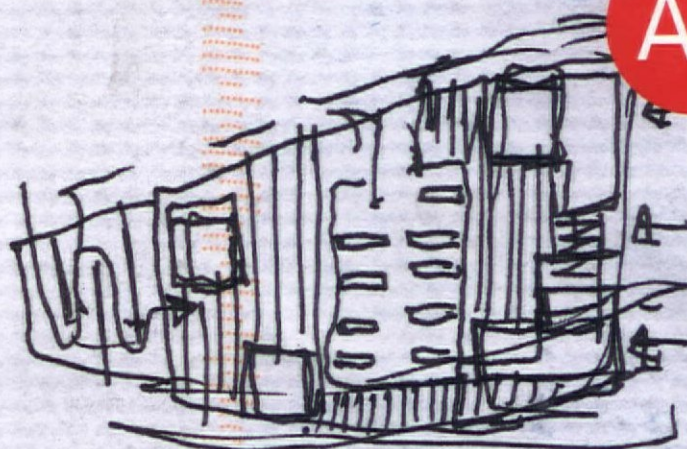




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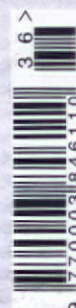
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*At home with the inventor
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favourite bicycle – p95*

Sustainability in Practice
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better – p75*

KING'S CROSS CHARRETTE

Sixteen practices have seven hours to get their ideas on paper – page 31



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020 7728 4574 / 020 7728 4666
E firstname.surname@emap.com
T 020 7728 plus extension below

Editor Kieran Long
Deputy editor Christine Murray (4565)
Editorial administrator Shumi Bose (4574)
Editor, online and special projects Ruth Slavid (4572)

Acting news editor Richard Vaughan (4566)
Senior reporter / Northern correspondent
Richard Waite (07918 650875)

Features editor Rory Olcayto (4571)
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This week online

See more pics from the Moulton bicycle workshop at
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Council fails to keep Spence bridge under wraps p6

Manser Medal shortlist is unveiled p10

Grafton Architects' Milan university building completes p14



Hebden Bridge-based Studio BAAD's plans for the town's Garden Street

STUDIO BAAD SCHEME TRIGGERS DEATH THREATS

Practice subjected to abuse after Hebden Bridge plans are submitted

Hebden Bridge-based Studio BAAD has become the victim of a hate and intimidation campaign after submitting revised plans for a mixed-use development in the West Yorkshire town.

Over the last few weeks bricks have been thrown at the practice's windows, staff members' car tyres have been let down and the firm's PR has been told in a phone call that he would be 'drummed out of Hebden Bridge in a wooden box with the lid nailed down'.

The practice is pointing the finger of suspicion at opponents of its ambitious £10 million Garden Street project, which could create 48 homes, eight

shops and 160 'much-needed' car parking spaces in the centre of the former wool-producing town (AJ 10.07.08).

'For schemes to elicit strong feelings in people is nothing unusual,' said architect Philip Bintliff, from Studio BAAD. 'But this is the first time that we have experienced actions of this nature.'

'This would appear to be a clear attempt to intimidate those involved with the scheme but also, more worryingly, an attempt to intimidate anyone who has shown support for it as well.'

He added: 'We are aware that local businesses have had their

livelihoods threatened for demonstrating support for the scheme and that is unacceptable.'

'This level of intimidation could potentially have a direct influence on the planning process as well as a hugely negative impact on the reputation of Hebden Bridge.'

A West Yorkshire police spokeswoman confirmed police enquiries into the spate of incidents were continuing, though no arrests had been made.

She said: 'We take any form of intimidation seriously and any offence will be followed up by the officers who have already spoken to the complainant'.

The most vocal anti-development reaction has come from a resident organisation called the Garden Street Action Group, which has denied having any involvement in the attacks.

Despite the uproar, the designs have received support from both English Heritage and CABE, which described the scheme as 'refreshing' and 'responding well to the complex historical context of the site'.

Calderdale Council is expected to make a final decision later this month. *Richard Waite*

Read Kieran Long's leader on page 22

Spence Associates' competition-winning New Wear Bridge



NEWLY REVEALED SPENCE BRIDGE MAY NEVER BE BUILT

This leaked image shows Spence Associates' never-before-seen New Wear Bridge – a design Sunderland Council has been trying to keep under wraps for the last three years.

The council kept the bridge out of the spotlight to avoid raising expectations while it awaited a government funding decision.

It looks increasingly unlikely that the council will ever build the

bridge, as it now faces a battle against two cheaper alternatives, believed to be a basic beam bridge and a cable-stay bridge.

The Spence scheme, which was designed in collaboration with engineer Techniker, won an RIBA competition in 2005 beating the likes of Frank Gehry and Wilkinson Eyre.

According to the designers, the bridge would stand at 210m in

height – taller than London's BT Tower – and act as an 'iconic landmark [and] a true gateway to Sunderland'.

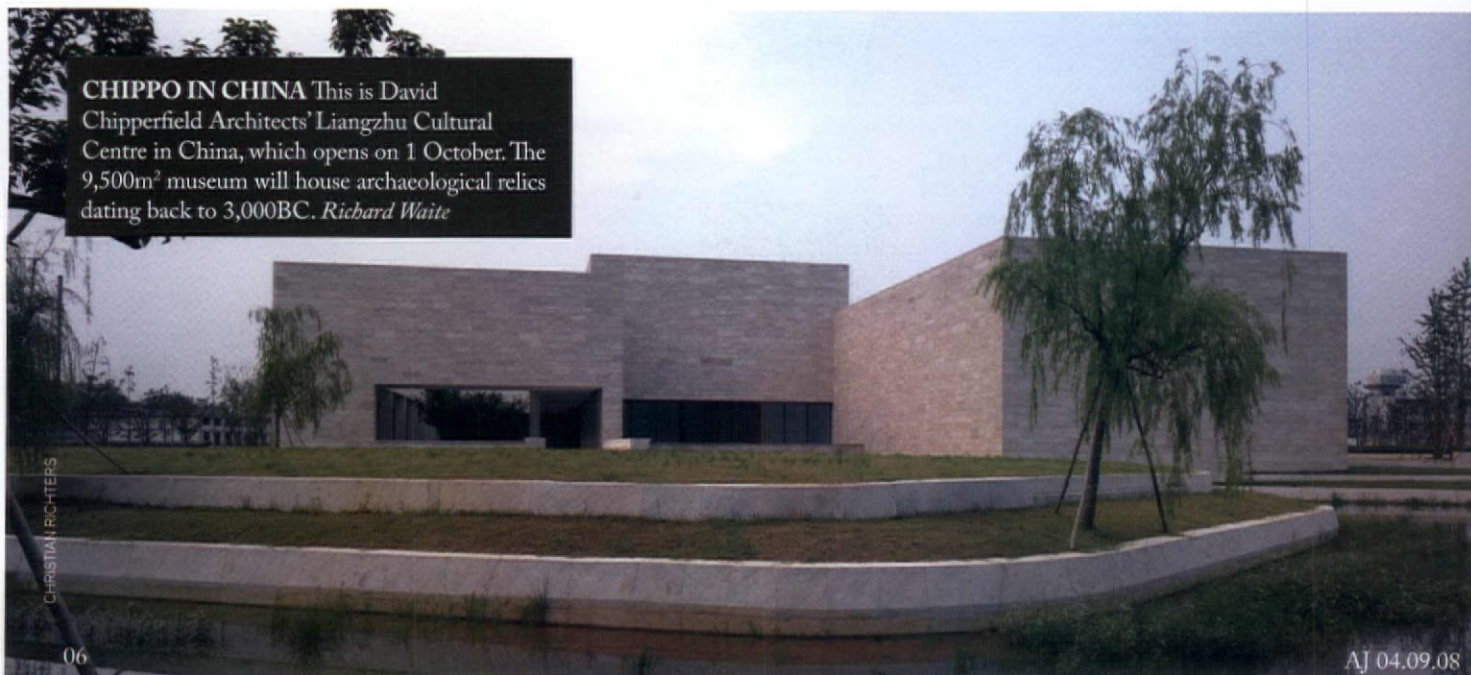
Spence told the AJ: 'Sunderland deserves a bridge like this – the city was once known for its bridges across the Wear.'

The AJ understands that the council will unveil all three bridges at a public consultation next Monday (8 September) and a

council source said that if the public wants the Spence scheme then the taxpayer will 'have to put their hands in their pockets'.

Sunderland Council leader Paul Watson said: 'The question is not exactly which bridge people want, but more about the decision-making process. We need to know what degree of importance people attach to the criteria that need to be considered.' *Richard Vaughan*

CHIPPO IN CHINA This is David Chipperfield Architects' Liangzhu Cultural Centre in China, which opens on 1 October. The 9,500m² museum will house archaeological relics dating back to 3,000BC. *Richard Waite*





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HLM DESIGNS A BARKING TOWER

HLM Architects has designed this 27-storey building near Barking station, East London. Backed by Swan Housing, the tower will house commercial, private and affordable accommodation, and will have elevated glazed garden spaces for residents. *Richard Vaughan*

THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

BROWN LAUNCHES £1B HOUSING SCHEME

Prime Minister Gordon Brown is set to launch a £1 billion plan to build more affordable homes and acquire more social housing. The three-part package is part of the government's attempt to buoy the ailing housing market. The new measures will also aim to help first-time buyers enter the market, and support vulnerable families at risk from repossession.

HOK SPORT SPLITS FROM HOK

HOK Sport, the firm behind Arsenal FC's Emirates Stadium and London's 2012 Olympic Stadium, is to break away from its parent group HOK. The management buyout ends HOK Sport Venue Event's 25 years of operating as part of the HOK Group.

PAGANS ENLIST GODS AGAINST TSCHUMI'S ACROPOLIS MUSEUM

Greek pagans were out in force in Athens on Sunday (31 August) as part of a protest against Bernard Tschumi Architects' £94 million New Acropolis Museum. The worshippers even called on Athena, the goddess of wisdom, to protect the statues, which will be moved from the sacred site to the new museum, due to open later this year.

ARCHITECTURE WEEK DECISION DELAYED

A final decision on the future of Architecture Week has been delayed yet further to allow for more consultation on the 'indefinitely suspended' national event. In July last year the AJ uncovered that Arts Council England had pulled its £250,000 funding for the annual festival – and cancelled the 2008 event – so that it could carry out a review of the week-long jamboree.

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

WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK

ACA LAUNCHES 'SAFER' CLIENT CONTRACT

The Association of Chartered Architects has unveiled its own rival client contract to the RIBA's 'dangerous' standard form of agreement.

According to the ACA the institute's latest document – an update of the soon to be discontinued SFA99 form – leaves practices open to 'potentially disastrous' professional indemnity insurance (PII) problems.

Unlike the RIBA's form, the ACA's 28-page document does not include a clause demanding

the architect performs 'his services in accordance with any budget or timescale agreed with the client'.

The ACA's Stephen Wakeley said: 'PI insurers have stated that failure to meet this obligation by the architect would not be covered by insurance policies. [This is] potentially ruinous.'

Other differences in the ACA form include a 'no set-off' clause, which can allow practices to enforce payment against unreasonable clients, and a provision to resign from a commission.

Comparing the forms, one business insider said: 'The RIBA document is not as tight as the ACA form but it does try to create less friction with the client, whereas the ACA document limits the architect's liability.'

A 'disappointed' Richard Brindley from the RIBA said: 'A plethora of different standard contracts is certainly not helpful to either architects or clients, especially as the ACA form appears to follow the lead of RIBA's.' *Richard Waite*

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HOUSES OF ALL SIZES VIE FOR MANSER MEDAL

Award founder Michael Manser tells *Richard Vaughan* that despite the presence of larger practices on the shortlist, the medal is still awarded 'on merit, not name'

This year's Manser Medal shortlist, sponsored by the Rooflight Company, has taken a different approach from previous years.

The award has always previously been handed out to the best one-off house or major extension by a UK architect, but 2008 sees larger housing developments included for the first time.

The Stirling Prize-nominated Accordia housing scheme in

Cambridge, designed by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, Maccreanor Lavington and Alison Brooks Architects, is included, as is Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners' Oxley Park project in Milton Keynes.

But the founder of the award, architect Michael Manser, has no fears that the sight of bigger names and larger housing schemes on a shortlist that previously featured lesser-known

practices will take anything away from the prize.

'It goes on merit not on name,' says Manser. 'It's inevitable that bigger practices will start going for these awards. But the smaller, firms are still involved.'

'This is a single house design award but it seemed sensible to include houses from larger housing schemes. If there's an estate with such good houses it would be silly to ignore them.'

ACCORDIA, CAMBRIDGE FEILDEN CLEGG BRADLEY STUDIOS, MACCREANOR LAVINGTON, ALISON BROOKS ARCHITECTS

Client Countryside Properties

Contract Value £80 million

This is the second shortlist this scheme has made it on to, after it was nominated for the Stirling Prize. The project provides 212 houses and 166 apartments. The RIBA Awards jury said it was 'high-density housing at its very best'.

PRIVATE HOUSE, BELFAST TWENTYTWO OVER SEVEN

Client Rachel & Kieran McGonigle

Contract Value £185,000

The jury was charmed by the 'childlike' house designed by this Belfast-based practice. The design features a gabled roof, simple white rendered walls and windows with deep reveals. The layout is kept simple, facilitating the ease of movement for a member of the household who is a wheelchair user.



Aidan McGrath



Edmund Sumner

GARDEN APARTMENT, KENSINGTON, LONDON GIANNI BOTSFORD ARCHITECTS

Client A Copponex

Contract Value £450,000

Botsford's scheme provides outdoor space in a protected 19th-century property. The lightwell gives the client an interior garden over three levels. A Manser Medal win would cap a fantastic year for this London-based practice, which picked up the Lubetkin Prize earlier in the year. >>

HALLIGAN HOUSE, ST ALBANS SIMON CONDER ARCHITECTS

Client Alison and Steve Halligan

Contract Value £312,000

A single-storey family home that boasts full-height glazed rooms to compensate for the squashed scale. According to the practice, a legal covenant meant the house had to be kept to one level. The scheme follows a simple courtyard layout and the rooms overlook courtyards both to the front and rear.



STEPHEN AMBROSE

OXLEY PARK, MILTON KEYNES ROGERS STIRK HARBOUR + PARTNERS

Client George Wimpey South Midlands/ English Partnerships

Contract Value £13 million

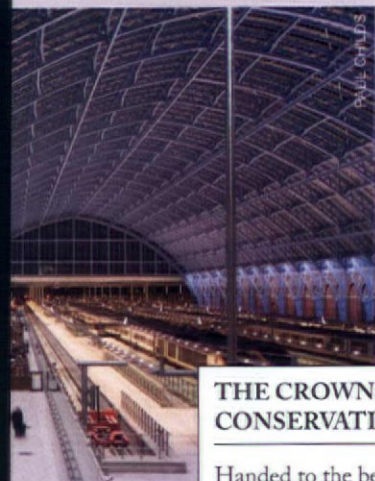
This project was born out of the English Partnerships Design for Manufacture competition, which looked for designs for prefabricated housing at just £60,000 a unit. The scheme was designed to be both flexible and inexpensive and features a host of sustainable features, such as solar heating and passive ventilation. ■



RICHARD DUBOIS



ANDY STAGG



THE CROWN ESTATE CONSERVATION AWARD

Handed to the best work of conservation that demonstrates the successful restoration and/or adaptation of an architecturally significant building.

1. The Listed Wind Tunnels, Julian Harrap Architects
2. De La Warr Pavillion, Taylor John McAslan & Partners
3. St Pancras International, Alastair Lansley (*above left*)
4. Royal Festival Hall, Allies and Morrison
5. Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds, Levitt Bernstein Associates

The RIBA has also unveiled the shortlists for all its special awards, which will be awarded at the Stirling Prize ceremony in Liverpool on 11 October. The shortlists are presented in full below

THE RIBA/ENGLISH PARTNERSHIPS SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

Given to the building that demonstrates most elegantly and durably the principles of sustainable architecture.

1. Oxley Park, Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners
2. Oundle School Science Technology Block, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios
3. Bristol Brunel Academy, Wilkinson Eyre Architects
4. Manchester Civil Justice Centre, Denton Corker Marshall

RIBA/CABE INCLUSIVE DESIGN AWARD

This award celebrates inclusivity in building design, and demonstrates that good design results in safe environments.

1. Alnwick Garden Pavilion, Hopkins Architects
2. Old Market Square, Gustafson Porter
3. Royal Festival Hall, Allies and Morrison
4. Royal Observatory, Allies and Morrison



STEPHEN LAWRENCE PRIZE

Sponsored by the Marco Goldschmied Foundation and awarded to the best example of a project that has a construction budget of less than £1 million. The prize is intended to encourage fresh talent working with smaller budgets.

1. East Beach Cafe, Heatherwick Studio (*left*)
2. Classroom of the Future, Gollifer Langston Architects
3. Cremorne Riverside Centre, Sarah Wigglesworth Architects
4. The Sackler Crossing, John Pawson
5. Glass & Timber Houses – Dulwich, Hampson Williams

THE RIBA/SORRELL FOUNDATION SCHOOLS AWARD

Awarded to the architects of the best RIBA Award-winning school with the aim of raising the standards of design in all new school building.

1. Oundle School Science Technology Block, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios
2. Thomas Deacon Academy, Foster + Partners
3. Bristol Brunel Academy, Wilkinson Eyre Architects
4. Pinewood Infant School, Hampshire County Council Architecture & Design Services
5. St Marylebone Church of England School Performing Arts Facility, Gumuchdjian Architects



GRAFTON OPENS A 'WINDOW TO MILAN'

This is Dublin-based Grafton Architects' new building for the Bocconi University in Milan. The 57 million euro (£46 million) project was completed during the summer after starting on site in November 2004.

The building houses conference and lecture facilities and acts as a gateway to the urban campus, which occupies an entire neighbourhood within a residential and commercial district.

Grafton saw off challenges from nine other European >>





firms to land the 45,000m² scheme in a competition organised by the university in 2002. Kenneth Frampton, who was among the judges, described the winning scheme as having a 'meaningful and right relationship' between the immediate urban context and that of the university.

The brief specified conference and lecture facilities for 2,500 people, including a 1,000-seat *aula magna* – or auditorium – and offices for a further 1,000 teaching staff and researchers.

Grafton's key move was to place the *aula magna* directly on the street edge of the busy Viale

Bligny. Partly submerged, it rises out of the ground, opening the building up to the street and, according to practice director Shelly McNamara, giving the university a 'window to Milan'. Its dramatic interior recalls the heavy tectonics of Russian Constructivism; McNamara calls it an 'erupting landscape'.

The building has been shortlisted in this year's World Architecture Festival Awards and will feature in a film to be shown in the Irish Pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale (which runs from 14 September to 23 November). *Rory Olcayto* ■





Left The *aula magna* auditorium is described by the practice as an 'embedded boulder'

Above Research offices form a floating canopy above public space

Below and below left The undercroft is treated as an 'erupting landscape' supporting the levels above



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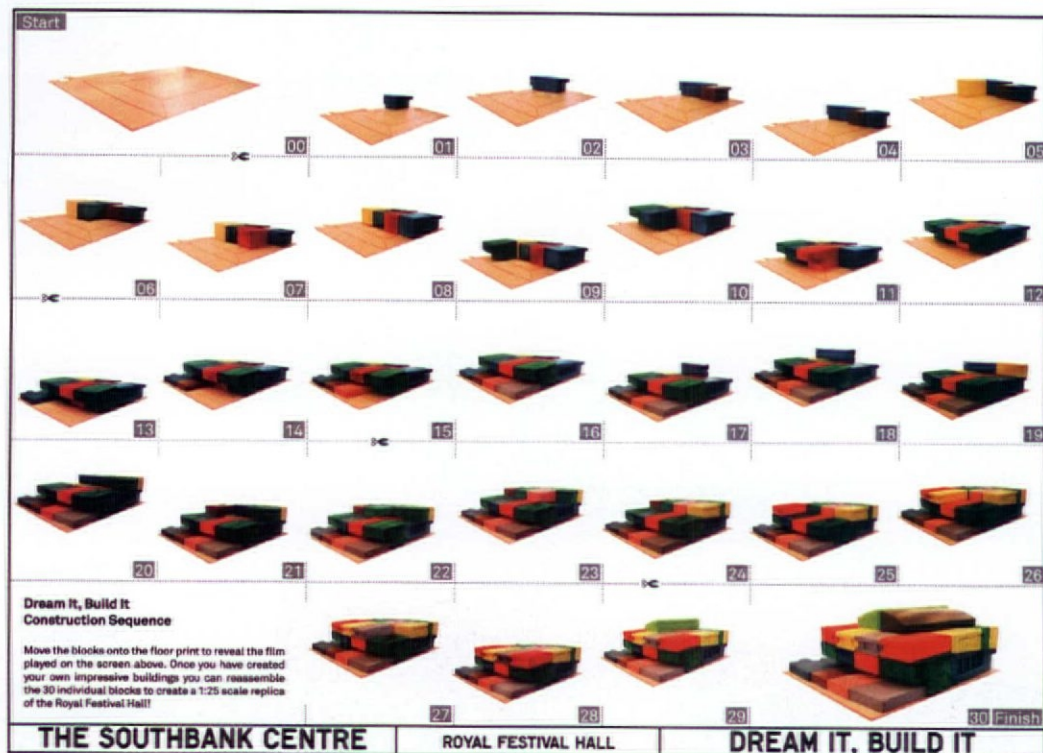
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SWEET DREAMS

Pictured above is **Amenity Space's** *Dream It, Build It* installation, currently showing at the Royal Festival Hall on London's South Bank. The practice designed a 1:25 model of the Festival Hall made entirely from soft furnishings, and the brightly coloured upholstered blocks can be rearranged into versions of the Southbank Centre. Each block has been fitted with a unique electronic ID tag that triggers film footage when it is configured in the correct position. For more pictures visit WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK

CABE'S BULLSEYE

Good news is no news and,

unfortunately for old hack Astragal, it seems that – unlike previous years – CABE has managed to hit every one of its government-set targets. Presumably this success guarantees chief executive **Richard Simmons** his £16,496 bonus on top of his tidy £109,975 salary. It just goes to prove that (talking about) good design pays.

A BRIDGE APART

Santiago Calatrava's newly opened bridge in Venice has come in for all sorts of flak. First the traditionalists had a pop, claiming its design was out of keeping with Venice's heritage. Then it was heavily criticised for not providing disabled access, and now, Astragal understands, protesters are having a go at the name: Ponte della

Costituzione, or Constitution Bridge. Apparently, people with disabilities are angry that the bridge doesn't respect Article 3 of the Italian constitution, which states that all citizens are equal. At least it was finished on time. Oh no, it was four years late.

LITTLE AT LARGE

Astragal gave a tiny sigh of pleasure when street artist

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Slinkachu's small but perfectly formed new book, *Little People in the City*, landed on his desk. The book follows a hapless cast of Lilliputian figures around the city, showing them clambering out of drainage grates, taking cash out of a cash machine 20mm above the ground (pictured below), and being savaged by bumble bees three times their size.

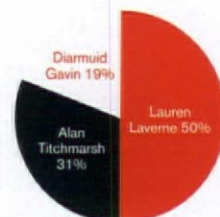


THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Who would you rather see judge the Stirling Prize?

Next week's question: Which building do you think should win the Manser Medal (see pages 10–13)?

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Leader Intimidation and violence have no place in a democratic consultation process, says *Kieran Long*

Architects do not expect their professional lives to entail threats to their person. But that's exactly what Hebden Bridge-based Studio BAAD has had to tolerate in recent weeks in the West Yorkshire town (see page 5). When people start throwing rocks through your windows it must be hard for anyone to stay focused and professional.

The deeply uncivilised behaviour of these attackers can not be allowed to sway a process that seems to have been democratic and with ample consultation. It also should not be read as representative of the views of the public. It is intimidation, pure and simple, by people with a clear agenda. Let's hope they're prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

It's interesting to note that the target of the vandals' ire has been the PR people and the architect. They are the public faces of the project, and very clearly associated with its authorship. I thought architects were supposed to have lost their place at the head of the supply chain? Clearly not in the eyes of those who wish to squash the project by intimidation.

You can't please all of the people all of the time, but in this case, you can lock up the ones who choose to express their displeasure through violence.

KING'S CROSS CHARRETTE

As the third AJ/Argent King's Cross Charrette exhibition opens at the New London

Architecture gallery in central London, I want to pay tribute to the extraordinary contribution of Argent and Bob West of the London Borough of Camden in this year's event. The visionary sponsorship of Argent over three years has seen the charrette develop into one of the most important showcases of emerging talent in British architecture.

Thanks also to all those practices who put so much work into the event, and I hope as many readers as possible will go to see their work at NLA. If you added their names to those of the participants in the previous two years' charrettes, you'd have as good a guide to emerging UK architectural talent as exists anywhere. Kieran.long@emap.com

Opinion The experience of Castleford has left *Anthony Hudson* bemused but with the benefit of experience

The Channel 4 series *Kevin McCloud and the Big Town Plan*, which finished on Monday (1 September) documented projects my practice Hudson Architects had been involved in, so it was with some trepidation that I watched, having no idea how they were going to be portrayed in the interests of a good story.

We worked on two high-profile projects for the town centre, one of which, the market stalls, was abandoned, and the second, a new town square, became a shadow of its original intent. Were we going to be the fall guys? Why had we put ourselves under the camera's gaze? In the event the programme provided an even-handed account of the process.

We found the people of Castleford amazingly supportive of our ideas. On the market stalls we built a good relationship with the users. However problems arose with how to test our ideas for the collapsible stalls. We

wanted to use fabricators with previous knowledge of such mechanisms, but the council was not prepared to go down this route since it might involve OJEU notices etc. so we were thrown back on our own resources and forced to reinvent the wheel, which with the costs and time limits imposed made it an impossible job. That was unfortunate, but the story of the town square was more bizarre.

For the square there was no identifiable user client – much as we tried to find one. Was it

For the square there was no user client – much as we tried to find one

the town centre partnership? Was it the chief executive? Was it the new town centre management group that was set up halfway through the project who changed the brief and told us to omit half the scheme and then disappeared? Was it the highways department who took over the working drawings and implementation of the scheme? Should part of it have been Alison Drake, Castleford's heritage champion, who was a huge advocate for our work but wasn't invited to help, yet was the only one who even suggested a brief for the square? Who would be a council advocate? In the end no one really.

The problem was an absence of a proper client structure. Nobody took responsibility and the final outcomes fully display this – with the design heavily compromised, the square was left unfinished, uncared for and uncleaned, even for the official opening.

I think that despite steering groups and project managers, Wakefield in the end wasn't prepared for the experiment. Maybe like a Lottery win there was an immediate prize in being chosen, but learning how to deal with it takes time and a cultural change that never materialised.

What are the lessons learned? – More than anything it taught us that you need an identifiable client. We had huge ambitions for this project that at most turns were thwarted.

Would we do it again? A hesitant... yes. Yes for the experience and insights it has given, but as a drain on the practice finances a definite no. We lost huge amounts of money but learned so much in the process about regeneration; about what makes a good client and how good architecture could be encouraged to blossom.

Anthony Hudson is director of Hudson Architects

Email comment@architectsjournal.co.uk



The precision of James Stirling's work brings Patrick Lynch to a new awareness of space

It seems barely credible that many of James Stirling's early projects are now at risk from refurbishment or worse. Stirling came out of the Empire School, as it was known, at Liverpool University, where Maxwell Fry had set the tone for a locally nuanced version of Modernism in his work in Chandigarh and

Around the library's edges, the book stacks are appealingly miniature in comparison, and one can't help feeling an Alicia tremor of surprise at the magnitude of one's shadow or the tininess of a desk. In fact, like all great buildings, the library is smaller than it looks in photographs, yet has a powerful grandeur

and emphasising the elegance of the running bond, its horizontal and mechanical character, and drawing the eye up towards the vertical rhythm of the glazing. Glass and brick complement each other and the tectonic order chosen to deploy them here seems richly complex and astonishingly well executed, as if Stirling knew exactly how much to protrude each surface, how slim to make things, and when to beef something up in contrast.

There is a delicious sense of the intricate and the broad-brush approach at work. From afar, you read the crystalline form as a perfectly cut diamond. Up close, the textures of mortar and silicone emphasise the joints between things, bringing to life the compositional logic of a space that sits between the brick book stacks and the glassy world of the atrium. As a consequence, when you are inside the building you feel as if you exist between things. Negative space is revealed as a positive, as a volume – hence the feeling of 'a strange thickness of air'.

The tension of the library's spaces is palpable in a strange thickness of air

West Africa. My first encounter with Stirling's work led me to apply to Liverpool University, and to follow in his footsteps to study architecture there.

I visited Stirling's Cambridge History Faculty Library at 17, and some years later, as a graduate student, I worked in the library, savouring the drama of the spaces and the heightened sense of reality they imbued in me. Back in the 1960s, the client issued a site plan showing land it did not then own as part of the competition site. Stirling and James Gowan's scheme, which originally used the extra land, then had to be rotated to fit the revised plot, with inevitable environmental problems.

Despite the library's failings, I'm still puzzled by its quality of exaggeration and poise. The tension of its spaces is palpable in a strange thickness of air that feels stretched and taut. How does Stirling do this? The steel beams and the glass atrium they support seem stretched and slick, as if the material processes that formed them have been translated into solid stable form – a silent embodiment of glass as a very slow liquid and of steel as a splinter prised from the earth.

in the flesh. Making small buildings appear large and vice versa is an old game for architects, and Stirling's teacher, Colin Rowe, wrote extensively about the Mannerist devices deployed by Michelangelo and Palladio to animate and dramatise surfaces and spaces.

The brick skin of the library slides past the patent glazing system, declaring its autonomy



Sam Jacob. If Stonehenge's symbolism is too daunting, why don't we just ignore it?

There's something about Stonehenge which seems to send plans for its new visitors' centres around the bend. Plans by Denton Corker Marshall were scrapped last year, and a fresh OJEU is out for those brave or foolish enough to take on the challenge. *I'm not suggesting that the project suffers any kind of supernatural curse.* But maybe, for a culture like ours that's so hung up about history, tradition, nature and so on, Stonehenge is just too much of a cultural overload that it simply blows our circuits.

