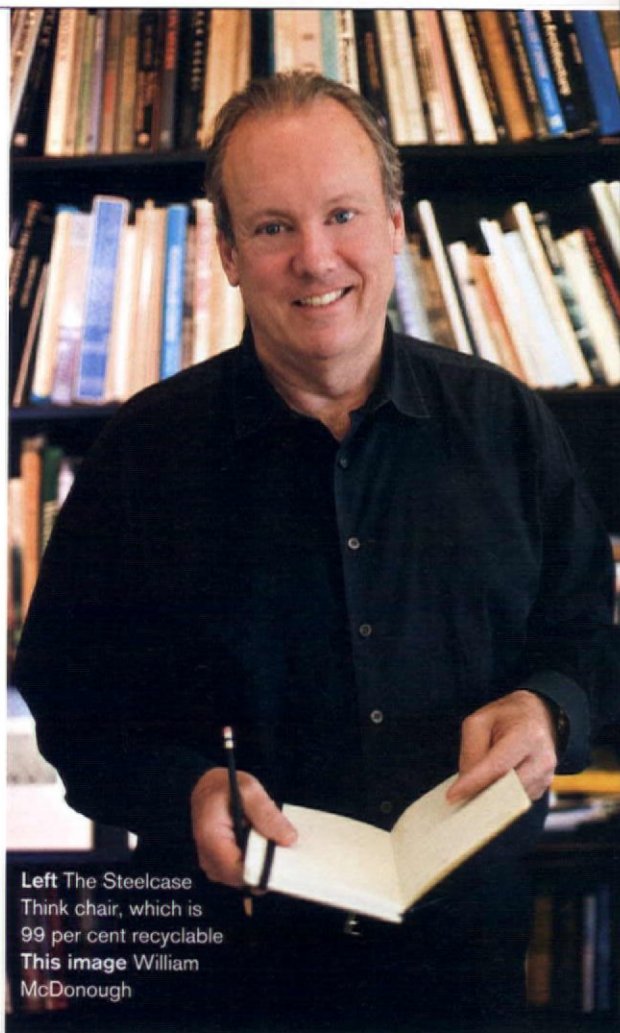
4 NETGEAR READYNAS NV+

Using an Ethernet connection and built-in file-serving software, the ReadyNAS can share its contents across a network directly. But remember the £450 price is for the enclosure only – you will need to add your own 3.5in SATA drives. www.netgear.co.uk

EXTERNAL HDD	TYPE	CAPACITY	CONNECTIONS	PRICE (EXCL VAT)/WARRANTY
1 Maxtor OneTouch 4 Mini	Pocket	160GB	USB 2	£57/five-year RTB warranty
2 Western Digital MyBook Studio Edition	Desktop	1TB	USB 2, eSATA, FireWire 800	£162/five-year RTB warranty
3 FreeCom Hard Drive Pro	Desktop	500GB	USB 2 eSATA	£66/two-year warranty
4 Netgear ReadyNAS NV+	NAS	4 x 3.5in disk bays	Gigabit Ethernet	£450/five-year RTB warranty
5 Iomega 2TB Power Pro	DAS	2TB	USB 2, FireWire 800	£508/three-year warranty

In this section // William McDonough // Define Your City //
Back Issues // Critic's Choice // Carmody Groarke's Sky Walk //
The Embassies Project // Redefining London // 5 Things To Do

The Critics



Left The Steelcase
Think chair, which is
99 per cent recyclable
This image William
McDonough

INTERVIEW

McDonough's breakdown

To bring waste back from the grave, American architect and sustainability guru William McDonough breaks products into little pieces, finds **Hattie Hartman**

The breadth of William McDonough's reach is unusual for an architect. Named an RIBA Fellow last year, the American architect is perhaps best known for his manifesto in book form, *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things* (2002) – co-written with German chemist Michael Braungart – which calls for 'nature-inspired design principles' that re-envision waste as raw material. Now in its second edition, *Cradle to Cradle* has already been translated into eight languages,

and McDonough has since toured the world presenting his vision for a sustainable future to audiences at the White House (twice) and the World Economic Forum.

