

07.11.08

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A guide to high-performance
timber windows – p39

An amateur's enthusiasm
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architectural ambitions and
work at Centre Point – p57

AJ

MOORE STREET

A courtyard community for Glasgow's east end
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and Richard Murphy Architects – page 26

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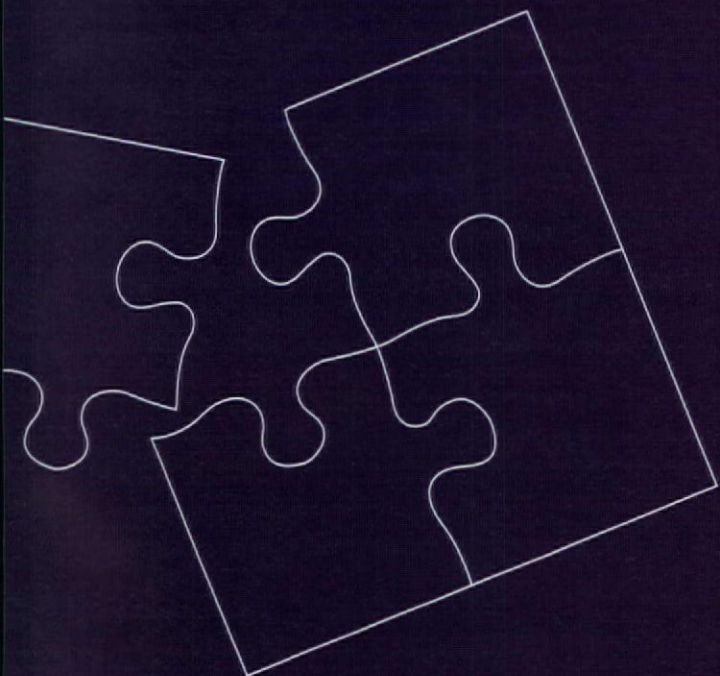
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Industry has 'little confidence' in pre-Budget plan p6

MJP set to complete British Embassy in Bangkok p8

Architects oppose Gehry museum in Israel p12

The Haram mosque in the Saudi Arabian city of Mecca



FOSTER AND HADID TO REDESIGN MECCA

Norman Foster and Zaha Hadid are in line to take on one of the most high-profile projects on earth – the redevelopment of Mecca.

According to sources, the scheme for Islam's holiest city will create a huge structure around the central Haram mosque that will eventually be capable of holding three million people, making it the 'highest-occupancy' building in the world.

The top-secret plans are being backed by King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia, who

has handpicked a collection of architects to 'establish a new architectural vision' for the 356,800m² mosque complex.

The Mecca project is likely to be phased, with the first phase increasing the mosque's official capacity from 900,000 to 1.5 million. This will grow to three million over the following five to 10 years.

It is understood that the proposals have been split into two 'tracks', with Foster + Partners earmarked to look at a range of alternatives for the

northern expansion of the Haram mosque. Atkins is among 10 other practices believed to have been approached to draw up feasibility studies for the extension.

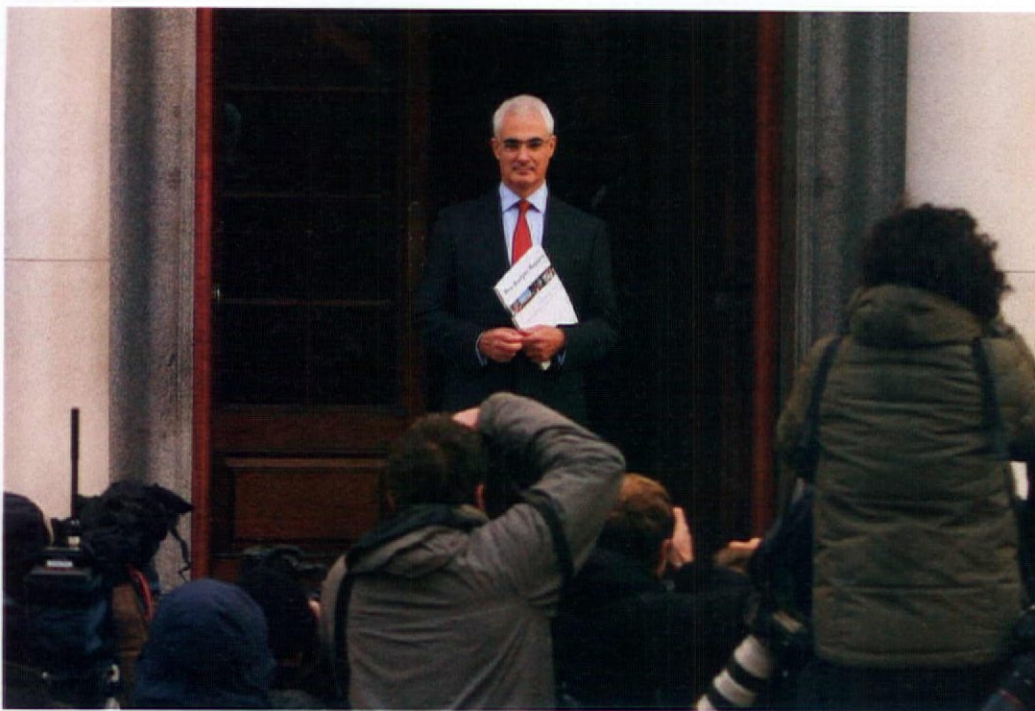
Meanwhile, Hadid has been given the prize task of coming up with ideas for the Haram mosque itself, as well as 'revisiting the whole area of the central district'. Another six unnamed 'world-renowned' architects have also been linked with the job.

A source close to the project told the AJ: 'This study is not

meant to be a competition. The main objectives of the design studies are to enrich our discourse on how we should address the future architecture of the Haram and its growth.

'These design exercises, in addition to other investigations, will be subject to an exhibition to his Majesty [expected to take place this week].'

British engineers Adams Kara Taylor and Faber Maunsell are also believed to be in the frame for the multi-billion pound project. *Richard Waite*



CARL DE SANZA

DARLING PLAN WON'T HALT INDUSTRY CRISIS

The government's £3 billion public spending plan will do little to prevent the largest percentage fall in construction output since the 1990s, a leading industry body has warned.

In his pre-Budget report earlier this week, Chancellor Alistair Darling outlined that he would be bringing forward cash from the 2010-11 budget to be spent on education, housing and transport projects during 2008-09 and 2009-10.

But the Construction Products Association (CPA) has made it clear that the measures, though welcome, will not prevent construction activity in the UK falling dramatically next year.

'Even if all £3 billion was spent next year, the construction industry would still see the largest percentage fall in output since the early 1990s, brought

about by the sharp fall in private sector investment in construction,' said CPA chief executive Michael Ankers.

Ankers added the construction industry should be cautious due to 'extremely high levels of borrowing' – expected to top £118 billion by next year. The CPA is also concerned that Darling's economic forecasts, on which the pre-Budget report is based, may be 'too optimistic'.

Aukett Fitzroy Robinson chief executive Nicholas Thompson went one step further saying he had 'little confidence' in Darling's measures to rescue the UK from the financial crisis.

'This long-term commitment to public debt is a real concern,' said Thompson. 'However, I was pleased to see the repatriation of foreign dividends will be tax-free from next year. I'm sure this will

encourage companies to seek work from more buoyant economies abroad while retaining their presence in the UK.'

Smaller practices are more open to the measures introduced, especially those heavily involved in residential work.

Alex Ely of mæ architects said: 'The cut in VAT will certainly help, but more encouraging for us is the increase in spending for social housing. We do a lot of work with housing associations and we have a few jobs which just need the funding.'

RIBA president Sunand Prasad added: 'Giving small architectural practices more time to pay their tax and National Insurance bills and extending government guarantees of small-business loans are welcome practical measures in these difficult times.'

Richard Vaughan

THIS WEEK ON THE WEB

ALSOPT'S PUTNEY TOWERS HIT BUFFERS

SMC Alsop's twin-tower Putney Place scheme in South London has been refused planning permission by Wandsworth Council. The authority's planning committee claimed the towers would 'loom large' over the 'domestically scaled' area. In a further blow, London Mayor Boris Johnson announced he will not overturn the council's decision.

PLANNING OVERHAUL COULD SAVE £300M

An overhaul of the planning process could save developers, authorities and the UK economy £300 million, according to a much-anticipated review of the creaking system. The Killian Pretty report outlines 17 ways in which the planning application process could be made 'swifter and more effective'.

FARRELL MASTERPLANS KENT COUNTY

Terry Farrell has bagged yet another design guru role after being crowned Kent County Council's masterplanning advisor. The news comes just days after Boris Johnson named Farrell on London's new suburban 'task force'. The 69-year-old has been asked to draw up a 20-year vision for Kent.

SPENCE'S WEAR BRIDGE BACKED BY COUNCIL

Spence Associates and Techniker's Wear Bridge in Sunderland is a significant step closer to being realised after the council agreed to back the scheme last week. The decision follows a public consultation which saw Wearside residents choose Spence's 210m-tall bridge over a more basic flatbeam alternative.

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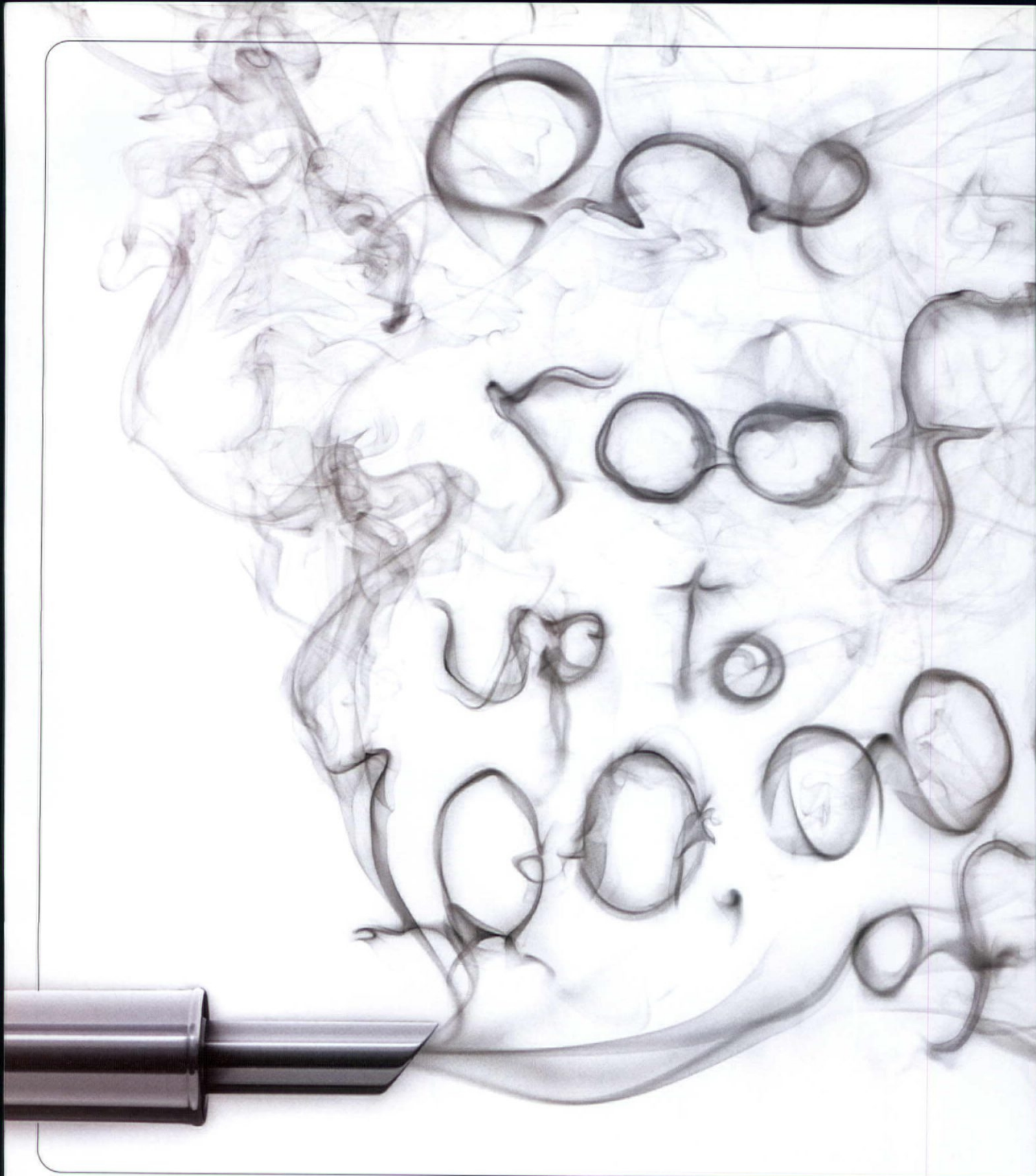
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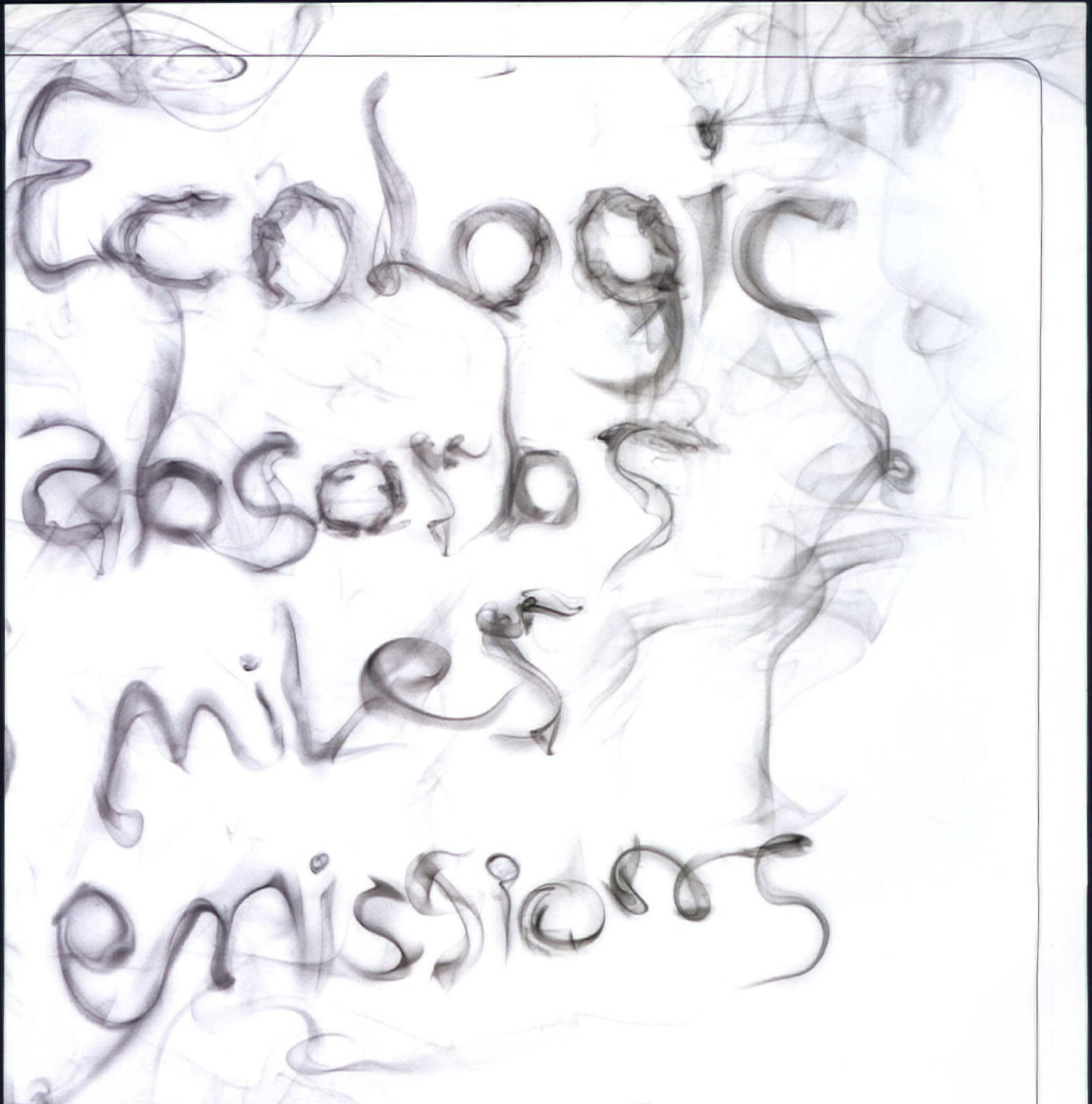




MJP'S BRITISH EMBASSY IN BANGKOK

This is MJP Architects' nearly completed British Embassy compound in Bangkok, Thailand. The scheme for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office includes 6,000m² of residential units, a swimming pool and a new clubhouse that 'floats' in the middle of an existing pond on the 3.8ha site. *Richard Waite*





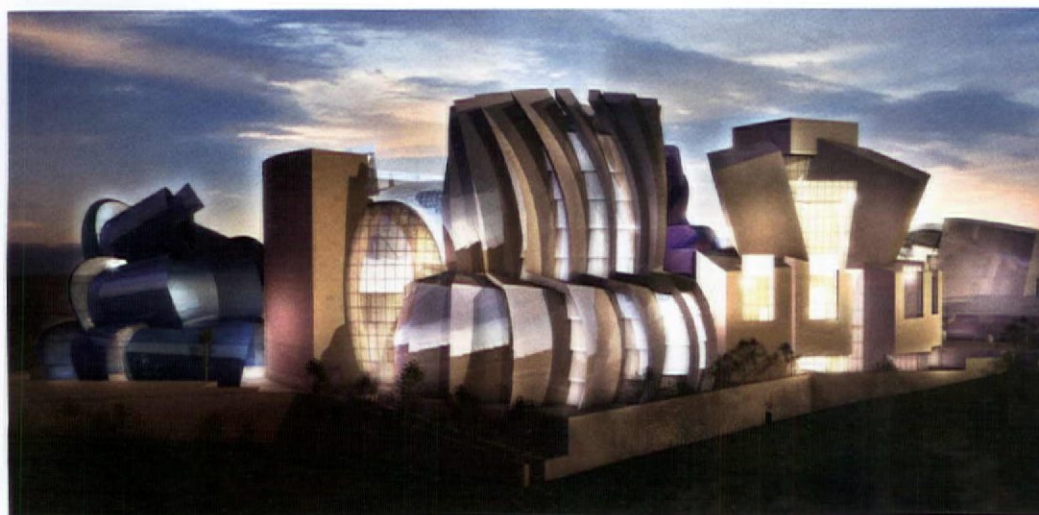
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Onwards Upwards Forwards



Frank Gehry's proposed Museum of Tolerance in Jerusalem

ARCHITECTS CAMPAIGN AGAINST GEHRY MUSEUM

Petition aims to stop museum on site of ancient Muslim cemetery in Jerusalem

A host of British architects have described Frank Gehry's proposed Museum of Tolerance in Jerusalem as a 'blow to peaceful co-existence' in the Israeli city.