We know almost nothing about Stonehenge's origins or the purpose its builders intended. Its huge presence and significance are in direct disproportion to the little we know about what it was supposed to be. This freakishly

lopsided disparity creates an effect of liberating its form from any singular or particular content.

From the Druids in their pantomime robes acting out a Victorian charade at the Summer Solstice, to the crusty convoy attaching non-specific cosmic vibes as generator-powered Hawkwind space-rock the sunrise, all the way back to the local guide who, when showing proto-archaeologist William Stukeley around the site in the mid-1700s, scattered Roman coins in an effort to confirm Inigo Jones' theory that it had been built as a Roman temple, Stonehenge performs varied roles in diverse narratives. *It acts as a monument not to itself, but to our own psychic projections.*

Perhaps this explains the curse of the Stonehenge visitors' centre.

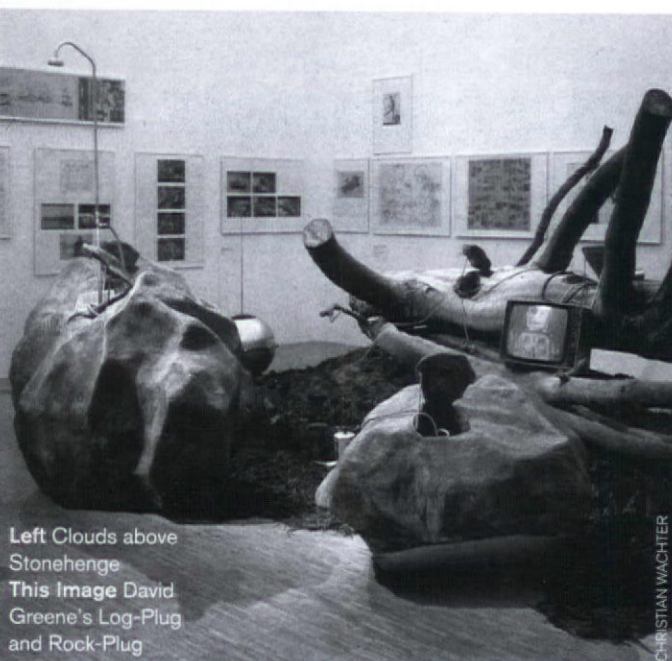
Because, though seemingly benign, visitors' centres are highly strung cultural artefacts.

The role of a visitors' centre is more than corralling cars and dispensing cappuccinos. The real substance of a visitors' centre is to articulate our relationship to history, nature or whatever it is we are visiting. The current visitors' centre typology employs a kind of eco-High Tech that steers a path between various controversies.

Stonehenge is an extreme example of the problems we have in relating to our history and heritage. In the US, for example, natural significance or history are treated as drive-in experiences. But here we still feel that some effort should be made to reach those sublime moments and that the process of touristification devalues authentic experience.

Our obsession with authenticity is predicated on the idea that somehow there was a more natural moment. *But as Julian Cope – '80s rocker turned megalithic chronicler – notes, the standing stones of Avebury mark the moment that man set himself at odds with nature: the moment of the agrarian revolution. They set a course for architecture as a symbol of the separation between the man-made and the natural.*

Perhaps pursuing this narrative might break the visitors' centre curse by embracing the artificial. Stonehenge deserves a visitors' centre which embraces its unique position among the ancient artefacts of Britain. My tip to English Heritage would be to appoint ex-Archigrammer David Greene as creative director. Greene's Log-plug and Rock-plug are the definitive precedent studies in the synthetic architecture of leisure. These projects – artificial rocks which house the infrastructure of convenience – oscillate between the commercial and the poetic in just the right way.



Left Clouds above Stonehenge
This image David Greene's Log-Plug and Rock-Plug

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Letters

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

TO THE FORE

In your leader in AJ 14.08.08, you weigh up the competing merits of the Allies and Morrison and Quinlan & Francis Terry schemes proposed for the site near Hampton Court Palace. You conclude that it doesn't matter which the local authority chooses: 'Both architects are just doing background.'

This is a misreading of the situation. With Ditton Field and Cigarette Island Park, this site forms the parkland setting of Hampton Court Palace. Excluding William Tite's listed Hampton Court Station and an engine shed (long gone), the site has never had buildings on it. Currently, visitors arriving at the station enjoy views across the river to the west front of the palace, a situation that would be improved if the station car park (put there in the 1960s on former railway sidings) was removed.

Network Rail, with developer Gladedale, wishes to foreclose this attractive possibility by building on the riverside and the station car park, some 150m or so from the palace itself. As well as blocking views to the palace, the new buildings will overlook the Pond and Privy Gardens. These, of

course, were always intended to be private gardens, and are something that visitors to the palace can still experience today. Gladedale's hotel, Modernist or Classical, will spoil this unique feature.

So the schemes by Allies and Morrison and Quinlan & Francis Terry are very much 'foreground' buildings, and are entirely misconceived, whichever style they are clothed in. Is it really the case that English Heritage (whose chief executive, Simon Thurley, was formerly curator at Hampton Court Palace) has withdrawn its objection? Historic Royal Palaces certainly remains opposed to the scheme, as is the Hampton Court Rescue Campaign.

The site should probably have been bought years ago (perhaps with millennium funds) to prevent harmful development of this kind. It is very much to be hoped, therefore, that Elmsbridge Borough Council will recognise the folly of allowing significant development here.

Keith Garner, London SW11

NOT FOR CARS

I'm grateful to the AJ for including my comments in defence of John Madin's

Birmingham Central Library ('Birmingham's Brutalist library to be demolished', AJ 14.08.08), but I don't believe that the arguments for demolishing it are true.

Removing the library will not create a long vista to the town hall. A straight line from Centenary Square across the bridge leads to the corner of the Edwardian Council House Extension – a lovely building, but not an architectural focus. With a bit of fiddling you might just see the Council House clock tower, but the town hall is well to the south-east.

It will not take £160 million to refurbish the library, as Birmingham Council's Clive Dutton suggests. That estimate includes, for example, the replacement of every single exterior cladding panel. The leaks could easily be stopped if only the council would talk to John Madin, and particularly to the surviving member of the detail design team, John Ericsson.

It surprised me to read that Glenn Howells is a fan of the library. But the building does not, as he alleges, restrict links between the west and east of the city. One of its amazing features is that it is all built to a 11m module to accommodate the Birmingham

City Transport bus station which was planned to go underneath it, but was never completed.

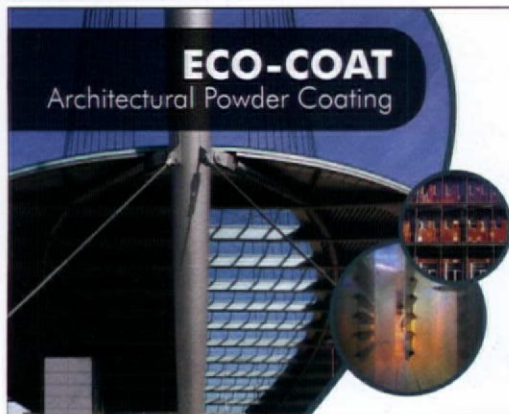
The concourse under the ziggurat was designed as the focus of local public transport for the city centre, with entrances and walkways in every direction. So far from being a blockage, it's a node. Glenn Howells calls it 'part of a car-based vision for Birmingham'. The truth is the exact opposite. *Andy Foster, Birmingham*

FROM WWW. ARCHITECTS JOURNAL.CO.UK

Response to 'Lauren Laverne quits Stirling Prize jury' (AJ online 28.08.08):

Landscape design requires many of the same skills as architecture and a well-respected landscape designer/architect would/should be a welcome addition to the Stirling Prize jury. Surely the problem here is that Lauren Laverne and her replacement, Diarmuid Gavin, been appointed because of their media profiles rather than any understanding of architecture or design.

Anonymous, London



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King's Cross Charrette

16 practices

1 site

7 hours of design

0 computers

5 jury members

16 crits

1 after party

The brief p.32

The site p.33

King's Cross Central p.36

The practices p.38

The crit p.70

The Brief

AGAR GROVE AND ST
PANCRAS WAY

1. Prepare a mini masterplan for the selected site, identifying massing and scale; and/or
2. Create a detailed design for part of the site.
3. All contributions must include the canal, either one or both sides.

THE SITE

This year, property developer Argent and the AJ consulted with Camden Council to select the 2008 King's Cross Charrette site, which is just outside Argent's landmark King's Cross Central development. Located in Neighbourhood Renewal Area Somers Town, insecurity regarding the future of King's Cross has long affected the neighbourhood. However, as the Argent development is rolled out, the area's prospects are likely to change significantly.

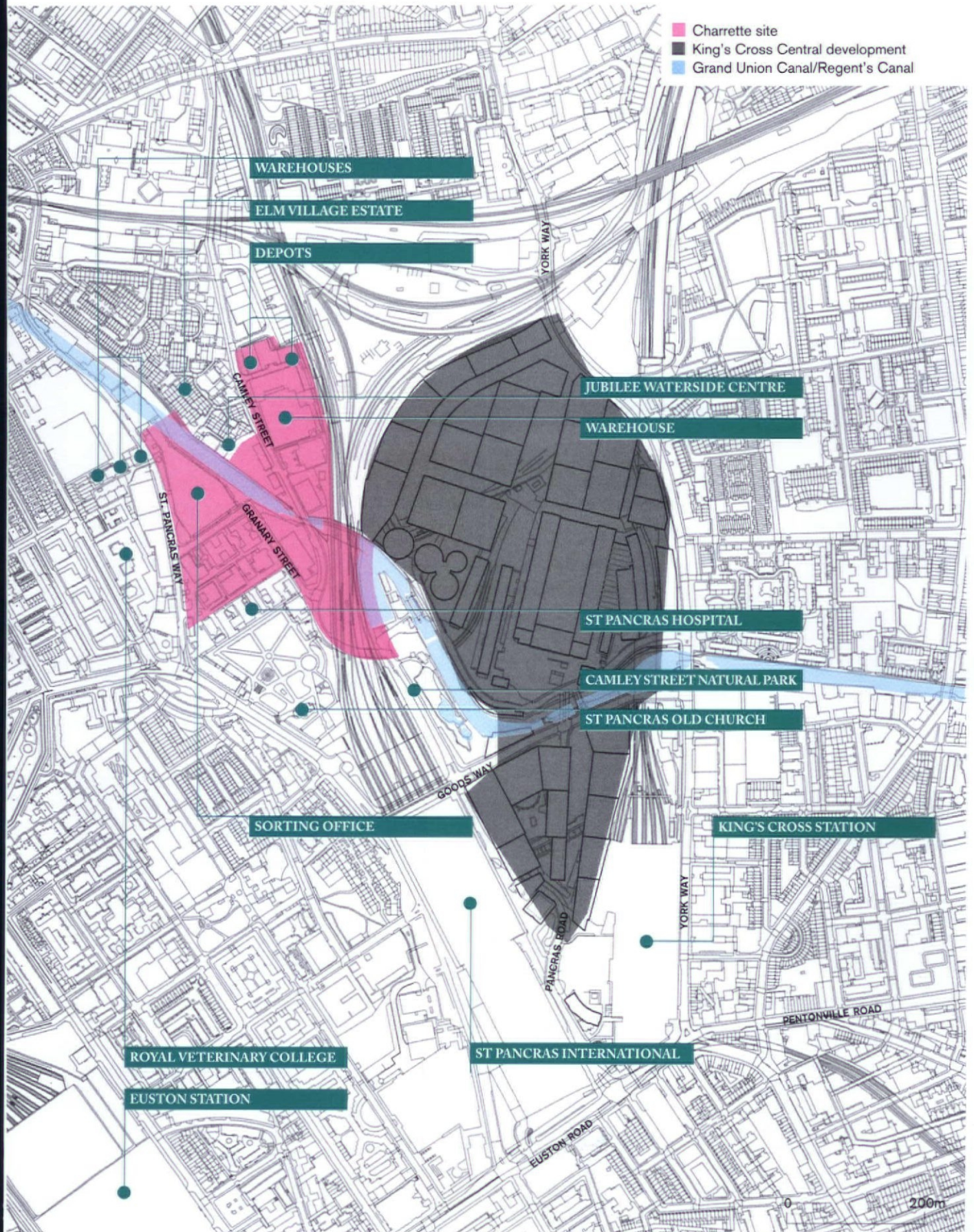
The irregularly shaped site spans the King's Cross railway tracks and is bisected by Regent's Canal. Edged by Camley Street to the east and St Pancras Way to the west, the immediate area consists of industrial, warehouse and established residential uses.

Local authority planning policies and guidance seek to retain industrial floor space while enhancing public realm, connectivity and the canal's leisure potential. An emphasis on biodiversity and climate change are also raised in the brief as the most relevant issues.

The area has excellent transport links from nearby St Pancras International and King's Cross rail stations; and is also reasonably close to Camden Town Underground station, offering access to over 10 different rail and Tube lines. >>

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID KOHN

REGENT'S CANAL



MAIDEN LANE ESTATE

REGENT'S CANAL



ELM VILLAGE ESTATE

NOTES

- New housing is to be 50 per cent affordable and should contain a significant proportion of family units.
- Building heights are limited to four storeys at the canal towpath and eight storeys at street level, to preserve views to St Paul's Cathedral.
- Buildings to be retained include the Victorian blocks along the southern side of the hospital site, the Jubilee Waterside Centre and the residential buildings west of Camley Street.
- Two pedestrian and cycle links are being provided, one to Agar Grove and the other to King's Cross Central, to increase traffic to the area. (Practices were asked to consider whether a 'proper' road link would have been better.)

ITINERARY

- 8:00 – Breakfast
- 8:45 – Robert Evans (Argent) and Bob West (Camden Council) introduce the brief
- 9:00 – Q&A from architects regarding the brief
- 9:30 – Design time commences
- 11:00 – Working tea-break
- 13:00 – Working lunch is served
- 15:00 – Working tea-break
- 16:30 – Design time finishes. Crit begins
- 18:00 – Invited guests arrive for champagne celebration

THE JURY

Will Colthorpe project director, Argent
Paul Finch editor, the *Architectural Review*
Kieran Long editor, *The Architects' Journal*
Roger Madelin joint chief executive, Argent
Bob West head of urban design, London Borough of Camden ■





The local authority seeks to enhance the leisure potential of the Regent's Canal



ST PANCRAS HOSPITAL WATER TOWER, GRANARY STREET



CAMLEY STREET



ST. PANCRAS OLD CHURCH YARD

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID KOHN

CHARRETTE SITE

King's Cross Central

1. COAL DROPS YARD

2. ST PANCRAS/EUROSTAR
TERMINAL
ALASTAIR LANSLEY

3. UNIVERSITY OF
ARTS LONDON
STANTON WILLIAMS

4. OFFICE SPACE (9,900m²)
ALLIES AND MORRISON

5. STANLEY BUILDING AND
OFFICE SPACE (2,000m²)
STUDIO DOWNIE ARCHITECTS

6. GERMAN GYMNASIUM (1864)

7. RESIDENTIAL AND OFFICE SPACE
NIALL MCLAUGHLIN
ARCHITECTS

8. PUBLIC GARDEN AND
RESIDENTIAL
PRP ARCHITECTS/
MACCREANOR LAVINGTON

9. CONSTRUCTION TRAINING
CENTRE (TEMPORARY)
DAVID MORLEY ARCHITECTS

14. J SAINSBURY'S
ALLIES AND MORRISON

15. RESIDENTIAL BLOCK
dRMM

10. OFFICE SPACE (16,500m²)
PORPHYRIOS ASSOCIATES

11. OFFICE SPACE (5,500m²)
DAVID CHIPPERFIELD
ARCHITECTS

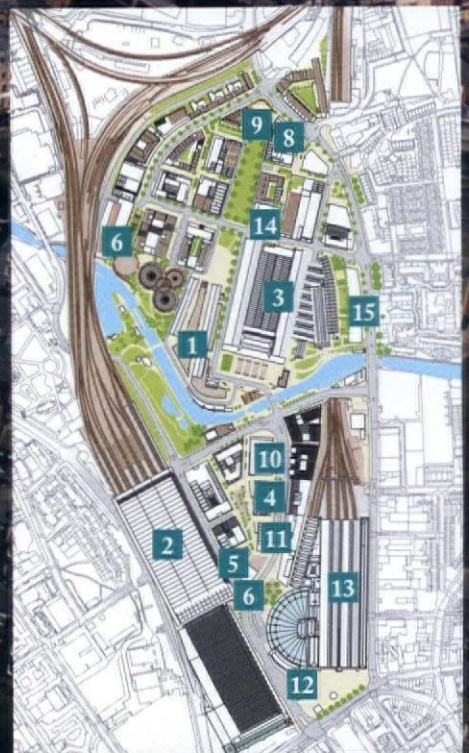
12. GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL
(1854)

13. KING'S CROSS
STATION
REDEVELOPMENT BY
JOHN MCASLAN +PARTNERS

THE BIG PICTURE

At nearly 700,000m², property developer Argent's King's Cross Central development is arguably the most significant regeneration project in the UK. Planning permission was granted in 2006 for nearly 2,000 new homes, 20 new streets and 10 major public spaces. The residential developments will be 44 per cent affordable, including shared ownership, key worker and homes for the elderly. About 50 per cent of the development is speculative, including office space by David Chipperfield Architects, Allies and Morrison, Porphyrios Associates and Studio Downie Architects, and a residential development by dRMM. The

rest consists of J Sainsbury's 23,000m² new head office, plus the Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design London campus. As part of the project, 20 historic buildings will be refurbished, including the Grade II-listed Great Northern Hotel, the Granary Complex, Coal Drops Yard and the German Gymnasium. Carbon-saving technology incorporated into the development include photovoltaics, windmills and a combined heat and power plant with top-up boilers fired by biofuels. As the developer, Argent is committed to creating an outstanding mixed-use piece of city with a distinctive and historic sense of place. King's Cross Central will complete in 2012, in time for the London Olympics.



5th Studio

Participants Tom Holbrook, Nathan Jones, Kieran Perkins

King's Cross is an important location for the white van economy and the huge amount of logistics needed to supply London with its desires and 'just-in-time' perishables. Stacking these present uses in the zone of slippage between the railway lines and Camley Street encloses them within proper, mixed urban fabric, making a safe route between King's Cross and Camden Road Station. As well as extending Camden's urban grain, we've brought to this space a remade St Pancras Hospital, the Camley Street Natural Park and a new world around St Pancras Lock. The scale of the infrastructure and strange level shifts across the site result in large areas of 'trapped nature' – we propose to unify these spaces into a wild reserve, or a resource for power production to support a low-carbon white van fleet.



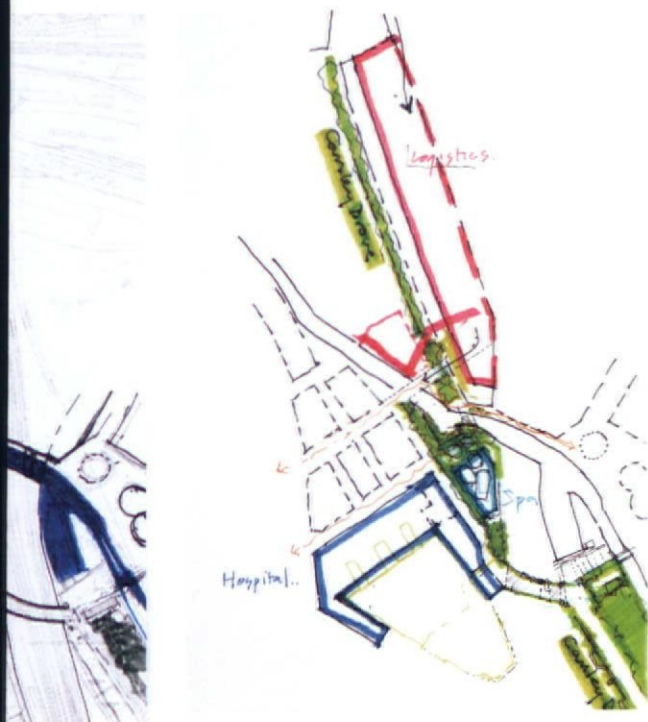


Above Kieran Perkins,
Tom Holbrook and
Nathan Jones

Far left The
concentration of the
'white van economy'
(red) between green
spaces (yellow) and

remade St Pancras
Hospital (green)

Below The
concentrated
'logistics' area (red)
increases traffic on
nearby residential
streets



Where did you begin?

King's Cross still acts like the edge of the city. The site is in a damp valley – human settlement has tended to favour higher ground. The uses on site have created their own topography, like St Pancras and its great viaducts. Our proposal uses this strange scale to allow the city to take hold.

What would you have done differently?

Nothing! The point of the day was to go with a hunch, to take a risk.

What was it like to work without a computer?

We could concentrate on drawing, and found we didn't need to talk very much.

What did you learn as a practice?

We realised we could use the formal charrette process ourselves to intensively tackle projects between our two studios. >>

Adam Khan Architects

Participants Adam Khan, Anne Wynne

Our project was an infrastructure of planting that could influence future planning decisions. We planted oak trees and kept their locations secret. The railway land to the east of the site may take 10 or more years to be developed. By then, the trees will be well-grown and so will be afforded statutory protection. They will act as an additional constraint to the development of the area.





Facing page Anne Wynne plants a free oak tree on site
Left Adam Khan and Anne Wynne

Where did you begin?

We talked about masterplanning and wondered at the desirability of making proposals without knowledge of the area. We looked at the model of the King's Cross development and walked around the site and its surroundings. We noticed an available local resource: free trees given out by Camley Street Natural Park.

What was it like to work without a computer?

We presented on a laptop, but it very nice to

be walking, talking, exploring and planting.

Any tales to tell?

A car worker asked us for a tree, and was very pleased to be given one.

What did you learn as a practice?

We need to think, and talk, and look a lot before we propose.

Would you do it again?

Happily. >>

ASD Projects

Department of Architecture and Spatial Design,
London Metropolitan University

Participants Anna Page, Anne Markey, Robert Mull, Timothy Smith

Our proposition was to establish a contract between interested parties prior to the imposition of a masterplan. We aimed, therefore, to produce an anti-masterplan with no single author. Using voices and faces collected by Camden Council's King's Cross Voices Oral History Project, we demonstrated what we, as a university group, can bring to such projects. Through a multi-layered presentation, we illustrated the many research strands and emerging talents that ASD Projects can draw on in its consultancy work, such as anthropology, health and education research, regeneration and transport expertise, and our own young architectural practices, graduates and students.



Left Anna Page and
Timothy Smith

Right ASD Projects
collected voices, faces
and stories; research
that could inspire a
masterplan

Where did you begin?

Conscious of the fact that we participated in the charrette as a university group, rather than as a conventional practice, we set out not to make a proposal as such, but rather to suggest a methodology or approach.

What was it like to work without a computer?

Fine. Representing a methodology doesn't lend itself naturally to CAD, and computers get in the way of the conceptual stage. It also forced us out on to the site, where we sketched buildings and observed

the local community.

Any good memories?

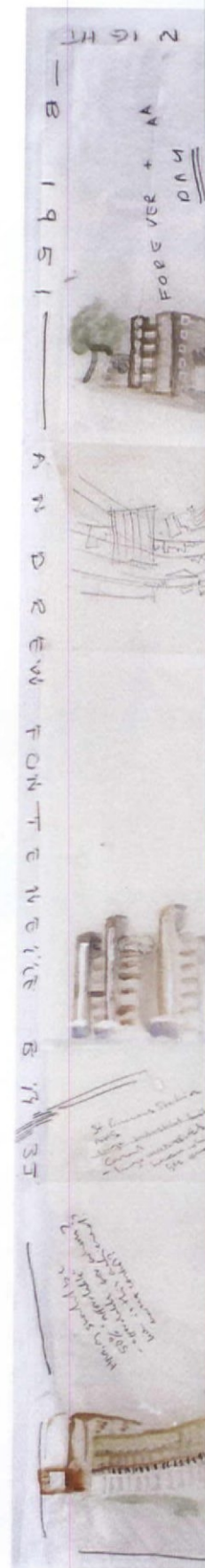
The food, the beer... I enjoyed the panel, too – Roger Madelin, Paul Finch, Kieran Long...

What did you learn?

How to distil the essence of our mission statement in a very short time and present it to our peers.

Feverish scribbling, or slow and steady?

Slow at the beginning, feverish by the end. We made our concept model from clay in two minutes. >>



O R A L
H I S T O R I E S
2004

For $(r \in M \in M)$

* Should put it aside at the edge of the tub, and work by accident!

1. $\frac{1}{2}$

IT TOOK A LONG TIME FOR
MANY ENORMITY OF THE
PROJECT TO SINK IN
EVERYTHING CHANGED
THEN EVERYTHING CHANGED

NORMA
STEEL

KINAS CROSS VOICES 2004

ONE THING
THAT WILL HAUNT
ME FOREVER

Anyone who reasonably may be expected to use or enjoy the product

* A copper would work in KNO₃
what you were doing in break 5p.

2. In a company that doesn't do that.
In Young's Company, don't do that.
- the same.

So we remember the language
factory in King's Court, we
called it the Spanish factory
because about people called
linguists we called Spanish.

• It's just a wonderful playground
when they beat the four ball.

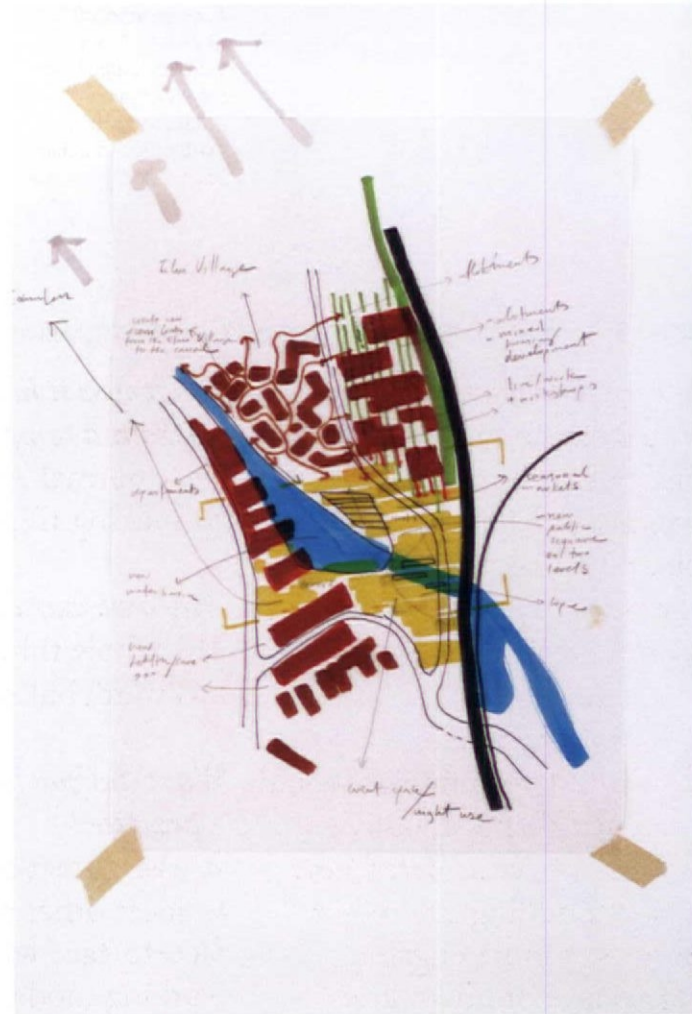
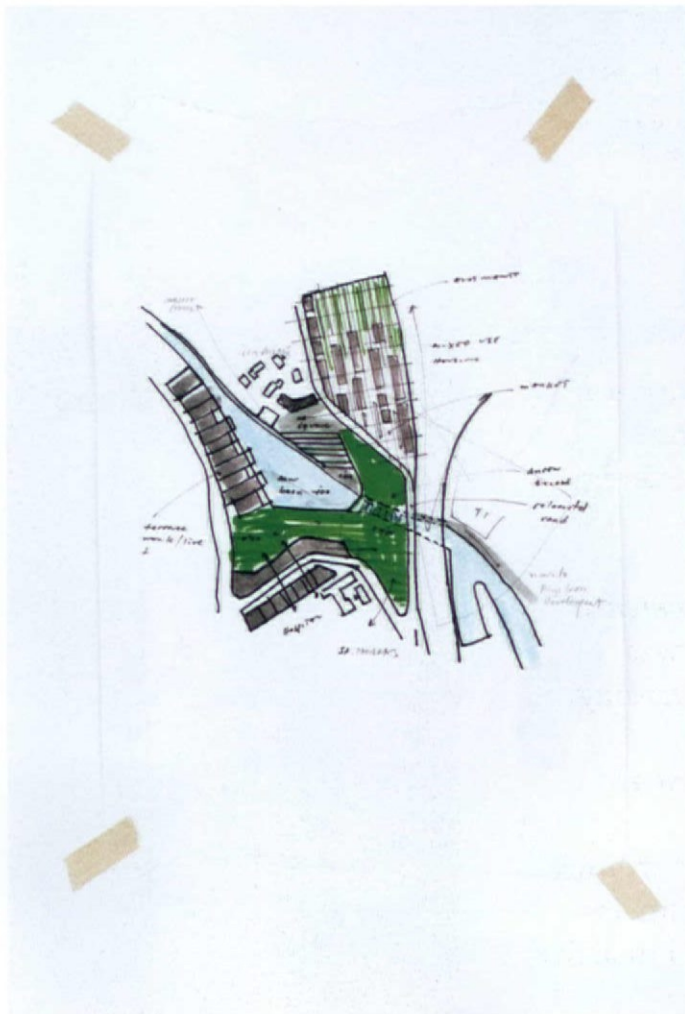
know more "complete" is sand? why is a sand why.