I met McDonough at the Waterloo offices of solar-technology manufacturer Solar Century, where he shared his thoughts on everything from soaring oil prices to recyclable Nike trainers. En route from Chicago (for the launch of a line of sustainable carpets for Shaw Industries) to Milan (where he is designing a

green office tower for American developer Gerald Hines), McDonough divides his time between lecturing, consultancy, his 50-strong architecture firm, and venture capital investment in alternative technologies. His current passion, however, is McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC), a company which certifies products and materials for their ecological impact.

Founded in 1995, MBDC's clients read like a list of Fortune 500 companies, from >>



Jamie Fobert
addresses the
crowd at Southwark
Cathedral

LONDON FESTIVAL OF ARCHITECTURE 2008

Define Your City

*Five architects delivered quite a sermon at the AJ's Southwark Cathedral event, says **Oliver Wainwright***

Define Your City: The Architectural Characters of London. 8 July at Southwark Cathedral, London Bridge, London SE1 9DA

'Architects have quite enough opportunity to express themselves,' barked Liza Fior of muf from the pulpit. 'The public not only have to live inside, but between the manifest egos of architects.' But the devout public begged to differ, eagerly filling the pews of Southwark Cathedral for Define Your City: The Architectural Characters of London – hosted by the AJ and sponsored by Gifford – to listen, with rapt attention, to 'five passionate young architects' working in London as they delivered their sermons on the city.

Deborah Saunt of DSDHA kicked off the proceedings, describing her leisurely strolls along Park Lane in pursuit of 'exclusive space and whimsy'. Next up, after a sombre organ interlude, was Patrick Lynch of Lynch Architects, with a posturing treatise on the development of the Georgian terrace presented with all the gloom of the Old Testament.

'Do you believe in the resurrection?' asked Jamie Fobert of Jamie Fobert Architects, by which time it seemed as if the cathedral's soaring Gothic vaults might be going to the architects' heads. His question, however, was related to individual buildings and, following a thoughtful examination of the debates surrounding reconstruction, he revealed his illicit love for the Globe Theatre – 'that devil

William McDonough continued from p45

Ford and Volvo to Herman Miller and Nike. MBDC breaks products down to their base chemicals, which are evaluated against five sets of criteria and graded as green, yellow or red. Products are then optimised to eliminate any 'red' substances and maximise the 'green' substances. MBDC's recently launched web-based certification initiative (www.c2ccertified.com) consists of a set of protocols for assessing products and certifying them as Cradle to Cradle Silver, Gold or Platinum. 'We now have the top 6,000 most-used chemicals in our database, so that we can quickly assess the ecological and human health of new products and give feedback to our clients,' explains McDonough.

MBDC-certified products include the Steelcase Think chair (pictured on page 45), which has Cradle to Cradle Gold certification. The chair is built from 44 per cent

recycled material, and is 99 per cent recyclable. It can be dismantled in five minutes with everyday tools and all components can be refinished and reused or recycled. Individual components are most eco-friendly when comprised of a single material – they are less likely to be contaminated and are easier to return to a raw state. Similarly, Shaw Industries' Eco Solution Q carpet can be repeatedly recycled – the fibre is collected

Components are most eco-friendly when comprised of a single material – they are easier to return to a raw state

from the consumer and recycled into raw nylon to make more fibre. To date, just under 200 products have been Cradle to Cradle certified, with thousands more in the pipeline.

As for his architectural work, William McDonough + Partners recently installed a 4ha green roof as part of the refurbishment of

Ford Motor Company's Dearborn, Michigan complex, which he claims saved the company US\$35 million in storm-water drainage. Other projects include a partially solar-powered laboratory building for a private client in Barcelona and 150 units of housing in New Orleans, which McDonough worked on with Brad Pitt. He has just been approached to design a hotel for Masdar, the Norman Foster-designed zero-carbon city for the outskirts of Abu Dhabi, and is currently working for Google as architecture and sustainability consultant on a major project, the details of which are confidential.

