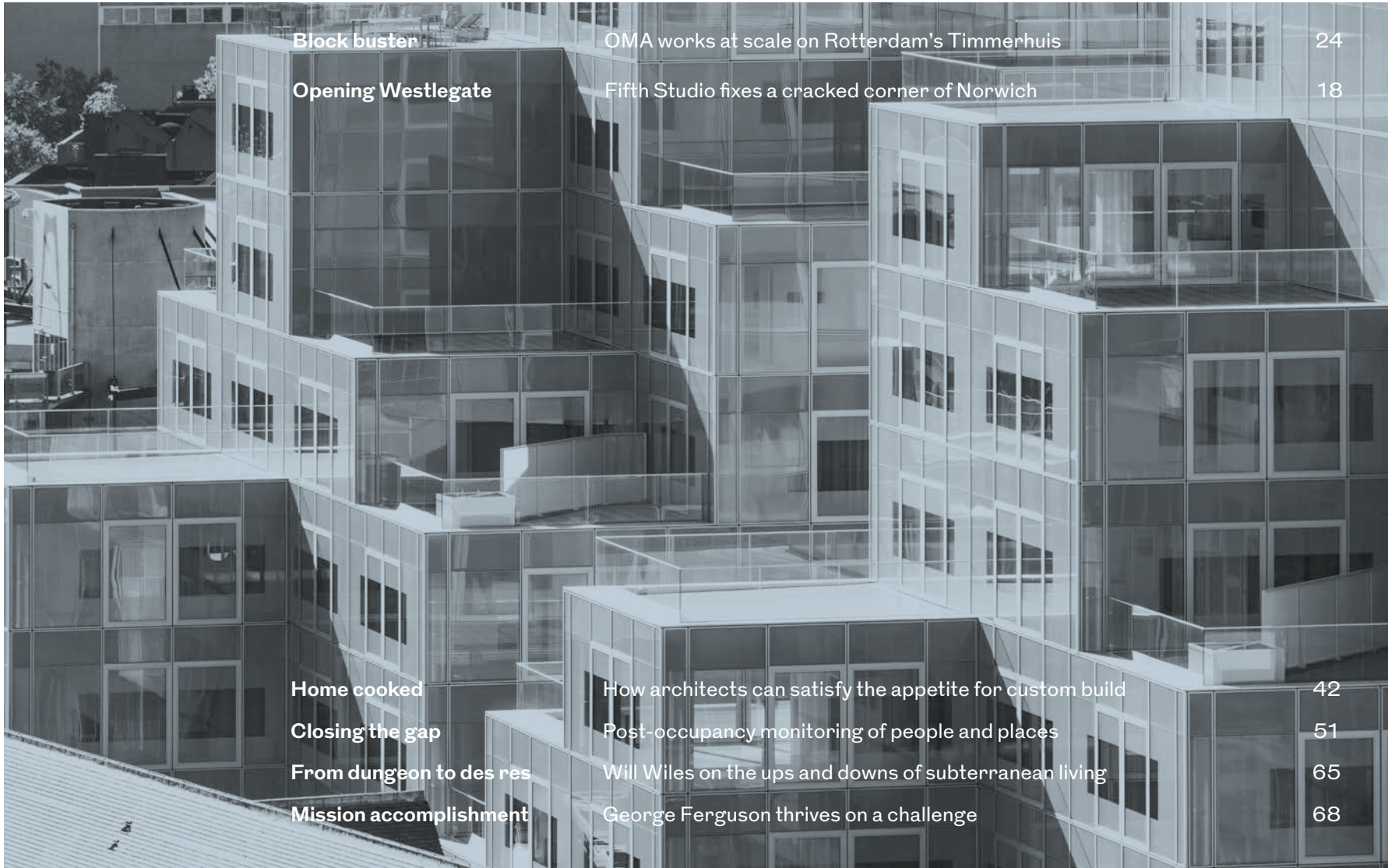


RIBA

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<http://is.gd/roskerslake>



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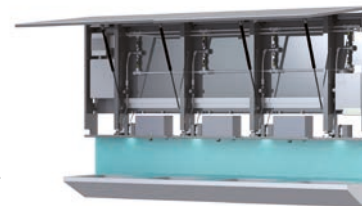
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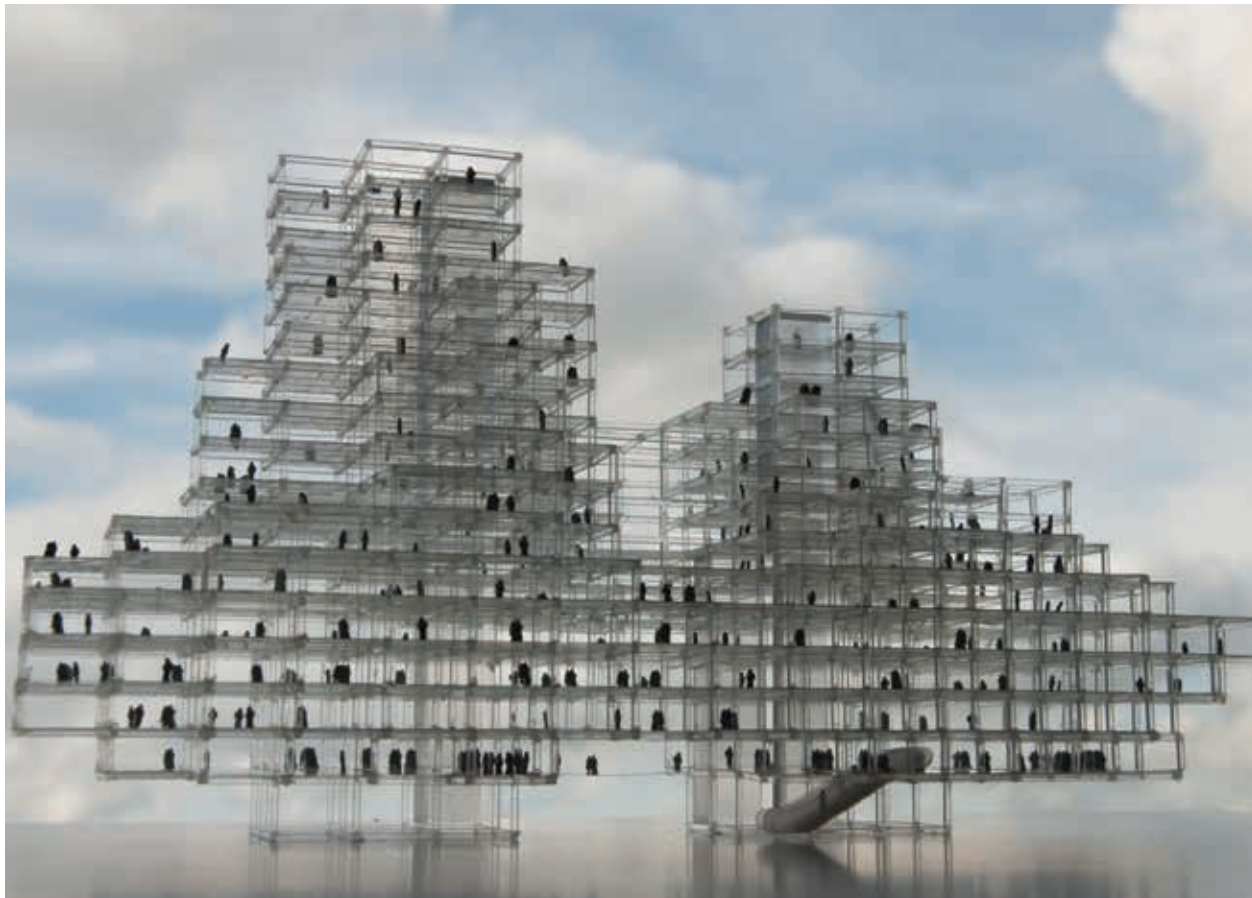
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1: Buildings

Make do and mend: that's the motto of noughties austerity that echoed around studios' empty desks as reuse and refurbishment gradually became the architect's bread and butter. Making projects stack up might have been harder, but this way of working has a powerful impetus: a critique of the existing building and its presence. And how to mend the problems. Slice it here, chop it there, new openings, patched colours. At London's airy Euston

Station even slapping plasticky wood (or woody plastic) around the sides doesn't destroy the life that a confident reuse of its forecourt would bring. In Norwich a revitalised Westlegate Tower (p18) sits in a tiny new slice of city. And the thinking behind those contextual stitchings is working its way back into architectural thinking with the fissures and forms of a human city. More liveable than game of urban Tetris (p24). ●

Original model structure of
Tetris-style Timmerhuis, page 24



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What counts is the simple number of brick or stone courses that man has raised one above the other in any one given location, in defiance of gravity

Seven striking towers
ribaj.com/culture/magnificent-seven-towers

The city, in this sense, was codified as an unfolding interior consisting of many grades of 'public'

Do Chinese style shopping malls threaten inclusion in our cities?
ribaj.com/intelligence/chinese-imports

Better Barkingside**Architect DK-CM**Words **Hugh Pearman**Photograph **DK-CM**

How do you improve an outer London high street that is, commercially speaking, in rude health and in no desperate need of improvement? Scores of declining town centres around the country would love to have the problems of Barkingside, in the London Borough of Redbridge but historically of Essex. It's not super-prosperous but it is getting along nicely: Alan Sugar of Apprentice fame is a big property owner round here. No, the challenge here was the way mid 1960s civic buildings were dropped in when the Greater London Council was created. It is these that the practice of David Knight and Christina Monteiro, DK-CM, has tackled – in a successfully accretive manner that can also be seen in part as post modernism 4.0.

David Knight met me at the grandly Arts & Crafts-tinged station – built thus in anticipation of a royal visit, apparently – to take me on a stroll that explains how the place developed and why the firm has done what it has. This is where in 1873 Dr Barnado built his first purpose-designed village for orphans, complete with chapel. It's still there, but its spacious village-green layout is being interleaved with 144 new spec homes branded

'Barnado's Garden Village', so making money for the charity but also making the site considerably less spacious. And so on to the high street – no particular problem there – and finally to the part at the end of the main street that did need attention: the swimming pool/leisure centre and library designed by Sir Frederick Gibberd and built in the mid 1960s.

The problem was a familiar one for the period – good buildings, particularly the listed circular Fullwell Cross library with its scalloped thin-shell concrete dome, copper clad. But they sat in indeterminate SLOAP – Space Left Over After Planning – which made little attempt to integrate with the street edge or enhance the public realm. DK-CM has added infill sections to redress this.

The single most evident aspect of this is the de Chirico-like arcade it has added to mask the flank of the leisure centre which, along with new hard landscaping, has made a much more defined and usable civic square, with power access for live events. The references are clear: Gibberd used the arcades of European towns to illustrate his writing on town planning, and this one draws its form from the arches of his library – but pulled out straight rather than arranged in a circle, and its precast concrete components pre-coloured to match the copper roof. It is this knowing referentialism that makes it the latest generation of PoMo: what look like 1960s railings, for

instance, are a new design inspired by the period. Knight has no problem with people being unable to tell what is new and what is old.

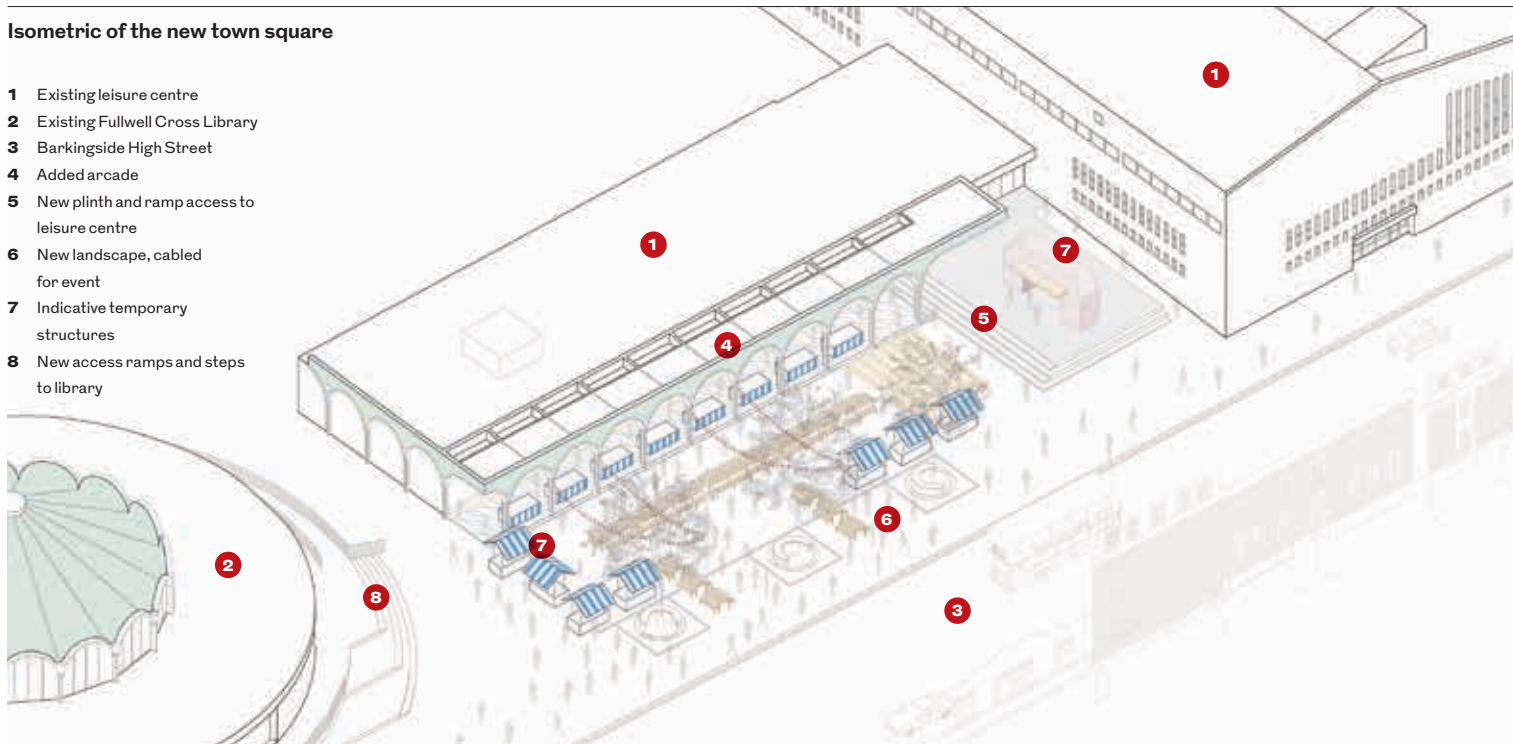
On the far side of the leisure centre, a high brick wall and service yard have been replaced by new landscaped gardens, forming part of a previously closed-off route through the site. The overall scheme makes a virtue of today's access requirements with a raised plinth and ramp in dark terrazzo defining the leisure centre entrance, and a related scheme in pale precast concrete around part of the library. This removes some of its original hovering-flying-saucer character but integrates it much better with the square.

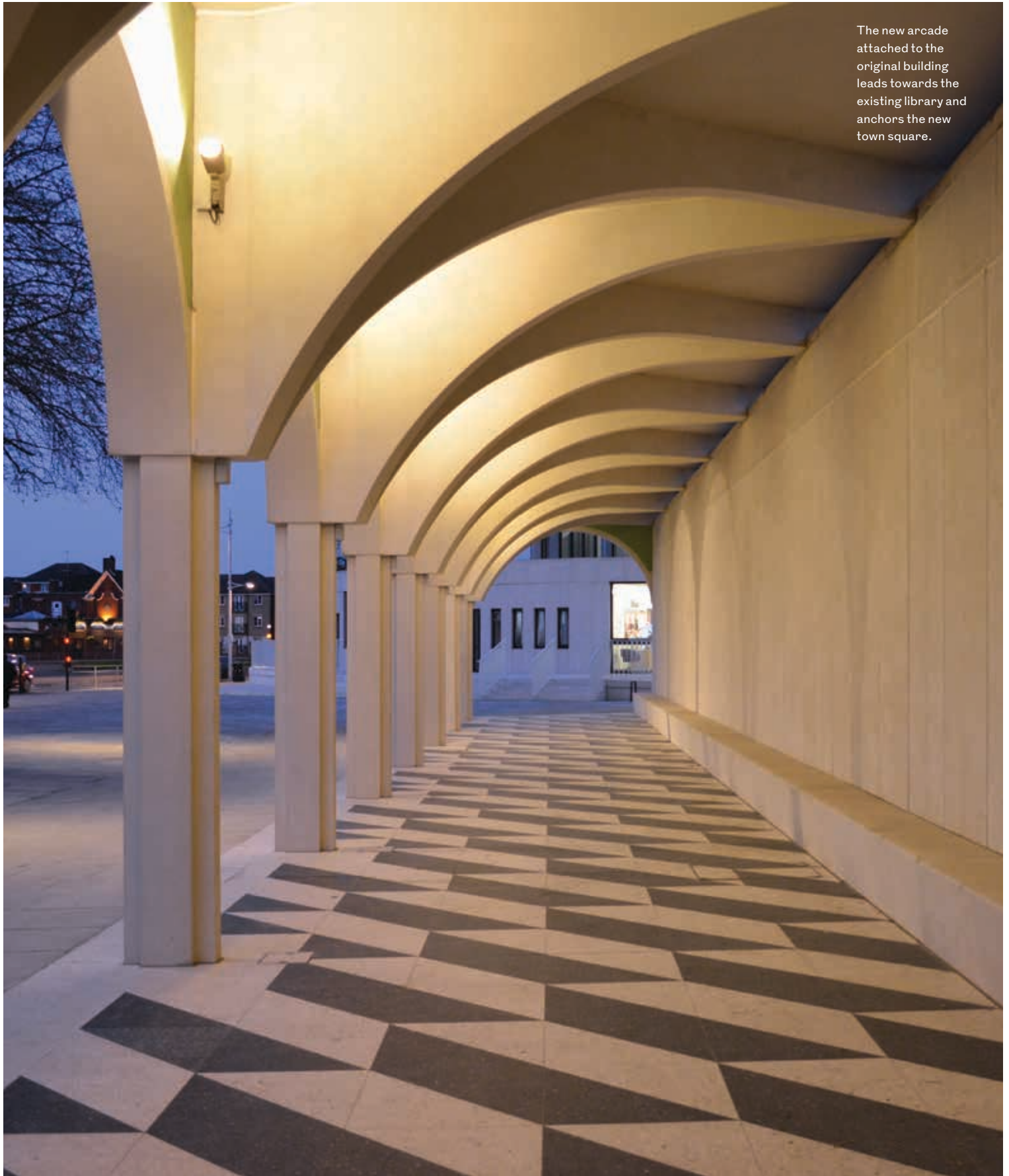
In the world of architecture, where the stylistic lines are drawn up, this project might be seen as an assault on modernism. The public, of course, couldn't care less about that and nor could I: it feels right, though the arcade with its full-length bench along the back needs to be cleaned more often. It is not quite complete: a little shop and public toilet is now being built at the western end – a miniature version of the swimming-pool barn, but timber-clad – while a large public clock is meant to hang at the corner of the new arcade, where the right-angled turn is designed to accommodate it. Here DK-CM has made more of a place out of the found objects of the civic buildings. It is skilful work. ●

More photographs at ribaj.com

Isometric of the new town square

- 1 Existing leisure centre
- 2 Existing Fullwell Cross Library
- 3 Barkingside High Street
- 4 Added arcade
- 5 New plinth and ramp access to leisure centre
- 6 New landscape, cabled for event
- 7 Indicative temporary structures
- 8 New access ramps and steps to library





The new arcade attached to the original building leads towards the existing library and anchors the new town square.