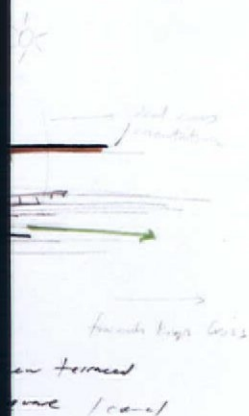
KAREN ABRAHAMS R 1961

ay-architects

Participants Anthony Boulanger, Yeoryia Manolopoulou, Michiko Sumi

Our proposal is based on topographical shifts for the making of a two-fold landscape: a 'soft' green wooded bridge over the canal and a 'hard' stepped public square between the bridge and towpath. The new public loop forms the heart of a chain of spaces and activities which would have a huge impact in the creation of new affiliations and thresholds. Today, the place-makers of the area are the families of Elm Village, visitors to Camley Street Natural Park, city commuters, cyclists and warehouse workers. We are interested in local design acts that would support and knit the beauty of this community back to King's Cross. In doing so, we've tried to avoid the traps of diagrammatic masterplanning and instead sought to appreciate and enhance what is already here.





Facing page, all sketches A 'soft' wooded bridge over the canal (green) is juxtaposed with a 'hard' stepped public square (red)

Above Michiko Sumi, Anthony Boulanger and Yeoryia Manolopoulou
Below Presentation model

Where did you begin?

With day and night walks, and talking to the people we met in Elm Village. The charrette was a reflection of the things we saw and the stories we heard.

Given more time...

Our intuitive approach would not have changed, but we would have considered how a large building site might become a more engaging experience of urban life.

What was it like to work without a computer?

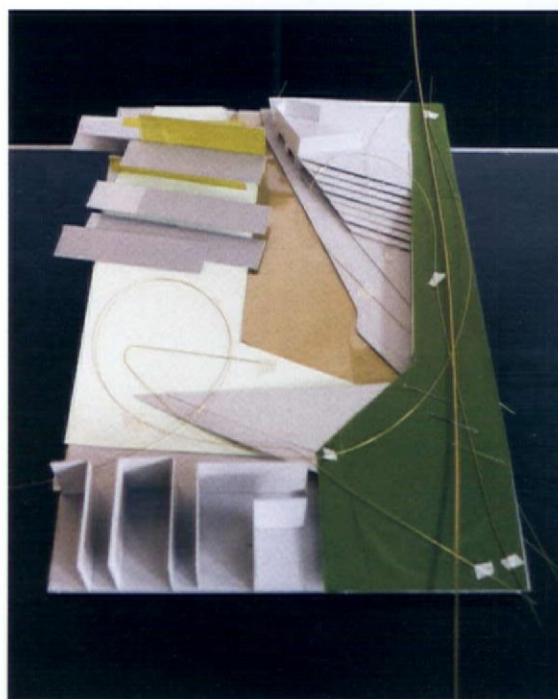
Very normal – we design by making things.

Any awkward moments?

The whole thing was awkward, but rewarding.

What did you learn as a practice?

It was a great opportunity to meet other architects face-to-face when in active working mode. >>

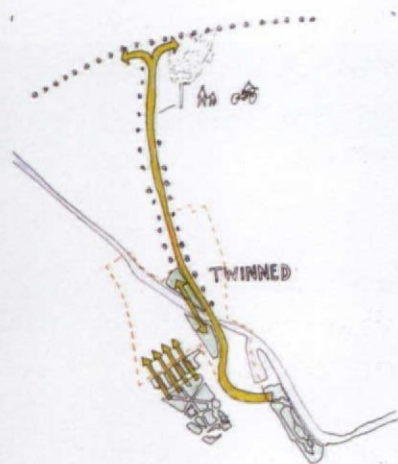
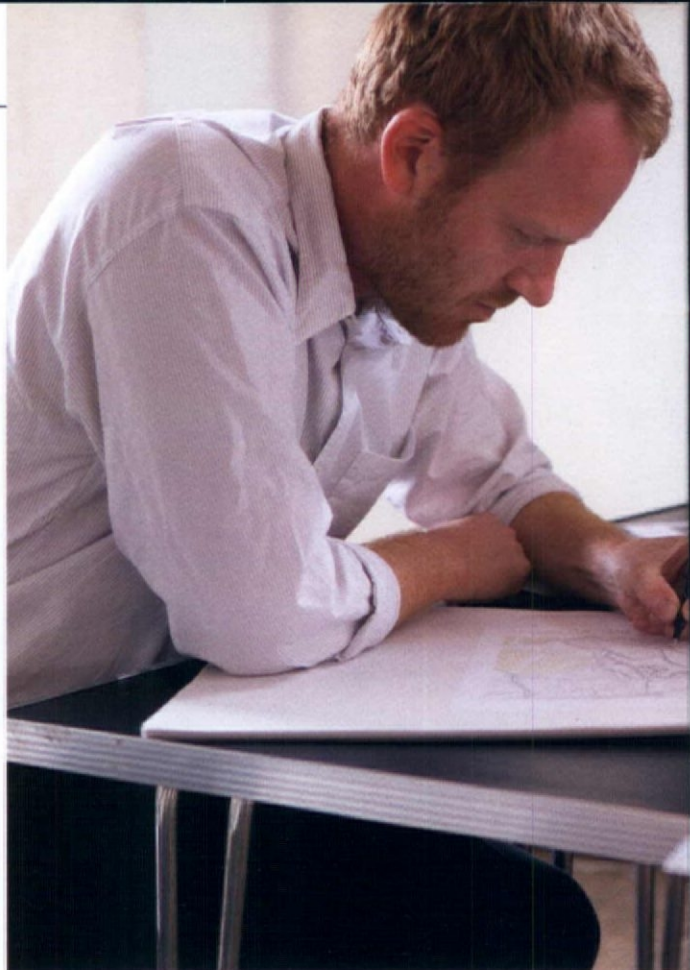


David Kohn Architects

Participant David Kohn

The King's Cross site is made up of many small urban fragments. My strategy was to identify existing qualities, then extend them across the site to connect these fragments, bringing them into greater and more pleasurable use. I called this process twinning, because the site seemed to naturally offer pairs of spaces: new parks on either side of the canal, the churchyard and the hospital buildings with a new residential quarter surrounded by gardens, the avenues of mature trees along Agar Grove and Camley Street with the nature reserve, and the densification of light industrial use beside the railway and the King's Cross development opposite.

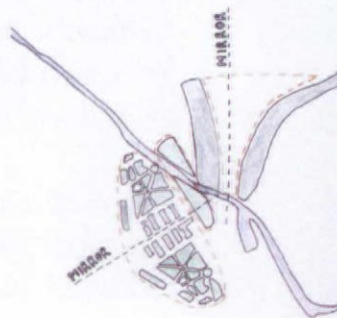
Right David Kohn with his 'Twin Parks' drawings, examining common typologies and twinned spaces throughout the sites



EXTENDING PUBLIC SPACES

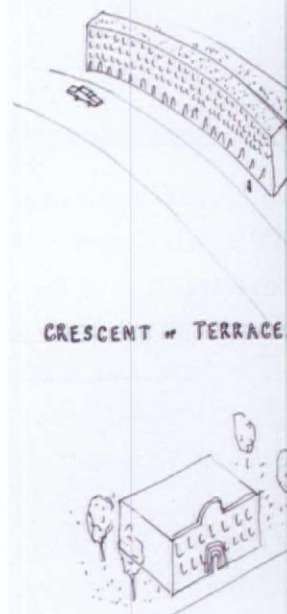


DIALOGUE BETWEEN FIGURES



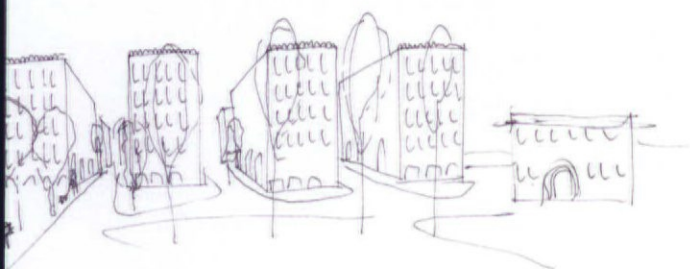
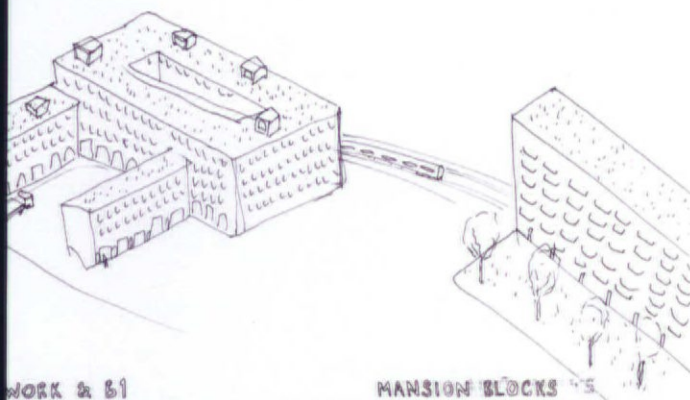
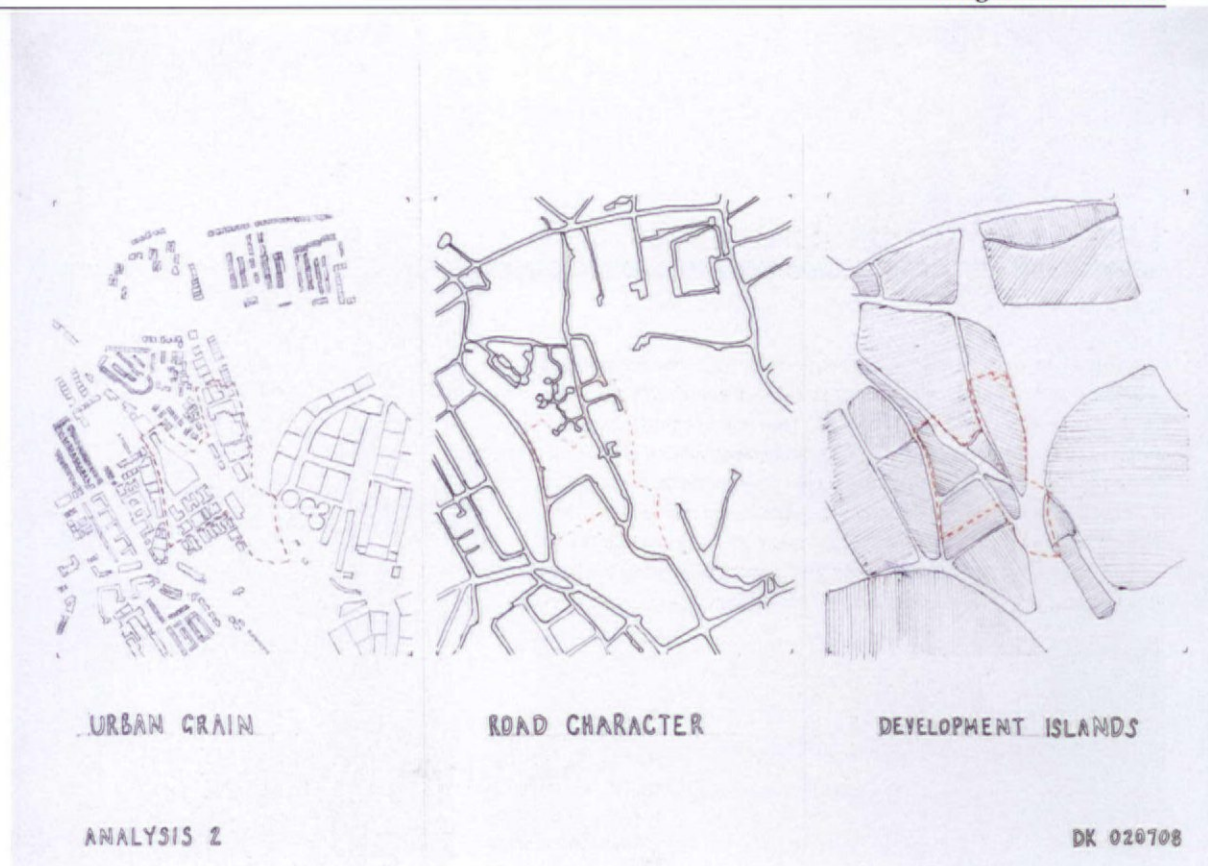
FRAGMENTS -> PIECES

DX



PUBLIC BUILDINGS BY P

TYPOLGY



Where did you begin?

I began by walking around the site on Sunday afternoon. I used to live in Somers Town, but I discovered parts I never knew existed. I was looking for uses, buildings and landscapes that gave the place its character; their relationship inspired the twinning concept.

Given more time...

I would have researched local history. When I realised I was the only foolhardy solo entrant, I put my head down and started drawing.

What was it like to work without a computer?

My hand hurt from squeezing my pen for a day. I hadn't experienced that since exams.

Any words of wisdom?

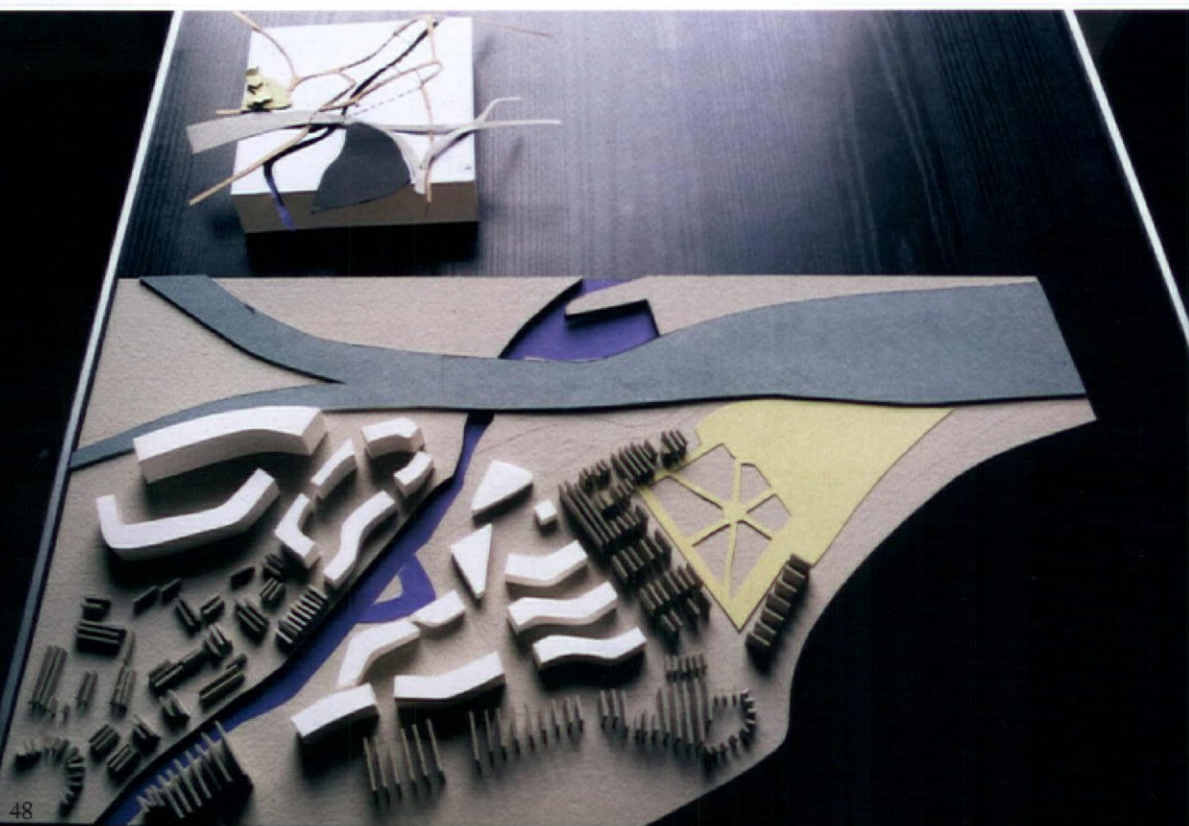
Think while you draw. Draw carefully, but non-stop. >>

DK

Duggan Morris Architects

Participants Joe Morris, Pete Grove, Grant Shepherd

Our scheme focused on how the site could act as a transition from King's Cross into north-west London by remodelling the approach from the station. In this way, greater focus is placed on the role the retained hospital buildings play on the landscape, acting as turnstiles when approached from the south. The buildings in the new masterplan are a free arrangement of objects over a blanket of connected public realm and landscaping. At the centre of the site is a new cultural quarter, which connects both banks. An inlet is also formed at this point, creating a focus for the linked landmark structures.



Where did you begin?

We received the brief the day before, gathered together a map of the area, a few pens and pads, and headed directly to the site for a reconnoitre.

Given more time...

It would have been interesting to have done more blue-sky thinking.

Any good memories?

The hushed silence in the morning (we arrived first), and the murmur

of anticipation which increased during the afternoon. And, of course, the free champagne.

What did you learn as a practice?

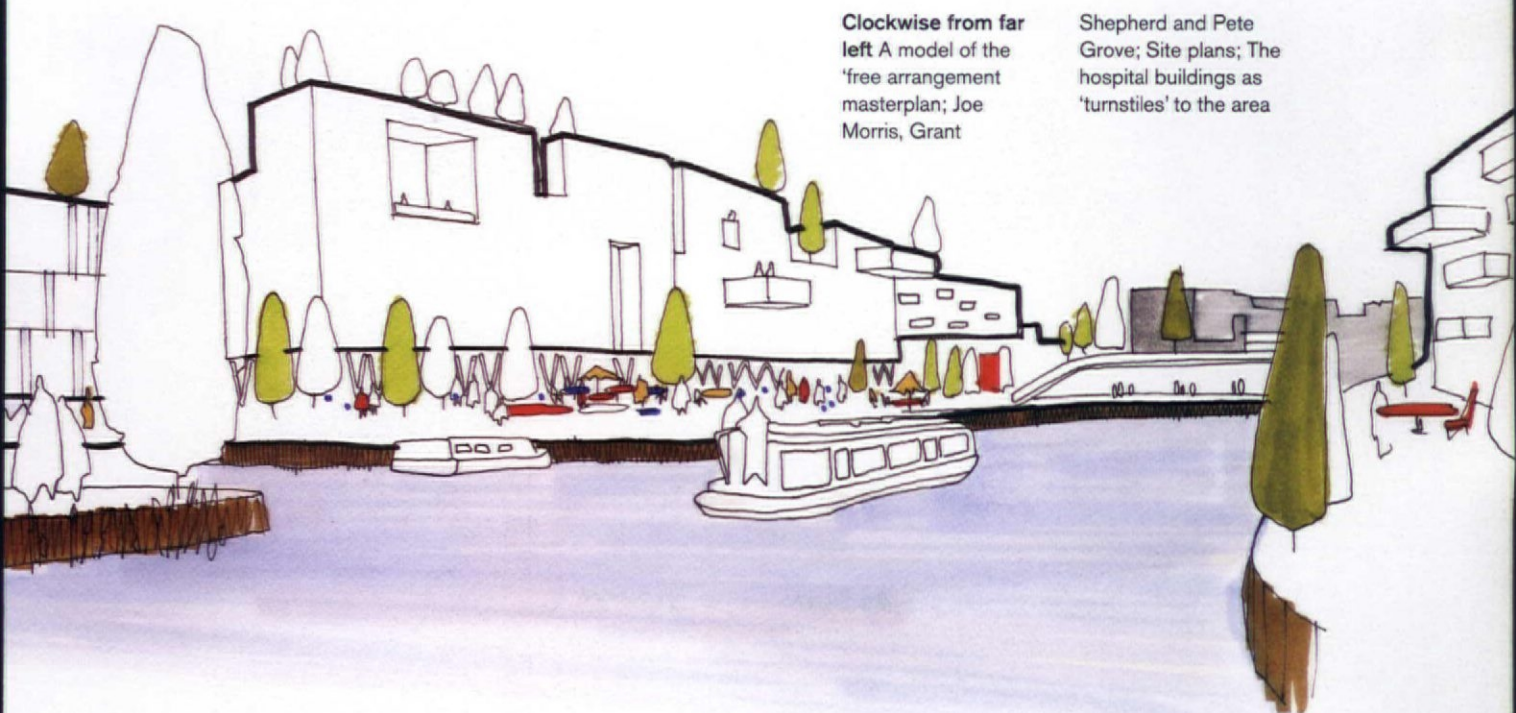
What was most interesting was how normal office hierarchies disappeared, and an organic natural order came into play, with each individual finding his strengths.

Would you do it again?

Without question. >>



1:12.50

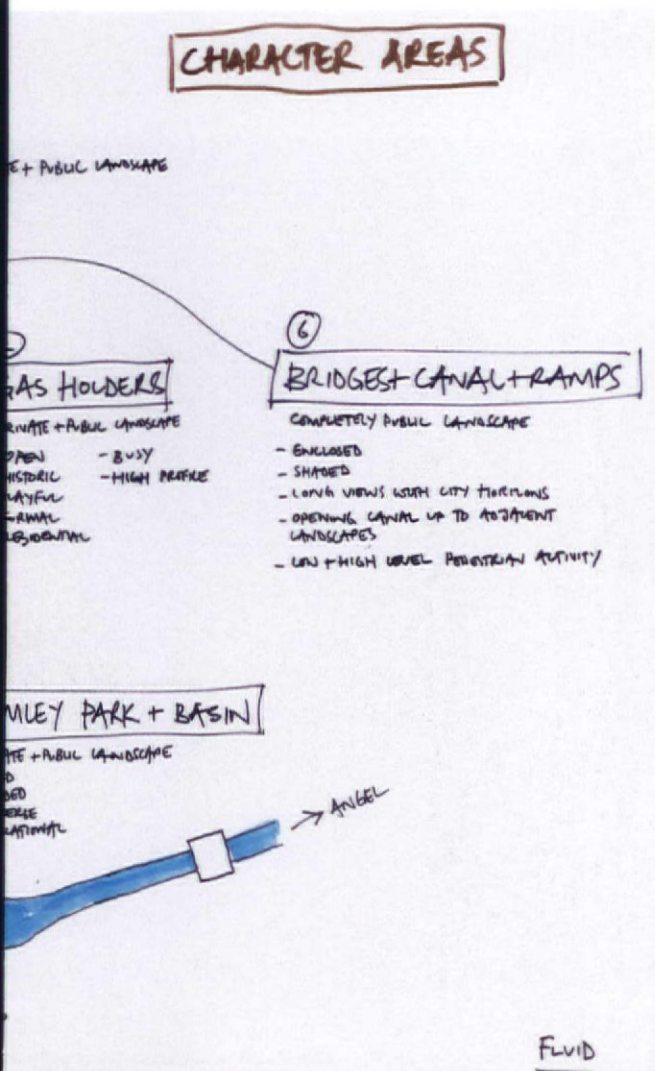
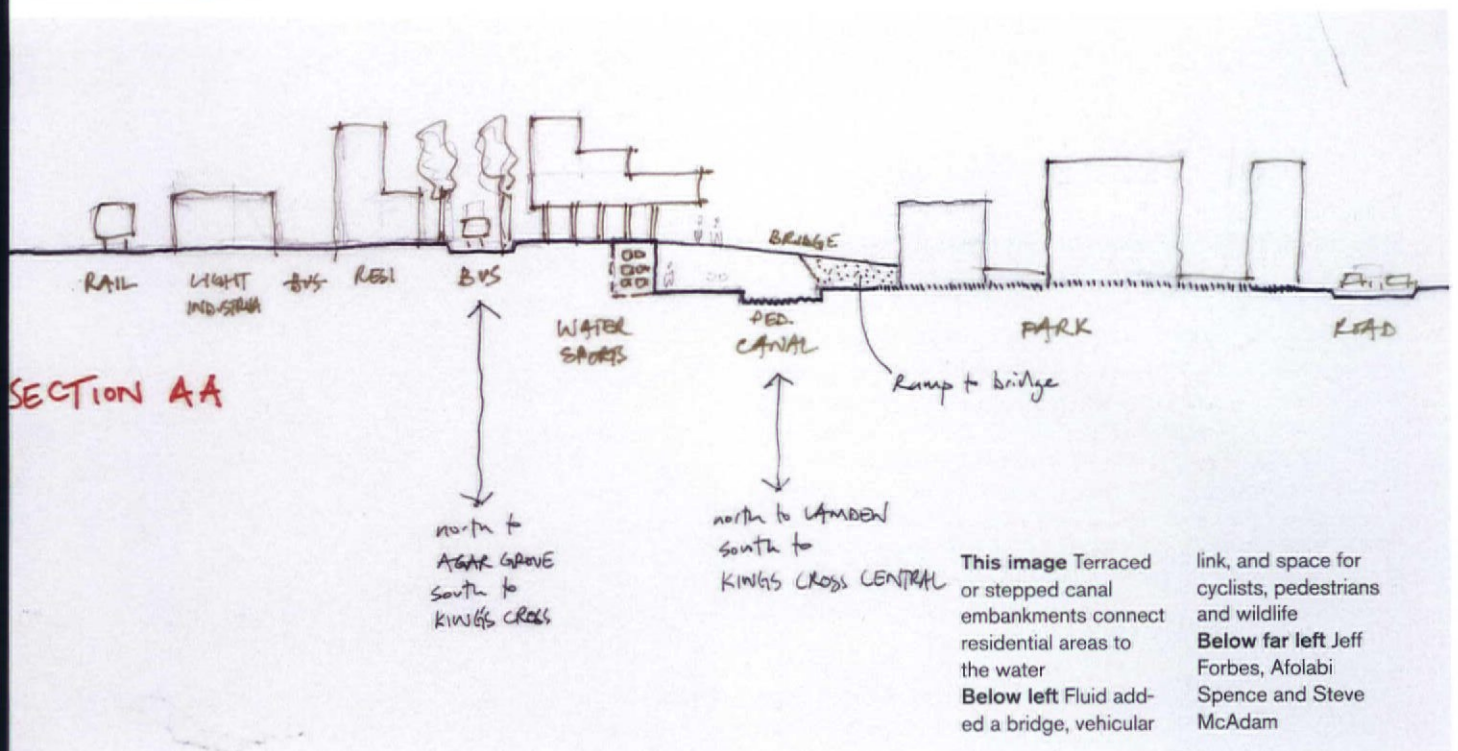


Clockwise from far left A model of the 'free arrangement' masterplan; Joe Morris, Grant

Shepherd and Pete Grove; Site plans; The hospital buildings as 'turnstile' to the area

Our project redefines the canal as a new public landscape and major piece of connective tissue, creating a sense of intense energy and activity under and around the bridge landscape, which is Camden's main connection with King's Cross. To accomplish this, we ramped out, terraced or stepped canal embankments and installed a slotted land bridge over the canal to form new linkages. We also provided space for cyclists, pedestrians, wildlife, lighting, planting and biodiversity along the canal and formed a southbound vehicular link from Agar Grove. Different residential enclaves were set out around the mixed-use area: mansion blocks north of the hospital, warehouses along the canal and terraces along the top of Camley Street.





Where did you begin?

We felt the canal was already becoming a public space and decided to build on this, opening up the canal to old and new residential areas via a mixed-use knuckle between Camley Street and Granary Street.

What did you learn as a practice?

To use freehand sketches more. We've already begun to do this and DfL seemed to approve when we presented interim ideas for our High Street 2012 masterplan project [an initiative to improve four high streets in East London].

What was it like to work without a computer?

Refreshing and liberating.

Feverish scribbling, or slow and steady?

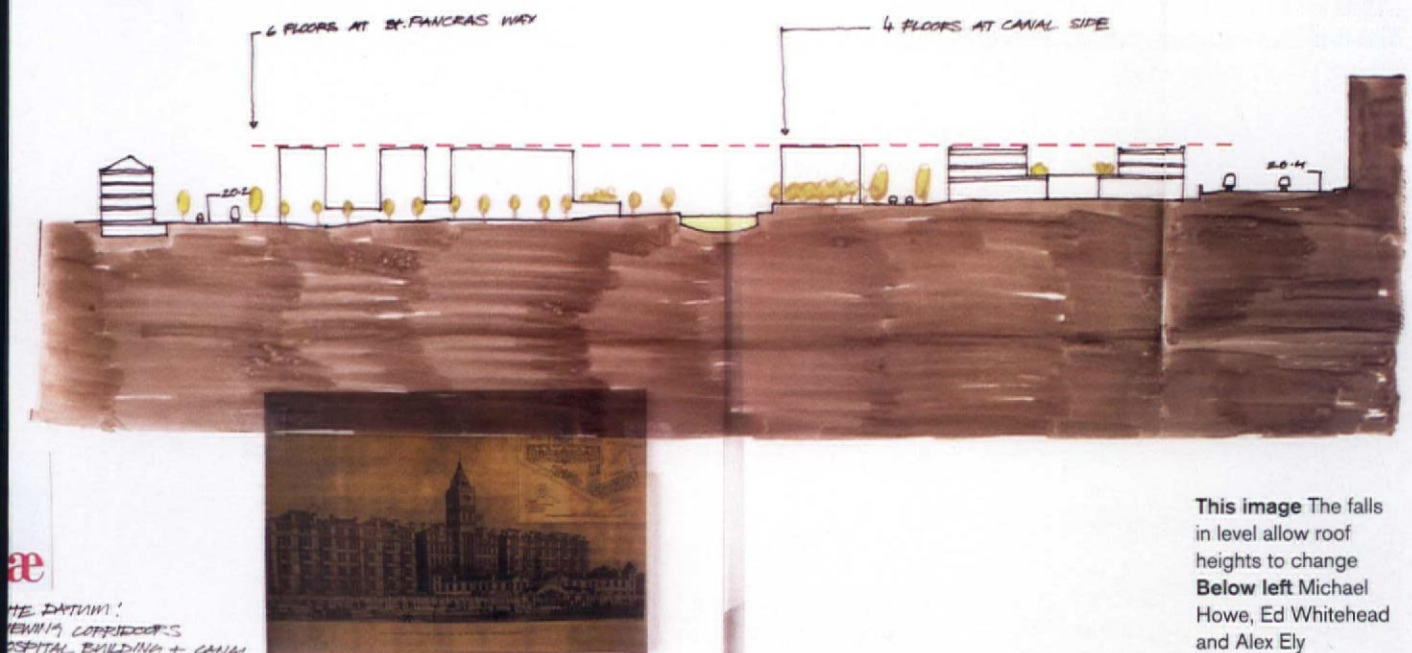
The thinking and talking was slow and the drawing, feverish scribbling. We might like to balance this a bit more in future! >>

mæ

Participants Alex Ely, Michael Howe, Ed Whitehead

Our project is a new piece of city defined by its context. The grid offers continuity with the surrounding landscape, yet allows a range of typologies, some new, some familiar. Fine-grained courtyard houses and chequerboard pavilions inhabit the grid alongside linear blocks, perimeter blocks and more monolithic forms: different species of space within a common ordering structure. The junction of two grids is a place for incident and architectural intrigue. Here we propose parks and leisure, focused around the canal and mediating the topography of the site. A common datum is set for the roofline, though the fall in levels allows for heights of buildings to change.