McDonough cites formative childhood experiences in 1960s Tokyo and Hong Kong for shaping his world view, making him aware at an early age of the reality of finite resources. After university, he picked up work master-planning the Jordan River valley, where he lived in a Bedouin tent – 'the ultimate eco-shelter'. 'The black shields you from UV light;



Critic's Choice

Louis Kahn's

'museum experience' pleases critic Peter Schjeldahl, writes **Andrew Mead**

'It features the worst lighting and most obtrusive curating I know,' says Peter Schjeldahl of London's Tate Modern in *Let's See* (Thames & Hudson, £18.95). Schjeldahl is art critic of the *New Yorker* and this enjoyable book brings together around 80 pieces that he's written for the magazine in the last few years. The Tate comment comes in an essay called 'Varieties of Museum Experience', in which Schjeldahl is predictably appreciative of Louis Kahn's Kimbell Museum at Fort Worth, Texas (pictured below), and surprisingly indulgent towards Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Bilbao, but believes a museum's true identity lies 'not in where it is lodged but in its collection'. Of course Tate Modern fails on that count too.

Schjeldahl's subjects – usually determined by what happens to be on at a museum – are extremely varied, but the 20th century predominates. Essays with an architectural focus include one on artist Donald Judd's Chinati Foundation in the wilds of Texas and an enthusiastic account of Tod Williams and Billie Tsien's American Folk Art Museum – among New York's few good recent buildings. Judd's Texan empire is neatly encapsulated as 'an austere utopia of concrete, metal, glass, Sheetrock, brick and adobe... the Xanadu of Minimalism.' But it's in a piece on once-forgotten painter Johannes Vermeer, whose 17th-century Dutch interiors now seem timeless, that Schjeldahl lays his cards on the table: 'Each of us is born with a capacity to feel and see intensely and with precision.' His book is testimony to that.



Carmody Groarke's ephemeral Sky Walk, now gone

LFA 2008

Carmody Groarke's Sky Walk was not so much playful as pointless, says **Jaffer Kolb**

There's something about pointless obstacles in a city that is almost charming. So it was with some measure of confused excitement that I went to see Carmody Groarke's Sky Walk for New London Architecture (NLA) on Montague Place in Bloomsbury – an installation that remained open for three days with a remit to bring pedestrians up and away from the streetscape of central London.

That's a mighty large ambition for a temporary structure, but this one was quite literal, and featured a ramp inclining on both ends, gently zig-zagging to create semi-enclosed event spaces. The structure, with its gauzy fabric covering a visible scaffolding structure, would be easy to mistake for a leftover prop from a school play – but given its darkness and serious rigidity, this was never much of a playful installation to begin with. At a book launch I attended, 'doormen' manned entrances to keep champagne sippers from curious laypeople – not very democratic for a structure meant for free exploration.

Now that the Sky Walk is gone I'll stick with Parkour, where at least pointless obstacles have a more committed attitude.

Resume: Look, Sky Walkers: the force was with you

LFA 2008

The Embassies Project should be an annual event, says **Alastair Parvin**

The Embassies Project, until 20 July. See www.lfa2008.org for details

At a time when embassies are more likely to house rigorous airport-style security checks than unexpected cultural stimulation, there's something compelling about the Embassies Project. The result of a collaboration between the British Council and the London Festival of Architecture (LFA), 33 embassies across London are staging free exhibitions during the month-long festival. As it happens, many exhibitions are not hosted in the embassies themselves, but in the showrooms of ambassador companies – such as the Swedish show, hosted by office-furniture manufacturer Kinnarps – which seems rather apposite for such a project, if retail brands represent the de facto embassies of the 21st century.