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Photograph Alex MacLean

Words Jan-Carlos Kucharek

American photographer Alex MacLean has his head in the clouds – but it's for purely professional reasons. Graduating in architecture over 40 years ago from Harvard, he combined his interest in the landscape as a design driver with a fascination for the geographic information systems that were still in their infancy, and so learnt to fly. Since then he's gone from strength to strength, starting with landscape surveying using elementary cod-

ing and punch cards to now producing state-of-the-art landscape images better suited to gallery walls than architects' desks.

Perhaps that's why he came to the attention of the Design Commission for Wales as a speaker for its recent 'Landmarks' annual conference. He accepted warmly before spending 10 hours flying around Wales, recording its landscapes and the human interventions that have modified it, to use in a visual presentation with his keynote speech. The artistry is clearly evident in the 75 shots that he presented to the delegates – most framed to the point of abstraction.

But it was the COP21 climate change conference in Paris as much as the landscape that influenced MacLean's final choice of image. Photographed while passing over Anglesey, the site intrigued him with its remnants of receded industry; flotsam left over as the petro-chemical industry retreated to the seas. Abandoned over 20 years ago and returning to nature, the relics of the former petrol storage tanks still leave their imprint on the landscape. But alongside the contaminated site, the shoots of a renewable future are beginning to sprout; a clutched stem of hope in Wales there to save the ice caps. ●



What's the driver?

For this year's Doolan prize winner, low margins but job satisfaction were par for the course

Words: Jan-Carlos Kucharek

Dickens' opening lines from 'A Tale of Two Cities' spring to mind for no reason, hearing the throaty rev of the client's classic Porsche as it pulls into St Andrews' West Burn Lane. Before that, Sutherland Hussey Harris' Colin Harris had been telling me how Edinburgh's smaller practices struggle to secure new work: this coming from the director of a firm that's just won the UK's most lucrative architecture prize – the £25,000 Doolan Award for the housing that we're standing outside. Yes, its got the accolade, but it turns out that

didn't stop the firm shrinking to a core team of six from the pre-recession glory days of 18, only turning a profit on West Burn Lane once the prize money offset its final outlay.

Client Mark Wilson meanwhile, of Eastacre Investments, seems a million miles from such concerns. An architect, he saw the light many moons ago, moving into lucrative development after concluding those nights spent burning the midnight oil for others' profit was a thankless task; and he's come a long way. Concentrating all his efforts in the

bubble economy of St Andrews, inflated by affluent international students and global golfing money, this £3.5 million, 14-unit speculative development of houses and high-end apartments is his largest to date. Wilson treated himself to a classic car after he sold the lot at a healthy premium to, among others, a Swiss accountant and Spanish diplomat. The car's limited edition colour, I note as he temporarily parks up in one of the garages, is very similar to the pale grey green that Harris specified on the garage door. As

Below West Burn Lane housing's 'rear' elevation reveals private courtyards hidden from the public road.





Left Looking north, the town houses with garages offer privacy at street level while between them are glimpsed stolen views into the private courts.

Right The apartment block on the south tip echoes the articulation evident in the townhouses.



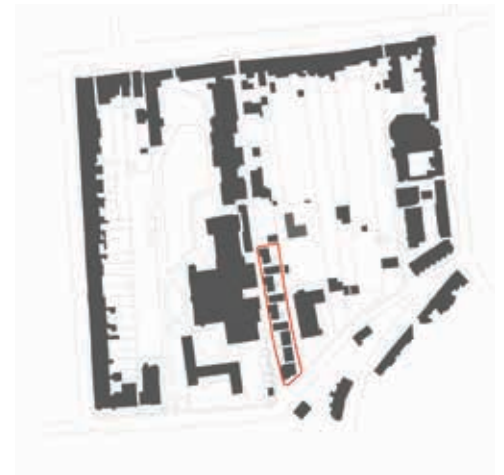
Ground level floor plan



First floor plan



Location plan showing the rigg's urban form



Key to drawings

- 1 4-bed, 1-garage townhouse
- 2 4-bed double garage townhouse
- 3 3-bed maisonettes (2-bed above)
- 4 2-bed apartment
- 5 Private courtyard garden
- 6 Public courtyard parking
- 7 West Burn Lane
- 8 Adjacent church house
- 9 St Andrews University faculty buildings
- 10 Alley views across site from street
- 11 3-bed apartment

it silently closes behind its boot, it resembles for an instant a huge rear spoiler; Wilson emphasises he never once doubted the firm's design nous.

Being an architect, he also understood the pressures on practice, offering an all-too-rare honorarium to the four practices he invited to submit for the project adjacent to one of the colleges at Scotland's oldest university – and he knew a good thing when he saw it, as Sutherland Hussey Harris' keenly worked-up proposal of six houses, four maisonettes and four apartments arrived duly presented in a book of Japanese washi paper. But key to the commission win was SuHuHa's novel treatment of the site's narrow rigg of land, stretching 114m down south almost to the banks of Kinness Burn; a tenure form rooted in Scotland's medieval past and very much in evidence here at the 'home of golf'.

The firm had obviously listened closely not just to Wilson's required density de-

mands but to intimations bound up in his accounts of the closes and courtyards typifying the city's vernacular grain and honed further in its university colleges. It also took on board the exposed nature of the site on both sides, leading to a more subtle distinction of front and back, the 'internal' and 'external' elevation. So the firm's response was to split the brief into its constituent elements and to twist the homes at right angles to each other as they snake down the rigg, creating narrow alley runs across the site. These offer tantalising views through to private courtyards, the six four-bed houses – either broad to the street or narrow and deep – effectively hiding them from West Burn Lane. The three spaces created between projecting homes meanwhile catch the best of the south-east light and open out to the neighbouring church house, beyond a low stone rubble wall.

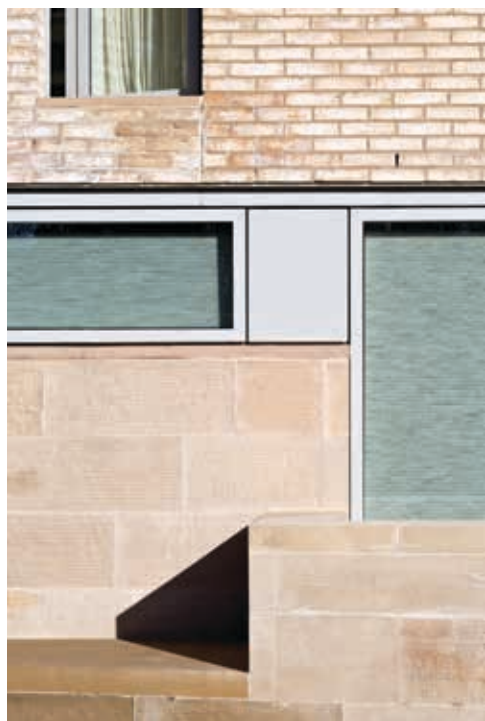
If Wilson was inspired by the urban grain, SuHuHa seemed as much driven

by Tanizaki's 'In Praise of Shadows'. Harris waxed lyrical over formal massing that saw lower level living spaces opening to the courts countered by high level external terraces on adjacent blocks, making the most of the views east over the rooftops to the cathedral ruins, the hills and the light. The yin/yang approach is echoed in section in the maisonettes further south, tessellated like two Tetris 'L's' and in the cuts into the duplex apartment block at the southern tip of the rigg. The deep articulation so evident in the rear elevations is echoed to a lesser degree on the street side, recessed entrance porches and projecting upper level bedrooms reaching almost indiscreetly across the lane to the university's psychology and biology faculties. Garages act as a foil for the prying eye at ground level, their double/single rhythm interrupted only by the viewing alleys and the final planted square in front of the maisonettes at the south of the site – this has

Below Local stone working techniques give grain at eye level.

Right Oak stairs are simply but effectively detailed.

Far right Upper level terraces counterpoint lower level gardens in neighbouring town houses.



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seven parking spaces but still retains a sense of a courtyard. Like Wilson's taste in cars, it's sophisticated; in all there are 20 vehicles on this site. You wouldn't think it.

It's moot now but perhaps Harris could have saved on office resourcing by spending less time on the specification of the external Peak Moor sandstone, leaving it ashlar faced, rather than insisting on the characterful treatment, to give the project its rusticated base. He could have spared the man hours given to churning out umpteen studies on the size and amount of fine-etched droving on the stone window architraves and rough horizontal broaching that casts deep set shadows in the low winter south light so well. Surely he could have foregone the Berlin trip to look at Chipperfield projects and decide the right shade of Danish Petersen Tegl D17 brick and lime mortar colour, or the time inspecting the 12 different full-size sample panels of brickwork.

But any architect worth their salt doesn't know when to leave well alone – which is probably why they live in unfinished houses. How many early nights might have been enjoyed had the firm adopted a standard flat roof system rather than creating a variegated landscape of low-pitched zinc sheet meeting rooflights that bring light deep into the plan and meld into the higgledy-piggledy roofscape of the town? Maybe it offset exterior efforts with the generic internal finishes more suited to speculative work – albeit high end. But time has even been spent here too, notably on the wide oak halls and staircases; no doubt detailed to death on paper, even if they're more compromised in life. But to tell SuHuHa to down pens for the sake of the fee would be pointless. Mark Wilson could probably have told them that much – though I'd quite understand that he wouldn't.

It might be a thought preying on Harris' mind as he drives me back to Edinburgh in a

more workaday vehicle. On the way he offers to show me the place he's building for himself and his family in a remote hamlet. A half-built steel structure, just roofed, and extrapolated out from a grass bank, the raw internal space is cavernous. One whole side will be nothing but glass. Open to the elements for now, the view out to the distant peak is magnificent, dark clouds rolling ominously by. Being procured for a fraction of the price of a cramped two-bed flat in London, it in part explains why the firm might yet be able to hold on for that next big project with a skeleton staff and modest turnover. Well outside West Burn Lane's prime property bubble, it's still about quality of life and the lengths you'll go to, to pay for it.

The best of times or the worst of times? Returning home to my gardenless, insalubrious flat in London, the view of the Paps of Fife fresh in my mind, perhaps it's all a matter of perspective. ●

Below The zinc roof and rooflights stagger north up the site to the town, blending in with its picturesque roofscape.



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Norwich reunion

Fifth Studio's Westlegate housing and retail scheme regenerates a broken edge of Norwich, knitting it back into the medieval street pattern

Words: Eleanor Young Photographs: Timothy Soar



Left Sandwiched between the towers of Westlegate, the 17th century cottage at the base of the tower, still undergoing surgery, with a new dining room alongside (**right**).

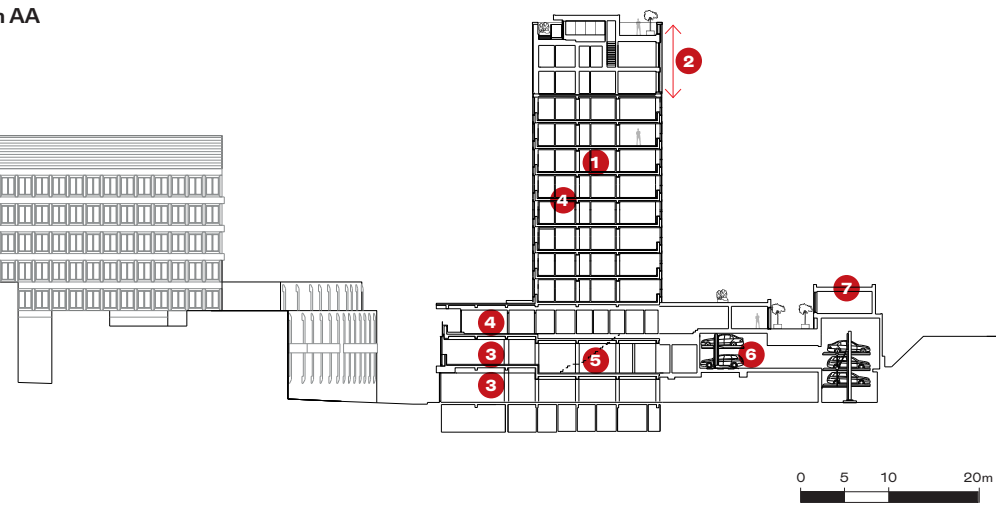
Just the name Westlegate tells you that this is a site on the edge, at the gates of the old city. And Norwich does still thrive on being an old city. Its cathedral and narrow streets peppered with independent shops and coffee houses bring visitors from all over Norfolk and beyond. The city knows how to deal with scale: to the north its city hall benignly overlooks the city's large market square. But at Westlegate, up the hill from the River Wensum, the intimacy of the medieval lanes comes up against the largescale forms

of John Lewis and the concrete behemoth of Norwich Union (Aviva)'s offices. Westlegate Tower was one of this breed when it was built in 1962. A 10-storey block with podium, it housed Norwich Union for many years but chilly patent glazing and relatively small floor plates didn't guarantee long term tenants. By the time Cambridge-based Fifth Studio got planning to reconfigure it in 2012 it had been empty for seven years. Now it is a residential quarter.

Fifth Studio does architecture and

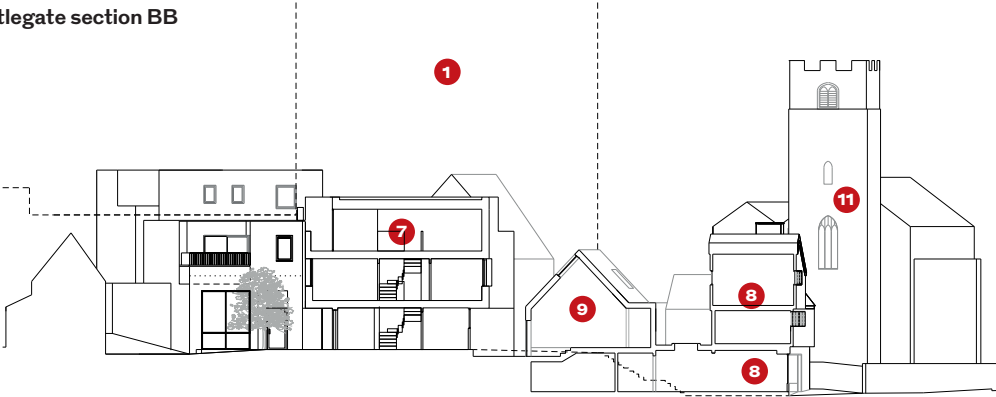


North-south tower section AA

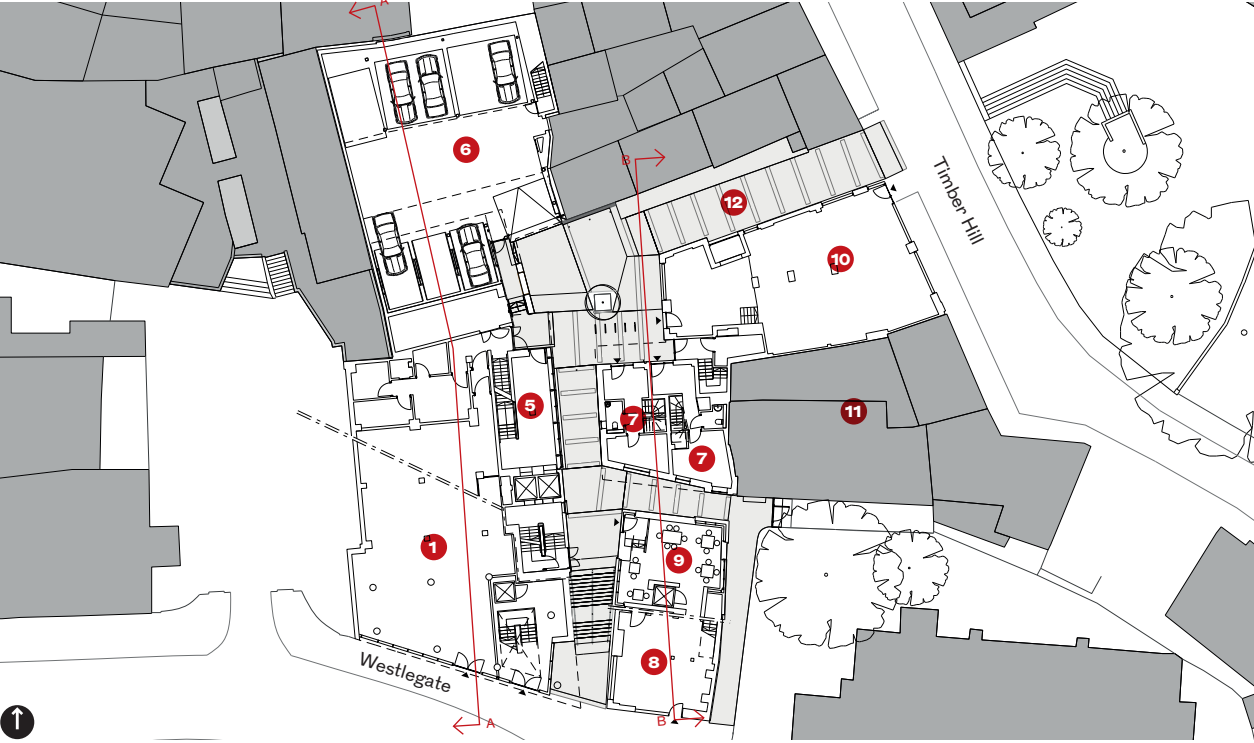


This defensible, though deliberately not private, space has the potential to bind its residents a little closer, through happenstance

Lion + Castle yard to Westlegate section BB



Combined street level plan



- 1 Westgate Tower
- 2 Penthouse and upper flat extension
- 3 Westgate retail unit
- 4 Residential unit
- 5 Tower lobby
- 6 Stacking car parking
- 7 Town house
- 8 No. 20 restaurant/ cafe (cottage)
- 9 No. 20 restaurant/ cafe dining room
- 10 Timber Hill retail unit (bakery)
- 11 All Saints Church
- 12 Lion and Castle Yard

urbanism: the small team has reimagined the Lea Valley, before and after the London 2012 Olympics, mapped Crossrail and masterplanned the North East Cambridge development. So it is not surprising that it studied the history of the Norwich site, the inn that once stood there, the 17th grade two listed cottage-cum-café at its corner and the yards and lanes around it. Building on the surface car park allowed the firm to re-establish a little of this grain and bring back the vanished Lion and Castle Yard. This cut-through to a court makes for a more interesting – if occasionally dour – piece of city. Not only that but extra homes and a new entrance to the tower open onto the yard, as does a dining hall of a restaurant (yet to be let). This defensible, though deliberately not private, space has the potential to bind its residents a little closer, through happenstance.

