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News



PATHFINDER STRIFE CONTINUES

English Partnerships withdraws funding from Maccreanor Lavington's Lancashire housing renewal scheme due to 'state of housing market'

The wheels have come off an 'exemplar' Pathfinder project in Lancashire, piling more misery on to the government's controversial housing renewal programme.

English Partnerships (EP) has confirmed it has withdrawn support and gap funding for developer R.gen, the preferred partner behind Maccreanor Lavington's proposed overhaul of the neglected Whitefield area in the town of Nelson.

Exact details of EP's decision remain unclear, with the organisation claiming motives were 'commercially sensitive and confidential'.

However, Brian Cookson, Pendle Council's executive director of regeneration and an adviser to the independent Whitefield Regeneration Partnership, blamed 'the current state of the housing and financial markets' and warned that the proposed masterplan would have to be revised.

The news has come as a shock to both R.gen and Maccreanor Lavington, which has been working on the scheme since April 2006 after winning an RIBA competition (AJ 27.04.06).

'We expected this to be full steam ahead,' said practice founder Gerard Maccreanor. 'Now it's a scramble to see if we can go forward. It's a delicate situation.'

Maccreanor is unsure of the capacity in which the practice will be retained, and fears that possible revisions could damage the integrity of the 300-home scheme,

which would have seen the regeneration of large chunks of terraced housing.

Remarkably, unlike other Pathfinder areas, the first phase of development included the demolition of just 16 homes to make way for new public space.

Meanwhile, R.gen has reacted angrily to EP's decision. The developer had bagged £25 million of private funding and secured planning for the project, which CABE described as a 'quality scheme demonstrably linked to the quality of the design team'.

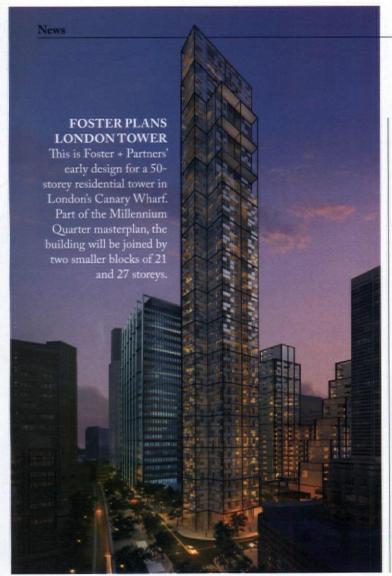
R.gen's Phil Summers said:
'This has cost us hundreds of
thousands of pounds to date.
Despite being part of the original
competition and selecting us, we
think EP wanted a big developer

with strong balance sheets, not a smaller, "riskier" firm.'

CABE has also waded in.
Caroline Fraser, head of regions, said: 'We urge the commissioning clients to continue to work with the existing design team – albeit with a new developer.

'If not, then there is a real risk that the high-profile competition and many months of creative work will go to waste and the whole scheme will be substituted for a bland alternative.'

However, Pendle Council's
Julie Whittaker, housing regeneration manager, said: 'Following any
amendments to the masterplan,
we'll need to look again at delivery
options in the context of the
current housing market.'
Richard Waite



BATTERSEA MAY HOUSE REBUILT SKYLON

Battersea Power Station has emerged as the front-runner to become the home for a £1.2 million full-size replica of Powell and Moya's Skylon.

A source close to the project said Battersea's owner, Real Estate Opportunities, is 'seriously interested' in rebuilding the 1951 South Bank Festival of Britain icon on part of the site being masterplanned by Rafael Viñoly.

It is also understood Newcastle, Gateshead and Worthing have made 'unofficial' approaches to house the 90m-tall mast.

However, Battersea Power
Station has only received 4 per
cent of an online public vote run
by campaigners. According to the
figures on the www.voteforskylon.
com website, Gateshead has
emerged as favourite, with almost
a quarter of the votes. A plot
outside London's City Hall is in
second place. Richard Waite

THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM IS RESTORED

The restoration of Frank Lloyd Wright's 1959 Guggenheim Museum in New York is complete after four years of careful work by Wank Adams Slavin Architects.

LATEST VELOPARK DESIGNS REVEALED

The Olympic Delivery Authority has revealed the latest images of the \$80 million London 2012 VeloPark by Hopkins Architects. The 6,000-seat venue, with its concave timber roof, is part of a larger cycling park.

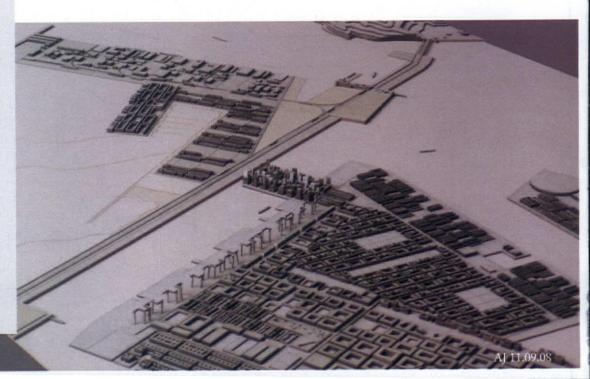
ALSOP BAGS PLANNING AT HEADINGLEY

Will Alsop has won the green light for his 4,000m² stand at the worldfamous Headingley Carnegie Cricket Ground in Leeds. The new pavilion will incorporate lecture theatres and media and hospitality facilities.

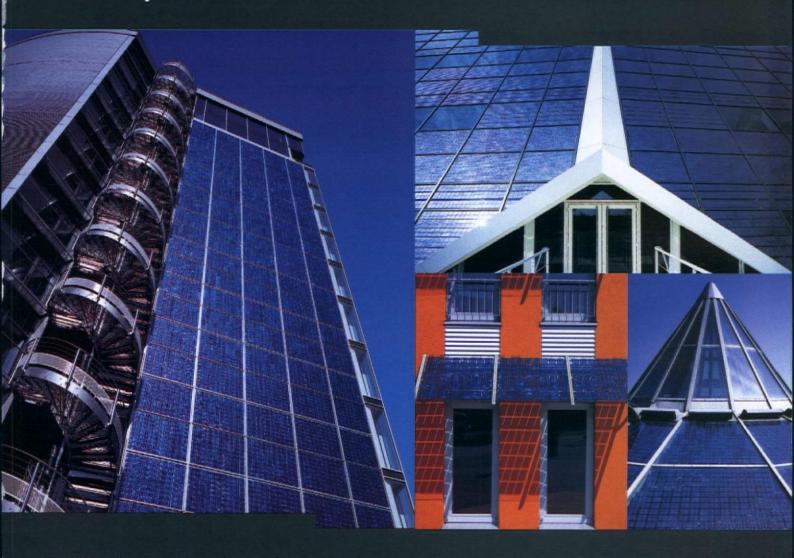
See images for these news stories and more online at www.architectsjournal.co.uk

BEIGEL TO DESIGN KOREAN CITY

Florian Beigel and Philip Christou's Architecture Research Unit (ARU) at London Metropolitan University has won the competition to design a new city on the south-west coast of South Korea. ARU was selected alongside two US teams under the direction of Alexander D'Hooghe and Nadir Tehrani at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Jeffrey Inaba at Columbia University. Proposals for the 283km2 city were presented to the South Korean government last month. Richard Vaughan



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DENTON CORKER MARSHALL'S EMBASSY IN MANILA

This is Stirling Prize-shortlisted Denton Corker Marshall's British Embassy in Manila, Philippines. Designed by the firm's London office, the stone-clad building provides 2,000m² of accommodation over three storeys, and was completed earlier in the summer. *Richard Vaughan*



IS THE CHINA BOOM OVER?

British architects working in China say their projects are in trouble as Beijing and Shanghai are hit by a property slump. *Richard Waite* investigates



Thamestown is a copycat slice of England outside Shanghai. The thrown-up development echoes much of what has been happening across China in recent years and reveals the country's insatiable desire to emulate the West in double-quick time.

Now, as growth in Europe and America grinds to a halt, China may be facing its first Westernstyle economic slowdown.

'For China read UK', says Philip Bintliff from West Yorkshirebased Studio BAAD, who has worked in China for many years.

'Our Chinese colleagues confirm that they are beset with similar problems, with residential values down 15 per cent in Beijing and Shanghai since the Olympics.

'Money supply for developers has tightened... and commercial and residential developments are languishing.'

According to Bintliff the future of schemes such as ChongMing Island – an eco-city in the Yangtze River, which the firm designed with Philip Johnson but is now being taken forward by SOM – and New Harbour City are in 'serious doubt'.

Callum MacBean, managing director of Gensler's Shanghai office also confirmed a number of its schemes had been put on hold and that clients backed by foreign investment money 'were being a bit cautious'. Sources claim venture capital is heading for India and Vietnam instead.

However, MacBean says there is still work to be had, and the company has recently picked up a commission for a 632m-tall tower – China's tallest – ahead of the likes of Foster + Partners.

He adds: 'For UK architects wanting to work in China, people have not missed the boat. Perhaps China is three to four years behind the States, but [the economic situation] here is totally different.

'Rather than looking at the whole country, the government [targets] certain areas, and its focus is now moving westwards.'

Jason Marriott, a managing principal at Woods Bagor's Beijing Studio, said: '[The] government austerity measures are taking traction to slow the economy.

'This will mean that fewer high residential and landmark building projects will be available, with an emphasis being placed on infrastructure, education and healthcare. In addition, the government is creating larger land parcels which will be increasingly difficult for smaller developers to purchase.'

This state-driven shift goes some way to explaining the apparent incongruity between recent headlines in the national press such as 'Property Slump Fears as China's Tallest Tower Opens' and 'Chinese Skyscraper Builders to put up Equivalent of 10 New Yorks'. Prospects differ wildly from city to city.

Andrew Bromberg, from Aedas' Hong Kong office says: 'The time for British architects has not passed... however in the more known and exciting cities of Shanghai and Beijing it may have.

'Many felt Beijing was overbuilding prior to the Olympics. But in a country of one billion people there is bound to be a market. The work is now in second- and third-tier cities such as Chongqing and Chengdu.'



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'A BASTARDISED COPY'

Allford Hall Monaghan Morris and Essex Council have been locked in a copyright row over Great Notley Primary School. Richard Vaughan investigates

Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM) and Essex County Council have clashed amid claims that the council ordered another architect to copy AHMM's designs.

The feud centres on Great Notley Primary School, Essex, an award-winning exemplar school designed by AHMM in 1999.

Essex Council commissioned an extension to the school, but rather than calling on AHMM to carry out the work, it turned to Enfieldbased Bryant Harvey Partnership (BHP).

According to BHP, Essex Council instructed the firm to follow its planners requirements to make its extension 'look exactly the same' as AHMM's building.