Architects such as Will Alsop, Charles Jencks, Richard MacCormac and Eva Jiricna, one of this year's Stirling Prize judges, have spoken out against the plans, and signed a petition supporting lobby group Architects and Planners for Justice in Palestine (APJP) in its battle to stop the development.

The museum is being backed by US Jewish human rights organisation Simon Wiesenthal Center, which already operates another Museum of Tolerance in New York.

Progress on Gehry's proposals has been slow. The museum has been embroiled in a two-and-a-half-year legal battle after Islamic leaders claimed that the site earmarked for the building was over an ancient Muslim cemetery.

However, Israel's Supreme Court gave the project the go-ahead earlier this month after it ruled that the site was a cemetery

before the state of Israel was formed, and had fallen into disuse in 1948.

Gehry welcomed the decision and told the AJ: 'I believe in the urgent need for a peace that is just for both sides. The museum will embody the values of respect and compassion that have guided

about the situation there. It seems that if we are going to put a halt to the conflict there then this is not the way to go about it.'

Eva Jiricna added that although she was behind the idea of a museum of tolerance, the choice of site was 'outrageous'.

'Tolerance is something that is

and defuse the row, as he fears the museum's construction will lead to 'violent demonstrations'.

Miliband was in Jerusalem last week but the Foreign Office would not say if the museum was on the secretary's agenda.

Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, said the decision has already been made to press on with the museum and added: 'What use would there be in the British Foreign Secretary getting involved? The highest court in the land, the Israeli Supreme Court, has ruled that the museum should be built. And everyone knows this is a liberal court.'

'For more than half a century that site has been used as a car park by Muslims, Christians and Jews. If people have a problem with a museum being built there, why haven't they had a problem with cars and trucks being parked there for the past 50 years?'

Hier added: 'If it were a cemetery with monuments and gravestones and we were bulldozing them down, that would be terrible, but it's a car park.' *Richard Vaughan*

'If it were a cemetery with gravestones and we were bulldozing them, that would be terrible, but it's a car park'

many faiths spanning Jerusalem's 3,000-year history.

'As the Israeli Supreme Court noted in its ruling in favour of the museum, it will spread "a message of human tolerance between peoples, between sectors of the population and between man and his fellow man",' added Gehry.

The decision was met with disbelief by those opposed to Gehry's plans, with Richard MacCormac claiming it was inconceivable that a 'museum of tolerance could be so intolerant to other people's beliefs'.

MacCormac said: 'I'm sorry that Frank [Gehry] is involved in the building. I feel very strongly

very close to my heart, but you also have to have respect,' said Jiricna. 'Just because the building is designed by a famous architect doesn't make any difference.'

The man behind the petition, APJP chair Abe Hayeem, told the AJ he hoped the campaign would stop the development.

'The cemetery goes back hundreds of years,' said Hayeem. 'A lot of the decisions dealing with this were taken in secret, without the knowledge of local Muslim people. There was no opportunity for objection by the Palestinians.'

Hayeem has written to UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband, asking him to step in



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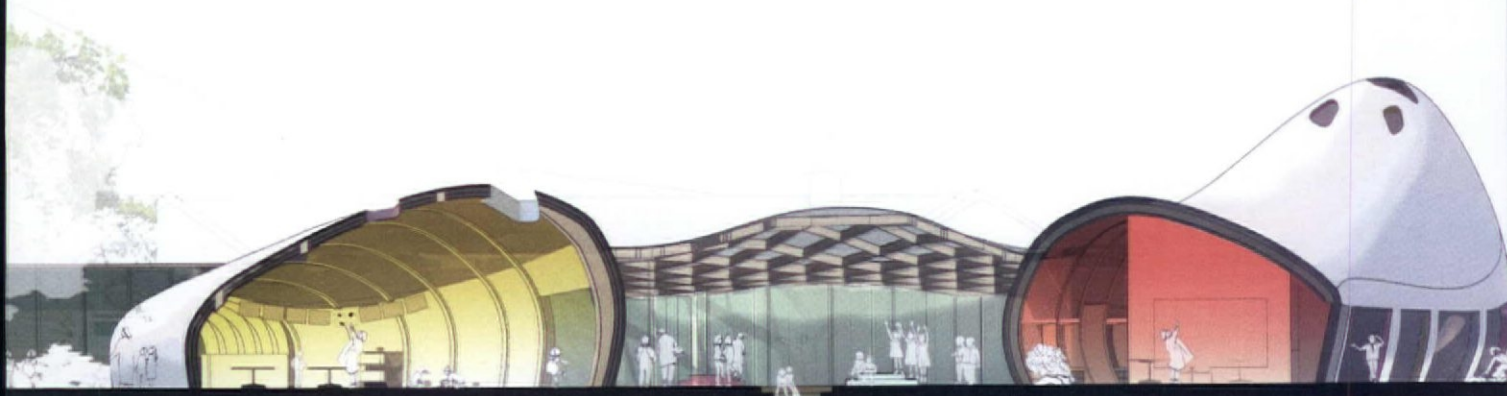
BUILDING VALUE SINCE 1906



IAN SIMPSON'S FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

Ian Simpson Architects has won its first education project – this primary school in the Lake District's Grasmere, Ambleside. Better known for its glass skyscrapers, the practice saw off Sutherland Hussey and local firm Hanson Marston Mellor to land the £1.5 million job. The scheme has a central 'heart space', built between three classrooms with a timber gridshell, and will accommodate up to 54 pupils.

Richard Waite



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QATAR ACT

Last weekend, Astragal jetted to Doha, Qatar, for the star-studded opening of the latest architectural jewel in the Persian Gulf, the jaw-dropping Museum of Islamic Art (pictured above) by nonagenarian US architect **I M Pei**. Rubbing shoulders were **Ronnie Wood** of the Rolling Stones, artist **Damien Hirst**, gallerist **Jay Jopling** and Tate head **Nicholas Serota** (the last two presumably sniffing around for some recession-proof art collectors and donors). Legendary actor **Robert De Niro** (pictured above right) was also there, having flown out to launch the Tribeca Film Festival Doha, a branch of the festival he runs in New York. The day after the party, De Niro swept up to his press conference at Pei's new museum by boat, before getting

stuck in the outdoor lift that brings visitors from the jetty to the plaza of the museum. As photographers ruthlessly snapped away, the doors just would not open. Asked what he thought of the museum, the unscripted De Niro said he 'had no words to describe it'. Must have forgotten his lines, thought Astragal.

SERPENTINE WHISPERS

The tittle-tattle squad are in a twitter about who will design next year's Serpentine Pavilion. The gallery confirmed neither **MVRDV** or **Frei Otto** will be asked back after failing to make previous schemes viable and America's **Steven Holl** has been ruled out by a gallery insider. Still in the running are **Massimiliano Fuksas** and **Bernard Tschumi**,

but more worthy of a bet is Frenchman **Jean Nouvel**, who has yet to build in the UK (a condition of any pavilion designer). This might make up for his troubled 'Darth Vader helmet' for Walbrook Square, London.

LOVE PARTNERS

It's a small world at the top of architecture mag *Prospect's* Scotland's Power 100 list this year. **Gareth Hoskins** rose like cream

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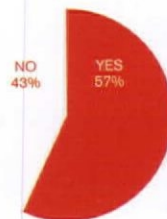
to the top, but it was number eight, **Gordon Murray** of Gordon Murray + Alan Dunlop Architects (gm+ad), that tickled Astragal the most. Murray named his partner **Alan Dunlop** (number four in the Power 100) as his favourite architect. 'How could it be otherwise?' he opines. 'We sit across from one another, we talk every day. We do design reviews together. Often we sketch the same projects. The plus sign in gm+ad has a wider significance across the practice. That the whole is more than the sum of the parts. Collaboration is at our heart.' Sadly, the tough Glaswegian's tender words went sorely unrequited. Dunlop named his favourite architect as **Louis Kahn**.

THIS WEEK'S ONLINE POLL

Has Dubai's bubble really burst?

Next week's question: Will the measures set out in the pre-Budget report (see page 6) help small practices?

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AJ100 2009 QUESTIONNAIRE OUT NOW



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Key dates for 2009

AJ100 questionnaire out now

www.marketlinkresearch.co.uk/aj100.htm

30 January 2009 Deadline for submissions

January 2009 New industry survey released

27 May 2009 Awards dinner

28 May 2009 AJ100 issue of *The Architects' Journal*

Throughout 2009 Breakfast Clubs and regional events

Surveys

AJ100 questionnaire

The AJ will invite practices to submit their data for the 2009 survey at an earlier date than in previous years.

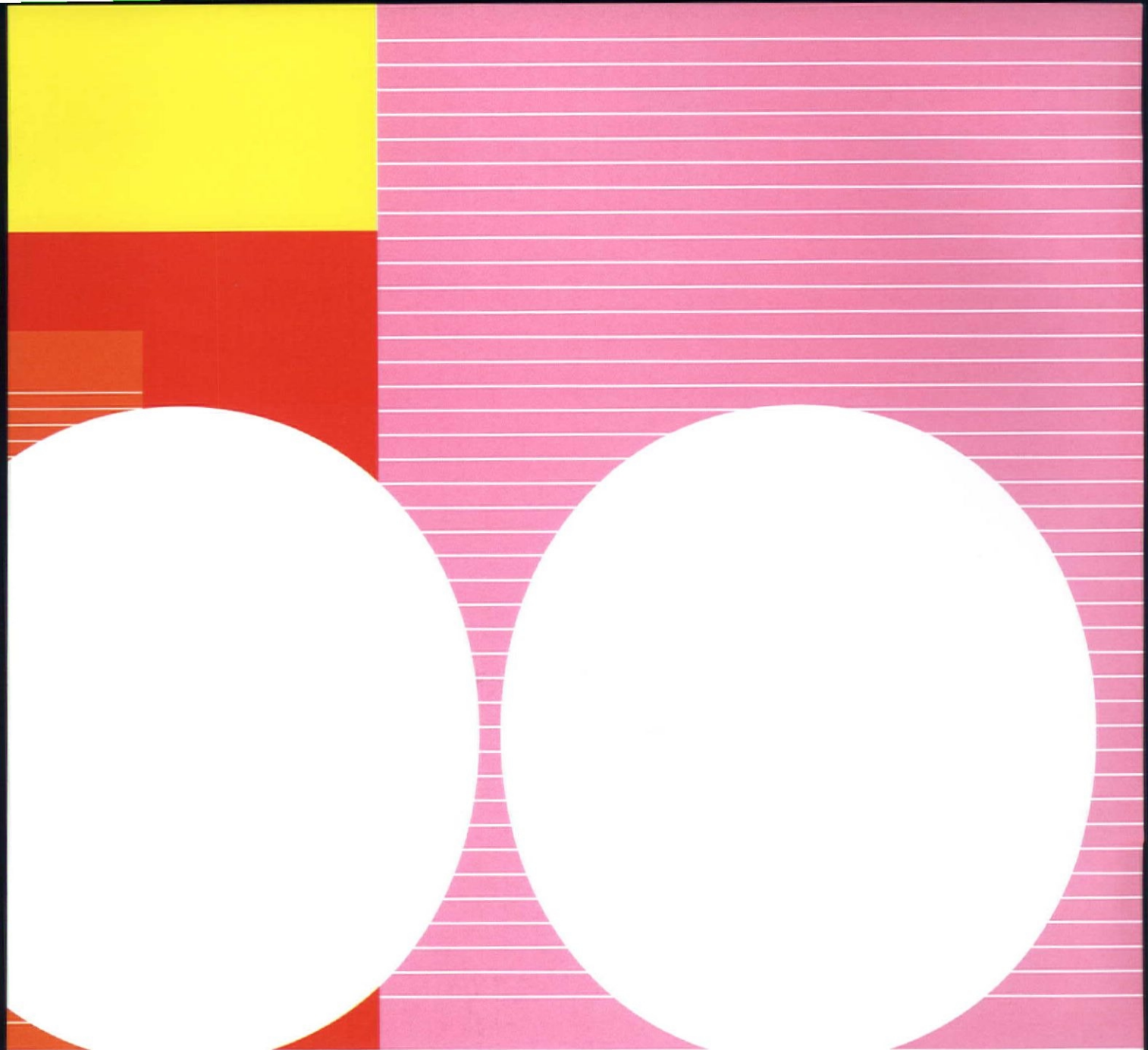
The data required will remain largely the same, and the information will be published in AJ 28.05.08. Some additional questions and sections will be included to aid the awards process and to recognise changes in the profession.

Industry survey

The AJ will ask all 7,000 practising architects

working within the AJ100 to complete a short online survey. The AJ is keen to understand the attitudes of these architects, and to celebrate individual successes. All information will remain strictly confidential. On completion of the survey, names will be entered into a prize draw.

We're updating the AJ100 award categories. The aim is to be as inclusive as possible, creating new categories for the 2009 awards programme that are open to all practices in the AJ100, regardless of size, location, history or status.



New-look awards

Highest First-Time Entrant Highest-placed newcomer to the AJ100

Practice of the Year Based on data from the survey, recognising key business, HR and design achievements

International Practice of the Year Based on data from the survey, recognising percentage growth and achievements in overseas markets

Fastest Growing Practice Based on data from the survey, recognising personnel and business growth

Regional Awards Based on data from the industry survey, recognising the best and most desirable regional employers

Clients' Practice of the Year Leading clients from all market sectors will nominate the AJ100 practice they most admire

Employer of the Year Based on data from both surveys, recognising staff turnover, workplace culture and HR benefits

Contribution to the Profession Leading industry observers will nominate a longlist and votes will be cast in the industry survey

Most Sustainable Practice Practices must nominate a single project from 2008 that successfully addresses sustainability issues

Building of the Year Practices must nominate a single project completed in 2008

Awards night

The awards night will once again take place at the East Wintergarden in Canary Wharf, London, on Wednesday 27 May 2009.

The new AJ100 list will be revealed, and will be commended by AJ editor Kieran Long. A high-profile industry speaker will deliver an after-dinner speech.

Throughout the year, the AJ will continue to host the AJ100 Breakfast Club in London, where leading experts will provide knowledge and insight. Two events will also be held outside London.

Leader & Comment

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Leader Alistair Darling has not saved you – or your business – from the looming recession. But he has given you a fighting chance, writes *Kieran Long*

As perennially unfashionable as they are, it was the Liberal Democrats who were talking sense in Parliament after Chancellor Alistair Darling's pre-Budget report had been delivered.

After the ruddy-checked bluster of shadow chancellor George Osborne, it was Vince Cable of the Lib Dems who stood up to advocate concentrating on social housing as the stimulus that the economy needs, flagging the pressing need for such accommodation, and the wide range of businesses that are kept busy by building houses. This is the kind of action that architecture practices, big and small, would have welcomed.

But the 'stimulus' activity promised will be

the bringing forward of roads, schools and some energy-efficiency measures. This will be cold comfort to most architects. We'd all love to have a Building Schools for the Future (BSF) contract to see us through the recession, but precious few will. Public spending alone will not see the construction industry through this recession, and investment in housing could have given a shot in the arm to stalled regeneration projects across the country.

However, there were some promised measures that will help smaller businesses. For many architecture businesses, there will have been the feeling that the budget may keep the wolf from the door. The £1 billion Small Business Finance scheme sounds encouraging

for much of the profession, guaranteeing bank lending to small and medium enterprises in a way that should keep banks from being too aggressive in their tactics. It also should make money available to small businesses with high levels of debt. The deferral of the rise in corporation tax also offers a small comfort.

To benefit from these measures will involve being proactive, though. The option to spread payments to the taxman should be exercised, but you need to talk to HMRC to arrange the terms. You should talk to the taxman and your bank manager now. The government predictions for recession in 2009 mean smaller businesses need to prepare for the worst.

kieran.long@emap.com

Opinion British architects will always work in Dubai, but now only committed parties need apply, says *Richard Thompson*

Such has been the pace of growth in the Gulf over the last five years that there simply have not been enough building professionals to meet the demand. This has allowed companies to pick and choose the jobs they want to work on. Profit margins have soared.

But the Gulf construction boom has been stopped dead in its tracks by the global financial crisis, and nowhere has been hit harder than Dubai. While record oil prices and levels of production have enabled the region's governments to embark on an unprecedented spending programme to develop national infrastructure, it is speculation on property that has propelled the region's real estate sector to the top of the heap. Private real-estate development accounts for some 65 per cent of the £1.8 trillion-worth of projects planned or

underway in the Gulf, with Dubai enjoying by far the biggest share.

Until this summer, the market had proved surprisingly resilient. Now, Dubai's real estate is crashing fast. Price falls of 40-50 per cent have been seen on some of Dubai's flagship developments since the summer, and the contagion has spread to neighbours Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Oman. To make matters worse, the fall in oil prices since August will see governments rein in spending on infrastructure projects. Oil will deliver smaller

The most successful firms are the those that have been there for years

revenues in 2009 than this year, resulting in the first contraction in the Middle East's economy in almost a decade.