The new low-rise development now sur-

rounding the tower between Westlegate and Timber Hill certainly binds the development back into the city grain. A three storey building, it takes on the same scale as its older neighbours, though it is dug into the ground so the shop unit still has a good floor to ceiling height. This is occupied by an artisan baker who has started the fit out with huge ovens, sitting alongside a café area which will bring life to the shop front, as will that evocative smell of baking bread. All this inside a brick envelope that has enough decoration to avoid bland but not too much to draw attention to itself.

Taking on the tower and its base were Ian Fox and Julian Wells, previously of London-based developer Targetfollow and now starting up FW Properties. Westlegate was its first development outside London. Against local market expectations the pair thought there was value to be had in bringing

city living back to the centre. Unlike the revival of this sector in cities such as Manchester and Leeds over the last few decades, city living in Norwich doesn't spell cramped two beds on top of noisy bars. Most of the tower's flats take the whole floor plate, a generous 140m². Fifth Studio's Tom Holbrook pictured retirees moving in from the suburbs, exchanging larger, more isolated homes for these city pads with people and amenities on hand. In the top floor penthouse the resident we meet is only too happy to have swapped acres of grass cutting on a large farm for city pubs and dramatic views – that reach as far as Yarmouth. He revels in the sense of fellow-feeling among residents one year after moving in.

The penthouse flat is part of a three storey extension to the tower. This is perhaps surprising, given that in the local plan it was marked as 'negative landmark' and planners

Below Building around the edge of the car park has reinstated the old yard and a new cut through for the city (**centre**).

Far right Three storeys taller now than the unloved original, it could be argued this is just one of many towers in the city.



were keen to see it removed altogether. But as well as helping the economics to stack up, Holbrook maintains that extra height, along with a new cladding treatment, has allowed the building to realise itself as a tower, rather than sitting slightly squat near the top of the hill. Holbrook also diagnosed the simplicity of the cladding as one of its problems as a landmark. The practice's task of turning it into flats was as one of the issues – in terms of conflicting scales – and an opportunity to articulate the block. As a result the cladding is broken up into panels of glass and spandrel panels on shifted grid that interrupt some of its linearity, balconies project from one facade or another rather than setting up a rhythm for each floor. And at the top, double or triple storey panels of expanded metal mesh are used as an overlay, increasing scale

rather than reducing it to the domestic level. It is true that it avoids the unremitting mean-ness of many residential blocks of this size.

Standing alone, at the edge and in the same ownership, is a historic cottage, its low ceilinged rooms most recently playing host to a cafe. Extended at the back by a zinc wrapped dining room, this now has potential for a more expansive business, its variety of intimate and airy spaces suggesting a future in fine dining although it has not so far secured tenants, not even the ubiquitous Starbucks. That would certainly add real life to the back court and, with its pitched roof and roof lights that look up and over to the tower and the church next door, it is a good, hidden place to observe – and enliven – this yard. Once that's done, Fifth Studio's job will be finished. ●

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Left Building to two scales – the view from Timber Hill.

Credits

Architects 5th Studio
Client FW Properties with Soho Estates
Structural engineer Rossi Long Consulting
M&E consultant BSD, Contact Electrical
Quantity surveyor Bremner Partnership
Planning supervisor Lanpro
Lighting consultant George Sexton Associates
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Raining Tetris blocks

OMA makes the virtual world real with Timmerhuis, Rotterdam's truly multi-functional, computer-age development

Words: Isabelle Priest



I felt like Rem. Architectural legend has it that when Koolhaas went to open OMA's Seattle Central Library in 2004, after walking a few times around the building, he had to call the office to find out where to get in. Here I was in the dark, wind and rain at Rotterdam's latest bulky building on its opening night, now late for the tour I had arrived early for. The four green celebratory light beams directed across the city at the new Timmerhuis – a building of municipal offices, a museum, retail and 84 apartments – couldn't even help me.

It is an obscure site for a €100 million gateway project: wedged between a dirty stretch of canal and a similarly unattractive service road to the back of the city hall and Post Office – the only surviving pre-war relics (and with that their architectural focus on frontage) in a city centre completely destroyed by bombing. I lived in the city for nearly a year without really knowing where Timmerhuis was happening and catching glimpses only a handful of times by mistake.

Now it's complete. I asked someone standing outside what looked like a back door where the municipal entrance was and he didn't know. Nor did

two women inside. I was actually already there.

One of my first lessons at architecture school was that it's a bad building if it needs an entrance canopy to find the door. Reinier de Graaf, OMA leader for the project, seemed to suggest it was my problem – but it isn't, if there is any truth behind the legend. It's an odd scenario for a building that's glazed all over, pertaining to be about transparency, access and the public. The only external opaque parts, giant industrial steel sheets, are in fact the doors. And next to no one understands the architectural reference of pulling back the scalloped glass 'curtain wall' panels above them to signify the entrance points in a facade that is otherwise flat.

But the building's central street, criticised for being a shadowy hulk of its original weightless competition cloud-on-stilts design, is beyond that. So what if it had lived up to its free hovering cloud rendered expectations?

Timmerhuis's main entrance, an aspirational public forum laid with pavement bricks, opens from a dead end on one side to be only marginally offset from another on the other. Between two four-sided ziggurat towers, the entrance mimics the idea of the covered passage of

IN NUMBERS

€100m
construction cost

60m
highest point

45,000m²
gross floor area

84
apartments

25,400m²
office space

3850
tonnes of
construction steel

14,000m²
glass



Timmerhuis from Meent shopping street with the steel panel entrances on the main facade just visible down the side street.

Credits

Architect OMA**Client** Stadsontwikkeling Rotterdam**Contractor** Heijmans**Structural engineer**

Pieters Bouwtechniek

Process management

Brinkgroep BV

Sustainability consultant

Werner Sobek Green

Technologies

Local architect, cost**consultant** ABT**MEP engineer** Deerns

Raadgevende Ingenieurs

Sustainability, building**physics, acoustics, fire****consultant, security**

DGMR Bouw

Service engineer Deerns,

Burgers Ergon

Facades Scheldbouw,

Rollocate

Interior contractor

Keijzers Lundiform

Cost consultant PRC

Suppliers

Elevated floors PBS**Ceilings** Interlu**Internal walls** Maars**Elevators** Otis**Metal stud walls** Schuur-

mans

Fixed furniture Keijzers

Lundiform

Graphic design Studio

Pino

Steel CSM**Entrance gates** Gunnebo**Core cladding** Aldowa**Wall panels** Gebebouw

Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum, but with nowhere to go.

'Government buildings are not really public buildings anymore,' explains de Graaf.

I could hammer on about this, but it would be unfair. The Timmerhuis is designed to be appreciated at a cityscape scale. It has computer metaphors in abundance. Timmerhuis is an out of control city-sized game of Tetris, played with 7.2m by 7.2m by 3.6m blocks. Its two truss and beam network atriums are like part of a real-life Sim City that has run out of money, squares yet to be filled in, its facade a set of hyper pixellated images. If you don't know the building is on a trapezoid site behind the former, now absorbed, 1953 Stadstimmerhuis office from which Rotterdam was rebuilt after the war on its two most prominent street elevations, you will struggle to understand it. But zoom out from street to tilted satellite view and Timmerhuis is a typical Rotterdam building. Its energy becomes about something else: massive, bold, brave and based on the cumbersome, but thrilling, formality of a 1960s masterplanning grid.

'Because the city is a mess,' answers de Graaf to how OMA's third building in Rotterdam is representative of

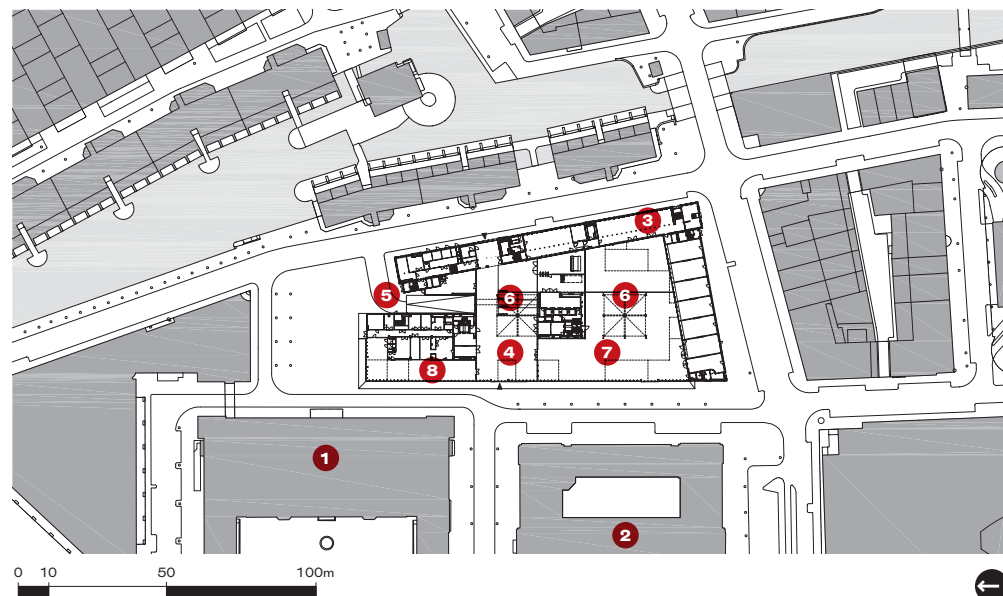
the city it stands in and the practice's home town.

'It was bombed in the war. Then it was reconstructed, and then there was a modernist reconstruction. Then there was a humanist revision, and then a post modernist critique of the humanist revision of the reconstruction. Then there was a wave of high-rise, then people became sick of high-rise so it became a free-for-all. There have been successive architectural styles – there is a different thing almost every decade. The sum total of that is a medley of many styles, of utterly improvised images. This building tries to be an echo of that improvised image, rather than the imposition of another grand statement.'

But it seems the problems at street level stem from the very idea of a grand statement – or frontage. As mentioned, the building absorbs a thin L-shaped 1950s building to the rear and side – its two most prominent elevations. Instead of giving in to the existing elevations for the main entrance, the architect changed the direction of the building to a 'front' that has very little presence – but the one that visually is primarily OMA.

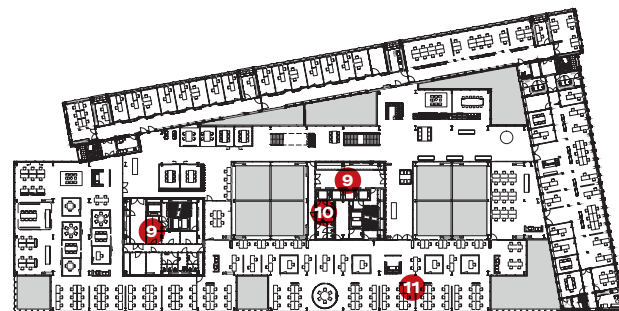
'The beauty about Rotterdam is that it resists vision

Ground floor plan

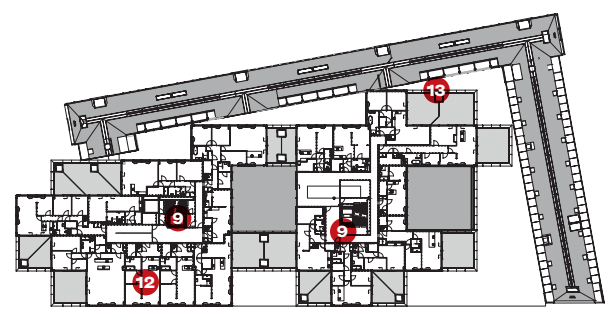


- 1 Existing City Hall
- 2 Existing Post Office building
- 3 Existing L-shaped 1953 office building
- 4 Entrance forum
- 5 Entrance to basement car park
- 6 Atrium
- 7 Museum of Rotterdam (upcoming)
- 8 Café
- 9 Service core
- 10 WC terrace
- 11 Office floor
- 12 Apartments
- 13 Apartment terrace

Office second floor plan



Apartment sixth floor plan





Main image The main entrance to the public forum is defined by solid steel doors and the scalloped glazed panel 'curtain' wall closing in the original hovering cloud.

– it is vision-proof. If you build in Amsterdam there is something you can ruin. There are centuries of history and you can be in discord. Here everything is at odds with each other so that is impossible. The building represents that – it's a mini style in a mini city in a context of a building.

From this main frontage, de Graaf describes the design concept as two Christmas trees or pyramids sitting above and inverted below the roofline of the attached existing building. Above this line it accommodates a crest of outward-looking apartments with large terraces that occupy the 'neighbours' roofs, while below the building consolidates several municipal departments in offices with inward views, as well as the upcoming Museum of Rotterdam – currently three museums scattered across the city – and commercial units on the ground floor plinth.

At its non-identical twin peaks, the apartments are surely some of the most exhilarating in the whole of the Netherlands – with mid-level panoramas across a lit-up equally blocky modernist urban jungle. One of the building's photographers, Ossip van Duivenbode, who moved into one of the three-bedroom apartments in the summer, says the cascading levels are perfect for

waving to your neighbours: 'It's like living in a village in the sky. I've met more of my neighbours here than I ever did in my previous apartment building.'

Yet like so many projects, things are not as they were originally conceived. The apartments were intended to be affordable micro homes for young professionals, but reality bit and, to make the project pay, prices ranged from €145,000 for the smallest (45m²) to €1.7 million (380m²) for the largest – beyond the average architect living and working in the city.

'The building is here because of the economic crisis,' says de Graaf. Commissioned through a competition by the city council in 2009, the modular design of the building anticipated the process through which it would be realised. The previous 1970s building on the site was demolished in 2010, but by then the council had had a change of direction, partially relegating the responsibility for public buildings to private parties. The contractor ended up being the client during the design development and construction document stages, as well as the developer of the apartments. Such a constructible design was inevitable.

'The design is an experiment in creating the most variety from standard prefabricated parts. This size of

Below The ground floor runs seamlessly into the level of the street.

Bottom The steel structure is left exposed in the atriums.

Below The existing 1953 building provides a rear wallpaper to the public forum.

Bottom Frit on the facade gives the appearance of much smaller glazed openings when unoccupied inside.



SEBASTIAN VAN DAMME © OMA

SEBASTIAN VAN DAMME © OMA



OSSIP VAN DUIVENBODE © OMA

OSSIP VAN DUIVENBODE © OMA

module is used in almost every office building in the Netherlands, and a format that contractors encounter frequently. It is also a building form that we could have changed slightly without changing the image – an idea we began with Hague Town Hall in 1986,' says de Graaf.

Inside, the building is organised around two cores and two atriums. The only 'pure forms' are the voids, next to the most solid. At certain points, the internal Piranesian complex of steel crashes into retained office, its external wall automatically becoming a textured wallpaper for the new space. Great chunks and swathes of structure cut through the spaces, but strangely such extensive circulation room makes the experience and logic of the building mindboggling. There is no sense of cantilevering: you expect what goes up might come down. 'Islands of specificity' for break-out and meeting areas combine with clinical curtains taken straight from OMA's G-Star building in Amsterdam with rugs printed with old maps from the city archive – the only ornament possible in an all-glass open plan floorplate. There is a surprisingly shiny palette of aluminium floors, rolled steel wall panels and back-lit lockers for hot desking.

In the offices, little distinguishes the interior floor to floor. Should the municipality leave, the space is

theoretically flexible enough to be made into a multi-tenant building of 200m² units. Now, there are 1295 desk spaces for 1800 employees. More light-hearted touches – reminiscent of the OMA of yesteryear – include the suspended bridge over the atrium to the canteen and terraces of WCs looking into it.

In terms of sustainability, except that half as much steel as the Eiffel Tower went into the building, the Timmerhuis sets a new standard as the most sustainable multifunctional building in the country, with a BREEAM 'excellent' rating. The modular structure offers flexibility for various functions, with some homeowners buying two flats and merging them. The atriums are the lungs of the building, playing a role in heat and cold storage. Meanwhile, it is triple glazed and has an electric car-sharing system in the basement for residents to reserve via a BMW mobile phone app.

According to many local architects, the frit window pattern has not gone down well. The original idea still resonates most with people. But its access strikes me as the building's biggest problem. For all that, the bright lights, hidden alleys, odd juxtapositions and cascading buildings are all part of the simulation computer game architectural mash-up that welcomes you to Rotterdam. ●

Two asymmetrical
bluish-grey Tetris
apartment towers
rise from the existing
Stadstimmerhuis
building in the
foreground, the
cascades providing
generous external space.



OSPIP VAN DUIVENBODE © OMA

THINK CLAY THE NATURAL CHOICE

The Architect's Choice

Birmingham Library

The pavers were chosen for their striking colours and are in keeping with both the surrounding paved area and the building's aesthetic. This combination was used to create the 'red line' to lead pedestrians into Centenary Square the use of clay provides a distinct colour that will be retained for the life span of the paver.

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Getting into character

There's a new personality brightening up a corner of Crouch End, courtesy of Panter Hudspith's refurb

Words: Hugh Pearman Photographs: Henrietta Williams

It helps to have known a building before you assess its transformation, and I knew this one. The Crouch End Picturehouse in north London, a five-screen 604-seat cinema designed by Panter Hudspith, re-uses and reveals the structure of what was previously a respectable piece of postwar bomb site infill: a well-proportioned concrete-framed, curtain-walled office building with a broad five-bay street frontage. But the building was

perched up on its pilotis, left void at ground level for car parking, giving nothing to the life of the street. This has now changed.

There was no planning requirement to keep this building – it and its motley assortment of neighbours fill the bomb-ruptured end of an otherwise well-mannered late Victorian/Edwardian shopping street, a wound that has never properly healed. 'They would have been quite happy for us to knock it

down,' says project architect James Jeremiah, 'but as architects we have a responsibility to reduce waste.' Besides, both client and architect saw the merit in it. They noted the generous floor-to-ceiling heights and lean but mostly sound structure, and saw that it could lend itself to cinema foyers. They recognised that this was a rare architect-designed 1950s modernist building in the area, to be re-revealed rather than disguised. And



New partially-translucent Kalwall sandwich panel cladding glows gently at night. The previously open ground floor is now glazed-in as a foyer.

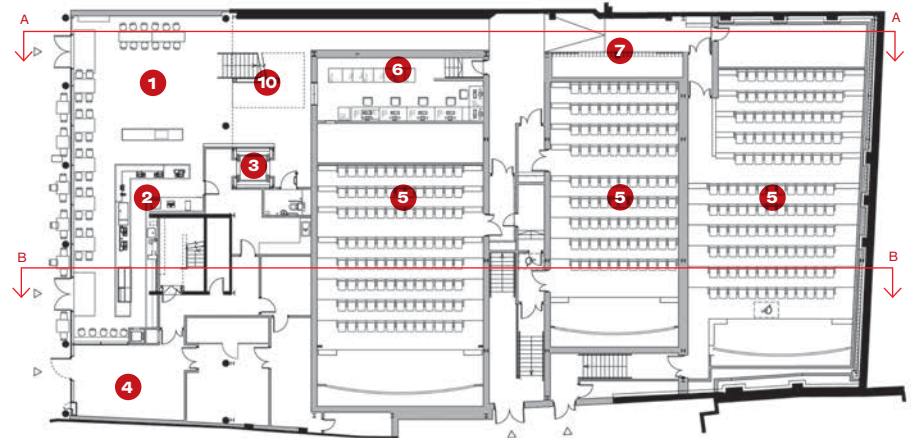
from a practical point of view, behind it lay a tight pack of time-expired asbestos-roofed brick-sided factory buildings rudely intruding into what is now an upmarket enclave of residential streets. They filled the footprint of what had been a cinema from 1911 until the Blitz, which by happy coincidence for a while was also branded The Picture House. These sheds were gutted and replaced with the necessarily blank boxes containing auditoria, intended to vanish beneath climbing plants.