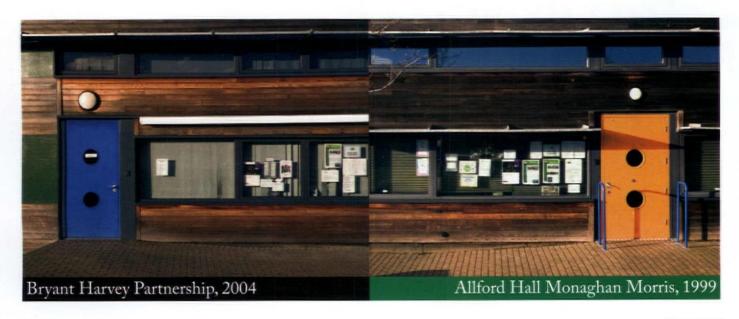
BHP associate director Jonathan Ringshall said: '[The council] said they wanted the extension to fit in with the context of the buildings in the surrounding area. Well, the only building in that area was the existing school.

'The design of the AHMM school was very successful, and that is what the council wanted with the extension.'

AHMM's original £1.8 million 1,800-pupil school won numerous awards, including the RIBA Sustainability Award in 2000. The AJ understands AHMM sought legal advice after it saw BHP's completed building in 2004/05.

'I was astonished when I saw the new building. To my eyes it is a bastardised copy of our work,' said AHMM partner Simon Allford.

He added: I have always believed buildings have a life after their author and, indeed, I





welcome these layers of history. But for Essex to commission another architect, having interviewed us, and for them to attempt to seemingly replicate our architecture is extraordinary.

'We believe there can never be any winners in court and we're keen for an open debate about when homage becomes to literal and the issue of copyright and intellectual property arises.

'Essex's position is that the building is not a copy,' he said.

Indeed, Essex Council refutes any claim that the building imitates the original or that it instructed BHP to duplicate AHMM's school.

An Essex Council spokeswoman said: 'The new building uses a similar architectural language and has a similar external appearance, something that is evident in many additions and extensions to buildings across the country.

the infringement of copyright nor breached any agreements with the original architects.'

AHMM has decided against taking Essex to court. According to the RIBA's executive director of business services Richard Brindley,

A council spokeswoman said: 'The building uses similar architectural language and has a similar appearance'

'Such similarities are inevitable when using a limited number of building components and techniques; however the new building is unique in many ways.'

She added: 'While we intended for the new building to reference the original, we never authorised

proving one's copyright can be difficult unless it is clearly written into the contract.

Brindley said: 'If there is no clause written into the contract about who has the copyright then a court would look to the legal precedent. It is assumed that in

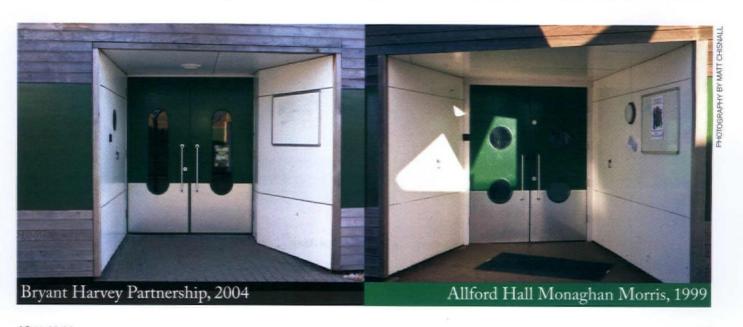
the absence of a contract then the copyright would go back to the originator, i.e. the designer.

'But a court could say the client has paid for something and therefore has the right to use it. It may also be fair to assume that if the client wanted to extend the school then it would do so in the same style.'

Brindley added: 'What the RIBA says time and time again is: "Get it in writing." If you do that you'll avoid situations like this.'

Read Christine Murray's leader on page 16, and see AHMM's full document at

WWW.ARCHITECTSJOURNAL.CO.UK



Astragal







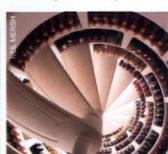




Kieran Long (above left). The exhibition runs until 16 October.

BELOW STAIRS

Astragal has found himself an early Christmas present – a spiral wine cellar (pictured below) from Spiral Cellars. For this ingenious invention, a spiral staircase surrounded by wine bottles is installed beneath the floor. Each cellar can store up to 1,500 bottles of plonk. Astragal is



having seven installed, one for every day of the week.

WHAT PLANET IS THIS?

Astragal is a big fan of Star Trek. But not as much as one of the directors from auctioneer Phillips de Pury. Astragal understands that this chap's new office, part of the Squire and Partners' Howick Place in Victoria, London, is to be decked out with the actual set

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from the original 1960s Star Trek series. We're talking swivel chair, blinking lights, even Mr Sulu (this may not be true).

CORRECTION

In AJ 04.09.08, the RIBA/ CABE Public Space Award was incorrectly labelled as the RIBA/ CABE Inclusive Design Award, and Alnwick Garden Pavilion by Hopkins Architects should not have been included. The Westminster Academy at the Naim Dangoor Centre by Allford Hall Monaghan Morris should have been included on the shortlist for the RIBA/Sorrell Foundation Schools Award.

THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Which building do you think should win the Manser Medal?

Next week's question: Is China's building boom over?

www.architectsjournal.co.uk



FIT FOR A KING

Last week saw the opening of the AJ's third annual King's Cross Charrette exhibition at New London Architecture (see images above). The evening kicked off with a symposium (top left) from a panel including Keith Bradley of Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, Roger Madelin from King's Cross developer Argent, Camden Council's Bob West, and the AJ's

AJ 11.09.08

Meeting

16 October 2008 London SE10

English Partnerships, the national regeneration agency, is holding its Annual Open Meeting in October. The meeting provides an opportunity to hear about the wide range of our activities and achievements during the last year. The programme will include presentations from an invited senior Government Minister and our executive team. If you would like to attend this meeting, please contact us by Wednesday 1 October to request a ticket.

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14-15 October 2008, Harrogate International Centre

Leader & Comment

Leader The grey area of copyright law discouraged legal action over Great Notley, says *Christine Murray*

As the photographs in our 'spot the difference' news story reveal (see page 12-13), Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM) was justifiably rankled by the addition of Bryant Harvey Partnership Architects' (BHP's) lookalike building at Great Notley Primary School in Essex. AHMM even considered taking legal action for copyright infringement, but the obfuscating nature of copyright law, mottled with grey areas when it comes to architecture, prevented it from pursuing the case, as the outcome would have been an expensive gamble.

While it's understandable that Essex County Council sought a building in keeping with AHMM's original design, BHP's tribute to the first school goes way beyond the sincerest form of flattery. Even if, as BHP claims, it was asked to produce an exact copy of the design, surely something using the same palette or distinct triangular shape would have sufficed.

AHMM's experience in Essex should serve as a wake-up call to architects, who among creative industries are arguably the least protected under UK copyright law. Unlike other professions, an architects' work can be legally photographed, published, drawn, reproduced, amended, extended and renovated at will. And while architects' designs, models and buildings are covered under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act of 1988, if their 'artistic work' (which includes buildings, drawings and models) is produced

for an employer, the employer (not the architect) is the first owner of the copyright, unless they've signed a contract to the contrary.

This stipulation can be interpreted to mean two distinct things for architects: that an architectural practice owns the copyright to the work of its employees; and that the client owns the copyright to the architect's work.

First ownership of copyright of an architect's design shouldn't extend to the construction of a second building based on those plans, but on this point the act is not expressly clear. Architects should consult a copyright lawyer and have contracts drawn up accordingly. christine.murray@emap.com

Opinion The Venice Biennale British Pavilion remains steadfastly London-centric, says Alan Dunlop

According to Emily Campbell, head of design and architecture at the British Council, Britain has an 'expanding cast of architects held in high regard internationally' (AJ 28.08.08). They will not be represented in the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, which will once again grandstand a small coterie of London practices.

Back in 2005, Peter Cook, curator of 2004's 9 Positions show at Venice, said architectural quality 'drops like a stone' outside London. This view appears to be shared by the British Council. A pity, for many architects outside London are held in high regard internationally.

What is bewildering is that the British Council continues to punt its efforts as representing 'British' architecture. Worse, their last two Venice shows were exceedingly dull.s. Responding to criticism that 9 Positions was too London-centric, the British Council invited regionally based ideas for 2006. They chose Sheffield University's Jeremy Till to curate. His 'urban register' however, was impenetrable. The British Council had done its bit; the regions just weren't up to it – back to the status quo...

This year the Council will exhibit more London architects who all work within walking distance of each other and who show

Regrettably, for the British Council the world ends at Camden

limited experience of building housing in Britain. Yet the British Council insists that 2008 will address the 'national' question of post-war reconstruction and 'Britain's housing challenge'. But only in London it seems...

Take Manchester, for example. The regeneration of the city – a consequence of an IRA bomb which tore away large parts of the city centre – is inspirational, with much new housing. But no Manchester architect will be represented in 2008.

According to curator Ellis Woodman, Home/Away: Five Architects Build Housing in Britain and Europe, will explore the roots of the British obsession with home ownership and the long-term domination of housing by private developers in the UK. But this is an obsession that is not general. In Scotland, and in particular Glasgow, people relied on social rather than private housing. Glasgow's plans for the regeneration of the Clyde was held up for years as the city wrestled with the burden of its decaying stock of social housing. Only when the city was freed from the financial overhang through the creation of the Glasgow Housing Association was it able to focus on other strategic issues. Campbell says: 'The world would be short-changed by not seeing what Britain has learned.' Regrettably, for Campbell and the British Council the world ends at Camden.

This year, a new debate on architecture will take place in Barcelona on 22-24 October, at the World Architecture Festival (WAF). Architects from Britain's major cities have made it on to the international shortlists for the WAF Awards. Their work has been selected by a jury of world-renowned architects and did not involve the British Council. So, I'm off to Barcelona and not to Venice this year. Alan Dunlop is a partner in gm +ad

Opinion The credit crunch may be serious, but I've lived and worked through worse times than this, says *Owen Luder*

Architecture is a cyclical profession. The problem for architects is that the optimistic unbridled growth in the boom years becomes a problem when the economy slumps. Fixed overheads cannot be cut back quickly. Interest on overdrafts to fund expansion in the good years cripples cash flow. Staff redundancy costs are expensive.

I have been in practice through every boom and gloom since the war. I started as a very green assistant on New Year's Day 1945. The offices I worked in survived the post-war austerity through the '40s and early '50s with work from the public-sector offices that controlled most of the contracts at that time.

The '50s was the decade when the economy started to take off. I learned then that the best time to start a new practice was not at the top of a boom but during a slump, so that as the economy climbed out if recession you went up with it. The commercial development boom that started in the late '50s meant I expanded to a very busy office in a few years.

The '60s was a magical decade; Twiggy, Carnaby Street, the Beatles. It was an exciting period for young architects prepared to chance their arms. Prosperity fuelled the massive demand for new offices, innovative city-centre redevelopments, massive new shopping centres and mixed-use developments.

But it couldn't last. By the mid-'60s the economy faltered. I widened our client and workload base, opening offices in Harrogate, Newcastle and South Wales to win public-sector projects. We took over established hospital practice Young & Hall, a move which also took us into prisons and Army barracks. Not very exciting, but the fees were certain.