But the slowdown is merely a hiatus, not the end of the boom. Oil prices will recover. Hydrocarbons remain the world's most viable source of energy supply, and the rise of China and India will place long-term demand on Middle Eastern oil. Just as significantly, the region's governments are committed to their economic diversification strategies in order to wean themselves off their dependence on

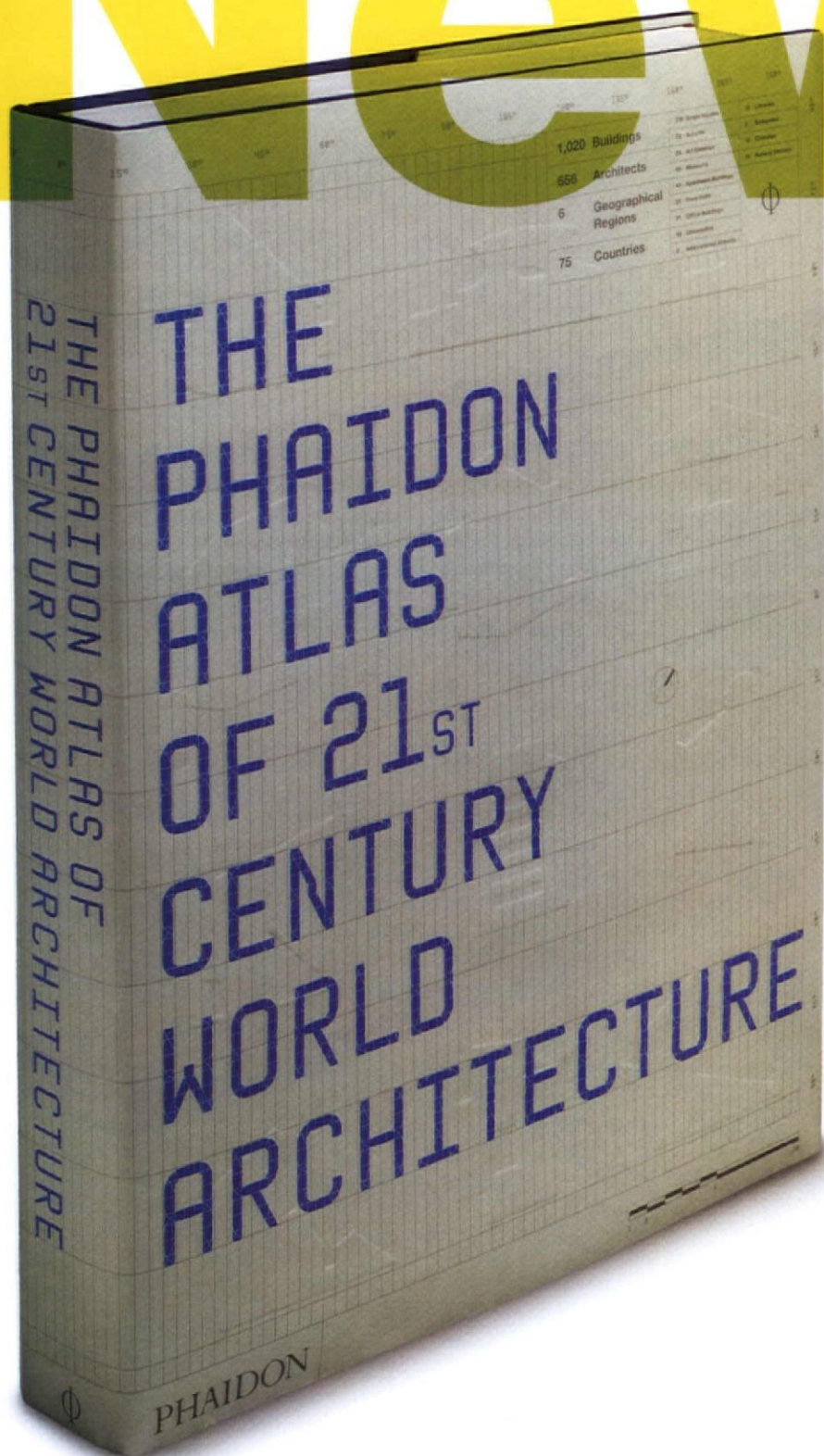
the volatile oil markets and create jobs for their fast-growing populations. Flush with the windfall profits of five years of soaring oil prices, the region's governments will continue to invest in financial services, transport, housing, tourism, power and water.

The short-term slowdown in activity will ease the inflationary pressures that have made life difficult for businesses in the region, and will also give local infrastructure capacity the opportunity to catch up with the rate of building development. Because Gulf construction has suddenly become a buyers' market, British construction consultants and architects will thrive for the simple reason that they are among the best in the world.

The most important factor for anybody seeking to succeed in the Gulf here is time. Relationships are key and the most successful international firms in the region are those that have been there for years. The Gulf remains one of the world's few construction hotspots, offering enormous opportunities for UK firms. But to succeed, you must be prepared to commit for the long term.

Richard Thompson is editor of MEED, a Middle-East business intelligence magazine
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Now the time is right, says Patrick Lynch in his final column, to reclaim our role as design leaders

For 48, issues I've told you what I think is right and wrong, good or bad about architecture. A year is a long time, it seems. A great deal has changed in the world, and architecture again appears part of a wider discussion than the narrow focus upon style that has dogged us for the past few decades.

I agreed to write this column because the AJ's editor, Kieran Long, knew the importance of good architectural writing. I was flattered he thought I might be able to deliver it. Behind Kieran's brief, for me, was the idea that the general architect is neither a cynic nor a fool, despite what some publications seem to assume. We're all prone to cynicism and foolishness some of the time, of course, but that isn't what you find at the heart of good architecture.

In the past year or so, David Chipperfield finally won the Stirling Prize 2007 and Álvaro Siza the RIBA Gold Medal 2008, making up

for years of neglect that reflected badly upon British architecture and offering hope to those of us for whom Modernism has moved on. Models are ways of imagining architecture, but the reality of architecture lies in buildings. Good architecture teaches us to feel and understand it fundamentally as built.

not philosophers – although Dalibor Vesely and Karsten Harries can help us to think clearly. We're not structural engineers – although order in architecture should be our goal. We're not cost consultants – although thinking about resources unites all of the different ways of thinking described above.

The architect is not a cynic or a fool, despite what some publications assume

There are things we can (and should) do well, and things that others do better than us. We're not sociologists – even though Richard Sennett and Max Weber should be compulsory reading for students. We're not historians – although Joseph Rykwert and Rudolf Wittkower should be known to us all. We're

Swiss architect Andrea Deplazes demonstrates how architectural education can enable us to reclaim our proper role as leader of the design team in *Constructing Architecture: Materials, Processes, Structures* (Birkhäuser, 2005). Critical essays about the spatial failings of Modernist horizontal windows sit beside 1:1 details of his own window designs. The Willmann Lötscher house (1998-9) by his practice Bearth Deplazes sits on a Swiss mountainside with a view down to the valley below, amongst pines. It is made from engineered timber, recycled from milling pine forests, and clad in thin vertical timber strips. The asymmetric roof is complemented by an angled plan form, distinguishing front rooms from back rooms, creating a newly memorable image of a house. Velux windows are hung vertically. The only luxury is the huge frameless view from the living room, from where, in contrast to the comforting embrace of the rest of the house, you float. There are a number of lessons here, and I recommend the book to you for more. [Joseph Rykwert's bi-weekly column begins next week](#)

Bearth Deplazes's Willmann Lötscher house in Sevgein, Switzerland



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Architecture's abstract hubris lies in ruins. But Sam Jacob finds it all rather picturesque

Every success harbours the seeds of its own failure. Somewhere in the hubristic peak of complete complacency, arrogance and absence of doubt that fans the inevitable, all-consuming bonfire of vanities. It's just this kind of raging self-immolation that has cindered the global economic landscape – in days, the terrain has been completely transformed.

The speed of transformation has hit built culture hard. The collapse revealed a world undescribed by the maps and charts we had drawn. **Buildings find themselves completed in a different landscape, appearing on the skyline like giant mausolea for a failed ideology, or abandoned, half-built, like freshly minted ruins.**

The markets had evolved into hyper-sophisticated, super-calibrated, cleverly geared systems whose logistics supported an ever-finer kind of abstraction. They

became a machine for manufacturing value and growth in vaporous form, decoupled from substance. Their fall marks the failure of a particular kind of algorithmically programmed fantasy of abstraction.

History suggests that the most ambitious architectural projects immediately precede the deepest economic slumps. And that's exactly what we've seen, from the Guggenheim Bilbao to the cities-from-zero in the Gulf. This headline-grabbing has been driven by the logic of the boom. The ideology of the global market has been the context for architecture. These projects attempted to turn the flush of cash and credit delivered by fluctuations of abstract systems into something real: a thing or a place. They sprung up in the ruins of industry or were fuelled by the fleeting bounty of mineral extraction. And they were designed around the most distracted and least reliable kind of programme: tourism, each project competing as a destination to max-out holidaymakers' credit lines. It's created **an architecture of spectacular, hollow unreality: based on unreal money, housing unreal programmes.**

This unreality has infused architectural production, often finding resolution in hysterical, liquid, fluid form at audacious scale – the kind of thing recently dubbed 'Parametricism' by Patrick Schumacher. (Note: just as the height of building might be a warning sign of impending turmoil, the articulation of a stylistic manifesto is a sure sign

of hubristic overconfidence). Displays of beyond-human formal complexity drop out of the computational design systems employed in the search for exoticism and difference – a difference that was demanded by the market pluralism of ultra capitalism. Appropriately, **these projects seemed to use the very same kind of tools that have maximised, magnified, and deepened our current financial crisis. If the Modern movement had the abstraction of industry as its reference, millennial architecture had the systemised abstraction of late capitalism.**

This union of ideology and form has decoupled in dramatic fashion. The swift disjunction leaves a generation of architecture rendered instantly out of time – as un-possible as Gothic architecture in the Renaissance. Architecture stands as a record of sensations long vanished. At Versailles, we can feel the vanity of pre-revolutionary France; at Chartres, the soaring might and mysticism of medieval religion.

Tomorrow's visitors to today's (or yesterday's) iconic buildings will feel the swoosh of volumes, the cranked-out impossibility of structure, the lightheadedness of refraction and translucencies. They will marvel at buildings that hardly touch the ground, which swoop into the air as though drawn up by the jet stream. They will feel stretched by elongated angles that suck into vanishing points and confound perspective, and be seduced by curves of such overblown sensuality. And in this litany of effects, they will find the most permanent record of the heady, liquid state of mind of millennial abstract-boom economics. We might rechristen these freakish sites as museums of late capitalist experience, monuments to our quaint faith in the global markets.

Parametric
Urbanism 1
(2005-2007), by
Design Research
Laboratory (DRL)



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Moore Street, Glasgow, by Elder and Cannon,
JM Architects, Page\Park and Richard Murphy Architects



EAST END ENCLAVES

Richard Murphy Architects' innovative masterplan for Moore Street pioneers a new courtyard model for social housing in Glasgow, but the result is strangely fragmented, says *Miles Glendinning*. Photography by *Andrew Lee* >>



The east end is an 'old' urban zone that, contrary to stereotype, never had a golden age

The international story of the architecture and planning of urban housing in the 20th century has been a tale of sharp swings – between Modernist and anti-Modernist patterns, high and low density, and so forth. In Britain, these swings have been accentuated not only by our particularly violent fluctuations in housing tenure, from private to public and back again, but also by the longstanding 'Pugin tradition' of fierce architectural polemic between competing utopian visions.

One of the more esoteric and longest-running issues of contention in these housing wars has been the conflict between 'open' and 'closed' planning models. This was first provoked by CIAM's (International Congress of Modern Architecture) insistence on a striking, separate newness, with clearly geometrical blocks in continuous flowing space, laid out 'democratically' with no hierarchy, no front and back. The approach was exemplified by the *zeilenbau* pattern of rigidly parallel slabs, arranged to maximise sunlight orientation 'for all', without any regard for existing urban contexts. This pattern was realised on a vast scale in Glasgow's Sighthill development (1961-8), with its array of parallel 20-storey towers. Over the second half of the 20th century, the pendulum swung gradually back from this extreme, with efforts to restore enclosure and public/private differentiation – a trend that began with the 1960s rejection of isolated, high towers in favour of complex 'low-rise, high-density' layouts, and culminated in the Post-Modern years' championing of the 'traditional street'. Now, however, the pendulum is returning to greater openness, as shown strikingly in the Moore Street project, the second phase of the Graham Square development in Glasgow.

Built by the Molendinar Park Housing Association (MPHA) – one of the most innovative of the community housing organisations that sprang up in the city during the 'tenement rehab' years of the 1970s – Graham Square is an enclave of careful regeneration in the vast, alienated expanse of Glasgow's east end. This swathe of the city is a palimpsest of jumbled fragments of survival and redevelopment, randomly and at times brutally juxtaposed, as in the trenches of an archaeological 'dig'. The east end is an 'old' urban zone that, contrary to stereotype, never had a golden age. Scramply semi-industrial in the 19th and early 20th centuries, it was

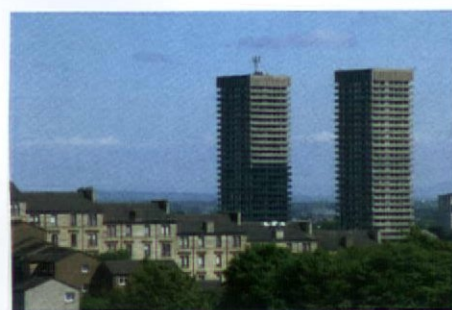
subjected to the most invasive of Glasgow's vast clearances in the 1960s and '70s. This bureaucratic juggernaut of destruction was only just underway when Modernist tower blocks fell from fashion, and was still in full swing when the first efforts at environmental repair and population stabilisation began in 1976, in the form of the 1,620ha, multi-agency GEAR (Glasgow Eastern Area Renewal) project.

By the late 1980s, the resulting landscape was an atomised mosaic of wide roads and almost invisible low-rise, brick, 'vernacular' housing, sanitised by greenery and dotted randomly with the stumps of 19th-century tenements. Of the occasional Modernist public-housing schemes, the most spectacular is the 31-storey, twin-towered outcrop of the Bluevale Street project (1963-6), half a mile east of Graham Square. This landmark will hopefully be retained in any regeneration scheme, rather than wastefully demolished.

In Glasgow, as in most other western European cities, the 'return to the street' reached its climax in the Post-Modern years of the late 1980s and early '90s. A campaign to save and rehabilitate 19th-century tenements elided smoothly into a drive to bulldoze Modernist open-plan areas of redundant council housing, substituting them with mixed-tenure 'new traditional' tenements lining 'reconstructed traditional streets'. The most notable example of this is the Crown Street project in the Gorbals, ongoing from 1992. So when the first phase of Graham Square – a redevelopment of a redundant meat market with mixed-tenure housing – was built in 1998-9, it took the form of an unambiguously Post-Modern piece of urbanism.

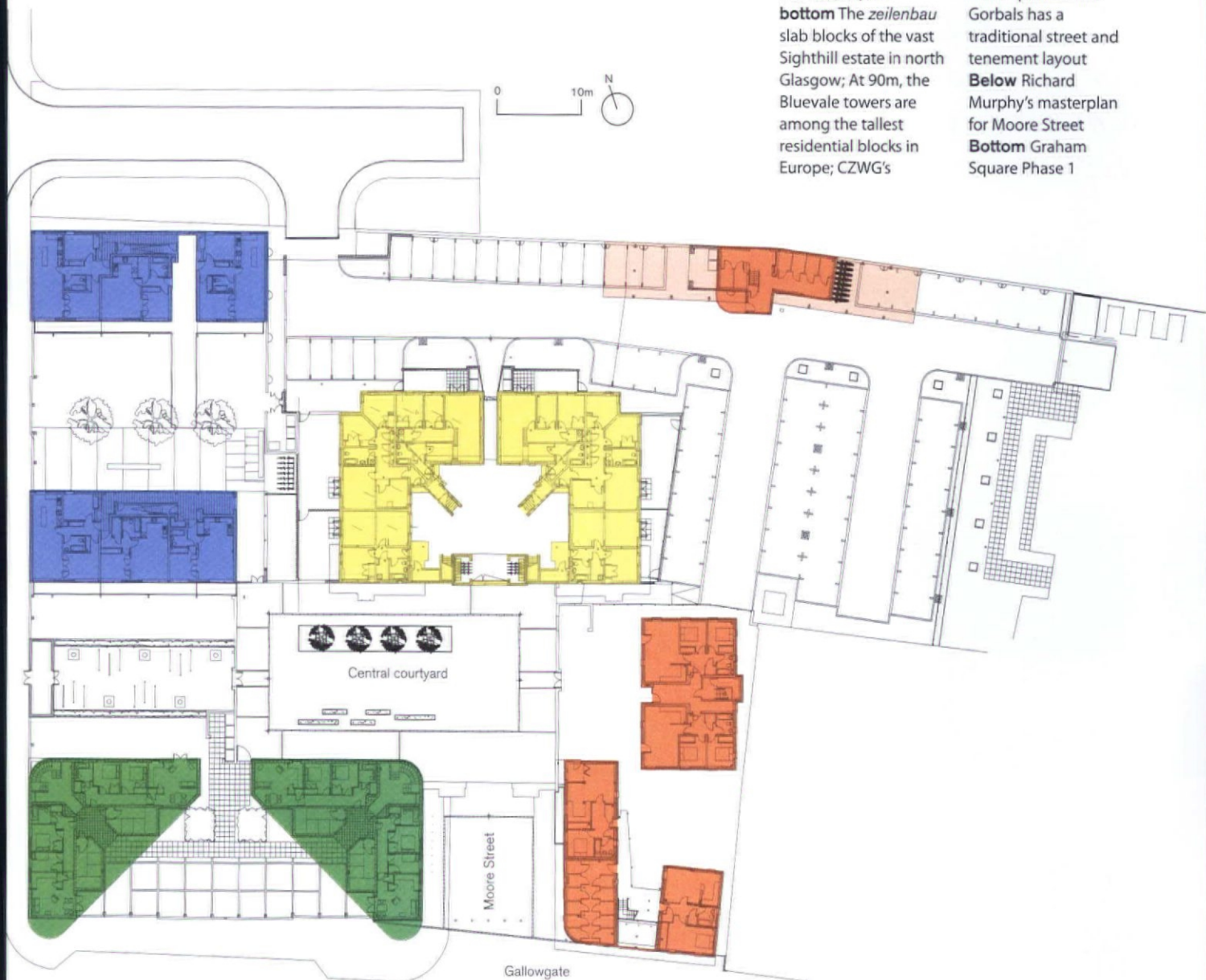
The project grouped blocks by three architectural practices – Richard Murphy, Page\Park and McKeown Alexander (now part of JM Architects) – around a 'traditional street', partly fronted by freestanding preserved sections of the classical market facades. Much of this phase was actually designed in an overtly Modernist 'style' – one of Glasgow's harbingers of a wider loosening-up of urban design, which rejects sharply divided front-back planning for a more fluid spatial approach, allowing deeper plots to be exploited without wasteful empty space in the middle.

Under the direction of Rob Joiner, a longstanding Maecenas of progressive, locally



Far left, top to bottom The *zeilenbau* slab blocks of the vast Sighthill estate in north Glasgow; At 90m, the Bluevale towers are among the tallest residential blocks in Europe; CZWG's

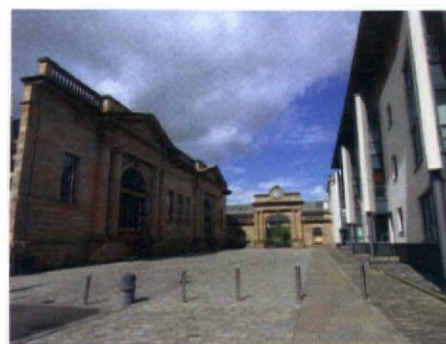
masterplan for the Gorbals has a traditional street and tenement layout
Below Richard Murphy's masterplan for Moore Street
Bottom Graham Square Phase 1



rooted regeneration in Glasgow, MPHA has consistently attempted to keep pace with the latest developments in housing architecture and urban design. So when, in 2005, it finally embarked on the second phase of Graham Square at Moore Street, it was little surprise that MPHA rejected proposals for a 'street'-based layout repeating the Phase 1 formula. Instead, through a limited masterplan competition involving all three Phase 1 architects, plus Elder and Cannon Architects, it chose a more spatially innovative concept by

Richard Murphy Architects.

