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Jacob Loftus | Michèle Dix | KPF | Mikhail Riches
WRK/LDN special | The Design Museum





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Design Museum © Gareth Gardner

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Sometimes, it feels like every possible sector in London's built environment has to be the focus of attention, the one thing that everybody should concentrate on. We have an ageing population, so third age housing should get all our efforts. We have a growing population too, so getting as many units started as possible is paramount. But London also has an issue as regards affordable, so perhaps all our energies should go there? Or is it improving transport connections into and around the capital that should be the one thing to unlock all this? And what about jobs?

There are many more elements vying for the attention and money, of course, but this scenario is essentially what mayor Sadiq Khan and those forging the next iteration of the London Plan must sort out. Each competing element must be weighed up and attended to in a blend that will stand as a recipe for London's continued success – however that looks – in the years and decades to come. In this issue, as a prelude to a Big Debate on the subject happening later this month, we ask our Viewpoint experts to say what they would like to see the plan address.

The issue of workplaces, another vying for attention in that mix, and especially in the wake of permitted

development rights, is the subject of a special feature this issue, drawing on the WRK/LDN season at the NLA. Rogers Stirk Harbour reflect on one example they are setting by moving to their own new offices in the Cheesegrater. And Jacob Loftus, who is leading a charge toward a new model of the office, is our New Londoner this time.

The transport equation as it relates to the capital's future is food and drink to another profile this issue, Michèle Dix pushing forward with plans for Crossrail 2, but also to get a greater diversity into the project and professions.

There is plenty more besides – a building review which looks at the Design Museum's new home, project previews on London Business School and Coal Drops Yard, a new 'from the team' feature, penned each time by NLA staffers, as well as opinions on industrial land, estate regeneration, modern methods of construction and on location reports on the West End and City of London.

All human life is here, indeed. And all will be on the next London Plan's ingredients list. Enjoy the issue!

David Taylor, Editor

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SCHÜCO

THE QUARTER

A quick compendium of the more important stories affecting London development over the last few months

Buildings

Ben Adams Architects has completed its work in collaboration with SEA Design on **Monotype's** new office in Shoreditch (pictured). The 330 sqm space is traversed with a tunnel of birch plywood that appears to have been carved through a single block of wood, while its walls, floor and ceiling are laser-etched with 1,500 of Monotype's 'M' monogram, set in 750 typefaces from the company's archive. The BDP-designed **Boxpark Croydon** opened its doors (pictured). The scheme is part of the mixed-use Ruskin Square development next to East Croydon station and focuses on food provided by small independent traders. Apple's new-look store on Regent Street, designed by Foster + Partners, opened to the public (pictured). The James Stirling-designed **Number 1 Poultry** was listed at Grade II* as an 'unsurpassed example of commercial Postmodernism', following a legal challenge from the Twentieth Century Society. Revised plans for **22 Bishopsgate** were submitted with the project reduced to 59 storeys. The City of London approved **1 Undershaft**, the 73-storey tower developed by Singapore-based Aroland Holdings and designed by Eric Parry Architects. RSHP completed its **International Towers** at Barangaroo, Sydney. The Science Museum opened **the Winton Gallery**, a new mathematics gallery designed by Zaha Hadid Architects (pictured). Sheppard Robson submitted plans to develop the postwar **Chrisp Street Market** in Poplar (pictured). The scheme for

Telford Homes includes plans for 650 homes, library extension and a canopy over the market. Plans to refurbish **Buckingham Palace** will cost £369m, it was announced. Meanwhile, Gensler unveiled its idea for a **temporary Houses of Parliament** to save the taxpayer £1.8bn. Westminster gave the green light to Renzo Piano's **Paddington Quarter** scheme, a 14-storey, 33,500 sqm office block developed by Sellar Property and Great Western Developments, replacing an earlier 72-storey proposal. EPR won permission to add four storeys to **60 London Wall**. Herzog & de Meuron won the job to design a new campus for the Royal College of Art in Battersea. Leo Villareal with Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands and Future\ Pace won the **Illuminated River** competition.

Companies

Foster + Partners was appointed to give historic Snowdon Aviary at London Zoo a £7.1m 'bold new makeover', as a walk-through monkey enclosure. Insurance broker **BPL Global** took 12,089 sq ft on level 12 of the Scalpel (52 Lime Street).

Reports

London Mayor Sadiq Khan published **'A City for All Londoners'**, its direction of travel document on the London Plan. On good architecture and design, it says: 'the London Plan has an important role to play in keeping standards high in the built environment – and I will use it to embed good architectural and design-

quality principles in new buildings and neighbourhoods'. The chancellor Philip Hammond unveiled his **Autumn Statement**, which included a 'record-breaking' affordable housing settlement – £3.15bn over the next five years. But there was nothing about devolving suburban rail services to Transport for London

People

The Queen's New Year's Honours list included relatively few notable names from the built environment world. But they were headlined by architect **David Adjaye**, who received a knighthood, and there was also a CBE for **Professor Ricky Burdett**, and an MBE for AECOM director **Anthony Wilson**. Elsewhere, **Keith Loraine** – Isos Housing Goup chief executive – received an OBE, as did former deputy chair of the Architectural Heritage Fund **Roy Dantzic**, and **Christopher Blythe**, chief executive of the Chartered Institute of Building.

Peter Mandelson will become the next chairman of the Design Museum in March, when he takes over from Luqman Arnold. Willmott Dixon hired former deputy mayor for housing **Richard Blakeway** as strategic advisor to its Willmott Residential wing. London's Night Czar was named as writer, broadcaster, DJ, performer and campaigner **Amy Lamé**. **Cllr Baroness Couttie** is stepping down as leader of Westminster City Council, with a new leader set to be approved at the end of January. **Shifa Mustafa** was appointed executive director of place at Croydon, replacing Jo Negrini, who was announced as the council's new chief executive last year.



↑ The BDP-designed Boxpark Croydon opened



→ True to type – Ben Adams and SEA Design's new offices for Monotype in Shoreditch



↑ Core work – Apple's Foster and Partners-designed refurbishment completed



← Poplar front – Sheppard Robson's Chrisp Street plans



Purple reign – Zaha Hadid's Winton Gallery at the Science Museum

CAPITAL IDEAS FOR WORKING LONDON

Technology, wellbeing and placemaking all came to the fore last night as NextGen practitioners unveiled their capital ideas for the future of work at a PechaKucha session held in Shoreditch's Trampery.

Trampery founder Charles Armstrong introduced the evening, noting that there had been a significant shift away from giant companies to start-ups, with a more nomadic workforce expecting more from their workplaces, but set against a background of 'acute' affordability pressures. 'The next decade will be a period of quite remarkable innovation in the kinds of spaces we provide for people to work in', he said.

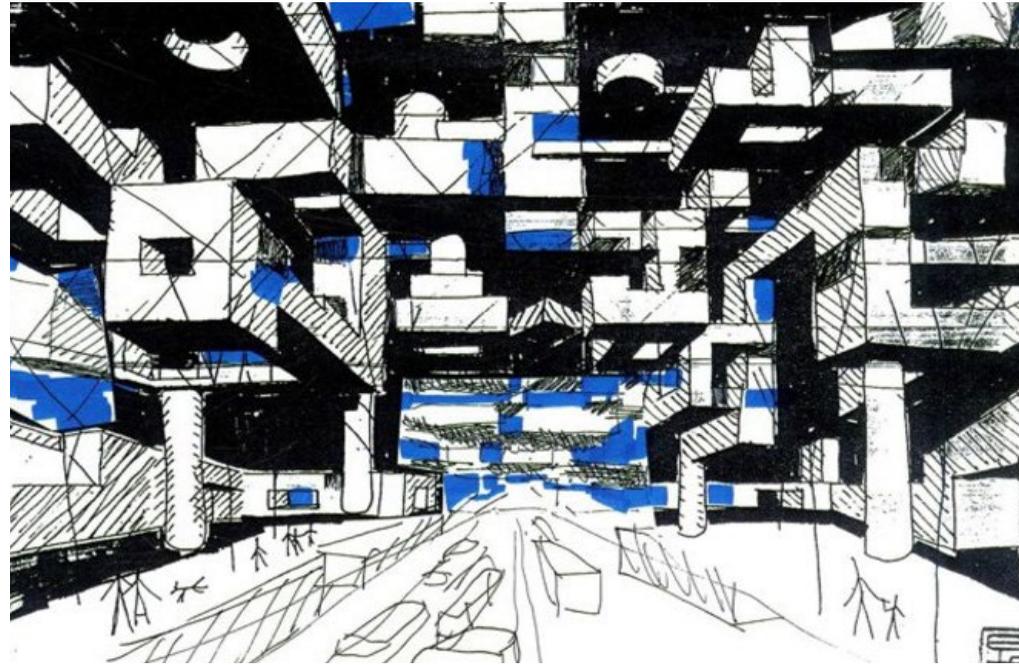
Ideas included Hawkins\Brown architect Jack Stewart's presentation on 'ecosystems' of the kind he is hoping to create at Here East to attract the 'butcher, baker, candlestick maker' with a 'life-support system'. 'Here East is about the collision between big and small', said Stewart. ADP project architect Riccardo Giusti looked at the possible impact of virtual reality on the office environment to ease the pressure on central London, while KPF architect Guillermo Grauvogel suggested that connectivity and flexibility were key to the city's success. Ben Adams Architects architectural assistant Leni Popovici said there is a 'real need for workspaces to give back to the employee' with wellness being a key

ingredient to increase employee engagement, while Finbar Bradley of Innes Associates suggested that neo-Victorian warehousing could provide a typology to work for all building types and bring 'ultimate flexibility'.

Artiq's Jamie Livingstone made the case for workplace art, claiming that allowing more of it can make for a more productive, happy and more engaged workforce. Indeed, following a nine-month study it proved that those who had been 'empowered' to choose their own artworks had enjoyed a 14.3 per cent increase in 'perceived productivity', which paid for the artworks themselves many times over. To facilitate this, Artiq developed new software to allow staff to vote on and, importantly, talk about art.

Other ideas ranged from Cushman & Wakefield's Henry Stuttaford on retrofitting car parks for new uses, to Architecture PLB architect Darren Wilson's thesis on 'parasitic nodes', to NBBJ architect Krissi Dullehan's 'Flashwork', a tongue-in-cheek idea for a portable desk held on by a neck strap that drew inspiration from ice-cream sellers in cinemas of yesteryear.

The GLA Regeneration team's Levent Kerimol commended all the ideas, noting how much had referred to the past for inspirations for the future, but also how a 'deep-rooted connection to physical spaces' continues to be part of the offices of today and tomorrow. ●



↓
'Parasitic nodes' from
Architecture PLB's
Darren Wilson



↑
Guillermo
Grauvogel's idea
for more flexibility
and connectivity,
inspired by Yona
Friedman



→
Jamie Livingstone's
Artiq helps bring
art into the
workplace



↑
Blurring boundaries
- Leni Popovici's
'shoffice' idea

VIEWPOINT

What are your hopes for the new London Plan?



Heather Cheesbrough

Director of planning and strategic transport, Croydon council

London, as a leading world city, sets a global benchmark. But after the cataclysmic events of the past year, London cannot be complacent; or perhaps more of a threat in these nationalistic times, would be to bow to the pressure of the vocal populist vote who seek sanctuary in a more somnolent era, with a halt to change and evolution through the cry of town cramming, overdevelopment and cryogenic preservation of the green belt.

The new London Plan must rise to the challenge of London retaining and consolidating its position as a world leader in tolerance and openness; as a driver of business and commerce; its cultural *mélange* continuing to inspire creativity and innovation while all balanced with the preservation of its staggering beauty and history that draws equally the most deprived and privileged from across the globe.

'A City for all Londoners' makes a decent fist of articulating the issues. These must now evolve to strong and directing policies that give a clear and irrefutable framework that will see the delivery of affordable housing increased dramatically, through a strong and unambiguous message to developers and landowners that affordable housing is required for all residential developments and needs to be considered at the onset of land purchase and design development. Greater clarity is also needed for suburban intensification that goes to the heart of less high-profile housing delivery but nonetheless creating discontent among some elements of long-established communities. City Hall needs to provide leadership to sensitively evolve all outer London boroughs through the accommodation of fair levels of growth, thus bringing benefits for all Londoners, not just those with the loudest voice.


Sasha Birksted-Breen

Project director,
Lifschutz Davidson
Sandilands

London, through its growth as a series of neighbourhoods with differing characters, has historically offered a variety of environments and services to Londoners. Covent Garden, Burlington Arcade, Camden Town, Hatton Garden, Mayfair, Soho, Pimlico, the City of London, are just some among many examples.

Today this distinct character of places seems to be in the process of becoming nostalgic, diluted by global brands and a mainstream notion of what regeneration looks like. This is reflected in the choice of frontage, paving, street furniture, signage and the retail outlets on offer (likely to be the regular big brands) in new developments, which can result in bland and predictable streets, urban spaces and shopping areas.

Encouraging urban identity must start with policymakers and policy implementation. One example of this is Savile Row in Westminster, which is one of five locations within the borough that have been designated 'special policy areas' (SPAs), making it harder for developers to dilute the distinctive character which is often the case when chain stores force out independent businesses.

The London Plan should seek to maintain and encourage the local and historical character of places, in doing so it will be able to offer a choice of lifestyle, allowing people a preference for how they want to live, shop, eat and enjoy their leisure time.


Emily Gee

London planning
director, Historic
England

London is a city of extraordinary history, vitality and diversity. It is blessed with a wonderful and compelling mix of tradition and modernity: listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered landscapes and conservation areas, alongside exciting new architecture. We rely on a strong plan to help London grow while respecting our shared heritage so that London's special identity remains strong.

Historic England supports sustainable growth and wants our capital city to thrive, grow and house us all. We believe it is possible for good development to enhance our precious heritage while avoiding harm to what is special. Historic buildings can play a crucial role in placemaking as London develops and grows. We call for policies in the new London Plan to encourage all those involved in London's future to act within a strong knowledge of London's historic character and what Londoners want. We welcome respectful creative approaches to our city's heritage assets, from the most special, to the most familiar and the best of the very recent past, too. Historic England wants heritage to be at the heart of the development strategy of the next London Plan.

Heritage isn't a special interest subject – it is a fundamental part of what makes London the vibrant, successful place it is. In a time of great change – and some uncertainty – a sense of history can make us strong. Historic England's Keep it London campaign encourages the next London Plan to build on London's mighty character and diversity to keep it flourishing, distinctive and resilient.


Mathew Riley

UK managing
director, Ramboll
England

London needs to maintain its competitive advantage on a global stage so we need a plan that unifies the public and private sectors behind a common cause.

Yet I fear we are still modelling the impacts on our society based on conventional wisdom, and we are trying to solve tomorrow's challenges with yesterday's solutions. One example to illustrate how we should be thinking differently, is how disruptive technology will change mobility and impact the use of electric cars in and around our city.

We know that major car manufacturers are likely to reduce production of new combustion engines within five years. We know about driverless car technology. We know that road capacity can be improved through linking Big Data. We know that in cities such as Copenhagen electric vehicles are available for hire like Boris Bikes are here in London.

The next generation will have a choice and probably not need to own cars because of this new model for mobility. This would mean fewer cars, greater utilisation of the cars that do travel, with limited or no CO2 emissions. In 10 years' time air quality will improve, not because legislation has driven change – but disruptive technology.

My overriding hope is that the London Plan will have a vision and ambition that goes beyond conventional wisdom, and short-term political interests do not compromise the entrepreneurial flair that makes this city great.


Sara Grohmann

Partner, Feilden Clegg
Bradley Studios

London is currently going through an exceptional period of growth and it is under enormous pressure to deal with key issues such as housing, both in terms of number and affordability, sustainability targets, transport capacity and accessible workspaces.

London is considered one of the most vibrant and creative cities in the world and undoubtedly is a place of great successes, but it is also a place of great inequality.

In a post-Brexit time, I believe the London Plan has the responsibility to set the strategies for a truly multi-cultural and multi-generational city, celebrating diversity, uniting through the city's unique culture and, with that, genuinely opening 'the right to the city' to all.

In relation to the current housing crisis, I think until housing is seen as a commodity, rather than a basic need and right, we will be unable to unlock the current issues.

At present, this fantastic city risks becoming a transient place, in the hands of few, but to quote Alison and Peter Smithson, "Belonging" is a basic emotional need – its associations are of the simplest order. From "belonging" – identity – comes the enriching sense of neighbourliness.'

It is therefore in the value of integrated neighbourhoods, mixed communities with a strong sense of identity, affordable workspaces and playful and accessible public realm that the effort should be placed to create the policies and frameworks for the London of the Future.


Jonathan Stoddart

Senior director,
CBRE

The Mayor, Sadiq Khan, has made a very positive statement in his new vision for London: A City for All Londoners. It's difficult to disagree with the direction the Mayor wishes to take but of course the real work on enshrining the vision in policy starts now.

As per the Autumn Statement, I would like to see how a truly integrated transport system will bring about increased development. Hopefully, more opportunity areas will be identified with increased densities and a sensible approach to 'family housing', i.e. embrace one-two beds only around key high-density transport nodes.

The integration of HS2, CR1 and CR2 is so important to the lifeblood of London; placemaking will be imperative to a seamless transport flow and high-quality environments in which to live, work and play. One of the key issues will be to balance the requirements for affordable housing, economic development and private housing. Critically, the emerging London Plan must not stifle the delivery of development. This is much easier said than done, schemes must be viable so affordable housing requirements will need to be sensible and flexible.

The vision to mix residential uses with industrial/commercial is an exciting but challenging direction and the drive to relocate industrial sites to 'outer London' may only be achieved with some considered release of green-belt land. Clear policies must be found to support PRS and decisions made on covenant lengths (10 years preferably). Key growth sectors such as life sciences must be identified and supported.

Finally, City Hall must make the critical decision as to what Heathrow will finally look like. What will happen around it and how will it boost the London economy?


Jo Wright

Director,
Arup Associates

I'd welcome a plan focused on the wellbeing of London, its communities and its visitors. There are established links between wellbeing, happiness and productivity (as set out in the University of Warwick/IZA Bonn study in 2014) and so many of London's current and future challenges centre on issues of wellbeing. Air quality is already high on the agenda – 29,000 deaths each year in the UK are attributable to pollution, more than obesity or alcohol. A strategy to reduce the toxins that pervade our city's air should be top of the Mayor's priorities.

Biophilia – the innate connection between man and nature – is another established component of wellbeing: access to green space has been shown to reduce blood pressure, improve cognitive function and benefit mental health. Some of London's biggest landowners have teamed up with Arup through the Wild West End project to enhance the 'green infrastructure' of the city, providing improved habitat for people and wildlife – it would be great to see others adopting this strategy.

London's traffic arteries are clogged – with most cabbies berating the Cycling Superhighway! But the city has a long way to go to match the welcome to pedestrians and cyclists that many of its European competitors offer. Investing in infrastructure to encourage cyclists and pedestrians is a clear win-win, reducing pollution and enhancing health.

Social isolation is a major problem for many of London's communities: I'd love to see a London Plan that promotes development which increases social equity through genuine engagement with community stakeholders and commitment of a portion of CIL receipts towards cash-strapped social infrastructure.

WHAT THEY SAID

Some of the best quotes and facts from NLA speakers and across the twittersphere via hashtags



‘Placemaking has a central role in the coexistence of industrial and residential development. Great thoughts from @darrylchen’

Matt Pochin @mattpochin89

‘Wellness isn’t resolved by a gym or juicebar. It’s how occupiers use the space and look after themselves’

Amy McIlwraith @amymcilwraith

‘There is a real need for workspaces to give back to the employee’

Ben Adams Architects’ Leni Popovici

‘Here East is about the collision between big and small’

Jack Stewart, @Hawkins_Brown at The Trampery Pecha Kucha by @nlalondon

#WRK_LDN

‘The bottom line is: London is where people want to live. It’s going to win every time over Frankfurt or Amsterdam’

Digby Flower

‘Everybody would like to work at home but inevitably it is always on a Monday or a Friday’

PwC’s Paul Harrington

#inspiringwomen

‘I believe in doing things that I want to do’ – Michele [Dix]’s very clear career strategy!

Alexandra Hellyer @ally_hellyer

#CreativePlacemaking

‘You can’t do this by a Google Street View’

Sheppard Robson’s Dan Burr on good public consultation

‘They’re not coming to dance, pray or get wasted. They’re coming to Canada Water to eat’

Henry Dimbleby on Hawker House

‘We see this as having a vibrancy to it which means it is an 18-hours-a-day place’

Elliot Lipton on Silvertown

‘A masterplan is a process and not a product’

Allies and Morrison partner Alex Wraight

‘Property development is about bricks and mortar, glass and steel, but it is nothing unless it is done right, to service the people of whom places are built’

Martyn Evans at Creative Places for Children talk

#theCityOL

‘We like to call it the “we generation”’

WeWork’s Patrick Nelson on the firm’s membership base

‘Singapore has internet as a public right. That’s kind of amazing’

Juliette Morgan, Cushman & Wakefield

#WestEndOL

‘Crossrail 2 is not something that should happen, it’s something that has to happen’

Joanna Averley

‘It’s fair to say that Oxford Street is a national treasure but it’s a national disgrace at the same time’

GPE’s Neil Thompson

#HousingLDN

‘It’s strange about politicians; they all think they look good in high vis’

GLA’s Alan Benson

Questioner at #HousingLDN has ‘crazy idea’ on getting more women into construction. ‘How about paying them as much as men?’

#NLACrossrail

‘The real opportunity is about stations becoming places’

Ealing’s Pat Hayes

‘If you want lessons learned from Xrail, then do it no holds barred. Really interesting from Julian Lipscombe @BennettsAssocs’

Simon Lawrence – @Simon_endorsed



For more live tweets and quotes from NLA events, follow #nlalondon. For write-ups, go to www.newlondonarchitecture.org/news

ON THE WATERFRONT

Culture plays a powerful role in waterfront regeneration across the globe, argues *Peter Murray*



1000 Museum by Zaha Hadid Architects

In October I spent some time in Miami and Shanghai looking at waterfront developments and in particular the role of culture in regeneration.

Nicknamed the ‘capital of South America’ and enjoying an influx of overseas investment, the south Florida city has done much to enhance its brand with a series of major cultural projects. These include the New World Center concert hall by Frank Gehry, the Center for the Performing Arts designed by Pelli Clarke Pelli, the Perez Art Museum by Herzog & de Meuron, the Frost Museum of Science by Grimshaw and the 1000 Museum by Zaha Hadid Architects, which is just beginning to take shape on site. According to Richard Florida, ‘Miami has undergone a great and sustaining transformation into a cultural hotspot and a hub for the creative class.’

I was invited to Shanghai to look at the development of the West Bund where the city authorities see culture as the game changer for this area of run-down, post-industrial riverside, with massive warehouses turned into art galleries exhibiting both permanent and temporary exhibitions. In the way they do it in China, the landscaping and infrastructure were all there, waiting for future development to take place. The mixture of landscaping, riverside walks and cultural offer was already making the area a popular draw. It was impressive.

The visits resonated with the seminar we held around that time at NLA looking at culture and regeneration. Mark Davy from Futurecity talked about the cultural offer on the Greenwich Peninsula, a development by Chinese developer

Knigh Dragon, which built an art gallery on-site almost before they had a marketing suite.