The mid-'70s slump was the biggest to date. The stock market was down to 178, inflation was out of hand, property developers and banks went bust. It was a real hold-on-to-your-hats time. I had been appointed to the architectural



and landscaping design of three deep coal mines in the East Midlands and one in South Wales. These created a positive cash flow through those difficult years.

We also prospected overseas work. The cost of setting up offices in Saudi Arabia, Iran and Nigeria was prohibitive, so to reduce overheads we worked with local architects or seconded our staff to operate as separate practices in our

The mid-'70s slump was the biggest to date – inflation was out of hand, developers and banks went bust

target countries. Many thought overseas work was glamorous, but in fact it was hard sweat and high risk. I wrote an article for RIBA Journal at the time under the heading 'You don't take your holidays in Nigeria'.

The next boom started in the mid-'80s, just as I had finished my first term as RIBA President. I sold out of my practice in late 1987, so missed the misery of the '90s slump. I then became a sole practitioner with no overheads. I discovered that when I was in practice I had to earn £1 million before I could

afford to buy a cup of coffee. When I became a sole practitioner I made the coffee!

What I have learned from these experiences is that you have to monitor continually what is happening in the marketplace. Look for new work and new clients in the anticipation that sooner or later there will be a slump. Keep your work a mixture of big and small. Big projects are great, but there is a big hole in your workload and cash-flow if they collapse. Small projects are a comfort base in bad times.

If you are made redundant, set up your own practice. Target small conversion and improvement work, such as conversions and extensions for private house owners.

The number of architectural practices increases dramatically during economic downturns. Redundant architects start up on their own and make a living working at the small work end of the market. Some of those who started up in this way in the mid-'70s are very successful large practices today.

Owen Luder is an architect and former president of the RIBA

email comment@architectsjournal.co.uk

James Stirling's light touch is exemplified in a triptych of university buildings, says Patrick Lynch

James Stirling was always a Modern architect, but Modern in the same sense as Palladio. Agile, pragmatic, ambitious, eclectic; in possession of knowledge of types, yet not enslaved by them; confident with tradition but even more so in their own talent. It is worth noting that the Modernity of these architects is their humanism. Central to humanism is respect for tradition and the belief in one's ability to transform it to answer the needs of one's age. In his review of Le Corbusier's Ronchamp Chapel for the Architectural Review in March 1956, Stirling wasn't scared of expressing his scepticism. His tactic of compositional inversion of Modernist clichés is clear at the Leicester Engineering Building (1959), where the Modernist view of glass as simply not being there - is reversed. The triangulated glass roofs appear as a line of prisms. On a misty morning the auditorium floats above the treetops, and the Georgian

wired glass in the prisms condenses into smoky ice. At night it appears as slick as solid oil, or as petrified as a frozen pond of black ice. The crystal metaphors of early Modernism are finally made real, not as a dream of openness and disembodiment, but as forms of light coagulated in matter.

At the Florey Building (pictured) for Queen's College Oxford, built in 1966, Stirling treats glass as a product that can be bought, along with its furniture, in particular sizes. Glazing is treated as a given, as a found object and an expedient device, a trope even. He does not attempt to curve or smooth out the

stubbornness of things laid against things. The ghosts of windows are recalled, and with them the image of a figure in a room. This small building is given scale and logic through the figurative and gesture-like aspects of windows. The repetitive treatment of the curtain wall evokes not just one oriel window but a collection of individual views, all slightly different but all of the same thing. This emphasis on the individual experience of space as a territory, and as a legible type of space, perhaps accounts for the popularity of the building among its student residents. I imagine that, living there, you sense the archi-

Living there, you sense the architect's care but not his arm at your elbow



tect's care but not his arm at your elbow.

Considered as a triptych, these two university projects and the Cambridge History Faculty (AJ 04.09.08) point towards the evolution of British architecture into technology and historicism. Stirling's three English university buildings remain caught in a flush of excitement, and they resonate energy and delight, revealing a deft touch. Lightness is complemented by mass, form by deformation; type is evoked but form is not dominated by tradition. They are legible and comprehensive works of art, and Stirling's learning is worn lightly. Formed perfect, they came out right first time. Now we have to care for them, because there is precious little as good from this period, anywhere in the world.

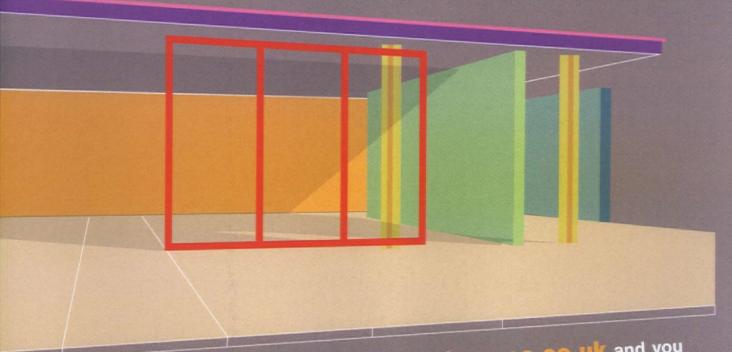
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CONSERVATION STARTER

I was delighted to read in AJ 24.07.08 of the success Eleanor Fawcett of Design for London has had in managing to get Newham Council to declare Sugar House Lane (pictured below) in Stratford, East London, a Conservation Area ('Stealthy conservation action saves Lea Valley gem'). She has recognised the social value of a collection of simple brick workshop buildings.

I remember discovering this industrial village when we at MBM Arquitectes were working on our urban design plan for Newham back in 1998, together with those working in the Three Mill Studios, who claimed the importance of having back-up workshops on their doorstep.

Perhaps the Lower Lea Valley can be saved for the future in spite of the planning for the 2012 London Olympics.

Well done, Eleanor Fawcett. David Mackay, MBM Arquitectes, Barcelona



STANDING UP STRAIGHT

It appears from AJ 28.08.08 that Wakefield is to be (or is already) subjected to the currently fashionable blight of wonky columns. They are structurally inefficient, generate a functionally useless space shadow and make buildings appear unstable.

Why do architects persist in this absurd conceit? Is it to reinforce the commonly held view that architects don't mind spending other people's money to achieve a superficial and counter-intuitive effect? Bob Owston, Owston Associates, Bushey, Hertfordshire

CORRECTION

In 'ACA launches safer client contract' (AJ 04.09.08), the Association of Consultant Architects was referred to as the Association of Chartered Architects, and the ACA's Stephen Yakeley's name was mispelled.

FROM WWW. ARCHITECTS **JOURNAL.CO.UK**

Responses to 'London Olympic Stadium could be flattened at the end of 2012 Games' (AJ online 05.09.08):

The 'green' games? Unbelievable shift in environmental stance. Anonymous, London

Call me cynical, but who is going to pocket the majority of fees from this white elephant? If this is true then it gives the lie to the whole Olympic hoo-ha. Anonymous, London

Responses to 'New details emerge for HOK's Olympic Stadium' (AJ online 04.09.08):

At least the lid is being opened now and some of the unrealistic/ unfavourable aspects are being aired - surely this gives more opportunity for it to stand a chance of being functional for the Olympics and in legacy. Anonymous, London



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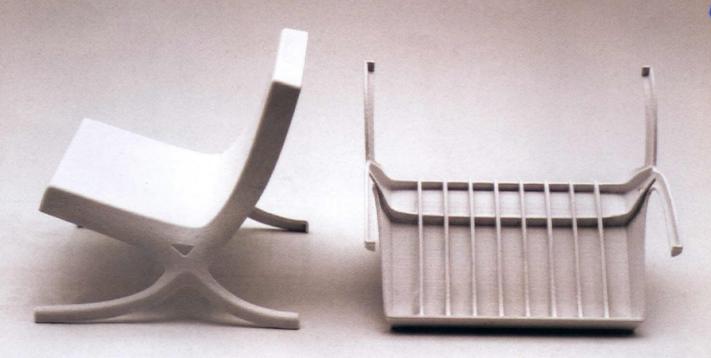






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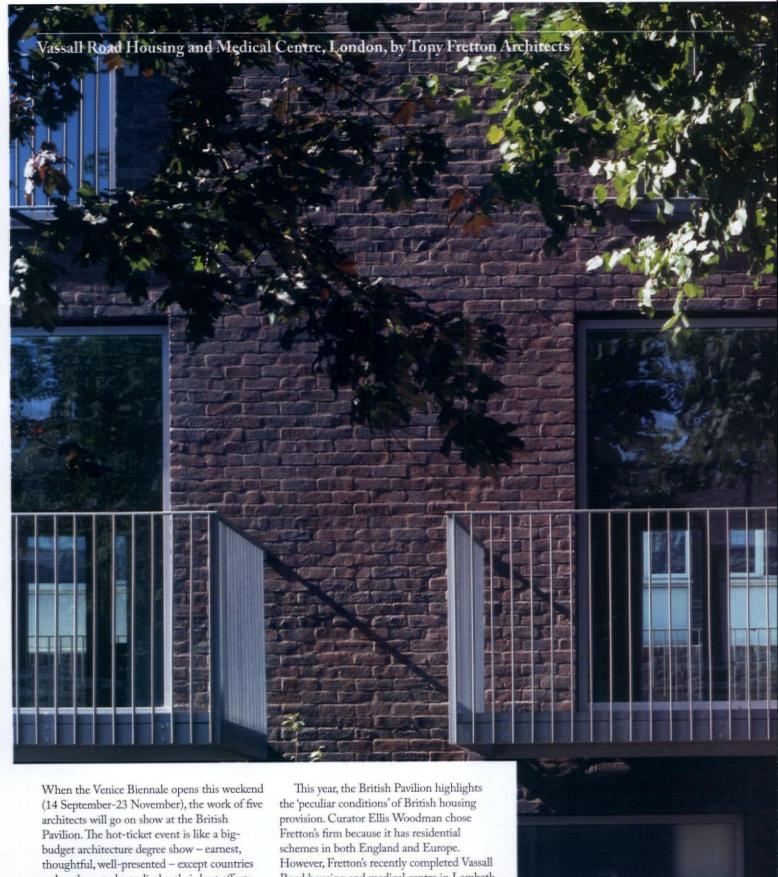
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rather than students display their best efforts. Every architect with big ambition wants to be involved and, this time, Tony Fretton Architects is one of the lucky five.

Road housing and medical centre in Lambeth, south London, won't be shown in Venice. It's a curious omission. Instead, his Red House, a one-off luxury dwelling for an art collector >>

BRICHS Tony Fretton's housing and medical centre in London epitomises the

Tony Fretton's housing and medical centre in London epitomises the 'peculiar conditions' of housing provision in the UK, writes Rory Olcayto.