The competition arrangements provided that the 93-dwelling development would be divided between all four firms, working to the winning masterplan. Murphy's concept for Moore Street was intended to deliver a decisive riposte to the lingering appeal of the 'traditional street and tenement' ideal in Glasgow. It pioneers a new pattern of semi-private courtyard development, breaking down the sharp facade separation of front and back. This approach was foreshadowed in 1999 >>





*Moore Street is
defensively walled
in against the urban
deprivation around it*



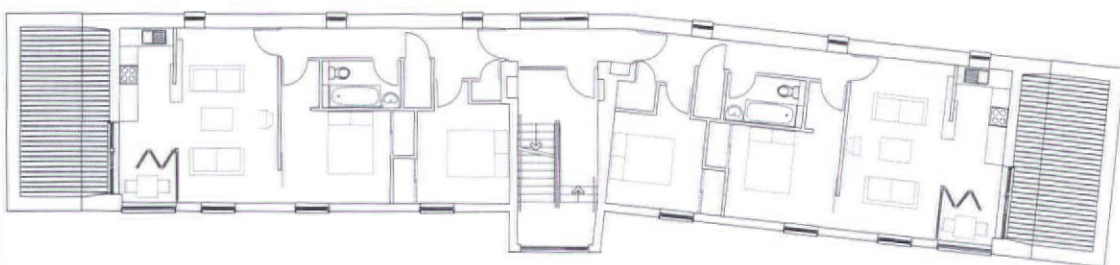
Above JM Architects clad this block with timber, linking it aesthetically with Page\Park and Elder and Cannon's schemes

by the multi-architect Homes for the Future demonstration project in Glasgow Green, masterplanned by Page\Park, with its loose ring of Modernist blocks around an inner courtyard.

At Moore Street, Murphy envisaged a loose hierarchy of courtyards. A main central space, entered from the city's Gallowgate area through a preserved market archway, is ringed by four distinct sub-developments, each with its own semi-private courtyard space. This strategy of breaking open the Post-Modern, 'traditional' street block and establishing a hybrid, less rigid relationship between private and public space is not, of course, unique to Scotland or Glasgow, but forms part of a broad international movement in the urban design of social housing. The Netherlands, for example, resembles Scotland in its vast expanses of older, four-storey tenements on shallow perimeter-block layouts. Here, a protracted urban-design vogue for the

'traditional street' has been followed recently by a sharp reaction towards deeper, more freely planned layouts, as in the 60m-deep, multi-functional blocks of the new Ijburg housing zone of Amsterdam, or the more radically opened-up network of Dutch firm Venhoeven CS' Rietlanden development in the same city.

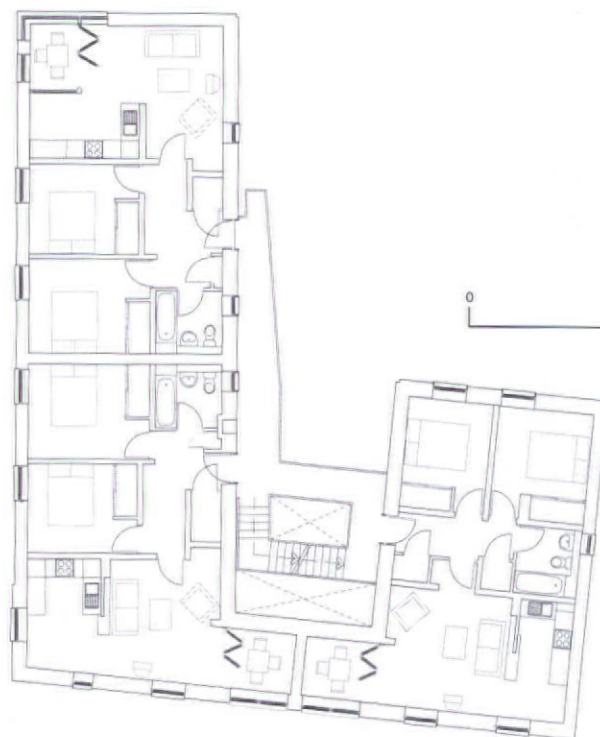
But the Dutch experiments enjoy the benefits of a proactive planning system that encourages a unity of concept and a wider integration with context that is unthinkable in Britain, with its reactive planning machinery and its aggressively individualistic culture of urban design. Here, far from aspiring to co-ordinate the design of entire city zones, the most architects can hope for is to build isolated demonstration projects, islands of care and excellence rather like city planner Patrick Geddes' turn-of-century 'conservative surgery' enclaves in the slums of Edinburgh's old town. Moore Street is necessarily planned as a >>

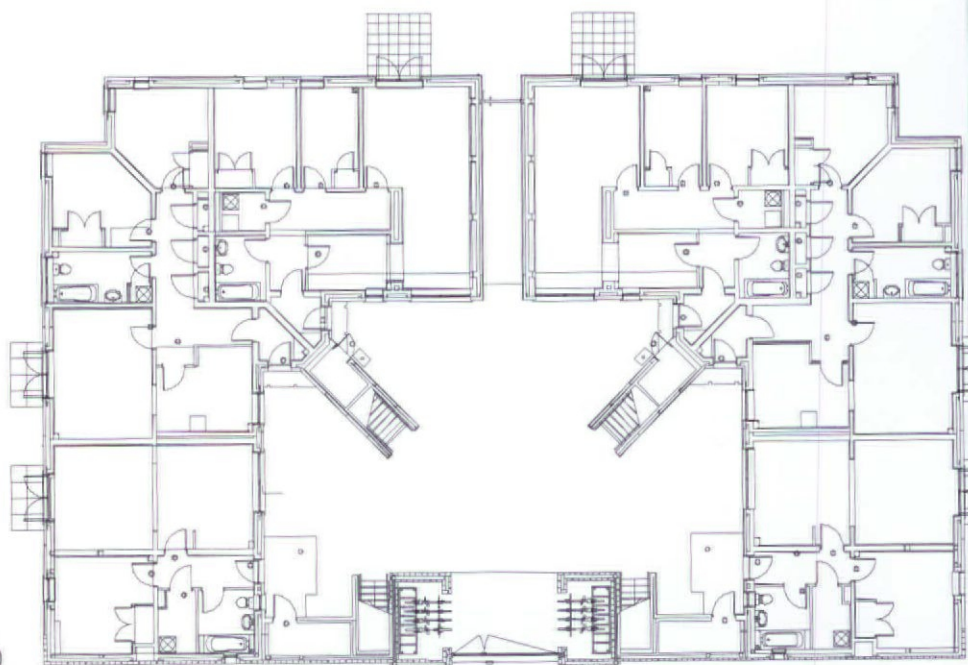


Left and below

JM Architects' elevated block at the rear of the site

Bottom left The firm's scheme on the Gallowgate





This page Richard Murphy's scheme combines 'bold sculptural force' with an Arts and Crafts 'house style'



There is an unsettling tension between Richard Murphy's project and the other architects' schemes



cul-de-sac – a jewel in a wasteland, defensively walled in against the urban deprivation around it, and separated from Phase 1 of Graham Square by a dilapidated Victorian workshop yard that could not be brought into the project.

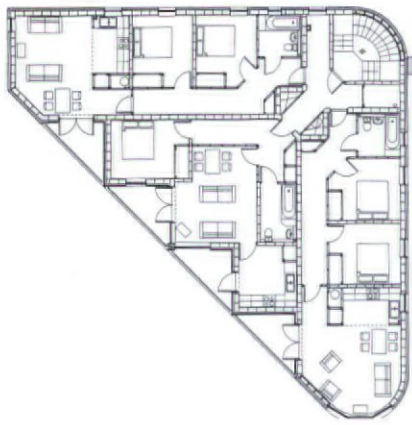
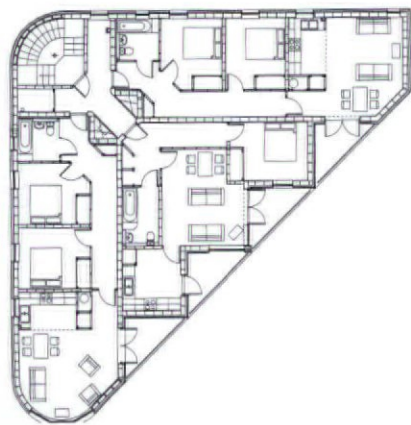
This more individualistic framework also reached into the site itself, and conditioned the design and layout of Moore Street's various blocks. Each is strongly effective in its own right, yet they are disjointed as an ensemble, despite the unifying effect of the bold, blue-brick walling at ground-floor level that runs around and throughout the site. The overall practical aim of maximising south-facing living-room exposure, as well as the utopian aspiration of 'creating community', is actually the same as in the *zeilenbau* slabs of Sighthill, but here each block sets about it in different and sometimes conflicting ways.

Murphy's block is axially located on the prime plot and contains MPHA rental flats. It embraces the sun through an expansive U-shaped plan, embedded with complex >>



This page

The curved bay windows of Page\ Park's scheme recalls Glasgow's 'cult of the tenement'



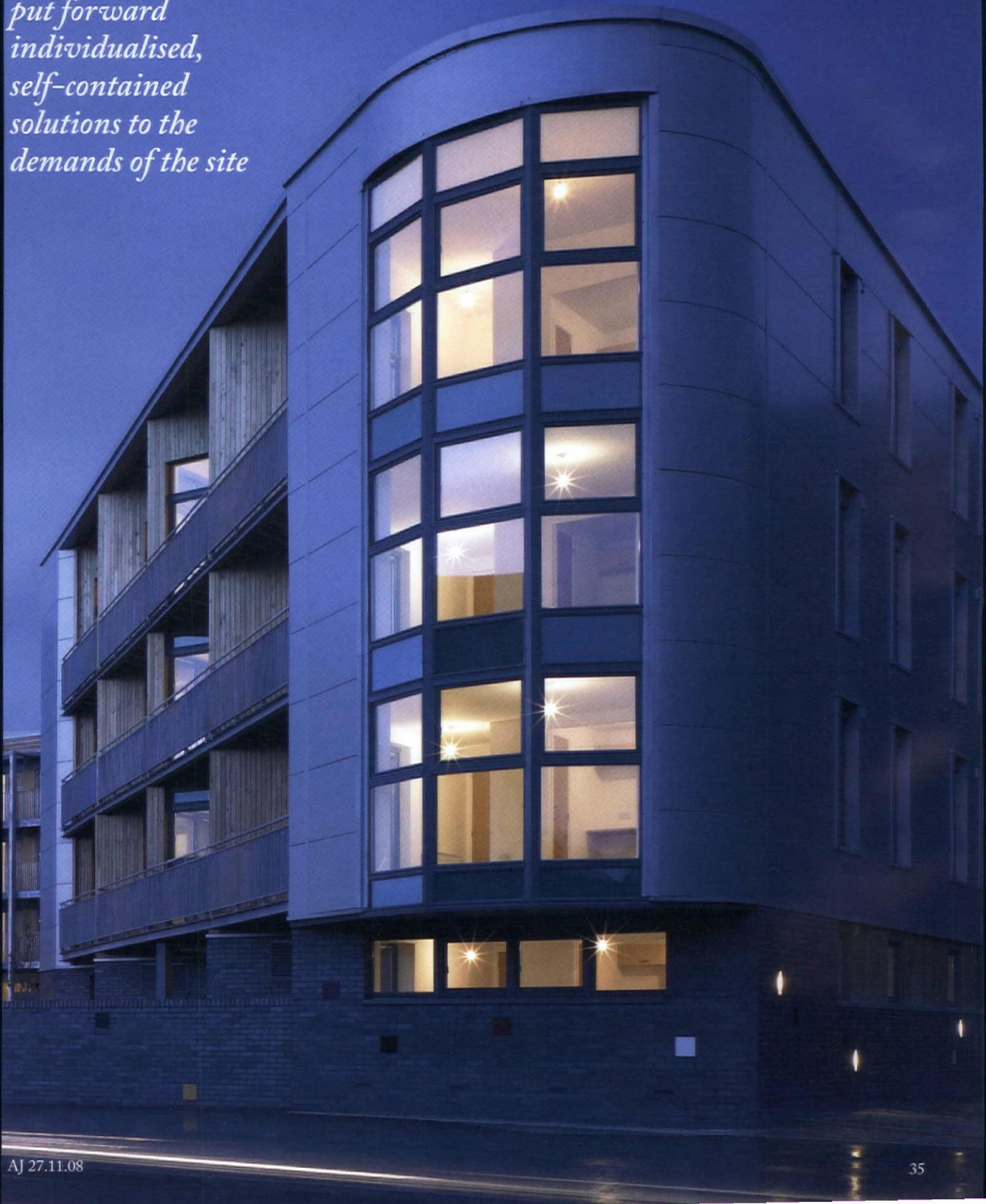
external staircases and interlaced with small, private open spaces designed to facilitate casual social interaction. The whole composition combines bold sculptural force with the inventive, slightly Arts and Crafts intricacy of Murphy's distinctive 'house style'.

However, the side and rear facades of his block are very different: plain, massive, even utilitarian. This sharp difference between 'facade' and 'back' – an almost Post-Modernist approach – sets up an unsettling tension between Murphy's project and the other architects' schemes. Their blocks, for a mixture of rental and sale properties, all adopt a sleek and, in some ways, more conventional Modernist style, with much use of timber cladding. Yet despite this superficial resemblance, they too put forward individualised, self-contained solutions to the demands of the site.

Page\ Park's scheme turns its back on the central space with a splayed, south-facing main 'facade' to Gallowgate, elegantly framing its own courtyard with flanking, curved bay windows (residually recalling the cult of the tenement). On the other side, though, is a utilitarian 'back wall', faced in a stark, almost commercial-style cladding that confronts the refined, timber-faced facades of Elder and Cannon's blocks. This restrained pair of simple *zeilenbau* slabs align east-west and feature spectacular, continuous south-facing balconies. These also feature the same disparity between richly elegant front and severely plain rear facades – a segregated approach that 1930s Modernist pioneers thought they had consigned to history, along with all the other relics of Victorian capitalism. Even in >>



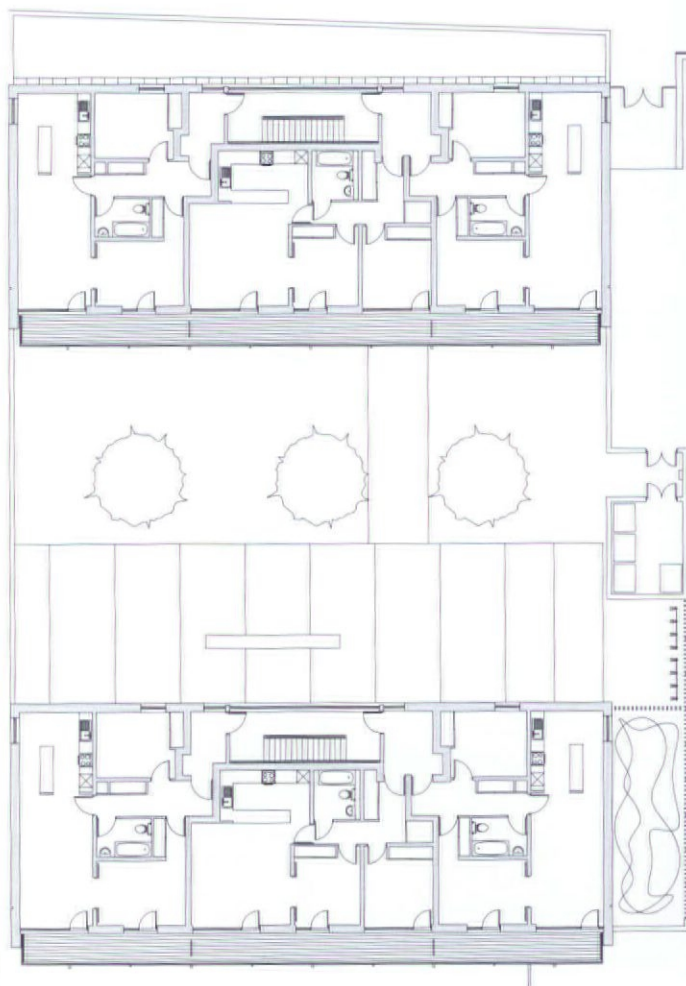
*All the architects
put forward
individualised,
self-contained
solutions to the
demands of the site*





This page The elevations of Elder and Cannon's blocks contrast sharply in their materiality

Top right Moore Street sits alongside Graham Square Phase 1 in Glasgow's 'atomised' east end





JM Architects' more intricate layout, the dark cladding of the Gallowgate frontage contrasts with the softer timber facing to the rear. The firm's two southern blocks enclose an intimate courtyard, whereas its northern block, commissioned directly by a group of local residents, seems marooned in an expanse of car parking at the north end of the site.

Internally, all the flats, whether for sale or social rental, have the same level of finish, and are comparable spatially to Parker Morris space standards. Some of Moore Street's more adventurous spaces are in Murphy's scheme, in particular the rooms in the upper-floor rental homes. Their chunky forms project aggressively beyond the roofline, but internally the glazed corners and low sills increase the sense of space.

What, if any, are the wider implications of this innovative, yet fragmentary project? Perhaps this: if today's economic crisis has brought an end to the laissez-faire bullishness of the private housing market – including the aggressively 'iconic' apartment outcrops that have recently disfigured most British cities, such as the Glasgow Harbour development – the time might now be ripe to elaborate our planning system. A more proactive and creative system might allow the individual qualities of projects such as Moore Street to connect with, and benefit from, a wider context. ■

Miles Glendinning is director of the Scottish Centre for Conservation Studies and reader in architecture at Edinburgh College of Art

Start on site date April 2007

Contract duration 18 months

Gross external floor area 7,640m²

Form of contract SBCC Standard Building Contract for Use in Scotland (Revised May 2006) with Contractors Design Portion (JCT 2005)

Total cost £11.6 million

Works cost per flat Elder and Cannon £93,180; JM Architects £112,467; Page\Park £99,342; Richard Murphy Architects £96,716

Client Molendinar Park Housing Association

Masterplanner Richard Murphy Architects

Architect Elder and Cannon; JM Architects; Page\Park; Richard Murphy Architects

Structural engineer SKM Anthony Hunts

Services engineer Fulcrum Consulting

Quantity surveyor and planning supervisor Brown + Wallace

Main contractor CCG

Annual CO₂ emissions Not calculated

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Nearly 100 different manufacturers distribute timber windows to the UK.

Hattie Hartman takes a closer look at six of the best

The introduction of the Code for Sustainable Homes and growing interest in models of low-energy design, such as Germany's PassivHaus standard (AJ 28.02.08), has increased demand for energy-efficient windows, particularly timber ones. The marketplace is growing – leading

supplier Green Building Store estimates that close to 100 manufacturers distribute timber windows in the UK that exceed Part L requirements and two UK firms are set to begin national production of triple-glazed units.