Where did you begin?

London doesn't throw anything away; its grids and displacement of buildings give areas character. On this site the grain and typologies change significantly: compact terraces, Modernist blocks, massive warehouses. We value these previous models.

What was it like to work without a computer?

Messy.

Feverish scribbling, or slow and steady?

We favour slow and feverish.

What did you learn as a practice?

Best to do the project the night before.

If you could do it all over again...

We'd hide pre-made models in our bags. >>

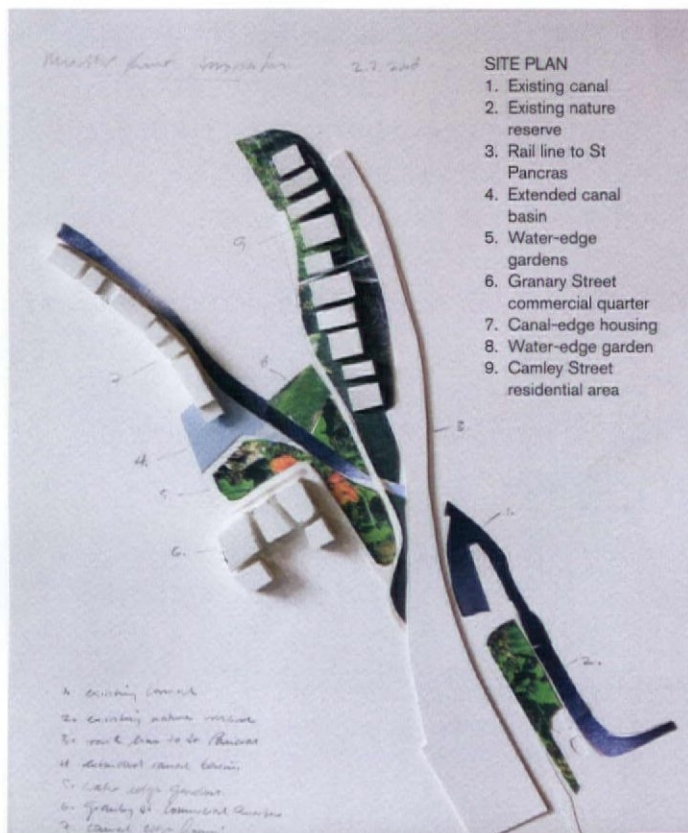
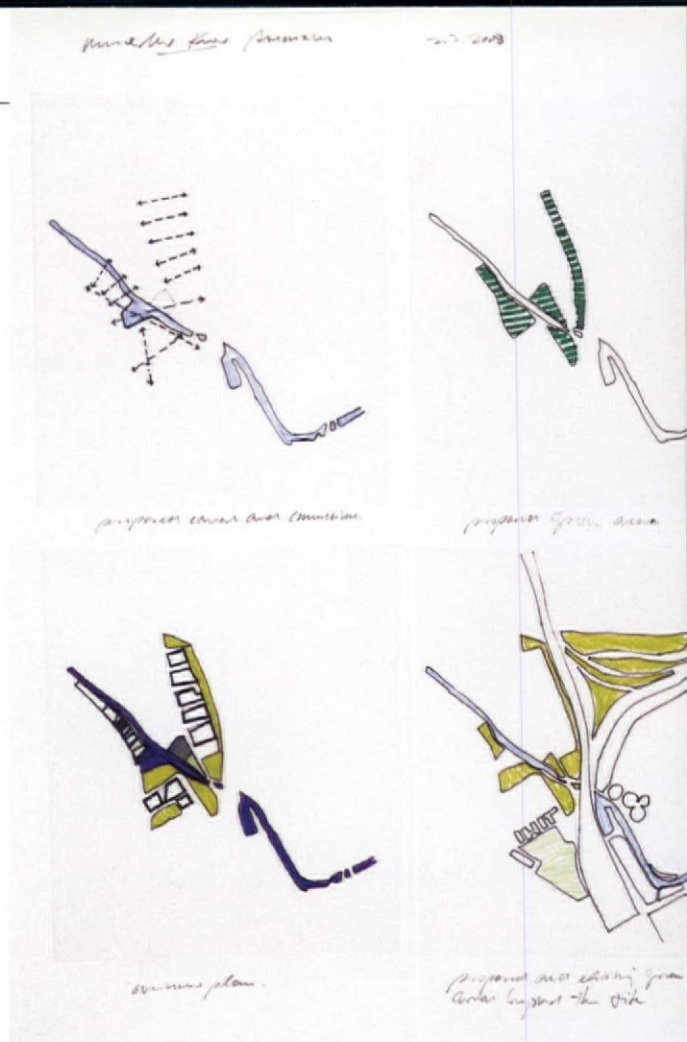
Mueller Kneer Associates

Participants Olaf Kneer, Kok-Loong Wong

This project, entitled Canal Life, builds on an existing culture within the area. We propose to extend Regent's Canal to form a new basin along St Pancras Way and Granary Street, providing a new and accessible open space which acts as a local amenity, as well as bringing value to the area. The project extends the network of open spaces, unlocking existing potential. We propose a mix of uses around the new basin, with housing along the canal to the north and commercial uses to the south, as well as a new residential area of part-owned flats and small houses along Camley Street.

Right Clockwise from top left, proposed canal and connections; proposed green area; proposed and

existing green areas beyond the site; and overview plan
Far right Kok Loong-Wong and Olaf Kneer



Where did you begin?

We were fascinated by the secluded qualities of some of the existing spaces and their everyday uses. We also see our proposal as a counterpoint to the proposed 750,000m² King's Cross development.

Any awkward moments?

We started positive, panicked around lunchtime, but somehow managed to pull it all together.

Given more time...

We would have done the same thing all over again but, with more time, we'd have tested the ideas we developed.



What was it like to work without a computer?

A relief!

What did you learn as a practice?

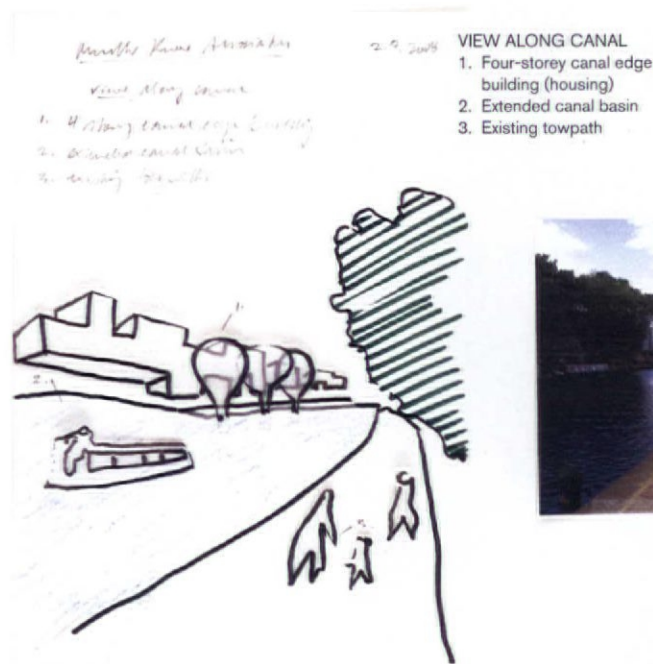
It was amazing to see how much can actually be achieved in a single day, but we also learned that it takes a lot more time to test those initial ideas – that's where the real work starts.

Feverish scribbling, or slow and steady?

A bit of both. The question is, what happens with an idea once it's in the open.

Would you do it again?

Definitely. >>



nOffice

Participants Magnus Nilsson, Ralf Pflugfelder

To develop a fixed proposal when ownership, funding and desires are unclear seems premature. Instead, we explored how the development framework might be structured. Large, bold, formal gestures do not necessarily generate urban intensity. Instead, it is more fruitful to enable differentiation, exchange and open-ended frameworks. The existing conditions to be enhanced and exploited are the surprising lush green spaces (Camley Street Natural Park and St Pancras Gardens), the Grand Union Canal and the site's insularity and scale as a counterpoint to the homogeneity of the King's Cross masterplan.

RECIPE:

- DEMOLISH BUILDINGS
- PLANT TREES -
MAKE FOREST



- MAKE CLEARING



- BUILD BUILDINGS



Where did you begin?

Our recipe is simple: demolish all unnecessary buildings, plant trees, make clearings, and finally, plant buildings in the clearings.

Given more time...

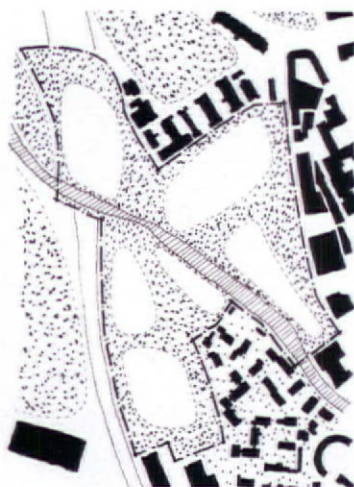
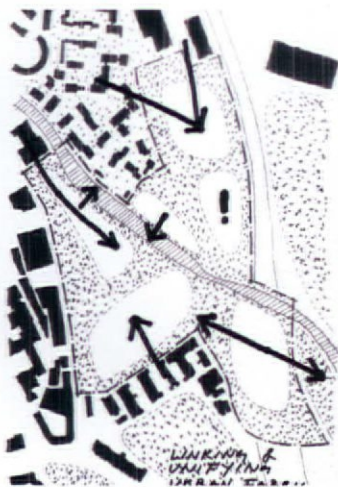
We would have held a conference relating the meta-issue of urban regeneration and the danger of Barcelonisation to the London site.

What was it like to work without a computer?

We develop all our ideas without computers.

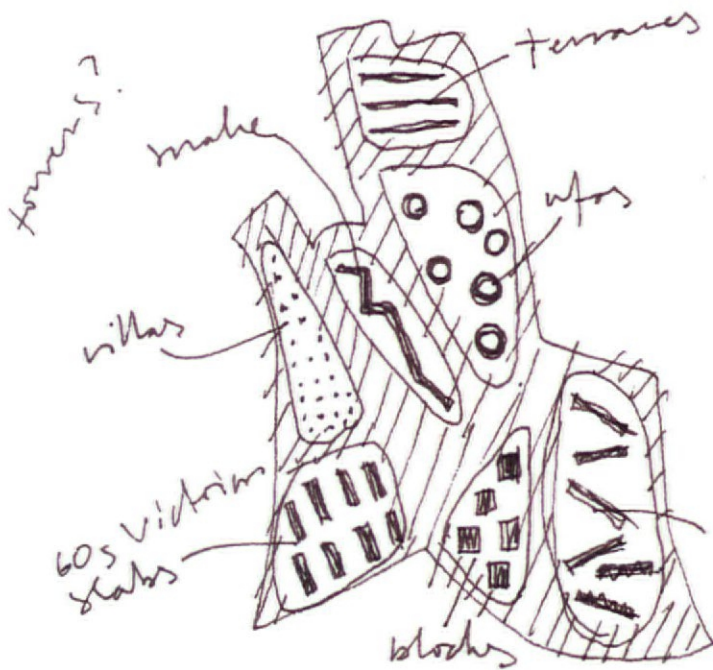
Remember when...

It was mentioned that the people who currently live in the area couldn't afford a Eurostar ticket to Paris, and Argent's Roger Madelin said: 'But what about the new people?' >>



Above nOffice's four-step plan for the site

Left The clearings between the trees, planted with buildings
Right Ralf Pflugfelder and Magnus Nilsson



This is
one way
of doing
it - there's
no fixed
form.

Archipelago



Peter Beard/Landroom

Participants Peter Beard, Gregory Ross, Dingle Price

We limited our proposal to the part of the site, currently occupied by industry and services, which lies west of Camley Street, next to the rail corridor. The project posited an intensification of the existing use and included a high plinth building of 9-12m in height, to contain all existing industrial space (including service yards), with public access to the upper level. A number of workspace 'houses' will rise to a height of 15-20m above the plinth. Urban agriculture with polytunnels, greenhouse towers and orchards will flood the plinth around the 'houses'.

Where did you begin?

There's a bunch of ideas which keep bubbling around Landroom: we've worked on big shed projects, cultivation (literal and metaphorical), and we also did a pretty traditional Beaux-Arts thing – an enquette, putting these two things in one pot.

Any regrets?

Paul Finch was pretty adamant that trucks

don't belong in a civilised city. We wish we'd had a better riposte at the time.

Any surprises?

I thought it would be like putting up the AA end-of-year show, with people trying to steal our glue all the time, but it was very proper.

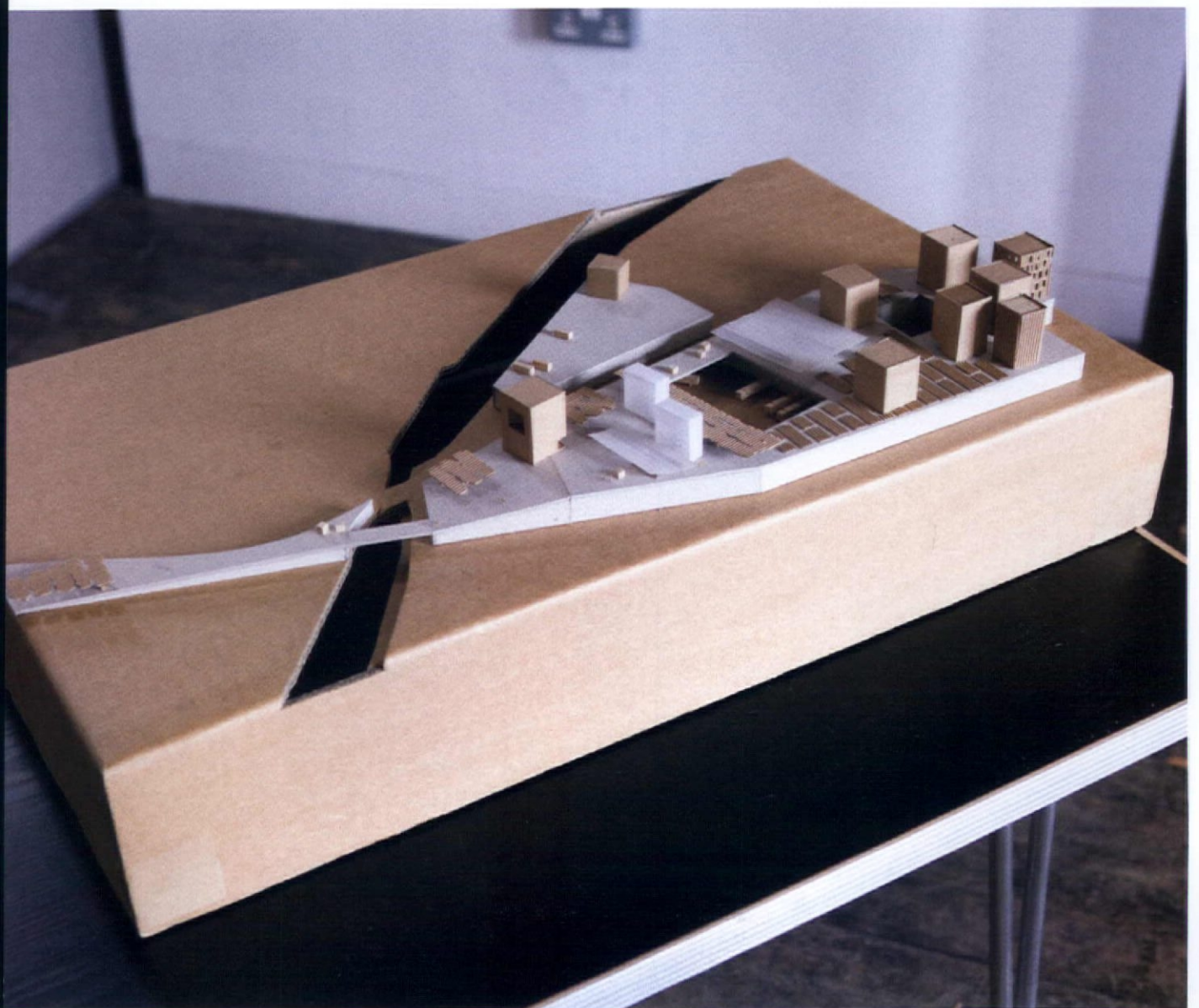
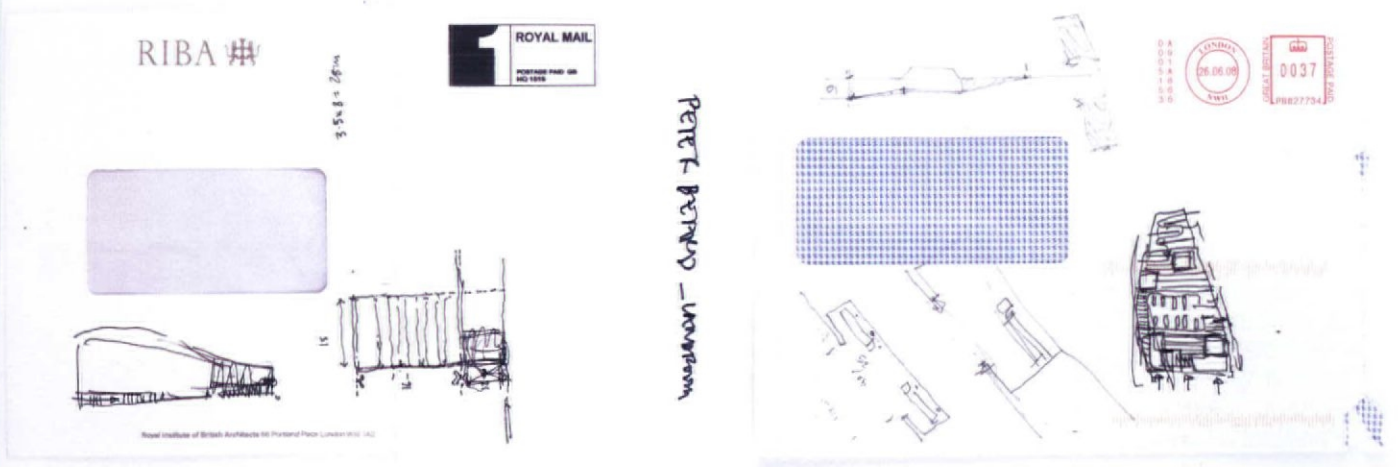
Feverish scribbling, or slow and steady?

I don't know about steady. No one got hurt. >>



Left Gregory Ross, Dingle Price and Peter Beard

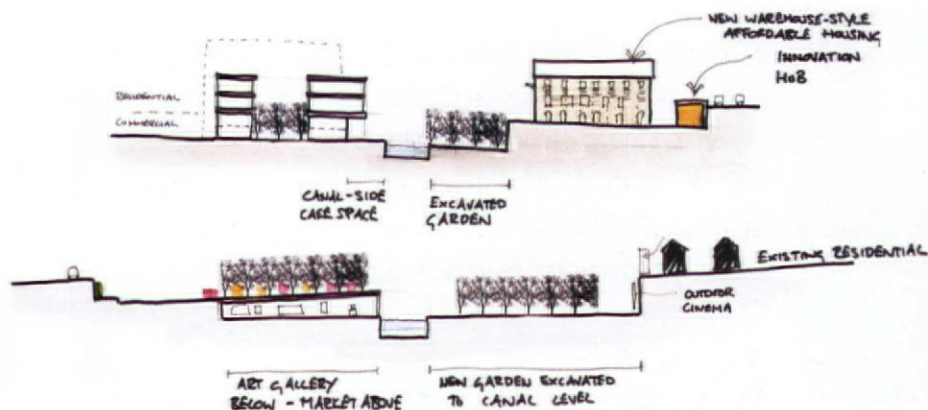
Above right Early envelope sketches of the 'plinth' building and site plan
Right Presentation model



Phos Architects

Participants Alan Jordan, Elisavet Blouka

Our intention was to create and connect several character zones, culminating in a cultural quarter by the canal. We saw the site as an intersection of many journeys. These axes separate the area from King's Cross and subdivide the site into distinct parcels of land. Rather than impose an abstract grid, we set existing lines of syntax free, creating new lines of egress at points of desire and retaining interesting structures across the site to form new mythologies and history. We developed an autonomous village over the ghost of existing buildings to create a community that bridges King's Cross and Camden, without losing its backwater charm.





Where did you begin?

We started with a puzzle: how to connect these disparate parcels of land to create a new place, while retaining its unique complexity. It was clear that a one-line response was not possible, so we set out to tackle as many of the unique situations on site as we could.

What was it like to work without a computer?

Good for the eyes and for the mind. Certain practicalities go out of the window and the right-hand side of the brain kicks in. This approach requires more emphasis on the concept principles than the presentation.

Any regrets?

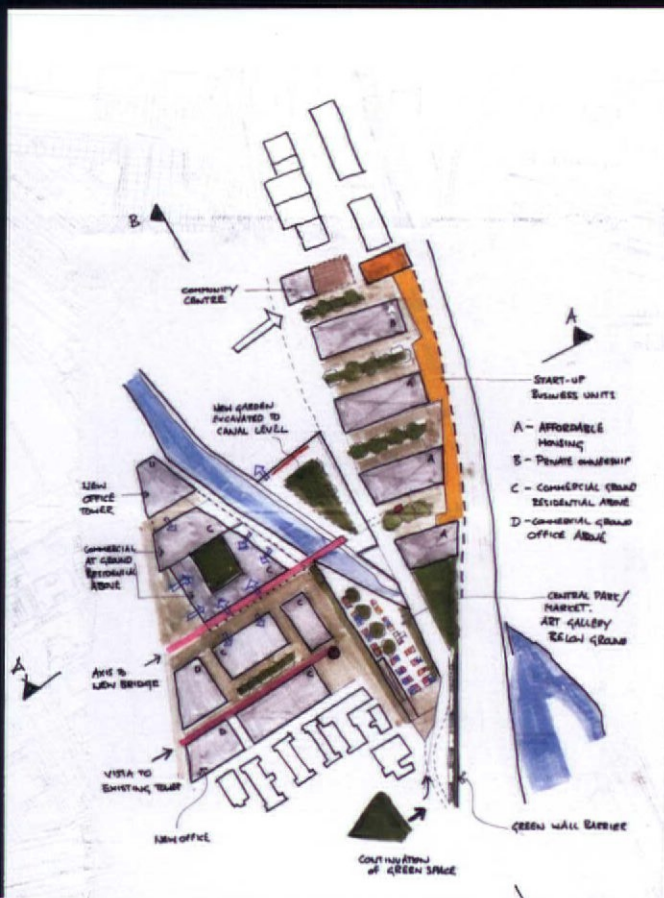
When we realised at 2pm that we'd only created a scrappy model and it was time to start drawing!

Feverish scribbling, or slow and steady?

Feverish scribbling every time.

Would you do it again?

Yes... but give us time to recover! You cannot prepare for the pressure of a charrette. >>



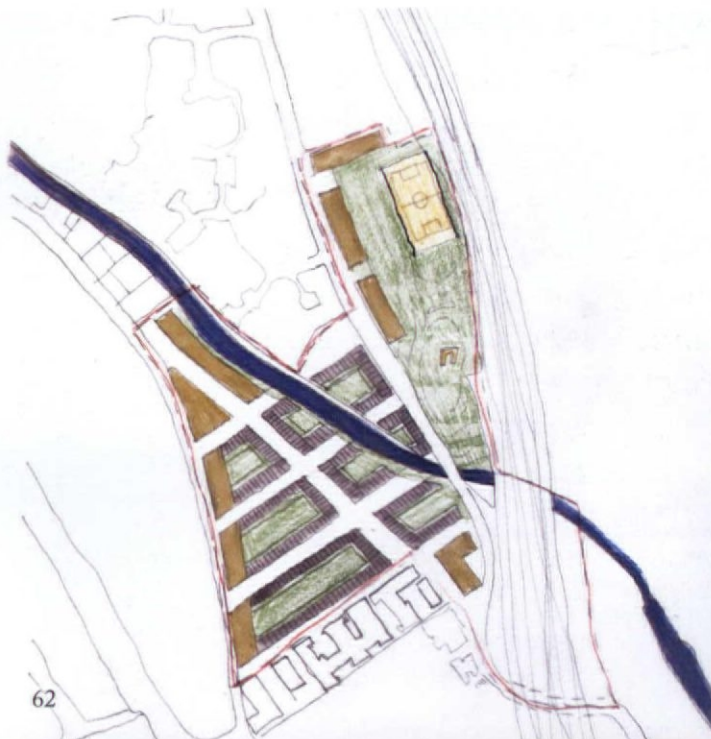
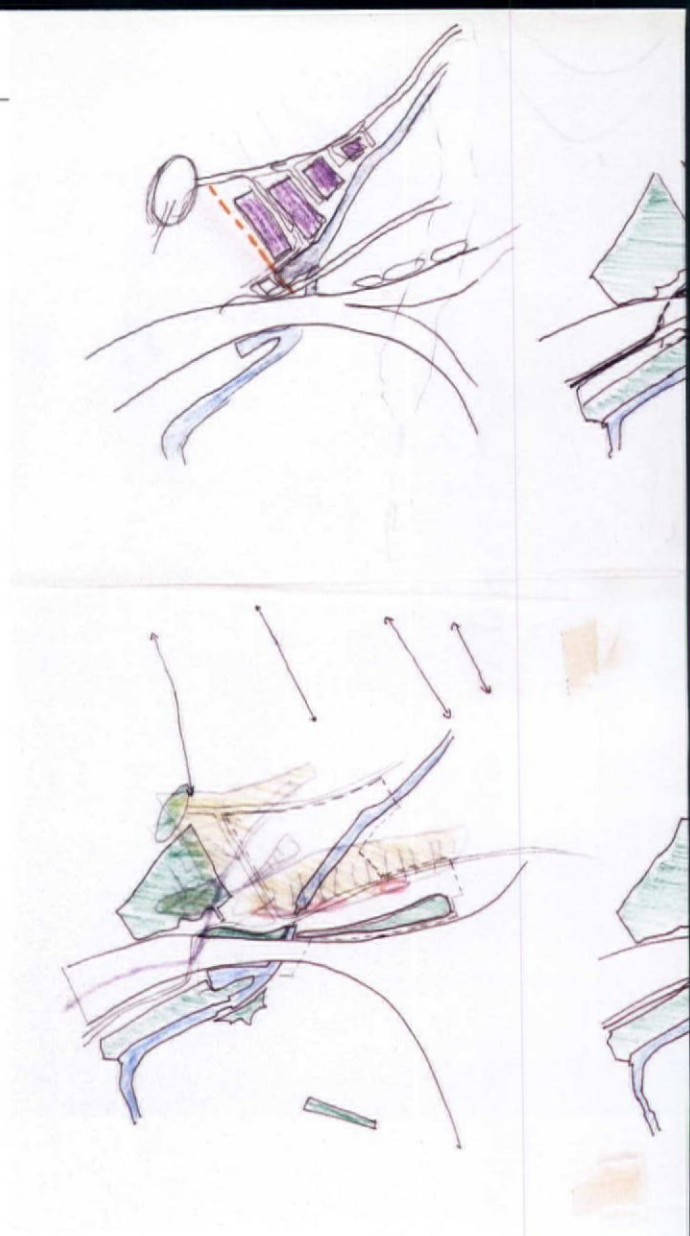
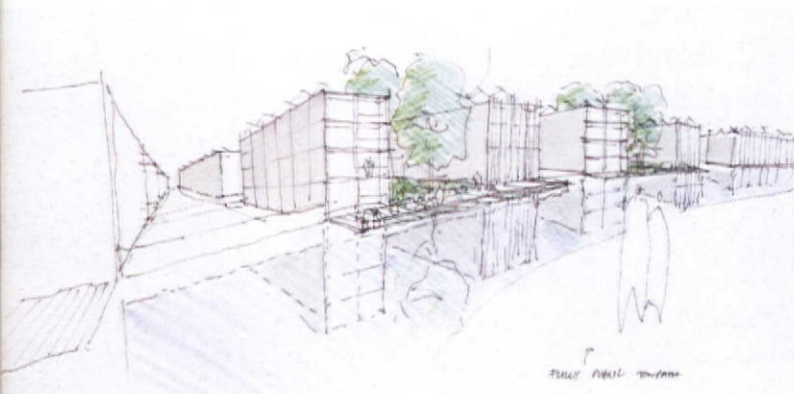
Left and above The cultural quarter by the canal has a market, art gallery and outdoor cinema

Far left Alan Jordan and Elisavet Blouka

Riches Hawley Mikhail Architects

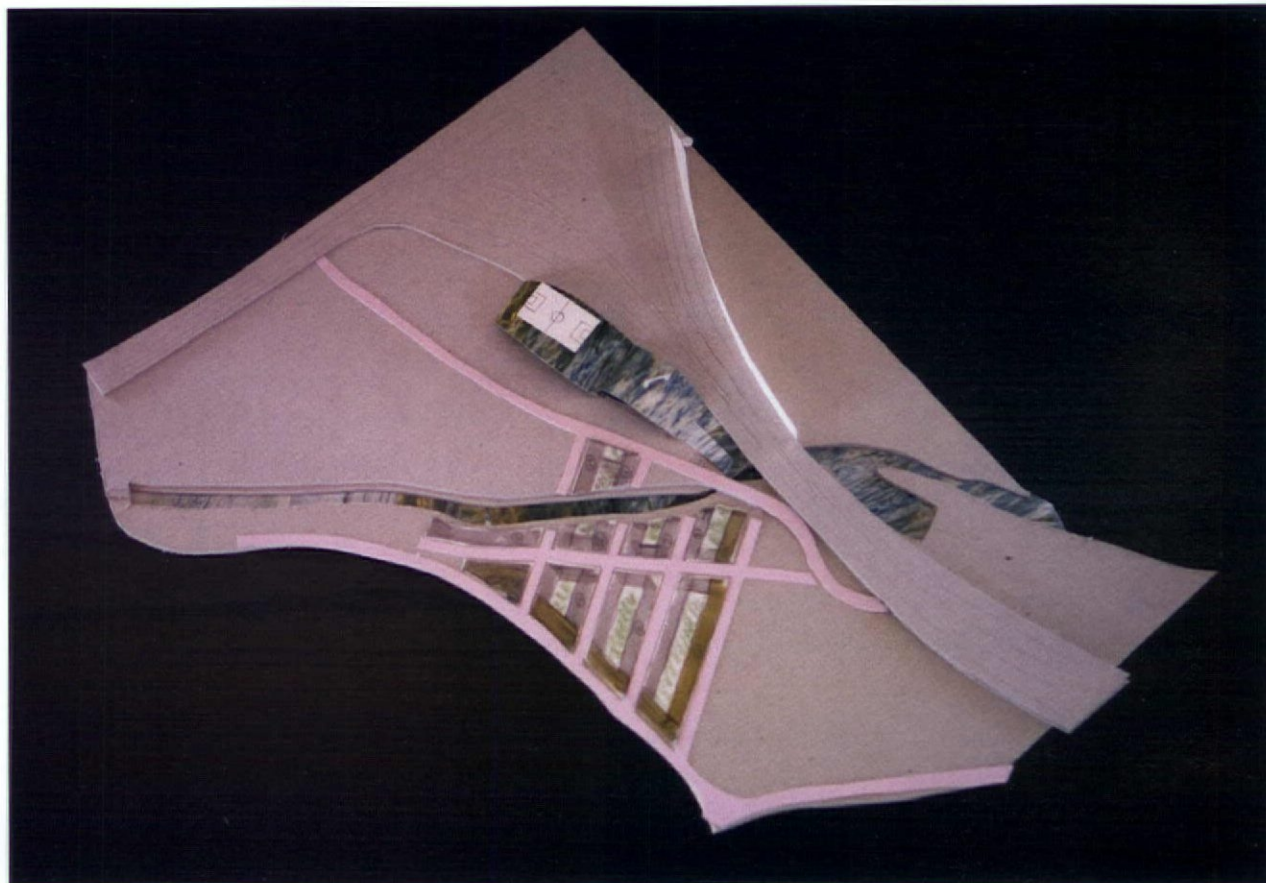
Participants Annalie Riches, Cathy Hawley, David Mikhail

Our starting point was arrival by train, both nationally and internationally. The King's Cross site currently presents a wall of accommodation, and we wanted to open up views towards the West End as trains round the corner towards St Pancras. For this purpose, we propose to have the spoil from the new development is formed into three mounds of parkland, to provide much-needed leisure space for the area. These might hold cafés, sports pitches and perhaps a reconstructed Euston Arch. Camley Street is connected to Agar Grove, and the east side planted with plane trees, to complete the boulevard. Our proposal mediates between the high-density development of King's Cross and the terraced streets of Camden. A grid of terraces crosses the canal, with open-sided courtyards by the water, making the route feel overlooked and safe.