Photography by Peter Cook



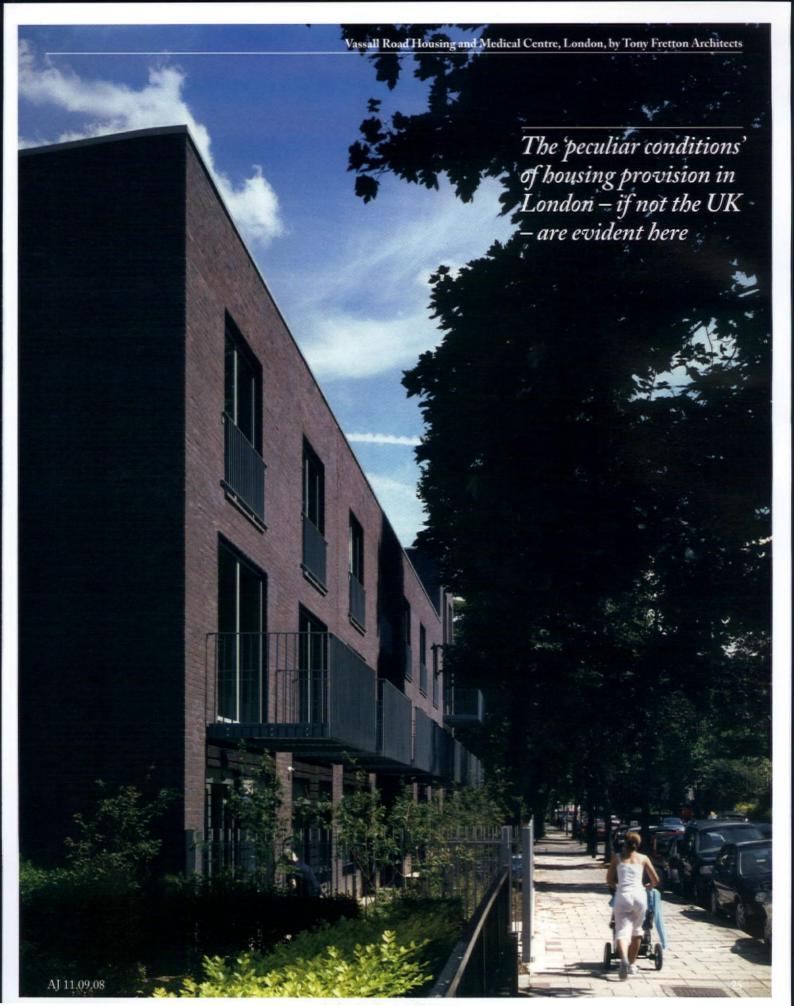
in London, will feature alongside a commercial-residential complex for Frederiksgade Square in Copenhagen.

Vassall Road is a joint venture by developer Baylight Properties – headed up by the design-obsessed and architecturally trained Crispin Kelly – and Servite Housing Association. The 'peculiar conditions' of housing provision in London – if not the UK – are evident here, both in the design of communal space and, given that it was way over budget and several months late, its tortuous road to completion. Throw an unimaginative and stubborn planning department into the mix and you should be looking at a shoo-in for Woodman's show.

Fretton's housing is on the north side of Vassall Road, on a site previously occupied by a pub. The three- and four-storey terrace consists of 10 for-sale apartments – seven two-storey maisonettes and three flats – placed above a medical centre which occupies most of the ground floor. The centre was built for doctors who had outgrown their basement practice in a neighbouring villa, and its sale funded the housing build. The plan for the >>

Above The corner of Vassall Road and Holland Grove, with the residents' entrance seen to the right Below Scale model Right The terrace is set back from the treelined pavement











Opposite The building steps up one storey where the maisonettes meet the apartments Above left Site plan Above Neighbouring

Church Manor estate is also set back from the street Below Balconies play an active role in street life

centre – a corridor, with offices on either side, which leads off a large reception space – was governed by a health consultant; consequently Fretton has little to say about it.

Kelly is one of a handful of developers in the UK who are committed to bringing quality to everyday housing – he wants to make homes that are spacious, elegant, transitional. 'We've built a terrace because we're more interested in building houses than flats,' says Kelly. 'We hope it will appeal to small families, young couples and retired couples, or people who want to work from home.' The idea is to create an occupied development, one that is lived in throughout the day, rather than obsess over density (it's 84 units per hectare). The busy medical centre is obviously key to keeping the site buzzing all day.

The scheme was constrained by the

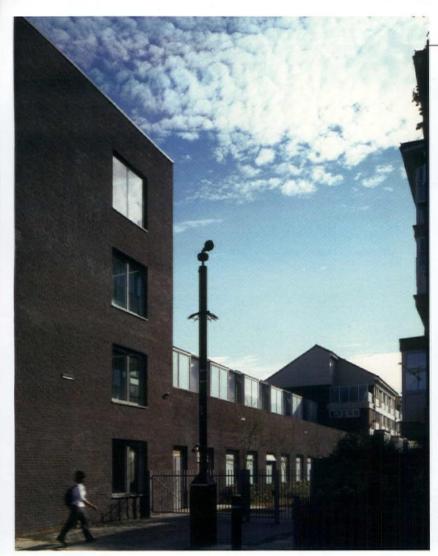
Architectural fetishists will struggle not to reach out and touch it

daylighting angles of the Church Manor housing estate to the rear – a Clifford Culpin & Partners design dating from 1971 – and local-authority building lines. It has a simple form with a clearly defined elevation; large windows above even larger glazed doors, which open on to deep, wide balconies. If you were to whizz by in a car you'd think it a little dull, but the pedestrian's experience is much richer. Walking by, you can see how the elevation has been enlivened by Fretton's choice of brickwork; handmade, clamp-fired Rudgwick Red Roughs, to be precise. These low-cost bricks have been transformed with a thin wash of Keim's black mineral paint.

When the sun shines, the richly textured, gnarled surface is at its best. If you're an architectural fetishist, you'll struggle not to reach out and touch it. The elevation feels both old and new: the subtle purplish hue mimics the 19th-century brickwork of the villas opposite, while its clean lines reference the '70s Modernism of Clifford Culpin's estate.

At its east end, on the corner of Vassall Road and Holland Grove, the building steps up one storey. A mature tree sits in front of >>







'It's the details that make cities bearable'

this 'tower', as Kelly and Fretton call it, and, taken together, the composition firmly anchors the development in the neighbourhood. Kelly takes credit for the decision. 'When we had a monolithic block, I felt it was too tough.'

Fretton says that the spaces created on the street by the neighbouring buildings influenced his scheme's relationship to Vassall Road. Like Church Manor, the villas – which date from 1830 – are set back from the street, protected by trees, black-painted railings and plots of grass. Fretton's scheme is also set back. A narrow strip of garden sits behind sturdy, grey painted railings, which have been embedded within a thin line of granite setts raised above the level of the concrete paving slabs. You might not notice these details at first,' says Fretton, 'but if you took them away the paucity would be apparent.

Sometimes it's the details that make cities

bearable, rather than the big moves.'

You enter the building through a double door at the base of the tower on Holland Grove, around the corner from Vassall Road, and are greeted by your own reflection in the utilitarian lobby. A few metres in is a mirrorpolished stainless-steel 'wall' hiding a meter cupboard – a simple idea that works. The lobby is brighter than you expect and seems big. There is a lift, but most visitors will take the terrazzo stairs – it's only one storey up to a deck at the rear of the building which gives access to each of the maisonettes.

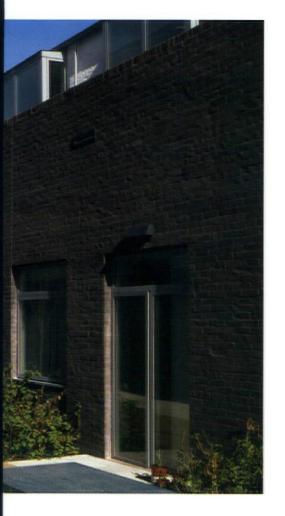
The space has been subdivided into seven small patios – each around 3 x 2m – with heavyweight railings and external storage leading off a narrow lane. Square-cut bay windows are ranged along the elevation, below which are glazed kitchen doors, and another that leads into a hall to the staircase.

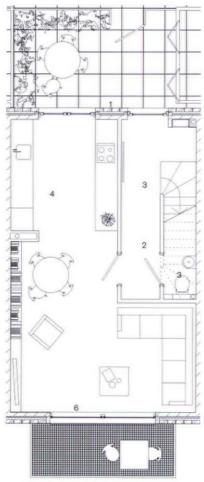
On the ground floor, between the newbuild and Church Manor estate, is a landscaped garden for healthcare workers and residents of the new-build and the estate. There are benches, saplings, and flower beds. It's a pattern I would have liked to see applied to the first-floor deck. Fretton says it was a positive decision to cellularise the space, for functional reasons and because it appeals to the English and their romantic view of domestic space.

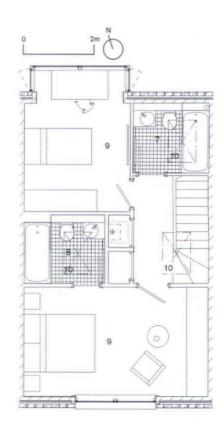
In a move that recalls Fretton's Fuglsang Art Museum in Denmark (AJ 27.03.08), the brickwork on the back wall has been painted white. Fretton says it provides a brighter prospect for the housing opposite, but also creates a 'different feeling'. The feeling is partly drawn from Fretton's own romantic sensibilities. 'It's just much more like a garden,' he says.

Despite the sense of self-contained 'homes', notions of privacy should be dismissed; the entire deck is overlooked by Church Manor. Earlier designs show that Fretton did consider an elevated communal garden – complete with trees – and Kelly suggests communal space is housing's 'most interesting question', and one Baylight is keen to answer. 'In the future we will definitely focus on providing communal space,' says Kelly, who adds that, unlike terraces, a block of flats naturally has shared spaces managed through community participation.