US window and door manufacturer Jeld-Wen has created a triple-glazed, side-hung, outward-opening casement specifically for the UK market that meets the PassivHaus standard for a whole window U-value of less than $0.8\text{W/m}^2\text{K}$. Next year, Soundcraft in Kent will launch a similar product. Double Good Windows' Justin Bere, director of Bere Architects, currently imports windows from German firm Bayer, but plans to eventually manufacture in the UK.

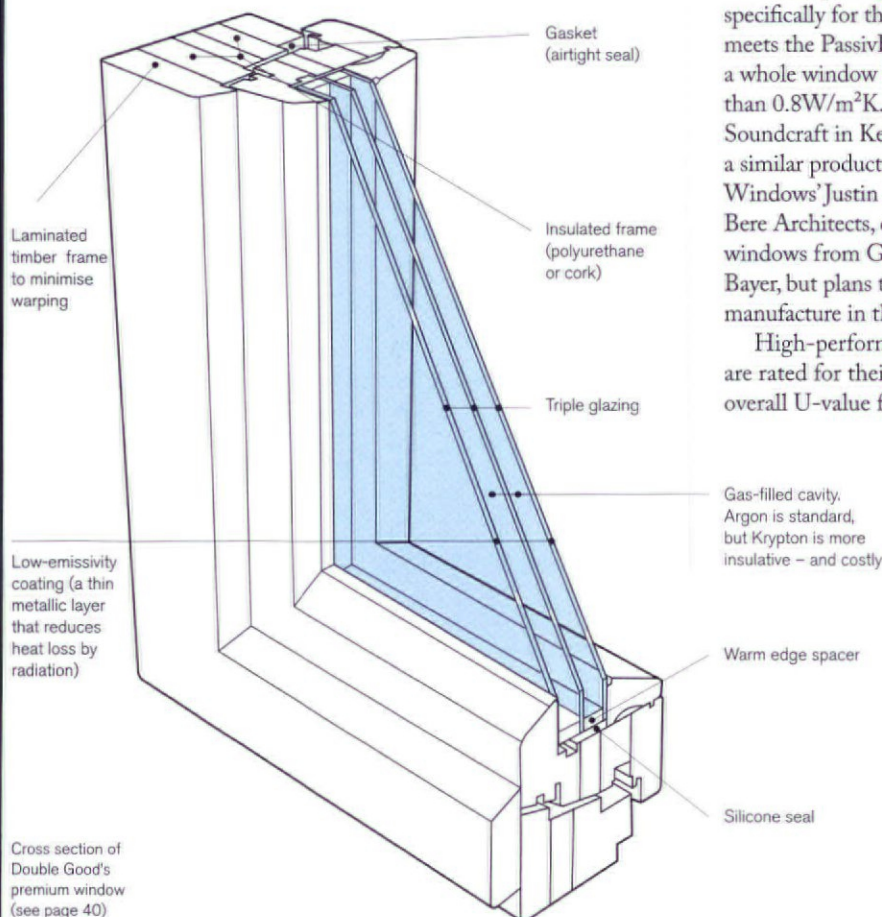
High-performance windows are rated for their U_w value, the overall U-value for the window,

and the U_g , the U-value for glazing. Other glazing considerations include the choice of hard or soft low-emissivity coatings. Soft coatings perform better but are easily damaged and more expensive.

A range of considerations relate to the timber frame: its provenance and chain of custody, certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC); the use of laminated construction to minimise warping; and the use of non-toxic finishes. These issues will be covered in depth in a TRADA guide to high-performance wood windows, to be published in February 2009.

High-performing windows are typically argon-filled, with krypton as an optional upgrade, and the material of the spacer bars that hold the glazing in place is polymer, glass fibre or structural foam rather than aluminium. To meet the PassivHaus standard of less than $0.8\text{W/m}^2\text{K}$, the frame also requires more than the usual insulation.

HTA Architects has considered a number of imported windows, but believes that using a UK-based firm will facilitate better installation. The practice is now building a mock-up to test the performance of Jeld-Wen's DreamVu windows for its Hanham Hall project in Bristol. >>



Continued from page 39

GREEN BUILDING STORE

Ecopassiv timber window

U-value 0.75W/m²K

Frame height 127mm

Glazing specification
4/16/4/16/4

Timber sourcing Pine from Poland

Timber certification FSC

PassivHaus certified No

Manufacturer Green Building Store

Start date of distribution in UK
2008

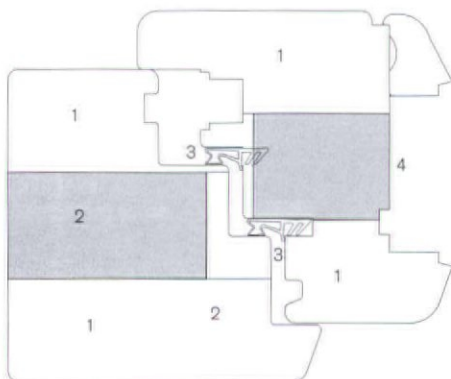
UK projects The first private houses are in the pipeline

Comments This FSC-certified window has a laminated frame with high-density polyurethane. The Green Building Store is currently launching EnerSign, a PassivHaus-certified window with surface-applied insulation, which makes recycling and dismantling easier

www.greenbuildingstore.co.uk



1. Laminated timber
2. High-density insulation
3. Rubber seal
4. Silicone seal



DOUBLE GOOD

Premium wood window

U-value 0.8W/m²K

Frame height 129mm

Glazing specification
4/12/4/12/4

Timber sourcing Sources near the German factory

Timber certification PEFC for softwoods; FSC for hardwoods

PassivHaus certified Yes

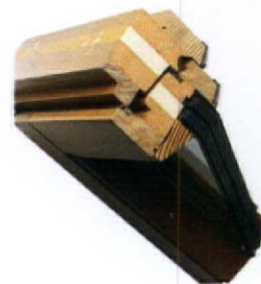
Manufacturer Bayer, Germany

Start date of distribution in UK
2007

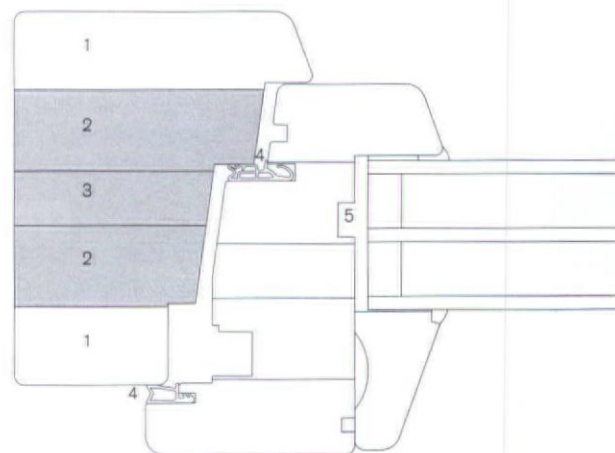
UK projects Allford Hall
Monaghan Morris: Crows Nest, Clevedon. Austin-Smith: Lord private house, North London. Bere Architects: various projects (see page 52). Prewett Bizley Architects: terraced house, East London

Comments The window has a laminated frame construction with polyurethane or cork insulation, and a double seal. Technical advice is provided by Bere Architects

www.doublegood.co.uk



1. Laminated timber
2. High-density polyurethane
3. Standard polyurethane
4. Rubber seal
5. Silicone seal



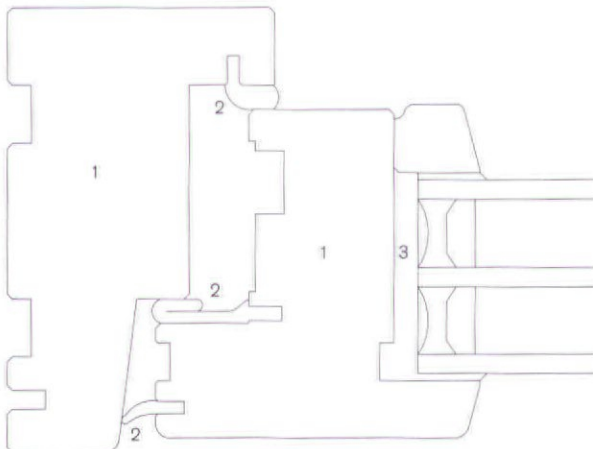
JELD-WEN**DreamVu window****U-value** 0.7W/m²K**Frame height** 99mm**Glazing specification**

4/8/4/8/4

Timber sourcing Softwood, predominantly Scandinavia**Timber certification** PEFC chain of custody, working towards FSC**PassivHaus certification** No**Manufacturer** Jeld-Wen in Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire**Start of manufacture** Early 2009**UK projects** HTA Architects: Hanham Hall (under consideration). Woodward Smith: Mount Sandford Green, Devon**Comments** The window has a triple-sealed uninsulated timber frame and its outward opening casement is designed for the UK marketwww.jeld-wen.co.uk

Above Double-glazed DreamVu window

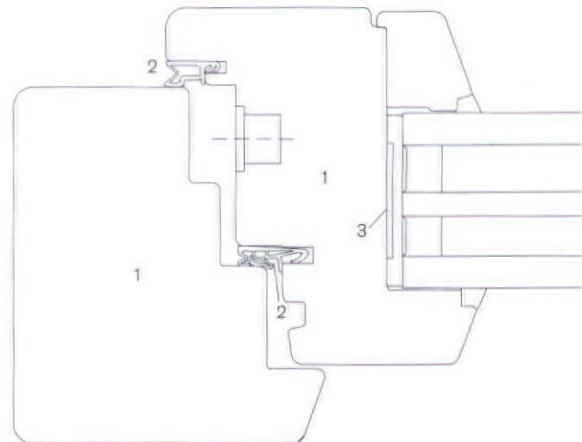
1. Laminated timber
2. Triple gasket seal
3. Taped seal

**KNEER-SUD FENSTER****HF 90 window****U-value** 0.8W/m²K**Frame height** 119mm**Glazing specification**

4/16/4/16/4

Timber sourcing Softwood from Bavarian forests**Timber certification** Majority FSC**PassivHaus certification** No**Manufacturer** Kneer-Sud Fenster, Germany**Start of distribution in UK** 2009**UK projects** None as yet**Comments** The window has an uninsulated laminated timber frame, and a stepped frame section with triple gaskets minimises thermal bridging. Krypton gas is used as standard
www.kneer-suedfenser.de

1. Laminated timber
2. Double rubber gasket seal
3. Silicone seal



Continued from page 41

NORDAN UK

NTech Passive window

U-value 0.7W/m²K

Frame height 105mm

Glazing specification

4/16/4/16/4

Timber sourcing Northern

European redwood

Timber certification PEFC

PassivHaus certification No

Manufacturer Nordan in Norway

Start date of distribution in UK
2007

UK projects Sheppard Robson:

Kingspan Lighthouse, BRE

Innovation Park. Gaunt Francis

Architects: Barratt Green House,

BRE Innovation Park. ECD

Architects: Hyde Housing

Association terraced house,

Nottingham

Comments This window has a laminated frame with single seal and self-draining decompression zone. Low Energy and Standard ranges are also available from Nordan

www.nordan.co.uk



1. Laminated timber
2. Polurethane insulation
3. Single gasket seal
4. Self-draining and ventilating void
5. Silicone seal
6. Aluminium bead



RATIONEL

Domus window

U value 0.9W/m²K

Frame height 108mm

Glazing specification 6/16/4

Timber sourcing Northern

European pine

Timber certification PEFC

PassivHaus certification No

Manufacturer Rationel in

Denmark and Poland

Start date of distribution in UK
1995

UK projects

ZEDFactory: BedZED and

RuralZED. Proctor and Matthews:

Newhall, Harlow and Greenwich

Millennium Village

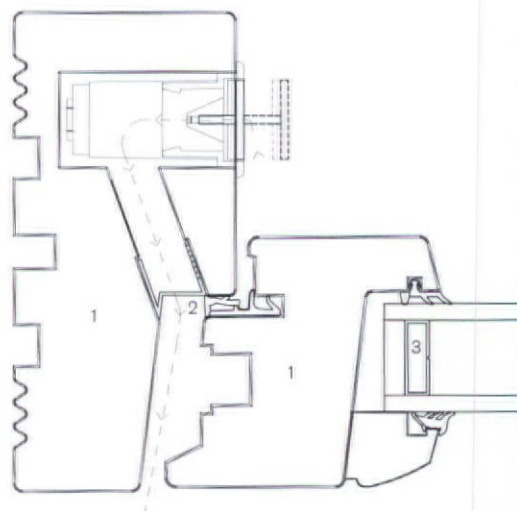
Comments Rationel was the leading supplier prior to the recent influx of triple-glazed units to the market

www.rationel.co.uk

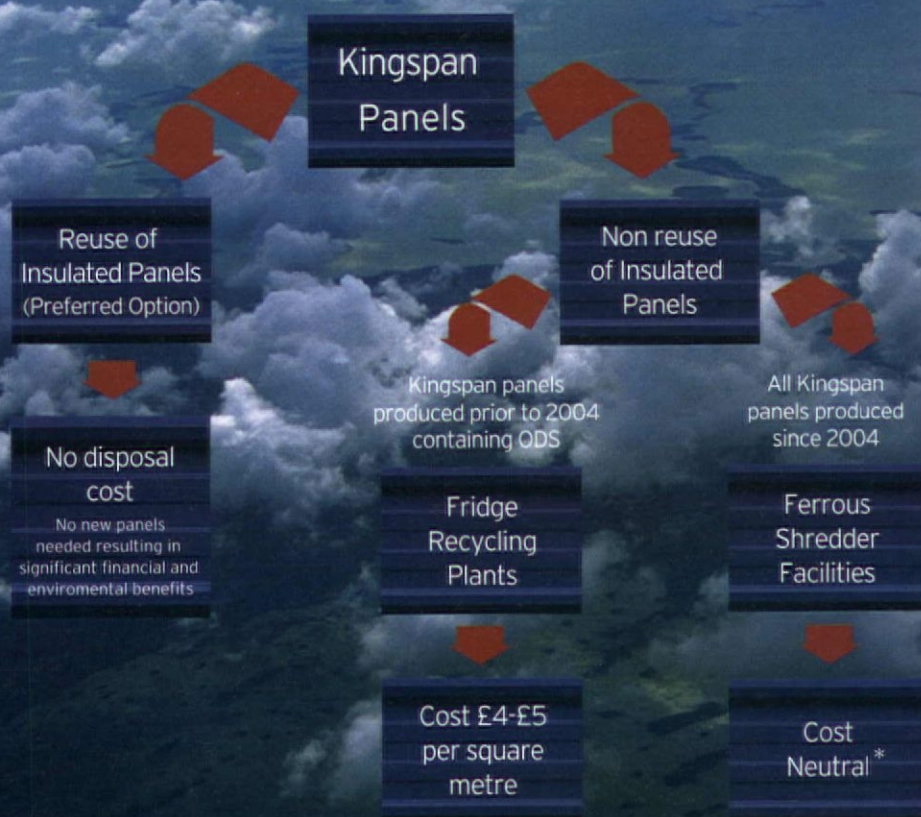


Above Double-glazed Domus window

1. Solid heart wood
2. Single gasket seal
3. Plastic spacer bar with aluminium surround



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* Subject to value of steel and transport costs at time of disposal, current scrap value of steel is approximately £100 per tonne.

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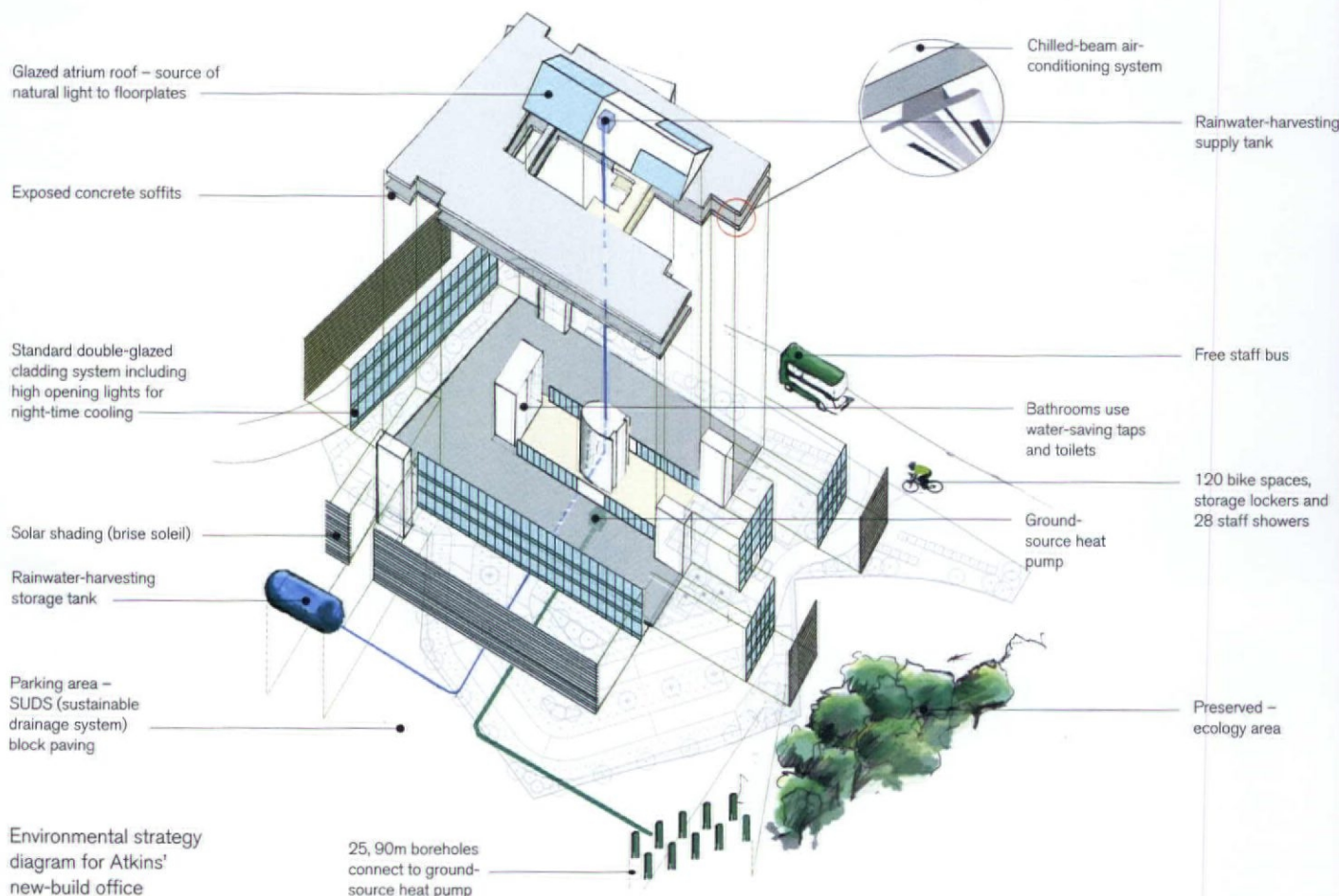
Placed 1st in Wales and 20th overall in The Sunday Times Best Green Companies 2008


Kingspan
Insulated Panels

CASE STUDIES

GREENING YOUR OFFICE

Hattie Hartman looks at how three practices made their offices exemplars of sustainability



BIG OFFICE ATKINS

Location Bristol (M4 and M5 junction)

Staff 1,000

Floor area 16,800m²

Cost £23.8 million

Predicted annual CO₂ emissions 30.72kgCO₂/m²


Atkins' new offices within the Hub, a speculative office building in a business park on the outskirts of Bristol, demonstrates how this conventional building type can address sustainability. Atkins director Martin Pease describes the project as 'a credible environmental solution achieved within the realities of today's marketplace'.