Clockwise from
below Presentation
model; Cathy Hawley,
Annalie Riches and
David Mikhail; Site
plan; Terraced housing

crosses the canal, with
open-sided courtyards
facing the water;
The spoil from King's
Cross is used to
create new urban hills



Where did you begin?

We looked at what we felt the area needed. The city's diversity should be maintained – this area lacks parkland and sports venues, and we felt it important to provide family housing. There was also the romantic response: the excitement of arriving in a new country by train.

Any good memories?

Great bacon butties, and fascinating to see how responses to the same site were so varied.

What would you have done differently?

We would have bought our own cardboard. It took far too long to cut up the backboards of the sketch pad and it blunted all the blades.

What did you learn as a practice?

It was great to study an area of London that you think you know well, and discover so much.

Feverish scribbling or slow and steady?

Slow and steady in the morning, a feverish afternoon. >>



Sauce Architecture

Participants Daniel Jary, Satwinder Samra

We were struck by the coexistence of the transient experience of arrival and departure by train, and the altogether different experience of children playing, the bicycles and the canal. We were intrigued by the idea of bringing these worlds face-to-face. Two small-scale interventions are proposed. The first creates a green wall, linking Camley Street Natural Park with St Pancras Gardens. Two vertical elements penetrate the railway viaduct above, reflecting light and views between train and street. The second creates a red wall, linking the residential community around the Jubilee Waterside Centre with St Pancras Lock. At the mid-point of the viaduct, a climbing wall rises from the towpath, bringing local residents face-to-face with the transient population.

Where did you begin?

We quickly rejected the idea of attempting to masterplan such a complex area with only superficial knowledge. Instead, we opted to make more subtle interventions aimed at reinforcing existing connections and stimulating future development.

Given more time...

We would have explored how the red and green walls might be developed to respond to the particular qualities of the context.



This image Daniel Jary and Satwinder Samra
Right Two walls are proposed: a green wall linking Camley

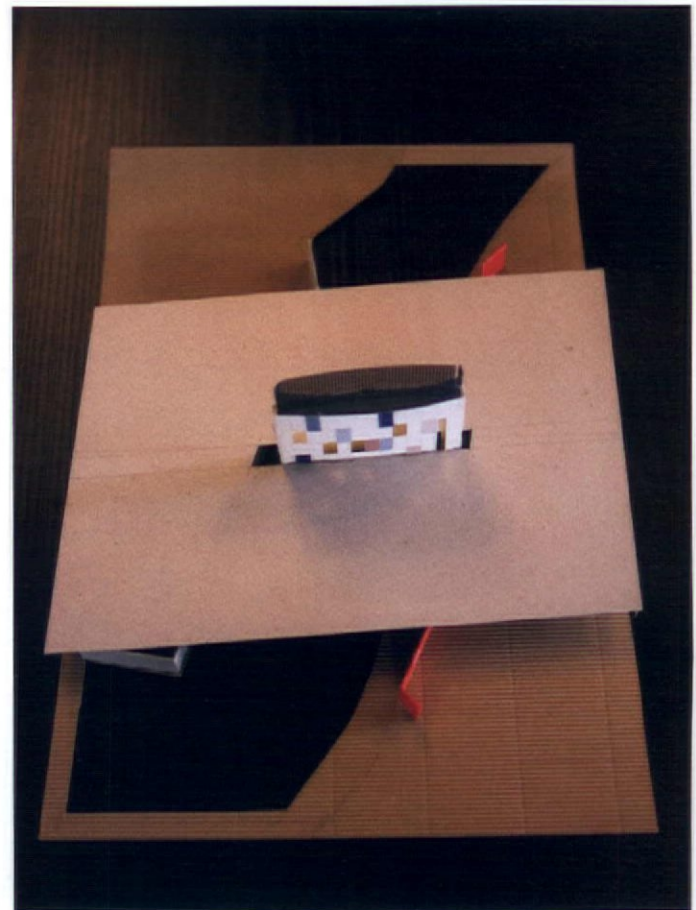
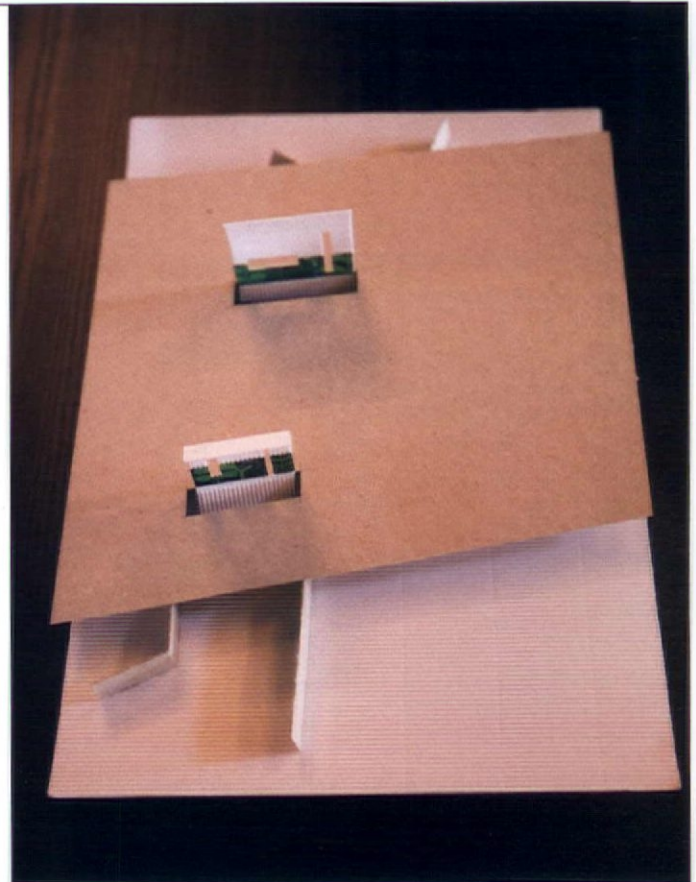
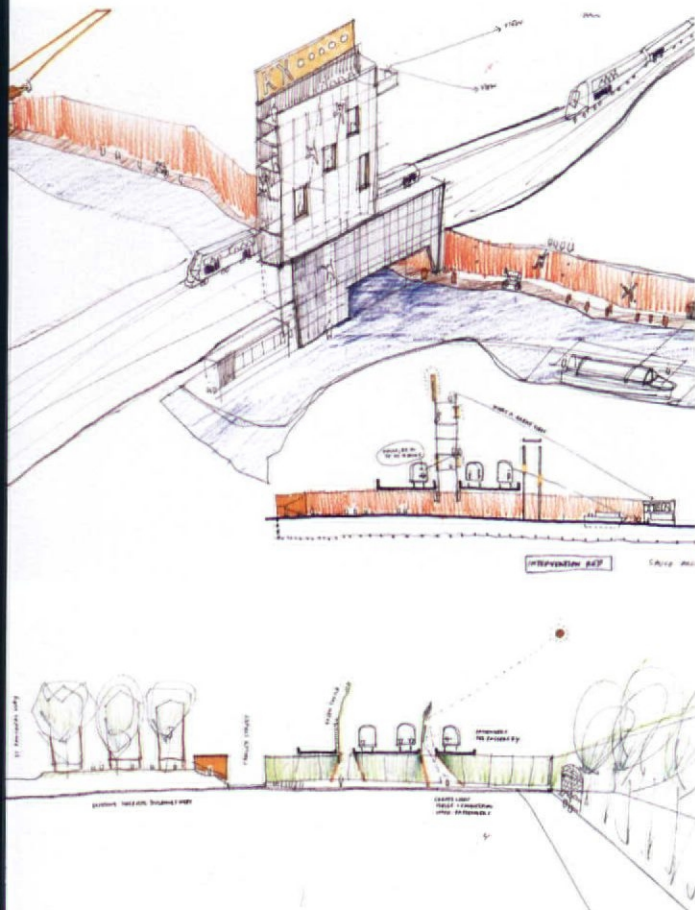
Street Natural Park with St Pancras Gardens; and a red wall linking the Jubilee Waterside Centre with St Pancras Lock

What was it like to work without a computer?

We generally work freehand anyway, as it allows a meaningful collaboration between the two of us: drawing, talking and thinking.

Any tales to tell?

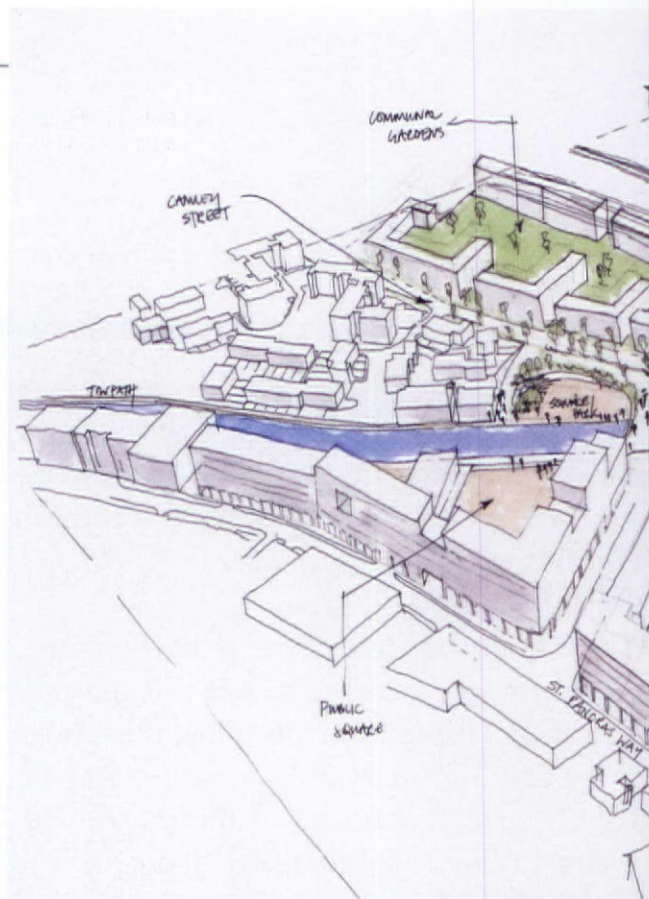
We were introduced as 'the practice from up North', and we tried to use this to our advantage. The site sits on the approach to St Pancras International, so our reading of it as the arrival point into London seemed of equal value to local knowledge. >>



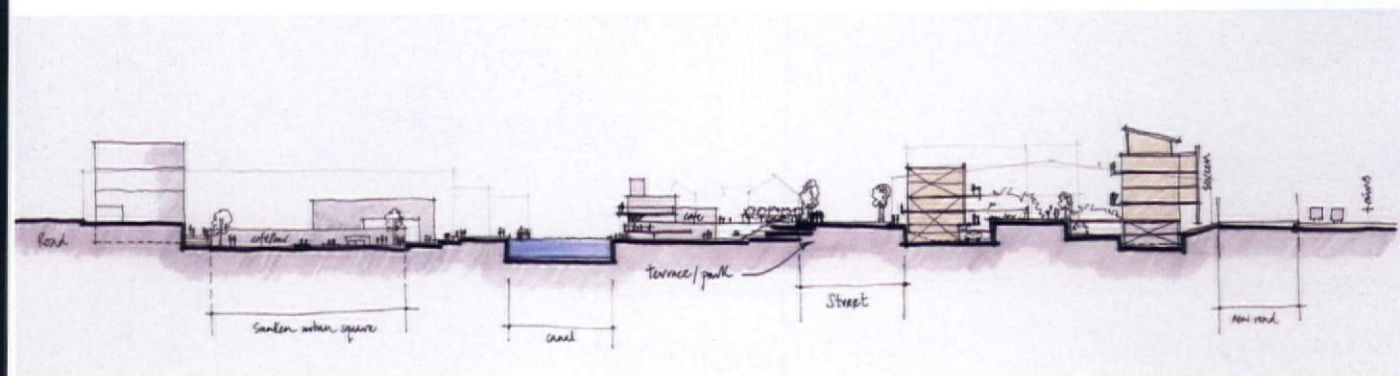
Stephen Turvil Architects

Participants Stephen Turvil, Sarah Marshall, Jonathan Logsdon

Our project is about accessibility, connectivity, desire lines and meeting places. The proposal is a wide, sinuous green bridge which heals the cut of the canal, creating a flowing ribbon of parkland that forms part of a pedestrian and cycle route through the site and beyond. This erodes the defensive nature of the canal and produces a focal point, which is then exploited to produce two urban canalside squares. To the north bank, a quieter, smaller space with café responds to the proposed Camley Street home zone. To the south bank, a larger square edged space with shops and a bar responds to the more commercial and mixed context proposed for this area.



Below left and above
A wide green bridge is
proposed to 'heal the
cut of the canal'
Right Stephen Turvil,
Sarah Marshall and
Jonathan Logsdon



Where did you begin?

A walk along the canal towpath revealed how it cut the area in two, due to the level changes on either side and the wet stuff in it. We wanted to open the canal edges, to create new routes and spaces as generators for renewal.

What was it like to work without a computer?

Good, refreshing: fat felt-tips and soft pencils.

What would you have done differently?

We would have focused more on the green

bridge and its immediate locality. We would also have produced a better model and designed some housing.

Any regrets?

Only that we were too busy too stop for afternoon tea – the cakes looked good!

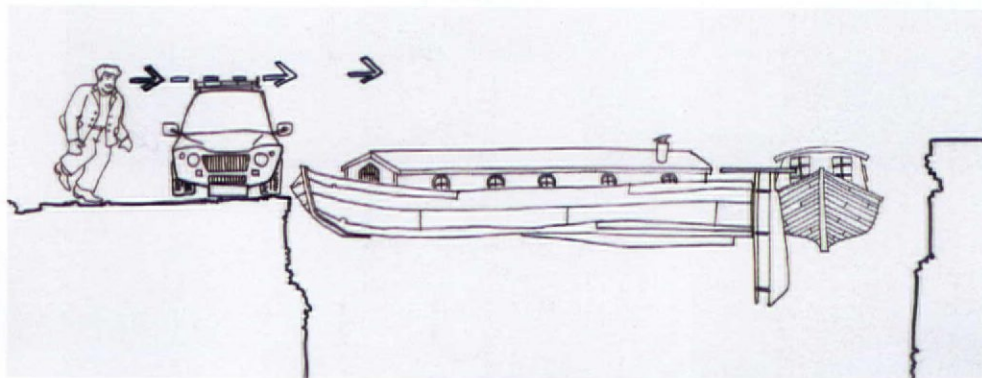
What did you learn?

That there are many ways to react and solve a problem. It was also a fun and energising break from the everyday. >>

Studio 8 Architects

Participants CJ Lim, Pascal Bronner, Maxwell Mutanda, Martin Tang

The strategy of our project was to introduce east-west 'connections' across London, unifying the urban islands that are currently dissected by the many train lines into the city. The proposal for King's Cross takes the form of inhabitable landscapes crossing these railway lines and stitching the various sites together. The occupation of domestic, commercial and social spaces has a new above-ground datum, allowing the development of a fresh urban layer. This new landscape can also bring back local food production and ease traffic congestion.



Where did you begin?

The maps, site visit and the site model in Argent's lobby were very useful. We realised the train lines into our city have sliced through London over the years. Our strategy was to stitch it back together with inhabitable landscape.

Given more time...

We were relatively happy with our schematic proposal, but would have resolved some of the edge conditions

and developed a couple of our building blocks.

What was it like to work without a computer?

Business as usual. We usually start each project with sketches and loads of models.

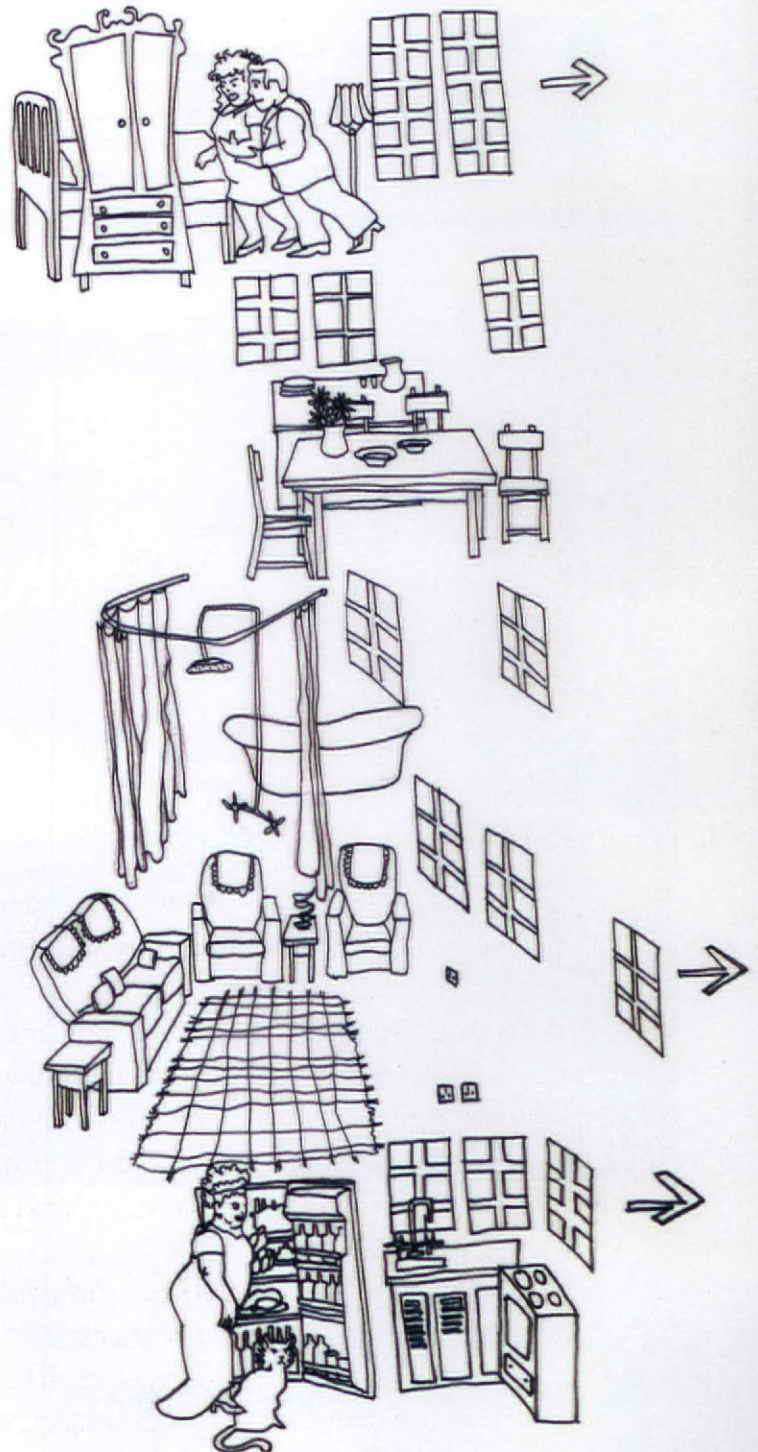
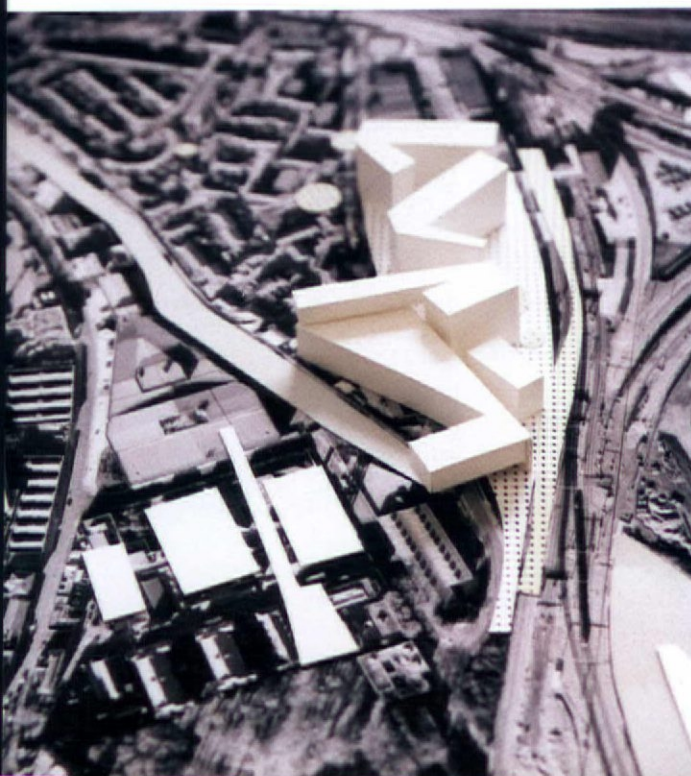
What did you learn as a practice?

It was exciting to think fast and strategically, and we liked the pressure of producing an intelligent proposal. ■



Clockwise from left
CJ Lim, Martin Tang
and Pascal Bronner;
Sketch showing
vertical living
choreography;

Presentation model;
Maxwell Mutanda;
Sketch showing
relationship between
pavement and inner
courtyards

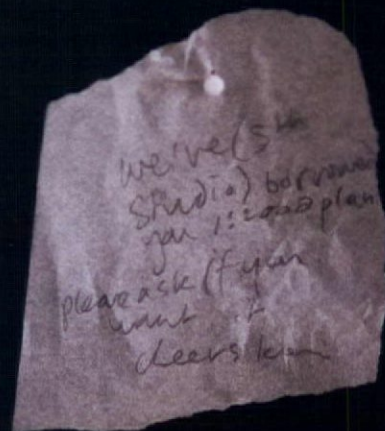


Below Sauce Architecture's presentation

Right Note from 5th Studio: 'We've borrowed your 1:2,000

plan, ask if you want it'
Far right Practices gather to hear the jury's comments at the end of the charrette day

The Crit



THE JURY

Will Colthorpe project director, Argent
Paul Finch editor, the *Architectural Review*
Kieran Long editor, *The Architects' Journal*
Roger Madelin joint chief executive, Argent
Bob West head of urban design, London Borough of Camden

nOffice

Paul Finch (editor, the *Architectural Review*)
Your project is interesting because it's not about where to put the buildings, it's about the landscape. That allows you to think about the topography, water and energy as part of a plan.

Roger Madelin (joint chief executive, Argent)
You could see it as a metaphor for what we are trying to do at King's Cross Central, which is to create the framework for things to happen. I can't fault you for not coming up with building designs – it's taken us eight years.

Stephen Turvil Architects

Madelin I think you've done what Camden has been searching for, which is to look at King's Cross and say: 'What are we going to do with the stuff in between?' With my developer's hat on, you've done it – you've got enough residents to make your public spaces work.

You've seen all the charrette designs, now find out what the judging panel made of them in these excerpts from the crit.
Photography by *James Bolton*



'This proposal is slightly mad!'
— Roger Madelin

Sauce Architecture

Finch I think a static piece of architecture against the movement of a train throws up a whole series of interesting questions. For example, is it designed to be seen while moving, or is it to be seen as static? Obviously, it's a bit of both. I like your attitude to the movement of the train being a positive on this site. And I personally like things that look dangerous.

Riches Hawley Mikhail Architects

Madelin I love hills, so why not a Euston Arch on a hill? To give two fingers to Primrose Hill with your own hill is, well, why not? Put a Starbucks at the top, just to really piss them off.

Kieran Long (editor, *The Architects' Journal*)

I admire the sensitivity of your approach. You're talking about typology and topology, and how you might interrelate Georgian terraces with the canal. Bob, can you relate this to what's happening in Camden?

Bob West (head of urban design, London Borough of Camden) I think people would readily respond to something like this. If you give it the right branding, you know, like the champagne bar [in St Pancras International]. I think it's got a whole identity of its own.

Phos Architects

Long I was drawn to this project because you put in some really big volumes where there are already big volumes and I think there's something quite upfront about that. These giant interventions are tough looking.

Madelin You've been generous with your public space. Instead of the market, perhaps I'd look at sport use, which is lacking in the area. But you've got every tick in the box, I'd say: community, business and housing, bloody hell.

Peter Beard/Landroom

Madelin What I like about this proposal is that it's massively unfashionable and slightly mad! I mean: 'Hey, let's shut Mount Pleasant and move it a couple of yards.' The reason they shut Mount Pleasant is that you don't want distribution in central London at all. I like the idea, but it's risky, certainly in terms of employment; a few security guards in the distribution depots, while these places could be jam-packed full of people who are doing something useful. The idea of having agriculture on the site is excellent but I fear the distribution thing. Unless everything I've been told about logistics is absolutely up the creek, it's a wonderful fantasy scheme.

Mueller Kneer Associates

Madelin This is stunning; water space, park space, gardens, a community, but also very high value. You've made me wake up to this as just the highest-value site in Camden.

Long The thing I really like is that, when you speak of the site as a 'lost' place, you're understanding how to keep and exacerbate that position. The idea of the not-very-formal selection of blocks doesn't feel very urban, but then that's what's interesting about it.

Mæ

Finch I think the unifying idea is interesting, because you get something that at first glance you might not notice, but you're going to see because it's on either side of the canal.

Madelin You've got the developer's hat on. In days gone by they probably would have put a huge bid in and got planning permission and a pat on the back for using that space. Presumably, you've got floor areas with unit sizes – I can't believe you've done all that in a day!

Fluid

Finch It has all the right moves. I mean, you could have put an eco centre on the plan, >>

but why not make a basin? We're terribly respectful of the people who dug canals in the 18th century. Anybody who says: 'We're going to open something up, we're going to divert it,' I think is good news, because we shouldn't be hamstrung by ancient engineering.

Duggan Morris Architects

Madelin I'm nervous about a presentation that starts with community facilities. Community facilities are not the focus for anything. What can often be the focus for things is something with a tangential relationship – in other words, not a community centre.

Finch I think the idea of the St Pancras Hospital becoming turnstiles is brilliant. By opening it up and creating water space this could become exciting event space. You can't do much around Little Venice because all the residents will complain, so let's build a place where all the festivals on water can take place.

Studio 8 Architects

Madelin The isolation of the site is intriguing, but it's also the greatest challenge. I'm completely jaundiced from dealing with railway people and not being allowed to build 5m away [from the train tracks]. But if I could remove that from my mind, I love the idea.

Finch I think railway people have just got to realise that they destroyed the city when they put the railways in. The idea of stitching as a historical thing, as much as a physical thing, is something they're just going to have to learn to understand. They do not own Camden or King's Cross. They are a facility and a service, and I think this proposition is a reminder that it has to be that way round.

David Kohn Architects

Madelin 'Twin Parks', what a great name! I think you should have a lie down and a good massage, because you've done the complete analysis, and come up with the ideas that as you can probably tell I like the most, and you've done all building types as well, all on your own, which is quite extraordinary.