Housing in parts of Europe could provide several models to play with, but Kelly is >>

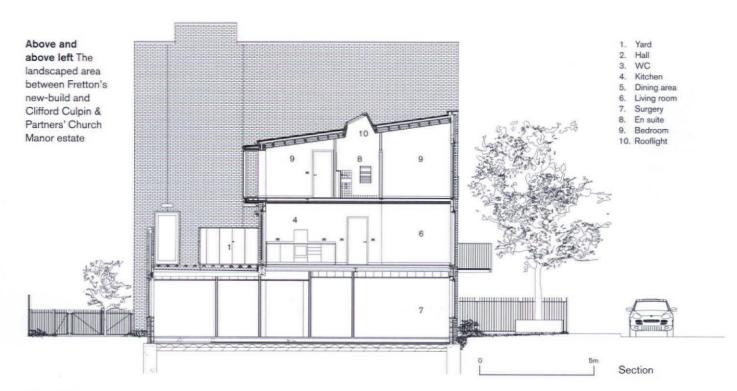


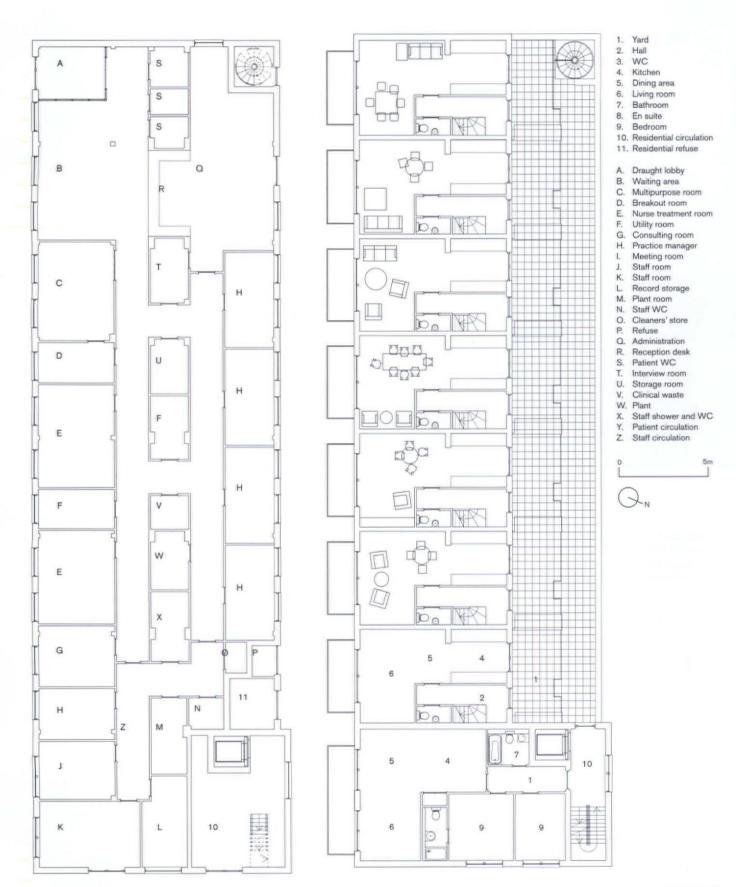


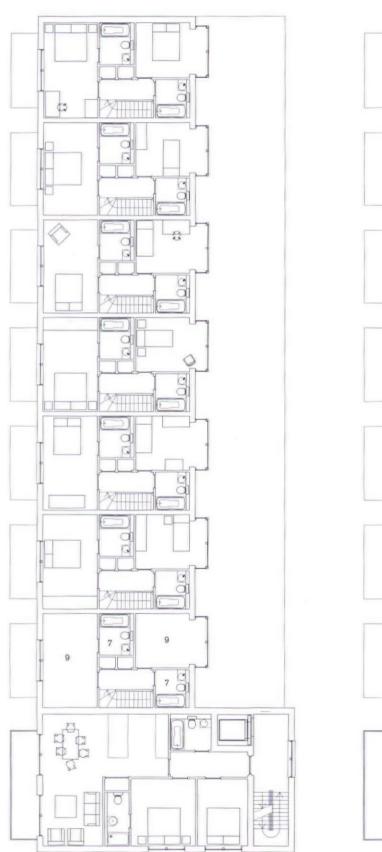


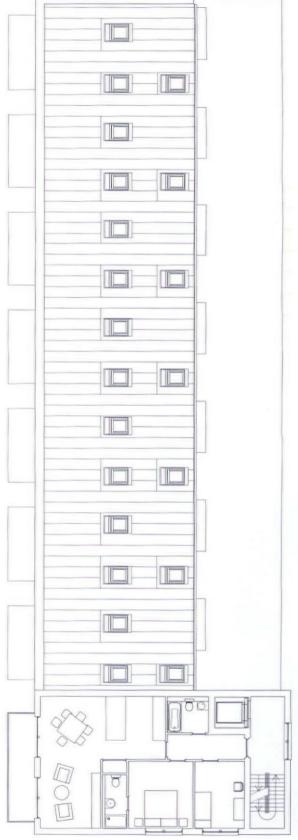
Entrance-level plan

Upper-level plan













The design is obsessed with materiality

more interested in oddball moments in England's past as a source of inspiration. He cites The Lane in Blackheath, south-east London – a 1963 project by Eric Lyons' design-and-build firm Span. 'We've really learned from it since we designed Vassall,' he says. But the cellular arrangement does focus Fretton's clear domestic planning: you can see right the way through the kitchen doors to the living room, balcony and Vassall Road beyond.

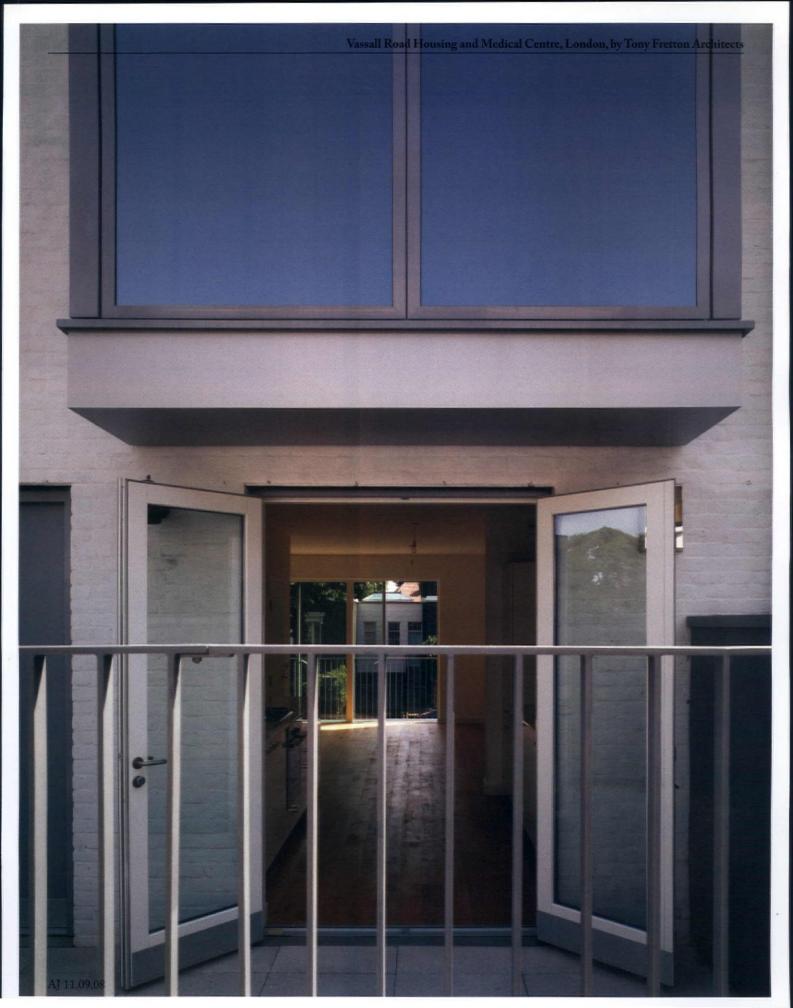
Moving inside, the Leicht Amica kitchen is of high quality and so is the American white oak flooring. Velfac doors open out on to steel balconies which are almost as wide as the living room itself. It's a far cry from what we expect of typical speculative builds.

Skylights with Velux windows sit above

both the hall and the bathroom upstairs. A south-facing bedroom has a bathroom en suite, while the north-facing bedroom's bay window is opaque, to satisfy the residents opposite. The flats have a similar arrangement of rooms throughout, but the bedrooms both face east and have clear glass in the windows.

Fretton's design ticks all of Kelly's boxes. It's obsessed with materiality; it has a tightly planned layout and an eye for proportion; there is a sense of transition and a hierarchy of spaces. It's good housing, and offers a fresh perspective on the urban terrace. But, while dwellings are spacious, at 84m² for the maisonettes and 79.5m² for the flats, they are hardly breaking records. As Woodman wrote in a *Daily Telegraph* article discussing his show: 'The average size of a new-build UK house is 76m², compared with 132m² in Denmark.'

Building the project was quite a struggle. Using a traditional contract, Durkan Pudelek (now known as Concentra), which tendered a mid-priced bid, was selected. Not quite >>





Left A mirror-polished 'wall' in the reception means you are confronted by your own reflection on entering the building Right and below Living-room space in the flats



an artisan builder in the manner of, say, Rooff, which built Sergison Bates' Garrett Lane scheme in south London for Baylight, it does have a reputation for quality. Fretton is fair to Durkan and says the scheme is well constructed – it just took a lot longer than planned. On site in October 2006 and completed in June this year, it was eight months late. And at around £1,800 per square metre, it is almost double the price Kelly had hoped for.

My feeling is that the contractor looked at the simple specification – a steel frame on a concrete deck, with loadbearing masonry walls and brick and block party walls – and thought it could get on with the job without guidance. Fretton is unwilling to discuss the matter in detail, as the bill is still to be settled, but he will say that the brickwork – the textural qualities of which were picked apart in the architect's studio – had to be taken down several times. 'The architect-contractor relationship is still adversarial,' he says.

'The long wrangle' (Kelly's term) with planners saw several schemes rejected before the design-as-built was approved. Fretton initially proposed more adventurous schemes. One was a storey taller and had two walkways wrapped around a courtyard. But he realised planners had 'lost the plot' when they questioned why he wanted more dwellings on the site. 'It was an incredible moment,' he says. 'Aren't we all supposed to be trying to build more homes?' And unlike the problems faced by Sergison Bates (also showing in Venice)

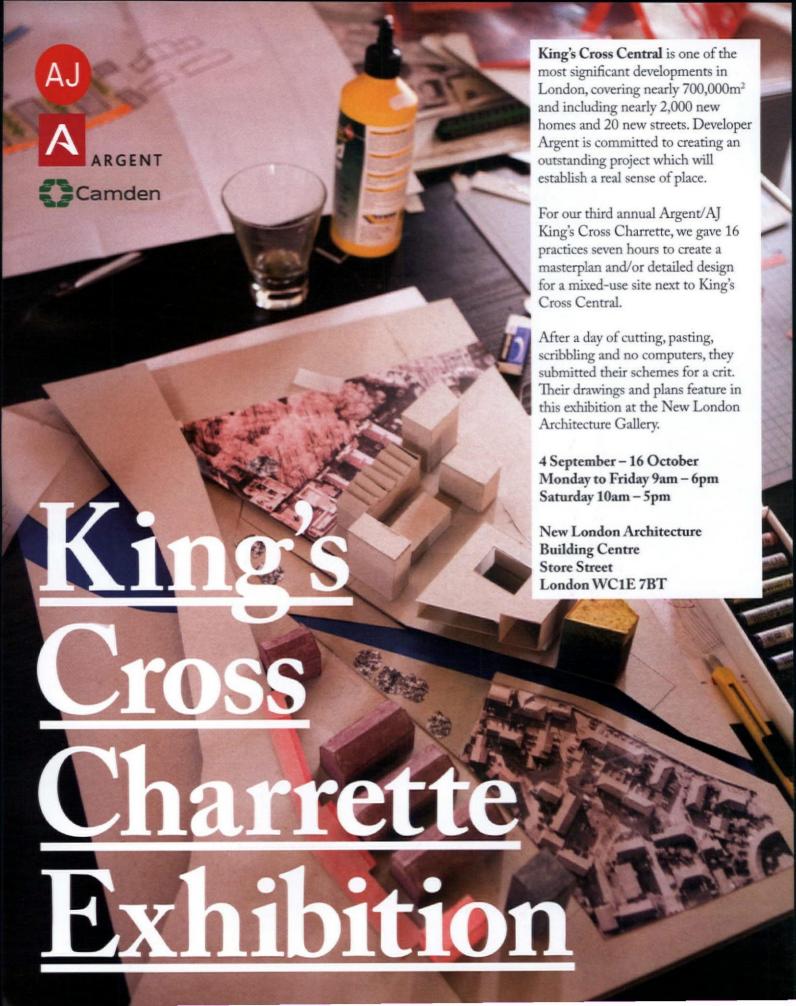
with its Parkside development in north London (AJ 14.08.08), inconsistency with jobbing planners wasn't the issue. 'Unfortunately, one officer stayed throughout the project, ad nauseam, ad exhausteam!' says Fretton.