As the Design Museum settles into its new home in Kensington one should not forget that it was a flagship of Terence Conran’s regeneration of Butler’s Wharf back in the 1980s, which now forms the eastern end of the hugely successful South Bank cultural quarter. The pedestrian route that links key cultural nodes – the Royal Festival Hall, BFI, National Theatre, Tate Modern, the Globe and Borough Market – has become one of the most popular attractions in the capital.

A cultural offer reinforces the brand and recognition of a new piece of city, it then provides a long-term benefit to visitors and local community alike. It attracts employment and it forms an essential element in a city that boasts a strong creative industry. Sadiq Khan has made culture a top priority and his goal is to embed it in regeneration, planning and infrastructure.

According to deputy mayor for culture Justine Simons, ‘it is now more urgent than ever to unlock the potential of culture to build bridges and bring people and communities together.’

London already has an unrivalled cultural offer – cultural tourists spent £7.5 billion in 2013 – and it has a healthy pipeline of new projects from the ‘top down’ Olympicopolis at Stratford and the proposed concert hall for Simon Rattle (I hope Sadiq Khan will give that his full support – London needs a hall with world-class acoustics), to numerous local initiatives. This is positive stuff – in an uncertain world, our cultural richness will remain a key attractor for workers and businesses and a mainstay of our future economy. ●



100,000 BIKES MEANS ONE BIG BIKE SHED.

Brompton is a British success story, exporting their iconic folding bikes all over the world.

Booming businesses have complex problems that need solving. However, in just one meeting, we were able to put a line through the property ones. Four separate parts of Brompton’s business moved into one of our industrial properties in the London Borough of Ealing, a property that not only allowed for expansion but also provided a viewing platform enabling Brompton customers to watch their personally specified bikes being built.

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SEGRO



LOFTY AMBITIONS

Jacob Loftus tells *Peter Murray* about his plans as a 'next gen developer' for the dynamic, inspiring and engaging offices of the future – and especially their millennial occupiers

'I guess property's in the blood,' Jacob Loftus says as we talk in the NLA's WRK/LDN exhibition. He comes from a property family and his uncle Richard Loftus was the first chairman of the Westminster Property Owners Association (now the WPA) in 1988. WRK/LDN is an appropriate location for us to meet because the show identifies the key changes taking place in the workplace – the impact of the growing TMT market and the working habits of millennials – as well as in property, where the focus is shifting from bricks and mortar to user experience. Loftus Junior, who launched his new company General Projects in mid 2016, represents the next gen developer. He helped to deliver the Alphabet building in Finsbury Square when he was at Resolution Property. The development sat neatly on the divide between the Square Mile with its large corporate occupiers, and tech city with its creative entrepreneurs, start-ups and collaborative work style. Its success highlighted the revolution that is taking place in the way we work.

He has recently been appointed as the development manager for No 1 Poultry designed by Stirling Wilford and the 'youngest' building in the UK to be listed by Historic England. "Our aspiration is to undertake a sensitive restoration and refurbishment that respects the original James Stirling vision and repositions the building as an HQ creative office building in the heart of the City," Loftus says.

Loftus studied international relations at university. 'Understanding the nuances of international relations, politics and diplomacy is a very good skill set to navigate through the investment and development world,' he says. He went straight into Robert Laurence's

Resolution Property with two-week work experience. 'When it got to the end of the two weeks, Robert was on holiday and no one else knew I was supposed to be leaving. I just stayed on. Robert came back three weeks later, walked into the Monday meeting and said: "What the hell are you doing here?" But he gave me a job, and the rest is history.'

That was back in 2010. He took over from Robert Wolstenholme as head of investment in 2015 during which time he was involved with a number of high-profile projects. He bought the 1927 Wickhams Department Store at Whitechapel from Development Securities, the initial proposals for which ran into strong local opposition. Architects Buckley Gray Yeoman proposed filling the gap in the facade created by Spiegelhalter Jewellers with a modern insertion. The Spiegelhalter brothers had refused to sell their property when the store was developed, leaving a gap in the classical facade. Calm was restored in the Mile End Road when the architects revised the plans to restore the Spiegelhalter frontage.

'We bought a beautiful building in the middle of Bristol called Colston Tower, very unloved and misunderstood, which became an office/residential development.' The building, designed by Moxley Jenner and Partners in the 1960s, is one of their best. At about the time he left in July 2016, Resolution received planning permission for a 100,000 sq ft scheme on Kensal Road, next to Derwent London's Portobello Dock, to develop a creative hub for digital businesses with loft-style apartments above.

But the building that raised Loftus's profile was Alphabet – formerly known as Triton Court. Resolution bought the building in 2012, which had been

'We bought a beautiful building in the middle of Bristol called Colston Tower, very unloved and misunderstood'

refurbished in the 80s as a financial services and City-orientated building. 'Our starting point vision was to spin the building 180 degrees and turn our back on the City, open it up to focus on Old Street and Shoreditch to the north and reposition what the City office market saw as a very poor quality, unexciting financial services building as the best creative Shoreditch office. It was at a time when that was not an institutionally accepted location or product.'

'We spent a lot of time on the brand, repositioning it for creative industries, but we always expected, correctly, that it was not just creatives who wanted to work there; a lot of the professional industries would take up space as well. In the end, 50 per cent of the building was leased to financial service companies, albeit forward-thinking, innovative ones. Alphabeta became the headquarters for Silicon Valley Bank, the biggest bank in California which primarily focuses on investing in tech companies. Philadelphia-based finance company SEI Investments moved from the Hermès Time and Life building in New Bond Street. Their business has a \$200 million art collection and they wanted to be in Alphabeta as they thought it would be an inspiring environment for staff and a great backdrop for their art.' The building was billed as London's first 'cycle-in offices'. Cyclists can ride directly into the building and down a yellow and black-painted ramp to bike parking, changing rooms and lockers.

'The primary driver of most decision-making in Alphabeta, as in all the projects that I am doing, is how we are creating experience for the individuals who are going to occupy the building. We built a new 10-storey atrium that everyone taking the Tube will walk in and out of. We took the view that probably 50 per cent of the occupiers would cycle, so we thought: how do you create the same experience of walking into a 10-storey-high atrium for the guy cycling in? Which was how we ended up designing the ramp.'

'It was a wonderful image and

captured everyone's imagination. I think it was reflective of the fact that we genuinely wanted to create an amazing experience for occupiers and it ended up being a genuine expression of how we felt we could do that.'

Then, in mid-2015 Resolution sold half of the business to Fosun, a large private Chinese investor run by Guo Guangchang, nicknamed 'China's Warren Buffett'. 'It was brilliant and amazing to be part of that process.' He bought Thomas More Square from Land Securities for £300 million and carried out public realm upgrades before starting work on a masterplan, but felt he needed to move on.

'I am interested in repositioning real estate and developing pioneering, innovative buildings around the workforce, the resident and the consumer of tomorrow who want to interact with their environment. I was not wholly aligned with the investment

'We spent a lot of time on the brand, repositioning it for creative industries'

management business that Fosun wanted which needed to be much broader than my specific strategies. I was involved in delivering some very innovative projects at Resolution and felt I had the necessary experience to branch out on my own. Serendipity took over and it felt like the right time.

'Over the next 10 years you are going to see a very dynamic shift in the age group within big organisations with millennials making up the majority. A generation growing up with iPhones in their pocket, social media access and more information than ever are expecting a much more engaging, inspiring, dynamic workspace than generations before them.'

Loftus envisages a business with some new-build development, but he most enjoys the challenge of working with existing buildings and trying to figure out how to make the best of

them. He intends to stick to workspace for the next year or two but in time would like to expand into residential.

The first General Projects' development is a joint venture on an existing 16,000 sq ft building on the corner of Goswell Road and Pear Tree Street. 'We are working up a scheme to put a couple of floors on top of the building and hopefully do some slightly different things to create an interesting HQ statement. Hopefully we will be in planning by the end of January. We are looking at building a permanent art gallery, mixed event space, part building focus, part local community/public focus.'

'We have also formed an interesting partnership with the arts charity Outset with 150 artists based in the building for the next year until we start development. We are working with them to create permanent affordable studio spaces.'

General Projects is also working with architects Hawkins\Brown and Sam Jacob on a new-build affordable workspace concept using prefab construction. 'We want to locate them in zones 3 or 4 for creative industries who are priced out of places like Shoreditch. We are trying to buy land at the moment and then will speculatively develop, aiming at SME businesses of between 10 and 50 people. There is a lot of attention and focus in London on start-up spaces and some fantastic creative statement office buildings being developed for some more sophisticated established occupiers. The people in the middle are being squeezed out by rising rents and no one is providing purpose-built space for them.'

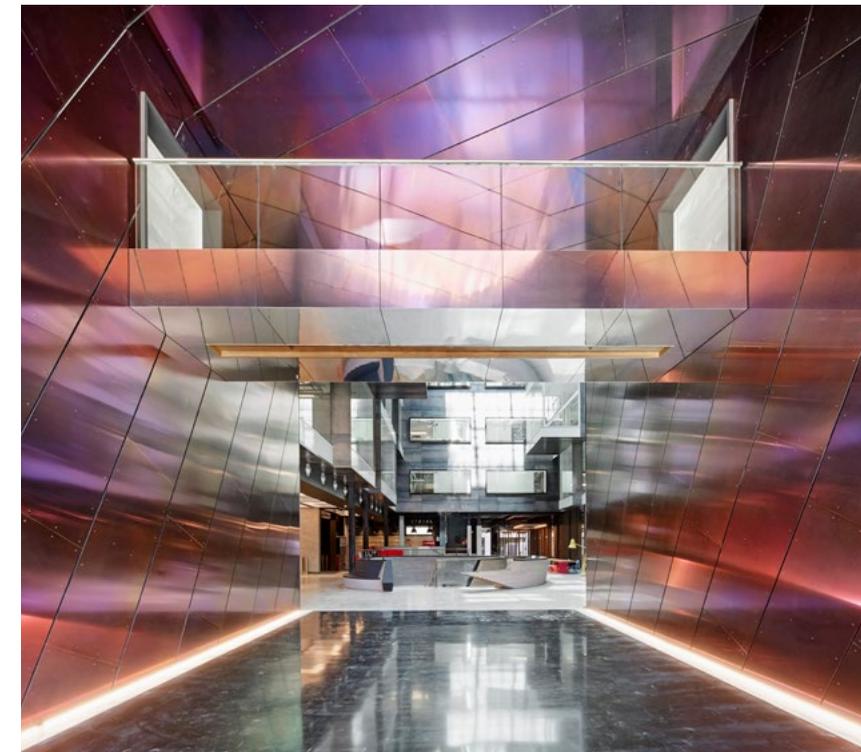
In the future, Loftus sees a lot of opportunity in outer London. 'We can make these highly attractive, diverse, cultural, creative places that will attract young millennials, not as a last resort but where they want to be located. You look at the last seven or eight years how unfashionable parts of London have been completely reimagined beyond expectations, that is something I see continuing to happen but there needs to be more strategic thinking between local authority and developer to ensure that the right kind of developments are put forward that integrate with existing communities.' ●



The scheme that made Loftus' name: Alphabeta



Shining example: the building by Richard Hywel Evans



Alphabeta from the street

Assael

They say residents are more likely to rent their home for another year if they make just one friend in their building, and if they make two friends then they're 90% more likely to stay.*

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* well known fact in the Build to Rent sector, but no one knows the source!

BRICKS FOR CLICKS

Turley associate director of economics, *Amy Gilham* says getting more land for logistics is a key requirement in the growth of online retail

With the January sales on everyone's to-do list, there is no denying that online retail is now a growing part of the way that we shop. The UK is Europe's biggest online shopping nation with £60 billion expected to have been spent online in 2016 alone. This is projected to increase as the population grows and becomes more digitally enabled.

The growth in online shopping drives the need for the logistics sector to devise solutions to deliver the goods to us when we want them. This in turn requires more land and premises for logistics operations. This is a challenge in cities where there is intense competition for land – nowhere more so than in London.

Industrial land is vulnerable to being lost for alternative uses. London specifically has seen loss of industrial land at three times the target rate of loss identified by the Greater London Authority (GLA).

There is a disconnect between the growth of logistics operations (fuelled by our own demands for coffee, clothes, computers and so on) and the land availability in optimum locations from which these uses are able to operate. For example, many logistics operators are already unable to find central London locations for their 'last mile' delivery services.

The government doesn't seem to appreciate the importance of the logistics sector to meeting business and consumer demands. In 2015 it consulted on introducing a 'use it or lose it' policy direction within the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to industrial land.

Added to this, our own research

shows that the employment land evidence of local authorities in many areas of the country is years old and not reflective of the needs of modern logistics operators.

With two key policy documents in the pipeline this is an opportune moment to give the weight to the logistics sector that it deserves. First, as Mayor Khan's team work hard to create the next London Plan, there is an opportunity to fully recognise the role that the logistics industry plays in meeting Londoners' needs. Second, the government's forthcoming Industrial Strategy was tipped in the Autumn Statement 2016 to focus on 'enhancing productivity'. Logistics plays a pivotal role in ensuring productivity is optimised in the supply chain of industries.

We also need new solutions to logistics challenges in a highly competitive land market in London. Approaches such as mixed-use developments with residential; underground fulfilment

centres; and stacked units and co-worker space for smaller start-ups; are already being put forward by developers.

However, cost and risk can hinder implementation for many developers and operators. Encouraging them to invest in a new approach will be aided by real life examples. The government could also respond by supporting investment in exemplar projects, through its new £15 million innovation fund or GLA investment programmes in London, for instance.

London needs to address this issue to ensure that it functions smoothly in the future. There is a need for recognition from government, the GLA and London boroughs that planning for logistics is essential. With the Mayor about to start consulting on the next London Plan in 2017, there has never been a better time to establish logistics firmly on the planning agenda for the capital. ●



← Gilham – logistics needs recognition in next London Plan



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CHANGING THE CULTURE

Crossrail 2 managing director Michèle Dix is leading a charge to build the 'transformational' new line for London and use the project as an exemplar for greater diversity.

By *David Taylor*

Michèle Dix has a lot on her plate.

Not only has she got her days filled with putting the case for Crossrail 2 as a 'transformational' catalyst for development and partial solution to London's congestion problems with politicians, peers and the public, she is also dead set on fighting to bring more diversity to TfL – and beyond. As she said at the *Inspiring Women* talk she gave to NLA, London's development industry needs to 'fish' in a deeper, wider recruitment pool. 'The more women we can get and the wider diversity, the better it will be for us, and our business cases.'

We meet just before the Autumn Statement, which as it turned out only contained one line on the proposed transport link – chancellor Philip Hammond 'looking forward' to receiving the new business case for the line. In Dix's words, this will essentially mean looking to achieve cost-cutting, despite the many merits of the line in terms of the regeneration it will offer 'from the Solent to the Wash'.

The project is, says Dix, 'vital for London and the UK's economy' and needs support to get it built and open in the 2030s. Why? It will help to unlock development sites for the kind of housing that will aid the capital's latter-day population boom, and take pressure off the other transport links into the centre. Unlike with

HS2, which was initially – or even wilfully – misunderstood by parts of the media as simply cutting minutes off the journey to Birmingham rather than being a capacity relief to the whole system, Dix is keen that the right message gets across. But it is a hard concept to explain to a lot of people, even the business case, in a simple manner, except when people are experiencing problems with their train, say. Dix's way is to explain that we have a population challenge which gives transport challenges visible already, plus there are still relatively unconnected parts of London, and a housing challenge on the back of that. 'What we have to do is address the transport challenge and housing challenge in a way that can make the country more productive', she says. 'That is, by making sure those houses are connected to jobs.'

Crossrail 2 will transform London, says Dix. 'We're talking about adding 10 per cent to the capacity of the rail network in London and that will have three big impacts.' One, it will allow the wider central London to further grow, she says. It will transform the whole of the upper Lea Valley and areas to the north up to Stansted and Cambridge, and will also open up a 'huge' area for housing and jobs there. And it will transform the whole of the south west, which is highly constrained now, by providing not

'What we have to do is address the transport challenge and housing challenge in a way that can make the country more productive'



just improved services for London but for the wider south east. ‘So the impacts are not just along the route, but from the Solent to the Wash. A huge impact right across the region.’ We are also talking 200,000 more homes, 200,000 jobs, and a contribution of £102 billion to the net GVA to the UK economy.

So, is Dix winning the case for Crossrail 2 with the powers-that-be? ‘We won the case for Crossrail 2 in March 2016’, she says. Her team had submitted a draft business case the previous July, government reviewed it, and set up the National Infrastructure Commission as a response. That reviewed what was needed for London and the north, and decided that Crossrail 2 was a priority scheme for the capital and that: ‘the Mayor and the government should fund its development and ensure that we are in a position to submit a hybrid bill in 2019, so it was an endorsement of the case and the next steps’. Since March, the scheme has been further developed, but we are in a different environment now, with a new prime minister, chancellor and secretary of state, so an updated strategic outline business case is on its way for submission in March 2017. And that will address how the £30bn scheme can be made affordable in a period when there is a good deal of economic pressure already. ‘It’s got a huge price tag on it. It generates huge benefits but you’ve still got to pay for the scheme in the first place’, says Dix. The cost emphasis will also look at and consider the potential for private sector involvement in taking Crossrail 2 forward, potentially in building stations or large chunks of the scheme, such as a branch. This is amid a general thrust to avoid overpaying of, as Dix puts it, ‘gold-plating schemes’ and to have minimum layers so we are not adding cost on cost in terms of the supply chain. ‘We’re very conscious that when compared with other parts of the world we’re seemingly more expensive’.

Dix – the grave accent on her Christian name is because her mother was reading a French book while pregnant – is a straight-talking pragmatist; the kind of person you feel gets things done. As she told the audience at NLA for her *Inspiring Women* talk, she even had the gumption to apply for a position at TfL as a job share with a close friend, taking it in turns to answer questions at the interview.

Dix was one of three girls to a father in the RAF and mother in full-time work – unusual in the 1960s – and wasn’t in any place longer than three years in her youth. That had contributed to her independent spirit, while her choice of civil engineering as a career was down to her love of maths, science, designing things and

transport, furthered with an interest in policy through her PhD. She trained at the GLC, getting her chartered status as a transport planner and revelling in projects including river crossings across the Thames, charging in central London and airport expansion, all of which are still issues today. When the GLC was abolished she went into the private sector until she had kids, when she wanted to go part-time, applying for a full-time post with that friend, ultimately doing the role as a job-share.

She became interested professionally in the link between transport and growth, specifically transport stimulating it rather than being reactive, with schemes like the Northern line extension and Bakerloo line extension, and now Crossrail 2. If we get our skates on and get the





Inspiring women –
Michèle Dix with
Native Land's
Joanna Kennedy
(left)



powers we need, we will have it open in the early 2030s, says Dix of Crossrail 2. 'But to deliver our plans we need a workforce which reflects London', said Dix. 'There's no point in us fishing in a very narrow pool of blokes. We need to fish in a much wider pool to get as many men and women into the business if we're going to service the skills required by the industry.'

TfL has changed in Dix's time, not just in diversity levels but from being an organisation which was playing catch-up in terms of upgrading the Tube to solve problems to one where it forecasted growth more and needed to plan for further improvements. Partially this was because it realised that applications to GLA to develop areas could not be accepted because of the limited transport capacity in that area. 'But it was development that was needed, so it was appreciating this link between development and growth and the transport network and relative contributions that the developer should be paying for that transport need, versus what TfL should be supporting.' The underlying growth needed to be addressed, and was cast into sharp relief at Elephant and Castle and the classic example with the development of Battersea Nine Elms. There, schemes could not be built without the extension of the Northern line, a clear though as yet unproven example of this direct relationship, and how it is paid for via the incremental increase in business rates. A similar deal was done at Barking Riverside, with homes linked

to a transport improvement, not the 'unaffordable' extension of the DLR to Dagenham Dock but extending Gospel Oak out to Barking Riverside. 'TfL has therefore changed to being more responsive to accommodating growth and enabling growth than simply responding to the outcome of growth.'

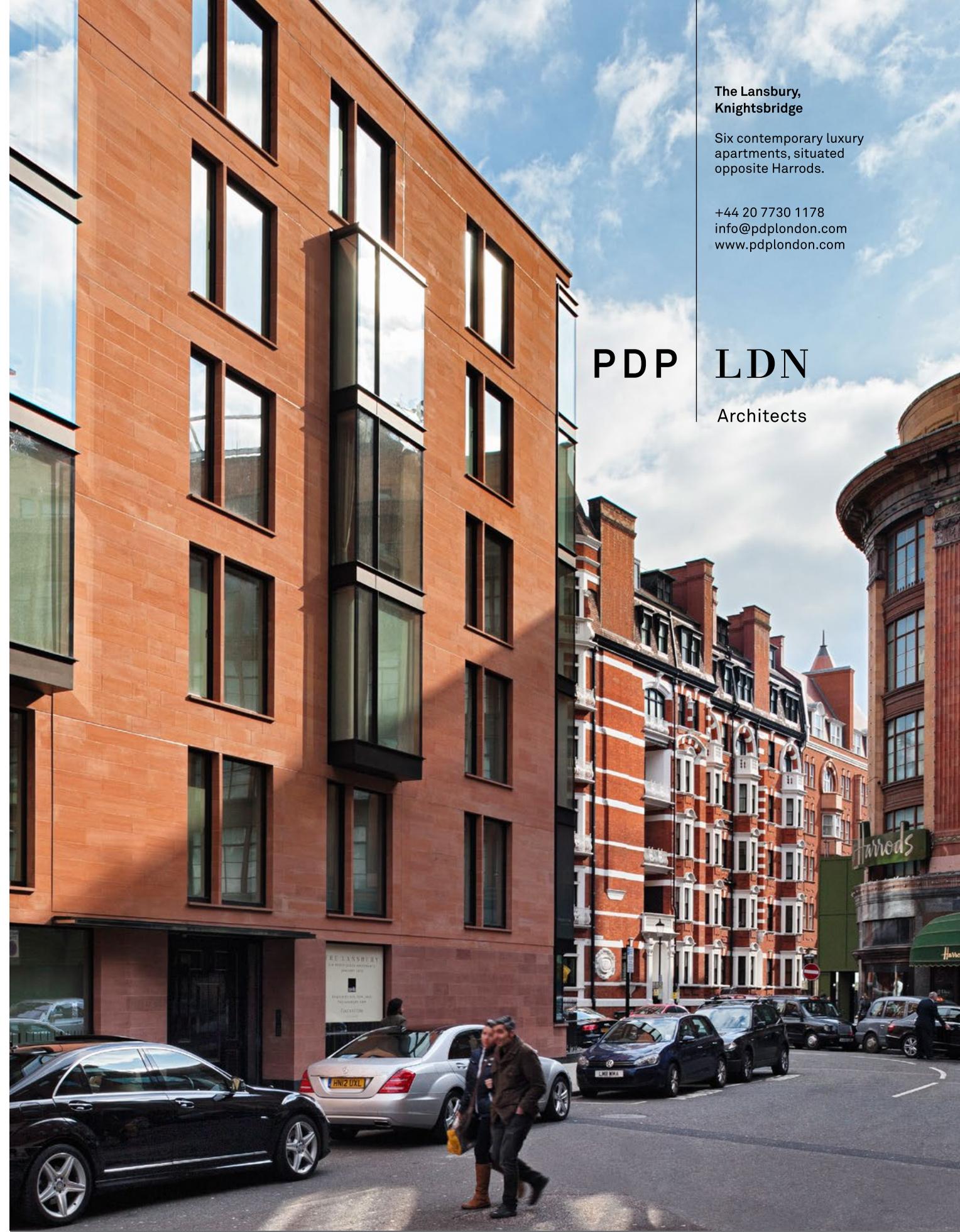
So, what can we look forward to in the next 20 years in transport terms? We'll see more walking, more cycling, a lot less car use, Dix says, not just in the centre but also in the suburbs. This will be because of environmental matters and the need to respond to congestion that would arise otherwise. The transformation in cycling in central London has been noticeable, but via the mini Hollands and other programmes it will be felt further out too, even if Dix doesn't cycle herself much these days (she used to bike daily from Leyton to County Hall earlier in her career), largely because of the fuff of changing on weekdays. The interesting thing will be the impact of autonomous vehicles, Dix goes on, especially shared ones, but the need for mass public transport carrying people to their work will be the same. London in 2030 will be at 10 million and 2050 around 11.5 million people, but if we don't have the transport improvements we will not be able to grow the centre. So the question is how the UK capital is evaluated compared with other 'global cities', while retaining its character, and ensuring that the northern and Midlands 'engines' can support the growth.