Left Bob West (far left) and Paul Finch
Below The crowd at the charrette crit



Long Paul, what about some of these building typologies? They're pretty tough looking...

Finch Yeah well it's *Twin Peaks* to Twin Parks, isn't it? You can take a building type and put it in two different parts of London, and you either have to be a millionaire to live there or a pauper. I think that it's more to do with the character of the area itself.

ay-architects

Madelin You're the only people to try to involve Elm Village [the adjacent 1980s housing estate], which is terrific. This is not meant to be a negative comment, but it doesn't feel like your proposal is quite working hard enough for London yet. I'd like to pump it up, and how would you do that would be my question.

Finch The site fundamentally is a landscape site, so when you start with a landscape proposition, you're on the right track. The interesting thing is, and it applies to all schemes that take a straight-up landscape approach, that you have to make a decision about whether the landscape creates the buildings or whether the landscape is in response to the buildings.

ASD Projects

Finch The problem with consultations is that it doesn't matter how many people you interview, they're all partial. It's perfectly possible for people to simultaneously hold two contradictory ideas in their head, such as 'I love bold, exciting new architecture, but I don't want it near where I live'.

Will Colthorpe (*project director, Argent*) The other dilemma is that, at the start of the project, you've got one set of voices, but five years in, new people will move in, people die; all of a sudden you've got a protest movement by people who were never asked because, actually, they were never there.

Adam Kahn Architects

Madelin I think I'm on the receiving end of a Tree Preservation Order! I recognise the spirit, but I think I would have enjoyed seeing how you would have placed those trees in the brief.

Finch I wouldn't mind getting rid of some trees: Leicester Square is ruined by those gloomy denizens in the central space; that stupid tree at the end of Kingsway... Your project reminded me that when the Victorians built King's Cross and St. Pancras, they

*The Victorians were vicious brutes.
By comparison we are pussycats'*
– Paul Finch



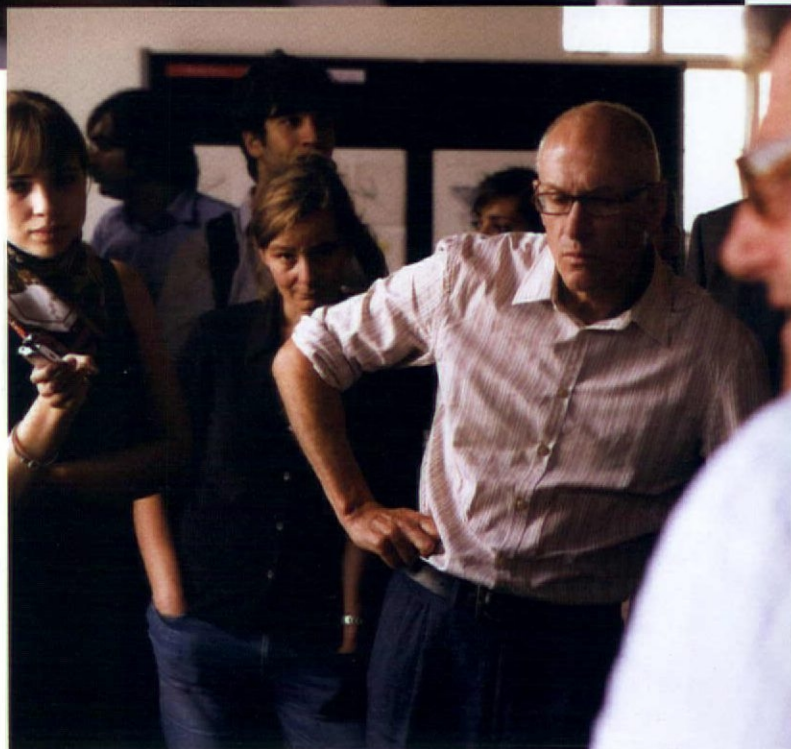
chucked 10,000 people out of their homes without compensation. And yet now we look at their work and say it's marvellous. They were vicious brutes, they let nothing stand in their way. By comparison we are absolute pussycats. So while I like the idea of planting trees, I hope that the preservation officer takes your application order and burns it, as that would be an appropriately unsentimental response!

5th Studio

West I like the drawing very much, and you have advanced some of the thinking on industrial space. It is an issue that London has to battle with – these white vans. Whether they are zero-emission vans or pedalled by Roman slaves, there are thousands of them. Where do we put these places? I don't think, from a political point of view, that Camden is going to get rid of all of that. But intensifying it and then creating a much more pleasant environment on the other side of the rail, connecting them... I think you've got a developer's hat actually!

Madelin ...Developer hats all over! I think this could be a really interesting place. It's a really functional bit of the future. ■

Above Will Colthorpe
(in pink shirt) and
Kieran Long
(in glasses)
Right Roger Madelin





ARGENT



Camden

King's Cross Central is one of the most significant developments in London, covering nearly 700,000m² and including nearly 2,000 new homes and 20 new streets. Developer Argent is committed to creating an outstanding project which will establish a real sense of place.

For our third annual Argent/AJ King's Cross Charrette, we gave 16 practices seven hours to create a masterplan and/or detailed design for a mixed-use site next to King's Cross Central.

After a day of cutting, pasting, scribbling and no computers, they submitted their schemes for a crit. Their drawings and plans feature in this exhibition at the New London Architecture Gallery.

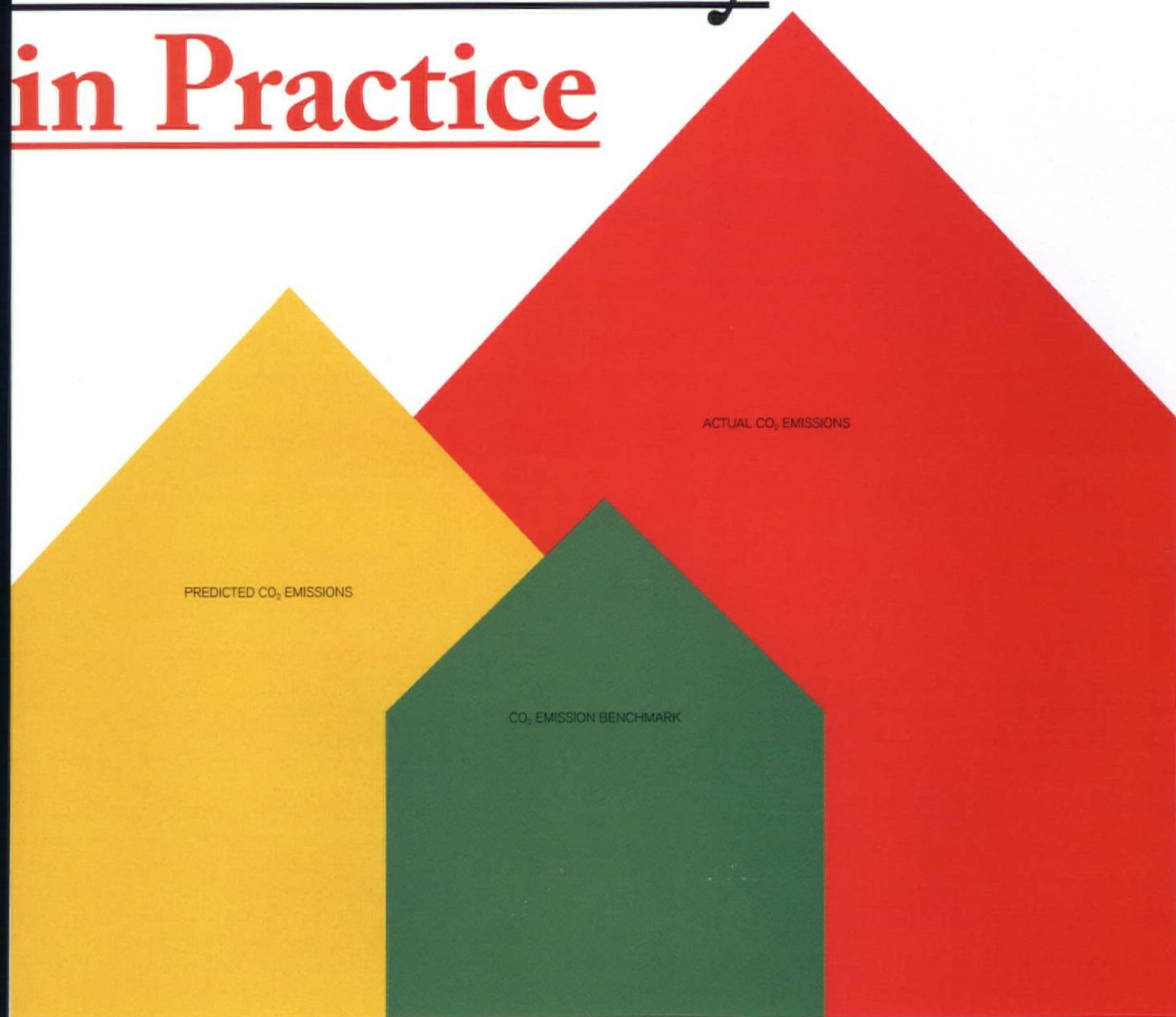
4 September – 16 October
Monday to Friday 9am – 6pm
Saturday 10am – 5pm

New London Architecture
Building Centre
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London WC1E 7BT

King's Cross Charrette Exhibition

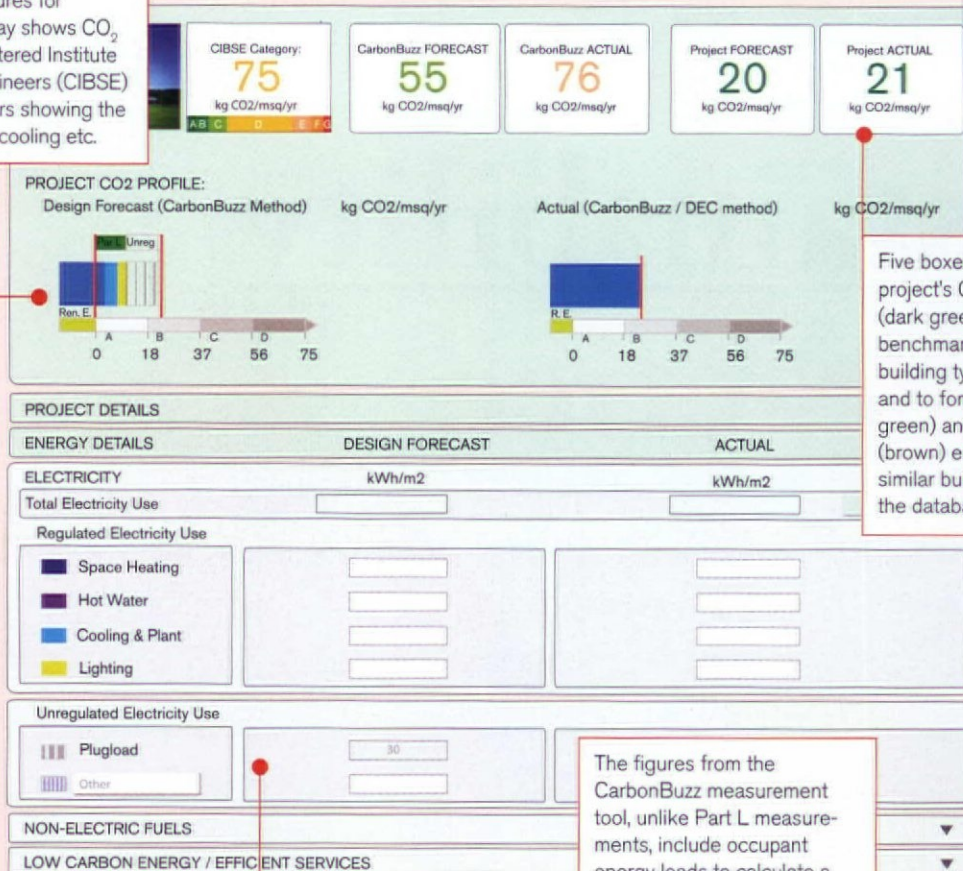
CarbonBuzz emissions benchmarking p76 // Retrofitted housing by
ECD Architects p80 // A snapshot of low-carbon social housing p86
// David Morley on retrofitting green walls p92

Sustainability in Practice



This instalment looks at evaluating building emissions and how to make social housing perform better. The AJ is hosting the Designing with Renewable Energy Conference on 10 September at the Royal Society of Medicine, London W1G. Visit www.ajrenewables.com

As users enter kWh figures for electricity use, the display shows CO₂ emissions against Chartered Institute of Building Service Engineers (CIBSE) benchmarks, with colours showing the breakdown for lighting, cooling etc.



Five boxes compare a project's CO₂ emissions (dark green) to a CIBSE benchmark for the same building type (yellow), and to forecast (light green) and actual (brown) emissions for similar building types in the database.

A mocked up page from CarbonBuzz, a free online platform for benchmarking a building's energy use, which goes live in November

The figures from the CarbonBuzz measurement tool, unlike Part L measurements, include occupant energy loads to calculate a building's total CO₂ emissions.

CARBONBUZZ

THE TRUE FIGURES

The RIBA's CarbonBuzz tool catalogues anonymous data from real buildings, making it easier for architects to understand building energy use statistics, says *Hattie Hartman*

If architects want to lessen the impact of construction on climate change they need to avoid glazing over when confronted with predicted energy use forecasts and meter readings from completed buildings.

CarbonBuzz, a new RIBA-led initiative, makes it easier for architects to understand and interpret these figures by presenting data from real projects, albeit anonymously.

CarbonBuzz is 'a massive step forward because it enables a direct comparison between building energy use projections and reality,' says Bill Gething, partner at Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios (FCBS).

The free online tool, currently being tested by eight architects, will establish CO₂ emissions benchmarks by building type. Practices taking

part range from the small (dRMM) to the medium (Make, FCBS) and the large (BDP, Sheppard Robson, Hamiltons, HOK, Aedas). Three consulting engineers – XC02 Energy, Atelier Ten and Mott MacDonald – are also participating in the pilot scheme.

The CarbonBuzz team is now inviting more architects to trial the tool prior to its official launch in November.

Luis Belmonte, who is leading the project at RIBA, says firms who sign up are showing a commitment to best practice in this crucial field. He said: 'This is what needs to happen across the industry. Getting involved will enhance the profile of each of the practices.'

Practices who are able to cite energy efficiency data without consulting engineers >>



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**ALEX DE RIJKE, dRMM,
A PARTICIPATING
FIRM IN THE CARBON-
BUZZ PILOT**

'CarbonBuzz will inevitably form part of practice in the future so I wanted to be in early. I've never understood how one can separate technique and creativity. Unless you understand the implications of construction, you are not an architect. There is a tendency to just say: "Let's phone Arup."'

**Heelis, Swindon
Feilden Clegg Bradley
Studios (FCBS)**

Although buildings on the CarbonBuzz register are anonymous, FCBS has released information about its central office for the National Trust. The practice commissioned a post-occupancy evaluation of the building using prize money from the project's RIBA Sustainability Award (2006).



will no doubt be viewed with increased credibility by potential clients. Judit Kimpian, Aedas' head of advanced modelling and sustainability, says: 'As well as understanding actual CO₂ emissions of buildings it focuses on important design team actions.'

Issues such as submetering, assessment of occupant loads, extended operating hours and special functions all have a major impact on a building's energy use and should be considered at design stage. Feedback from 'in use' data, almost non-existent until now, means that lessons from completed projects can be incorporated in future work.

Shashi Narayanan, HOK London's head of sustainable architecture, says CarbonBuzz is easy to use: 'There are many tools orientated to

M&E teams, but this is a tool which architects can use early in the design process.'

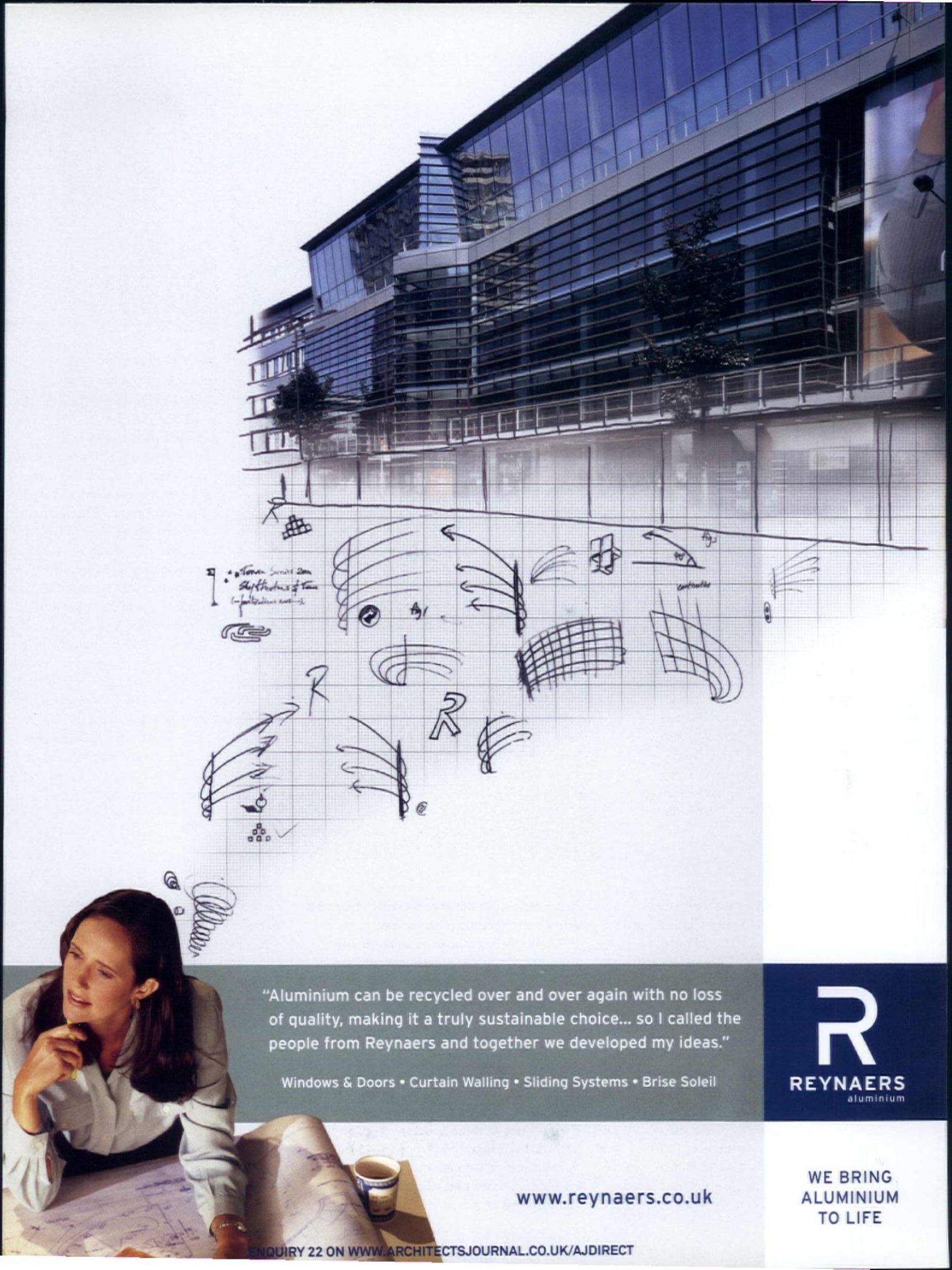
CarbonBuzz participants attend a three-hour workshop to learn how to enter project information online. It takes about 30 minutes to input the necessary information. Getting and sifting through the data is the most challenging – and tedious – bit.

A key feature of the database is that it's blind. That means no fingerpointing or blame for architects or their clients when buildings don't perform as efficiently as intended. dRMM director Alex de Rijke says this is a smart move, because it will mean the firms participating will be 'more honest' with information. Gething says: 'You don't want to share data if you know you are going to get slammed.'

Nevertheless, RIBA is considering rewarding practices who make their data public with a proposed 'Carbon Conscious Practice' certification, currently still in development.

Anonymity may be necessary to get CarbonBuzz up and running. Long-term, however, it must be dropped. Architects take responsibility for cost over-runs and information production delays – it should be the same for a building's energy consumption too. ■

The pilot scheme will be developed at the RIBA in three-hour workshops on 1, 2 and 3 October. Practices must submit a minimum of two projects with carbon emissions design and in use data for at least one year. Contact research@inst.riba.org or 0207 3075359.



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CASE STUDY

GREENING A TERRACE

Considered use of products should ensure that ECD Architects' retrofit of a social housing property achieves an 80 per cent reduction in carbon emissions, writes *Cathy Strongman*

Refurbishment of existing housing stock is often cited as the panacea to our carbon woes. According to the Energy Saving Trust, the average household can save up to 25 per cent of its annual carbon emissions through energy efficiency, and retrofitting is one way to achieve this. ECD Architects' retrofit of a terraced house in Mottingham, south-east London, due to complete later this month, is aiming for a reduction of more than three times that figure, targeting 80 per cent. The project could have a far-reaching impact on how properties owned by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) are transformed to reduce carbon emissions.

This Hyde Housing Association property (pictured below) is a nondescript brick terraced house built in the 1930s, with a flat-roofed rear extension added in the 1980s. 'We needed a house that was representative of [Hyde's] stock,' says ECD associate director Mark Elton. 'The idea being that lessons learnt from this project can be rolled out on a larger scale.'

The target for an 80 per cent reduction in carbon emissions was adopted because it is the figure proposed for the UK's existing housing stock by Brenda Boardman, of the University of Oxford's Environmental Change Institute, in her *Home Truths* report. The SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) rating system, against which the project will be measured, is a scale from 0 (inefficient) to 100 (highly efficient). 'The fact that it is a brick cavity wall has actually made the job harder than if we'd been given a solid-wall Victorian property [because the former is inherently more energy efficient],' says Elton. 'The SAP for the existing building was around 60, and the national average is 48, so getting the 80 per cent reduction has proved quite a challenge.' The German PassivHaus standard (AJ 28.02.08), which Elton sees as more accurate than the SAP, was used to double-check emissions.

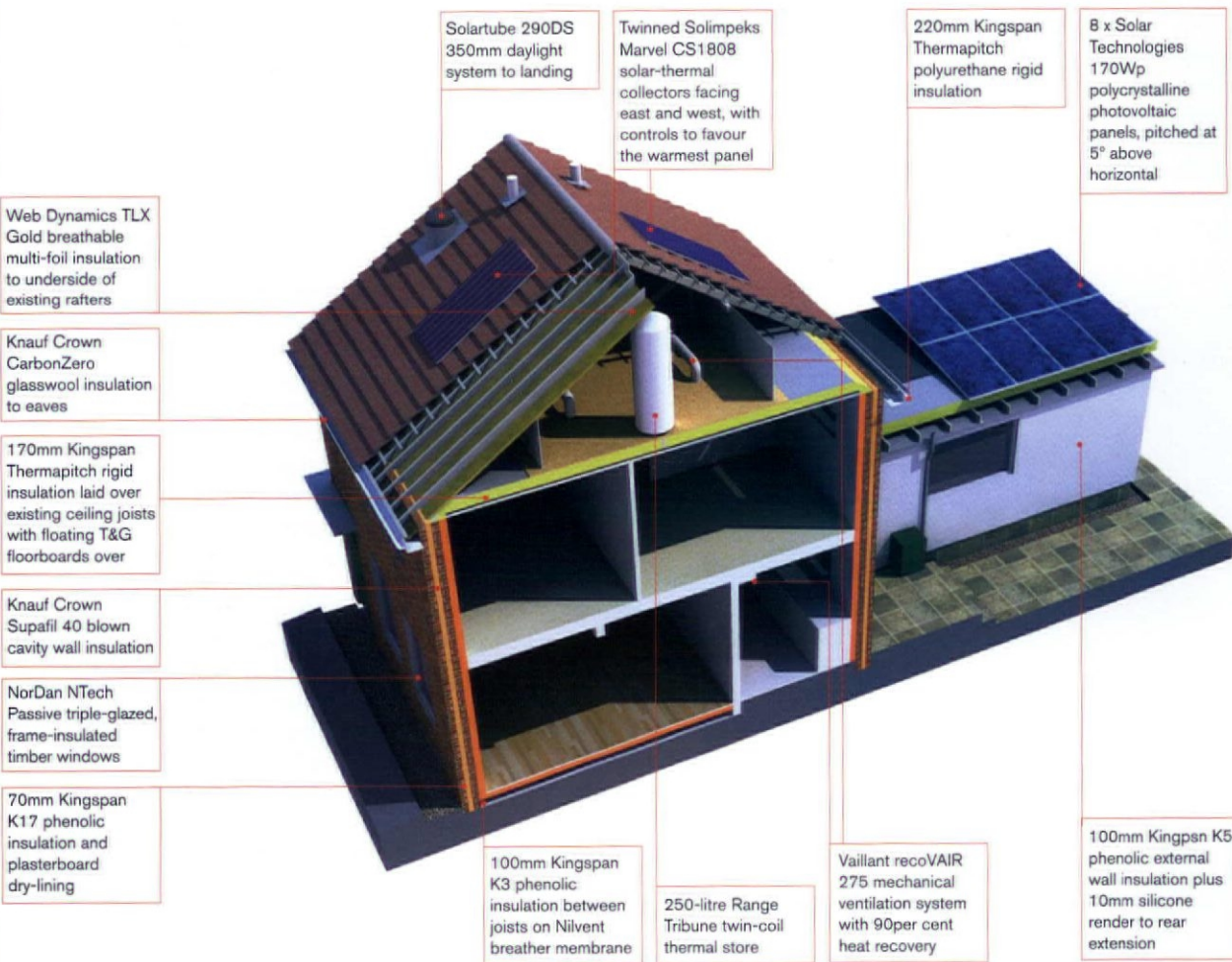
The budget for the project is £80,000 including design fees, but, as Elton points out,

this is not a representative figure. Both ECD and main contractor Mears are working at less than cost, and many products are being supplied free of charge or at a discount. A table of predicted costs will be collated and made public at a later date. On completion, a week of launch events will take place before the house is handed over to the tenant. Parity Projects, a consultancy that works to reduce the environmental impact of existing buildings, will then monitor the performance of the building for two years, periodically publishing the results.

During this period, social housing consultancy (and ECD's sister company) PPCR will interview the tenant and a control tenant in an existing similar property. 'It's a great opportunity for everybody involved to actually put the techniques and materials to the test,' says Elton. 'Hyde is committed to reducing carbon emissions from its stock, and this project will allow it to identify the most cost-effective measures and apply them.'



The Hyde Housing Association terraced house before retrofit



Start on site date July 2008

Contract duration 10 weeks

Gross external floor area 98.7m²

Form of contract Exchange of letters only

Cost £80,000, but the true costs based on a roll-out programme will be delivered at the end of the project

Client Hyde Housing Association

Architect ECD Architects

Quantity surveyor/planning supervisor/

CDM co-ordinator Keegans

Main contractor Mears

Annual CO₂ emissions 9kgCO₂/m²

according to SAP

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

'The key driver of product selection is the 80 per cent carbon reduction,' says Elton. 'We shouldn't get too hung up on the embodied energy of products in a refurbishment scheme until we've cracked the bigger problem, which is the operational energy use.'

ECD therefore rejected more expensive solutions such as ground-source heat pumps in favour of standard solutions like glazing and condensing boilers. The project adheres to PassivHaus-standard U-values of 0.15W/m²K for external walls and 0.1W/m²K for the roof, and has an airtightness value of 3. New homes are expected to achieve a value of 10

to meet Part L of the Building Regulations.

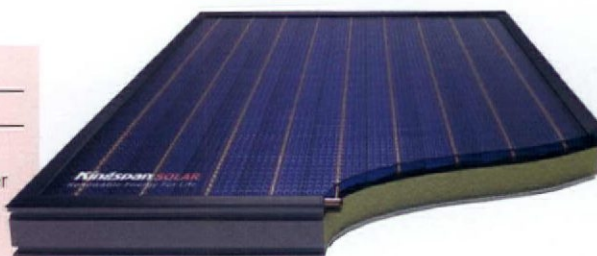
Elton often uses GreenSpec (www.greenspec.co.uk) for product research, and is increasingly wary of the BRE's Green Guide. 'There's hardly anything on there that isn't A or A+ rated. When PVC windows have an A rating, I begin to wonder,' he says.

The choice of products was partially dictated by the appointment of main contractor Mears – the firm entered the job with Travis Perkins backing it on the supply side and Kingspan on technical issues. See overleaf for a selection of products used in ECD's retrofit of the Nottingham house

Solar-thermal panels

Solimpeks

ECD opted for flat-plate solar-thermal panels rather than an evacuated tube system, because they are cheaper and more robust. Kingspan advised ECD to install Solimpeks' Marvel Dual system (for which Kingspan is UK distributor), so there is one 2m² panel on either side of the pitched roof, and the system automatically switches the water flow to the hottest panel. The panels feed into a 250-litre thermal store, and Solimpeks claims it will provide up to 70 per cent of the building's hot water.



Insulation

Kingspan Insulation/Knauf

ECD has used two different forms of insulation: Kingspan phenolic lining boards to the walls of the main house, and, in the 1980s extension, 100mm of Kingspan phenolic external insulation with a silicone render by Wetherby Building Systems. Some of the cavity walls have existing blown insulation, but the coverage is patchy. ECD is topping it up with Knauf Crown Supafil blown glasswool, and is using Knauf's Crown CarbonZero glasswool in the two eaves.



Breathable multi-foil insulation

Web Dynamics

TLX Gold, a waterproof, breathable multi-foil from Web Dynamics, is being installed between the rafters in the roof and on the party walls. The 33mm-thick, seven-layer laminate consists of a top layer of breathable roofing membrane, a bottom layer of reflective film laminate, and a core of PET wadding alternated with gold film. 'In combination with Kingspan insulation laid horizontally, we can get our 0.1 U-value and still have enough room in the roof for storage and the water cylinder,' says Elton.