It's not easy to get approval for big adaptive things like this in affluent north London, even if you do include such very Crouch End inducements as a large covered bike store and baby buggy park. And it was pipped to the post by a couple of years by the smaller Arthouse Cinema in a former Salvation Army hall very close by. Combined with the recession, it meant that this project has been on Panter Hudspith's books since 2007. But now it's done, and there it is: re-imagined, a cinema with an array of photovoltaic panels on top rated BREEAM 'very good'.

First impressions first: the new facade, while making a glazed enclosed ground floor level and insulating the upper levels in a way the original curtain walling did not, is aesthetically not a patch on its predecessor. That consisted of a pronounced grid organised as two horizontal ribbons of opening windows surrounded by opaque holly-green panels, with one bay done in a contrasting berry red. The new facade has a memory of this grid traced on it (though not in the same proportions) and eschews rich colour. It's more functionalist in feel and organised to mark the bays, each in turn visually divided vertically into three. This, plus the vertical pinstripes of the 75mm Kalwall sandwich cladding, is somewhat at odds with the broad horizontal glazed strip marking the restaurant at first floor level on the left-hand side of the composition. The glazing system lines up with the vertical composition. Other individual windows are punched through as needed. From outside, it's visually uneasy: should you read this facade sideways or upwards? It's better at night, when it glows softly.

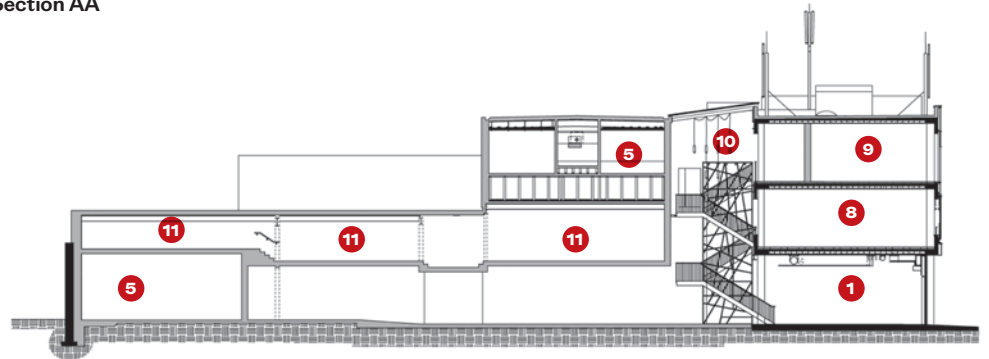
However, while the new facade itself is neutral in tone, there is plenty of colour in the interior which is visible from the street. And these interiors are the strength of this project. The scrape-and-reveal approach is done rigorously, the original in-situ concrete of the front block and the undersides of the

Ground floor plan

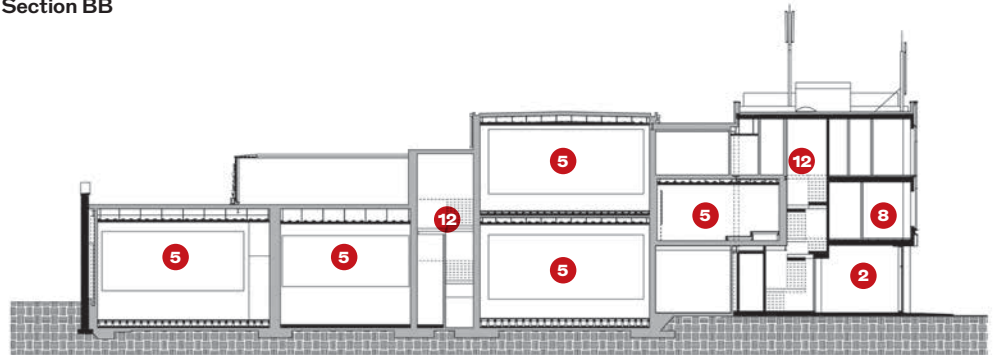


- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Entrance foyer | 7 Buggy park |
| 2 Café/bar | 8 Bar/restaurant |
| 3 Lift | 9 Community room |
| 4 Bicycle store | 10 Staircase atrium |
| 5 Cinemas | 11 Projection rooms |
| 6 Office | 12 Stairs |

Section AA



Section BB



0 2 5 10m

clay-pot floors exposed in almost fetishistic detail. Original imperfect concrete beams were fire-protected. Behind, the broad corridor to the screens is flanked by a retained brick flank wall to the previous factory/warehouse buildings – left with all the marks of use, sealed against dust. New elements are clearly new, with new structure expressed in orange-painted steel – such as the highly sculptural new asymmetrical-latticework staircase linking the levels in a full-height daylit atrium at the back of the original block, a temptation to move to the upstairs restaurant. A tight existing concrete stair shaft provides lateral stability to the building and is retained (behind the bar at ground level). The top floor houses admin and a room for community use.

There is the odd touch of retrostyle in evidence: for instance the worn Rhodesian teak herringbone parquet flooring in the first floor restaurant is recycled from a demolished 1950s City office building. Doors

through to the cinemas have mouldings that seem out of keeping but are based on originals found on site. A large specially-commissioned mural on the wall of the atrium by artist Ben Nathan is just the kind of thing (if not the style) you'd find on a 1950s public building. Behind the repurposed office block the five cinemas are placed in rendered steel-frame boxes out the back which are so massively insulated against noise transmission to the surrounding houses that at one point the acoustic wall is 2m thick. Such auditoria are much the same everywhere: there's no particular distinction to the interiors.

Crouch End Picturehouse succeeds in establishing a cultural destination at the 'wrong' end of this retail street, which together with the nearby Arthouse, makes this into something of a movie quarter. It also succeeds in its policy of enlightened re-use – there is nothing forced about this conversion. Refurbishment, it proves, can yield more characterful spaces than new build. ●


The worn Rhodesian teak herringbone parquet flooring in the first floor restaurant is recycled from a demolished 1950s City office building

Below There's an industrial feel to the café-bar in the ground floor foyer...



Below ... and a constructivist flavour to the orange-painted steel latticework staircase in the new atrium.





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WINDOWS FOR LIFE

Come into the gardens

Aircrete blocks played an important part in last month's Sunday Times British Homes Awards



2015's Sunday Times British Homes Awards sought innovative solutions to typical housing needs. Homes were to be a minimum of three bedrooms on two storeys with options for double height spaces, roof terraces and single-storey elements. The plot size was 9.5m by 26m and a two-car garage was also part of the requirement.

Aircrete manufacturer H+H sponsored the awards and architects were asked to specify Celcon Blocks made from aircrete in their designs. It was keen to demonstrate that, although aircrete is a traditional building component, it provides flexibility for cutting-edge housebuilding – as shown by the range of winning and shortlisted solutions. In particular, many architects extolled its ability to add to high insulation values as well as provide thermal mass.

Thematically, the competition was inspired by garden cities, giving entrants permission to reach into the style of Britain's Arts & Crafts, with wood and cladding used extensively.

McInnes Gardner's peaked design was innovative enough to take the prize, though its modern look also harks back to a more traditional barn structure.

RBDS' Almond Place unashamedly incorporated colonial-style iron verandas, classical scrolls and mullion windows in semiotic nods to Britain's domestic heritage.

There are whiffs of America's Arts & Crafts and Frank Lloyd Wright in the brickwork and glazing over corners, and in the trellises, of Growing Home by waparchitects.

Integrated greenery Falling Water-style is also a part of Somorjay & Talliss' Hanging Gardens, while Emrys Architects' Garden Villa is arranged around a village green and gardens are brought together to maintain biodiversity. All that's missing is a maypole. ●

Winner

Arc House

The distinctive shape of McInnes Gardner's winning ArcHouse is reminiscent of the whale jaw bone arches or ships' prows of coastal areas. Rows of the peaked homes, set at angles to prevent overlooking, would boldly challenge the blocky British streetscape – and refresh the garden city ideal.

Despite its architectural elan, the ArcHouse's internal space is expertly utilised over its three floors, from the double garage at foundation to the heat-recovery and ventilation system (HRVS) at the apex.

Along with four bedrooms, there is a utility area, bike and rainwater stores, a utility bench (at ground), a first floor study, and a dressing room, en-suite bathroom and office on the second floor with the master bedroom.

To the rear, an oblong void is inserted alongside the arch, creating space for the stairwell, but maintaining the spiky rhythm at the front elevation.

A £200,000 build-limit (£100/m²) encouraged

creativity in the use of the build methodology. The peak – through which the sky is more readily glimpsed – is formed with 200mm thick curved structural insulated panels sitting directly on aircrete walls and gables. In this iteration, these are coated with zinc to further brighten the street. Synthetic thatch is a suggested alternative – a nod to the garden city's rustic genesis.

The building is faced with overlapping clapboard – maritime or rustic – panels topping a cheerful patchwork of brick and acrylic render.

Thrifty specification is particularly necessary given the amount of green kit with which the house is stuffed. This includes the HRVS mooted at 90% efficiency, underfloor heating, a Viessmann Vitocalor 300-P domestic fuel cell micro CHP boiler, and external wall insulation with Thin-Joint aircrete blocks providing internal massing – part of a system helping the building's claim to zero carbon status.



Despite its architectural élan, the ArcHouse's internal space is expertly utilised over its three floors, from the double garage at foundation to the heat-recovery and ventilation system at the apex



Hanging Gardens

The hanging gardens of Somorjay & Talliss' modular houses' title refers to the timber screens and pergolas adorning the ground-floor outdoor space and roof terraces. Preventing overlooking on a densely packed site, vines and vegetables could be grown over the homes, fulfilling the verdant promise of the competition's

theme. Within, each benefits from a double-height volume over the main living room — affordable internal grace. The intriguingly sculpted homes could be built singly or in pairs as required, and the ground floor is also flexible to incorporate car parking and internal partitions can also be reorganised to suit.



Growing Home

These sophisticated, four double-bedroom homes are striking in their adjacent volumes, with deconstructed roofs pitched against each other. The cladding chosen by waparchitects is flexible, but this design, in timber and brickwork, references Frank Lloyd Wright, who was contemporaneous with the garden city movement.

The Utopian touch is to 'rewild' Britain's front gardens — 25% of which, it points out, are paved over and 33% of which lack plants. Space for growing at the front is provided alongside the driveway and garage, so the back garden can fulfil a recreational function. And a fully planted roof space is thrown in for good measure.



Almond Place

RBDS' shortlisted, three-storey Almond Place scheme presents different faces on its public and private aspects. On the street-side facade, a counterpoint window rhythm enlivens classical motifs. These include console doorcases, string courses and thin pediments. A Bramante-inspired arch wittily surmounts the garage door. To the rear, the impact is Edwardian colonial, including Eastern-inspired ironwork roofed balconies fronting high loggias on the first floor, and Arts & Crafts-style mullion windows on the second. The final result, repeated on crescents, inhabits the space between post-modernism and neo-classicism, calling to mind successful British terraces of the past.

Garden Villa

Emrys Architects has taken a macro approach to the design of its villas, putting communal space literally and figuratively at the centre. The 'simple' public square creates a 'home within a landscape', and back gardens are similarly grouped together for pools of green, limiting overlooking.

Living spaces are at the top of the dwellings, providing seamless access to a garden roof and better natural lighting.

The neighbourhoods use a combination of facades, some of simple render and others of clapboarded — a repeated refrain through many shortlisted entries. Here, the effect is to create barn-like masses, adding a touch of rusticity.



Hundred Year Home

The design for Hundred Year Home from CF Møller is focused on openness, simplicity, proportion and light. The clay-faced brick and tile dwellings are here arranged on a tilted angle, and while the large windows allow natural light to permeate throughout, privacy is unaffected.

The architect has specified high quality materials — reassigning cost away from mechanical heating and cooling. To provide both air-tightness and thermal mass, the designer has plumped for a familiar block component, obviating the need for skilled labour or specialist supply chains. Simple detailing should help the home to last the intended 100 years.



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2: Intelligence



External
management

Tony Chapman



As Tony Chapman nears retirement after nearly 20 years of running awards for the RIBA we ask him about the why prizes matter and the RIBA's new International Award

Why do awards matter?

They reward those who put in blood sweat and tears with the recognition of their peers. And they help the public understand why good buildings are important.

Surely there are too many?

There are too many bad awards. An award isn't worth winning if it has not been seen before being judged. That is where all the money goes on the RIBA Awards.

After the televised RIBA House of the Year, could other awards be more engaged?

That appearance on Grand Designs was good. I would love more TV coverage of the Stirling Prize. Back in 2000 it was hard to persuade the right broadcaster to do it. Architecture suffered from low esteem then – Stirling became part of the solution and the de facto architecture prize.

Is debate as important as celebration?

Yes. Debate – such as over the Rothschild Flint House winning House of the Year – is the public engagement we want. Judges have a duty to say why something won.

An international award has been difficult to crack. Why?

It is hugely demanding to get entries in from across the world and ensure fair judging. It needs to be run by a reputable institution and the mechanics must be right.

What is different about the new RIBA International Prize?

After three years' development we're working on promoting and possibly judging it with 80 international bodies. An awards group will sift, then a member will visit it, with a representative from that region.

Why has the Lubetkin name gone?

It's changed so fundamentally it needed a completely new title, though it might have a sponsor's name later.

Will your jury include non-architects?

Richard Rogers is chair of the grand jury with Kunlé Adeyemi and Philip Gumuchdjian – all architects. There are two more judges to be announced, a lay judge, and one appointed by our partner the UIA.

Will it outshine the Stirling Prize?

It could. But that is not the avowed aim. It has a wider catchment and the Stirling Prize winner will be on the longlist alongside 20 international RIBA Awards for Excellence. We'll have to see if it makes the final six.

What next for you?

I'm leaving the RIBA but not architecture, and I will continue to be involved as part of the RIBA awards group. I also have a model book for children, a conversation about presence with Peter Zumthor and an architectural thriller in the pipeline.

I particularly liked Richard Lavington's suburban multi-detached mansion block densification strategy. Air-rights ideas abounded, above everything from multi-storey car parks to schools.

Pamela Buxton at
NLA's New Ideas for
Housing
ribaj.com/culture/nla-ideas-for-housing

Over the course of one year, elevators are out of use for the equivalent of 216 centuries, due to service interventions

Save your legs with a lift that will pre-empt faults
ribaj.com/products/intelligent-lifts



Intelligence is officially approved RIBA CPD. Look out for icons throughout the section indicating core curriculum areas.

Where people
live

Do it yourself

Custom and self build have huge potential to dent the housing shortage. So what's stopping them?



By Luke Tozer

Custom build is part of the self build family, where instead of an individual doing their own Grand Design (self build), a custom developer helps an individual or group through part or all of the process, giving the customer choices along the way. It's been happening in Europe for years – custom and self build constitute up to 80% of new build homes in Austria – but in the UK it is negligible. Most such homes are done as self build and they account for less than 10% of new completions (around 10,000 new homes each year).

If it's so popular abroad, why hasn't it

happened here? Barriers to self and custom build have been identified by the government as land supply and procurement, access to finance, the planning process and general regulation and red tape.

In short, it's the whole process of getting something built, the way we do it, in the UK. A cultural and legislative shift is needed to reduce the barriers, and make fringe activity more mainstream. This is starting to happen through increased land supply and planning (see overleaf), but all developers agree UK custom build is taking time to mature.

However, there are two main emerging types of custom build, which address issues

of affordability and consumer choice: self finish homes and those offering a significant level of choice to the homeowner.

Self finish homes

Here the developer provides a watertight, warm, external envelope with services, a shell, which the customer then fits out themselves. The shell is Building Regulations compliant and mortgageable so that the new owner can move in and fit it out over time.

Gus Zogolovitch of custom build developer Inhabit homes likens the difference between volume house building and custom and self finish homes to 'the difference between buying a ready meal or cooking a meal yourself'. He sees the value for both customers and developers. From his perspective Inhabit's model of selling homes at shell gives customers choice and potential savings while saving significant time on site, lowering the cost of the build and speeding up the development cycle, which all improves profits.

Neil Double of Naked House, a not for profit community group set up to address affordability in London, uses custom build as a model and aims to provide 'naked', intermediate homes for its members on incomes from 25-80k. Double estimates that self finish can save new owners 20-30% of the cost of the home. That's a pretty significant saving in real money at London prices.

Choice and involvement in design

An alternative approach is where the custom developer provides the finished house, but gives the customer options and opportunities for customisation along the way. Isabel Allen of Kevin McCloud's HAB Housing says: 'Consumers have come to expect increasing levels of choice and opportunities for personalisation when they buy holidays or cars. I think it's inevitable that they will demand opportunities to customise their homes.' She believes that a degree of custom build will inevitably become the norm for mainstream housebuilders. An approach that is adaptive to local need, is collaborative, and which blurs the boundaries between the developer and local community – where many of the eventual purchasers will already live – has advantages, says Allen.

At Heartlands in Cornwall, Igloo has pioneered an approach, more common in the Netherlands and Germany, where as developer it provides serviced plots and access to a



range of house manufacturers who each provide a pattern book of customisation options for the client to choose from.

Why now?

The government is keen to encourage self and custom build, to supply much needed housing capacity alongside traditional house builders' provision. It offers an additional rather than competing solution to the housing crisis.

The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act proposed by Richard Bacon MP under the coalition government achieved Royal Assent on 26 March 2015 and placed a duty on local authorities to keep a register of individuals and community groups who want to acquire land for self and custom build projects. It requires them to take account of and make provision for their interests in local authority housing initiatives and local plans.

With its renewed emphasis on home ownership, the Conservative government has reiterated the desire for more custom and self build in the housing and planning bill, which is making its way through committee stage. The bill places a duty on local authorities to grant planning permission for self build homes to meet the local need as demonstrated by the local self build register.

The self build association NaCSBA launched a toolkit for local authorities in December 2015 to help them meet these new obligations, which sets out examples of best practice. NaCSBA estimates that due to this new legislation, approximately 10,000 additional building plots will be available over the next 2-3 years. Ted Stevens, of NaCSBA, says 'Community groups are springing up all the time, clambering to get custom build schemes off the ground.' So moves are afoot to address the land supply and planning barriers. It remains to be seen whether local authorities, already stretched by budget cuts, will have the skills necessary to adequately meet these additional demands, even with NaCSBA's help.

Opportunities for architects

Judging from the experiences from Europe such as the successful Baugruppen-model in Berlin, there seem to be two main, alternative, roles for architects in this fledgling sector, either as designers or as project enablers/facilitators. These two roles are mutually exclusive to avoid conflicts of interest. Some early group custom build schemes in Europe struggled when these roles were combined in an individual architect.

Consumers have come to expect increasing levels of choice and opportunities for personalisation when they buy holidays or cars. It's inevitable that they will demand opportunities to customise their homes



Opposite page The Acre for Hab Homes in Oxford, by John Pardey.