Approximately 1,000 employees will be relocated there from three nearby buildings next spring. Atkins' multi-disciplinary team (with the exception of M&E) was novated for the Design and Build contract.

The Hub was recently awarded BREEAM Excellent at design stage, with a score of 72.16 per cent. Pease says that this was the

result of a considered examination of cost savings and environmental impacts over Atkins' 17-year lease, rather than 'a pick and mix approach of which points would get us over the line'.

The architects opted for a site in the business park away from the M4 and M5 junction so that the building, a C-shaped plan with 18m-wide wings >>

- 
- Q:** Can I provide high performing energy-efficient comfort cooling and get a high BREEAM rating?
- Q:** How do I leave the soffit exposed to take advantage of the thermal mass of a building while providing additional comfort cooling?
- Q:** Which system integrates other prefabricated building services and provides low maintenance and whole life costs?

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SAS ISMs have been developed and tested by our German air distribution and static cooling partner Krantz Komponenten. CIBSE and RIBA accredited CPD seminars are available upon request.

For further information visit www.sasint.co.uk/isms or email enquiries@sasint.co.uk

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Below West elevation with fixed external louvres for shading
Bottom Detail of sunshading fixing to curtain wall

wrapped around a central atrium, could have opening windows. Fixed external louvres – the position, angle and spacing of which were modelled to balance the need for shading with the desire for natural light – shade all but the north elevation.

All the office floors have exposed concrete soffits with cooling provided through active chilled beams. The 3.5m ceiling height includes a notional service zone of 625mm so that the building can, if desired, be retrofitted with a conventional fan-coil system at a later date. In summer, the chilled beams can be turned off for night cooling through transom windows operated by the building automation system.

Out of every five panel-cladding bays, two 500mm-deep transom windows are openable, but apart from this the building is fully sealed. Energy-efficient lighting is incorporated into the chilled beams, and includes presence sensors that detect

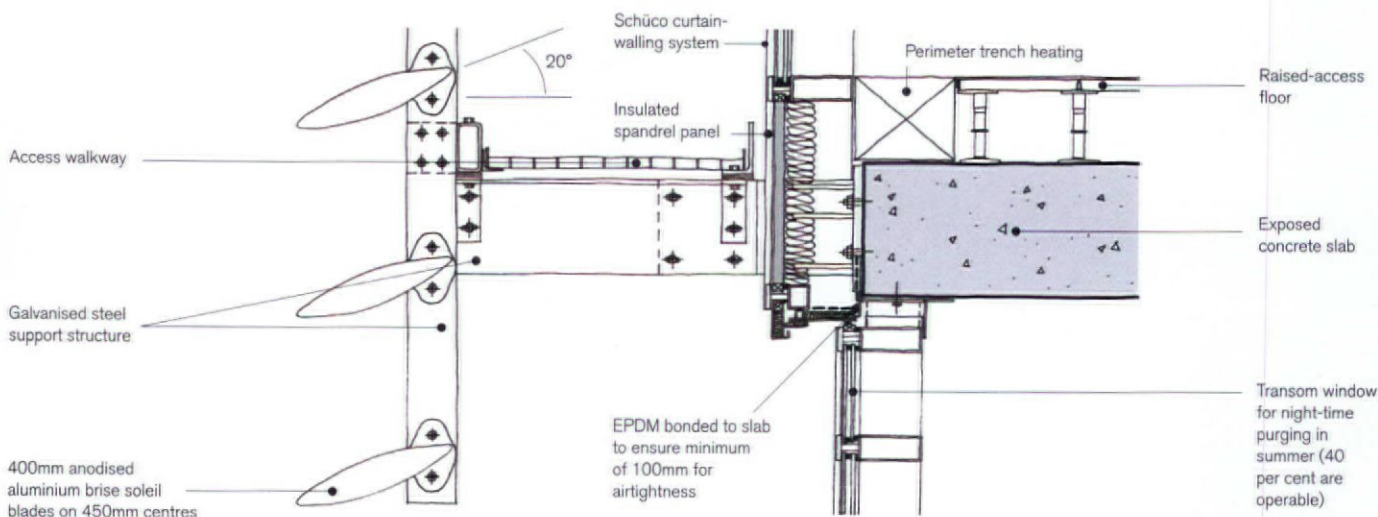
occupancy and photocells that dim in response to natural light levels. Mock-ups were trialled to ensure that the dimming is imperceptible.

In terms of renewables, Atkins has funded a system of 90m boreholes connected to a ground-source heat pump, predicted to reduce energy loads by 13 per

cent. The original scheme called for 125 boreholes, but access requirements for the site during construction meant that the final number was reduced to 25. A green transport plan was a key part of the project – 120 cycle spaces and 28 showers have been provided. However, the out-of-town site could turn off potential

cyclists, so five dedicated bus routes for Atkins employees have been allocated.

The Hub's predicted annual CO₂ emissions rate is 30.72kgCO₂/m² and the CIBSE benchmark for the general offices category is 75.1kgCO₂/m². Atkins has also committed to post-occupancy monitoring. >>



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MEDIUM OFFICE JOHN THOMPSON AND PARTNERS

Location Clerkenwell, London

Staff 80

Floor area 770m²

Cost £475,000

Predicted annual CO₂ emissions Not calculated

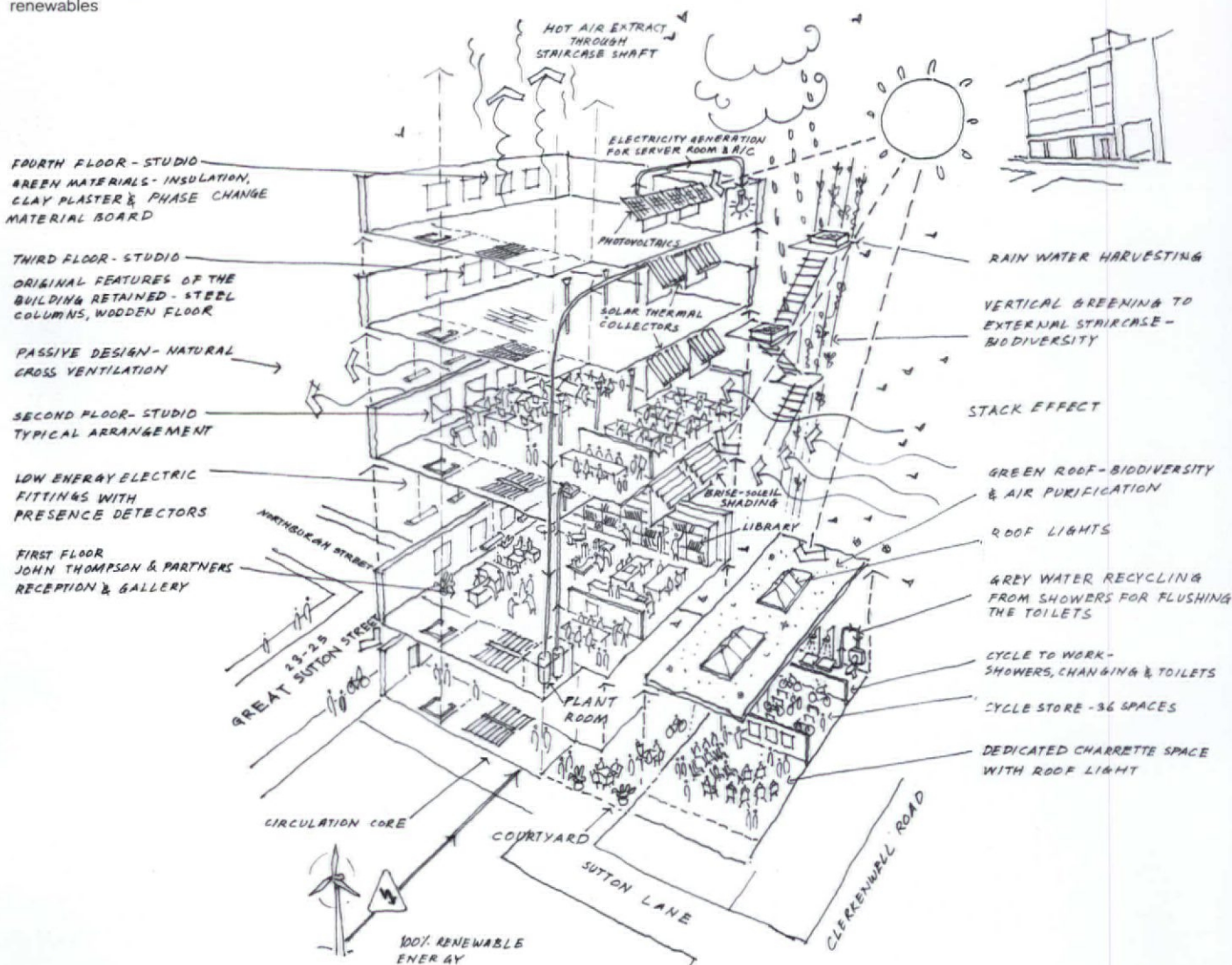
John Thompson and Partners' (JTP) refurbishment of a 1920s warehouse in London is both a didactic demonstration of greening existing stock in an urban conservation area and a model of social sustainability. At its heart are two communal spaces: a flexible ground-floor space, with a reception and a lunch area that doubles up as a

space for design crits and meetings; and a skylit charrette room. The project also includes an internal cycle store accommodating bikes for almost half the staff.

The south-facing rear elevation is an experiment in using renewables as brises-soleil. A 1.3kW array of photovoltaic panels – intended to offset about 25 per cent of the server room's

air-conditioning load – shades the top-floor windows. Evacuated solar-thermal tubes provide shading at second and third floor, and a steel shading device is used at first floor. 'We want to practice what we preach,' says Paul Miller, JTP special projects director. 'It's an experiment so that we can learn about these technologies, including the space they >>

Below JTP's environmental strategy for a 1920s warehouse includes natural ventilation and south-facing renewables



A practical alternative to hard flooring

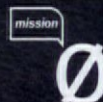
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Paradox is a stylish, new, sustainable carpet tile range manufactured using technology unique to InterfaceFLOR, which cleverly combines the practicalities of hard flooring with all the benefits of carpet tiles. High performance, durability and acoustic benefits make it the ideal choice for high traffic areas. The microtufted flat pile ensures compliance with DDA regulations and it can be cleverly combined with many other InterfaceFLOR designs to create striking borders, feature and break-out areas, creating a warm environment with the added bonus of easy maintenance.

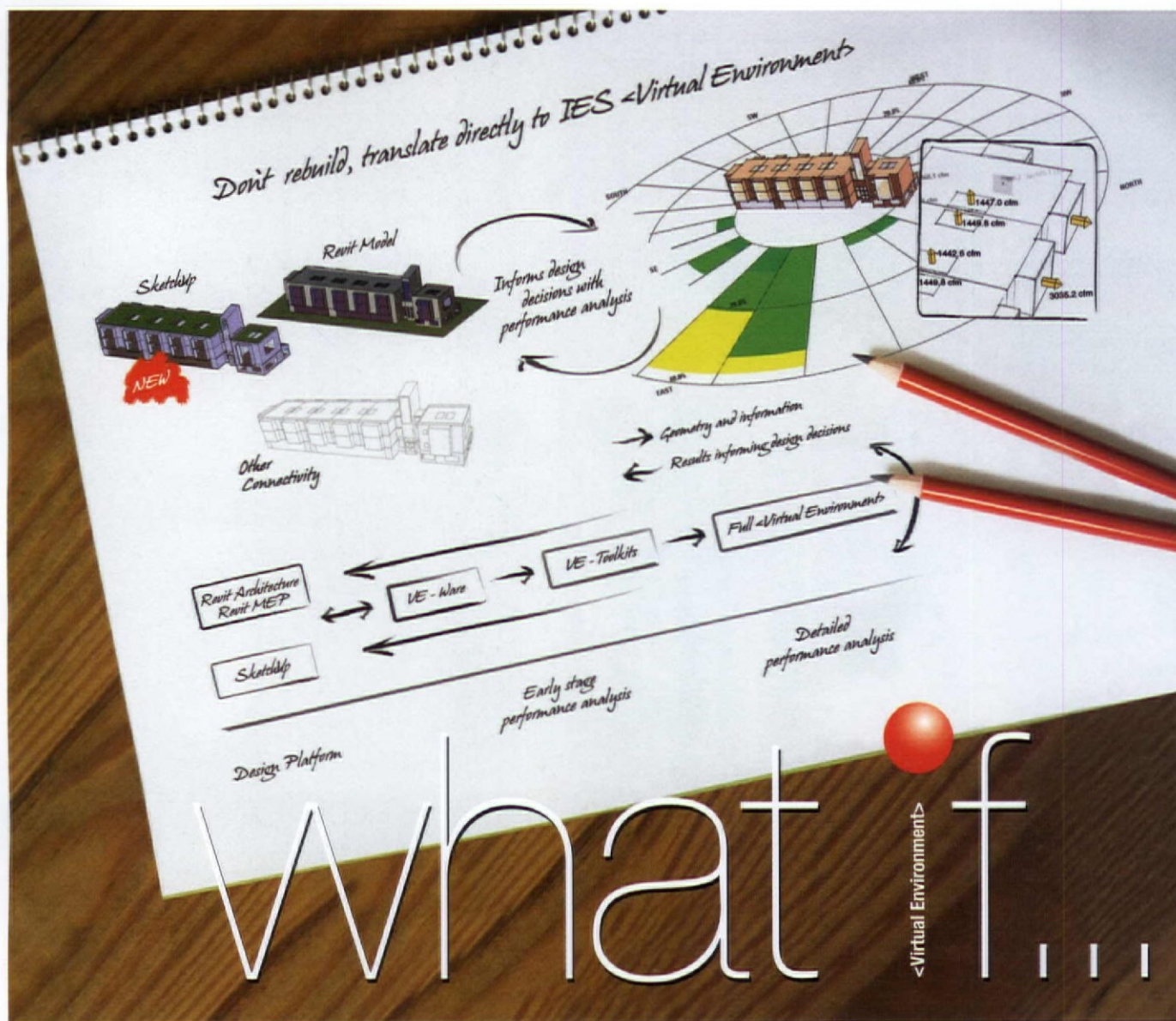
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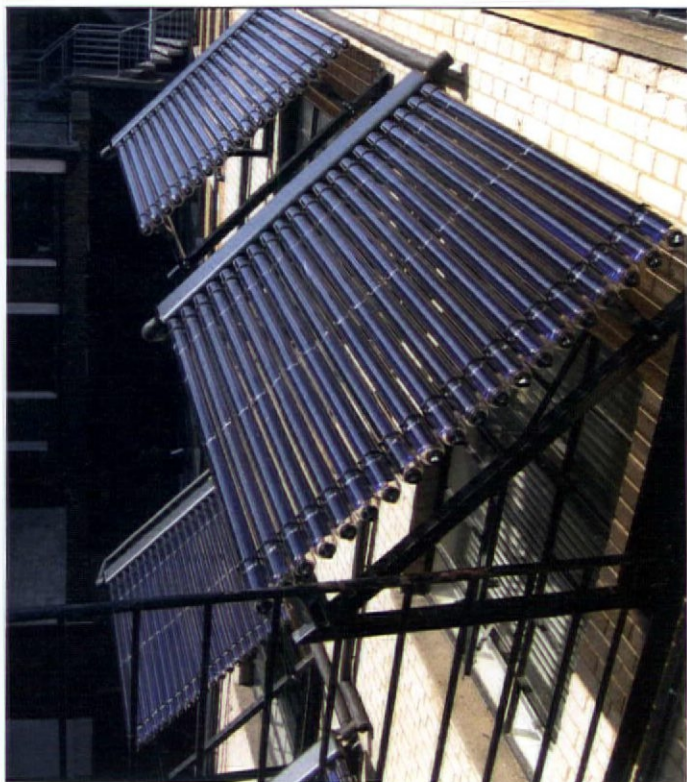
Architects can now easily build energy efficiency, lighting and thermal performance into their design as they go. Form, orientation, construction and use of passive solar principles can be optimised to ensure energy savings.

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Top left and top right Second and third floor windows are shaded by solar thermal tubes and first-floor

windows by a steel brise-soleil
Above A secure internal bike store encourages cycling

require and the energy they generate.'

The new office's X-plan depth is ideal for natural ventilation. Special winders were fitted to operate high-level windows, and all studio doors are on hold-open devices so that the stairwell can provide stack ventilation. Low-energy lighting has been zoned in rows parallel to the windows so that it can be switched separately, and rooms that are not in continuous use are fitted with presence detectors.

Other green measures include the provision of lockers and two staff showers adjacent to the cycle store. Showers are timer restricted and grey shower water is recycled to the low-flush toilets.

Green materials include ochre clay plaster on the walls of the main conference room, and three different types of insulation –

sheep's wool, eco-wool from recycled bottles and wood chip – each with its own plexiglass panel so it can be seen. To minimise heat gain on the top floor, the building's flat roof was painted with solar-reflective paint. In another trial installation, 1 x 2m phase-change panels by Energen have been suspended below the ceiling between rows of lighting. Paraffin within the panels acts as a heat sink during the day, when internal temperatures rise above 22°C.

Wall-mounted explanations, 25 in total, make the practice's sustainability measures explicit to staff and clients. The overall effect is a pleasant and unpretentious work environment. Miller plans to monitor the output of the renewables installations and will even plot daily bicycle and towel usage. >>

SMALL OFFICE BERE ARCHITECTS

Location Newington Green, London

Staff 8

Floor area 290m²

Cost Undisclosed

Predicted annual CO₂ emissions 27kgCO₂/m²

Below Bere Architects' new office includes renewables, a four-level green roof and a lap pool that acts as a solar heat dump

'*The Diversity of Life* by Edward O Wilson should be compulsory reading for everyone,' says Justin Bere of Bere Architects, describing the genesis of the elaborate roof garden he has built over his home and studio in London. When Bere and his staff moved in last August, it was the culmination of a six-year self-build project, which is ongoing.