Photovoltaic panels

Solar Technologies

Solar Technologies is supplying photovoltaic (PV) panels for a timber loadbearing structure positioned on the flat roof of the extension. The 170W polycrystalline units will provide a total of 1.36kW peak of electricity. 'Even with the mechanical ventilation and heat recovery that we are installing, we'd struggle to reach the 80 per cent reduction in emissions without the PV,' says Elton. 'The system is grant-funded, but this is an element of the retrofit that might not prove affordable in future projects.'

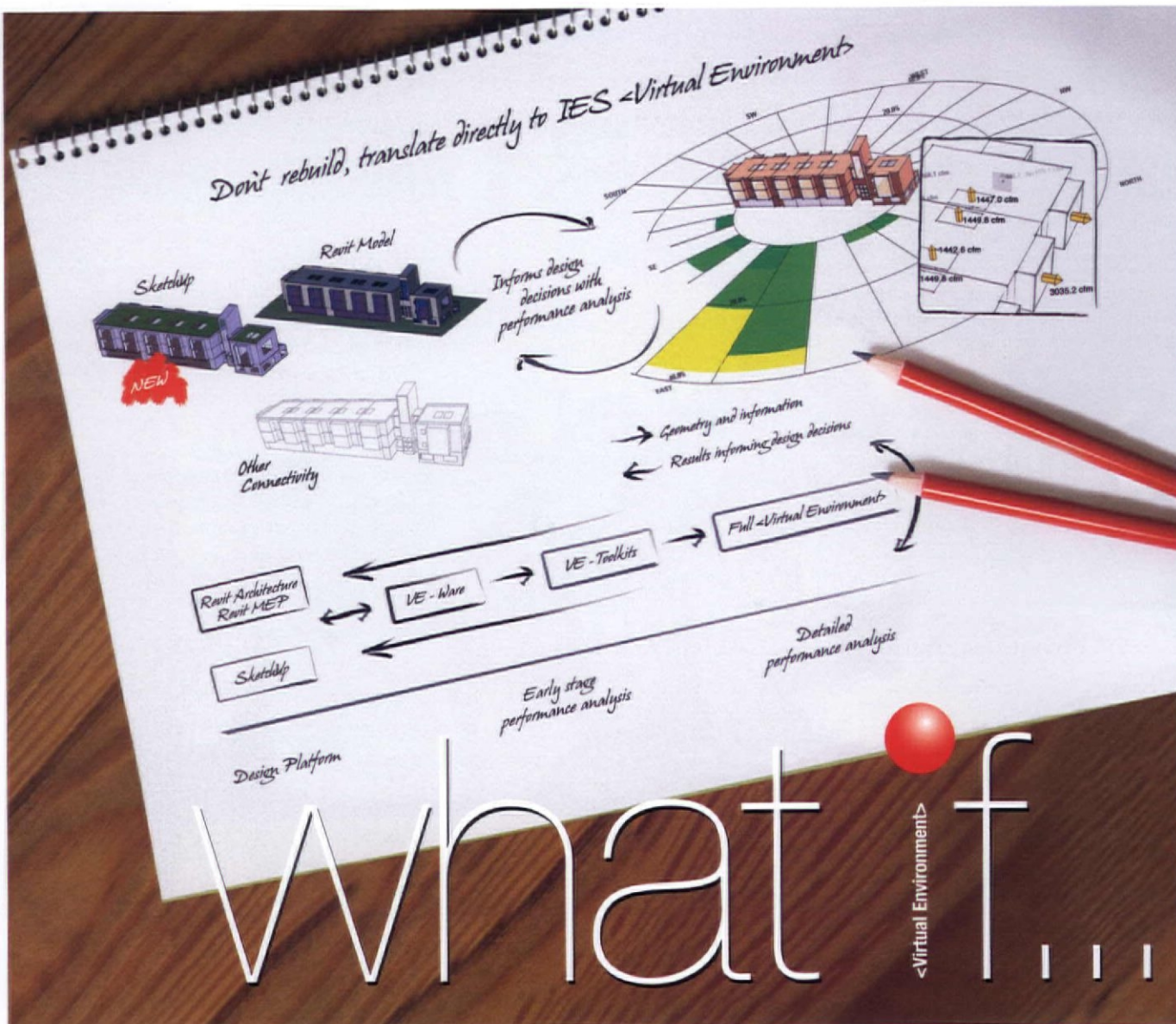


LED lighting

GreenLED

GreenLED is supplying 100 per cent LED lighting throughout the house. 'We are installing six per room, but each light is 2W, compared to a 50W halogen bulb,' says Elton. 'These LEDs are a lot more expensive, costing around £20 each, but they have a lifespan of 50,000 hours and we've calculated that a typical tenant won't have to replace them for 20 years.' However, the capital cost of the lighting comes down to the RSL instead of the tenant, which could hinder future application. >>





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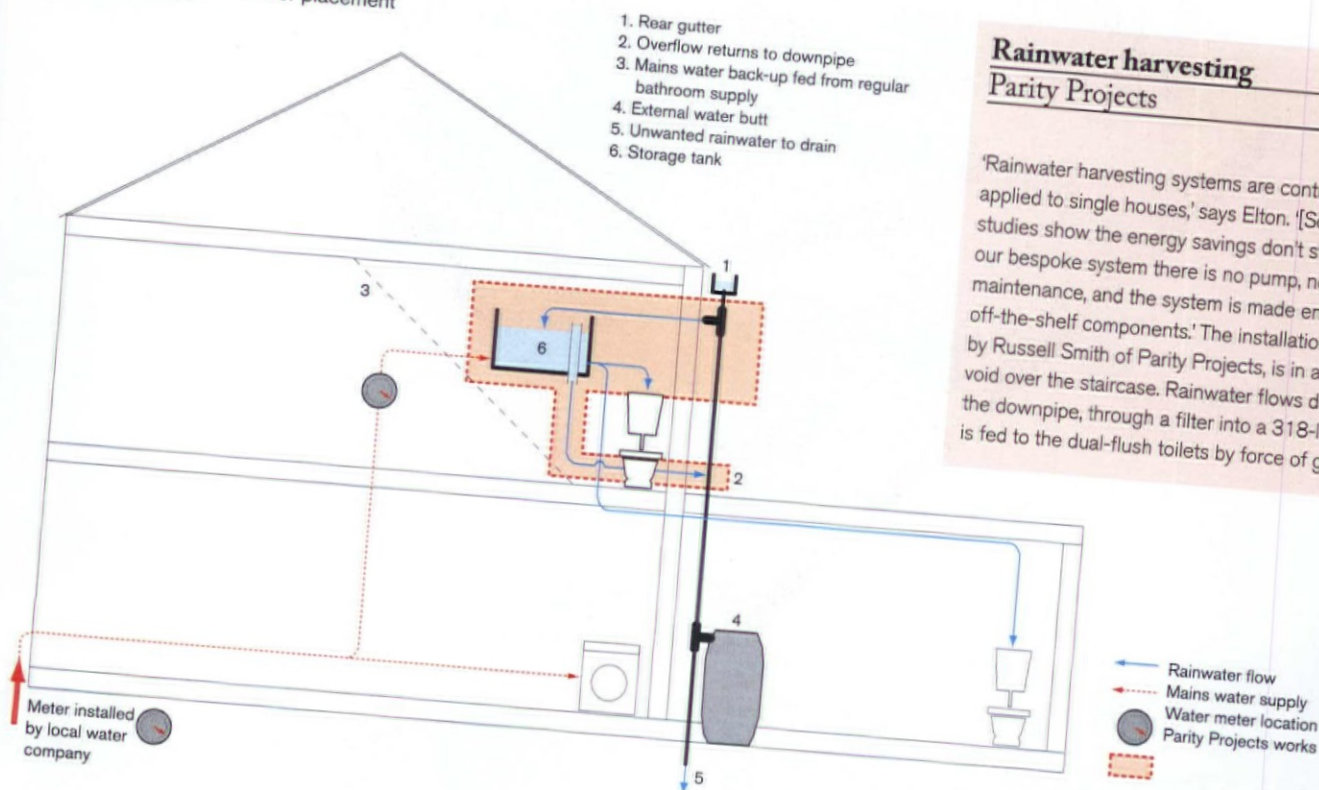
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Water supply and meter placement



Rainwater harvesting Parity Projects

'Rainwater harvesting systems are controversial when applied to single houses,' says Elton. '[Some] scientific studies show the energy savings don't stack up. On our bespoke system there is no pump, no costly maintenance, and the system is made entirely from off-the-shelf components.' The installation, designed by Russell Smith of Parity Projects, is in a boxed-out void over the staircase. Rainwater flows directly from the downpipe, through a filter into a 318-litre tank, and is fed to the dual-flush toilets by force of gravity alone.

PassivHaus-standard windows NorDan

ECD is working to the PassivHaus-standard target U-values for windows of $0.8\text{W/m}^2\text{K}$. 'There are a few products available in the UK, but we have gone with NorDan because it is arguably the biggest UK importer and is most likely to be able to gear up to a roll-out programme with the RSL,' says Elton. NorDan NTech Passive windows are triple-glazed, with argon-filled cavities, and low-emissivity coated glass with split frames and a polyurethane core. They have a whole window U-value of $0.7\text{W/m}^2\text{K}$. ■





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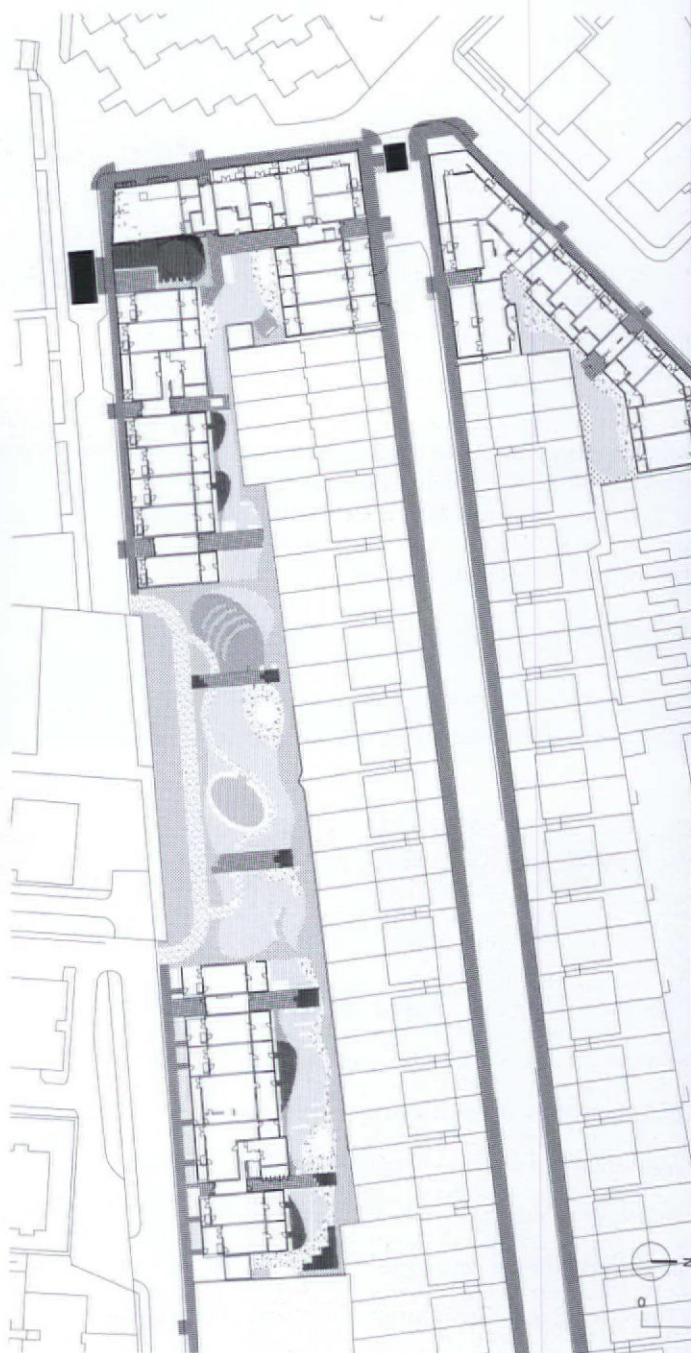
The AJ presents a snapshot of new-build social housing developments across the UK where sustainability is a key design factor



Granville New Homes, London
Levitt Bernstein

Client London Borough of Brent (handing over to The Hyde Group on completion) **Location** Brent, north-west London **Start on site** July 2006
Completion date April 2009 **Number of units** 130 (one- to four-bedroom flats) **Dwellings per ha** 107 **Predicted annual CO₂ emissions** 25kg/m²
Rating EcoHomes Very Good **Construction cost** £19 million **Cost per m²** £1,750 **Contractor** Higgins Construction PLC

The competition-winning project will achieve a Standard Assessment Procedure 120 rating and target National Home Energy Rating 10 with solar panels and super insulation. It also adheres to Lifetime Homes standards.



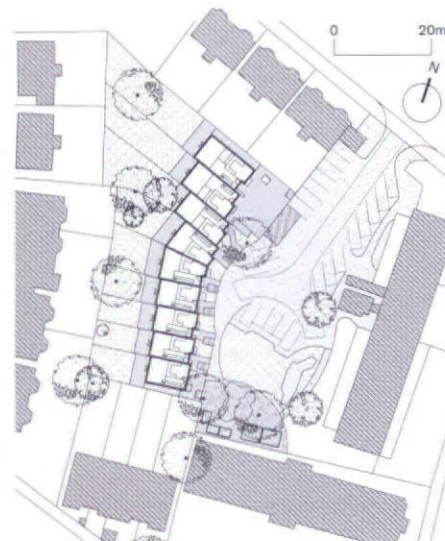
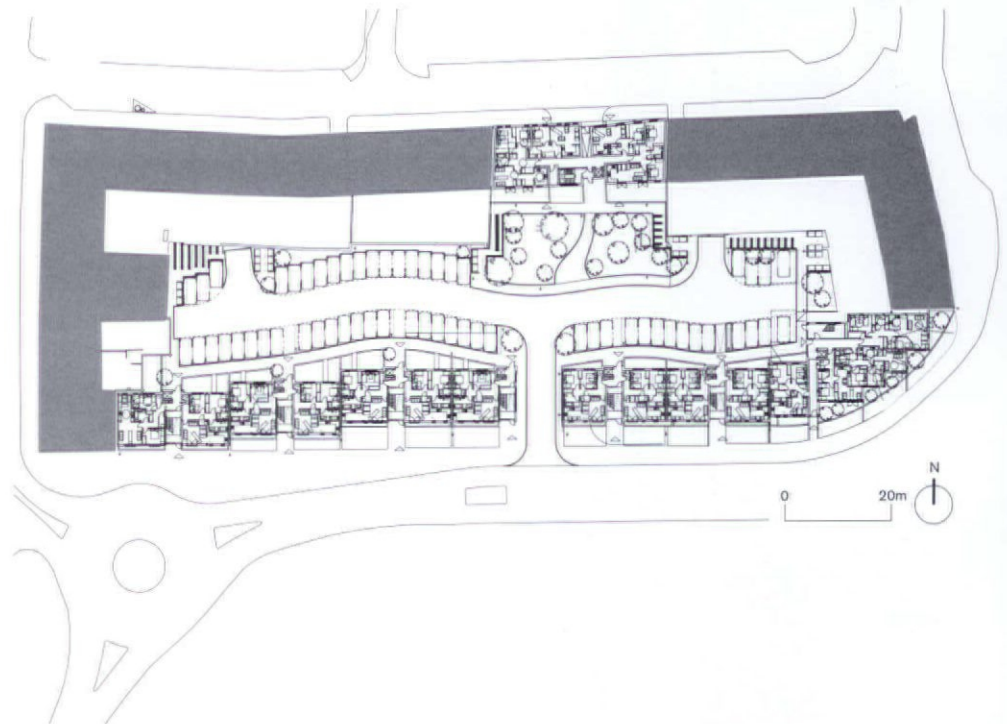


Govan 101, Glasgow

DO Architecture

Client Govan Housing Association/Cruden Estates **Location** Govan, Glasgow **Start on site** January 2009 **Completion date** Spring 2010
Number of units 110 (one- to three-bedrooms flats) **Dwellings per ha** 175 **Predicted annual CO₂ emissions** 21.8kg/m² **Rating** Ecohomes Very Good **Construction cost** £12 million **Cost per m²** £1,230 **Contractor** Cruden Building and Renewals Limited

The specification strategy has been to focus on passive techniques – such as improving the thermal envelope, sourcing sustainable materials, improving daylighting, and allowing flexibility for cradle-to-grave habitation – rather than tacking on sustainable technologies.

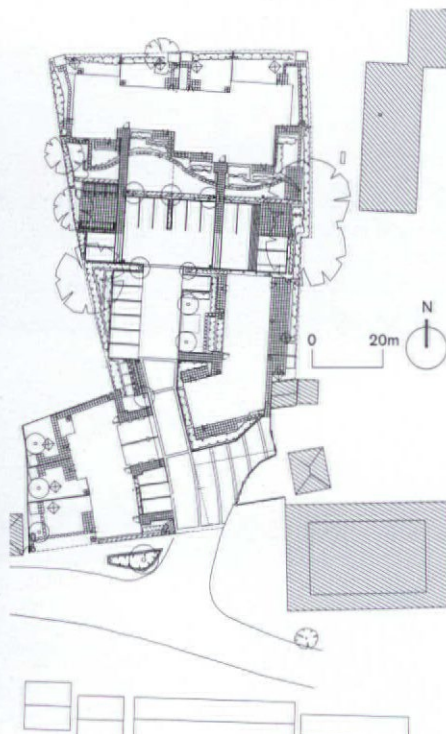


Angela Carter Close, London

Anne Thorne Architects Partnership

Client Metropolitan Housing Trust **Location** Brixton, south London **Start on site** January 2007 **Completion date** March 2008 **Number of units** nine (two- to four-bedroom houses) **Dwellings per ha** 28 **Predicted annual CO₂ emissions** 14-17kg/m² **Rating** EcoHomes Excellent **Construction cost** £1.6 million **Cost per m²** £1,644 **Contractor** Sandwood Design and Build

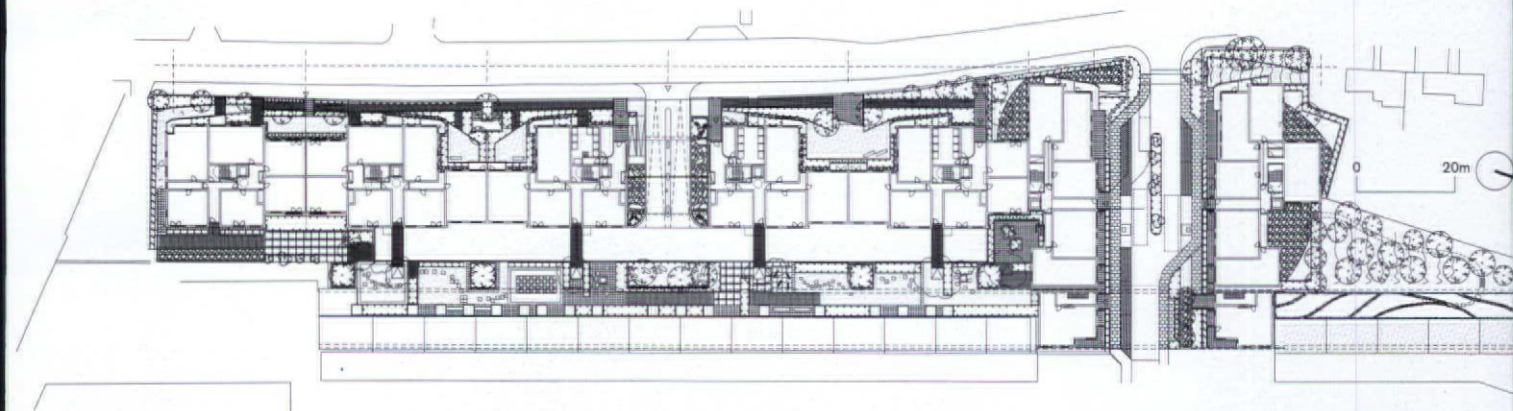
The prefabricated-timber-frame terraced houses have a sedum green roof. The project uses a passive stack ventilation strategy, and A-rated boilers are supported by flat-plate solar collectors for hot water. >>



New Heston Road, London PCKO

Client Octavia Housing and Care **Location** Hounslow, west London **Start on site** July 2007
Completion date July 2008 **Number of units** 28 (one- to three-bedroom houses/flats)
Dwellings per ha 91 **Predicted annual CO₂ emissions** 19.03kg/m² **Rating** EcoHomes Very Good **Construction cost** £4 million **Cost per m²** £1,875 **Contractor** Sandwood Design and Build

The mix of affordable and shared ownership dwellings (two of which are fully wheelchair accessible) are all to Lifetime Homes standards, with associated amenity areas and parking spaces.



Crossways Estate Regeneration, London PRP

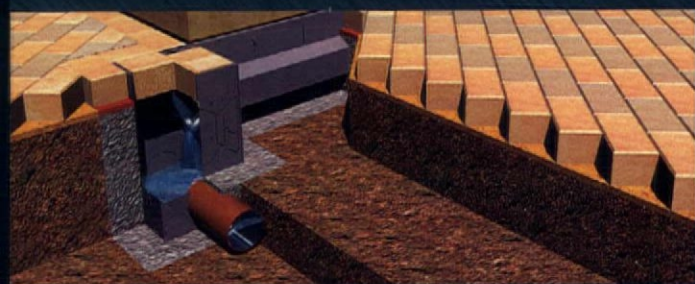
Client Swan New Homes and Swan Housing Group **Location** Bow, East London **Start on site** October 2008 **Completion date** Unknown **Number of units** 235 (one- to three-bedroom flats) **Dwellings per ha** 276 **Predicted annual CO₂ emissions** 2.57kg/m² **Rating** EcoHomes Very Good for private sale/Code for Sustainable Homes 4* for affordable **Construction cost** £29 million **Cost per m²** £1,400 **Contractor** Countryside Properties

A biomass boiler will provide communal heating and hot water. Roofs are designed to allow for the installation of photovoltaic panels at optimum angle/orientation. Wind power locations have been allowed for future retrofitting. Building fabric includes enhanced insulation levels. >>



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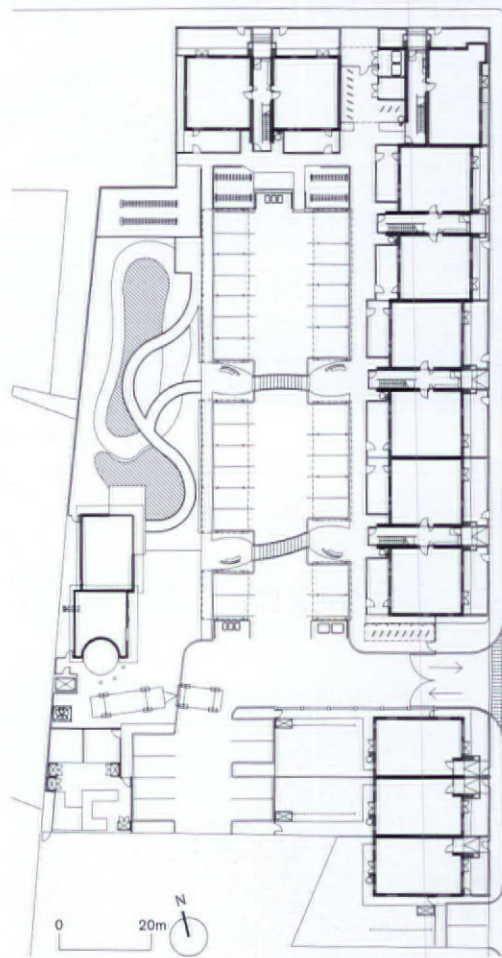
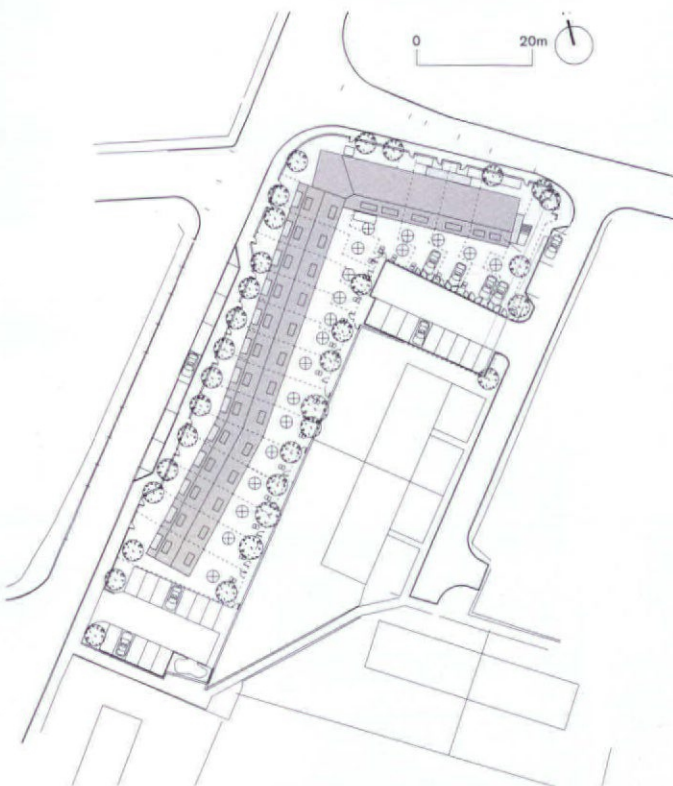
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ENQUIRY 14 ON WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK/AJDIRECT

Mansefield Place, Rothesay Collective Architecture

Client Fyne Homes **Location** Rothesay, Isle of Bute **Start on site** April 2008 **Completion date** September 2008 **Number of units** 19 units (one- to four-bedroom houses and flats) **Dwellings per ha** 64 **Predicted annual CO₂ emissions** 15kg/m² **Rating** Built to 2004 Scottish regulations, so no rating available **Construction cost** £2.8 million **Cost per m²** £1,400 **Contractor** John Brown of Strone

The heating strategy is driven by two factors: reducing the ecological impact of the development, and addressing fuel poverty in low-income families. Insulating to a high standard minimises heat loss and target U-values were chosen to match super-insulated houses.



Cross Street South, Wolverhampton Cole Thompson Anders Architects

Client Bromford Group **Location** Wolverhampton **Start on site** December 2006 **Completion date** April 2008 **Number of units** 30 (two-bedroom flats and four-bedroom terraces) **Dwellings per ha** 67 **Predicted annual CO₂ emissions** 5.95kg/m² **Rating** Eco-homes Excellent **Construction cost** £3.6 million **Cost per m²** £1,200 **Contractor** E Manton

The project features sedum roofs and uses off-site fabrication, low-energy passive design, natural ventilation and renewable energies. Allotments, recycling facilities and an environmental pavilion will also be enclosed within the site. ■



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Installed: January 2007

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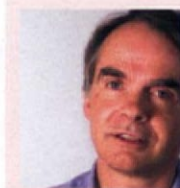


Installed for
18 months



Monaco
Pictures: July 2007
Installed: April 2006

ENQUIRY 24 ON WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK/AJDIRECT



In the second of a series on how to retrofit building with an eye on sustainability, Kaye Alexander talks to David Morley, of David Morley Architects, who recently installed a green wall in the courtyard of his London office.

Why did you install a green wall?

We were working on several projects where there was a strong possibility of application, and we wanted to understand the technology better. Also, our courtyard was previously filled with plants, but due to development next door they had to be removed, so we wanted something that would restore the environmental quality of the space.

How did you size your installation?

It is 3.6 x 8m. We wanted to incorporate the existing trellis, although the climbing plants will take a while to catch up. Their vertical growing is in contrast to the green wall's horizontal bands of planting.

How did you select the manufacturer?

BioTecture's cassette system is flexible, working like a rainscreen cladding system, and also provides a deeper growing medium for the plants. We were impressed by BioTecture's research and development and willingness to work with us on exploring a green wall's potential to provide internal cooling.

How much hassle was it?

Very little. BioTecture did the installation in about four half-day sessions.

How does the cooling element work?

Max Fordham has done research into the cooling effect of plants and we wanted to see if we could exploit their ability to dissipate heat from our IT server room. We collaborated with Fordham to design a system which works like a radiator in reverse. A panel of cold water is warmed by the heat given off by the server, which is fed to the plants. Naturally cooled, it returns to the server room to complete the

cycle again. We are setting the air conditioning in the server room 3°C higher than normal, and we're aiming for a 5°C reduction in temperature.

What lessons have you learned?

The black irrigation strip at the top is bigger than we imagined, creating a frame. We replaced some of the droopy plants along the top with more upright ones to try to blur the line between black and green. On the money side, it is competitive with rainscreen cladding, although on housing schemes it might be a struggle to get it into the budget. However, the environmental benefits and potential to build more densely could offset some of the cost.