Top left Poulsom Middlehurst Architects for Inhabit Homes.

Above Naked House, a chance for owners to save money on the initial outlay by finishing their house themselves. Hugo McCloud.



Design opportunities

Designing a flexible envelope that can be configured in a variety of layouts and then designing a suite of components from which the customer can select is one possibility. There is the opportunity of working closely with a developer to design an adaptable model, a prototype, with potential for reproduction and scalability, combined with the more familiar process of working with the individual clients to make that into a specific home.

If concentrating on designing the shell and leaving the internal finish and fit out to owners seems to move away from the architectural desire of producing a Gesamtkunstwerk, it could also remove a lot of the pain and speed up the delivery of homes. It could significantly broaden the built impact of well designed, adaptable homes. It seems potentially closer to the Georgian pattern book model than anything the volume house builders have come up with. Perhaps it's that happy middle ground between over-precious private clients and the anonymous lack of end user input of larger housing schemes

Acting as an enabler

To facilitate a custom build scheme you need an understanding of project development, finance, contracts, procurement, planning, and community consultation and a love of spreadsheets – skills much like those of an RIBA client adviser, but with some specific

knowledge and specialism in custom and self build projects. These may not be at the core of most architects' training, but they are skills that architects often develop as they move out of daily design work into a more client side role. Most commonly an enabler is a surveyor, project manager or developer offering development management services.

There is potential and, according to NaCSBA, a willing market, for architects to establish a new model and combine forces with an external enabler to offer customers both designer and enabler services, so long as they are provided by different people with defined roles with clear Chinese walls between them.

What can you do?

First, you could apply to be on the self build register, and encourage others, for example clients etc, to do so too.

Join a community group such as Naked House, get in touch to see if they need help, or even start one yourself to address your own housing need (many small housing associations were started by architects).

Contact the head your local authority planning department and ask how they anticipate meeting their obligations under the new legislation and how many custom and self build schemes they have given consent. ●

Luke Tozer is co-founder of Pitman Tozer Architects and a member of the RIBA's housing group

Left Baugruppen Berlin by Zanderroth Architekten.

Bottom Custom build at scale, Baugruppen Berlin by Simon Menges.

LESSONS FROM BERLIN

Berlin's Baugruppen typically consist of 10-15 units and work predominantly in an urban context. Architects can now deliver schemes of up to 200 units using this custom build route. These Baugruppen have been around only for 15 years or so, with home ownership in Berlin on the rise.

Many valuable lessons can be learned from this custom build model. Architects' services vary greatly pending on the focus of each Baugruppe, most notably whether the emphasis is on high customization or on affordability.

The Baugruppen model, which built up Zanderroth Architekten's reputation as architects and its commercial success, focuses on affordability for the customer at highest possible construction quality within tight construction programmes. The urban design and design of the building's envelope are thus tightly controlled by the architects. Customization is offered through the amount of space that can be purchased and through choice of layout and spec of finishes within the actual flat only.

As the practice's Sascha Zander explains, the firm started with a much greater offer of (interior) customization, but this led to direct additional costs for the customer and to time delays. As the architect move to larger projects (eg Liebigstrasse 1 consists of 190 units), it ensures that customization is limited and follows a strict process. Traditionally procured new build flats in Berlin cost £3700/m² upwards. It is hardly surprising that Zanderroth's ability to deliver high quality flats for its custom build clients within unique buildings at a cost of £2700/m² has proved highly popular.

Silvia Ullmayer is director of Ullmayer Sylvester Architects





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Ahead of the game

As the government’s BIM mandate approaches, the second NBS RIBA panel came together in October

Adrian Malleson

Adrian Malleson The government mandate, which requires the use of collaborative 3D BIM for all centrally procured buildings by 2016, is only a few months away. What is your assessment of BIM at the moment, and the standing of the mandate? Are we confident the government and industry are ready?

Sarah Davidson I think the mandate has been issued with the best of intentions, but my concern is that the industry is not yet clear on how it will be implemented.

David Miller Whatever happens next year, the mandate has given a real emphasis to BIM in the UK. Whether on 6 April they will ask for it specifically, I don’t know.

Mick Goode There’s real ambiguity. ‘Centrally procured’? What does that mean – you could drive a horse and cart through it. With the range of funding mechanisms for buildings, and the blurring of the distinction between private and public sectors, it’s hard to know when something is publicly funded. If there’s no stick to enforce the mandate, we could be losing a real opportunity.

Steve Lockley If contractors refuse to adhere to the mandate, what then? What would change – the contractors or the mandate?

DM Yes, I’d agree it’s unclear. Take the Ministry of Justice, and Defence. These carry out some of the biggest centrally procured projects. But they are necessarily bound by secrecy and confidentiality. We can’t talk about their projects, and they can’t have a common data environment.

MG What I’m seeing is clients doing it because of the benefits they see, not just because of the mandate.

DM Yes, clients are choosing what they need for their projects – and that’s increasingly BIM.

SL It’s because the market is seeing the value of collaborative BIM.

David Shepherd Where a disruptive technology emerges – and BIM is a disruptive technology – its effects on the mainstream is not always clear. What we might be seeing is the early stages of disruption, and in those early stages it’s very difficult to know what the effects will be. We don’t have the breadth of vision to see where, and for whom, the benefits of BIM will emerge.

AM That brings us on to Level 3 BIM. While it’s not yet clearly described, do people see the current mandate as just a point on the way to Level 3? And what will Level 3 BIM mean?

DM Well, to get to Level 3, we first have to get to Level 2, but putting that aside...

DS For us to move up the BIM levels we need to start thinking about what the advantages of sharing information are for each party.

Elizabeth Kavanagh Knowledge is power, but with Level 3 BIM, power will lie in the ability to effectively share information, not in the ability to hoard it. Level 3 BIM will be about sharing the gain in a project, not in

allocating blame.

DS It’s early days, of course. The in-use model needs to improve over a number of years. A designer needs to be accountable – and held accountable – for the design. This could be in energy performance, for example, but the performance requirements will vary significantly by building type.

EK Yes, with Soft Landings we’ll be able to learn more about the consequences of our design decisions.

DM At the moment design decisions are all about reputation. A design that is seen as ‘good’ will enhance your reputation as a designer. In the future designs will be measured against performance. And that performance has a very direct effect on the financial reward you can expect from good design, from commissioning a good designer.

SD Better buildings, those whose lifetime performance is better, will be worth more. Level 3 BIM will give the audit trail of how a building actually performs.

DM Could Soft Landings become another stick to beat the industry with?

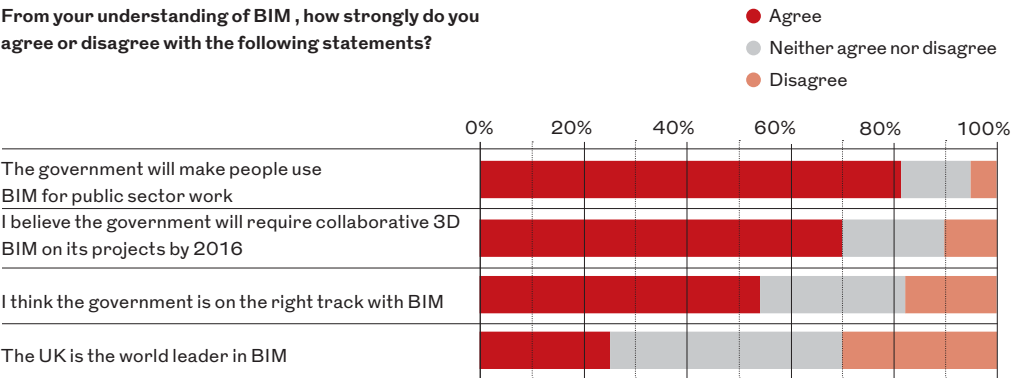
EK Well, it could, but it should be a showcase for best practice.

DM We might need to change our business model; designers charging for improving the performance of buildings, not for their time.

DS So Level 3 won’t be about being paid to produce a co-ordinated model, it will be about demonstrating the payback, the bottom line value, of a design. This could be about performance of the building over its life, but it could be about the time it takes to create a building too.

SL This may be something architects have to adapt to. Level 3 BIM may bring about the industrialisation of design. Doing the same thing again and again but making incremental improvements each time; that’s industry, but that’s anathema to architecture.

From your understanding of BIM, how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



AM: We'll need the involvement of those managing buildings in BIM – how's that going?

EK COBie might not turn out to be the way this information is delivered. There will be something that supersedes it.

Anne Dye RIBA clients don't want spreadsheets – the format, as it stands, is unusable by clients.

DS Yes, but it goes deeper than that. There's a cost to the data collection for asset management. But clients aren't asking for a fully costed asset database at the early stages of the design process.

SL Too often we see three different information requirements: BIM, handover information and asset data. And these sets of information are not linked by a common identifier, so it's very difficult for them to be harmonised.

EK This isn't just process, it's people too. There's a need for ongoing dialogue and conversation between those who produce and those who use data.

SL The design team rarely sees data being used downstream.

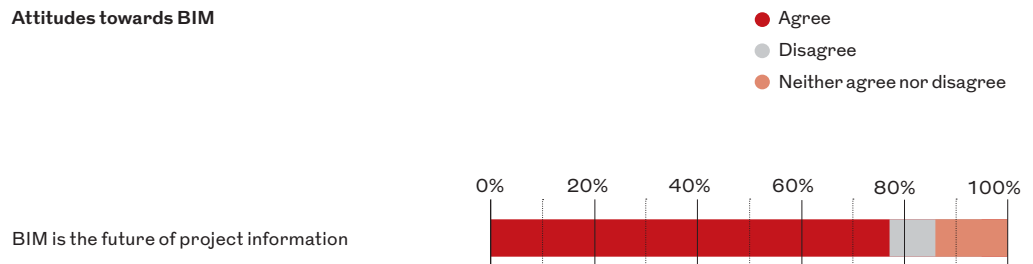
SD Facilities management (FM) tends to be reactive maintenance, but through BIM we will be able to provide a strategic approach to asset management – including FM.

EK Yes, we have 'intelligent clients' whose FM team is looking at asset information – COBie – to manage a large portfolio of buildings.

SL Moving to new ways of managing assets isn't easy. While you move from one way of doing things to another, there can't be any downtime. Moving to any new system is very risky, even when it's going to be better in the long run.

MG People are ignited by the NBS BIM Toolkit. We are using it to brief building maintenance. Together, we can populate the

Attitudes towards BIM



data to a greater level. And this is for smaller projects. For kitchens, for example, we use it to help work out the costs for future maintenance and replacement, depending on the choices we make in design.

DS Part of overcoming these challenges we're speaking about is getting links between all the different data. But you have to bear in mind that it's a human thing too. People have to communicate with each other.

AM How do we see the changes BIM brings affecting architects?

SL New technology tends to be disruptive. One disruptor for the industry will be standardised descriptions of products that allow easy like for like replacement.

MG So if we get to 'plug and play' design choice, where does that leave the architect?

DM We may increasingly be involved in just early stage design, with contractors developing the construction model from our early stage work. But a standardised, 'plug and play' model of describing and modelling buildings, their systems and components may be just what we all need. It allows for the best people, those with a particular expertise, to do their specialist work at the right stage.

I can see two models coming from this. The first is where large a contractor owns a project and brings on specialists, as needed, during a project. BIM will allow standardised information to be shared through the

project as specialists come and go. The second, more interesting, model is where teams of SMEs come together on a project by project basis, with no overarching company owning the project.

It's only through BIM that we can foresee this highly collaborative future.

SL Level 3 is a new process model. That needs a big cultural change, but the question is: who is going to bring that about?

SD It could be international companies demanding new ways of working.

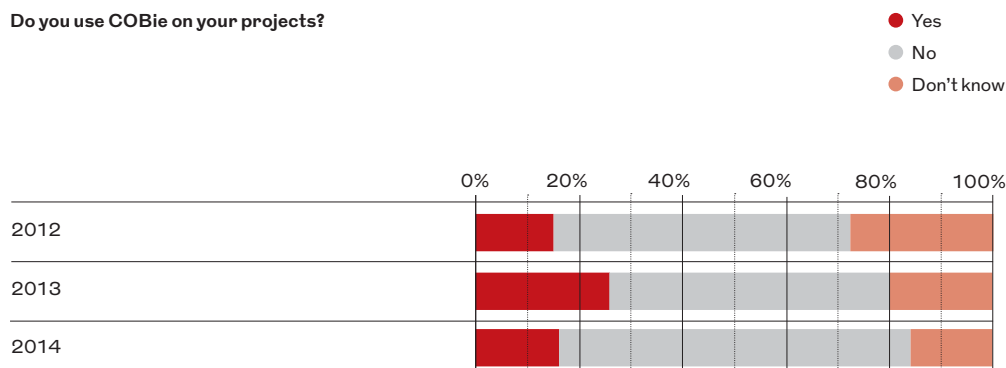
MG Or it could be regional. With devolution and the Northern Powerhouse, perhaps cities will be the engines of change. Will one or more cities become BIM cities – Manchester BIM?

SL It looks like the genie is out of the bottle. BIM will happen. It might not be because of the mandate coming into force. But the anticipation of it means we have become world leaders in BIM.

SD Yes, it's created an idea of progression that we've not had before. The idea has been that with BIM the UK will do things differently, and better. But it's been us, on the ground, who have worked out how we're going to do it, against the backdrop of the mandate. We have had the freedom to develop BIM in ways we can see real value in.

MG Those who will really be doing it won't be us. The post post-millennials, generation Z will really be driving the change. It's them we need to listen to. ●

Do you use COBie on your projects?



THE EXPERTS WHO SHARED THEIR VIEWS WERE:

- Sarah Davidson Gleeds Property & Construction Consultancy
 - Elizabeth Kavanagh Stride Treglown
 - Mick Goode Croft Goode Architects
 - David Shepherd author, BIM Management Handbook
 - David Miller David Miller Architects
 - Anne Dye RIBA
 - Steve Lockley Northumbria University
 - Adrian Malleon RIBA Enterprises
- Lynda Thompson and Adrian Malleon attended from RIBA Enterprises, along with Lucy Carmichael from the RIBA

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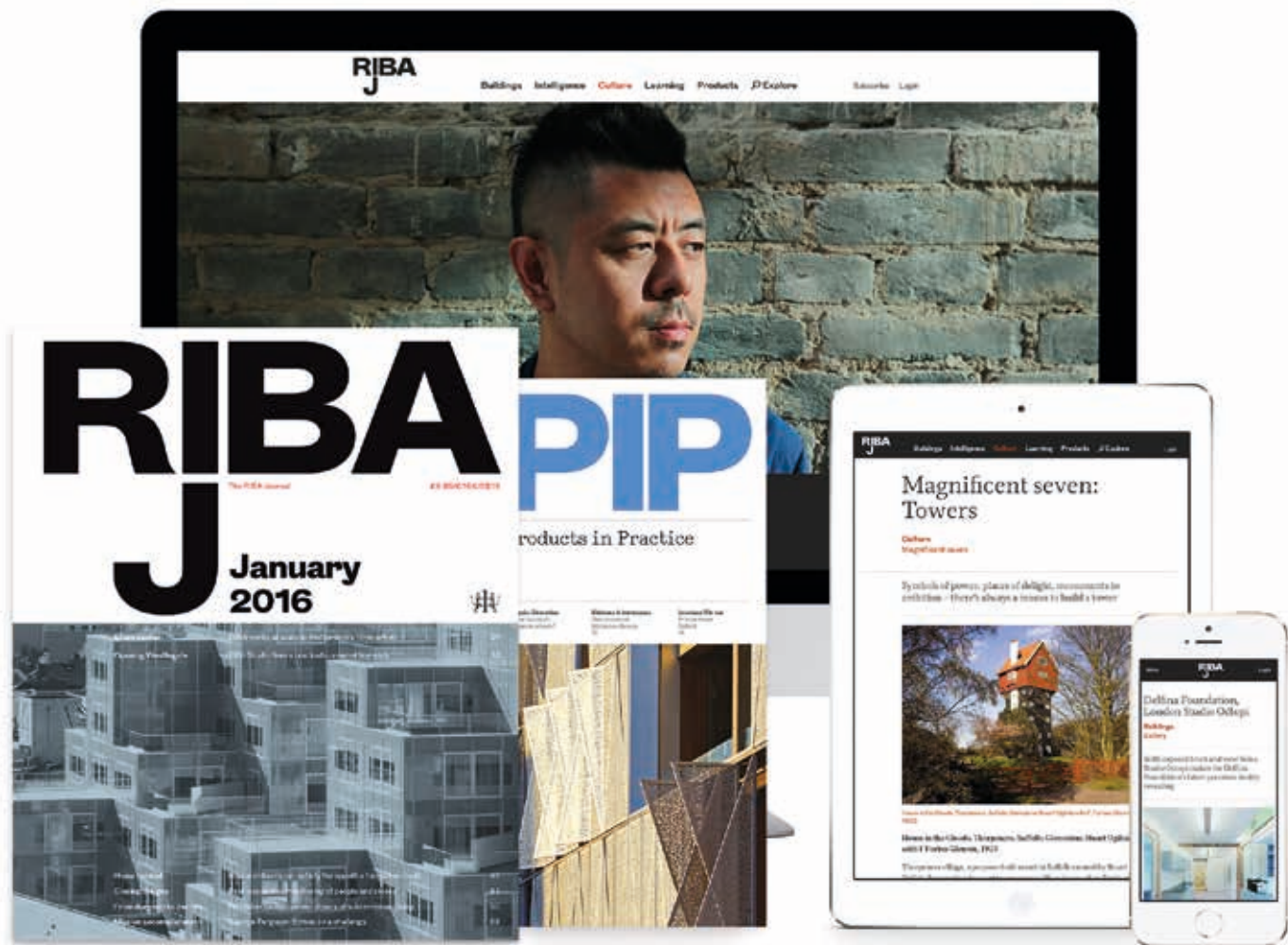
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And after that...

The question of how well buildings perform relative to their design expectations has long worried architects

Henrik Schoenefeldt

Architecture stands out from other professions within the service sector, particularly education, health and social care, as having escaped the drive to measure performance. The proposition underlying the RIBA's recent research symposium 'The Design Quality Proposition: ensuring and communicating design quality in architectural practice' is that the value of design quality could be communicated more effectively to clients if it was verified through measurement.

Although standardised methodologies for evaluating building performance are available, these are still rarely fully embedded in practice. With their emphasis on energy efficiency and carbon emission, these methods are also too narrow in scope to provide comprehensive tools for measuring design quality. The symposium illuminated the way architects are confronted with the challenge of evaluating a wider range of 'qualities'.

The question of what constitutes design quality was investigated through three case-studies, of Wilkinson School, the Sainsbury Laboratory and Royal Road. These projects were reviewed from the perspective of architects and client (in one case only), followed by critiques from external rapporteurs. Although not sufficient to yield a new framework for assessing design quality, the case studies gave insights into a multiplicity

of design qualities that received recognition from clients and occupants.