Hopefully, Crossrail 2 will arrive early in the 2030s, and will potentially be built using a more sustainable method – building the tunnels first and transporting the soil using them, rather than trucks along the roads above. And, again, economies in the construction method will be looked at, with a beady eye.

So, does Dix like what she does? 'I very much like the job. I like the do-ing', she laughs. 'I like the fact that in this particular job, not only do you have to think strategically about the big case, but the topics that you have to cover are so broad. So you're thinking about how you fund it, how you finance it, how you get the housing off the ground, what housing are you getting off the ground, and what policies do you require to support getting the housing off the ground? How does that impact on different localities, and what are the urban realm issues associated with that? To the other extreme, which is, well if this tunnel is going through there, what does that mean in terms of the geology? And how will we technically do that, and where will we remove that much soil to? So you have all that nitty-gritty detailed engineering stuff, which is exciting, right through to the strategic case-making.' Truly, a lot on her plate.

It's challenging, and offers Dix the chance to mix with many different professions, take proposals to the public and, sometimes, modify them to address their concerns via the line's ongoing engagement team. But there are so many messages to get across to so many people. And in the background is Dix's ambition for the Crossrail 2 organisation to be an exemplar in diversity, building on the employment of a female head of scheme design – Isabelle Adams – to get to Dix's ambition of 50 per cent women, on merit.

So, finally, is there life for Dix after Crossrail 2? 'I want to open a tea-room when I retire, in my garden', says Dix with a smile. 'But my husband says if I put in a planning application, he'll object. So that might be difficult.' ●



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BRIDGING THE GAP

Elliott Wood director *Gary Elliott* makes the case for the NLA People's Choice winner – its Rotherhithe Bridge design, created with reForm Architects – to make it into reality

Guests present at the Guildhall for the 2016 NLA Awards will have seen a delighted Nik Randall and I receive the inaugural People's Choice Award for our Rotherhithe Bridge design.

It is cliché to say that this award means much, much more because it was voted for by the public, but in this case it is true. If the Rotherhithe Bridge is to be built, and it could be by 2020 if procurement and funding allow, evidence of public support will be vital.

Produced in collaboration by reForm Architects and Elliott Wood engineers, the concept design for the Rotherhithe Bridge, or 'Boomerang Bridge' as it is popularly known, started life as an idea on how to improve connectivity for a borough poorly served by public transport.

It was, it transpired, also an idea shared by Sustrans, which in June 2015 asked us to assist them in identifying the feasibility of a Thames pedestrian and cycling bridge, connecting Canary Wharf and Rotherhithe.

We then examined the numerous technical challenges involved in constructing and operating a bridge in this location, using our pre-existing design as a means to test whether these could be met and, in doing so, prove that it could be delivered.

Analysis by Sustrans has predicted that by 2020, there will be approximately 2.1 million bicycle



Open and shut case? The 'Boomerang' bridge design

journeys each year or 10,500 per day across the bridge and more than 1 million by foot.

The good news is that Sadiq Khan is a supporter, confirming in October that plans for the bridge were to be accelerated, followed by the launch by TfL of a market engagement exercise designed to help determine a 'cost-effective solution' and inform its approach to the delivery of a crossing. Competitive procurement is due to start in March 2017 with the Mayor proposing that, subject to funding, availability of land and relevant approvals, the new bridge could be open by as soon as 2020.

A combination of controversy around the Garden Bridge procurement and the impact of impending Brexit may mean this takes longer than envisaged. In the case of Brexit, while guesswork continues to obscure the facts, the general view from more learned legal minds appears to be that if the UK government wants to continue to compete abroad and ensure value for money at home, our current procurement rules won't face wholesale changes.

Neither, presumably, will the way in which these rules are interpreted which, in the UK, means procurement being judged on what firms have done before, not what they are capable of doing. This often favours the

larger firms, at the expense of more enterprising and innovative companies and designs. Any delay in delivery on the bridge runs the risk of missing the opportunities, both financial and design-based, presented by the other planned developments at Canary Wharf. The window of opportunity on this side of the river is slim and narrowing.

Elliott Wood and reForm Architects are continuing to bang the drum for the Rotherhithe Bridge, meeting community groups on either side of the river, keen to know more about our design, and private investors and companies that could potentially help fund its development.

The use of public money must be accountable and show best value, but it should be possible for public bodies to back a speculative proposal provided that it makes sense in terms of cost, programme and design quality. Our design provides a known outcome that meets the requirements of the Port of London Authority, London Underground and others in the shortest possible timescale with the lowest possible risk.

The question should be 'how would you deliver this project?' not 'how many similar projects have you done before?' In the case of the Rotherhithe Bridge, we believe that we have the answer to that question. ●

WORKING THROUGH

As part of WRK/LDN – a season of events and an exhibition on the way London is facing its workplace future – a conference heard that the capital remains as resilient as ever. By *David Taylor*

London's workplaces face threats from permitted development rights, the lack of affordability of housing for staff and the uncertainty surrounding Brexit. But the capital is fully able to fight off all three as well as the competing cities of Frankfurt, Paris, Dublin and Amsterdam, just as it has ridden the storms of various booms and busts over the decades.

That was the view of Digby Flower, chairman UK & Ireland and head of London markets at Cushman & Wakefield, speaking on 'disruption', deliberate innovation and Brexit at a half-day conference on the future of work at NLA.

'Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower. The challenge for us in the industry and the challenge for London is to be the leader,' said Flower. 'If we're not the leader and continue not to be the leader, it will be done to us rather than us doing it; I think that's important.' Brexit was a change that we did not control, said Flower, but was a 'very clear and deliberate vote for disruption'. And although in the innovation dynamic London had to be leader, in the Brexit dynamic it should be a fast follower and one that adapts to the situation quickly. The city is in an uncertain place and the tendency is for such conditions to lead to delay, but London has to have the courage to move forward despite this, added Flower, with strategic investment in infrastructure including Crossrail 2 needed to ease that passage. But the likelihood of firms leaving en masse was low, with

no obvious place for the banking sector to go: Frankfurt has a working population 8 per cent the size of London's 'and they speak German'; Paris has very complicated labour laws and a similar language problem; and Dublin simply does not have the stature of infrastructure. As for Amsterdam, 'even the Dutch don't take that seriously'. London survived, adapted and came out stronger from the Big Bang, recessions and other major events, and so there is a 'strong precedent' for doing that with Brexit.

But, Flower went on, we cannot rely on the financial services industry, with

'Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower. The challenge for us in the industry and the challenge for London is to be the leader'

innovation and tech firms moving ahead in the hierarchy. The key thing as it has been for the last five years is securing and retaining talent, said Flower. 'We have to be able to make London attractive to that talent and they have to be able to afford it.' For its part, 'London will become much more geared towards experience and interaction', he added.

Paul Harrington, real-estate director at PricewaterhouseCoopers, said his company attracts graduates from universities such as Nottingham and Newcastle predominantly on the attractiveness of London (including

six Premier League football clubs and more than 100 Nando's), but has an aspiration to alter its split of 70:30 London staff to the regions in favour of its offices outside the capital. The firm runs its own headquarters like a 'business hotel', a theme picked up by others as being a more widespread trend. And it looks upon the workspace as a box, into which it adds 'theatre'. But if knowledge was the key asset of the 20th century, Harrington said, imagination is the key asset of the 21st.

The conference also heard from Great Portland Estates investment manager Simon Rowley, who felt there had been a definite shift from Capex fixed-cost to operational expenditure. Battersea Power Station Development Company head of office leasing Andrew Hilston said he expected to see an 'Apple effect' from its most recent addition, perhaps leading to the company increasing the offices component in the 20 acres still to be developed at the project. And consultant Despina Katsikakis said that many of the same choices we make about where we go to physically connect in cities – quality of experience, uniqueness, unexpected events – were becoming just as important with workspace. But perhaps the biggest impact will be to do with the integration of physical space and policies that enable people to work differently and more flexibly.

In the second session of the event, John Robertson Architects' sustainability consultant and architect Colin Beattie questioned



↑
Work style – Buckley Gray Yeoman's 10 Bloomsbury Way commercial refurbishment scheme in Holborn



↑
Calling the tune – Jules Pipe, Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration & Skills, opening the WRK/LDN exhibition

how we can provide 7.5 million sqm more workspace in London in the next 20 years. One way could be in more co-working space, with WeWork a major player in this field. Its head of Europe, real estate, Patrick Nelson said that the firm had built up its own in-house designers, architects and construction teams and provides people with flexible, homely spaces and experience with energy. Some 70 per cent of its members do business with other member companies. But

community can never be forced, he said. The future will be more about the 'sharing economy', said head of the futures group at Cushman & Wakefield Juliette Morgan, and environments that fuse education and work.

Finally, Pilbrow + Partners' Fred Pilbrow showed how density and clustering form key elements in some of the practice's current projects on York Way and for U+I at 8 Albert Embankment, which will incorporate the London Fire Brigade Museum. ●

UN SQUARE MILE

Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners' John McElgunn and Tracy Meller tell *David Taylor* about how the move to its Leadenhall Building has transformed it into a more 'urban' practice



←
Colourful future – Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners' John McElgunn and Tracy Meller at the practice's Cheesegrater home

Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners' move to its own Leadenhall Building in the City has been transformative. Not just for showing the world that it could put its money where its mouth is, but in terms of improving accessibility, communication in the office, events for outsiders, and even wowing clients – both existing and potential – with their new home.

After 30 years the practice moved from its historic riverside base in Hammersmith a year ago and, say partners John McElgunn and Tracy

Meller, after looking around, the lure of the City was a strong one, partially because it was so much easier, and safer, to get to than its old premises. The practice even mapped journeys-in using the postcodes of its staff to ensure that this was the case, and good cycling facilities at the new home – hundreds of spaces in the basement and shower facilities – please the firm's army of bikers too. Even Rogers himself cycles in on occasion from Chelsea.

It helped that Oxford Properties and British Land, the developers of 122

Leadenhall Street, had allocated one floor of its 51 as a possible expansion space for anchor tenants Aon, which they ultimately did not want, so RSHP got a 'pretty good' deal. But beyond that, the pair stress the benefits of being on one floor as a real boon to communication internally and for an end to the 'disease' of internal emails when a wander over to a colleague's desk is so much easier, more productive and more enjoyable.

'It's been very positive', says Meller. 'Initially, I think a lot of people were concerned, and the people who had not

been in the practice so long were just excited that there was change.' For many there had been a kind of 'weight' about leaving Thames Wharf as the practice had been there so long, and some of the identity was wrapped up in the buildings there and the way in which the practice worked. 'I think there was a fear about how we translate to here', says Meller. 'But even on the first day it was tangible, the excitement. It couldn't be more different from Hammersmith, coming out of the Tube station to the river, to the office, compared with coming out of Bank, and walking up the street: Leadenhall, Lloyd's, it's a kind of a reminder of what we can do at our best.' The sensation was that this was a real opportunity and even those who had been concerned were 'overwhelmed' by what could be a 'positive new chapter'. 'It's been an utter breath of fresh air.'

The practice designed desk space for its 260 staff across the 14th floor in a bold use of colours that makes it stand out as 'the rabble on the weird colourful floor' among its insurance colleagues. A central, highly flexible space plays host to impromptu meetings as well as Monday Design Forum (MDF) – its weekly morning partners' meetings – which includes new 4K screens for presentations and is curated with events such as talks for 150 people with Archiboo on reinventing Paris and launches including with RIBA and Open House. The office is littered with models of projects, and also features a modelmaking facility, along with more formal meeting rooms and a food preparation area that Rogers himself is keen to bolster with a new chef coming in to feed the troops.

The staff had been aware of an upcoming move for some time with the lease expiring at Hammersmith. A year of discussion followed, with the idea of Leadenhall generating excitement but then going off the table, then back on when the floor became available. The practice had been looking for more than the 17,000 sq ft it now has – it had 24,000 sq ft in Hammersmith but in three buildings on five floors. 'The

amount of circulation and inefficiency was pretty remarkable' says McElgunn. But sourcing that kind of area in central London on a single floor is no easy task, with the sweep taking in Clerkenwell, Shoreditch, King's Cross, north London, east London, but finding very little that could work. Then Leadenhall came back on the table.

Space was a big consideration, especially for a practice which has grown by 35 in the last year. In mocking up the new furniture 1.5m compared with the old 1.8m and 2m modules, 'there was definitely concern' that things would be tight, but those were a hangover from old drawing boards, and one of the nicest surprises from day one was that staff didn't feel cramped. 'And when you're not at your desk there are a lot of other spaces to hang around in, have a coffee and a chat,' adds McElgunn. 'And I think that makes a lot of difference.' Mid-

'I think there was a fear about how we translate to here. But even on the first day it was tangible, the excitement'

afternoon sunsets are a particular draw. 'That's our new river,' says Meller.

At Thames Wharf, the practice all ate together every day, with a chef and meals subsidised by the office. Historically, this started with the relationship with the River Café and so one of the biggest things about moving to Leadenhall was about the food question and how it might affect the community culture. The practice felt that it would see how it worked without it, since the area is surrounded by restaurants. 'But we have decided that it is so much part of our culture that we've reintroduced it,' says Meller, with a former River Café chef coming in two days a week with pre-prepared salads and other items, and all are able to eat together on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the kitchen on long tables, and subsidised by 50 per cent. 'That's been met very positively', says Meller. 'It

was felt that was the missing bit we didn't manage to bring with us. Richard really pushed for us to keep reconsidering it.' It's also much more democratic when you're all eating together, adds McElgunn. 'It's a real leveller.'

During the process of recruiting its new staff – largely needed to serve the practice's project for a new T3 terminal at Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport – the building was also a definite draw, says Meller. And the building acts like a giant billboard for the work the practice does, with a fit-out that is done in the practice's own style, so various details, even servicing, can be talked through and even shown to prospective clients, and sometimes its own staff. 'The solutions to how you resolve a lot of the issues are actually here', says McElgunn. 'That is brilliant.' This was especially true with a weekend presentation to a Far Eastern client, where the space was set up as a kind of exhibition. 'By the time they had got out of their taxis, come up the escalators, come up in the lifts, they were giggling,' says McElgunn. 'They had their iPhones out and were click, click, clicking. So much for the cool, "we're not impressed" exteriors! They were totally blown away. And actually the sales pitch is kind of actually done.'

So much so that Foster + Partners came to visit its rivals, Grant Brooker presenting Graham Stirk with a brilliant gift – a small model of the Leadenhall building and St Mary Axe as a tremendously lifelike piece of Brie and Gherkin, respectively.

So what do McElgunn and Meller feel on an emotional level every day as they come up the escalators? 'I still smile in a slightly giddy way,' says Meller. 'I still can't quite believe I work here. I brought my kids here a month or so ago and I still have the same expression that they had. I thought it would last maybe a month or two – maybe I'm excitedly silly, but I definitely still have it. I feel honoured to be in it. It makes me feel proud.' McElgunn agrees, saying it is 'immensely special'. 'I just love it. You just can't help but feel really privileged.' ●



↑
New cathedrals – the City skyline has replaced the river at the practice's old Hammersmith base

←
Say cheese – a model of Leadenhall and Swiss Re presented as a gift to the practice by Foster and Partners



←
On the office – Ben Adams chairs a talk with Tibbalds' Jennifer Ross and Aukett Swanke's Tom Alexander

THE CHANGING OFFICE

The offices of the future should be leased by volume rather than square feet, while a *sui generis* approach could skirt outdated planning rules.

Those were just two suggestions to emerge from a wide-ranging lunchtime talk at NLA on *Live to Work? – Investigating the Live-in Office*.

Aukett Swanke director Tom Alexander said that his practice had noticed that education spaces were being influenced by offices and vice versa, with atria and breakout spaces being more and more common to both. Another feature in many new office schemes is the 'urban lounge' – hotel-lobby congregating/work spaces prevalent too in airports, railway stations, universities and the ground floors of workplaces. So the architect has developed a model with such a lounge at ground floor and security deeper into the building, with 'fairly traditional' office spaces but linked vertically, and with a double-height volume for flexibility. Someone might then be able to come in and rent 3,000 sqm, with a bit of space on the ground

floor, perhaps, more on the upper, and a part in the volume spaces, within what Aukett Swanke are calling a 'chassis', both structurally and from a service point of view. 'It's really about designing for the person, rather than for square feet', said Alexander.

Tibbalds director Jennifer Ross, meanwhile, said live/work had been around for 20 years, but had got something of a bad name, to the extent that Hackney and Tower Hamlets now will not allow it as a concept. Yet Tibbalds' work with Second Home showed how a new model was emerging as a kind of club or business hotel, whose planning progress has been eased by dealing with it through a *sui generis* application. Ross added that the practice had found in further research into working office types that one of the key elements in this area was affordability. 'If you combine living and working into a model you can get 30 per cent savings over rent', she said. Planning was not very good at controlling the shift in living and

working, she added, but the best model overall was a commercial lease which 'knits in' a residential use. 'It's actually what we have got to tackle more than the design side of things', she said. 'It's how we manage how we rent, and who manages those spaces.'

Questions directed to the pair from the floor ranged from the extent to which permitted development rights has affected offices ('it's absolutely killed the affordability of offices', said Ross), and chiefly the loss of artists studios and other small workspaces, to the effect of technology and ways of working, to meanwhile spaces.

In summing up, chair of the talk Ben Adams said we will most likely look back on this period as one of 'massive' change in the way we work. 'I'm sure everyone here is carrying a smartphone of some type', he said to the audience, 'and that device has liberated us from all kinds of things that we're still coming to terms with.' ●

WRK/LDN is supported by Principal Sponsors: *British Land, Cushman & Wakefield, John Robertson Architects and Segro*. Go to newlondonarchitecture.org/wrk to see the full report

MEETING MENTORS

In the first of a new series from the team at NLA, programme manager *Lucie Murray* looks at a new approach to providing a useful leg-up to younger firms – speed mentoring



Inspiration, words of wisdom and a wealth of experience filled the NLA galleries this autumn as we hosted our first ever Speed Mentoring event as part of the NextGen Programme.

This initiative identifies and supports young talent within the industry, advancing the professional development of the built environment's future leaders. It encompasses all sectors and provides the unique opportunity to meet those working across different professions. There have been numerous NextGen activities so far and this is only set to grow next year. The energy and enthusiasm in the room at the Speed Mentoring evening was inspiring and encouraging in itself. Mentees came away feeling 'optimistic and with some new avenues to explore' as Ramboll's John Hurle commented. However inspiration was a two-way street as Rob Partridge, director of AKT II and NLA mentor, was 'slightly

humbled by the wealth of knowledge we can impart and help guide this unbelievably enthusiastic generation!'

Rob was one of 20 industry leaders who acted as mentors for the evening, meeting with more than 40 young professionals, imparting their knowledge to the next generation of talent. Mentees were able to meet with a varied group of mentors for 10-minute 'speed-mentoring' sessions, gaining a range of valuable insights into particular challenges they were facing, project specific issues or their own career progression.

This event is a prime example of our ambition with the programme and evidence of what we can provide here at NLA: a springboard for the next generation, a forum to share ideas and a place to inspire and be inspired.

NextGen is supported by Programme Champions Gardiner & Theobald and associate sponsors Buro Four. ●

←
'The energy and enthusiasm in the room at the Speed Mentoring evening was inspiring and encouraging in itself'



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NextGen mentees enjoyed 10-minute sessions with their mentors

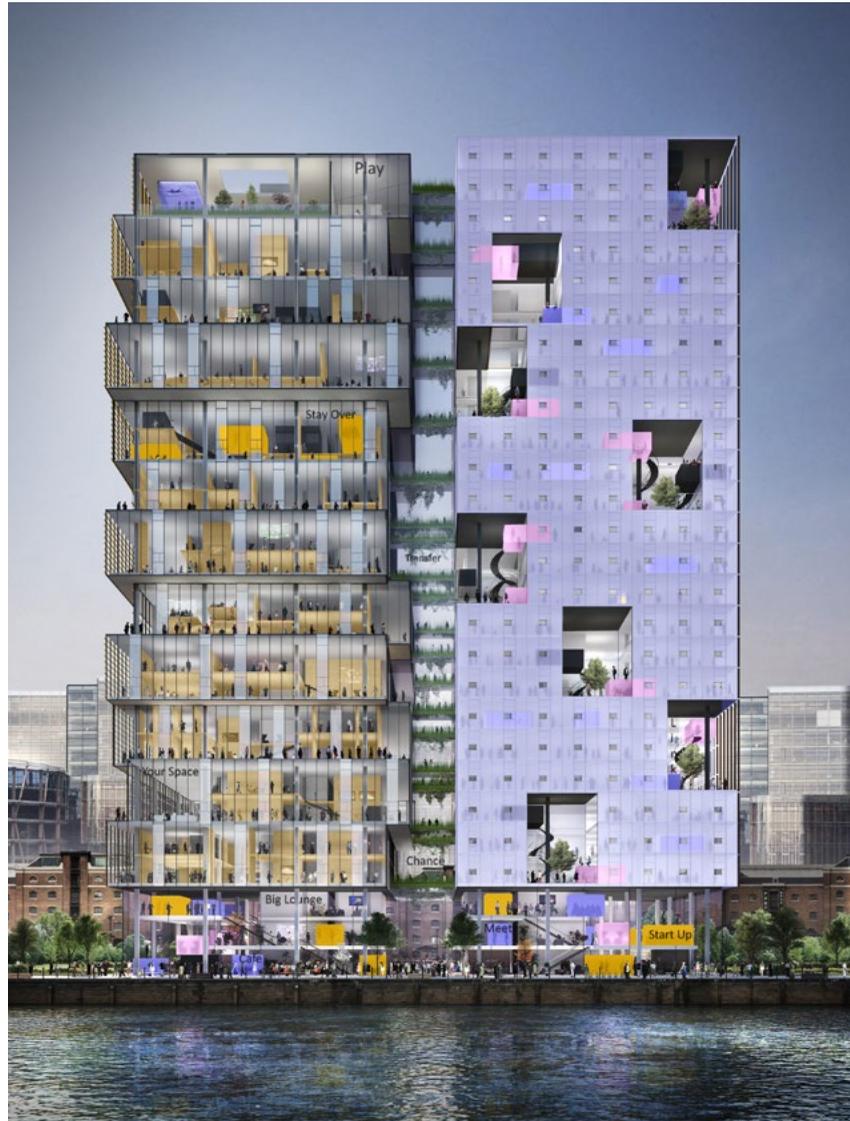
WORK, LEARN, LIVE, PLAY

By Tom Alexander,
director of Aukett Swanke

Aukett Swanke's 'Work / Learn / Live / Play Chassis' is a vertical campus concept, demonstrating a new kind of flexible workspace. It is designed to cater for companies of any size, from one-man-bands to larger organisations, where you can trade up or down between a public sofa, a private 'box', several floors of quiet office space or to larger 3D volumes.