Kelly's ambition is to use the architect's intellectual capital in ordinary housing. That Fretton's creative energies were so distracted during what should have been a simple project – by planners apparently confused by his approach and a contractor wary of his input to the construction process – is hardly a clarion call for Britain's best to get involved in housing provision. Perhaps it's not something we should be shouting about in Venice, after all.

Join Tony Fretton on a tour of Vassall Road at WWWARCHITECTSIOURNAL.COUK



Tender date February 2006
Start on site date October 2006
Contract duration 64 weeks
Gross external floor area 1,490m²
Form of contract JCT SFBC 98
Total cost £2.4 million
Client Future Living Space (Servite Housing
Association and Baylight Properties)
Architect Tony Fretton Architects
Structural engineer Jampel Davison & Bell
Services engineer Bailey Associates
Quantity surveyor Smith Turner Associates
Main contractor Concentra
Annual CO₂ emissions 20.98kg/m² for the end
maisonette



Big Fish Little Fish

Make partner John Preve has a bonding experience on the beach at Littlehampton

Make has two official parties each year. The Christmas party is exclusively for Make staff; while friends and families are invited to the summer party. It's a chance to meet husbands, wives, partners and children and appreciate the fact that Make has a bigger life beyond the office. So in July, we made a day of it by the sea at Littlehampton. We chose Thomas Heatherwick's East Beach Café as our yenue.

As the day developed so did our engagement with the sea. Inspired by the antics of the kids who'd come along, a number of adults decided to test the Channel's temperature. After a short plunge six shivering bodies emerged from the sea inviting the rest of us to follow their lead. There were no further takers...

My time in Littlehampton drew to a close in the early evening, but many stayed on. It was a fantastic day. The highlight for me was a simple one, the chance to informally talk to people and improve relationships. We spend so much of our time together in the office without really knowing what we are all about outside of it. The party was an opportunity to find out. Monday morning revealed interesting stories of missed trains and nights out under the stars but more importantly, how, as an office, we had become more united.

Next issue: Jonathan Hendry of Jonathan Hendry Architects



AN UNLIKELY SUSTAINABLE OFFICE IS STUDIED

Hadfield Cawkwell Davidson's Vulcan House, the UK Border Agency's new home in Sheffield, designed for speculative developer Wilson Bowden Developments, has achieved BREEAM Excellent standard despite using full air conditioning. Not only this, but it also achieved what was then the second-highest rating for an office building (77.79).

Corus is hosting a seminar this month to see how this was achieved. Part of the 'Framed in Steel' series, the half-day event on 17 September will feature speakers from all the parties involved in the design process (see credit box, far right).

CO₂ emissions were measured throughout construction, and measurement will continue into operation and demolition as a benchmark for future government projects. While the Home Office client – aiming for carbon neutrality – provided motivation and promised to rent Vulcan House for 15 years, conventional sustainable office developments could look to this project as an exemplar. Kaye Alexander

Framed in Steel – Vulcan House, Sheffield. Hilton Hotel, Wednesday 17 September. To book your place visit www.corusevents.com

VULCAN HOUSE CREDITS

Client

UK Border Agency

Architect

Hadfield Cawkwell Davidson

Project manager

Drivers Jonas

Client's engineer

Mott MacDonald

Structural engineer

White Young Green

Main contractor

Wilson Bowden

Steelwork contractor

Robinson Construction

HIRE OR FIRE?

The AJ answers your questions on recruiting in the credit crunch. *Kaye Alexander* talks to architects and recruitment specialists to find out how to take on staff amid the financial downturn

SHOULD LOUTSOURCE?

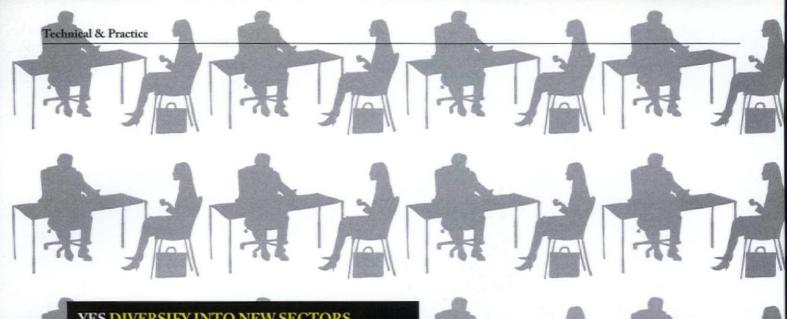
YES OUTSOURCE ALL NON-FEE-EARNING ELEMENTS

'It is possible to save a third of costs by employing external professionals for roles such as marketing, payroll and HR,' says Delwar Hossain of Adrem Recruitment. 'These are non-fee earning elements that do not contribute to the business' profits.' Hourly fees for external companies are more expensive, but practices can economise by only buying their services when required. John Clemow, managing director of London-based practice YRM, explains that its approach is to outsource all functions with which clients have no direct interface: 'This means we benefit commercially and professionally because we buy the experience of the specialists. For roles such as IT we can have support 24/7.'

NO FULFIL ROLES WITH IN-HOUSE TEAMS AND ARCHITECTS

Some firms, especially larger ones, find it more cost-effective to keep some non-architectural functions in-house. 'This is particularly relevant to HR and payroll,' says Peter Browne of SIV Architectural Career Management. 'If you take these in-house services away from a medium-sized firm of 25-50 staff you just make a lot of work for senior staff.' The architecture team can alsop carry out some roles themselves, for example, Alan Dunlop, of Glasgow practice gm+ad, writes all the practice's press releases 'It's a decision based less on economics than on the advantage of making media contacts,' he says.





YES DIVERSIFY INTO NEW SECTORS

The credit crunch could be an opportunity for architects to seek new revenue streams as well as exploring new sectors. In AJ 24.07.08, David Birkbeck, chief executive of housing lobby group Design for Homes, urged architects to consider taking on practitioners made redundant by housing specialists in preparation for the end of the credit crunch. Lindsay Urquhart of Bespoke Careers confirms that some of her clients are staffing up in this manner. International firm Dyer's approach is to forge partnerships with experienced firms to access new sectors, for example with American healthcare expert Anshen + Allen to become Anshen Dyer. Dyer director Tim Hampson says: 'Although this relationship has now ended - the partnership was always structured so that it could end in mutually beneficial separation - Dyer has gained the experience to work on similar projects independently.

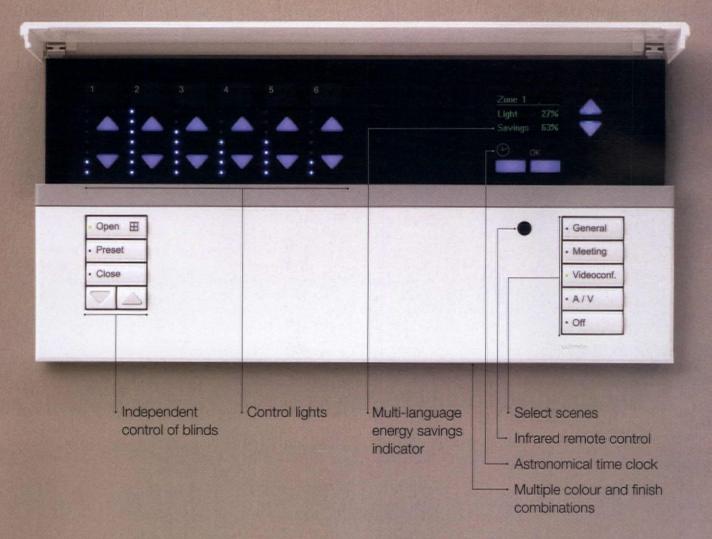
SHOULD I DIVERSIFY?

NO BUT DO SEEK NEW MARKETS

'Firms that are doing well now have diversified in terms of where their business is conducted,' says SIV's Peter Browne. Working worldwide does not have to mean setting up offices abroad, as firms can take advantage of existing international contacts via current employees. Chapman Taylor uses this method before committing to an outpost abroad - the company has offices all over Europe and Asia, including in Spain, Poland, Russia, India and China. 'We develop projects and relationships first via existing staff or by purposefully recruiting someone at the necessary level to explore opportunities in the targeted region,' says director Adrian Griffiths. Dyer's method of forming partnerships can also be applied, linking with a foreign practice to open access to new business.

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SEEING THE LIGHT

The AJ, Lighting magazine and sponsor Lutron brought a panel of architects and lighting designers together to discuss their working relationship



THE PANEL

Associates

Mark Bax BDP
Maurice Brill Maurice Brill
Lighting Design
Tony Ingram 3DReid
Kieran Long editor, The
Architects' Journal
Mark Major Speirs and Major
Associates
John McRae ORMS
Ray Molony editor, Lighting
Davide Padoa
Design International
Theo Paradise-Hirst Max
Fordham and Partners
Lee Prince Light and Design

In his 1923 manifesto Vers une Architecture, Le Corbusier wrote: 'Architecture is the masterly, correct and magnificent play of masses brought together in light. Our eyes are made to see forms in light; light and shade reveal these forms.' Le Corbusier was talking about natural light, which is traditionally seen as the architect's domain. Lighting designers focus on artificial light and how it can improve the architectural experience.

To investigate this relationship, the AJ, along with sister magazine Lighting and sponsor Lutron, brought a panel of architects and lighting designers together to talk about their roles.

Following a brief history of artificial light from Spiers and Major's Mark Major, the group came to a unanimous decision: light should be an integral part of the architectural programme.

The panel then began to discuss the implications this has on working patterns, sustainability and regulations.



Major said his firm prefers to get involved in projects from outline proposal – stage C of the RIBA Plan of Work. He said: 'An architect once said to me that one of the reasons he employed us was because we are one of the few members of the team who, while everyone else is sitting around drawing fat pen diagrams trying to resolve spatial elements, was trying to visualise what the finished building is like, with all the materials, at night.'

BDP's Mark Bax pointed out that early collaboration with architects is good, but that other designers should be included too. He said: 'We can be talking with [the architect], conceiving this and that, but at the same time the M&E guys are planning their air duct locations, for example. You find that a lot of your concepts are already lost because the spaces have been filled.'

Value engineering often affects lighting design decisions. The panel agreed that designers need to convince the client that lighting is not a luxury they can afford to sacrifice. Tony Ingram of 3DReid said lighting 'is all about the power of the big idea', and various methods of communicating this, such as story boards and models, were suggested by Design International's Davide Padoa. Bax said responsibility lies with the architect. He said: 'The architect is in a position, as mediator between client and designer, to say: "You must have this."