The case studies showed the importance of evaluating design quality not purely on basis of the performance of the physical product, but also on the quality of partnerships in design as a social process. Wilkinson School and the Sainsbury Laboratory were both products of successful co-operation between clients, users and architects. According to Rod McAllister, the rapporteur, and project architect, Gavin Henderson, the design quality of the laboratory was the result of Stanton Williams' skill in engaging in an open inquiry with the client. The brief, budget and architectural concept developed in partnership with Dr Roger Freedman, academic head of plant research, and patron David Sainsbury. Stanton Williams was not hired as an expert in laboratories but for its skill in successful collaborative process involving the client and future occupants. The firm was in dialogue with the client for over

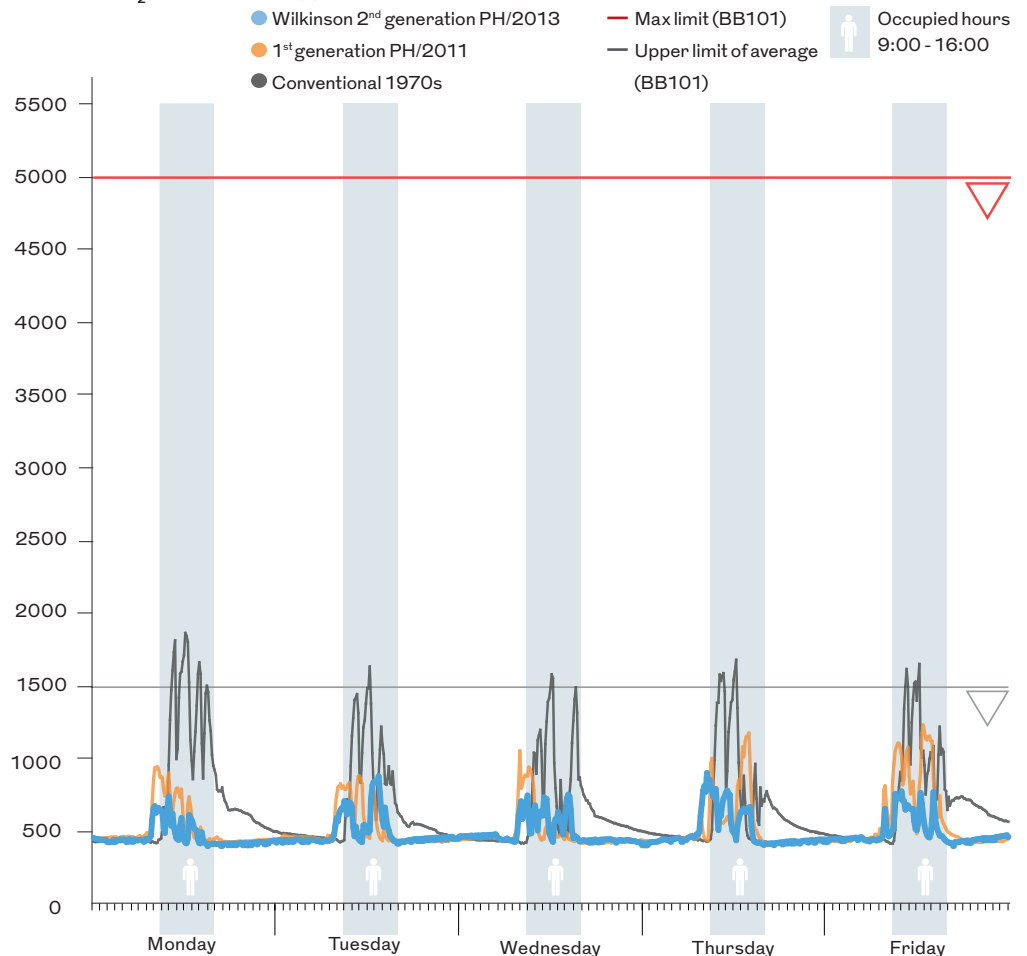
six months, engaging in a shared learning experience, before receiving the commission.

Similarly, architect Mark Lumley highlighted that the design for Wilkinson School was guided by the educational principles presented by the head teacher Tina Gibbons, who also spoke at the symposium. She saw her involvement in the design as a means to fundamentally rethink how she and her team approach teaching, and the architect engaged with her in a collaborative process. Professor Harry Daniels argued that the school was a rare example of collaborative practice, where the architect's role was to bring together people in the social process of design.

Quality and efficiency

Construction quality and energy efficiency were central considerations in all three case studies. Wilkinson School is Passivhaus certified, the Sainsbury Laboratory received BREEAM excellent rating and Royal Road achieved Code Level 4. But the speakers

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Royal Road housing by Panter Hudspith attempts to give more identity to the surfaces and spaces.

Space planning, if based on an understanding of human social interaction, can improve the performance of social organisations

emphasised that important design qualities exhibited in these projects can only be measured through studies of occupant behaviour and experience. Although Stanton Williams faced the challenge of designing highly serviced laboratory environments, the design was not the result of a process with a narrow technical focus. It was equally concerned with creating environments around human experience, exploring how spaces can foster social interaction or how work benches with access to daylight and visual connections to the botanic gardens can help scientists be more productive. It has been occupied since January 2011 but so far only preliminary user-surveys have been conducted, by the client, to evaluate these more experiential qualities.

Professor Alan Penn showed how space planning, if based on an understanding of human social interaction, can improve the performance of social organisations. Such understanding can be gained through ethnographic research methods, such as the coding of floor plans following observations of how human interaction is affected by space.

Architect Simon Hudspith reported that the Royal Road case study aimed to achieve high-density housing that gave its residents a sense of identity and belonging. A sense of

intimacy was to be created through the provision of communal courts and individual balconies and roof terraces. Challenging the repetitious building systems of the modernist Heygate Estate, this sense was to be further accentuated through irregular window arrangements and brick detailing.

The human angle

Wilkinson School was the only project to undergo a comprehensive performance evaluation, addressing technical and human factors. It has been occupied since January 2014, but Architype could also draw on experience with two of its previous Passivhaus schools, both completed in 2011 and with post-occupancy evaluations. Environmental performance was evaluated using common methods, such as energy metering and monitoring the indoor climate and air quality, but the head teacher also took an active role in facilitating a process of optimising its performance from environmental and pedagogical perspectives. Apart from reviewing how teachers or pupils use spaces, Gibbons held several meetings to explore with the teachers the challenges of adapting teaching practices to the physical space. In this context the term 'performance gap' – typically used to describe the discrepancy between the

predicted and actual energy performance – acquires a much broader meaning.

Reviewing the design through the lens of activity theory, Ming Tse and Professor Daniels from the University of Oxford showed that the design of teaching practices and the physical environment were intimately linked, requiring teaching activities to be considered integral part of the building's operational life. The relationship between human behaviour and environmental performance was also addressed through the provision of visual user-guides and workshops. The participation of occupants in day-to-day operations was a prerequisite to achieving the best performance.

Taking a wider historical view I showed how environmental control in 19th century public buildings was a social process out of necessity. Without computerised controls, 'occupants' had to co-operate closely with the human 'operators,' facilitating a level of engagement that went far beyond that of modern building performance evaluations. Should modern post-occupancy evaluations therefore be understood as a way of re-establishing closer partnerships with occupants in achieving better performance in-use? ●

Henrik Schoenefeldt is lecturer in sustainable architecture at the Kent School of Architecture

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Is anybody there?

There's no need to feel alone – there are plenty of places to find a mentor to fit your aims and ambitions

Danna Walker

Perhaps the first question to ask yourself if you are seeking mentorship is 'What exactly is mentoring?' Mentoring is a 3,000 year old learning strategy and an important step in development, providing a platform for personal empowerment and self-directed growth.

At its heart mentoring is a developmental relationship, typically between two people, a mentor and a mentee, who together build a mutually rewarding connection. It can be undertaken formally (using a structured programme) or informally. It provides a safe environment where a mentee can explore issues affecting their personal or professional goals but may also include matters such as work-life balance and building confidence.

Mentoring is an incredibly powerful tool embraced by individuals and business sectors as a key strategy to learn and develop.

Identifying a potential mentor

The second question is 'What do you want to be mentored on?' Being clear about the purpose will save you time finding a potential

source of support. Other things you may need to consider now are: Is there a specific topic I wish to focus on? How much time am I willing to commit? What am I hoping to achieve?

Clarity on these questions will make it easier to narrow down potential mentors. There are some great places to start searching.

Your workplace can be a great source of mentors, particularly if you are looking at the potential for growth into new areas of responsibility. You could ask colleagues to act as a mentor for you, ask them to recommend people in their networks or even suggest that your office sets up an in-house scheme.

The benefits of this approach are that you gain specific support relevant to your experience and you can strengthen or build new relationships with colleagues.

Your professional network is another good prospect. You may already have plans to meet a potential future mentor or know someone who could introduce you to one. If not, consider the members of your personal networks, for example LinkedIn, and if you go to face-to-face networking events consider colleagues you meet through them. Some groups feature one to one mentoring or host speed mentoring events (mentoring does not have to be a long term commitment).

One of the advantages of seeking support via your networks is the potential to link with someone not in your immediate circle and who may have a different background or skillset to you, so it can be particularly effective if you want to develop new skills or need a completely objective perspective.

Then there is your college or university. If you are studying you may find that your institution has a mentoring programme – these are often designed to support you through an educational programme. For example, some will provide the assistance of entrepreneurs to support the development of business skills or workplace mentors to assist those transitioning to the workplace for the first time.

You can have more than one mentor. You may find that you have more than one goal or area you wish to focus on so it's worth considering having different people with diverse backgrounds and experience to assist you.

A great mentor can be younger, older or even the same age as you. If you've considered very carefully what you wish to achieve, let that guide you on whether an individual has the right experience or perspective to guide your journey to self-improvement.

MORE INFORMATION

RIBA Student Mentoring Scheme. This is offered via the RIBA's regional offices and designed to help students to become fully qualified architects. architecture.com

The FLUID Diversity

Mentoring Programme

Developed by Architects for Change, the RIBA's equality, diversity and inclusion advisory group, this supports individuals from groups under-represented in the construction sector at any stage of their career. fluidmentoring.org.uk

Business mentoring

Government supported mentoring for all types of businesses including start ups. <https://greatbusiness.gov.uk>

Women in Property (WiP)

Membership organisation offering mentoring to women from a wide range of construction backgrounds. womeninproperty.org.uk/mentoring.aspx

Mentoring programmes

Formal mentoring programmes are excellent for those seeking a mentor from a particular background or with certain experience (or those wishing to become one). There are various mentoring styles on offer from one-off events to group and one-to-one mentoring.

One benefit of a formal programme is that you are placed with another individual who has already made a commitment to mentoring. Depending on the programme remit it can be an excellent way to connect with someone who is outside your network and may be experienced in a completely different discipline.

The FLUID Diversity Mentoring Programme, for example, which started in 2012, is pan-professional and aimed at built environment disciplines. It has proved to be a great way for those working in the same industry but from different specialisms to build an understanding of the construction industry at large or other roles and perspectives. ●

Danna Walker is chair of Architects for Change, the RIBA's equality, diversity and inclusion advisory group

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Procurement
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The morning after

Even apparently professional organisations can blunder badly. Don't be one of them

Alistair McGrigor

All too frequently the tales of woe in this column relate to situations where it is hard to envisage a professional person making such negligent mistakes.

However, a recent case involving bank project monitors shows how a professional engagement rushed into in the boom years of the mid 2000s soured during the recession.

The project related to a scheme for conversion of a property in Willesden into a church. Lloyds Bank was lending £2.6 million to the borrower, to turn an old bingo hall into a church and congregation offices.

As the judge put it, 'unfortunately it all went wrong'. After about 21 months, the bank's facility was virtually exhausted but the development was far from complete. McBains Cooper, appointed by the bank as its project monitor, had failed in several ways to carry out its professional role, not least in a failure to attend monthly site meetings or to visit it much at all; nor did McBains Cooper give proper warning of the likelihood of the facility amount being entirely used up. From this sorry tale, a few lessons can be learnt.

Hard lessons

To start with, always properly check the terms of what you have been asked to carry out, and for any particular task, ensure your personnel have the relevant experience and expertise. McBains Cooper had been asked to

carry out a project monitor role and provide cost reports, but the person responsible for the project was not a trained quantity surveyor.

Secondly, understand the brief. It became clear that McBains Cooper had not realised exactly how much the loan facility was for, nor that it would have to allow for professional costs as well as the costs of the works. The purpose of the loan was also not well understood. Some of the drawdowns seemed to be used for separate works, which were not part of the works to be funded by the facility, and McBains Cooper never warned the bank that this was occurring.

Be precise about the terms of your retainer. McBains Cooper was supposed to make monthly visits to the site, but it transpired that its visits were far short of monthly, amounting to perhaps eight or nine over the course of the 18 month project. McBains Cooper's acceptance of payment for monthly visits, while visiting far less regularly, was in the judge's mind 'verging on the fraudulent'.

Keep contemporaneous records. If a dispute arises, reliable evidence dating from the time of the events will be invaluable. McBains Cooper had lost its notebooks proving how many times it had visited the site, so most evidence on these visitations depended on the project quantity surveyor, who did have his hard copy contemporaneous records, and was therefore able to give the most compelling evidence as to how often the project monitor attended site. Beware the use of electronic diaries for such records, because they have a tendency to wipe clean their calendars a year or so after the events.

Nor was the bank blameless. In several ways it was negligent, resulting in losses which could otherwise have been mitigated.

These include the use of inexperienced staff for the project (one bank employee clearly had limited experience of building contracts) and a failure to explain to McBains Cooper either the full value of the facility agreement or its terms and scope.

This big dispute will have cost Lloyds Bank and McBains Cooper a hefty amount in fees and in damages, even with the contributory negligence shown by the bank.

For any professionals engaging with clients, the same issues are crucial to bear in mind: know your brief, check the terms of your retainer, and ensure your staff have the correct levels of expertise and experience. ●

Alistair McGrigor is partner at Nabarro LLP

McBains Cooper's acceptance of payment for monthly visits, while visiting far less regularly, was in the judge's mind 'verging on the fraudulent'

IN PLAIN ENGLISH CONTRIBUTORY NEGLIGENCE

Contributory negligence is the principle that if a claimant seeking damages is itself also at fault, and that fault has in part caused the damages the claimant is seeking, the claimant might have its damages reduced to take account of its own negligence.

The court will decide what would be a just and equitable reduction in the damages payable, taking account of the facts and including taking account of the relative sophistication of the parties. For example, in the *Lloyds Bank v McBains Cooper* case, the fact that the bank was a large and sophisticated organisation will have weighed against the bank in deciding whether or not its own negligence had contributed towards its losses.

Contributory negligence is not the same as 'contribution', which is where, say, a structural engineer has been found liable for losses incurred by the developer client, but believes that the architect was also liable for the developer's losses. In those circumstances, the engineer might seek a contribution from the architect, whereas (if the developer had partly caused its own losses) the engineer might claim contributory negligence against the developer.



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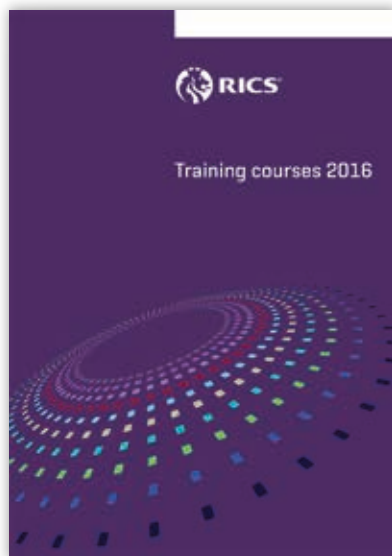
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External
management

This world ain't big enough

Maria Smith tells the tale
of a cunning plan



Maria Smith

Once upon a time there was a baby fox. His name was Focks. Focks wanted to be a journalist so he went to architecture school and moaned about it very loudly until everyone in architecture knew who he was. Then he got a job at an architecture magazine. The magazine was called Snide. Focks quickly rose in the ranks by writing very clever articles that appeared as flattery to the idiots they were about and appeared as insult to the jealous readers who wished they were about them. Before long he was deputy editor and everyone assumed he was the creative force behind Snide because the editor was spending so much time hanging out in private clubs and reminiscing about the smell of Soho in the rain in the 80s that he barely had any time to do any work. This suited Focks down to the ground because he would hate anyone to think he wasn't the underdog.

One day the editor of Snide got into an argument with the driver of a black cab who splashed a puddle of water over his Church's and a series of unfortunate comeuppances led to him being sectioned. Focks could see what was coming; he was going to be promoted to editor. He knew this would be a disaster

so he promptly resigned and went to Africa to build schools and remind everyone he had a degree in architecture and genuine affinity with the real world. An incredible stroke of luck involving a minor but exaggerated-in-the-UK-press disease outbreak near where Focks was working meant he got away with only three months instructing children to carry concrete blocks the five hour walk from the nearest road before coming home a hero. Slightly thinner, slightly hairier, and slightly more adept on the dance floor, Focks was ready to enact the next stage in his plan.

Calling in a favour from a fellow architecture drop-out that worked at a quasi-quango-funding-body-design-police-outfit, Focks secured himself a job as in-house client-side design-advisor for a local authority suffering an influx of infrastructure-earmarked cash they had no idea how to spend. Focks wrote press releases every day for nine months and the council quickly became the envy of all other councils, which councils inexplicably like to be. At the same time, for completely unrelated reasons surrounding class guilt, the daughter of a fashion magnate opened a boutique nail bar with an unviable business plan in the council's second largest town centre and Focks was immediately credited with achieving tantric gentrification.

Focks' next move was to set up a new practice that delivered community consultation services by convincing architecture schools to pay his practice to deliver taught modules effectively outsourcing education while getting students to work for free. It was of course immediately a runaway success and all the high profile architects signed a petition to save it even though it was in no danger. Focks later revealed that he was using the format of the petition to demonstrate how harnessing the agency we have for change leads to positive action-research even in the face of rampant neoliberalism.

After two years, thirteen and a half students had helped three small-scale developers from far away places – where they spoke languages into which it was impossible to translate the bureaucracy of the British planning system – to not get planning. This upset local residents by drawing attention to a long established roller blading club that had to be shut down after scrutiny revealed that the precise frequency generated by the roller-bladers' wheels travelling over that particular grade of macadam caused a nervous tick in

Slightly thinner,
slightly hairier, and
slightly more adept
on the dance floor,
Focks was ready to
enact the next stage
in his plan

a species of bat that an amateur ornithologist claimed to have seen on her way back from an endoscopy that went very slightly wrong.

Flush with human interest, Focks secured a job at a national broadsheet just as the first NASA probes were bringing back evidence of life on Mars. For a year he travelled the globe building up momentum and air-miles and prestige while in the background positioning himself to be the first architecture critic to make it to off-world and assess the structures of the single-celled organisms' habitats. Thirty-nine design festivals later and Focks found himself strapped in to a rocket seat next to Richard Branson's third cousin twice removed and the cryogenically preserved identical-twin Siberian models that had been really big in the 20s. An inarticulate time later, he was on Mars, dictating to the singularity on the kitschness of crystal formation and audacity of florescence of proto-organs. Just as he was feeling pleased with himself for coming up with the perfect pun around sub-zero extra-terrestrial architecture being like frozen music, life as we know it was irreversibly altered and nobody cared. ●

Maria Smith is a director of architecture at engineering practice Interrobang and curator of Turncoats

Hidden danger

The potentially lethal problem of poor firestopping was brought firmly into the open at Hilti's seminar, says Ruth Slavid



Walk into a new building or one that has recently been refurbished, and what do you notice first? It may be the nature of the space or the quality of materials or even a detail of a sill or a shadow gap. But it's not going to be the firestopping – almost entirely hidden and decidedly unglamorous.