Much of the content of the exhibitions is rather flat. Too many settle for a straightforward representation of recent exemplar projects from their respective nations, many loosely based around a theme of sustainability, such as Italy's Sustainab.Italy, Denmark's Sust-Dane-Able and Sweden's Greener than Thou?. While some of these politely pay a degree of lip-service to the LFA's theme of 'Fresh', very few succeed in taking the sustainability debate beyond the predictable.



RICHARD GREEN

There are some notable exceptions. Detour, the Norwegian contribution, exhibits a sequence of small architectural interventions built along tourist routes in Norway in recent years, including viewing platforms, rest areas and service points. The structures themselves are fairly conventional and humble, but refreshingly provocative in their celebration of the car. At the centre of this (very small) exhibition is an exquisitely directed documentary film. Viewed through brass eye-ports into a wood panelled cylinder, it takes a moment to realise that the installation is not, in fact, part of 33 Portland Place, the Georgian house in which Detour is exhibited.

Ultimately, what makes the Embassies Project compelling is also its most limiting factor. Although diverse and well-funded, the exhibitions are by their nature small; it takes more time to travel between them than you might spend at each. Finding the venues demands a certain amount of determination – you'll find yourself pressing doorbells, circling buildings and doubling back up the street to find the correct number. Perhaps though, this is part of the attraction.

For the exhibitions that do take place in embassies – which include Japan's Craft in Context, Georgia's Installation by Imma, Brazil's Raw and Canada's Vancouverism – emptying your pockets for bag scans and producing ID for security guards is not something you often find a pleasure, and the Embassies Project, even for this reason alone, deserves to be revisited.

Resume: Be an ambassador for architecture this month at London's embassies

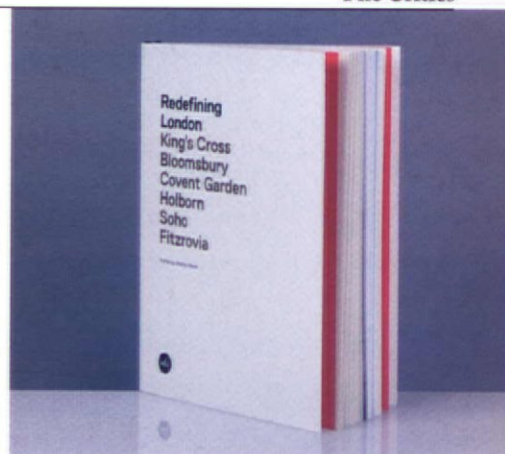
LFA 2008

Redefining London does just that, says *Ruth Slavid*

Redefining London: King's Cross, Bloomsbury, Covent Garden, Holborn, Soho, Fitzrovia. Edited by Andrew Mead. New London Architecture, £18

The London Festival of Architecture is by its nature ephemeral. The wobbly jellies were demolished in an evening; the green parking bays in Store Street had a lifespan of only 24 hours. How intelligent then of New London Architecture (NLA) to produce a book in association with the festival which will live on. *Redefining London* looks at the festival hub of King's Cross, Bloomsbury, Covent Garden, Holborn, Soho and Fitzrovia. A collection of different elements, each defined by its paper type, it is bound in an elegant white cover embossed with street grids.

At this point, I should declare an interest. The editor is Andrew Mead, former reviews editor of the AJ and still a contributing editor, and the design is by Sarah Douglas, former AJ art editor, who worked with Lee Belcher, her colleague at *Wallpaper**. The photography is by Dominik Gigler, a regular AJ contributor. And there is an essay by Catherine Slessor of the AJ's sister publication, the *Architectural Review*.



I don't think this collection of former colleagues earns them an easy ride by this reviewer. I know what they are capable of, and would be sorry not to see them live up to their best. But Mead offers an intelligent historical view of each area, steering a careful course between the bland and the opinionated, with insights such as the fact that Senate House was the probable location for George Orwell's fictional 'Ministry of Truth' in his novel *1984*. In a similar light, Gigler's photos wink out some unknown views and manage to make even the most familiar sites look fresh.