These spaces understand and enable their needs, productivity and wellbeing in an environment where the choice of workplace has become fundamental to business success in the 'war for talent'. This concept is agile and suitable for a tower, low-rise or existing building, accommodating co-living, learning and playing activities, in urban, brownfield or green sites.

In a radical shift from traditional leasing models, the floors would be let by volume rather than floor space, an indication that the way in which we think about occupying space has completely changed in the 21st century. ●



Trading up,
trading down,
Aukett Swanke's
'chassis' idea

WHAT'S IN STORE FOR ENERGY?

Barny Evans of WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff argues that energy storage is the final piece of the jigsaw for reduced bills in a low-carbon energy future

At WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff we published a report in July on energy storage called *Energy Storage – The Final Piece of the Jigsaw*. In it we discussed whether energy storage is the final part of the equation to allow us to move to a very low-carbon, all-electric world and how sites could benefit.

Energy storage is not new; anyone with a hot-water tank stores energy. There are lots of other forms of energy storage; capacitors, batteries, hydrogen, phase-change materials, you could even argue biomass is energy storage. Until recently, however, local electrical energy storage (batteries) has been very limited, either due to the cost or the need for it at a very large scale. That is now changing fast due to necessity and opportunity.

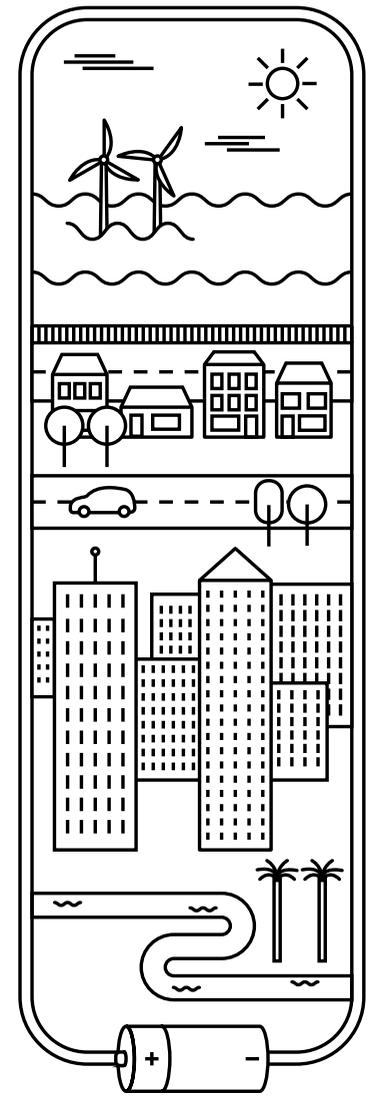
This year 25-30 per cent of our electricity will come from renewable energy and this is growing rapidly, but is mainly in the form of wind and solar which is not wholly predictable. On the demand side, I have argued that all new buildings should be all-electric; that is, where all the heating is provided from electricity through the use of heat pumps. This has fantastic benefits in terms of CO2 emissions and air quality but it does increase electrical demand and make it 'spikier', during cold weather for example. (All of our vehicles will probably be electric in the future.)

For the electrical system, which has to balance minute by minute, this is a challenge; do we build an enormous fleet of generators and upgrade our electrical system to cope with the occasional large demand, or can we use energy storage and (its twin sister) demand-side management to help the balance? This is the necessity.

Energy storage offers buildings the opportunity to reduce their energy bills, CO2 emissions and contribute to a very low-carbon energy future. Most non-domestic energy users pay more for electricity at peak times and can switch unnecessary equipment off during peak times to save money. (This peak tends to correlate with the carbon intensity of our grid, meaning you reduce CO2 as well as bills.) Energy storage offers the opportunity to be entirely 'off-grid' during peak times, or to supply energy to the grid. By 2020 even homes should have smart meters, enabling variable 'time of use charging' which means we can all benefit from energy storage.

For new buildings this makes things more complex. We need to think about how much energy storage a building will need and where it will go, as well as the usual renewables, heating, cooling, ventilation and electrical supply. This additional complexity does mean there may be opportunities. Developments being held back by high costs to upgrade the electrical network may now be able to use storage to reduce peak demand, wind and solar systems will be able to be bigger as their energy generation can be stored on-site rather than exported, and for homes storage will mean occupants will have reduced bills as they can use more of the energy they generate.

As an advisor in the sector it is a really exciting time, everyone is looking for revenue, reduced bills and lower CO2 emissions, and energy storage offers all of this in a (complex and dynamic) partnership with demand-side management and renewable energy. Energy storage is the final piece of the jigsaw and we are beginning to work out exactly how it fits in. ●



Energy storage
- part of our low-
carbon future?

UNTOLD RICHES

Mikhail Riches are making waves in housing, with an impressive hit rate in competitions. *David Taylor* caught up with them

If you win seven out of eight architectural competitions, you must be doing something right. Mikhail Riches is that practice with a near perfect hit rate, and puts it down to being good in interview, understanding the brief and getting on with prospective clients. But it may be more than that. It may be that the practice is also very good at what it does.

Mikhail Riches – led by David Mikhail and Annalie Riches – has been going in its current guise for just two years now since director Cathy Hawley left to teach, but has been winning competitions – in predominantly housing – for 10 years, and longer as David Mikhail Architects since 1992. Now, though, with another win of the next phase of Park Hill under its belt, it feels as if it is at a ‘watershed’ both in scale and in profile.

Mikhail studied at Cambridge and then PCL with fellow students including Peter Barber, Liza Fior and Sean Griffiths, taught by people as varied as David Green and Demetri Porphyrios. Riches was at North London and then Sheffield, which is half the reason why Park Hill was such an important win. The two met while working in Kentish Town for Robert Dye Architects, who held Tai Chi classes every Friday. ‘I did it because Annalie was doing it’, admits Mikhail, sheepishly. ‘It was oh-so-subtle.’ Riches can also list a brief spell in the circus as a trapeze artist among her jobs, which came about largely because she was greeted by a recession on graduating in 1992. A brief sojourn strawberry picking in Colchester followed before going to Paris to work for structural engineer Peter Rice for two years.

They formed a loose affiliation of Riches Hawley Mikhail to put in a pitch for a competition for a housing scheme at New Islington that was eventually won by De Metz Forbes. But their good showing and shortlisting led to being invited to go for another scheme for Urban Splash, Bank Hall in Chorley, which featured on TV’s *Restoration*, and other projects in the portfolio included the Stephen Lawrence Prize-shortlisted and RIBA award-winning Whatcotts Yard in Stoke Newington, which Riches built for herself with some friends, and some one-off houses and extensions. ‘We thought maybe we could get involved with housing’, said Riches. ‘So that’s what we set out to do. And now we’ve become housing experts!’

The competition strike rate is impressive, certainly, and feedback on the one they lost out of the eight told them it wasn’t on design, but fee and the consultation strategy. ‘We are good in interview’, Mikhail offers, and Riches says their graphic skills or CGIs are perhaps not up to their competitors. ‘But if we get an interview ... I don’t think we’d win in a numbers competition.’

They also much prefer competitions where they can meet the client and understand their agenda, says Mikhail, which never really comes through in a written document. ‘Even better where we can show them initial ideas, before developing them.’ This was the case with Stanhope and BBC Television Centre, where the practice is designing 20 townhouses alongside the AHMM scheme, following a recommendation to invite them onto a shortlist by Paul Monaghan. *Stories*, the exhibition Mikhail Riches staged during the

London Festival of Architecture, was another attempt to show the processes the practice goes through, stories of the project rather than themselves, says Riches. ‘That really helps as a strategy for interviews. We don’t go in saying we’re the best architects. We go in talking about their project and what we can do for it.’ Stories have to have a beginning, middle and end, she reasons, and by the end you have to have the feeling that there is no other solution, no alternative ending. And the joint author is the client, where the brief is a massive part of the authorship.

The pair are also engaging and easy to talk to. ‘I’ve had feedback from

‘We don’t go in saying we’re the best architects. We go in talking about their project and what we can do for it’

clients that suggests that we have no ego’, smiles Mikhail, ‘which of course can’t be true!’ Stanhope praised them for this ability to ‘park’ their ego, and a lot of juries don’t really understand what they are looking at in design terms, says Riches, so it is more about what they are bringing for them. ‘I think we’re schooled in a way of talking about design that’s completely alien to most people. I think it leaves most people cold.’ It’s like going into a hi-fi shop, says Mikhail, and getting blasted with jargon.

Much of the work has been in doing tight urban sites like Church Walk in north London, where the pair acted as developer and now live alongside





Now on BBC...The practice's housing at the old Television Centre site

three other units. But such sites take a long time to make into fantastic spaces, and Park Hill and the BBC projects are slight moves away from this. At Park Hill, they graffitied inside an apartment having been given two weeks to make their mark in an innovative competition. 'We didn't do anything in that apartment until the morning of the competition', says Mikhail.

What they *did* do is meet with the agent selling phase one, talking through the pros and cons of the first phase and what lessons they could learn. But they didn't prettify the space, instead looking at how much of the existing fabric they could retain to suit budgets, and prepped a kind of guerrilla intervention on the morning of their presentation. Four of the team drew on the walls with stencils, put a model into place, and ultimately emerged victorious. 'I think it gave an impression of how much time and energy we poured into the ideas', says Mikhail, 'and prepping, as opposed to making the apartment beautiful, which we weren't doing. We were leaving it as found. We didn't even sweep it.'

The graffiti drew on the famous 'I love you will U marry me' line sprayed onto a concrete bridge four storeys up at Park Hill, which became a kind of signifier for the new life of the area. It also drew on a culture of graffiti in the city, and proved that they were engaging with the

building, says Riches. 'It seemed like a complete no-brainer to draw all over the flat. I thought everyone was going to do that.' The team was the only one to embrace the £100/sq ft budget, as if it were their own money being used.

It is looking for more sites of the kind it found to do Church Walk, which it won through auction after being alerted by a weekly notification service called Plotfinder. This one was around the corner, so Mikhail popped on his bike to see the site before the auction, which he snapped up for his maximum budget of £280,000. That limit was based on almost zero profit at the time but happily in land value terms the scheme took an age to win planning and it took five years to build. They're now selling up their space to raise funds for the next opportunity.

While Sheffield will be a watershed moment in terms of scale and profile, the practice is also doing 105 new socially rented passive houses for Norwich, and in terms of a mix of uses is also involved in transforming a church in south London with housing, café, nursery, workspaces, studios and event spaces, even potential space for mead barrels and bee hives for the scheme's chief visionary, Revd Gareth Powell. The project, at St Margaret the Queen on Streatham Hill, is a large church that seats 800 people but has no congregation so seeks to bring

this building back into the community once more, and includes a monastic house and private homes for sale to fund the scheme. Could this be a replicable model across London as churches and vicarages get looked at anew amid the capital's housing crisis?

And then there is the practice's work with Brick by Brick, Colm Lacey's brainchild in Croydon to speed up housing by going to a select group of architects to get on and build in the area, of which Mikhail Riches is one, and which has been presented with eight current schemes from 10 units to 50 in the borough to be getting along with. It's a model being looked at by other boroughs, and avoids time-consuming and overly bureaucratic processes. It is also almost the contrast to all the firm's previous competition-win work.

At the other end of the scale the practice was invited to design a bus shelter in Croatia to encourage tourism and make local markers. The scheme,

'I've had feedback from clients that suggests that we have no ego', smiles Mikhail, 'which of course can't be true!'

destined for a village in Istria, is made of Corten steel and is a reinterpretation of a local chapel and trees.

So, what are the practice's plans? They both baulk at the thought. 'Ah, I'm not really a believer in five-year plans, and stuff like that', says Mikhail. 'I just want to get some of this lovely stuff built.' Riches agrees, saying that the practice is lucky that it has no 'churn' – it is doing the kind of work it really loves, but says that if she is honest she would love to do something beyond housing. 'I'm so excited about this bus stop', she says. 'It's a beautiful thing. And I'd like to do something on a big scale, not masterplanning but to think about, in collaboration, making places. I'd like to do bigger and smaller places.' Mikhail grins. 'Yes, bigger and smaller. And medium size.' ●

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THE REMARKABLE PLACES WE MANAGE



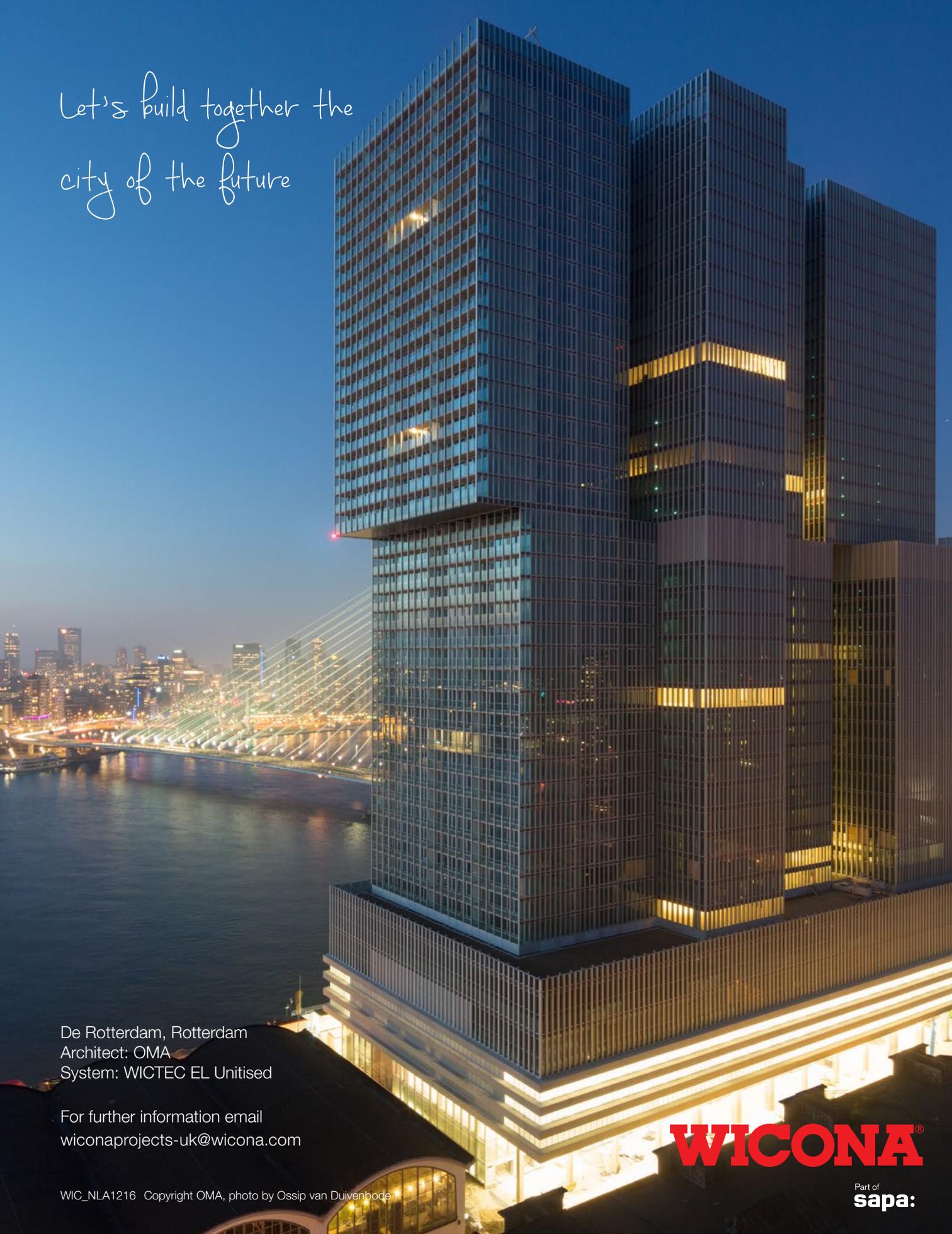
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LONDON'S NEW TOWN

John Lewis, executive director at Peabody, Thamesmead, says its £1.5bn regeneration scheme with potential to deliver up to 20,000 new homes is key to turning around the area

For many, Thamesmead is best known for being the backdrop to *A Clockwork Orange* – a concrete, Brutalist environment with a crime problem. For those who know the area though, the picture is rather different.

It is a little known fact that crime is lower in Thamesmead than almost anywhere else in London. Some 96 per cent of the schools are good or outstanding. There are 150 hectares of parks and open spaces – more than double the London average. It has 30,000 trees, 7km of waterways, five major lakes, two nature reserves and 5km of river frontage.

Much more than an estate, Thamesmead was originally conceived in the 1960s by the Greater London Council as a new town for 60,000 people. But the Jubilee line and other infrastructure that could have helped make it successful never happened. There were strategic planning and design flaws and the money dried up. Almost 50 years later, transport connectivity remains poor and the town centre doesn't offer enough for the population. There is no bank and a shortage of the small local shops that help neighbourhoods thrive. In South Thamesmead there is also a lack of activity at ground level because the town was designed before the Thames Barrier was built. Homes are raised, space is wasted and some of the old concrete buildings are no longer fit for purpose. These are significant challenges which will not be rectified quickly. ●



↑ Thamesmead from the air, looking towards the O2 and beyond



← Proctor and Matthews and Mecanoo's plans for South Thamesmead

LEARNING FROM...EASTERN EUROPE

HB Reavis has big plans for London's real estate market, having cut its teeth in Bratislava and elsewhere in Europe. By *David Taylor*

Watch out, London.

HB Reavis, the quirkily named developer that is the third biggest in Europe, is ready to make the English capital a firm focus for future activity, with up to six buildings in the pipeline and a clear belief in the city's draw, despite Brexit and market flurries.

The company – which has just released details of the Foster + Partners-designed tower in Warsaw that will top The Shard in height as Europe's tallest – has been working in Bratislava, Warsaw, Prague and other eastern European cities since 1993, building up a formidable portfolio across offices and retail. Current plans include a Benoy-designed retail centre in Bratislava called NIVY, which features a running track on its green roof, bus station (it bought the bus company to gain the site) and an office tower alongside. The scheme will add to work by John Robertson Architects elsewhere in the city, which will also be the location for a Zaha Hadid Architects-designed project by rival developer J&T. But now, having developed 33 Central in the City of London and sold it to Wells Fargo, HB Reavis has its sights set on the kind of rapid expansion it has made elsewhere, says board member Marcel Sedláč. 'In 2012 we made the very smart decision to move to London but also a more courageous one to move to Istanbul.' While the latter is still something the firm is monitoring as a potential opportunity, analysing 100 projects, the former is very much all systems go.

The firm aims to have a third of its business from London – 16 per cent of its pipeline is currently in the UK with 35 per cent Slovakia, 30 per cent Poland, 10 per cent Hungary and 9 per cent from the Czech Republic. Managing director of HB Reavis UK Tomáš Jurdák said it

aims to increase its London staff from 35 to around 70 inside two years. But what sets it apart from other developers, he adds, is its in-house capabilities across the building team, with contractors, space-planning teams and designers all operating under the HB Reavis banner. This acts as its guarantee of quality and cost by retaining full control of what it is delivering.

So what was so attractive about London? 'The main reason was diversification of the portfolio because we were very exposed in central and eastern Europe', says Jurdák, 'so we were looking for more locations to get more balance. The other reason

'What is very important to us is we are not a standard developer that is wanting to deliver office space as a commodity'

is that the UK is the top of the global real-estate market, with Hong Kong, Singapore and New York. Our ambition is to grow to the main markets in the world and London geographically and culturally is the closest to these big cities. So as a first step to world-class real estate it was the natural move.'

The firm's ambition is 'global', says Jurdák, and it is delivering 'world-class' buildings that are 'the best in design and user experience in offices' wherever it is active, so he believes its product will be attractive in new locations.

What lessons can it can bring from central eastern Europe? Its clients are occupiers like Microsoft, Deloitte, PwC, and it has delivered more than 1 million sqm of offices so far in its 20 years. So that kind of experience is also applicable

in the UK, Jurdák reasons. London has proved so far to be a 'volatile' market because of the transparent and easy to read real-estate market and its cycle. But a few unexpected things like the referendum on Europe have not dented its enthusiasm for expanding in the UK. 'We were expecting a correction and that maybe was speeded up by the referendum', says Jurdák. 'It's just a downturn in the cycle which allows us to buy more projects and be stronger in the market.'

At the moment it is involved in three main projects in the capital including 20 Farringdon Street, designed by Denton Corker Marshall and featuring an entrance for cyclists off the superhighway, and 61 Southwark Street, where it is working with Tate Hindle Architects. And then there is the 11-storey 33 Central (concept architects John Robertson Architects), which it has sold to Wells Fargo but will move its staff into as part of the deal, occupying one floor. This was in fact the first deal, post referendum. But it aims to buy 'three to six' more development projects in the coming two years, says Jurdák. And it is geared towards introducing innovation in the office market, with things like face recognition and other technological improvements for its buildings. Jurdák himself is also a keen cyclist and wants to 'force' people to come to the office by bike (he changes that to 'encourage' on prompting ...). 'What is very important to us is we are not a standard developer that is wanting to deliver office space as a commodity', he adds. 'We are trying to deliver a lot of innovation and quality into the product and this is what we are targeting. We don't want to be one of many. We want to be a slightly higher price, but top quality product.' ●



←
Man with a plan:
Managing director
of HB Reavis UK,
Tomáš Jurdák



↓
New wave – the
John Robertson
Architects-designed
33 Central

THOROUGHLY MODERN METHODS

Colin Bartlett, director of residential at Buro Four, says now is the time to collaborate on modern methods of construction

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) is the hottest topic in the residential property industry right now and as collaborative project managers, we find ourselves spending more time examining delivery options to improve speed and certainty for our clients' developments, such as Wadswick Green for Rangeford.

So what's changed? For some time, the 'traditional' construction industry has been overheated with order books full, tender price inflation ever rising and labour availability dwindling. Development viability is being challenged from every angle, and so, now is the time for innovation to be embraced on a large scale to meet demand for housing. This will only ever materialise through investment in viable alternative methods of construction delivery.

Manufacture is simple supply and demand – the demand is well documented and the need for

collaborative working to resolve supply is under way. As we know, key players have already committed to adopting MMC: whether in full, or in part, elements of their residential units are being manufactured off-site in factories. Others watch and learn, deliberating on whether to follow suit.