Yet the firestopping is the single element that may determine whether the building will still be there in 20 years' time – and whether or not anybody has died in it. Firestopping is the process of making good the breaches that are created in fire compartments when services and other elements are passed through, or alterations made. It is not necessarily difficult to carry out, but there are too many people, both professionals and manual workers, who have

little understanding what they are doing. The results, while usually invisible, could be catastrophic.

Overview and best practice

It was to address this problem that firestopping specialist Hilti sponsored a half-day RIBA Journal seminar on the topic. Wilf Butcher, chief executive officer of the Association for Specialist Fire Protection, gave a clear explanation of what best practice involves, discussing the legislation and architect's liability as well as issuing a plea for simplicity and standardisation within a design. Two other speakers – Jo Pilsniak, partner at Make Architects, and project director Andy Hills from John Robertson Architects – demonstrated their

practices' exemplary approach to fire design in, respectively, 5 Broadgate office and Bush House refurbishment, both in London.

The most startling presentation, however, was by Steven Morgan, associate fire engineer with Hoare Lea. He talked about his research into firestopping in hospitals and, although this is a very specific building type, the situation he uncovered has salutary lessons for anyone involved in the design and construction of all kinds of buildings.

What differentiates the fire design of hospitals from most other building types is the presumption that many users will not be able to escape unaided. Patients may be bed-bound, or undergoing an operation or other procedure that cannot be interrupted. In

Make's 5 Broadgate for British Land



Fire design at 5 Broadgate (left) by Make Architects was exemplary

Joanna Pilsniak

addition to these patients, medical staff will need to be on hand to look after them.

So while most building designs have evacuation at the forefront of their approach, with compartmentation still playing an important role, with hospitals compartmentation is the primary concern. Typically each floor will be divided into a number of compartments, so that patients can if necessary be wheeled from one to another in the case of fire. Maintaining their integrity is crucial to preserving life in the event of fire.

Unfortunately, hospitals are heavily serviced buildings, and as instruments are replaced and upgraded, or the layout of the building is altered, these compartments may get breached. Firestopping – the filling in of gaps that are created in compartment walls, using the appropriate materials in the right way – is essential when this occurs. If it is not done properly, people may die.

Morgan showed examples of bad practice from just one hospital of firestopping that would not stop a fire. These examples included, among many, incorrectly fire-stopped expansion joints or gaps around the perimeter of proprietary intumescent pipe collars, the use of polyurethane foam fire-stopping, known for its disappearing act at the first sign of heat, and corrugated plastic cable conduit threaded through large holes cut in plasterboard walls and cable trays that had not been fire-stopped.

Terrifying litany

Morgan's presentation provided a terrifying litany: but there is no reason why it should be confined to one particular hospital – or indeed to one particular building type. And if the idea of a fire in a hospital is particularly frightening, don't forget that people have died in fires – sometimes in large numbers – in all manner of buildings. This is made even worse by the fact that the failed elements are typically concealed behind false ceilings or under floors so they are not likely to be picked up by any but the most thorough inspection. Many of the people who work in the building either during construction or during alterations just don't appreciate either the importance of firestopping or how to do it properly.

So what is to be done? Paul Langford, head of the Business Unit Chemicals at Hilti, kicked off a panel discussion at the end of the morning by saying: 'There are two things that all of you [the architects in the audience]



can do. You can give better guidance and better descriptions of what needs to be done. About 10-12 standard firestopping applications cover 80-85% of penetrations, so you should produce standard drawings of those and put them into your specification. You should also accurately document with photographic evidence. For the other 15-20% good solutions exist and can be easily rectified and highlighted.'

This was a well attended seminar on a topic that is a matter of life and death. Delegates listened to presentations that were at once inspiring and frightening. It is worrying to start wondering how well things have been done in the buildings that you have already completed. But this mix of carrot and stick may well save lives in the future.

The talk also suggests that architects should have greater awareness of how more considered initial design might better contribute to the safety of buildings over their useful lives, cognisant that they are highly likely to change as, over time, the needs and purposes of the building alter. ●

Research into firestopping in hospitals uncovered has salutary lessons for anyone involved in the design and construction of all kinds of buildings

Steven Morgan

About 10-12 standard firestopping applications cover 80-85% of penetrations. Architects should produce standard drawings of these and put them in their specification

Paul Langford

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3: Culture

Architecture for art's sake

What does Assemble's Turner triumph say about art and architecture?



Hugh Pearman

We've been familiar with the notion of community architecture since Ralph Erskine in the 1970s. We've trodden the modern path of art/architecture fusion since Le Corbusier in the 1920s and saw its revival in the UK with the arrival of FAT and Muf in the 1990s. But come on – architecture and art have rubbed along together at the Royal Academy since it was established in 1768. The RIBA's charter of 1837 talks of the 'various arts and sciences' of the profession and comes down in favour of the former: 'it being an art esteemed and encouraged in all enlightened nations'. As for the notion that architecture can emerge from other disciplines, that's older still: we can point to Inigo Jones (stage-set design) and Christopher Wren (mathematics and astronomy). But it took until December 2015 for a community-minded, not-exclusively-architect architecture practice to win the Turner Prize, in the 21st year of that art award. Well done, Assemble, but why now?

OK, we know that anything can be defined as art if someone (especially the artist) says it is and enough people agree. And if ar-

chitecture is an art, which it clearly thinks it is, then there should be no argument. But it is a DIFFERENT art. Never mind the 'frozen music' thing. Architects are different from artists. That's clear from all the biennales and triennales where you too often encounter architects trying – my, how they try – to cut it as installation artists. But they can't escape their training. It shows. Artists, believe me, always do art better than architects.

Assemble is, unlike Muf and FAT when they set out, much more heavily into actual buildings that get built. It just does things involving buildings and people of one kind or another. Its members have ideas: they are good at making things happen and helping others to make things happen. That's a very architectural skill.

All this is admirable. Where FAT wrote a tongue-in-cheek (but wonderfully accurate) manifesto on 'How to be a famous architect', Assemble just got on and did it, by force of collective will, in five years from a standing start. But the mystery of the Turner Prize remains.

The Turner Prize jury wants to broaden our ideas of what constitutes art. It rejects the idea of the lone artist genius, and commends a kind of art that is not about commodification of the work produced – is, in fact, anti-capitalist. Thus Assemble's community architecture work at Granby Four Streets in Liverpool qualified. This chimes with an emerging strand in architecture exhibition practice right now, which tends towards social engagement rather than the presentation of objects. That's not easy to demonstrate to a public looking for, well, things to look at.

Is this the death of 'useless art' then? Or is it the birth of a new kind of recognition for what architects – who are not visual artists – do? Probably neither, but this doesn't actually matter. It's one of those Turner Prize moments and it's got everyone (well, everyone interested in contemporary art) talking about architecture, and what it is. I'm not going to argue with that. ●

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Great Excavations

Will Wiles goes underground



Will Wiles

'The people – where will they go?' Ebenezer Howard asked in *Garden Cities of To-Morrow*. His question was accompanied by a now-famous diagram with magnets pulling three ways: to the town (yuck!), to the country (bo-o-oring!), and to the town-country of the garden cities. It was a question that had an answer built in. But the diagram should really have had a spectral fourth arrow, the arrow of Victorian fears and nightmares. It would point down, into the earth.

As the 19th century wore on, with its mines and cuttings and excavations and tubed railways and general mighty delvings, fears grew that the people – working people in particular – might end up living permanently underground, either by force or, worse, because they preferred it. This is a fear that finds repeated expression in the fantastical literature of the time, most notably in HG Wells' *The Time Machine*, in which the subterranean, vicious Morlocks run the machinery that supports the idle, decadent Eloi on the surface of a far-future earth. Much the same fear can be seen in Fritz Lang's film *Metropolis*: toiling subterranean proles, buried engines, periodic eruptions of savagery.

Everyone – the Victorians, the Edwardians, the proto-modernists – assumed that the rich would seek the health-giving light and air available at the heights, and the social hierarchy would descend with the lifts, to reach the masses in the basement. And it's true that a penthouse fetches more than a first-floor flat. But otherwise, under the distorting pressures of the property market, something like the

We're left with a startling realisation: the housing crisis in London is so severe that even the richest people in the world are inadequately accommodated

opposite has come true. Surveys, often tententious, tell us that a stigma of deprivation attaches to high-rise living, and that given a choice people prefer ground level.

Meanwhile, in London at least, it's the rich who are burrowing downwards. Last month a £3.5 million mansion in Barnes, London, spectacularly collapsed, apparently the result of deep basement excavations. These 'super-basements' are a distinctive feature of the post-2008 oligarch-directed redesign of the capital, which is curious given their alleged invisibility. They're like the city centre in general: seemingly interminable disruption and upheaval while rebuilding work takes place, and once it's done the place looks much the same, only slightly smarter, hollowed out and empty apart from occasional visits by billionaires.

Or maybe we could look at the 'iceberg home' – in which most of the structure is hidden below the surface – as an example of form following (fantasy) finance. After spending a hedge fund manager's ransom on the extreme status symbol that is a Zone One house, what does one get? Some stucco, some yellow brick, and perhaps so few bedrooms they can be counted on one hand. This must cause a degree of dissatisfaction. So why not dig down into the footprint, and get that wine room, home cinema, second garage, party room, swimming pool, private Tube platform etcetera? (Only kidding about that last one. You won't find these people using the Tube.) What we're left with is a startling realisation: the housing crisis in London is so severe that even the richest people in the world are inadequately accommodated.

So while Victorian novelists liked the idea of the poor disappearing underground, subterranean living has something of catnip to the imagination – Alice in Wonderland, *The Hobbit* and *Wind in the Willows* all enjoy the trope, that's just the Timeless Classics. More recently Iain Sinclair was one of the writers to be fascinated by William Lyttle, the so-called Mole Man of Hackney, who illicitly dug a network of tunnels under his home. When I decided to make super-basements part of my third novel, I emitted the kind of thin cackle novelists emit when they think they've stumbled on something no one else has done. I was unaware that two others, at least, were cackling too: Rachel Johnson and Jonathan Coe both have them in their latest books. O tempora, o moles. ●

Will Wiles is a journalist and author. Read him here every other month

A MACHINE FOR LIBERTINES

One exception to the holes-for-proles literature alluded to above is EM Forster, who imagined underground living as luxurious and leisurely in his 1909 story *The Machine Stops*. He also cannily predicts electronic music and social networking, imagining comfortable subterranean chambers that few have any desire to leave as they are continually distracted by amusements and in easy remote communication with all their friends. However, civilisation has become decadent and stagnant, utterly reliant on the all-providing Machine. As the amusing, distracting online headlines say, *You Won't Believe What Happens Next*.

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Design for devolution

The devolution genie is out of the bottle, said LGA chairman David Sparks last September. But will it grant any wishes?



Jane Duncan

The UK is one of the world's most centralised countries, but over the last few decades the home nations have started to take very different paths. Policies created in Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh can differ significantly from those affecting architects in England.

Now changes are on the cards for England too. Announcing a 'big package of new powers' as well as extra responsibilities for local councils, Chancellor George Osborne said he wanted his recent Spending Review to 'hand back power to local communities' and 'spread economic power and wealth'.

Manchester is probably the most high profile 'devolution deal', but others have since been revealed with cities and areas including Sheffield, Liverpool, the Tees Valley, North East and West Midlands. In these locations elected mayors will be able to raise business rates as long as they secure support from their local enterprise partnership.

This shift in local government funding

The shift in local government funding from grant to business rates will have significant impact on the shape and future of the construction sector in which we all work

from grant to business rates will have significant impact on the shape and future of the construction sector in which we all work. Creation of the Northern Powerhouse, for example, will have an impact over areas such as transport, housing and strategic planning. Since construction will be at the heart of economic growth, architects could play a vital role to help city regions develop and grow.

So what could this mean for us, our practices and the communities that we work in – and how can the profession help to shape what happens next?

My view is that this debate is long overdue. We must grasp the chance to take hold of our own local futures and learn from our colleagues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This is a real opportunity to bring about long-term change and put great architecture at the centre of national and local government plans. Architects are increasingly speaking out on behalf of projects that can make a positive difference to our towns, cities and villages – George Ferguson as mayor of Bristol (see Profile, p68) is the ultimate local architect champion. It's time to consider what more we can do, if we're given the right tools.

Let's be realistic though: devolution is unlikely to magically transform how politics works, and we may never see a return to an era where the public sector had the resources to plan and deliver large scale developments. At the very least, tight public finances are likely to be a constant theme across the UK for many years to come.

This doesn't mean that we shouldn't aim high though, and I'm pleased to announce that this will be a major area of focus for the RIBA this year. With the opening of RIBA North in Liverpool we have a unique opportunity to help promote the great work local architects are already doing, and to provide a platform for that debate.

It is very important that we are at the forefront, leading through sharing our creative ideas about working with our partners across the professions, the public and private sectors to tackle the housing crisis, improve the planning system and take a long-term approach to planning the infrastructure we need to grow our local economies.

I challenge you to engage in the devolution debate in your area and reap the benefits for your local economy and for architecture. ●

@JaneDuncanPRIBA

RISING FROM ASHES

Creation from Catastrophe: How Architecture rebuilds Communities opens at RIBA's Architecture Gallery on 26 January. The exhibition explores the different ways that cities and communities have been re-imagined in the aftermath of natural or man-made disasters, from the Great Fire of London in 1666 up to the 2015 earthquake in Nepal. It includes work by Yasmeen Lari, Elemental, OMA, Shigeru Ban, NLÉ, Toyo Ito, Metabolism (Kenzo Tange and Kurokawa Kisho) and Christopher Wren.

Mayor of Bristol and former RIBA president George Ferguson has spent years getting the city ship-shape for a devolved and sustainable future

Words: Eleanor Young

Political animal

If you know central Bristol you have probably walked on, travelled on or stared at something George Ferguson has fought for. Not necessarily as mayor.

You know those cranes opposite the Arnolfini that mark out the dock from a distance? Ferguson helped buy them off the scrap merchant the city had sold them to. When the embarrassed city bought them back the money was invested in the Yellow Ferry Company. This saw the first of many such boat services to ply the waters of the docks and is now a community interest company with many small scale local shareholders.

'The seventies was a fight to save the docks from being stripped,' Ferguson explains. 'The eighties where when we really started trying to get to grips with the harbour.' He took on the Tobacco Factory in Bedminster as developer, and as an archi-

tect with his practice Ferguson Mann, and turned it into a thriving arts venue and bar – and above it apartments, including his own. When he didn't like harbourside proposals at Canon's Marsh by Arup for Crest Nicholson he suggested Bristol Venice as a counter proposal. The experience of all these battles came together when Ferguson became Bristol's first directly elected mayor in 2012. He is now nearing the end of his first term.

When I first met George, early in the millennium, he was trying to bring people as well as buildings to the RIBA as its new, red-trousered president. He brought verve and energy and a real engagement with place, not simply buildings. He wanted to change things for the better. Those energies have now been returned to his own city.

Of course he has only been mayor for just over three years; he has been living in

the city for 50. It was plans for a major ring road to carve up the city that first drove him into politics as a 'kid councillor'. He is still inspired by Jane Jacobs' writings – she was his first text as an architecture student in Bristol. Transport has continued as a gritty theme since Ferguson became mayor; the city was the only one which voted to have a directly elected mayor in the referendums across the UK that year. He campaigned to have an elected mayor and said from early on he would stand if the opportunity arose. He reckons that as an independent he could steal a march on party rivals. It might not be so easy in the 2016 elections in May.

'Last election I was a surprise. This time I will be the target.' He laughs ruefully at the idea of the election leaflets of 70 plus would-be councillors all aimed fairly and squarely at him. 'I am to blame for everything.' It is



said with irony but only a little, he accepts responsibility for what has happened on his watch – though two of the most controversial city changes were not initiated by Ferguson, the Metrobus and the 20 mile an hour speed limit on the city's roads. 'I didn't bring it in but I champion it,' he says. It made his fine for breaking a 30mph limit early last year all the more embarrassing; he hangs his head before shaking away the memory.

The Metrobus, a government-backed £200 million investment for fast routes into the city, is another scheme that started before Ferguson's term. He re-routed it and believes it will be much better as a result. It received planning in August 2015. Alongside it, finding a park and ride site north of the city proved another contested issue – and it took a court order to remove protesters from the treetops in Stapleton. Ferguson dismisses this loss of land as trivial in the greater scheme of things. He is convinced the Metrobus will be 'transformational'. It is not surprising to him that this causes intense debate. 'It's a complex historic city,' he says. But travel is something that – as in many cities – holds the key to unlocking many problems from straightforward congestion to health through air quality and increased walking and riding, and even housing through access from further reaches of the city.

Like most architects Ferguson has a professional appreciation of the importance and benefits of change – that huge disruption can pay off. But he knows not everyone feels the same way. 'Change is really tough for us,' he admits. 'I have a collective noun for those who resist change: Adults.' Ferguson says he is trying to address the language of change. If a road is closed to cars it might be better described as open to people. And his preference for offering positive alternatives has been demonstrated through the past few summers with traffic free days in certain areas entitled Make Sundays Special – taking former London mayor Ken Livingstone's advice on using the temporary to at least get things started.

Local politicians have always been subject to the spotlight from the local press and nowadays it spreads further on blogs. Ferguson has suffered a regular stream of accusations of hypocrisy, nepotism, unfounded rage and sheer incompetence. These are painful, there is no doubt about it, particularly those that relate to funds going to his daughter's organisation. But they have to be put aside

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to lead a city, Ferguson relies on a cabinet drawn from across the parties and getting the budget through the councillors is a juggling act, not to mention having to cut £35m from the operating budget for 2014 – savings made in council office consolidation and ways of working, though front line services inevitably also suffered. More cuts are looming.

What is also on the way is devolution. There have been City Deals which pass over some tax to some cities – Manchester has been first to negotiate a more significant tranche of powers. Ferguson is already dealing with many of the areas name-checked in last autumn's devolution bill – transport, planning and housing – but central government is offering more power over these now. He thinks there is no doubt that city government can be quicker to respond, more likely to see the problems – and answers – than national government which is a more theoretical practice. To prove the point he need only cite the bedroom tax and lack of government awareness about what housing stock is on the ground to move downsizers into. As elsewhere central government's freezing of social rents has drastically cut Bristol's the ability to build new homes, though Ferguson is buying housing to turn it social and start to reduce the massive inequities that house prices have opened up in this relatively wealthy city. Housing raises his ire. And it's one very strong reason for pushing

for the devolution deal for Bristol and Bath city region – and ultimately recognition as a city region with Cardiff and Newport too – a Great Western Powerhouse up there with the Northern Powerhouse.

Listening to Ferguson, as phrases like entrepreneurial city, the internet of things, open datasets, smart city etc trip off his tongue – you wonder quite how many visions and initiatives a mayor can keep spinning. 'It probably comes together in one sentence,' he says. 'The big vision is making a healthier, environmentally friendly, fairer city. Or in one word "Resilience".' For him it is about the longer term; without denying the immediate, it encompasses both social and infrastructure, it reminds you to build your flood defences and to ensure the form draws tourists and benefits business too.