There is a section on future development and even a collection of personal views by figures such as Dan Cruickshank and Jonathan Sergison. The NLA plans to make this the first in a series of books, which promises infrequent visitors and long-time residents of London something to look forward to.

Resume: A little immortality goes a long way when it comes to the LFA

5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

1 *Buildering*

Climb an aerial circuit over Pollard Thomas Edwards architects' office.

20 July, 10am-6pm. Diespeker Wharf, 38 Graham Street, London N1 8JX. Limited tickets available for each hour at £15. Book online at www.lfa2008.org

2 *A Tower in the Minds of Others*

See Nicky Coutts' Japanese pagoda of stacked sheds for Tatton Park Biennial.

Until 28 September. Tatton Park, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 6QN. www.tattonparkbiennial.org

3 *Frank Gehry's Serpentine Pavilion*

Visit Gehry's long-anticipated pavilion as it opens to the public.

20 July to 19 October. Serpentine Gallery, Kensington Gardens, London W2 3XA

4 *It's an Architectural Knockout!*

Navigate an obstacle course dressed as a London landmark.

20 July, 12-4pm. Clerkenwell Green, London EC1V. Email fuchsiamaqueette@velorose.com to enter a team. www.lfa2008.org

5 *Amphis*

Participate in building a communal structure with Bertin-based artists Folke Köbberling and Martin Kaltwasser.

Until 31 August. Wysing Arts Centre, Fox Road, Bourn, Cambridge CB3 7TX. Register your interest at info@wysingartscentre.org

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Kier Property Development has used Colorcoat Prisma prefinished steel from Corus in Metallic Silver and Pegasus colours on its newly erected distribution units in Enfield. Colorcoat Prisma is technically superior to PVDF and is available in a range of contemporary colours. It is backed by a Confidex Guarantee for up to 25 years.

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.

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AJ ENQUIRY 205

Mapelastic from Mapei is a two-component, flexible, cementitious mortar for waterproofing concrete terraces, balconies, bathrooms, showers, wet rooms and swimming pools. Mapelastic 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.

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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

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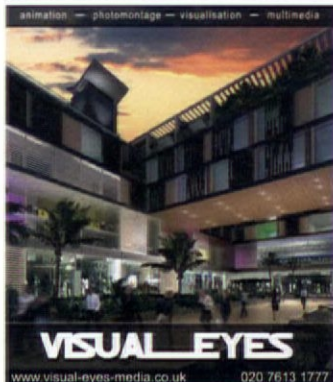
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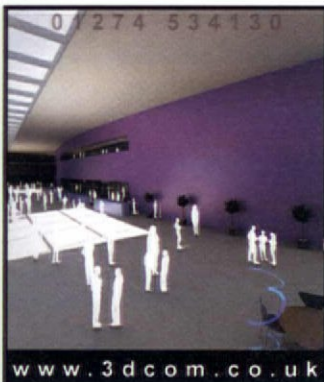
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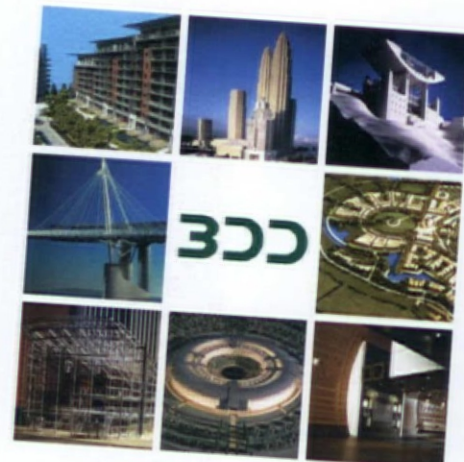
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Ian Martin. Globalisation is the new civilisation, but with much nicer hotels

MONDAY. Conceptual sketching for Eco Beach, my new sustainable leisure scheme in Bulgaria. There are protests already about habitat destruction and inappropriate development, which seems a bit selfish and parochial. After all, *I'm doing this for the planet, not just Bulgaria*. Nature is clearly not capable of protecting her own virgin coastline and endangered species; it's up to us to unspoil it again.