'Most of the details were done on the backs of pieces of paper,' explains Bere, who worked with consultant engineer Max Fordham on the house's environmental strategy. Unwilling to pay £60,000 for full service engineering, Bere proceeded without a complete design, a cost plan or a contractor. He then discovered PassivHaus, the German

methodology for low-energy building (AJ 28.02.08). Although the house-cum-studio was by then half built, Bere incorporated many PassivHaus principles: super-insulation, triple-glazed windows, and a whole-house ventilation system.

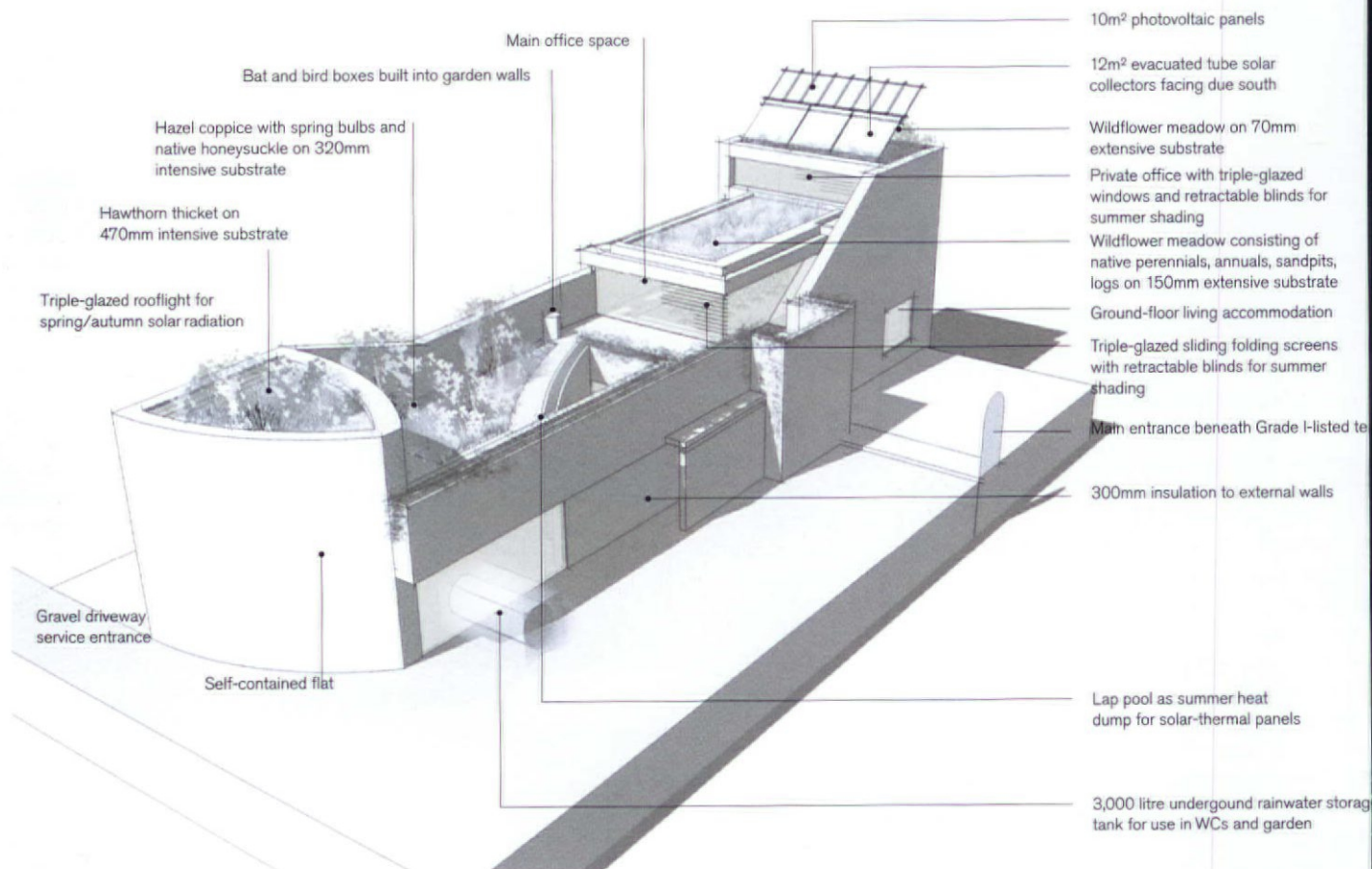
Unable to find suitable windows in the UK, Bere set up a company to import windows from Germany. He says that with certain modifications, such as adding insulation under the ground-floor screed and over the master bedroom, the building could be PassivHaus certified.

Airtightness has been a major concern. 'The Germans do three airtightness tests, the first before closing everything in when problems are easy to correct,' says

Bere. Despite not doing it the German way, he hopes to achieve airtightness of 0.6m³/m².hr @ 50Pa – very low for the UK.

Staff at Bere Architects can lunch in a roof garden, amid landscape architect Kim Wilkie Associates' native planting. The notion of elevating the garden over the house evolved from the desire to get more sun into the narrow mews site. Approximately 20 tonnes of soil has been hoisted on to the roof and arranged in four different planting substrates. Dusty Gedge of online green-roof resource Living Roofs (www.livingroofs.org) advised on the soil and meadow planting.

The roof gardens planting will require no watering once established. A 3,000-litre >>



Are you doing your bit?



Look! Not wanting to be over dramatic or anything, but the sands of time are running away. We all have an obligation to act more sustainably.

Kingspan Insulation has been acting on this obligation for a number of years now and was the first insulation manufacturer to publish an independently certified Ecoprofile for one of its product ranges and then to publish an independent review of the societal, economic and environmental sustainability of its manufacturing operations at its main UK site.

But... time moves on and Kingspan's philosophy is to not rest upon its laurels. Kingspan's work on sustainability is not about collecting badges, it is about demonstrating progress, and to this end Kingspan's ecoprofiling and sustainability review processes are revisited annually.

Kingspan Insulation has now published an updated version of its Ecoprofile for the Therma range of rigid urethane insulation products. The Ecoprofile, independently certified by BRE, shows an improvement in the environmental impact of the Therma range.

Kingspan Insulation has also published the results of the latest review of the societal, economic and environmental sustainability of its largest manufacturing facility at Pembridge, Herefordshire. This review process, carried out annually by Arup using the SPeAR tool, includes a statement of progress made by Kingspan and a list of commitments that Kingspan's sustainability team is actively working on.

Kingspan Insulation has made a start – HAVE YOU? Perhaps your first decision could be to only use materials from manufacturers that can demonstrate to you what they are doing about the holistic sustainability of their products.

Copies of the latest ARUP Sustainability Appraisal with Kingspan Insulation's improvement action plan or Kingspan's latest Ecoprofile are available from Kingspan Insulation on:

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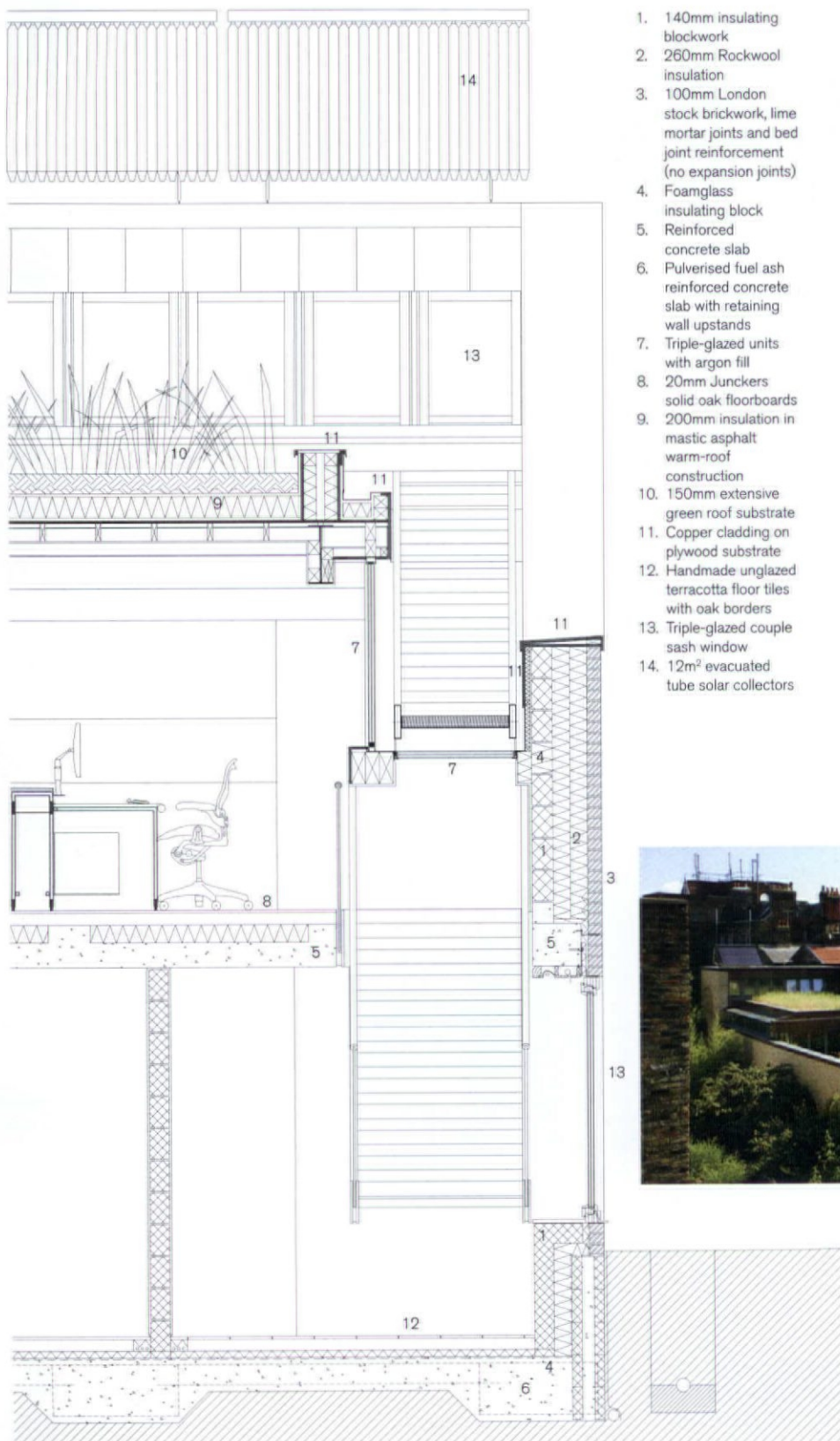


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6. Pulverised fuel ash reinforced concrete slab with retaining wall upstands
7. Triple-glazed units with argon fill
8. 20mm Junckers solid oak floorboards
9. 200mm insulation in mastic asphalt warm-roof construction
10. 150mm extensive green roof substrate
11. Copper cladding on plywood substrate
12. Handmade unglazed terracotta floor tiles with oak borders
13. Triple-glazed couple sash window
14. 12m² evacuated tube solar collectors

rainwater storage tank supplies the garden and lavatories, and is fitted with a flexipipe so that supply can be diverted from the mains if necessary.

Three solar panels are intended to supply the full hot-water requirement for the property, exceeding the normal 70 per cent estimate commonly cited in the UK. When sized to accommodate full winter demand, solar-thermal installations result in excess heat in summer. Bere has built an 11m lap pool on the roof to act as a heat dump for the excess heat from the panels in summer.

A simple palette of materials includes birch plywood certified by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC), handmade terracotta tiles on the ground floor and knotty oak flooring upstairs. The exterior is stock London brick with lime mortar joints, wire brushed to expose the aggregate. ■



Above View of mews studio with green roofs and solar panels beyond
Left Wall section showing super-insulation and green-roof build-up

Creating living space



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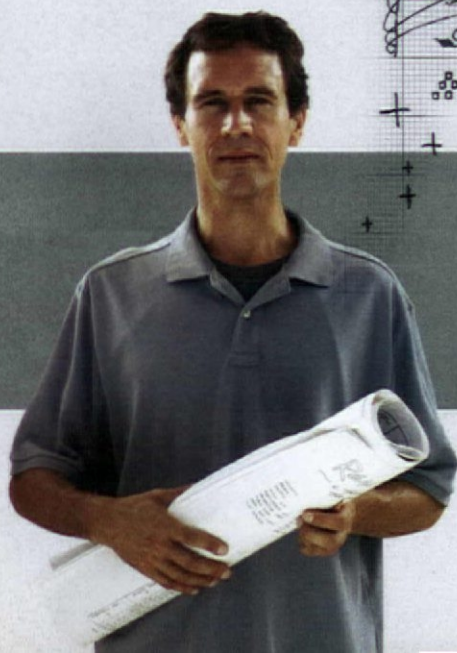
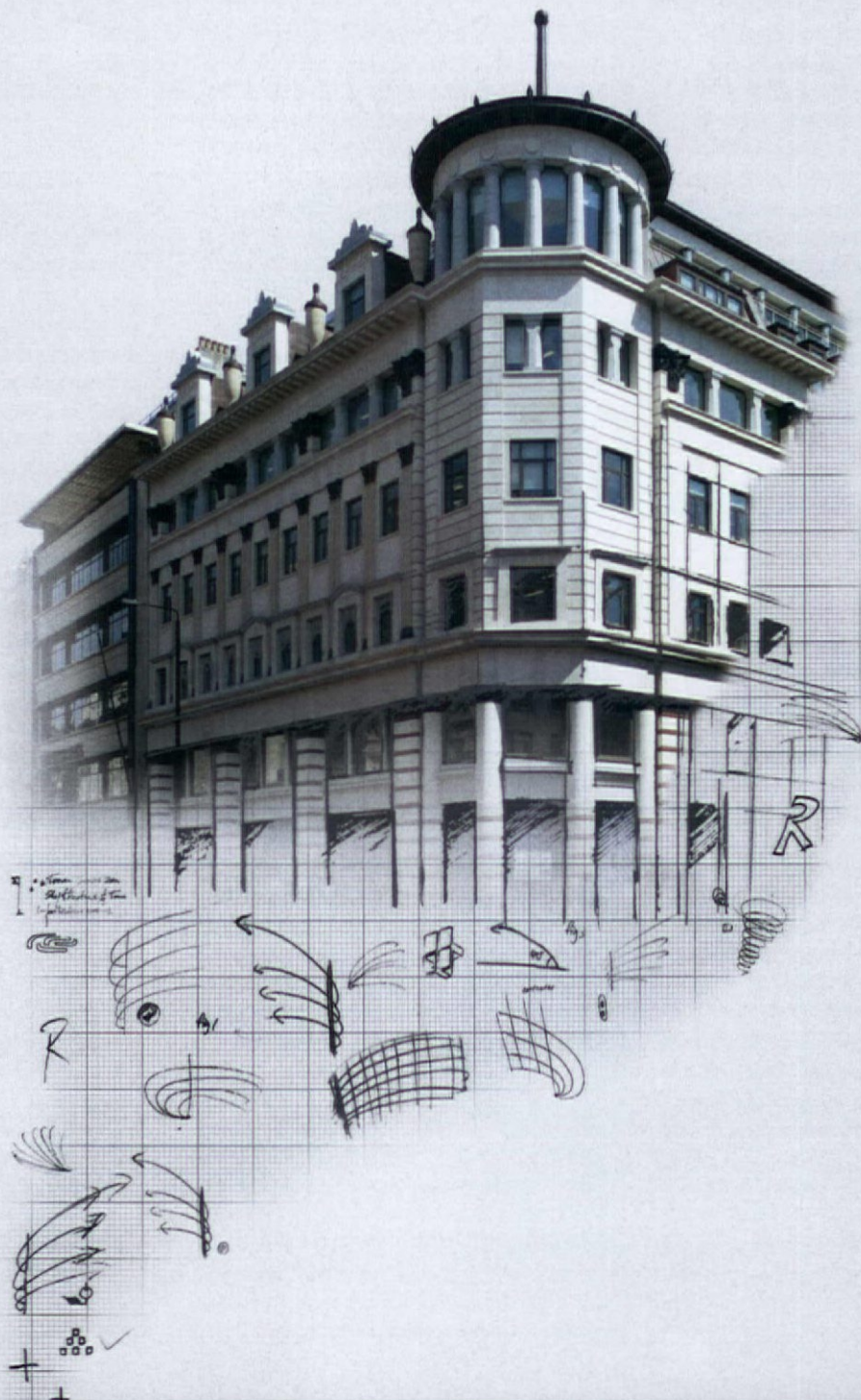
Architect - John Gilbert Architects

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In this section // Tom Dixon // Critic's Choice // Perspectives on Architecture magazine // Nudge // 5 Things To Do

The Critics



INTERVIEW

'I have an amateur's enthusiasm'

Tom Dixon, a designer more famous for chairs than buildings, tells James Pallister about his architectural ambitions and his practice's Centre Point refurbishment

'I feel architects' pain,' says Tom Dixon, a designer best known for his furniture and interiors, as he talks about a personal project of his – the conversion of a water tower in Ladbroke Grove, London. 'It's been completely frustrating. It took me two years to get permission, then there was a series of difficulties with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea over access rights,

and now it's in credit-crunch land.'

Planning frustrations aside, Dixon has a growing fondness for architectural practice. Dixon's firm Design Research Studio (DRS), has this week completed its refurbishment and interior redecoration of the 31st, 32nd and 33rd floors of Richard Seifert's iconic – and notorious – London landmark, Centre Point. Dixon launched DRS in 2007 to take

on 'high-concept interiors, large-scale installations and architectural design'.

'For someone who hasn't trained as a designer, never mind an architect, it's great to get there faster than people who have had to study for a huge amount of time and who are a lot cleverer than me!,' says Dixon. 'Working in architecture makes you a better designer.'

Famously, Dixon has no formal design >>

Clockwise from right

Dixon's Centre Point interior; Inn the Park; the water tower in Ladbroke Grove; Shoreditch House; Tokyo Hipsters Club

qualifications and came to prominence in the 1980s for his rough, welded furniture. As well as spending 10 years at Habitat, where he was head of design and later creative director, he established the brand Tom Dixon in 2002 to market his own design work.

When we meet in his central London studio, I find it to be a little more chaotic than the typical architect's. Scattered around the concrete-floored studios are his signature pieces – a Cone Light here, a Wing Chair there. Dixon's three operations – DRS, Tom Dixon and Artek, the company established by Alvar Aalto – are all based here.

'There's a symbiosis between the businesses, which is useful because you start seeing what people need and start seeing the gaps in your range,' says Dixon. 'But people assume that we want to stuff every interior with the furniture we do.' Artek provides him with an opportunity to do long-term research. 'I'm looking at recycled materials like fibre and bamboo. After five years of hell, we've got a

'I can put up a building in six months, including planning permission, but it takes me two years to get a chair into production'

really great chair and table out of it. That gives us the opportunity to do something different. I think what gave Aalto's furniture such longevity was its revolutionary manufacture.'