OTHER GREEN WALL SYSTEMS (see AJS 05.08)

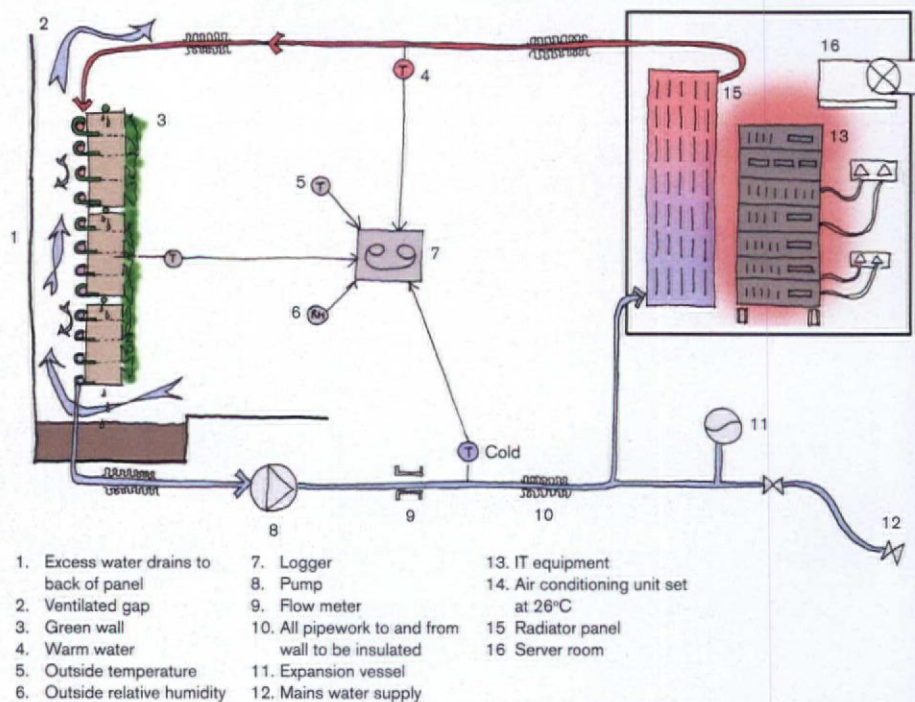
ELT Easy Green Living Wall System www.elteasygreen.com

NY Sunworks Vertically Integrated Greenhouse www.nysunworks.org

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How to install a green wall, by David Morley

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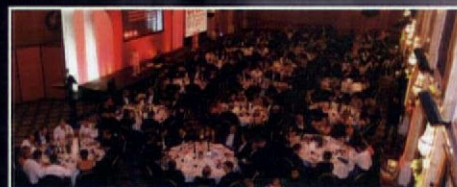
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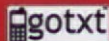
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In this section // *Alex Moulton and the Moulton bicycle* // *Critic's Choice* // *The Rule of Regulations* // *Thinking Allowed* // *5 Things To Do*

The Critics



Alex Moulton in his study at The Hall, Bradford-on-Avon, holding one of his bicycle frames

DOMINIK GIGLER

INTERVIEW

Reinventing the wheel

Christine Murray meets Alex Moulton, engineer of the much-loved Moulton bicycle, Norman Foster and Rayner Banham's favourite set of wheels

Moulton Bicycle Club weekend, 5-7 September, Holt Road, Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 1AH. Admittance to members of Moulton Bicycle Club only, but new members are welcome to join on the door. www.moultonbikers.info

I'm at The Hall in Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire, the enchanting 17th-century home of the Moulton, arguably the most unique and technically advanced bicycle in the world.

I've come to meet Alex Moulton, the octogenarian mechanical engineer who invented the small-wheel, full-suspension Moulton bicycle in 1962 as a challenge to the conventional diamond frame. Since then, he's

spent a lifetime refining his revolutionary design, which, in 1986, broke the world speed record for the fastest bicycle of conventional riding position.

This weekend, Moulton aficionados will convene on the triple-gabled villa for their annual summer ride and picnic, a pilgrimage to the place where the Moulton was first manufactured, and where frames are still

lovingly handcrafted in its converted stables.

'It has simply been my continuing ambition to make a superior bicycle to the classical bicycle,' says Moulton over a glass of wine in a room piled high with books, sketches of bike parts and scribbled calculations. Moulton was born into engineering and invention. His great-grandfather, Stephen Moulton, acquired the rights to the process >>



Left Norman Foster describes his Moulton as 'a delight to use'

Below left The Hall in Bradford-on-Avon
Below Some frames are still manufactured in The Hall's workshop



DOMINIK GIGLER



Right Alex Moulton in his study

Below right The Double Pylon Stainless Separable starts at £7,200 – it takes 48 hours to hand-braze the frame

for the harder ride.' Moulton also altered the relative sizes of the chain wheel and sprocket to compensate for the smaller wheels, ensuring that his bicycle had the same speed and gearing as the diamond frame.

The design of the original Moulton featured a unisex, Lazy-F step-through frame, 16in high-pressure tyres, front and rear rubber suspension, and increased luggage capacity with front and rear racks. After a sensational launch in 1962 at the Earls Court Cycle and Motor Cycle Show, Moulton went on to become the second-largest frame maker in the UK, at its peak manufacturing more than 1,000 bikes a week. According to Tony Hadland's book *The Moulton Bicycle*, by 1966 the Moulton was being exported to 30 countries and being built under license in the USA, Australia, South Africa and Norway. Sales were boosted by racing results, such as John Woodburn's record-breaking Cardiff-London ride on a Moulton Speed in 1962.

Paradoxically, the Moulton's breakaway popularity eventually led to a decline in sales – Raleigh launched a series of copycats, such as the Twenty shopping bicycle, while increased mass production of the Moulton led to a decline in quality, particularly at the factory in Kirkby, Liverpool, where inexperienced welders overheated the frames. Raleigh eventually took over the name Moulton, but failed to adhere to the design's delicate specifications, and marketed versions without the front suspension, causing the frames to crack.

Moulton became an independent company once again in 1983, and operated under the name Alex Moulton Bicycles until June this year, when it announced a merger with Stratford-upon-Avon-based Pashley to form The Moulton Bicycle Company. The new bicycles, aside from their full suspension and (slightly larger) 17in high-pressure tyres, bear little resemblance to early Moultons. In the 1980s, Moulton began experimenting with space frames to build a stiffer, lighter bicycle. His newest 'pylon' models feature a steel cage formed by triangulated smaller units for a structurally-rigid, lightweight construction.

With its engineering-led precision design and constantly improving form, Moulton has long inspired a fervent following. Architectural critic Rayner Banham famously rode a 1960s Moulton, and was often pictured astride it. Moulton's New Series, which starts at £2,200, has inspired equally devout disciples, including

for the vulcanisation of rubber from American Charles Goodyear, and made his fortune developing new uses for this new material, such as rain capes for British soldiers fighting the Crimean War. Stephen bought The Hall in 1848, converting the adjacent cloth mill to rubber production, later sold to the Avon Rubber Company in 1956.

His great-grandson would also turn to rubber for his innovative designs. After studying aeroengines at the University of Cambridge, Alex founded Moulton Developments Limited, focusing on the design and development of rubber suspension for vehicles such as cars and trailers – research which culminated in the development of his acclaimed suspension systems for the Mini, as well as the Austin Allegro, Princess, Metro and Ambassador.

In the aftermath of the Suez crisis in 1956, the ensuing oil shortages encouraged Moulton to examine the bicycle. 'For all the brilliant work that was done in the last century, the classic bicycle came to be around 1900,' says Moulton. 'It worked so wonder-

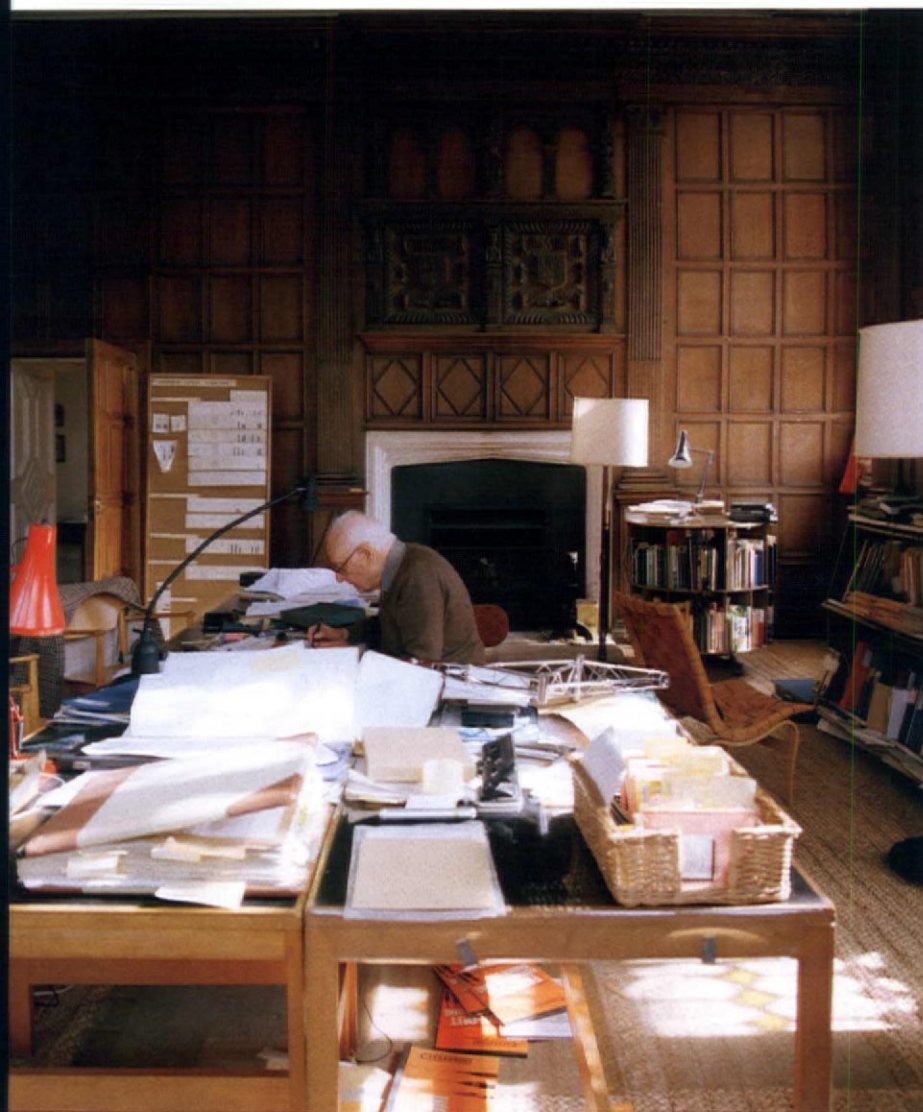
fully, nobody saw any reason to change it – but it does have certain dysfunctions.'

These 'dysfunctions', according to Moulton, are the crossbar that bridges the top of the frame ('you're trapped by it. You can't get away from it') and 'those enormous, stupid wheels'. Moulton noticed that as vehicles evolved, their wheels continually became smaller, with the exception of the classic bicycle, which had

'The classic bicycle worked wonderfully, but it does have certain dysfunctions'

stalled at 26 or 28in. His calculations showed that a smaller wheel would go faster with less effort due to lower rolling resistance, lower aerodynamic drag and faster acceleration. 'One always rears up to the reality of the physics, if you like,' says Moulton.

With support from Dunlop, Moulton began testing small wheels using tyres designed for children's bikes, but found them 'very bad'. 'It became clear that we needed a high-pressure tyre,' he explains. 'And with a high-pressure tyre, suspension was mandatory to compensate



James Dyson and Norman Foster, both owners of the New Series Speed. Foster even flew his helicopter to Bradford-on-Avon to meet Moulton, landing the chopper on The Hall's front lawn. 'He loved this place,' says Moulton. 'He was absolutely bewitched.'

Foster's enthusiasm is not surprising: Moulton admits that his newest designs have a lot in common with High-Tech architecture, as they allow pure functionality to lead the form. 'With the first model, I was extremely concerned with appearance because I was doing a really brutal thing; I was imposing on the public an enormous change from the classical bicycle,' he explains. 'So, in order not to offend the public, I made the front and back forks nicely curved, and kept the suspension entirely hidden. But very soon, reality punished me – the rear forks bent.'

'After that, I said to myself, let's do it engineering-wise. Since then, I've been concerned with creating something balanced and elegant, but never to lead the fashion. The elements must be obviously efficient, but never styled.'

'Architecture has one or two less dimensions than engineering,' adds Moulton. 'I mean, things don't have to fly or go moving about. The things that I'm working on, mechanical things, they've got function. Architecture is more open to styling, to shape.'

It is his quest for the most efficient, most technically brilliant ride that has kept Moulton's bicycles from folding. According to Moulton, the Brompton folds exceptionally well because it is designed for folding, whereas his bicycle is designed for exceptional performance on the road. Rather than fold, several of Moulton's models separate into two

'In order not to offend the public, I made the front and back forks nicely curved'

– an option he claims will not compromise the frame in any way.

'Scores of manufacturers that make a small-wheel bicycle imagine that they're simply folding bicycles,' adds Moulton. 'It hasn't dawned on them that actually, if you do it properly, a small-wheel bicycle is the best bicycle in the world.' ■

See WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK for more photographs from Moulton's workshop

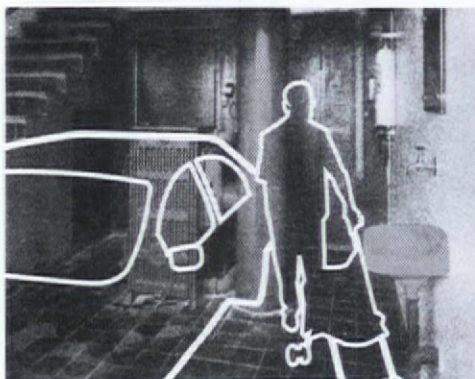
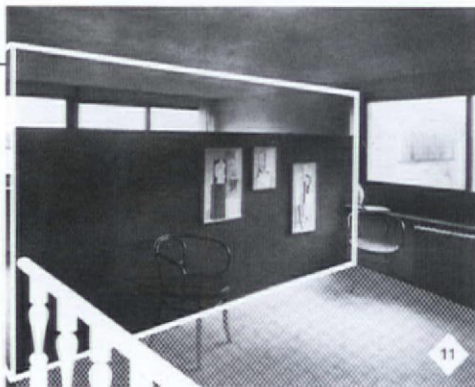
Resume: Classy engineering has Foster freewheelin'



Critic's Choice
Per Kirkeby's
 'chapels' lead **Andrew**
Mead to rediscover his
 rewarding paintings

The rather cryptic building pictured below, with its blank brick walls, is one of three so-called 'chapels' that Danish artist Per Kirkeby has designed for the Hombroich Cultural Environment – a settlement of architects, artists and scientists on a former missile base near Düsseldorf in Germany, with Tadao Ando's Langen Foundation as the main attraction. Inside the chapels are samples of Kirkeby's work in several media, including models for the large brick sculptures he has built on many sites in northern Europe (AJ 29.10.98). They are rare examples of successful public art, inviting passers-by to explore their interiors (which are seldom as straightforward as they seem) and then offering complex fractured views of the surroundings, rural or urban, through multiple shallow-arched apertures.

But above all, Kirkeby makes paintings, and a new book, *Per Kirkeby: Journeys in Painting and Elsewhere* (Hatje Cantz, £32) gives an excellent overview, with watercolours from his trips to remote parts of Greenland and Norway, and some striking larger canvases. The dominant theme is landscape, but in a generalised way – a tree stump, a waterfall or a clump of conifers may be recognisable, but the paintings don't depict a particular place, more the sensation of immersion in the elements. It's the kind of work that was completely sidelined during our ludicrous obsession with 'Young British Artists', but hopefully the planned Kirkeby retrospective at Tate Modern next year will set things straight.



EXHIBITION

Alex Ely visits a show
 that challenges an ever-
 expanding set of Building
 Regulations

The Rule of Regulations. Until 13 September, at the Closet Gallery, 57 Ewer Street, SE1 0NR. www.architecturefoundation.org.uk/closet

Under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, it is an offence to beat or shake a carpet, rug or mat in any street, and to keep any pigsty at the front of any street. This is just one of 35,000 unrepealed acts on the statute book. The job of repealing obsolete laws is an infinite one, not helped by legislators churning out over 3,300 statutory instruments every year. We are a risk-averse culture, always adding to rules rather than editing them, and the Architecture Foundation's new exhibition, *The Rule of Regulations* curated by Finn Williams with David Knight, tackles this tendency.

Construction law may account for a relatively small number of the statutes in the UK, but, by the time we combine acts, regulations, policies and standards, it doesn't seem like it. Lifetime Homes, a voluntary adopted standard introduced in 1991, has been integrated unedited into other standards such as the Code for Sustainable Homes,

despite seven out of the 16 requirements now being part of the Building Regulations. The Building for Life standard, which first appeared in 2003 as a ready-reckoner to current planning policy guidance, is now added to the policies that it summarises.

We are looking into the rabbit hole, a world where accretion is king. Policies which refer to standards become, in turn, embedded in codes, which reference regulations, which already incorporate many of the criteria of the aforementioned standard. Or was it code? Or policy? Sometimes throwing out the proverbial nipper with the bathwater is necessary to bring a rationale back to our thinking.

If we must follow Alice down the rabbit hole, perhaps we can seek out creative opportunities within the current legislative framework, maybe to arrive in a wonderland where new forms of architecture emerge. In *The Rule of Regulations*, Williams and Knight pit architectural conceits – here Le Corbusier's five points of Modern architecture – against five pieces of current housing legislation. They have remodelled Corb's early mass-housing prototype, the single-family dwelling *Maison Citrohan* (1922), to see how it might look in today's climate of environmental paranoia, lowest cost, equal opportunities and accessibility.

This astute project illustrates some of the incompatibilities between our current regulations while creating a new architectural language, one with its own qualities and humour. A sculptural moment, for example,



Left The Rule of Regulations suggested interventions to Corb's Maison Citrohan mass-housing prototype

is created by the rotation of the WC to avoid it 'aligning with Mecca' – part of the National Housing Federation's Accommodating Diversity guidance. Surprisingly, the exercise proves how flexible Maison Citrohan is. The design methodology reflects the process by which most volume housebuilders develop their standard house types. Instead of returning to first principles they simply incorporate strange windows and additional WCs into an existing product.

It raises an interesting question about the value of architectural ideas. Are architectural outcomes determined by policy makers, with politicians playing a bit part, any less valid than the whims of an 'architectural genius' compromised by the laws of gravity? The exhibition is an illustration of how legislation can compromise the purity of architectural ideas or how it can lead to ingenious solutions – perhaps even a 21st-century vernacular for housing. The exhibition is a must for any architect engaged in mass housing who hopes to retain their architectural integrity. And equally, a must for police makers convinced that only regulations can deliver architectural excellence.

Alex Ely is a partner at mæ

Resume: Eager bureaucrats should Corb their enthusiasm

RADIO

Shumi Bose lets her imagination loose on the subject of suburbia

Broadcast 13, 20 and 27 August. 'Imagination and the City' is available on the BBC iPlayer until 8 September. www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer

BBC Radio 4's *Thinking Allowed* programme has been tackling typologies of space. Three special editions entitled 'Imagination and...' looked at the Countryside, Suburbia and the City, and brought together an array of academics and writers for some unstructured but stimulating discussions.

Hosted by Laurie Taylor and the Open University, the series began gently with the

5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

1 *AJ/Argent King's Cross Charrette exhibition*

See the work from this issue in the flesh.

Until 16 October. New London Architecture, The Building Centre, 26 Store Street, London WC1

2 *The Naked and the Nude*

Take in works from the Tate Collection at Erick van Egeraat's gallery in Middlesbrough.

Until 16 November. Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, Centre Square, Middlesbrough, TS1 2AZ. www.visitmima.com

3 *Design Cities*

Learn about contemporary design through work from seven cities – Vienna, Dessau, Paris, Los Angeles, Milan, Tokyo and London.

Until 4 January 2009. Design Museum, Shad Thames, London SE1. www.designmuseum.org

4 *Arbores Laetae (Joyful Trees)*

See Diller Scofidio + Renfro's rotating trees as a prelude to the Liverpool Biennial.

Corner of Parliament Street and Great George Street, Liverpool. www.biennial.com

5 *Catastrophe: Painting Sculpture Collage Drawing*

There's more to Peckham than Will Alsop – see the work of artist Bobby Dowler in a former Victorian packing warehouse.

Until 11 September. Hannah Barry Gallery, Warehouse 9i, 133 Copeland Road, London SE15

rural edition, 'Imagination and the Countryside'. Howard Newby of Liverpool University made a case for the formative impact of Picturesque painting on the English psyche, and novelist Trollope riffed with Taylor on the unreachable Garden of Eden as the primordial root of our bucolic fantasies.

The second programme, 'Imagination and Suburbia', was the most intriguing and pithy of the three. From John Betjeman's celebrated 1970s documentary *Metro-land* to the monstrous picket-fenced 'burbs seen in Sam Mendes' 1999 film *American Beauty*, the modern phenomenon of suburbia has proved fertile subject matter. Paul Barker of the Young Foundation and Iain Sinclair, author of *London Orbital*, tried to nail the difference between 'edge lands' and suburbs, while Nick Hubble, formerly of the Centre for Suburban Studies at Kingston University, considered suburbia's strange double life – town promising country and country promising town.

For the third chapter, 'Imagination and the City', high-profile guests included Richard Sennett, chair of the London School of Economics' Cities Programme, and 'psycho-geographer' and novelist Will Self. Much of the terrain covered in this instalment seemed rather hackneyed, especially in the wake of the recent scrutiny of cities in books and exhibitions such as Tate Modern's *Global Cities*. Alienation and intensity are already

overanalysed and are obvious urban phenomena. Tangential interruptions from the audience leavened the discussion further – a disappointment given the panel.

Perhaps the triumph of the suburbia episode is not so surprising, for, despite our disdain for huge patternbook developments, most of us – 84 per cent according to the Independent Transport Commission – actually live in them. The Oxford English Dictionary lists 'suburban' as a pejorative term used to describe the 'contemptibly dull and ordinary', but this illuminating programme proves the suburbs to be rich ground for imagination and examination alike.

Resume: The suburban identity is no intellectual cul-de-sac, says *Thinking Allowed*



The 'Suburbia' chapter was the highlight of Radio 4's 'Imagination and...' series

JAMIE ANDERSON

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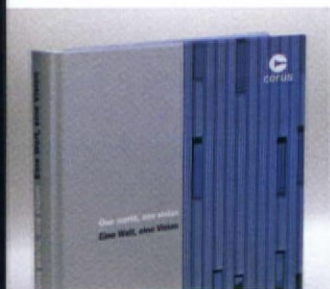
KINGSPAN INSULATION



AJ ENQUIRY 201

Kingspan Insulation's updated Design Manual contains detailed information about the complete product range, and is available now. Contact Kingspan Insulation for a hard copy or download individual pages from the website. Call 0870 733 8333 or email literature.uk@insulation.kingspan.com www.insulation.kingspan.com

KALZIP



AJ ENQUIRY 203

Kalzip has launched a new project reference book called *One World, One Vision*. Marking 40 years of Kalzip, the book highlights the creative design, manufacturing quality and technical support associated with Kalzip installations. To obtain your free copy while stocks last, call 01925 825100 or email kalzipmarketing@corusgroup.com

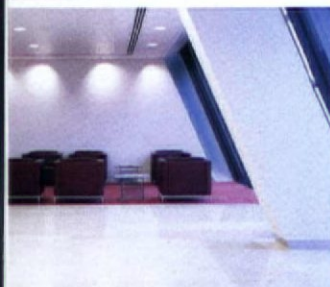
LEADERFLUSH SHAPLAND



AJ ENQUIRY 205

The Designer range of flush doors and doorsets from Leaderflush Shapland gives complete design freedom, with numerous wood-veneer, PVC, paint and metal finishes available. The most popular options include four frame types and 13 vision-panel designs – all of which have already been fire-tested and certified.

KIRKSTONE



AJ ENQUIRY 207

Kirkstone is well known for its beautiful volcanic, blue and green slate. It has a strong reputation for sourcing the finest available stone from around the world. Kirkstone's Florac honed Limestone was specified by Sonnemann Toon Architects for this private bank in Moor House, London. Visit www.kirkstone.com

STOAKES SYSTEMS



AJ ENQUIRY 202

How about this application of Kalwall at Gateshead College, Tyne and Wear? Architect Red Box Design Group has sculpted a stunning barrel vault with end walls to diffuse natural daylight evenly, without shadows or glare, creating the college's unique ambience. For more information visit www.stoakes.co.uk

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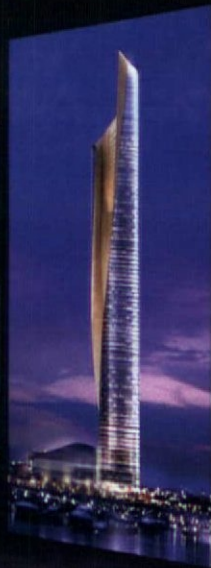
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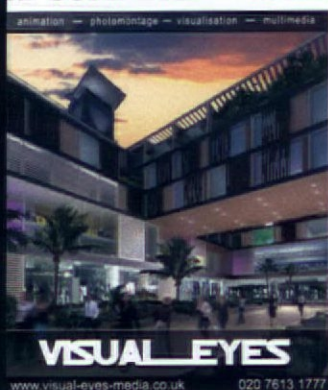
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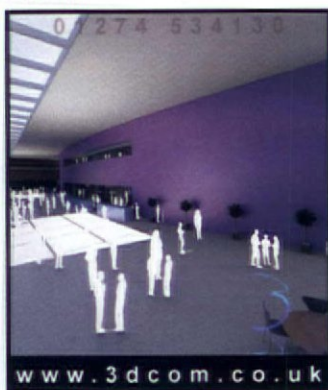
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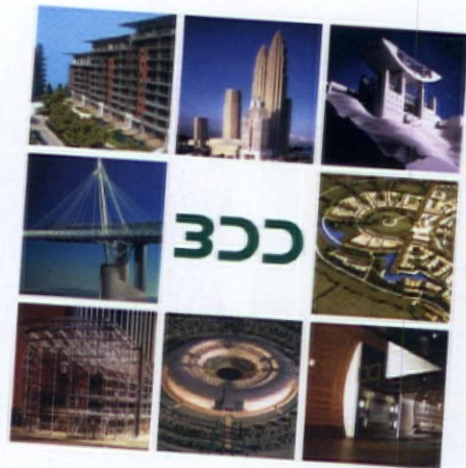
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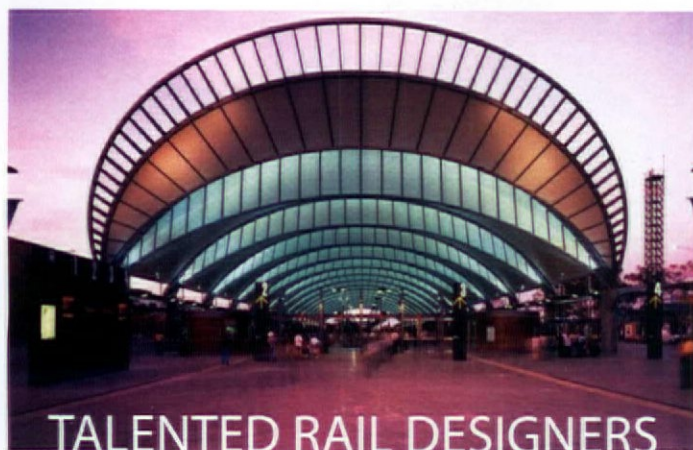
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Ian Martin. Overcrowded Britain, stereotypical Venice and an architectural parrot

MONDAY. All my brilliant tall-building proposals are falling like dominoes in the second wave of 'credit crunch' vertigo and nausea. It's unseemly now for us even to admire virile urban landmarks shaped like USB memory sticks or exotic fruit. We're all supposed to be having an energy crisis. Staying at home wearing duffel coats, tuned to local radio for further announcements, and hits from the 1980s.

Latest cancellations include the Anorexic Junkie, a glazed super-thin tower in a ridiculous hat. It was supposed to be under construction already in Hove. Rock Steady Eddie, my Middle East fixer, says we might be able to shift it to 'Dobuy', but we'll have to change the name to the Virgin Daughter or something.

TUESDAY. Dreary afternoon at a Westminster policy charrette hosted by someone who looks like a horror-movie ventriloquist's dummy, but in a jumper. This turns out to be Holly Boxwood, secretary of state for communities, bins and forward thinking.

Bit of a panic on. The newspapers are grumbling about British Society again. Now apparently it's not just Broken, but Overcrowded. And it's going to get 'Worse'. I think this means 'Darker, Untattooed and With Poor Communication Skills', though it's difficult to tell. The *Daily Mail*, for example, seems to favour slim Polish girls who work in 'the world of marketing', which as we all know is a foreign country.

Britain's about to become the most crowded country in Europe. 'What I want to explore

today' says Boxwood, not moving her mouth very much, 'is how we address this challenge. Please help yourselves to a sandwich and a gottle of geer...'

We think hard. Tim from Immigration suggests new quotas based on Body Mass Index. 'It's not just about population intake, it's about reducing population density'. Donald, an elderly town planner with Woodland Trust eyebrows, says we could construct 16 replica Isles of Wight on pontoons along the South Coast - 'each with its own inflatable local authority...'

Sally from Transport moots the following: 'I'm talking 1. New wave of high-security Titan dormitory towns. Separate minor offenders from those serving a commuted life sentence. I'm talking 2. Special sideways-walking lanes on pavements to ease congestion. And I'm talking 3. Partially inhabited M25...'

My proposal (decriminalise euthanasia) is swatted away by Linda, the new health wonk. 'That's a rubbish idea. If you decriminalised euthanasia it would no longer be available through the NHS. And what with all the fuss about PFI in the *Guardian* I'd like to see YOU try to convince the unions we need private service providers...'

The consensus is that we should bring in Tom from Global Issues for the next meeting, to talk about how we might reverse Britain's pointless and 'worsening' geological tilt. At the moment we've got the south up to its knees in contaminated water and the Highlands getting higher and higher and not knowing when to bloody stop. It needs to be going the other way. Then people would naturally roll downhill and settle in Scotland.

And the capital city would naturally slide down to Tamworth, where it has always belonged.

WEDNESDAY. Darcy and his dachshund Bauhaus, wearing 'matchy-matchy' denim outfits and jewellery, call round to help audition a shortlist of dogs. I need one to boost my standing in the world of architecture. They're all rubbish and lack a moral compass, unless you count the bit sticking up when they roll over. Yeah, fuck this. I'm getting a parrot.

THURSDAY. To the Venice Architecture Lesbiennale, a celebration of gay design held in advance of the straight version.

As usual it seeks to confront people with architectural stereotypes, so it feels very much like the usual heterosexual festival of epic space to be honest. My multisexual friend Paulo's installation is an interpretation of Palladian harmonics. Frequency curves are subtly changed with mysterious algorithms to define an elementary spatial genotype, then decorated with kitschy ornaments and pictures of weird cats.

It will remain in place for the Architecture Biennale, and for the Architecture Bisexuale next month.

FRIDAY. Buy parrot. Name him Barratt.

SATURDAY. Great fun, teaching him some key phrases. By teatime he's got 'design quality at the heart of the procurement process' word perfect.

SUNDAY. Brainwork in the recliner. Barratt in his new starter home, screening calls.



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