Working with natural light may traditionally be seen as a core architectural skill, but Major said architects are increasingly unaware of how to integrate it within the design process. He said: 'We just find an incredible lack of interest and awareness among architects now. We will ask if a basic daylight simulation has been carried out on a project that is at stage D [scheme design] and the answer will come back, "no!". John McRae of ORMS said it is inevitable that architects will bring in specialists due to increasing demand from clients for warranties and the speed and complexity of projects.

The panel also discussed how lighting designers can use their skills to reduce project costs. As buildings become more thermally efficient, lighting is becoming a major energy load, and lighting designers are best placed to assess appropriate technology.

Architects looking to improve the sustainability credentials of projects often specify LEDs because of their long lifespan and low power consumption and operating temperature. But Lee Prince, of Light and Design Associates, said a more cautious approach is required. 'LEDs are just one tool in the box. You can't use them to fulfil Part L,' he said.

Major agreed, adding that when LEDs are specified, there's often a feeling of 'fit and forget'. He said: 'In 10 years time they will probably all be thrown away after





- 1. Mark Bax of BDP
- 2. John McRae of ORMS
- 3. Mark Major of Speirs and Major Associates
- 4. The panel in discussion
- 5. Davide
- Padoa of Design International





they have stopped working - that's not sustainable.'

The usefulness of lighting tables and guidelines such as the British Council for Offices' BCO Guide is another key issue affecting the outcome of lighting design proposals. According to Major, tables focus solely on minimum levels required for visual acuity. 'Guidelines are often interpreted as rules that must be abided by to

achieve funding,' agreed McRae. 'This often results in spaces that are excessively lit.'

Major cited Heathrow Terminal 5 as an example of the successful balance of required lighting levels and ambiance. The visual connection between the passengers and the planes drove lighting levels down both inside and outside the glazed building. 'This in turn helped with one of the

outcomes from the public inquiry, which was to minimise light spill from the building at night, Major said

The panel's conclusion was that lighting concepts may be difficult to communicate and realise, but the contribution lighting can make to the design outcome is becoming increasingly valued in terms of performance, sustainability and user engagement.

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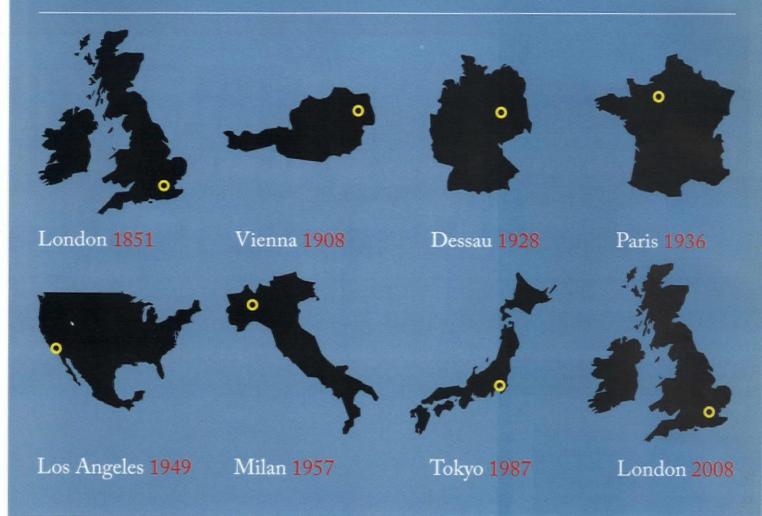
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In this section // Design Cities at the Design Museum // Back Issues // Critic's Choice // Brighton Pevsner // 5 Things To Do

The Critics



EXHIBITION

Around the world in 128 exhibits

James Pallister talks to curator Deyan Sudjic on the eve of the opening of Design Cities, and takes a trip around the Design Museum exhibition

Design Cities, until 4 January 2009, at the Design Museum, Shad Thames, London. www.designmuseum.org

The 2m-high angels of William Morris' Angeli Laundantes tapestry are first things to greet me as I enter Design Cities, the newly opened exhibition at the Design Museum, London (5 September 2008-4 January 2009). Curated by Deyan Sudjic, the exhibition is framed by design works linked to seven cities and a year between 1851 and 2008.

London is captured in 1851, when it was the biggest city in the world. It was also the moment, says Sudjic, speaking to me on the eve of the exhibition's opening, when the very young Morris refused to set foot in the Great Exhibition because he thought he knew that everything inside was meretricious, machinemade junk'.

Accessorised with wings, harps and mournful pouts picked out in intricate needlework, Morris' angels look out on to a vitrine enclosing a souvenir fan from the Great Exhibition, a jamboree of the industrial age that included, among other things, a Venus de Milo carved in butter. If they shared their creator's feelings and their mohair, silk and >>



Design Cities continued from p45

cotton features were to come to life, their delicate faces would probably wear a scowl.

The exhibition hall the young Morris refused to enter is represented with a facsimile of architect Joseph Paxton's sketch for it. Watermarked and grease-spotted, his spidery drawing of this massive prefabricated structure is labelled 'Cryhstal Palace' (sic). Sketches, though used sparingly across all cities, are one of the most rewarding aspects of the Design Cities exhibition, particularly Paris 1936's Furniture Study 1922–1954 which shows a perspective view of Le Corbusier's chairs and Adolf Loos' drawing of The Chicago Tribune Column, exhibited in Vienna in 1908.

The exhibition also offers a whirlwind tour of Dessau 1928 featuring the Bauhaus school; Los Angeles in 1949 with Charles and Ray Eames; Milan in 1957 featuring the Vespa 125; and Tokyo in 1987 featuring Sony's iconic Walkman, before looping back to London 2008. On show representing this year is a Paul Smith suit, a set of glass beakers for Muji by Sam Hecht, and the Gingko Carbon Table by Ross Lovegrove – his weird rendering of a living fossil in ultra-modern carbon fibre.

'You can always bend history or chronology a bit,' says Sudjic

Work on show by architects includes Alessi crockery by Jan Kaplicky and David Chipperfield, as well as a lifeless model of Zaha Hadid's Aquatics Centre for the 2012 Olympic Games, accompanied by a whizzy 3D flythrough.

I point out to Sudjic that some of the names representing London 2008 are

powerhouses more associated with earlier in the decade. 'Fair point,' says Sudjic. 'You always bend history or chronology a bit, but the reason that London is creatively powerful now is because of that generation and the one before that. You could argue that it really started with Archigram, James Stirling, Ken Grange of Pentagram.'

Sudjic admits that for some, the choice of London 2008 is controversial but, he says, one can argue that London is the most creative centre at the moment. I think it probably is. It's a place where you can be yourself and it's a place where astonishingly different things exist side-by-side, from Future Systems to John Pawson to Peter Saville. It's a very energised time.

'It's tricky to argue that there is such a thing as Italian or British design, but focusing on a city is a way of encapsulating the climate that





Back Issues Michael Ventris was a linguist extraordinaire whose talents extended to architecture, says Steve Parnell

Polymath and scholar Michael Ventris (1922-1956) graduated from the Architectural Association (AA) in 1948 (see Back Issues, AJ 03.07.08), but his involvement with architecture was brief. He is better remembered as the man who deciphered Linear B – an early form of Greek script used for writing Mycenaean, which predated the Greek alphabet by several centuries.

Ventris could speak five languages by the age of eight, and throughout his life he was able to pick new ones up in a matter of months. When he travelled with his friends from the AA – Oliver Cox and Graeme Shankland – he amazed them by slipping into the native tongue with ease in both Italy and Sweden. Cox and Ventris partnered with Fello Atkinson for their entry to the Trade Union Congress Memorial Building Competition – what became Congress House in Bloomsbury, London – published in AJ 22 07 48

Ventris' mother was friends with leading lights from the art world such as Naum Gabo and Henry Moore. Marcel Breuer made their furniture and Walter Gropius personally advised the young Ventris to go to the AA. But his brilliant, analytical mind produced sterile architecture. The design for his own house, which appeared in Country Life on 12 November 1959, seems most conventional but Mark Girouard's title 'Keeping the Children Under' alludes to the fact that the children had the ground floor while the parents lived above.

Ventris was a man of means and gave up architecture in 1951 while he concentrated solely on his hobby of Linear B, which he finally cracked in 1953. He then worked for the AJ as a researcher looking into architects' information systems. The first two articles were published on 15 and 22 November 1956, but by then Ventris had resigned, and, shortly after at the age of just 34, been killed in a car crash.

produces interesting moments in design' adds Sudjic, outlining the thesis of the exhibition.

It's a reasonable premise, though – thankfully – Sudjic is more concerned with creating a good exhibition than sticking slavishly to the rules he has set up. Dates and regions are fairly elastic – something Sudjic is very open about – and the thesis is not really given a thorough going-over.

If you're looking for a detailed exploration into the relations between a city's social, economic and environmental factors and its design output, you won't find it in this exhibition. What you will find, however, is an excellent collection of industrial design held together with a coherent narrative. Some of the exhibits really make it worth the trip − and there's no butter Venus de Milo in sight. ■

Resume: From Morris to Muji, 150 years of (the good bits of) design are here



2008



Critic's Choice Alison Turnbull has added her touch to Allies and Morrison's project, says Andrew Mead

It's not often that an artist collaborating with an architect can make so integral a contribution as Alison Turnbull has done to a new scheme in central London by Allies and Morrison. One Vine Street is a renovation for offices of a Crown Estate building near Piccadilly, and what makes Turnbull's work special is the way that it unfolds in three distinct but related stages, extending from the facade through the foyer to the atrium at the building's heart (see below).

What you see first are numerous coloured glass discs scattered over the four large groundfloor windows; the discs are absolutely flush with the clear glass that surrounds them (and realising this part of the project must have been a pain). These coloured circles seem to have migrated from the base of the painting that occupies a whole wall of the foyer, which, looking like a family tree, takes its cue from the Vine Street address and is a dendogram that classifies varieties of grape. Then in turn the vertical elements of this painting-cum-diagram migrate into the atrium, where they become strips of coloured fluorescent light, multiplied as reflections in the lift shaft and other expanses of glass.

So there's both change and continuity, which is true too of Turnbull's work over the last 15 years – the continuity coming in her fastidious execution and expertise with colour. The project is recorded in an attractive little book published by Matt's Gallery. (www. mattsgallery.org).