TUESDAY. Meeting of the Olympic Rebadging Task Force. Suzi Towel, 'Minister for 2012' in the chair. We begin with a Mexican wave, followed by apologies for absence.

Azzy Bifter, Secretary of State for Entertainment, can't be with us today as he's taking his Mam to see *Grease*. My mate Loaf, Mayor of London, has also cried off. Officially he's in France on an urban park fact-finder. But everybody knows he's staying on for a family holiday, and that he's a bit embarrassed about the cancellation of Parliament Square's upgrade to a piazza.

Suzi's furious. She'd planned a Consultants Parade there as part of the opening ceremonies, with representatives from all over the marketing world solemnly shuffling round the square in corporate dress, BlackBerrys held proudly aloft. 'Hmph. Now I suppose we'll have to do it round the Stratford gyratory system, though goodness knows how that will impact traffic-wise...'

The main agenda item is Rebadging the Olympic Village. *Recession means we lose the duck pond and thatched pub for a start*. Suzi glumly acknowledges the accommodation will

be 'less bed-and-breakfasty, with pot-pourri in all the rooms etc., and more sort of Travelodgey'. We decide to start calling it an Athletes' Camp, which has a nice frugal Cold War vibe and chimes perfectly with the workers' camp we're setting up in tents on Wanstead Flats.

Yes, the Olympics will see an influx of people from across the globe. Though admittedly not all of them will be hired as construction workers by a PFI subcontractor and paid minimum wage, less deductions for tent hire.

WEDNESDAY. Money's also suddenly too tight for *Tamworth's televised regeneration project*. We decide to do it on the radio instead.

THURSDAY. Solve a *wind vortex* problem by not going to a conference on 'ethical architecture'.

FRIDAY. 'Why are we here?' It's a question I ask Rock Steady Eddie, my Middle East fixer. And not in any clever-dick existentialist way, either.

I mean why have we schlepped all the way to Paris for what must be the most boring trade fair in history: Arabian Nice: Development Opportunities In The New New World? 'It's the economy, stupid,' explains Eddie, who has 'self-styled diamond geezer' on his business card.

'The UK's down the pop shop, mate. It's up the pictures. Round the bleeding proverbial. We need to be in the Middle East now, tickling up the oilgarchs...' Oilgarchs? 'Yeah,

oilgarchs. Like oligarchs, only not Russian and with enough bleeding oil under their patios to fill the Irish Sea. So stop moaning, think positive thoughts, spout some of your pretentious bollocks, and let's have it! He is a bit scary. You feel you owe him his 20 per cent even before you land the gig.

Getting in's a faff – no entrance fee, you just have to bribe your way through security. Still, you can smoke once you're through. It's very noisy. Boring and noisy, great combination. My mission today is to mingle with potential clients who are making a fortune in what Eddie calls 'Do Buy'. Then get them to commission 'us' to masterplan stuff like 'lifestyle cities' and... hey, what about pitching the idea of an Olympic Village for Do Buy instead of London? People would come and live like pampered sporting heroes for a fortnight, though obviously gruelling training sessions would be replaced with underwater dining and shopping for luxury goods...

I try this out on a few potential clients. God, they're all so jaded and indifferent. Then I remember Rock Steady Eddie's advice: *dream the impossible dream, double it and add VAT*. OK, what about making the VIP Village zero-gravity? With chocolate fountains and unicorns and plastic-surgery clinics and sex dungeons and robots and world-class architecture and Elton John? Sorted. Now it's a bidding war in the Middle East.

SATURDAY. On a roll – I'm designing a *Bulgarian-style beach resort* for Qatar.

SUNDAY. Lie undisturbed in *natural habitat*.

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