But while MMC is undoubtedly gaining momentum, there are still question marks over key viability issues such as cost, programme and commercial risks. So where are the sensitivities in selecting MMC over more traditional methods of residential development?

During early design and feasibility stages, both developers and design teams need to commit to modular early on and be willing to adhere to a standard set of module sizes. For a Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) solution, the design needs to maintain vertical alignment floor by floor for structural conformity to realise

full benefit. These options apply to individual projects and across multiple projects to realise maximum benefit.

The scale of the project or development programme also plays a major part. As with any manufacturing process, there is an economy in numbers, and costs are likely to come down if modular construction becomes more widely adopted, creating a sustainable platform for the growth of a mature, competitive MMC industry.

While every project is unique, we've recently found that the perceived existing uplift on construction costs for an off-site solution is noticeably reducing and when you then consider wider savings in the below-ground structure and speed of construction programme, that margin is quickly eroded. All things considered, the value proposition is quickly swinging more towards MMC solutions.

The growing Build-to-Rent sector has already been identified as the ideal environment where off-site construction could have the biggest impact and deliver the biggest step change in delivery of quality modular apartments. The scale of development programmes, a consistent brand and apartment layouts make it perfect for modular and repetition while quality is to a high standard.

We know that the MMC supply chain in the UK is growing and maturing with every project delivered. But now is the time for the industry to work collaboratively with government and local authorities to reap the benefits it can bring. ●

LIFE BEGINS AT 40

KPF is 40 years old, has delivered some 600 buildings in that time and is looking forward to the next four decades. But what is its ethos? Is it just another big corporate practice? And where is it going? *David Taylor* pays a visit



← Principled principals – KPF's John Bushell, Julian Cross and Brian Girard

KPF, as principal John Bushell is fond of citing founder Gene Kohn as saying, 'respects its clients' drivers' – a way of saying it is quite comfortable with being called 'commercial', even if that can often be used as the ultimate architectural put-down. The firm is as much at home designing a supertall skyscraper in New York as it is crafting a hotel for Robert De Niro in London, or a sensitive masterplan for Covent Garden or Earl's Court. But it also enjoys being much more of a placemaker and less of an object-building creator than perhaps you might think.

We meet, perhaps fittingly given the company's 1976 start date of 4 July, on the day that America went to the polls. The venue is KPF's Covent Garden office just down from Pineapple Studios (whose dancers' flicks and kicks its basement modelmakers can get an eyeful of, from time to time). The

mood then was generally that Hillary Clinton would prevail, but there was also a cautiousness expressed about the number of 'previously unengaged' who might put a cross in Trump's box. The rest, as they say, is history.

We're here with three chosen principals to talk through the projects, the past, and the ethos of the firm as it looks forward to its future after four decades of adding to city skylines around the world.

Brian Girard joined in 1997 in New York, having made the jump across the Atlantic six years ago in a period of transition for the firm – there was a breakaway of key staff to form PLP – to work on London-based projects and 'relearning how to do architecture'. You can be an American working in London in lots of different industries, he says, and not fully comprehend how much it is a different country. But in architecture

there are 'different methodologies' required to work here, in terms of the historic environment, consultation and planning. 'Planning is not part of the job description of an architect in the US at all, because most cities have zoning. So most buildings have the height and bulk predetermined before they even call you, whereas here there is this two-year preamble. It's a democratic process, probably a better way of doing it, but it takes a lot more time.' In the end this makes for a better cityscape – not a lot of quality has come forward in the last 20 years in New York, certainly in terms of the 'background buildings'. Landmark and trophy buildings, sure, but London has a better track record in improving and maintaining the urban grain than its US cousin, says Girard. Why? Partly because of a more enlightened level of discourse, certainly in some boroughs, but also because



Improving speed and certainty – Buro Four's Wadswick Green for Rangeford

of a sense of stewardship in evidence particularly with the Great Estates or in the City of Westminster.

Julian Cross's experience is as a counterpoint to that, having only been in London, and for the last four and a half years, saying he has been 'quite pre-programmed' to how you should compose buildings in a London context, in contrast to a different sensibility of how you create a facade represented by Brian's experience. So in Westminster they may be working on 6-12 floor buildings maximum, which demands a certain process and pursuit in materiality, contrasting to the different set of skills required by different-scaled buildings in the US or Asia. 'It's part of what we are; we have lots of local experts in London but also in Shanghai or Hong Kong.'

Finally, John Bushell joined in 1994, having worked at Lifschutz Davidson on projects like the Oxo Tower and before that on schemes such as the British Library for Sandy Wilson. His parents travelled a lot so he was in grade school in the States and when he was 18, and like Girard went to Harvard (they discover), so admired the Anglo-American ideal. For Cross it was spending part of his childhood in California that got him the US bug. For Bushell it was revelling in the American 'energy' and enjoyment in creating things that is less restrained, perhaps, than here. 'We can bring both a respect for the city here but also an enquiring eye as to how this can be done differently, distinctively, and in a way which helps move the discussion forward in some way, and tests something new', he says.

So, what of the output? Of the 600 buildings that KPF has created, more than 200 of them have been towers. But there is an inner discipline that prevails that squeezes out anything excessive, says Bushell. 'We've not done anything leaning, or curved, or twisting', he says, 'so we like to do buildings that have a kind of natural order, a spatial sense, an urbanity, a respect for tradition, but they're always trying to find a slightly different voice.'

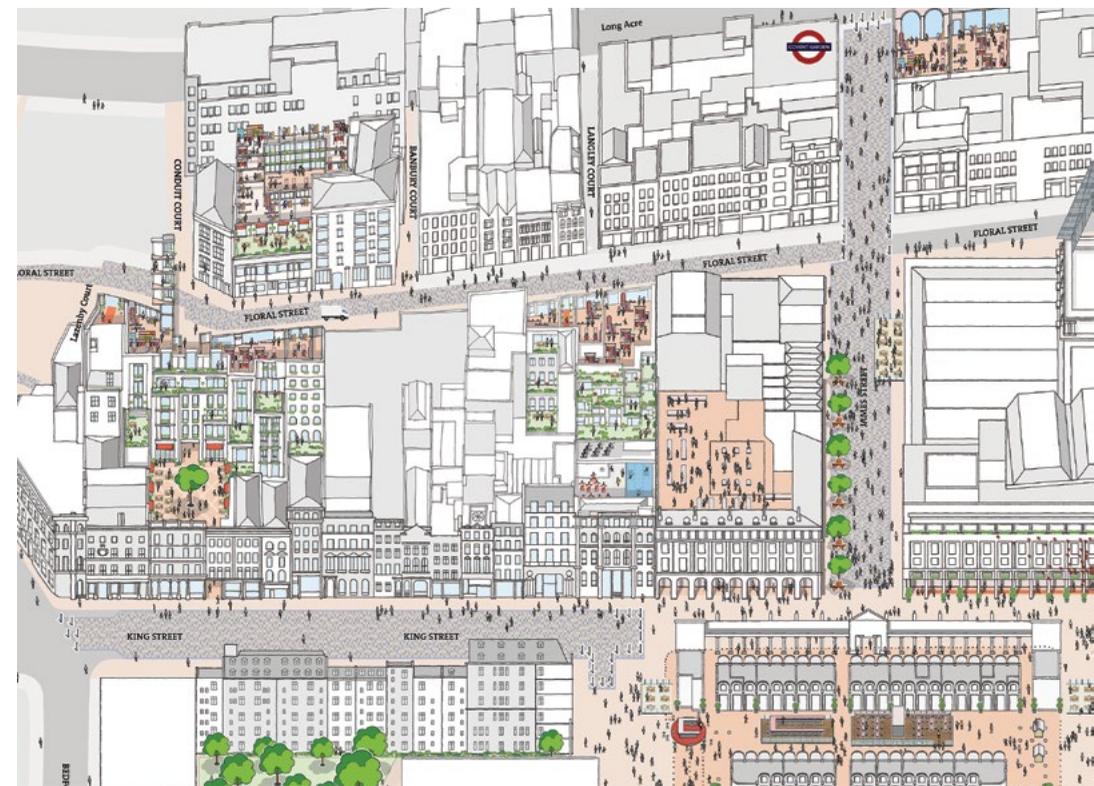
There is also a commercial underpinning to everything the practice does, Girard is not afraid to say. 'And commercial, especially in London, is about the worst thing you could say about architecture. It's used as the ultimate put-down. But actually, commercial is why cities exist.'

There's a lot of inspiration in commerce, says Girard, and there's a certain sneering from rivals, adds Cross, who says that although they are often at the 'top table', they sometimes don't get the gig because of perception or because they aren't the signature name. A case in point was the US Embassy competition for the site in Grosvenor Square. KPF got to the longlist, then the shortlist, then the last two, head to head with Chipperfield, who is to convert the Eero Saarinen building into a hotel. 'If you thought with your brain it would be us, but if you wanted the brand and that individual signature person ...' But this is also their strength, responding to context and programme, with no house style.

At the party to mark the practice's 40th anniversary – a big shindig in New York – Gene Kohn said that when he and his fellow founding partners Bill Pedersen and Sheldon Fox sat down to put together their objectives, one of them was to establish a firm that would live long after their deaths. It would be to work as a team with members who complemented each other, rather than being centred on any one individual. 'It starts as a real generosity of spirit', says Bushell. Despite working in 40 countries, the majority of design is done in two studios – London and New York. But KPF also likes to collaborate with its own offices elsewhere with local knowledge and firms in the countries in which it works to do something 'more exciting, more ambitious, perhaps in a quicker timeframe', says Bushell. In London it has 150 staff among 550 across the world in six offices, but it makes a big effort to be one joined-up practice, with a mix of European and American principals (six of the 27 in London). It also has a workforce that features people in their 20s right through to

their 80s, Cross points out. But the firm struggles to get people to see the 'huge breadth of its portfolio'. It is perhaps known for its towers, but won the World Bank competition in Washington DC 20 years ago as the only practice not to suggest a new-build. And its South Bank Tower (it has added 11 more floors to its 30) is part of a tradition of reworking and transforming buildings. Indeed, the practice thrives in the kind of complexity, adds Bushell, that is offered by both mixed-use vertical schemes and masterplanning. A case in point is Earl's Court and at Covent Garden's King's Court, which is a collage of complicated pieces fitted together, says Cross.

Girard cites the JR Central Towers in Nagoya, Japan here as an early mixed-use model, a complex building in Japan that has been open for 25 years and which has 'absolutely everything in it' including a Maglev station, bus station, 15 storeys of retail, hotel, offices, public space. 'It's a city in a building', he says, and is used by something like four and a half times the number of people who use Grand Central Station every day. Covent Garden could not be more different and is almost 'stealth', where you cannot really see what KPF has done. 'That was the whole point, in a conservation area', says Girard, 'finding new ways inside the blocks for new development and new density that didn't challenge the listed buildings and surroundings.' It couldn't look more different, but to KPF it is a continuum of ideas, says Girard. KPF acted as masterplanners and on strategic interventions for client Capital and Counties (Capco), with work on King's Court and the Robert De Niro-backed Wellington Hotel, which merges six historic buildings to create an 83-room boutique hotel. 'We don't seek good projects; we seek good clients', says Bushell. 'The strategic idea was to recover the more authentic Covent Garden.' The job came about through doing work for the chief executive of Capco in Hong Kong for Hongkong Land, but the partners agree they were an unlikely choice, given that perception issue. Unilever also chose the practice



← ↑
Covent Garden
from the sky
(above), and from
the masterplanners
(below)

despite it not being the obvious choice, but 50-60 per cent of its output is repeat business.

‘The more people work with us, the more they come back because they understand the breadth of work but also the way we work’, says Bushell. ‘So we try to work very interactively.’

There is merit in doing Covent Garden and Earl’s Court at the same time because they both inform each other, says Cross, who praised the custodianship of client Capco. ‘It’s kind of like, how far do you restore a classic car before it is no longer a classic car, versus building a new car? The challenge for me with Earl’s Court is the fact that you’re building your own context. How do you create something that is new but is varied enough, which is interacting properly with its people and its edges and its population?’

The ultimate challenge, adds Girard, is how to evoke the essence of the place. ‘Because that is what will really add value and make it commercially successful for the client.’

The trio think that London is changing fast, and needed to change, with the current challenge being to find buildings that are more accessible to more people to live and work in, says Bushell, and to broaden the area of attention. ‘So we wanted to make sure we weren’t just doing towers’, he says, ‘focusing on affordable housing, rented housing, all of the projects we’ve done in the last six months are different from anything we had done before’. This includes a scheme in Stratford, which is a rental-only project, and with RBKC on affordable rent and sales, trying to address design for construction which allows such things to be affordable. Part of that is density, but also intensity and interest. How you can be both meaningful and appropriate to the street while designing tall is a trademark of the work of Bill Pedersen, say Bushell. People’s understanding of a tall building in a picturesque way – as a composition from a distance – though, is not always the best way to appreciate it, adds Girard. It is also strange that the tall

building clusters are being more and more infilled, says Bushell, with views being cancelled out. There are many tall buildings in London that people love now, says Cross, but this will not be viewed as a generous era in space standards terms, says Bushell.

The Scalpel on Lime Street – a scheme the firm is proud of – skilfully and carefully responds to the Lloyd’s Building. It was sold as a seven-storey building but KPF managed to convince the powers that be that it become a tower site, partly because of the continued strength of the insurance sector. The 35-storey scheme will complete in around a year and a half for, appropriately, an American owner with UK links. The Pinnacle is a less happy story. In its original conception Bushell thinks it embodied how the cluster could work. Inasmuch as it was trying to be an ‘enormous building in a sensitive city’, it was also a clever building, he says. It was a child of its time, but once KPF put its name to it as a company, even if it had been tempted to update the design it got caught out by ‘political manoeuvring’, and chose to stand by its client. ‘And the current scheme is even more of a child of its time’, says Bushell, ‘and it’s forgotten so much of the previous discussions in the need to do something.’

Elsewhere the firm is also interested in using technology to inform making buildings better, with a group who studied at Colombia working at KPF on ‘XIM’ – like BIM but with an X-factor. It is using this on light levels in proposed schemes, pushing for a zoning diagram to be used in New York, more work on metrics about tall buildings in different cities, and harnessing VR headsets in competition entries, most recently in Bristol.

Ultimately though, it’s a team game, and will remain so.

‘What we’ve done is we’ve tried to allow the egos to be driving us, and we all have an individual voice in our design’, says Bushell, ‘to buy into the idea that if we’re all working together, what we can achieve is much greater.’ ●

‘The more people work with us, the more they come back because they understand the breadth of work but also the way we work’

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Robert de Niro’s waiting – the actor-backed 83-room Wellington Hotel project



←

Cutting it – how The Scalpel will look in the City cluster

OPPORTUNITY SUTTON – LOOKING SOUTH FOR GROWTH

LB Sutton's chief executive *Niall Bolger* explains how Sutton can play a big part in London's growth and future success as a world city

Sutton is one of the most popular places in the UK to live and work. It is just 30 minutes away from central London by rail and positioned between Heathrow and Gatwick airports. The borough has excellent parks and open spaces, outstanding schools and a low crime rate. Property websites suggest Sutton is the third highest local authority in the country for speed of house sales.

As London's population of 8.3m expands to a predicted 9.5m by 2031, the borough can help to create opportunities that will protect and advance London's competitiveness within world markets.

Sutton is developing a new 15-year vision in its Local Plan (which will be adopted in 2017) to unlock development opportunities that will drive prosperity, create jobs and generate the 21st-century smart living solutions London needs to thrive.

We have already approved a masterplan to maximise growth in Sutton town centre, one of only four Metropolitan Centres in south London. In September, Gavin Barwell (the housing and planning minister) launched the Sutton Town Centre Masterplan at an event at the House of Lords, which was attended by representatives from the development and investment industries. The masterplan, prepared by a consortium including GVA and Allies and Morrison, has identified 47 private and council-owned sites which together could deliver more than

5,000 net new homes and over 30,000 sqm net new retail development. I am pleased that Bob Allies (founding partner of Allies and Morrison) continues to support the council over the delivery of the masterplan. He says: 'Sutton is characterised by a rich historic past and our Masterplan establishes the principles to help secure growth within this context. I believe in the council's ambition to nurture and deliver a distinctive town centre with destination shopping and cultural activities, new residential neighbourhood and a brand new civic centre and we are working closely with them to deliver this.'

'Sutton is characterised by a rich historic past and our Masterplan establishes the principles to help secure growth within this context'

We are working with the GLA and TfL to secure delivery of the Tramlink extension from Wimbledon to Sutton via Morden and continue to highlight rail devolution as a critical infrastructure opportunity to help unlock sustainable growth.

Sutton is home to the Institute of Cancer Research (ICR) and the Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust. The recently approved London Cancer Hub Development Framework (prepared by Inner Circle

and Haptic Architects) will help to unlock the development of the world's leading life-science district specialising in cancer research and treatment. The total transformation will see the investment of over £1bn in the project, will support 10,000 researchers, clinical and support staff, and will have a school at its heart to offer Londoners a ladder of opportunity into this world-leading growth sector. Sutton is ideally placed to significantly contribute to scientific innovation as the London Cancer Hub will provide a major connection to London's MedCity, within the golden triangle of innovation between London, Oxford and Cambridge.

As the chief executive I am proud Sutton is playing its role in tackling London's housing crisis. The sites in Sutton One Housing Zone will deliver more than 1,600 new homes and our housing company, Sutton Living, will use prudential borrowing powers to build private and social homes, while working with the private sector to unlock sites where development has stalled.

Finally, Sutton is delivering major infrastructure projects including a decentralised energy network that can offer low carbon energy for up to 19,000 new homes when fully implemented.

Sutton is a key part of south London's fast paced change and growth. If you would like to have a role in delivering this growth, contact opportunitiesutton@sutton.gov.uk ●



↑
Hill Road and
civic centre



→
Institute of
Cancer Research

LONDON BUSINESS SCHOOL

The redevelopment of Old Marylebone Town Hall, now onsite, seeks to show how bold architecture can connect increasingly dispersed campuses. By *Lee Bennett* (partner) and *Gavin Robinson* (associate partner), Sheppard Robson

Like most ambitious projects in central London, the story of the redevelopment of London Business School's campus is a combination of creativity and stamina.

Sheppard Robson won the competition to regenerate London Business School's main site at Sussex Place in 2006, with the vision to create large teaching and social spaces that the campus lacked in the space between the existing buildings. The brief and design gradually developed over the next four years as a masterplan for the whole site and the scheme – which included a new lecture block and central forum – received planning permission in 2012.

The massive disruption that would be caused to the teaching environment during the redevelopment made it clear that a viable decant solution was critical for the school to remain in operation during the works. Fortunately, in 2010, Westminster City Council began to seek a suitable partner to redevelop the Grade II-listed Old Marylebone Town Hall (OMTH), which had fallen into disrepair.

Originally a decant option, it quickly became apparent that the Edwardian town hall would create an excellent satellite teaching centre that would complement and enable expansion for London Business School. The plans included six lecture theatres, 32 seminar spaces, a library, offices and a student lounge. The project would be a way to relieve the Sussex Place site through a dispersal of academic functions as well as a way of increasing the school's footprint in London.

OMTH offered something different to the Nash-designed calm cloisters of Sussex Place. It would give the world-famous business school a major new presence firmly rooted in the bustle and pace of the Marylebone Road. The building was selected for a permanent outpost because it would, with the right architectural interventions, broadcast the quality and ambition of the organisation, using bold design ideas to announce the arrival of a major new building for London Business School.

The terms of the lease agreement specified that the Westminster Register Office would be retained within the completed scheme; the main entrance

'The option to create a crisp, elegant and simple glass link was considered to form a dedicated entrance for the school'

of the existing Council House and the ceremonial rooms on the first floor will be sublet, so that marriages will continue to take place in the iconic building. It was also agreed that the council would be able to use the largest lecture theatre to hold their monthly public meeting, thus weaving together political, civic and educational services.

As the registrar would require sole use of the existing, civic steps to the Council House, it was necessary to create a new entrance for the school and the gap between the two buildings afforded us this great opportunity. Through negotiation with the WCC planning department,

the positioning, height, scale, form and use of materials of the new element were designed to be visually distinct from and subservient to the adjoining landmark listed buildings. In particular it was agreed to set the new frontage back from the Marylebone Road to retain the individuality of the two existing buildings.

When we first looked at the site, the option to create a crisp, elegant and simple glass link was considered to form a dedicated entrance for the school. There was a strong desire to create an integrated structure so that the steel frame would be supported off the two existing buildings.

Analysis of the existing construction of the two buildings was to greatly determine the structural composition of the new glazed link. The two buildings, despite having a uniform classical appearance, are structurally misaligned and a simple diagrid was created to mediate the structural differences by connecting the critical structural points at the centre of each respective pier.

The area between the buildings has been excavated to allow the reception to be set at the lower ground floor level, with a new bridge link connecting the raised ground floor level between the two buildings, which enhances the pure and transparent view through the space. Setting the reception at a lower level allowed the revolving doors, security barriers and associated apparatus to be contained beneath the bridge and obscured from the pavement view.

The introduction of a brave and bold architectural language is consistent with a wider conversation about the dispersal



Making connections – the glass diagrid link



The steel frame is supported off the two existing buildings



Rear elevation onto mews street, with lecture block in background



of education estates and the need for satellite buildings to be provocative markers of the institution's ambition.

No longer a tightly packed nucleus, the way education campuses inhabit our cities is changing. The seemingly inevitable sprawl of departments is a challenge for universities who want to maintain a collective identity. A way of negotiating this is for buildings that are dispersed around a city to have a distinct identity, enabling buildings to have an urban status outside the boundaries of a main campus.

As we have found with our work with London Business School, this is particularly important when working with existing buildings. Relocating departments from a main campus and placing them in an existing building could result in them having a low visibility, hidden away from view. With

'The seemingly inevitable sprawl of departments is a challenge for universities who want to maintain a collective identity'

London Business School's purchase of OMTH, the building needed to use the prominent location to its advantage, broadcasting the quality of the organisation.

The opportunity to do this was the link building between the Council House and Annexe, creating a new entrance that did more than mediate the gap but changed the institution's relationship to the streetscape. Its design is a beacon of a new institution coming to this part of London, a recognisable symbol that meshed with its context in a radical way. Perhaps the spectacle of the steel and glass does not seem immediately contextual, but our design is informed by the urban fabric we inherited. This guided and pushed us to create a piece of architecture that spoke of the brave decisions made by our client, while presenting a civic and educational emblem to London. ●



↑
Making an entrance
- interior of the
new addition

COAL DROPS YARD

Argent project director *Tom Callaway* looks at the impact King's Cross's latest addition – Coal Drops Yard – is likely to make



Coal Drops Yard, in the centre of the new King's Cross, will open in 2018 as an impressive new retail quarter. A design by Heatherwick Studio is breathing new life into a heritage site with its own proud industrial history. The development, which will feature up to 65 shops, aims to provide a wonderful and unexpected mix of individual, independent stores, together with signature brands from both home and abroad, with a focus on fashion, craft and culture. The street scene will be as interesting and inspiring as the shops, with places to eat and drink, and markets to browse.

The unique offering that Coal Drops Yard will deliver to consumers moves away from the uniformity of the

current retail scene, which will ensure the development is a 'must visit' retail destination.