BOOK

Brighton is raffish and curvaceous, but Pevsner only hints at its danger, says Robert Harbison

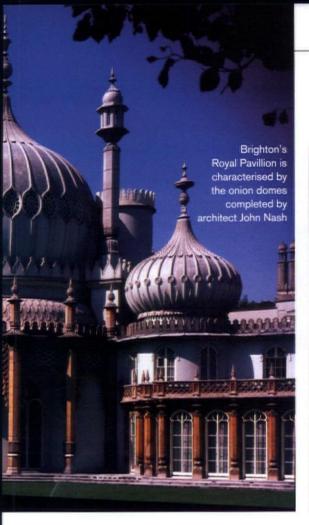
Brighton and Hove (Pevsner Architectural Guides) by Nicholas Antram & Richard Morrice, Yale University Press, 244 pp, £9.99

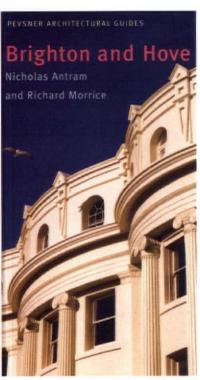
Brighton is not known for its architectural seriousness. The Prince Regent, George IV, put his irresponsible stamp on the place with the Royal Pavilion (1815-1822), a pleasure dome that ate up £500,000 in pursuit of no higher purpose than decorative excess. Experts have identified Indian, Islamic, Chinese and Rococo elements in the mixture of exotic styles, but treating the Pavilion as a textbook of architectural motifs seems fairly perverse. It's a folly, and to appreciate it you need to suspend judgement and become a pasha for an hour or two.

The Oriental taste spread: speculative builders proposed an 'Oriental Place', a cul-desac that would culminate in a glazed conservatory topped with onion domes and surrounded by oriental gardens. British-Indian merchant Sir Albert Sassoon, who died in Brighton in 1896, built himself a private mausoleum, crowned with a gilded metal tent, which juts up in the midst of ordinary townscape of the town. The 'Shampooing Surgeon' Sake Deen Mohamed, who owned baths frequented by high society in Regency times, made his Indian Shampooing Baths respectable through publications that both rationalised and spiritualised their effects.

All this exoticism and raffishness sits oddly with the stuccoed Regency terraces that fill many of the in-between spaces in this townscape. Except that these terraces aren't the sober kind of Bath or Cheltenham. They sport a curvaceousness created by the bulge of bay windows, and their composite capitals end in ammonite fossils instead of neutral volutes.

But the authors of this guide face a quandary nonetheless: how to combine the expected architectural taxonomy with an evocation of the spirit of this eccentric place. Oddly enough, it's the general introduction that seems blinkered and the gazetteer where one can breathe more freely. In the overview the writers are hamstrung by wanting to allude





to all the evidence for attributing another nondescript terrace to local architect Amos Wild rather than a nameless follower. Maybe the gazetteer is saved from this myopia by the need to describe physical features. Whatever the reason, church fittings that one might expect to be a quicksand for the unwary cataloguer come out clear as glass. It's a good thing too, because Brighton's churches are remarkable for towering pulpit canopies, sybaritic marble paneling and reredoses of Indian complexity, as if they honoured a promise to keep the memory of the Regent's extravagance alive.

Antram and Morrice do ample justice to the surprising industrial heritage of Brighton as well, which includes a notable 19th-century trainshed in iron and glass with a fantastic brick viaduct attached. 'Industrial' can perhaps be stretched to include the piers, seafront railings, lamp standards and tiered galleries. Brighton is adding another engineering feat of a touristic kind, London Eye designer Marks Barfield's i360, a tower with a lift pod that will raise 100 people at a time to the top.

Frank Gehry receives an informative but more openly hostile mention for the proposed seafront King Alfred complex of two wobbly looking towers framing what looks like a pile of broken crockery (apartment towers and sports centre). This project, in the spirit if not the scale of Brighton, recently got planning permission, followed by the withdrawal of its main financial backer ING Real Estate, and then the architect.

The recent building boom in Brighton provokes mainly negative comment in this book, with the notable exception of Bennetts Associates' central library, a glazed box with subtly lit interior spaces.

I read Brighton and Hove continually hoping I'd pick up some of that sense of risk and danger conveyed so vividly by Graham Greene's *Brighton Rock*. Antram and Morrice don't go as far as mentioning that Brighton is the gay capital of Britain, though there is one coded reference for anyone who knows this already. Maybe they give us something better than sensational titbits in the suggestion, built up brick by brick, building by building, of an almost impossibly diverse place that combines in its solid structures the luxurious and the louche, the fresh and the jaded, the practical and the seriously unbalanced.

Resume: Welcome – in the most understated way possible – to the Pleasuredome

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Friday 19 September. The Gallery Cowcross Street, London EC1, contact Louise at admin@udg.org.uk

2 Gareth Hoskins Architects: The Lighthouse Architecture Series

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Until 2 November. The Lighthouse, 11 Mitchell Lane Glasgow G1 3NU

3 Man on Wire

Conquer your vertigo with a film about the exploits of a plucky French tightrope walker. On general release

4 Concrete Dreams; Art, Architecture and the Social Space

Head to Deptford for architecture with a small 'a' (oh, and pathos, wealth, power and neglect); 27 artists take on the semi-detached, the hospital car-park and shopping mall.
Until 21 September. Harold Wharf 6 Creekside London SE8 4SA

5 Architecture of Media

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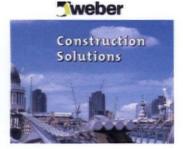
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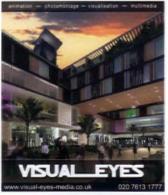
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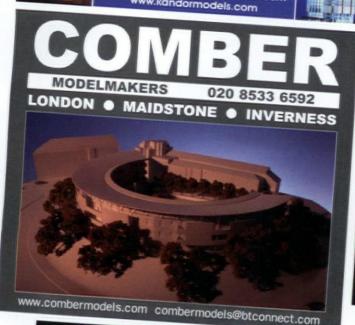
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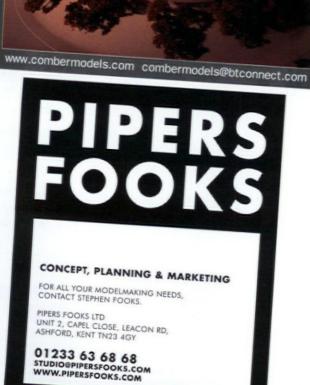
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Ian Martin. The goddess Athena is summoned for civil engineering works

MONDAY. My new parrot, Barratt, is beginning to get on my nerves. I've been going out a lot lately, leaving him with only his beakoperated 'i-Pet' for company. Barratt's not that fussed about the music, but he does love his CPD podcasts. Unfortunately, he's started committing platitudes and bullet points to memory and now sounds like an architect addressing a conference.

'Step-change your skillset, upskill your mindset - scrark!' is amusing once. After 20 or 30 times, I deploy The Tablecloth. If only you could do this with architects.

TUESDAY. Lunch with conservactionist Dusty Penhaligon. He's brought along his militant Greek pagan mate, Yannis, who's friendly enough but a little intense.

Yannis helped organise the recent militant pagan protest in Athens against Acropolis Now, a new £100 million museum explaining to people who the ancient Greeks were and how they loved a party. Oh, and inside there's a massive, sulky exhibition space reserved for the Elgin Marbles in case we ever return them.

The Greek pagan community is a bit conflicted about all this. Of course the museum is a travesty, a blasphemy. But as a protester you get to wear togas and shout the odds in ancient Greek. 'The ladies, they love it' Yannis purrs as the three of us smoke on the pavement, which is how you have half your lunch in the 21st century.

Dusty's got him and his militant pagan mates over to join an ecumenical demo at Stonehenge, where they will swell the ranks of Druids, animists, leyliners, shamans, cargo cultists and virtual historians. 'Go on, do your invocation' urges Dusty. Yannis mentally centres himself and begins. 'O mighty goddess Athena, we join with our brothers and sisters in Wiltshire most heartily to commend your divine purview, and hereby call upon the relevant authorities urgently to relocate the A344...'

WEDNESDAY. Redesign Edinburgh in the morning, eschewing a controversial 17storey hotel in favour of 750 unobtrusive bedand-breakfast bungalows.

In the afternoon, tweak my Orkney wind orchard so it looks more contextual and neolithicky. At one point I'm jolted from a power nap by Barratt shrieking 'Human scale! Human scale! Not just the buildings but the spaces in between! Kraaark!'

Over and over again. This is intolerable. Just as you're settling into something he'll start burbling randomly. 'Ark! Disability hub? Oh yes. Disability hub? Oh yes. The objective of this seminar is to understand the benefits of factory-produced lime mortars and the need for their correct specification. Grark. Green design that doesn't cost the Earth. Limited liability? Limited liability? Ark. Case study. Eek. Download as a PDF? Aye-aye. Cuttlefish. Disability hub?'

Memo to Self: explore possibility of outsourcing Barratt.

THURSDAY, September 11. Today, architects across the world join in remembrance and mourning. For, respectively, the original World Trade Center masterplan and a design process thwarted by sinister public consultation. Barratt witters on about the

typology of terror for a bit, then starts jabbering and whistling. Very defiant and jolly. Is he 'doing' Daniel Libeskind?

FRIDAY. To Tamworth, for the opening of an exhibition celebrating Cold War Chic. During those dark days of division Tamworth was a sort of 'moral hinge' between the opposing ideologies of North and South.

Below Mercia's demilitarised zone the people lived under a system of free-market capitalism, controlled by used-car salesmen and Rotary Clubs. Above it, the proletariat was ruthlessly suppressed by krypto-Stalinist municipal juntas.

The exhibition itself is quite modest, as Tamworth during the Cold War was a lot less chic than, say, East Berlin. There are moving reminders of old-fashioned pub opening hours and an early lava lamp. An outside lavatory has been painstakingly recreated, and there's an impressive display of men's hats. There really ought to be a word to describe this nostalgia we all seem to have at the moment for a lost ennui.

Meanwhile, a sense of unrest is growing in Tamworth. Buoyed by events in the Caucasus, the people are now clamouring for secession, a giant cultural spider marching through the streets, and 'Tamworth The Musical'.

SATURDAY, Charity football match. Palladian Academicals 2, Corby City 1. Scrappy, with lots of issues being tackled very late.

SUNDAY, Horizontal CPD in the recliner. Barratt, in reflective mood, questions his own attractiveness before mercifully falling silent under the tablecloth.

CMA08 CONSTRUCTION MARKETING AWARDS

construction news

Shout about your success

Call for entries

Deadline: 15 September 2008 Winners announced: 27 November 2008

If you're a marketing or business development professional in construction, put your company forward for a Construction Marketing Award. You've played a vital role in raising the profile and increasing the profits of your company or client – so enter now and gain the respect you deserve from your industry.

The closing date is Monday 15th September 2008 and winning entries will be announced at The Awards Dinner on 27th November 2008 at The New Connaught Rooms.

For entry form and further information, call Sharon Sugars on 01753 651 177, email sharon@propertyevents.co.uk or download an entry form from www.constructionmarketingawards.com

Winners announced: 27 November 2008
The New Connaught Rooms
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Marketing Insight & Planning

Client Focused Approach to New Business

Delivery

Best In-House Marketing Team

Agency / Consultancy of the Year

Communication

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Best Campaign for Employee Recruitment & Retention

Best Marketing Communication to Encourage CSR

Best Interbuild Stand

Best Use of Advertising

Best Use of PR

Best Use of Direct Marketing

Best Use of Technical Literature

Best Use of Events & Exhibitions

Best Use of Online Communications

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View from London Westminster Cathedral towards the London eye



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