So where are the icons that this architect-mayor has commissioned? If you are looking for a strictly architectural legacy there isn't one. Yet. However, the Bristol arena, designed by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios with Populous and due to complete spring 2018, is more important to Ferguson to put Bristol on the map and as a part of the Temple Enterprise Zone. Here attracting investment (and good people) is the game, along with improving the entrance to the city for the many who arrive by train. The new Homes and Communities Agency-funded Arena Island Bridge will help by linking the city to the Arena on its old diesel depot, as will negotiating changes with Network Rail for major improvements to the station, ahead of electrification of the line and reduced journey times to London and Cardiff. As well as major tenants in the zone, such as PricewaterhouseCoopers, smaller firms are being encouraged, the shared work space of the Engine Shed is proving popular, with stylish firms booking out metro-retro office and meeting space. Hab Housing has also moved in locally.

The council itself has bought the concrete frame – the old sorting office – that stands beside Temple Meads Station. 'It makes it more Beirut than Bristol, and that is an insult to Beirut,' remarks Ferguson. This is a strategy that the council is increasingly using to give more control than planning can offer. And like his other projects he wants to carry this through the next three years as mayor. It seems that politics brings out the entrepreneur and architect in Ferguson. ●

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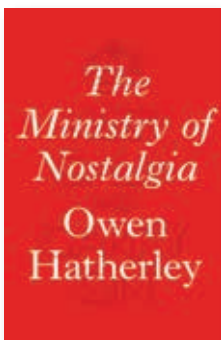
Owen Hatherley swaps nostalgia for a call to arms

Jan-Carlos Kucharek

My trouble with Owen Hatherley's excellent if thoroughly miserabilist walking tour of Blair's urban Britain in his earlier 'New Ruins' is that it maintained an almost nostalgic, rose-tinted view of the modernist/brutalist housing experiment of the 60s and 70s, without taking account of the fact that people might not have liked living in them very much. Maybe it's because he was a child of the 80s. Hatherley is nothing if not a prolific writer on socialist architecture – his last tome, 'Landscapes of Communism', a dewy-eyed tour of duty around the former Eastern Bloc, runs to 624 pages. Mao Tse Tung's Little Red Book it sure ain't.

'The Ministry of Nostalgia' is both red and little (luckily) – and aims to address accusations of nostalgia head on. It's also, by his own admission, something of a mea culpa. His expertise and championing of socialist architecture, read via the lens of modernist housing and Thatcher's abolition of the generous Parker Morris standards, unwittingly helped make the style eminently marketable again. A surf through property sites like The Modern House proves how the message got absolutely lost in the medium.

And this seems to be the premise of his latest book – one apparently triggered by no more than a simple poster. 'Austerity nostalgia', as Hatherley terms it, finds no worse embodiment of corrosive potential for the future than the 1940s 'Keep Calm and Carry On' poster in Gill Sans font that has, since the 2008 crash, been endlessly re-presented to us. The now ubiquitous phrase was first used, we're generally led to understand (incorrectly, Hatherley says), to galvanise the masses in their legendary wartime 'Dunkirk Spirit' but has now been hijacked to underpin a far less justified – and insidious – form of contempo-



Below Gentrification of council house modernism: Keeling House in Bethnal Green, London, by Denys Lasdun.



rary austerity, courtesy of David Cameron.

The route from the author's 'Junk Market of Austerity' chapter to his concluding 'Building the Austerity City' may disconcert readers used to Hatherley's more architectural writing. The book is drawn from diverse articles penned for his own blog site, magazines and broadsheets, so not only is there a slightly jarring disconnect in the intervening three chapters, but they are written to appeal to different audiences. Yes, we get potted histories, from Pick and Holden's London Underground in the 1930s and Lubetkin's modernist social housing to the austerity brickwork of Cambridge's Accordia and a 2015 King's Cross by Argent – but it's done via the complexity of Clement Atlee, Ken Loach's film 'Spirit of '45', EP Thompson's 'Making of the English Working Class', the Mass Observation Archive, interwar Empire Marketing Board and Nye Bevan's NHS. In exposing the austerity nostalgia subterfuge, Hatherley calls on a plethora of cultural influences – some more subjective than others.

The result is a flawed call to arms; but a well-researched and impassioned one, taking a seemingly banal, superficial observation to highlight a much deeper societal malaise. Hatherley fervently argues that the period from 1930-55 in Britain was in fact far more radical, potent and open-ended than any Keep Calm and Carry On campaign could ever epitomise. The book leaves us in the charge of the front liners occupying the council estates poised for demolition or gentrification; for whom William Faulkner's 60 year old words must still resonate: 'The past's not dead; it's not even past'. ●

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The Ministry of Nostalgia

By Owen Hatherley
Verso

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Norman Engleback

1927 – 2015

One of the LCC young turks of the 1950s and 60s, designer of much of London's South Bank complex whose work is still cited today



Norman Engleback played a significant role as one of the highly-motivated young turks in the London County Council architects' department in the 1950s and 60s. He was responsible among much else for South Bank buildings including the Hayward Gallery complex, the 1960s extensions to the Royal Festival Hall

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On leaving LNER Norman worked for Armstrongs, an established practice, and – more excitingly for him – under Tony Cox at the famously egalitarian ACP (Architects Co-operative Partnership). But his main career began at the LCC architects' department in 1952. His first major project was Elm Court School. Efficient and flexible as well as costing a third less per head than the norm, it got him noticed by Leslie Martin who was architect to the council. Martin took him under his wing and he became a very young group leader, greatly enjoying his collaboration with his contemporaries and lifelong friends the late Bryn Jones and John Attenborough. Together, they worked on the National Sport Centre at Crystal Palace. Now listed, it features in Elaine Harwood's new book on post war listed buildings, as I told him a few weeks ago.

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This led to his next assignment working on the Queen Elizabeth Hall (QEH), Purcell Room and adjacent Hayward Gallery. His talented team included many architects who later became well known in their own right including Nicholas Grimshaw and Terry Farrell, and Archigram members Ron Herron, Warren Chalk and Dennis Crompton. He regarded this as one of the most exciting and challenging periods of his life. Part of this was standing up to the then architect to the council Hubert Bennett – a pleasant man but with less vision. Because of this the QEH has, for example, cast anodised aluminium windows instead of off-the-peg fenestration, and seating based on sports car bucket seats that don't flip up and clunk when a late-comer arrives. He loved the way this complex has recently developed a lively multi-level roof garden and commercial arts space.

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DENNIS GILBERT



Left Last year's winner: Dun Laoghaire Lexicon library and cultural centre, Dublin, by Carr Cotter & Naessens Architects.

Above 2014 winner: Ortus, Camberwell, London by Duggan Morris Architects.

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Applications are invited for appointment as Associate Professor/Assistant Professor (50-75% fractional) in Professional Practice (2 posts) in the Department of Architecture to commence as soon as possible, on a three-year fixed-term basis, with the possibility of renewal.

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Applicants should have a demonstrated track record or a strong potential for success in architecture practice as well as academic research, and readiness to engage in the Department's commitment to innovation and excellence in teaching. They should preferably have experience in teaching with design programs and in professional practice. The appointees are expected to teach courses in professional practice at introductory and advanced levels. As the teaching of professional practice in the Department is intended to give students both a broad understanding of the work of an architect globally and specific understanding of the responsibilities of practice in Hong Kong and China, knowledge of and experience with professional practice in Hong Kong and China as well as qualification of professional registration in Hong Kong are strongly preferred.

A globally competitive remuneration package commensurate with qualifications and experience will be offered. At current rates, salaries tax does not exceed 15% of gross income. The appointment will attract a contract-end gratuity and University contribution to a retirement benefits scheme, totalling up to 15% of basic salary, as well as annual leave, and medical benefits. Housing benefits will be provided as applicable.

Applicants should send a completed application form together with an up-to-date C.V. to: applyarc@hku.hk. Please indicate clearly the reference number and which level they wish to be considered for in the subject of the e-mail. Application forms (341/1111) can be downloaded at <http://www.hku.hk/apptunit/form-ext.doc>. Further particulars can be obtained at <http://jobs.hku.hk/>. **Closes January 15, 2016.**

The University thanks applicants for their interest, but advises that only candidates shortlisted for interviews will be notified of the application result.

The University is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to a No-Smoking Policy

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Kawneer glazing helps with a new school's vision

Kawneer have helped a visionary new school achieve a BREEAM "Very good" rating. Kawneer's AA*100 zone-drained and AA*100 SSG (Structurally Silicone Glazed) curtain walling, AA*541 top-hung casement windows, AA*541 actuated windows at high level as rooflights and series 190 heavy-duty commercial entrance doors were specified for Trumpington Meadows primary school near Cambridge. The curtain walling was installed on the main entrance and assembly hall while the 190 doors give classrooms direct access to the outdoor space.

www.kawneer.co.uk

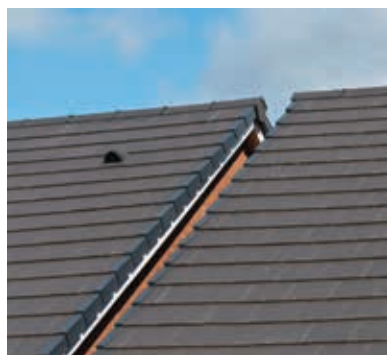


Marley Eternit's CANTERBURY HANDMADE RANGE

Marley Eternit's Canterbury premium handmade clay plain tiles are available in three colours to achieve truly unique roof design. Loxleigh boasts an antique appearance due to its semi-sanded finish in red and grey shades, Burford is a rich red-brown tone in a fully sanded texture and Chailey offers a vibrant orange tone and can be used on the main roof or as a contrast tile for vertical tiling.

t: 01283 722588

www.marleyeternit.co.uk/handmade



Aesthetic appeal and proven performance for award winning project

The low maintenance benefits and an aesthetic sympathetic to its location led to the specification of Marley Eternit's corrosion-resistant profiled sheeting as an external cladding solution for an award-winning development by designers, Soup Architects, called The Studios. The project has been built within a mature landscaped garden on an existing residential plot at Aldeburgh in Suffolk.

t: 01283 722588

www.marleyeternit.co.uk



Comar 5P.i Advanced Window System

Integration is the key factor which underpins the latest new product launch from Comar Architectural Aluminium Systems. Their market leading Comar 9P.i Framing system offers fast-track semi unitised construction for floor to ceiling glazing, allowing tilt/turn or casement windows to hang direct from the Comar 9P.i Frame as well as rebated doors. With the addition of thermal foam and triple glazing Comar 9P.i offers U-values down to 0.77, creating a future proof solution for their architectural, contractor and fabricator partners.

www.comar-alu.co.uk



Ideal Commercial's Evomax boilers get full marks at Adams' Grammar School

Thirteen Evomax wall hung condensing boilers from Ideal Commercial Boilers have been specified and installed to provide high efficiency heating and hot water at Adams' Grammar School in Newport, Shropshire. The Evomax's extremely high efficiency of up to 110% part load was an important factor for all buildings to minimise energy use, but in particular for the outdoor swimming pool, where the boilers are running 24/7.

t: 01482 492251

e: commercial@idealboilers.com

www.idealcommercialboilers.com



Hunter Douglas creates ceiling for state-of-the-art technology centre.

Hunter Douglas's reputation for undertaking major projects in showstopping buildings was further consolidated when it was commissioned to create a ceiling for an £89 million technology and research centre at the University of Strathclyde.

Hunter Douglas supplied 836m² of solid wood grill ceiling in 3-130-20-98 module. Made from American White Oak, it was treated in Hunter Douglas's Magma Firestop treatment to meet European Fireclass B-S2-D0 and the Scottish fire regulations.

www.hunterdouglas.co.uk



Nautical-inspired Eco-Build

Marley Eternit's corrosion-resistant profiled sheeting has been specified as a roofing solution on a new build eco-home on the River Rother. Its journey from concept to completion has also been featured on Grand Designs. Architect Ben Hebblethwaite chose Marley's profiled sheeting as a competitive and design-led solution.

The aesthetic qualities of the chosen profiled sheeting such as its resonant colour, as well as its proven performance, made it a highly appropriate product to select for the project within its location.

www.marleyeternit.co.uk



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Mapei launches Ultrabond Eco VS90 plus

Mapei is pleased to announce the recent launch of Ultrabond Eco VS90 Plus to its range of Ultrabond Eco Adhesives. Ultrabond Eco VS90 Plus is a ready to use, light beige paste, which benefits from a fast, strong initial grab, allowing traffic after only 3-5 hours. This universal high temperature acrylic, wet-bed dispersion adhesive, bonds vinyl/rubber sheet and tile, PVC-backed carpet and luxury vinyl tiles with ease.

www.mapei.co.uk



Estate rejuvenation with Kingspan Insulation

The Ferry Lane Estate in Tottenham has been given a fresh start thanks to a multi-million pound regeneration scheme, which includes the installation of 39,000m² of Kingspan Insulation's premium performance Kooltherm K5 External Wall Board. The work forms part of Haringey Council's Decent Homes programme which will see 2,916 tenanted homes brought up to a satisfactory standard by 2016. With thermal conductivities as low as 0.020 W/m.K, the product allowed the best possible thermal performance to be achieved within the space available.

www.kingspaninsulation.co.uk



GEZE UK sponsors Close The Door retail campaign

The Close The Door campaign has named GEZE UK as the exclusive sponsor representing the automatic door industry. The nationwide campaign aims to persuade retailers to save energy and create a better environment by reversing their open door policies. GEZE is the only door control company to support the campaign, which was launched by founder Jeannie Dawkins, who became concerned after seeing how hot air from the open shop doorways was melting the ice on the street.

www.geze.co.uk



Gerflor 'Create' the London look

Office Space in Town are a serviced office company offering workspace solutions. They choose buildings in central districts of London, refurbishing them to a high standard creating a stimulating working environment. International flooring and interiors specialist Gerflor was chosen to supply two of their most iconic and stunning flooring products to the newly re-furnished 20 St Dunstan's Hill in the City of London. Gerflor's LVT Creation and smart-looking GTI was the designer's choice to grace this jewel of a building.

t: 01926 622600 www.gerflor.co.uk



Haddonstone appoints first Commercial Director

Ben Burge has been appointed as Commercial Director at Haddonstone, the UK's leading manufacturer of architectural cast stonework. Ben will head-up an experienced contracts team whilst looking to open up new opportunities as part of the company's plans to increase growth. Ben comments "This is a tremendous opportunity for me to have a significant impact on the success of a market leading, construction materials company".

www.haddonstone.com



New unitised curtain walling launched by Kawneer

Leading UK architectural aluminium systems supplier Kawneer has enhanced its curtain wall portfolio with the launch of a fast-track dry-glazed unitised system. An alternative to the AA®201 structurally-glazed modular system, the AA®265 incorporates a three-chamber system and overlapping gasket design for optimum weather tightness. Its dry-glazed assembly gives the building team a unique set of benefits including factory fabrication to ensure additional quality control and rapid on-site installation.

www.kawneer.co.uk



Center Parcs success for AkzoNobel

In December 2004, Center Parcs announced it had identified a location for a fifth UK site at Woburn Forest, Bedfordshire. West Port Timber Window and Door Technology were awarded the contract to provide 4,000 timber windows and 2000 doors and needed the assistance of AkzoNobel to help them fulfil the high demands of the project. The coatings solution for this project rested on the expertise of AkzoNobel in supplying two of their hugely popular products which would meet this specification perfectly.

t: 01254 687950

www.sikkens-wood-coatings.co.uk



Super-cool rebar couplers from Ancon

In line with its global reputation for developing reliable, high performance fixing systems for demanding construction environments, Ancon has designed a range of reinforcing bar couplers to operate at cryogenic temperatures. Applications include the construction of steel-lined concrete storage tanks for refrigerated liquefied gas (LNG/LPG). Tested with cryogenic-grade rebar at a cool -165°C to the requirements of EN 14620-3, the new Ancon CTT range of couplers is available to suit bars from 12mm to 32mm diameter.

A new technical brochure is available at:

www.ancon.co.uk/cryo



Welsh Slate launches new roofing brochure

ROOFING by leading UK manufacturer Welsh Slate is the newly-published natural slate roofing guide.

The 32-page guide advises architects and roofing contractors how to specify and install natural roof slates and includes the revised recommendations in the recently amended BS 5534 code of Practice for Slating and tiling plus all relevant references and standards.

A copy is available from:
enquiries@welshslate.com
t: 01248 600656



Recticel Insulation marks a BIM century

Recticel Insulation has marked a century by posting more than 100 objects with the award-winning NBS National BIM Library, the UK's fastest-growing BIM library. Downloadable in the Revit, Vectorworks, AECOSim and ArchiCAD software formats, as well as the open IFC standard, the Recticel portfolio of BIM objects encompasses solutions for flat and pitched roofs, walls (including rainscreen systems) and floors.

Recticel's BIM portfolio is available to download from

www.nationalbimlibrary.com/recticel



Kawneer glazing systems give offices a Fresh new look

Elements from the complete portfolio of glazing systems from Kawneer were specified for the refurbishment of a derelict office building for their "good cost to performance balance". Kawneer's curtain walling, windows, doors and framing systems were selected by Barber Casanovas Ruffles chartered architects for 90 Hills Road, Cambridge. The manufacturer's AA®100 zone-drained curtain walling with narrower 50mm sightlines was used for screen and window replacement with AA®100 concealed window vents.

www.kawneer.co.uk



Level up with Mapei's Ultraplan Renovation Screed 3240

Mapei's Ultraplan Renovation Screed 3240 is a fibre reinforced self-levelling compound, specifically designed for the renovation or refurbishment of existing subfloors. The high coverage, low VOC screed can now be applied to a thickness of 3-40mm, in one application, and is suitable for prepared concrete, screed, stone, ceramic, timber and terrazzo. Suitable for both commercial and domestic applications, it is ideal for smoothing and levelling floors ready to receive tiled finishes, resilient floor coverings or wood flooring.

www.mapei.co.uk



MARTIN CHARLES / RIBA COLLECTIONS

Kirkton Cottages Fortingall, 1889

The village of Fortingall is the supreme achievement of the architect James MacLaren and one of the most important examples of Arts & Crafts architecture in Scotland.

MacLaren studied architecture in Glasgow before moving to London to practise. Here he joined the Art Workers' Guild with Voysey, Lethaby and other leading Arts & Crafts architects. In the late 1880s he received an important commission from shipping magnate Sir Donald Currie, who had acquired the estate of Glenlyon including Fortingall. MacLaren was to transform the dilapidated collection of long houses into a model village.

The architect combined inspiration from traditional

Scottish, English and French architecture with the Arts & Crafts principles he had learned in London. The famous Kirkton Cottages, for example, photographed here by Martin Charles, exhibit various vernacular influences including Devon thatch, crow-stepped gables and Cornish-inspired eyebrow windows.

MacLaren died in 1890 aged just 37 and the village was completed by his colleagues Dunn and Watson. Nevertheless his work was influential, particularly to Charles Rennie Mackintosh who is said to have embraced his 'materials, massing and design vocabulary'. ●

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