As a result of the heritage and cultural importance of the existing buildings, a sympathetic approach was taken to restoring the buildings to their original grandeur while at the same time maintaining the 'gritty' feel of the Coal Drops. A key design principle has been to provide and deliver a world-class retail destination and associated support services while maintaining the appearance of the original building fabric. Each detail and functional element has been considered and challenged to ensure the design is true to this principle.

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Destination retail
- the Heatherwick
Studio-designed
Coal Drops

'A sympathetic approach was taken to restoring the buildings to their original grandeur while at the same time maintaining the 'gritty' feel of the Coal Drops'



Inside story –
how the interior
will look

Heatherwick Studio was the obvious choice as designer, with a reputation for challenging the norm. The brief was to create a destination like no other, to go beyond the light-touch restoration undertaken so many times before. At the same time, the design needed to work with and celebrate the existing buildings, not overpower them.

The main challenge in converting the existing buildings into a world-class retail destination is the lack of the building services and back-of-house space for supporting and serving the shops. Others included the varying dimensions of the original arches, which proved problematic when fitting new shopfronts, and a lack of disabled access to the multiple levels. The existing buildings have thrown up numerous

surprises as they have been stripped back and rebuilt, which has required constant adaptations to the new design.

The greatest success of the design solution is the merging of the original fabric with the modern interventions. The new upper level floats effortlessly above the yard suspended by the large trusses which have been wrapped in the slates to provide a seamless transition from old to new. The original building fabric is visible in nearly every area of the Coal Drops Yard and gives the project real substance.

The new upper level has pushed both the structural engineers and steel to the limits. Never before has such a large intervention been stitched carefully into two existing buildings. The scale of the structure

is immense, with the central point weighing over 50 tonnes alone. More than 300 micro-piles have been carefully installed between the existing structures to provide the support for the new steelwork.

Coal Drops Yard will provide a mix of individual, independent shops together with signature retail brands from home and abroad. With a focus on fashion, craft and culture, this is a place to discover beautiful, carefully chosen things.

Coal Drops Yard is part of 20 historic buildings and structures currently being creatively restored in King's Cross which will ultimately add another dimension to the vibrant quarter and contribute further to London's commercial and cultural landscape. ●



Under construction –
the Coal Drops
site in context

STEERING A COURSE

NLA's Sounding Board members branded chancellor Philip Hammond's Autumn Statement as 'a modest first step', but icebergs loom for London. By *David Taylor*

NLA's Sounding Board gave the Autumn Statement a cautious welcome as a 'modest first step' but warned of a series of 'icebergs' London must steer clear of if it is to prosper and grow.

That was the overall consensus of the meeting of senior experts across the built environment industry, called to chew the fat over chancellor Philip Hammond's headline offering of £3.15bn to the GLA to help start the building of more than 90,000 affordable homes by financial year 2020-21.

The statement was not as positive as some had hoped, said London Communications Agency executive chairman Robert Gordon Clark, despite welcoming Hammond's broad point about bringing up other cities economically, rather than taking London down. There was a modest start to devolution, but no real mention of the 'massive issue' of adult social care, so it represented something of a 'curate's egg for London'. 'Overall I thought it was so-so', he said.

There had been a 'huge sigh of relief in City Hall that the figure of £3.15bn had been confirmed at all, however', said Pocket CEO Marc Vlessing, and, dealt with such a poor hand, the chancellor had juggled reasonably well. But why was the national investment fund not £60bn or indeed £500bn at a time when money is cheap, and he felt that there was definitely an element of recycling going on with some of the figures. An important move, however, was that here was a government that is now reasonably tenure neutral. 'Gone was all the talk about Starter Homes', said Vlessing. 'Gone is the fastidious obsession with particular tenures. I think they are very much in the business

of trying to encourage supply, which is a very good thing.' What was missing, however, was any reference to skills and how government would or could fund a skills network.

This was a much more sensible policy direction on housing, said director of regeneration, planning and development at LB Haringey Lyn Garner, with a welcome move on mix of tenure. While there was a bit of 'landlord bashing' going on, the measures here were welcome, but Garner was not convinced that Starter Homes were yet completely off the agenda.

For Jamie Ratcliff, assistant director of policy, programme and services at the Greater London Authority, the pushing back of the Housing and Planning Act could be seen not as a U-turn but a pragmatic approach showing 'a government which was prepared to pause, listen and not just follow ideology'.

What was interesting and welcome for Savills' director of world research Yolande Barnes was the explicit link in the statement between productivity and housing. 'What we've now got to start accepting is that London's economic power extends up to and beyond Manchester and Bristol, and to smaller coastal towns like Margate', said Barnes. 'The way we think about London now, therefore, has to be with a far greater sense of responsibility for the Northern Powerhouse. The two are not unrelated and the whole London, Bristol, Manchester cluster and certain small towns and cities in between is increasingly being treated as one economic entity on the global stage.'

The Autumn Statement is a 'total disaster area' for executive director

of regeneration and housing at LB Ealing Pat Hayes, given its underlying assumptions about growth and borrowing, from a government that doesn't know what to do about major issues facing it. Why, for example, when we have a massive deficit, massive air pollution problems and congestion issues, are we 'promoting people to drive more' with 'pointless' road building? A sensible measure would have been giving the Mayor more Vehicle Excise Duty to spend on more sustainable transport, which has been an opportunity passed up. Greater regulation on planning fees and something on CIL might also have helped, while the landlord letting

'I think they are very much in the business of trying to encourage supply, which is a very good thing'

charges did not solve reputation or regulation issues in the private rented sector.

Another iceberg was the impact on local authorities around homelessness, said Sue Foster, strategic director of neighbourhoods and growth at LB Lambeth, while director of regeneration and planning at LB Newham Deirdra Armsby questioned whether there was anything for the average Londoner struggling to get housing and stable work.

Daniel Moylan, councillor at RB Kensington and Chelsea, would have acted on borrowing, and done 'something radical' about homelessness; that is, give or sell every council house



← Sounding board chair Robert Evans in full flow

in the country to its tenant, providing certain criteria were met. This would introduce huge mobility, he said, while the current lettings agents scenario was morally wrong in terms of a lack of accountability, and Hammond's Crossrail 2 line was, in Moylan's view, simply government awaiting a revised business case with reductions in overall capital cost, irrespective of benefits of certain elements. This could mean an end to a station on King's Road, and possibly the New Southgate branch.

So, what would people do with a blank sheet of paper and that £3.1bn to get moving on housing? Jamie Ratcliff applauded the new level of flexibility it will bring the GLA, even if £1.07bn was allocated from a previous Mayor. The main focus will be on affordable housing construction, with new guidance on grant funding out next week which will aim to cut bureaucracy. 'We've designed a grants system which will be very transparent, very certain, very predictable', he said. Ratcliff said three main tenures will be looked at – shared ownership, a London Living Rent product with rents set in relation to local incomes, and then a proportion of homes at social rented levels. But the flexibility in funding will also allow GLA to support acquiring surplus central government land and supporting people through compulsory purchase powers,

acquiring sites around public land to widen the opportunity. The Mayor wants to go further than his predecessor on suburban intensification and town centre densification. The GLA will also seek to use funding more innovatively in the mould of the 0 per cent finance terms it used with Pocket, and then there is its interest in driving up London's ability to manufacture more homes in factories.

Vlessing said that 25 per cent of its output is factory-based manufacture, but having visited all the modular factories in the UK, the more automated they are the less his firm is interested in them. 'The more they are basic sheds with just-in-time management teams that have a contracting background and know about development, the more interested we are in them', he said. Government should not be investing in this but hypothecating public funding to organisations that are given an obligation to spend some of it on modern methods of construction.

While, as investment director at Mount Anvil Darragh Hurley said, ideas are easy and their execution is everything, the question was on investing more in creating infrastructure for the future delivery of homes. 'Invest in infrastructure, and by that I don't mean roads, bridges and railways; I mean people, primarily people and then the skills.'

And skills are the crucial point, agreed Central director Pat Brown and Vlessing. Those factories Vlessing visited had 70 per cent EU workers, many of them from Poland, and the number one problem across the industry is a lack of qualified personnel. Eddie Lister should, he added, try to turn the HCA into a bank that could do something 'meaningful' with the £3bn, and some of the cash should be ploughed into helping people into various layers within both the public and private sectors to motor London and the south east. Moylan reminded the group that the Mayor's Design Advisory Group had a plan for a new structure to help in skills but, as chair Robert Evans pointed out: 'We all know there are only so many good people.'

Ultimately, the Board saw the Autumn Statement as a modest first step, said Robert Evans. But it was a good analogy that there were also a number of prospective 'icebergs' in the way. The state of our borrowing figures is one, the social care position another, with the issue of temporary accommodation and the homeless another looming large. All of this, against the general Brexit uncertainty acting as a filter on everything including London's competitiveness and prospects for growth likely in years three to five, rather than immediately. ●

BRIEFING NOTES

Our regular round-up of conferences and events at NLA

ON LOCATION

The City 'will stay top in world financial league'

In association with City of London Corporation, City Property Association and The City Centre

Amid uncertain times for businesses, Brexit, and other seismic political events, the City will retain its position as the world's leading financial centre.

That was according to its chairman of the policy and resources committee Mark Boleat at an NLA conference on 'strengthening resilience' of the Square Mile. But to remain there it must grow, adapt and get assurances about the kind of Brexit we want, retain access to the single market, allow talent to come in and have a reasonable transition period put in place.

Boleat was speaking just hours after the shock news about the election of US president Donald Trump ('great news from abroad, Root is nearly on 100'), but how the City copes with the likely effects of Brexit has caused similar uncertainty about the future. Boleat said that, anecdotally, firms here have been deferring decisions about starting projects and on locations, and that there is much work being done by City businesses on assessing options and the implications, in a 'straight, business' way rather than as an emotional knee-jerk. New York will be the biggest beneficiary of any loss of business over five to 10 years, but London has 'incredible strengths', and although the notion of companies 'upping sticks and leaving was never going to happen', it was important to be realistic. 'If we pretend it is not happening we will not be doing



ourselves any service at all', said Boleat. 'We will remain the largest international financial centre. What is at issue is whether we lose business that we would rather not lose.' Businesses such as those in accountancy, for example, would struggle if they need, say, Polish workers to help on language issues for Polish clients on a short-term basis but cannot get access to talent. Differential visa requirements may be one solution, when different parts of the UK have differing needs to access such talent

'We will remain the largest international financial centre. What is at issue is whether we lose business that we would rather not lose'

from abroad. The importance of access to the single market was also critical for many businesses, and a transition arrangement for Brexit must be announced next year for businesses to lessen risk. 'Brexit can be bad, good, very bad; that depends on what we do from now on', said Boleat. 'It is absolutely vital for the City and your industry that we get this right but there is an awful lot of work to do.'

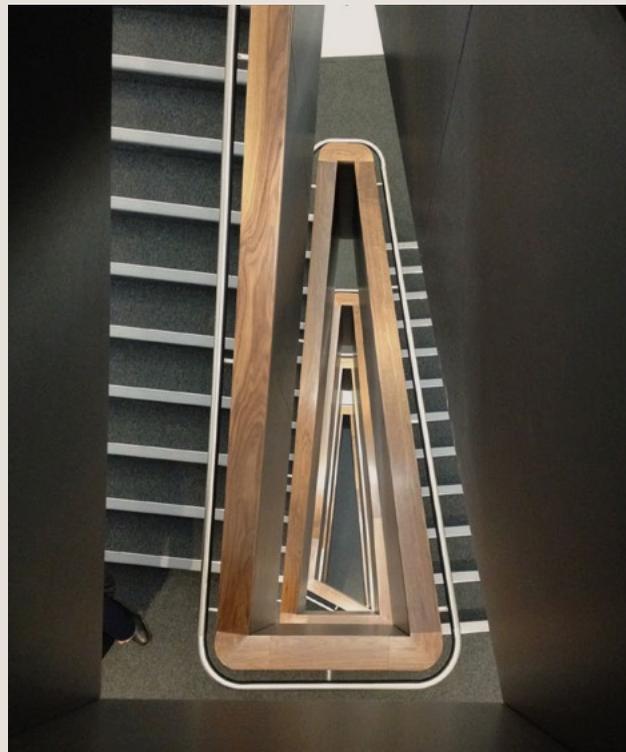
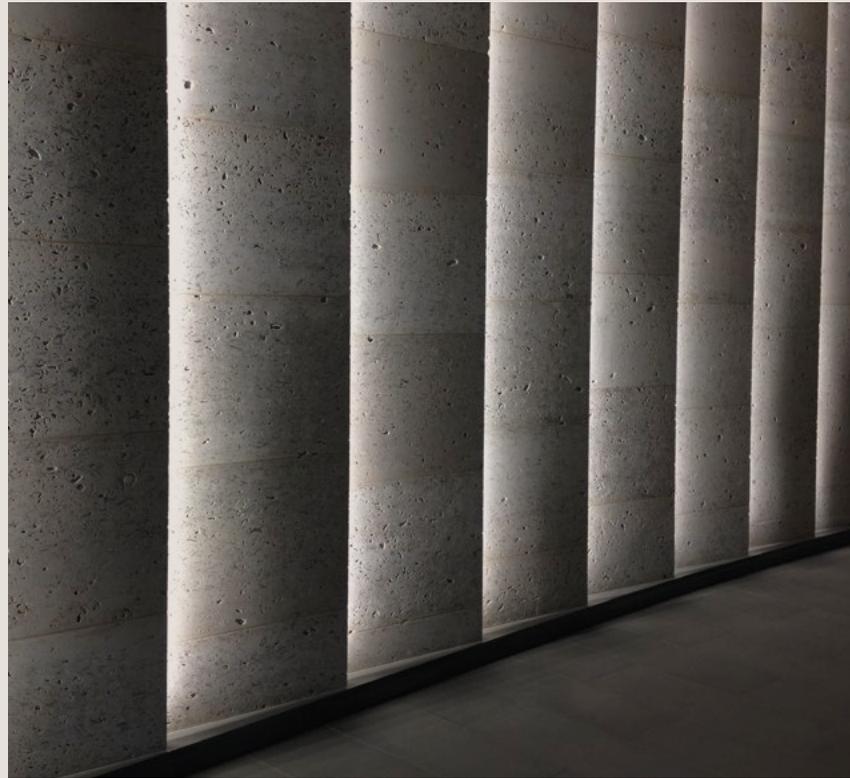
Eric Parry agreed that talent is what is so important to London; both keeping it and growing it. And 'the quality of the environment in which people work and live and are entertained is extremely critical to the City of London', he said. To that end, Parry hopes his Undershafft building will be a major contributor in providing important public realm, and at 10 Fenchurch Avenue, where public access is also emphasised.

London is a vibrant economy largely built around people and their skills, said Knight Frank chief economist James Roberts. But for the City, tech, media and telecoms has overtaken finance for office demand now for five years in a row. Where it had been a lot of start-up businesses, it is now more companies coming in from Silicon Valley and increasingly New York, and the phenomenon of the collaborative office has become a major trend. But even before Brexit, London had been seeing departures from the financial market, notably with jobs moving out of London to Birmingham, Warsaw and Lisbon, driven by cost and savings made in moving back offices. Law firms now are adopting something of a 'Mexican wave' strategy, with partners in London meeting clients and winning business, farming out the donkey work, and taking the credit when it

returns. But this represents a kind of ‘Darwinism’ in the London economy, said Roberts, with the highest earning offices in the capital able to justify their high rents and fit-outs. ‘In many ways the departures do play a role in keeping the London economy efficient and lean’, said Roberts. The final trend is that occupiers, who once stayed in the same postcode when they were looking to relocate, now view London simply as London, focused on people and where they want to be. ‘It really is now as different as different can be’.

The conference also heard from speakers including LCCI chief executive Colin Stanbridge, who said that the latest research showed ‘rather steep declines’ for London in all bar one indicator, something he put down to continued uncertainty. And that may remain, said Generali Real Estate, following the US election, with trade agreements being something more and more countries will have to enter into.

Museum of London director Sharon Ament showed how the creation of a ‘robust ecosystem’ and culture could help to support the City’s adaptation and reinforce its status as a great place to live, which will be enhanced by the new gallery in West Smithfield. And City of London Corporation director of the built environment Carolyn Dwyer talked the audience through how the City aims to cope with the projected rise in workers coming into the Square Mile from 400,000 daily to 500,000 by 2030. This will partly come through 1.25 million sq ft of extra offices being developed to add to the 8.75 million already, and a further 0.4 million approved, but will be eased by more pedestrian modelling and lessening traffic impacts. Finally, the City’s chief planning office and development director Annie Hampson said the eastern cluster was where the Corporation anticipates the greatest concentration of development, but that it was cognisant of the amount of construction. ‘It’s very important that the City is seen as a part of London and isn’t an exclusive place just for those who work in the City’, she said.



↑
Fin tech – the interior of Wilkinson Eyre’s 8 Finsbury Circus

←
Going up in the world – the staircase at Finsbury Circus

ON LOCATION

Cllr Davis – ‘let us retain more business rates to invest in the West End’

Sponsored by CallisonRTKL and CBRE, supported by Westminster City Council and Westminster Property Association, and hosted by The Crown Estate and Oxford Properties

Westminster City Council has lodged a bid with central government to retain more of the business rates it raises and use the cash to improve the West End.

That’s according to Westminster deputy leader, councillor Robert Davis as he opened an NLA On Location conference at St James’s Market – West End: What is the Future for London’s Heartland?

Davis said that the West End was ‘truly the rock star of the nation’s

economic culture and retail scene’, its 40 theatres and four world-class universities and £3.3 billion of tourism spend helping it to generate £51.25 billion – or 3 per cent – of the country’s economic output, eclipsing that of the City of London. The West End is an ‘endlessly changing place’, said Davis, but with a growing case to invest more in public spaces and transport infrastructure and pressures from more people coming to the area via Crossrail, it needs to attend to turning around places like Oxford Street, whose plans towards pedestrianisation are moving along. ‘I can truly say that we are pulling in the same direction’, he said. But to do so and fund other schemes to remain ‘globally competitive’, Davis proposes to retain 6.5 per cent of the area’s business rates to reinvest in the area, compared with the 4 per cent it is today, with an aim to attract more co-finance from the private sector and increase national revenues. ‘The West End is not just for Londoners’, said Davis. ‘It creates and supports thousands of jobs for people across the nation.’

For James Cooksey, vice chairman of Westminster Property Association and director of central London at the Crown Estate, a long-term

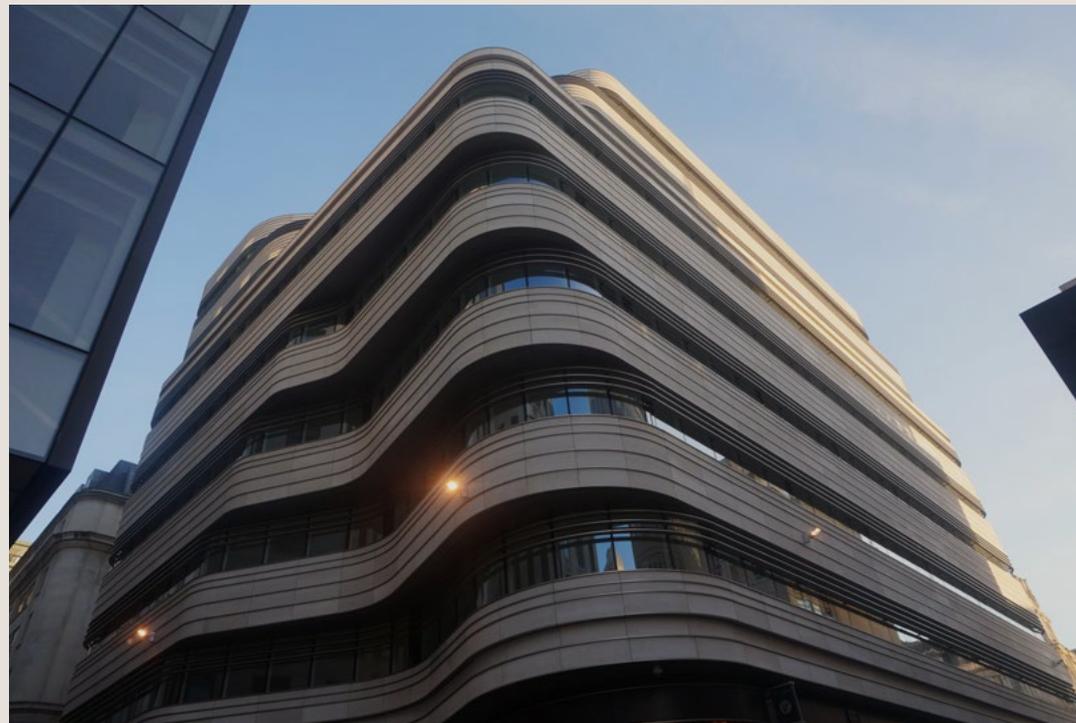
approach and willingness to be brave is necessary, the Crown Estate having created some 8 million sq ft in the last 10 years. ‘There is a palpable feeling that while we’ve achieved a lot there is a real need to push on again’, he said. ‘We cannot rest on our laurels when other major cities are after our business.’ The curation of places is also important, said GPE executive director Neil Thompson, alongside continued investment. ‘Pavements don’t pay rents, but the people who walk on pavements do’, he said. Leadership from the public sector is another key factor in creating a successful place like the West End, said placemaking director at Grosvenor, Will Bax. ‘We should be clear we want to judge our civic leaders on their ability to create great places’, he said.

The conference also heard from Cynthia Grant, director at Limehouse Transport Design, who showed how the West End’s essential character needed to be sensitively handled, as it is hoped will be the imminent work on Bond Street, where carriageways are to be reduced in width, walkways widened and buildings ‘celebrated’. Another bone of contention was Oxford Street, which has generated a lot of interest over the ‘P’ word, said TfL’s Alex Williams; pedestrianisation. Although it is a road that attracts some ‘bonkers’ ideas, it has not changed a lot in the last 25 years, said Williams, and ‘clearly needs a new approach and new thinking’. There is work to be done on buses and routing, said Williams, but modelling has been carried out on Oxford Street’s part-time closure, perhaps with pedestrianised elements during shopping hours. Finally, Crossrail 2 strategic manager Joanna Averley said the line – now at an early stage of business case planning with preferred route announced shortly – will take the heat off terminal stations and help support the West End and London’s continued productivity. But it is not something that should happen, said Averley. ‘It’s something that has to happen.’





↑
Room with a view – delegates at the West End On Location conference



→
Learning curve – Make Architects' St James's Market

HOUSING

GLA housing chief James Murray pledges action on viability assessments

Programme Champions: Barratt London, GL Hearn, Peabody

The GLA is forging 'alliances' across the industry and is poised to publish new Supplementary Planning Guidance to end the 'confusion, uncertainty and delays' caused by viability assessments. It is also focusing on Build to Rent as a delivery model and more off-site construction across tenures and price points – while ensuring that London's growth can be seen as a benefit to ordinary Londoners, rather than something they simply 'observe and get frustrated by'.

That was according to deputy mayor for housing and residential development James Murray as he made the keynote speech at an NLA conference on housing held in November, before the release of the SPG.