I mention that one of the attractions of furniture design to architects is the swift turnaround. 'Is that why they do it?' says Dixon, laughing. 'I've managed to reverse that. I can put up a building in six months, including planning permission [for example, the Tokyo Hipsters Club], but it takes me two years to get a chair into production.'

As well as Centre Point, DRS have London members' club Shoreditch House (2007), the interiors of the city's St James's Park café, Inn the Park (2004), and the group's first new-build project, the retail outlet Tokyo Hipsters Club (2005) in its portfolio.



DRS joined the project in January 2008, working alongside lead architecture consultant Mark Way, in association with Morey Philipps. 'I have an amateur's enthusiasm for the building,' says Dixon. 'It's not as pretty as One Kemble Street [a cylindrical tower in London, also by Seifert] where CABB's offices are, but it shares that great period of prefabrication and modular thinking. And if you contrast it with some of the blocks of flats you can see from the tower, it's actually a really quite rich building.' Dixon clearly has a fondness for Seifert. When his team

examined the architect's original drawings for Centre Point, they found doodles of sports cars in the margins. 'He was a real playboy,' he says.

Centre Point famously lay empty for 15 years, its wily developer Harry Hyams aware it was worth more unlet than occupied. Reviled at the time, its listing is testament to its importance to the London skyline.

Its listing hasn't, however, made Dixon's job any easier. 'In design terms it's difficult, because the ceilings are so low and even things like door handles can't be changed,'

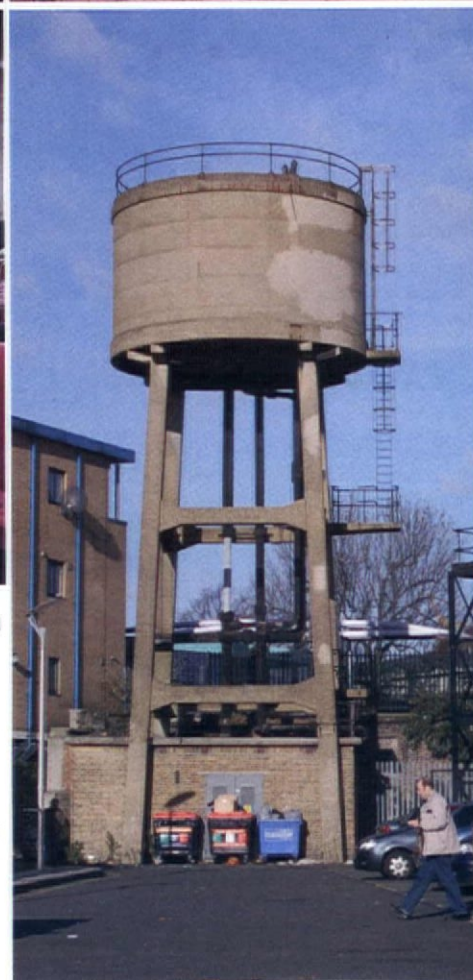


Critic's Choice

A new book shows the Swiss melding the sober and the serene, says **Andrew Mead**

Swiss architect Valerio Olgiati's recent show in Zurich was warmly reviewed in AJ 06.11.08, and now he figures in a book, *Three Architects in Switzerland* (Quart, £18), alongside his compatriots Beat Consoni and Morger & Degelo. Each practice presents five projects by means of photographs, drawings and brief texts, while critic Markus Breitschmid supplies a useful essay that looks at the last two decades of Swiss architecture and its precedents. Olgiati offers some 20 illustrations from his 'iconographic autobiography', an expanding collection of images that form the basis of his work and range from the red sandstone palace of Fatehpur Sikri in Uttar Pradesh, India ('an entire palace made out of a single material') to a close-up of a Japanese wood-joint.

There are several one-off houses, two schools, a home for the disabled and an art museum. Concrete predominates in buildings that are often as austere and monolithic as Morger & Degelo's House Müller in Staufen (pictured below). Not every project is outstanding – Morger & Degelo's glass skyscraper in Basel looks quite run-of-the-mill – but there is remarkable consistency here. Nothing is extraneous; the work is sober but serene. Breitschmid warns against idealising Swiss architecture ('ugly buildings exist in Switzerland too') but a look at publisher Quart's catalogue confirms the country's strength-in-depth. www.quart.ch



says Dixon. 'Given that the building had been used for offices, part of the job was to bring a bit of grit back into the inside, so a lot of the rough in situ concrete is left bare.'

Dixon says balancing three companies ensures he has a variety of work at different timescales. 'Something that started as a sideline is now crucial to our strategy and our success.' Despite his current frustrations over his water tower conversion, he has no plans to give up architecture. ■

Resume The untrained amateur done good, and now he's taken on architecture



IN PERSPECTIVE

Architecture in the air



IT WAS AN EXTRAORDINARY EVENT. THE LAUNCH OF PERSPECTIVES LAST month saw architecture brought right into the national perspective. All the national newspapers and most radio and television channels gave the magazine high priority. There aren't many new publications that get a major mention on the airwaves of CNN around the world....

We have had an amazing number of letters from our readers – something the editors particularly welcome. We want to hear from more of you, to discover exactly what you want from *Perspectives*. We have said loudly that *Perspectives* exists to give the readers 'a voice and a view'. As part of that commitment we are holding a series of roundabouts around the country to establish direct contact with readers.

Architecture is in the air – it is the subject for national debate. The Secretary of State for the Environment has now appointed a special architectural adviser; a few days after the launch of *Perspectives* the Labour Party held a seminar on 'Architecture'; and several major new programmes about architecture are about to be broadcast. *Perspectives* is the only national monthly that tackles the subject for the public.

It is rare enough for a new magazine to attract a leader in *The Times* – even rarer to find a magazine such as *Perspectives* singled out 'as a vital, continuing contributor to the national debate'. We will keep the debate going. We will continue to investigate those architectural and environmental issues which affect all our lives and we will campaign for an architecture and planning system more responsive to popular aspirations.

But seduction must also be part of the process by which the architectural debate is enlarged. In this issue of the magazine we use beauty, curiosity, eccentricity and sheer fascination to keep you entranced by the complex world of architecture. *Perspectives* gives you the key to the maze – and a broad route into the world of architecture.

THE 100 PERSPECTIVES



Prince & Prince opening one of another great project: the new office of the Prince of Wales. Prince Charles, who was born in 1948, spent nearly a decade (1970-1981) in the Prince of Wales office. There, he met George Osborne, born in 1971, who joined the firm in 1992. Prince & Prince was founded in 1998.

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Back Issues Prince Charles extended his architectural criticism to his own consumer magazine, says Steve Parnell

It's almost a quarter of a century since Prince Charles delivered his famous 'carbuncle' speech at the RIBA's sesquicentenary in 1984, making him the architectural critic that architects most loved to hate – a mantle recently acquired by Alain de Botton. Their shared crime is, of course, articulating the *vox populi* about architecture from outside the unblurred boundary of the profession.

The Prince put his money where his mouth was, building Poundbury and founding his Institute of Architecture, and on the 10th anniversary of his infamous speech and at the height of the last recession, he established a magazine, *Perspectives on Architecture*, to proselytise the message. 'The magazine reflects the aims of the Institute but is editorially independent,' claimed the first number of April 1994. The magazine was initially edited by Dan Cruickshank and published by Peter Murray, with an initial print run of 70,000, indicating its ambition to be read by the lay person rather than the architect.

Alongside adverts for Sainsbury's were those for shaker kitchens, orangeries and a fine art course at the Slade. The overall message was confusing to architects and philistines alike. The contents included articles on teaching children architecture in school (good), wind farms (bad), spiders in the home (creepy), Glyndebourne (crawly), Clive James' take on the Sydney Opera House ('an Olivetti portable typewriter filled with oyster shells') and Grimshaw's Waterloo terminal ('space station'). *Perspectives on Architecture* closed in March 1998, with the late Giles Worsley at the editorial helm and articles on Daniel Libeskind, Alvar Aalto, a Chelsea Arts and Crafts home and a North London High-Tech home. In early 1996, it featured 'Six of the best' new British practices, including Allford Hall Monaghan Morris and Penoyre & Prasad.

While Léon Krier is reappearing in the architectural press, Prince Charles' views remain as lambastable as ever. Nevertheless, the RIBA still holds dear its royal career.

Richard H. Thaler
Cass R. Sunstein

Nudge



Improving Decisions
About Health, Wealth,
and Happiness

BOOK

Good decisions need good information – so you'd better read Nudge, says **Kaye Alexander**

Nudge. By Richard H Thaler and Cass R Sunstein. Yale University Press, 2008. 293pp, £18

Nudge, written by University of Chicago economist Richard H Thaler and Harvard law professor Cass R Sunstein, introduces the concept of 'choice architecture'. The message is simple – the way choices are presented can 'nudge' a person into making a particular decision. People get better at making decisions when they have good information and prompt feedback. When they have neither, people make poor choices or refuse to choose at all, resorting to the easiest option, the default – which, more often than not, is the worst choice. Put simply, 'choice architecture' refers to structures that enable better decisions to be made.

Cue the first case study – Carolyn, a director of food services for a city school system, has a moral dilemma. Aware that the precise layout of the school cafeteria influences the food chosen, she wonders if she should adopt a laissez-faire attitude towards the foodhall – or encourage children to eat more healthily through presenting food differently?

Active choice architecture is 'libertarian paternalism', a seemingly oxymoronic theory which states that it should be easy for people

to make the 'right' choice – without taking away their own, individual freedom of choice. Those that need a little help arriving at an answer get a nudge in the right direction, while those able to strike out on their own can do so at no extra cost to their bank balance, health or future options.

Nudge is divided into five parts: the first looks at our innate flaws to explain how choice architecture works. This is the part where we are all supposed to have a wry smile on our faces as we recognise hiding our alarm clock to force ourselves to wake before hitting the snooze button. To some extent this attempt at endearment works, but too often it reads as cutesy self-consciousness on behalf of the authors. In their desperation to make a rather complicated idea accessible and relevant, they have gone overboard on amusing and self-deprecating anecdotes (poor Sunstein seems to be the butt of most of these). But the layering of examples illustrates that, ultimately, choice architecture

In their desperation to make a rather complicated idea accessible and relevant, the authors have gone overboard on self-deprecating anecdotes

is ever-present. 'There is no such thing as neutral design', they maintain, as every choice is consciously or unconsciously designed by someone, and we may as well use this power for good, conclude the authors.

The book's second part, focusing on money, provides much evidence of choice architecture at work and part three considers health in an equally salient manner. Despite being US-centric, these chapters offer clear I-can't-believe-I-haven't-thought-of-that examples, from presumed consent schemes increasing rates of organ donation to improving mortgage transparency by simplifying comparisons.

Part four looks at freedom of choice, which is somewhat soured by the authors' jarring suggestion that marriage should be privatised. It is the first time that a hint of their personal agenda is recognisable. Also, the problems do not need to be explained in as much detail, only the solutions – most readers are aware that too few save for retirement, and the authors' solution (an automatic enrolment policy) merits space.

But you'll forgive them, just as you'll forgive

the poorly designed page layout, the fact that the authors are not writers and their laboured instance on referring to all unidentified examples as 'she' for the reason that this book is important. It is important because we are subject to poor choice architecture everyday and potentially subject others to our own.

Thaler and Sunstein ask us to be aware of the machinery behind our decisions about how we make choices, rather than be hyper-aware all of the time, though I must admit while reading *Nudge* I did start to analyse my decisions and ask how I might have been subconsciously influenced. If taken to the extreme, this conclusion suggests we could all end up like TV trickster Derren Brown, with the ability to make people do as they wish.

The authors wisely pre-empt such 'slippery slope' overstatements in part five, 'extensions and objections'. Their point-by-point counter-argument should particularly encourage architects, who have long been careful to distance themselves from the accusatory cry of 'social engineering'.

People have begun to take note of the thesis: *Nudge* was allegedly compulsory summer reading for David Cameron's Conservative Party this year and Thaler is a consultant to Barack Obama's economic advisor. So if I have been successful in my own foray into choice architecture, this will be the next book you read.

Resume Choice cuts from Obama's favourite behavioural economists

5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

1 *Drafting Culture: A Social History of Graphic Standards*

George Barnett Johnston's beautifully put-together book documenting the development of architectural drawing standards. MIT Press, £25.95. www.mitpress.mit.edu

2 *G F Watts: A Victorian Visionary*

Get some Victorian Symbolism with this exhibition of the English painter's works. Until 26 April 2009. Guildhall Art Gallery Guildhall Yard, London EC2V 5AE. www.wattsgallery.org.uk

3 *Iwan Baan: Recent Works*

Last chance to see haunting architectural photography (pictured below) from Amsterdam's Iwan Baan.

Until 10 December. Architectural Association, Bedford Square, London WC1. www.aaschool.ac.uk

4 *Inner States: Berwick-upon-Tweed Film Festival*

Head up to Northumberland for some independent cinema, new and old.

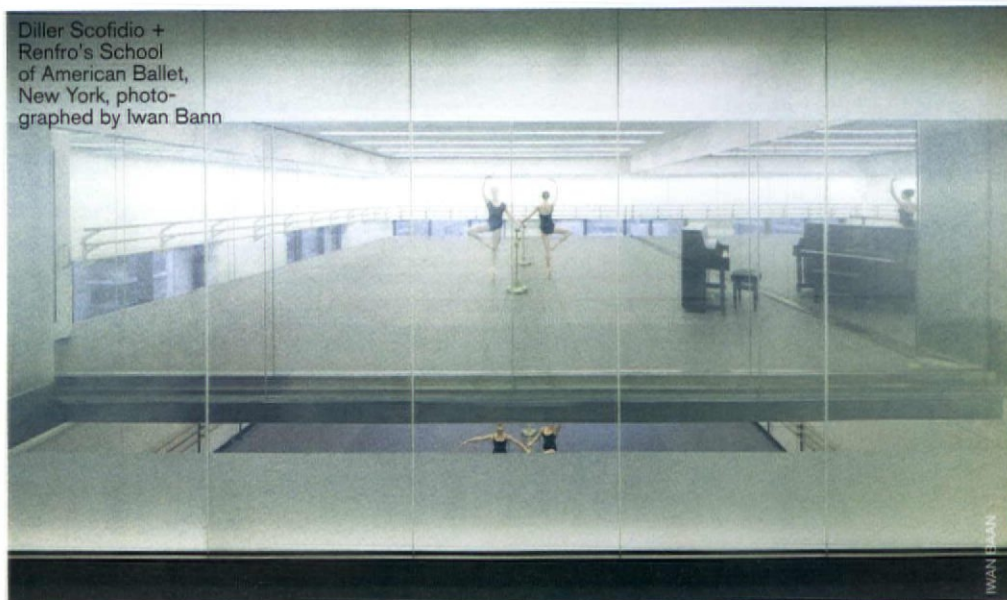
28-30 November. Various venues, Berwick-upon-Tweed. www.berwickfilm-artsfest.com

5 *Proximity Effect*

Discover how selected Plymouth artists assess their relationship to their hometown.

Until 12 January 2009. 38 Looe Street, Plymouth, Devon PL4 0EB. www.plymouthartscentre.org

Diller Scofidio + Renfro's School of American Ballet, New York, photographed by Iwan Baan



MAKING SENSE OF SUSTAINABILITY

The Energy Saving Trust Housing programme helps the housing industry get to grips with energy efficiency



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Details. These are designed to help achieve improved thermal performance standards exceeding those set out in current building regulations. Therefore, using our Enhanced Construction Details will help achieve the energy efficiency requirements of the Code.

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Mid Street, South Nutfield

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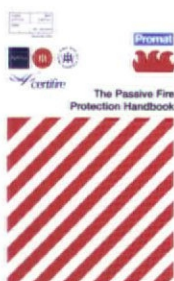
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Meta-Slate is a lightweight, robust, metal roofing system from Steadmans which is quick to install. Manufactured from 0.7mm galvanised coil with a matt polyester finish, BBA-certified Meta-Slate sheet gives the appearance of natural slate and is ideal for both new-build and refurbishment applications, including flat-to-pitch conversions.

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Promat, the UK's leading supplier of passive fire-protection materials, has launched an updated version of its Passive Fire Protection Handbook. It is a single source of information for passive fire-protection products and systems for architects, specifiers, building contractors and structural engineers. Visit www.promat.co.uk to order a copy.

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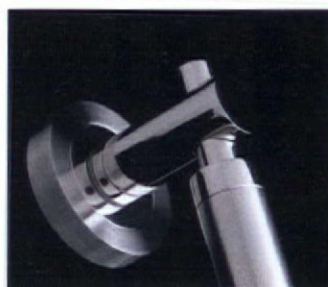
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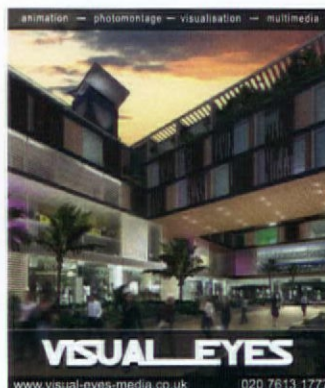
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Tender for the Designer Panel Framework in Sheffield

Sheffield City Council is looking to appoint a Framework of external Architects, Landscape Architects, Urban Designers and Sustainable/Renewable Energy Consultants to assist in providing design and consultancy services for residential developments and other neighbourhood regeneration projects across the city. The Framework will also act as an Approved List that private Housing Developers selected by the Council will be encouraged to select design teams from.

The Framework is being established to provide top-up design and consultancy services to the Council, which will supplement those already provided by Council Teams. Such services will include residential design, creative public realm, urban design framework development/review, green and open space design, environmental sustainability consultancy services, showcasing renewable energy/low carbon technologies etc.

Applications are invited from interested parties to enter into a Framework Agreement with Sheffield City Council for a period of two years, with a possible extension of a further one year at the Council's absolute discretion.

Suitably qualified organisations or consortia wishing to be considered for a place on the Designer Panel Framework should, in the first instance, obtain a copy of the Market Brief, which will provide background information about this Framework and the full tendering process, and submit their completed Pre-Qualification Questionnaire. Both documents can be found at <http://scms.alito.co.uk> reference number 9102.

If you have any queries or require further clarification, please contact Mrs Priya Chopra at the above web address. All questions/clarification must be submitted in **writing only** no later than 7 January 2009.

The Pre-Qualification Questionnaire must be submitted **no later than 12 noon on 12 January 2009.**

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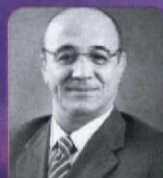
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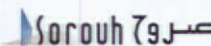
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Isi Metzstein, retired, Glasgow
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