Murray said he had been busy building a coalition, consensus and alliance right across London in the last six months, aimed at building the homes we need, and bolstered by a good relationship formed with housing minister Gavin Barwell. 'The thing that I hope the government is open to now which we strongly support from City Hall is that, if we're going to raise supply significantly, the only way we're going to have a chance of doing that is by supporting different tenures at



Vital and viable – Grahame Park by Peter Barber Architects

different prices, and through different delivery models to get those homes built', he said. That means homes to buy and rent, at market level and below it, and by supporting different delivery mechanisms, Murray having been encouraged by the Housing White Paper's support for off-site and forthcoming announcements on its accelerated delivery.

The consensus was that land is a key issue at the crux of housing supply, and the GLA needs to lead on bringing forward public land more quickly than it had done in the past, said Murray. Smaller sites will be identified across London, to support more small and medium-sized builders, while TfL and GLA's CPO powers need to be streamlined and merged, and the GLA has made a case for London getting more of the national investment programme in affordable housing. Finally, Murray said that this new SPG will go some way to providing greater clarity, consistency and a common approach when it comes to determining the affordable housing contribution developments should make. Although nothing is 'pinned down' yet, the figure of 35 per cent has been

talked about, said Murray, as a fixed contribution to avoid getting tied up in lengthy viability negotiations. 'Is that a way forward for us beyond the difficulties we have experienced recently?' asked Murray. Finally, Murray said design had to be a major consideration if higher densities are to be built, in a housing crisis whose solutions are built on consensus in what is 'a marathon, not a sprint'.

The situation currently is certainly

'If we're going to have a chance of raising supply it is by supporting different tenures at different prices'

dark, however, said professor Christine Whitehead, emeritus professor of housing economics at LSE, with at least 55,000 homes needed in London for the next 25 years, and which even then would not help young couples. Projections show that almost no single people now live alone, said Whitehead, with admittedly positive announcements from government being just that,

announcements rather than resources or change. ‘The sums look large’, she said. ‘They are tiny.’ Does the chancellor believe we have a crisis, in which case do we have an emergency package of off-site construction?

L&Q chief executive and chair of G15 David Montague said he felt the opportunities outweigh the challenges, however, with a shift away from home ownership and a promised state-backed programme that is the largest since the 1970s. But ‘all roads leading to land’ is the main issue, he said, and London needs the confidence of land continuing to come forward. But while building places where people want to be is also a simple, fundamental need, according to Peabody executive director John Lewis, perhaps the green belt could be reassessed, said the National Housing Federation’s Dave Smith.

The conference also heard from Legal & General Capital head of housing James Lidgate, who said modular and off-site construction is not the only solution. But it is part of the ‘additionality’ required in the sector and is something the company is investing in, with a cross-laminated timber product that will be built in a factory near Leeds, the first units of which will be rolling off the production line before the end of the year. There are ‘no planning constraints really left in the room that we should be worried about’, said Pocket CEO Marc Vlessing, although we have a habit of putting ourselves in ‘regulatory knots’. ‘The enemy in the room is the borough solicitor’, he said, but modular as a solution to our chronic labour solution is ‘pie in the sky’ – the power it brings is in just-in-time management. There is ‘immense potential’ in London’s outer boroughs for intensifying neighbourhood centres and existing housing, said HTA Design chair Ben Derbyshire. But the industry does not have the skills necessary to increase capacity, said Laing O’Rourke’s Stephen Trusler – off-site manufacture will play a big part in the

future of construction, especially given ‘snobbish’ attitudes towards skills from the government down, said Vlessing.

Other highlights included PRP senior partner Brendan Kilpatrick presenting the case for PRS: increased density, larger developments and the importance of the brand and placemaking – even the challenge of creating ‘pet-friendly environments’ and suitable homes for older people. Indeed, there is an acknowledgement now that renting is not a second-class form of tenure, said Grainger executive director Nick Jopling. Finally, Cath Shaw, commissioning director, growth and development and interim deputy CEO of LB Barnet, presented on public-sector land and brownfield land release. Sadiq Khan could help, said Shaw, by looking ‘beyond the border’ at a Greater South East, increasing the pace of private delivery, perhaps through ‘tax tweaks’ and incentives – and one more thing: ‘Let those of us that are delivering get on with it!’

HOUSING FOR THE THIRD AGE

London faces ‘tidal wave’ of third-age housing need

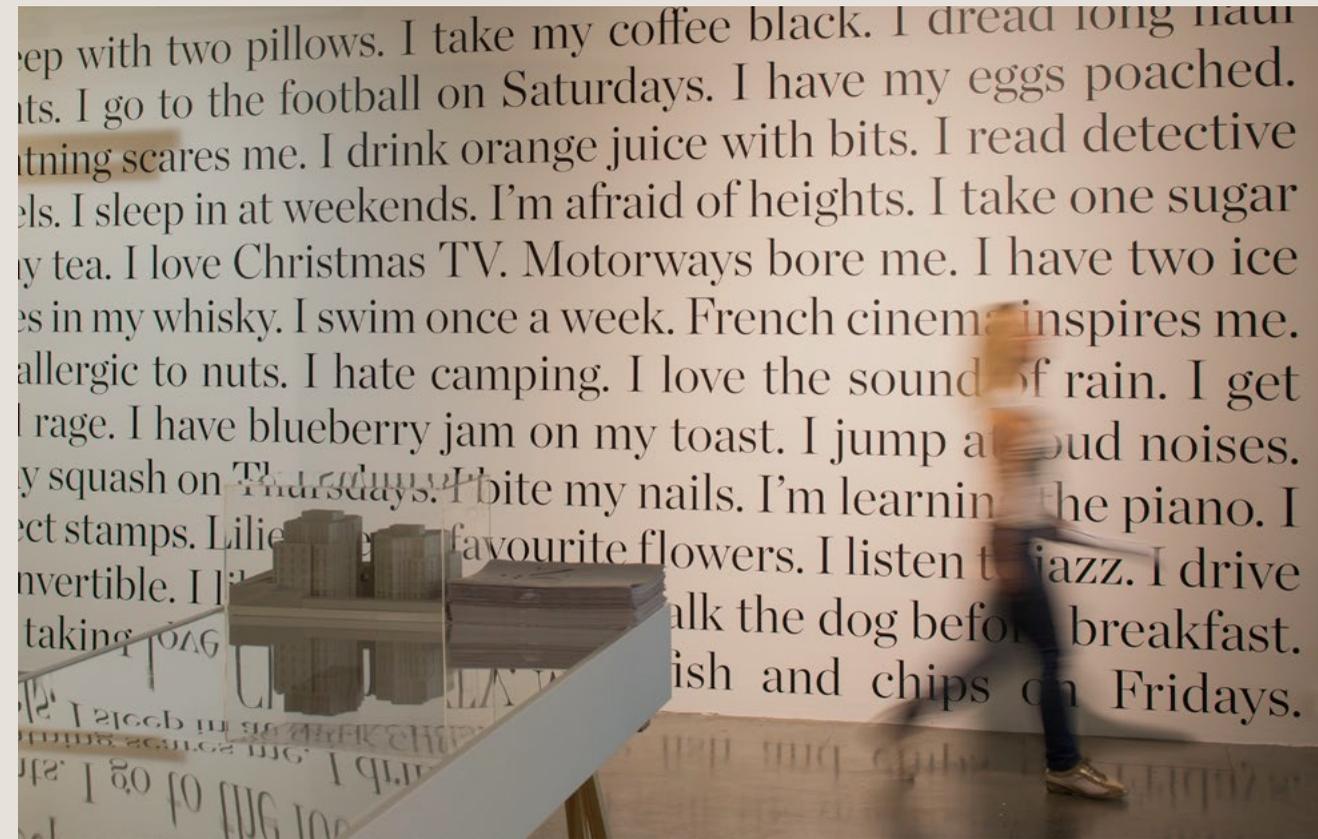
*Programme Supporters:
AECOM, Pegasus*

London needs a concerted campaign ‘on a grand scale’ and a widespread change of mindset if it is to avoid a ‘tidal wave’ of housing need from older people. The profession has failed to provide enough high-quality, affordable and flexible accommodation for its older citizens, it must learn from countries like

Denmark, Holland and Germany, and the city must better appreciate the widespread benefits and more balanced communities that intergenerational housing can bring.

Those were some of the main views to emerge from a breakfast talk on third-age housing, at which former RIBA president Angela Brady, director at Brady Mallalieu called for more sites to be made available. Perhaps this could be through Mayor Sadiq Khan stipulating that, say, 10 per cent of public land could be made available for the sector. ‘There’s definitely a need there’, she said. ‘We shouldn’t be looking at this as a housing thing. It’s actually a lifestyle that we need because we’re still not building the types of houses that we need. It’s still the 1950s model of the nuclear family, and then people get stuck.’

Brady was speaking as part of a panel discussing the issues surrounding third-age housing, and specifically following presentations by, first, PRP partner Jenny Buterchi. Key to providing good quality housing for older people across a range of tenures was to create a product older people choose to move to and which they can afford, said Buterchi. Spacious, well-designed apartments are what people are after, not just to downsizers or – as they are now known – rightsizers, and they should aim to have good access to natural light, outdoor space, and places to socialise. That last element is an important factor given that social isolation is quite often why people make the move, while other elements such as security are important, all of which is helped by creating efficient, rational designs, with stacked features, scale and communal facilities. Much of which is encapsulated at PRP’s newly opened Windmill Court scheme in Chingford, a new project of 44 apartments with balconies, winter gardens and lot of storage. ‘But most of all it’s about balanced communities’, said Buterchi. ‘We



Generation games – visitors to PegasusLife’s NLA exhibition on third age housing

want vibrant communities and keeping older people near their family and friends where they’ve perhaps lived all their life – that is what we would all want to see.’

Ryder’s David McMahon said that with almost 20 million households in the over 55s bracket and the number of people aged over 85 set to double in the next 20 years, this area of housing provision is a key concern. Especially with a government more focused on Right to Buy, a chronic housing undersupply and a lack of suitable homes to downsize to. ‘The government has failed to address the need to provide appropriate housing for the older generation’, he said. So the practice has been looking at new solutions to encourage downsizing, including its ‘Redefined Living’ concept, allowing residents to move into apartments while freeing up

larger family homes at the same time. McMahon said that 2.25 million bed spaces could be released or created for Londoners using this method.

The HAPPI report was a really important moment in the late 1990s, said PegasusLife design director John Nordon. ‘But one of the most

‘If we designed housing properly in the first place we wouldn’t need to design specialist housing for older people’

salient points it made was that if we designed housing properly in the first place we wouldn’t need to design specialist housing for older people’, he said. ‘I just think people need to remember that. We’re here

because, as a profession, we’ve failed to build the housing I think we should all be living in.’

Nick Taylor, head of north west London – housing and land at the GLA, housing associations or local authorities had done enough to try and unlock shared ownership for the elderly market, and the private rented sector should be another key player.

But there is a lack of understanding at policy level about what the benefits of good quality housing are, said Nordon, and that the ‘drop in the ocean’ that PegasusLife is contributing in numbers – 1,500 homes a year – needs bolstering by others. ‘Berkeley Homes, Crest Nicholson, bring it on’, he said. ‘We need more people building it, not shying away from it or using it as a pseudo-affordable housing play. We need more housing; good housing.’

ELIZABETH LINE

Elizabeth Line already transforming the outer boroughs

Sponsored by Crossrail

The Elizabeth Line was hailed as both the best infrastructure project the UK has ever produced and a catalyst for development which is already transforming outer London, at an NLA conference on the subject. But the process by which the stations are procured must improve further to allow architects to be free to flex their creative muscles and produce worthy schemes that are places as well as stations.

Those were some of the key points to emerge at *Crossrail: Unlocking Opportunities in Outer London*. The Elizabeth Line has done some groundbreaking work in integrating stations into the urban realm, said its head of urban integration Sam Richards, and it is the outer London stations – places such as Ealing, Abbey Wood and Hayes – which will see the ‘most transformative change’, when the first stages open next year and into 2018. Richards said key to its successes was the Elizabeth Line breaking the rules by stepping outside the ‘red lines’ of sites and designing those areas – 19 in outer London – despite having no funding for them. ‘You can’t design the stations in isolation’, he said. Schemes such as that at Abbey Wood by Fereday Pollard were significantly enhanced by public realm around it provided by Urban Movement, while the importance of smaller scale improvements, such as new paving around Manor Park in Newham, funded by TfL, should not be ignored.

The Elizabeth Line is the most



Bennetts Associates’ Ealing Broadway Elizabeth Line station

important thing to have happened to Ealing since the growth of the borough in the early 20th century, said the borough’s executive director for regeneration and housing, Pat Hayes. ‘It’s an enormous change for us and we’ve gone overnight from being a Zone 3-4 borough, effectively to being a Zone 1’, he added, regarding improved journey times that are helping to persuade developers to invest, even post-Brexit. Areas like Southall could become the ‘new Brixton’ given the area’s edge, diversity, interest and new accessibility, Hayes added. No one would have taken the risk to build 4,000 homes on the Southall Gas Works site without the catalyst of the Elizabeth Line. ‘Overall this is probably the best infrastructure project the UK has ever done.’ Among several new Elizabeth Line stations opening up the borough to investment and new housing, Ealing Broadway station offered the chance to improve something ‘fairly dire at the moment’, said Hayes, but the first designs presented were reminiscent of a pre-1989 eastern European bus station. ‘We got stuck into the Elizabeth Line and said it should have a principal station that looks like one.’ The ‘fairly bruising encounter’ paid dividends, with a substantial station that aims to knit back together a ‘broken’ urban realm, an ‘impressive place and station that can be seen from the Uxbridge Road’.

Bennetts Associates director Julian Lipscombe said that the project ‘got there in the end’ but it was an ‘odd process’. ‘Let me tell you it was bloody difficult to push for quality of buildings

at the outset’, he said. The ‘landmark’ scheme aims to ‘speak of quality of place’ and features a grand canopy as ‘part unifier, part gatherer’ announcing the station’s presence, with a good generous ticket hall and clear gate line beyond. ‘It’s fair to say we got there in the end. We’re pleased with the stations, but my word the process could have been better.’ The Elizabeth Line ‘get the fact that this is about regeneration’, said Lipscombe, perhaps better than other partners on the project such as Network Rail. Initially the budgets for the stations – Bennetts was involved in

‘Overall this is probably the best infrastructure project the UK has ever done’

four new-build schemes including Hayes and Harlington – were ‘hammered to the floor’. Lipscombe said the projects were retendered at every stage attracting ‘suicidally low’ bids from large multidisciplinary practice. But the Elizabeth Line listened to the team’s concerns and enabled ‘the shackles to be taken off our design freedoms and budgets’. There is, however, a pervasive ‘penchant’ for separating conceptual design and delivery. ‘I am here firmly with my fingers crossed that what we designed gets built’, said Lipscombe, ‘and I hope the people of west London will like it’.

NYLON

Make space for work, London and New York told

Programme Champions: KPF An NLA series in association with the AIA NY and the Urban Design Forum

London and New York are facing similar issues over population growth and a lack of affordable housing, but each must make greater efforts to retain and grow workspace in the city without destroying their respective characters.

That was one of the take-away messages of NYLON, the 10th in a series of live link-ups between speakers in the US and UK megacities on the subject of new working neighbourhoods.

The debate was kicked off by NLA chairman Peter Murray, welcoming a debate between cities in a ‘post-Brexit, post-truth era’ that aimed to make for better places and lives. AIANY board president David Piscuskas said that both New York and London shared population growth similarities, with each set to exceed nine million inhabitants by 2025, and each thus experiencing new ‘work/life paradigms’.

And while Hana Kassem, director at KPF, said that the ‘co-movement’ was prevalent, with ‘work environments becoming extensions of ourselves’ and living environments becoming more places to do work, aided by remote technology, the secret was about blending. ‘Making salads, rather than perhaps soups’, she said, where the right mixture of developments have distinguishable elements but ‘which complement

each other beautifully’.

In Brooklyn, Regina Myer’s work as president of the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership is chiefly in the Brooklyn Tech Triangle, which seeks to nurture and grow tech companies in the area. It is concentrating on the areas of Dumbo and Brooklyn Navy Yard as well as Downtown Brooklyn because a rise in this activity is happening already, with 13,000 innovation companies, 22 per cent up on 2012 figures, and employing more than 17,000 people, 45 per cent up in three years. The group has looked at finding more space for such companies to grow, improving transport, placemaking and communicating what the tech triangle was all about. The neighbourhoods also needed to connect, and become ecosystems integrating talent from local communities. ‘We needed to make the

‘We really need to be proactive and think, to ensure we’re encouraging commercial growth along with the housing, in such a strong housing market as New York’

tech triangle distinct’, said Myer. ‘We needed to compete with Manhattan.’

In London, Hackney Wick represented an interesting case study in changing work patterns, said Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design director Jennifer Ross. The area had become quite disconnected and cut off, said Ross, but was one of those vibrant places supporting a whole range of businesses, with some 600 studio spaces in Fish Island and Hackney Wick, hitherto relying on affordable rents. ‘But change is coming’, said Ross, along with pressure, which has led to the London Legacy Development Corporation recognising its ‘fragility’ and commissioning Ross’s firm along with Karakusevic Carson to produce a spatial plan or framework to guide the area’s future development

and which looks at different workspace typologies and how they could be structured and combined. ‘This has been a mechanism’, said Ross. ‘Some would argue it is all a bit late but at least the LLDC are doing something.’

Back in New York, Heritage Equity Partners CEO Toby Moskovits showed how the 25 Kent project epitomises an approach about how workspace can be brought into a community as a speculative shared scheme that answered a strong desire from government for somebody to step up and provide. ‘I hope this is the start of the future of development in Brooklyn and other boroughs in bringing commerce into the communities and neighbourhoods of New York City’, she said.

In London, meanwhile, The Collective represents a new model in ‘co-living’ said its founder, Reza Merchant, in an age where people value experiences over material possessions. ‘We feel there’s a real need to provide spaces where people can have these amazing experiences’, he said. The scheme at Old Oak is the largest co-living building, in which the firm takes care of the ‘hassle’ of much of the everyday, even linen changes and collecting data on inhabitants, allowing people to ‘focus on the important things in life’.

Respondents from the floor included Gensler director Nigel Lea, who stressed the need to maintain ‘a sense of place and genius loci’, rather than kill the goose that lays the golden egg, ‘which is a very live conversation in places like Shoreditch’.

And Tom McKnight, executive vice president for planning, development and transportation, NYC Economic Development Corporation, had more to say about how to foster innovation and commercial growth. ‘We really need to be proactive and think, to ensure we’re encouraging commercial growth along with the housing, in such a strong housing market as New York’, he said. ‘We need to make sure we’re also creating space for businesses.’

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

London told: keep ahead of culture club

Programme Champions: Broadgate Estates, Capco

Culture pays dividends to developers and cities alike. But London must continue to keep ahead of the field or risk losing ground to other cities embracing creative placemaking.

Those were some of the key points to emerge from a conference at NLA kicked off by Tate's head of regeneration and community partnerships Donald Hyslop. Hyslop said London was a 'global cultural hub' but could not afford to rest on its laurels, especially against such background pressures as Brexit, land values and 'strongholds' like Hackney Wick coming under pressure from an exodus of artists. 'So if we want to continue as leader, as liveable as Copenhagen but grittier, we need cultural thinking embedded in all these areas', he said. It is now 20 years since the start of the Tate Modern project, now joined by its extension as a 'physical and philosophical reaching out to the south'. Other projects with culture at their heart abound, including the Design Museum's move to the Commonwealth Institute site (see building review this issue) and what was known as Olympicopolis, now 'Stratford'. Such projects need to seek an integrated approach to their communities, said Hyslop, and the planning system needs to be 'reinvigorated' with culture embedded within.

CBRE consultant Stuart Robinson showed how, via his new work with Jan Gehl, he is setting out to show the demonstrable economic effects of good placemaking – or simply 'the human experience of the city'. But investors

can no longer buy value, he said, they have to create it; they are interested in human capital – knowledge, skills and innovation – and those people want to live in exciting places. 'London is successful because it has those places.' Good cultural placemaking has been proven as creating value, as shown in the study of 20 interventions in the public realm including Granary Square, Duke of York's, and the High Line in New York, which has significantly catalysed development around it.

Futurecity founder Mark Davy said cities like Sydney are undergoing change as it sees itself as a city of ideas. But 'you can't just make it and they'll come', he said. 'It's about authenticity ... We're in an age of content. Organisations that can provide deliverable ideas are in a fantastic place.'

'We're in an age of content. Organisations that can provide deliverable ideas are in a fantastic place'

The conference also heard from Capco creative director Beverley Churchill, showing how investment in creative events such as the installation of 100,000 balloons by artist Charles Pétilion had paid dividends in footfall and worldwide acclaim, as will a forthcoming event with an artist tattooing people through a hole in the wall. Local authorities such as Barking and Dagenham also have a role in leading cultural development, said the borough's acting head of planning and regeneration David Harley, who is luring artists to the area with rents half those of Hackney Wick, and through working on providing live/work accommodation for them.

A second session looked at case studies, begun by Allies and Morrison partner Alex Wraight with a focus at Stratford waterfront, the Royal Festival



Hall ('stripping back and clearing out'), Bankside, and Elephant and Castle, where the practice's plans for the London College of Communication is in for planning. First Base managing director Elliot Lipton showed plans to revitalise Silvertown, drawing on the history of the area and particularly Millennium Mills as a 'real, original' element that can be uniquely claimed

as heritage. Sheppard Robson partner Dan Burr, meanwhile, showed how his practice's plans in Poplar could draw on and enhance the popularity of the Adjaye-designed Idea Store, creating a new adjoining cultural building and community resource alongside a new square and improved market. And finally, Street Feast and London Union founder Henry Dibleby showed

how a similarly innovative approach to creating 1,000-plus venues for eating, from Canada Water to Shoreditch to Lewisham was bearing fruit, amid further plans to expand abroad.

Ultimately, though, said Broadgate Estates strategy director Polly Plunket, '80 per cent of placemaking is management. And space is always in beta'.

↑ Creating a place – urban garden by Bartlett Students at King's Cross

PLAY IN DEVELOPMENT

Regeneration needs 'reset' to forge good placemaking

Sponsored by A New Direction

London must emulate the words of former Bogotá mayor Enrique Peñalosa and create a city that is successful for children, and therefore for all people. To get there, however, it needs to allow for creativity and play at a local level via the creation of flexible places, managed with tolerance. But it must start with a root-and-branch 'reset' of how the world of property engages with those it designs for.

Those were some of the key messages to emerge from a breakfast talk at NLA kicked off by partnerships director at charity A New Direction, Holly Donagh, with research showing strong links between creativity and place. Donagh said that the research included three case studies of projects in Bermondsey, Silvertown, and Boston in the US, all of which demonstrated the long-term benefits of involving and inspiring children. 'We really feel that with growth in London there's a lot more that needs to be done', said Donagh. 'We didn't find the perfect case study, if you like – it's out there, waiting to be built.'

Nicola Bacon, director of the firm that was commissioned to undertake the research, Social Life, said schemes such as that at South Acton with its public art programme helped to bring an old estate to life, with benefits for creativity, communities and participation. 'And it's good for London as well', she said.

But Uncommon founder Martyn Evans said that it was fundamental that we must stop thinking about this subject as a 'nice to have'. 'There seems to be



© Roxane Grant

A city that is successful for children is one that is for all

a notion that you only bolt them on if you're a nice person or if you feel that that's important', said Martyn. 'Because we all know property development is driven by money, and that's it. I feel we need to turn this discussion into how you connect doing good stuff with making money.' Property development, Evans went on, is to do with bricks and mortar, glass and steel, but the industry needs to better attend to the needs of young people and work together, ending the 'combative' relationships it tends to have with local authorities over things such as Section 106 negotiations and planning applications. 'I think we should think hard about how we reset those relationships', he said.

ZCD Architects co-founder Dinah Bornat agreed that there was a 'cultural shift' required, especially in terms of how the house should be viewed less as a commodity and more as part of a community that is going to last, and to which the designer has a duty. This is particularly true of external spaces, which require intensive research about how they are used, and which deserve more emphasis in both design and policy terms. 'The freedom we need to grant children in residential schemes is not there at the moment', she said.

How a society treats its young people is a marker of how civilised it is, said Ealing executive director of regeneration and housing, Pat Hayes. And we need to move away from the culture of people

in high-vis jackets telling young people what they cannot do in their spaces, to designing them to be used flexibly and managed with tolerance. 'The development industry has to move on this and the more enlightened ones have', said Hayes. 'We've got to build a city that works for younger people. Because if it works for them, it tends to be more vibrant and dynamic.'

THINK TANK

Stop viewing estate regeneration as asset management, councils told

Programme Champions:
Countryside, GL Hearn
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Local authorities involved in regenerating London's ageing housing estates must avoid seeing the process as 'asset management' and instead adopt

sensitive and honest engagement with affected communities.

That was one of the points to emerge from a lively think-tank discussion on 'densification vs demolition' at NLA, attended by representatives from the National Strategy for Estate Regeneration (NSER), GLA, housing associations, developers, local authorities and architects.

The Lord Heseltine-fronted NSER, said Assael Architecture director and NSER member Félicie Krikler, has had 110 expressions of interest, a third of them from estates in London, all keen to get a slice of the £140 million set aside by former PM David Cameron to lever in extra investment. The panel will come up with best practice guidance, and each estate must be addressed on its own merits, said Krikler.

But local authorities must get away from the town hall mindset of 'doing things to residents of estates, rather than with them', said London Assembly member Tom Copley. The majority of successes in this area are where residents have led the process, he added, and it must be from the residents' point of view or risk being blighted with conflict. The critical thing was to deliver something for the residents, added Westminster's executive director for growth, planning and housing, Ed Watson – 'there is an opportunity if you engage properly in a genuine way to take communities with you', he said.

But LB Barking & Dagenham strategic director for growth and homes John East said that increasing numbers of authorities, such as Lambeth with Cressingham Gardens and Central Hill, are putting housing up for sale despite its popularity. 'That's an asset management approach and a wrong approach', he said, 'and there is a collective failure of people like us not pushing back. We need to take responsibility on having a much more nuanced approach.'

It was also important, said Pollard Thomas Edwards senior partner Andrew Beharrell, to be sensitive to people living on estates who take comfort in their 'estateness' and are nervous about

barriers being brought down. 'The assumption that we de-estate places and normalise them has to be handled carefully', he said.

Krikler said the role of the NSER is to help estates along the line of the three Heseltine 'pillars', ensuring local authority support and buy in to each programme, improving community engagement, and financial viability. A matrix being put together by ex-PRP's Andy von Bradsky, who has been seconded to the group, will aid the way in which design will be incorporated. Copley said he didn't like the 'arbitrary' number of 100 sink estates announced as the target by former PM David Cameron and residents are often very fearful of losing tenure when estate regeneration plans are mooted. But densification is important, and could be split into the three controversial options of densifying estates, building on the green belt or creating tall buildings.

Kat Hanna, research manager at the Centre for London, said her organisation had taken a sample of four boroughs to produce a density analysis from large estates of over 200 units. And part of the results had shown that estates are not at significantly lower density than their surroundings. 'It is not saying that they constitute a great use of land, but actually to single out estates as being low density and therefore potential for densification ... you can kind of see why that's sometimes perceived as unfair when surrounding streets and areas are often at a lower density.' Getting the narrative and justification for this whole area in the light of the need to increase housing supply was important, she added.

For Levitt Bernstein director Jo McCafferty, the financial package for residents is important and should be pushed out at front – this is not just about design. And for Beharrell the conventional model for cross-subsidy is being stretched to replace gap-funding by the state – with more market homes subsidising fewer affordable homes – and therefore the offer that is possible to make to existing residents has worsened.

'That's got to the point of extremely controversial and highly combative situations which is understandable.' The solution has been patient, thorough, honest engagement – of which there are lots of good examples – allied with a transparent examination of all the different options to get some kind of comparable criteria on ways forward, rather than presenting a fait accompli. 'Be honest with people, tell them things they don't want to hear, not bury them, and seek endorsement through a formal test of opinion.'

Countryside Properties new business director Michael Hill, however, disagreed that a reliance on cross subsidy from housing for sale or commercial development has worsened estate regeneration. It has enabled more to take place given the constraint on public funding, he said, although perhaps it has gone too far, and driven over-expectations on what private money can do. But, Hill asked, to what extent are pressures on local authorities to generate funding themselves leading to an asset management approach that will require them to look upon housing estates as opportunities to increase revenue streams?

LB Enfield assistant director of regeneration Peter George said his authority evaluates estates in terms of the extent to which the area in question is deprived, but also on the performance of the estate and to what extent it is a burden 'on our already pressurised housing revenue account' and to what extent the estate is ever likely to stack up financially. But it was not coincidental, said George, that the estate regeneration projects his borough had been involved with had thus far avoided too much in the way of protest. 'Our offer to residents has always been fair and reasonable.' This has included all council tenants offered a replacement home with secure tenancy and a fair share equity scheme so leaseholders were not paying rent. Enfield also runs polls on development or refurbishment options, securing a 66 per cent turnout and 86 per cent in favour of redevelopment on

one recent estate.

In the majority of instances where estate regeneration is seen as a positive thing, residents recognise a problem that could be solved, said Ed Watson. So the opportunity to present regeneration as an opportunity for communities, backed by good-quality houses of size – in Westminster this is a particular issue – is key. But it is also important to start to win hearts and minds early by way of improving the employment offer, followed by the more complicated matter of demolishing and rebuilding houses. ‘There is an opportunity if you engage properly in a genuine way to take communities with you’, he said. Another powerful weapon is to show council tenants around already completed schemes.

The recent decision on the Aylesbury Estate (where government blocked a compulsory purchase order) is a game changer, said group director of business development at Pinnacle Group Jim Saunders, and a positive one at that. ‘We need to move away from this idea of displacing communities – it’s not about that. It’s about retaining the existing community.’ The focus in terms of Haringey is on jobs and businesses as well as housing. ‘We should realise there’s a lot of heavy lifting to be done to bring that community on board.’ They should be challenged, however, and we need to engage in the idea that mixed, sustainable communities are a good thing – maybe a way to do that is to look at community stakeholder models to bring about social dividends. With regards to the Aylesbury Estate, said head of regeneration north, LB Southwark Jon Abbott, the inquiry Inspector agreed with Southwark council that the proposals were in conformity with the local plan for the area, and that the scheme for the phase was viable, while the alternative solution of refurbishment was not. The decision to refuse the CPO was primarily down to the Inspector’s conclusions regarding compensation for the small number of leaseholders who remain in the phase, a significant proportion of whom are non-

resident. The council is of the view that it provided substantial evidence to support its position that leaseholders were provided with reasonable alternative housing offers and it has announced that it will be seeking a judicial review of the secretary of state’s decision.

But we’re running out of the easy options, said John East, with the perception that ‘postwar housing estates are bad, redevelopment good’, one that is too easy to fall into. An increasing number of authorities are making those asset management decisions. We all have to meet housing need, said area renewal programme manager – environment, housing and regeneration directorate at LB Sutton Sally Blomfield, and the estates are under pressure, and the pressure is regeneration, partly driven by the residents. ‘It’s not just the asset management pressure, it’s the housing growth pressure too’, she said.

For Metropolitan Workshop partner Neil Deely, the key issue comes down to communication, with trust lost immediately if this is not excellent and if the local authorities fail to communicate the benefits residents are in line for. ‘But I think there is real danger around a borough-wide portfolio viability where it rules out at a stroke the individual approaches you might take to estates along the way’, he said.

Tottenham is made up of many communities, said director of regeneration, planning and development at LB Haringey Lyn Garner, with extremely vociferous residents, requiring intensive work and resources to engage

the community. ‘With all the will in the world we’ll never have consent from all the residents’, she said. ‘One has to press ahead in the 80:20 world we all live in.’ Fear of change is not unique to estate renewal, said head of strategic communications at GL Hearn Nick Jones, but the outside community must be remembered as well. There is a real problem with using the word ‘regeneration’ to cover all of this, said director of Thamesmead regeneration, Ken Baikie. First and foremost it is an asset management approach that keeps a roof over people’s heads before we start adding on other issues of additional housing supply by way of infill or redevelopment or wider social and economic objectives.

What is certainly needed from the start of this kind of project is a strong vision said Andrew Ogorzalek, director at AHR_PCKO, but in many areas it is lacking or an ad hoc activity, done as a feasibility study of some sort. Armed with a strong, funded and properly conceived vision, people can subscribe to it and see that ‘something fantastic is happening’.

‘It seems to me we’ve really got to think very hard about the estate regeneration offer going forward, and the expectation’, said Michael Hill. ‘That’s a huge opportunity, and a huge challenge. Ten, even five years ago, the main challenge was to physically replace physically worn-out housing, and that was generally the limit of expectation. I think there’s a huge change under way – and there needs to be in what partners can offer local authorities.’



Estate regeneration
– more than just
asset management



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COFFEE BREAK

With *Caroline Sellar* – commercial and operations director, Sellar Property Group



Which is the best?

Now this is hard because it's impossible to name just one! St Pancras and the Natural History Museum always engage me with their stunning stonework and The Shard for its chameleon-like presence, absorbing the ever-changing sky. I am also so proud of my father creating a new symbol for London; London is one of the greatest cities in the world so that's an amazing legacy.

What or who has been the biggest influence on your career thus far?

Joseph Ettedgui in my fashion days and my father, Irvine Sellar.

What would your advice be to those starting out in your profession(s)?

To understand the life cycle of developments and see where you feel most engaged and excited and hone your career towards this – and read the trade magazines!

How important was The Shard for south London, and for London as a whole?

It has been one of the key catalysts in the area and breathed life into a tired part of London that has such strong creative and historical roots. Our vision for The Shard and London Bridge Quarter to be a vertical city open to all has been a contributor towards its success. The unique mix of offices, viewing gallery, gift shop, hotel, apartments and restaurants creates wide appeal to office occupiers, visitors and tourists, and because of this there is a great buzz every day of the week, morning to night. The Shard has become a new global symbol for London, which is incredible to see;

it has helped to keep London at the forefront of great global cities.

How do you see the market moving in post-Brexit London?

I wish I had a crystal ball, until we know how the Brexit negotiations are going it's hard to know.

What do you feel is the main area of London to watch, and why?

South-east: connectivity, value for money and nice, green open spaces.

How can development become more appealing as a career to women?

Education and awareness in schools that development is a career for all and that it's an exciting one!

Has property got an image problem?

Well, I think if you looked at MIPIM you could say yes; also the residential agents are still dogged with a poor reputation.

What single thing would improve the development process?

The process could be more efficient and faster.

What would you do if you were Mayor for the day?

If I had a magic wand while being Mayor for the day, I would widen the roads, create decent cycle lanes everywhere and put trams in through the city.

How optimistic are you for the year ahead (and why)?

For Sellar we have an exciting project pipeline ahead, for London and the UK it's all change and I hope that will bring some positives. Change can be good. ●

What is your proudest achievement and why?

It was probably the day I opened my own Joseph shop in Covent Garden; it was the first independent franchise they had approved and had stemmed from a great working relationship with Joseph Ettedgui. He was a hard taskmaster and this was the biggest sign of approval he could bestow on me.

What would you have been if you hadn't chosen the path you did?

I am fascinated by nature and the power that it holds and I have a keen interest in the relationship between diet and health, so a nutritionist would have been a good path, especially if I had been ahead of the curve with the current explosion of health gurus!

Which is the worst building in London?

That's a very hard question to answer and so subjective! This is controversial but personally I don't like Trellick Tower; I just don't get the obsession people have with it.

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RAMBOLL

DESIGN MUSEUM

We take a look at the start of the Design Museum's next chapter, its new home in Kensington

Architect: **Allies and Morrison, OMA, John Pawson**

Engineer: **Arup**

Contractor: **Willmott Dixon Interiors**

Client: **The Design Museum**

THE ARCHITECT'S ACCOUNT

SIMON FRASER, PARTNER, ALLIES AND MORRISON



There were multiple authors here with a remarkable array of design capability assembled to undertake what seems straightforward, but was actually a very multifaceted, technically complex project. We worked very closely with engineers at Arup to refurbish the Grade II* listed building's shell and core, and with John Pawson, who was responsible for the fit-out and design of the museum's interior. The building is set within a wider masterplan by OMA in which three stone cubes – new residential buildings – geometrically frame the Design Museum. Allies and Morrison worked with OMA to design and deliver this ensemble within a landscape designed by West 8.

The 1962 Commonwealth Institute, the first major public building to be completed in London after the 1951 Festival of Britain, presented us with the scale and complexity of design challenges we had found at our Royal Festival Hall transformation, where we had previously undertaken a comprehensive refurbishment of the building and its setting in 2007. Both projects designed, in part, by Robert Matthew, had to be brought into the 21st century to enable contemporary functions more relevant to today's audience expectations; they needed to perform better, while protecting, reviving or exploiting their attributes, making them more inviting to the public.

The copper-clad hyperbolic paraboloid roof provided a strikingly distinctive architectural form that

required significant repair and reinstatement. The first big move was to remove the existing building's service wing, the 'train crash', and to concentrate the form of the exhibition building as an unencumbered object, the 'tent in the park', as was the original intent. The interior spaces needed to provide increased floor area yet retain the clarity and scale to enable large movements of people and yet feel more welcoming. This same de-cluttering and repurposing of spaces was familiar, yet more dramatic, to our earlier work at the Festival Hall. Protecting the clarity of internal volumes and providing entrance views to the underside of the roof were explicitly protected through discussions and subsequent conditions set by English Heritage (now Historic England) and Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea conservation officers.

Important reminders of the building's original features were also carefully retained. Stained-glass windows by Keith New were templated, repaired and relocated into the ground floor facade; the original marble flooring reused as the wall lining in the main atrium space; the decorative map of the Commonwealth re-hung off the permanent galleries. Much of the rest of the building, however, is new. Most of the entire structure was rebuilt and the basement was enlarged to increase overall floor area for the Design Museum's ambitious programme. All this was achieved while keeping the original roof primary columns and concrete mullions in-situ thanks to the extraordinary engineering skills of the Arup structures team and the contractor, Mace.

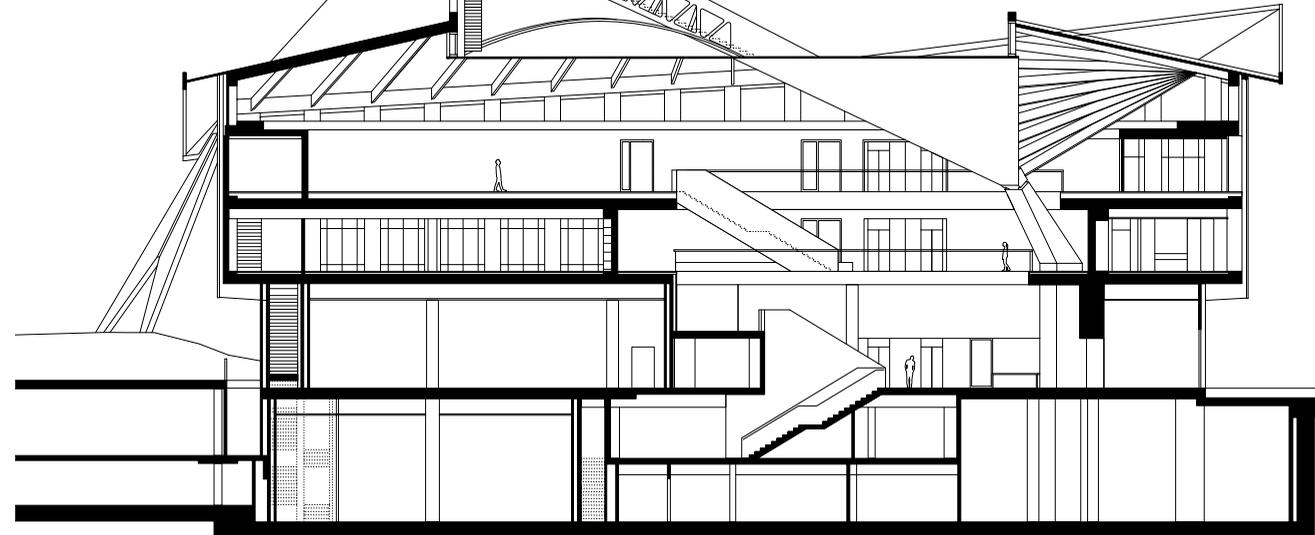
There is no doubt that the roof is the star attraction, when viewed from outside and within. It is one of the finest examples of a hyperboloid in

modern architecture. The original design was an important milestone in an ongoing chronology of experimentations in curved roofs by architects such as Le Corbusier, Saarinen and Candela. The wholesale removal of the existing structural floor and circulation systems created a new spatial configuration for John Pawson to organise the Design Museum's brief around. The new floors were arranged around an atrium in such a way that they provide continuous and direct views to the raw underside of the roof throughout the circulation spaces. This provides a means of orientation but also a device that changes in form and light as your visit continues.

The building envelope was also a particular challenge. We had to allow for natural light to filter in and we completely replaced the facades to comply with today's much more stringent environmental standards. (The building manages to achieve a BREEAM Very Good rating). The glazing was completely redesigned and replaced yet retained the pattern of fenestration and the blue-glass appearance of the original after detailed explorations into glass technology. We incorporated a paint system of dots, or ceramic frit, which permits controlled daylight into the interior spaces while allowing views out into the surrounding Holland Park landscape.

Complex yet elegantly simple, structurally challenging yet subtle in its design, and with a world-class cast of collaborators, this was an interesting project for Allies and Morrison to be a part of, allowing us to continue to apply our extensive knowledge and empathy for the revival of Modernist masterpieces. It has been a great source of pride for the whole of our design team, and we hope to see the Design Museum enjoy a long and successful future at its new Kensington home.

→
Designing the
Design Museum –
elevation



↑
'Tent in the park'
– the redesigned
glazing retained
the blue-glass
appearance of the
original

→
The floors provide
continuous and
direct views to the
raw underside of
the roof



THE ENGINEER'S ACCOUNT BY NIGEL CIUFFETELLI, ASSOCIATE STRUCTURAL ENGINEER, ARUP



We provided a sophisticated engineering solution to enable the successful repurposing of the Grade II* Listed Exhibition Building, formerly the Commonwealth Institute at Holland Park, London.

The Exhibition Building's listed roof and primary supports were retained and strengthened with the remaining internal structures removed and re-constructed, meeting the future needs of the Design Museum. Our structural engineering team proposed the radical idea of temporarily supporting the historic roof structure. This enabled the replacement of the existing internal structures, including a much-enlarged basement. The new floors were designed in keeping with the original structural solution with the use of post-tensioned concrete.

The roof for the Exhibition Building consists of a central hyperbolic paraboloid shell constructed from post-tensioned concrete. The outer

warped roof is constructed from radiating precast post-tensioned beams with wood wool infill panels. Construction was completed in 1962 with the Exhibition Building being one of the few examples of large-scale concrete shell structures in the UK. In 1998, the Exhibition Building was recognised as being of historical significance and was listed by English Heritage as Grade II*.

In 2009, our team proposed the radical idea of retaining the roof structure and its supports, while replacing the internal structures to meet the requirements of a modern museum. The new building included a much bigger basement, which extended beyond the footprint of the roof. The scheme required the 1,500 tonne roof, suspended some 20m above ground level, to be supported by temporary works, enabling the removal of the internal structural frame. Assessment of the existing roof identified that any movements of the key supports had to be controlled to within +/-5mm to avoid damage. Some of the retained elements were strengthened to accommodate those expected movements and associated forces. We developed a sophisticated temporary works scheme in close collaboration with the contractors, to support the roof loads and maintain movements within the defined limits.

One of the main aspects of the temporary works was the main horizontal ties, which resisted the thrust force exerted by the two primary internal columns. These temporary ties consisted of four 100mm diameter high-tensile bars that were prestressed to balance the thrust forces. One of the main challenges was how to transfer the roof loads from the temporary works to the permanent structure without exceeding the movement limits. Our solution utilised post-tensioned concrete to transfer these loads; this technique is not typical in the UK. The post-tensioned cables within the concrete floors, when stressed, result in the uplift forces effectively balancing the roof loads, thereby releasing the load from the temporary works, with little to no movement.

Ultimately, I believe that the central hyperbolic paraboloid shell resembles that of a giant manta ray in full flight. The radiating rafters of the outer warped roof add a further dimension, with the building appearing to come to life as people move around the upper exhibition space. This astonishing roof is a stunning example of great engineering design from the past and present, and will no doubt inspire all those who visit.



Works in progress – retaining the roof structure and supports was a key move

THE CONTRACTOR'S ACCOUNT BY LEWIS HEPBURN, CONSTRUCTION MANAGER, WILLMOTT DIXON INTERIORS



Willmott Dixon Interiors was awarded the contract for internal fit-out and refurbishment of the new Design Museum. As construction manager at Willmott Dixon Interiors, I was responsible for ensuring the successful delivery of the refurbishment as the museum moved from its Shad Thames location to Kensington.

The main objective was to turn the old building into a space ready for the Design Museum's own team, for them to complete the third phase and install the exhibits. Part of this refurbishment was to retain the existing parabolic roof structure. It's about altering the existing building to suit the museum while saving some of the existing features. I would say it's the most important fit-out in London, as it will attract 650,000 visitors and also has free entry.

Interiors got the go-ahead on the contract in January 2015, but an award was not confirmed due to delays on the previous phase. Apart from a weekly two-hour visit, we were not allowed on site for nearly five months after winning the job, but that time was not wasted. To overcome this challenge we used that time to de-risk the project and look at all the cost details and for any gaps in the design in order to flesh them out early. That was quite successful but we couldn't complete it entirely as we couldn't get in the actual building, so all the mechanical and electrical work at that point was all theory. The difficulty was the quality of the finishes and the need to make them look good can be a challenge. It's the finite detail.



Light touch – glass balustrade with timber handrail fitted with LED Lights

Our build part is the permanent exhibition, so it couldn't overwhelm the temporary exhibitions. What John Pawson has done is quite subtle. For example, the second floor is oak with oak panelling and floors. The joinery is particularly significant and this package is valued at around £1 million out of a £20.6 million construction cost.

There was a lot of metal and timber cladding and getting those junctions with the floors and ceilings was important. The Design Museum was very particular with the design and we have been working with them to incorporate the mechanical and engineering works (M&E). An example was the 300m-glass balustrade with a timber handrail fitted with LED lights, which was very tricky to say the least.

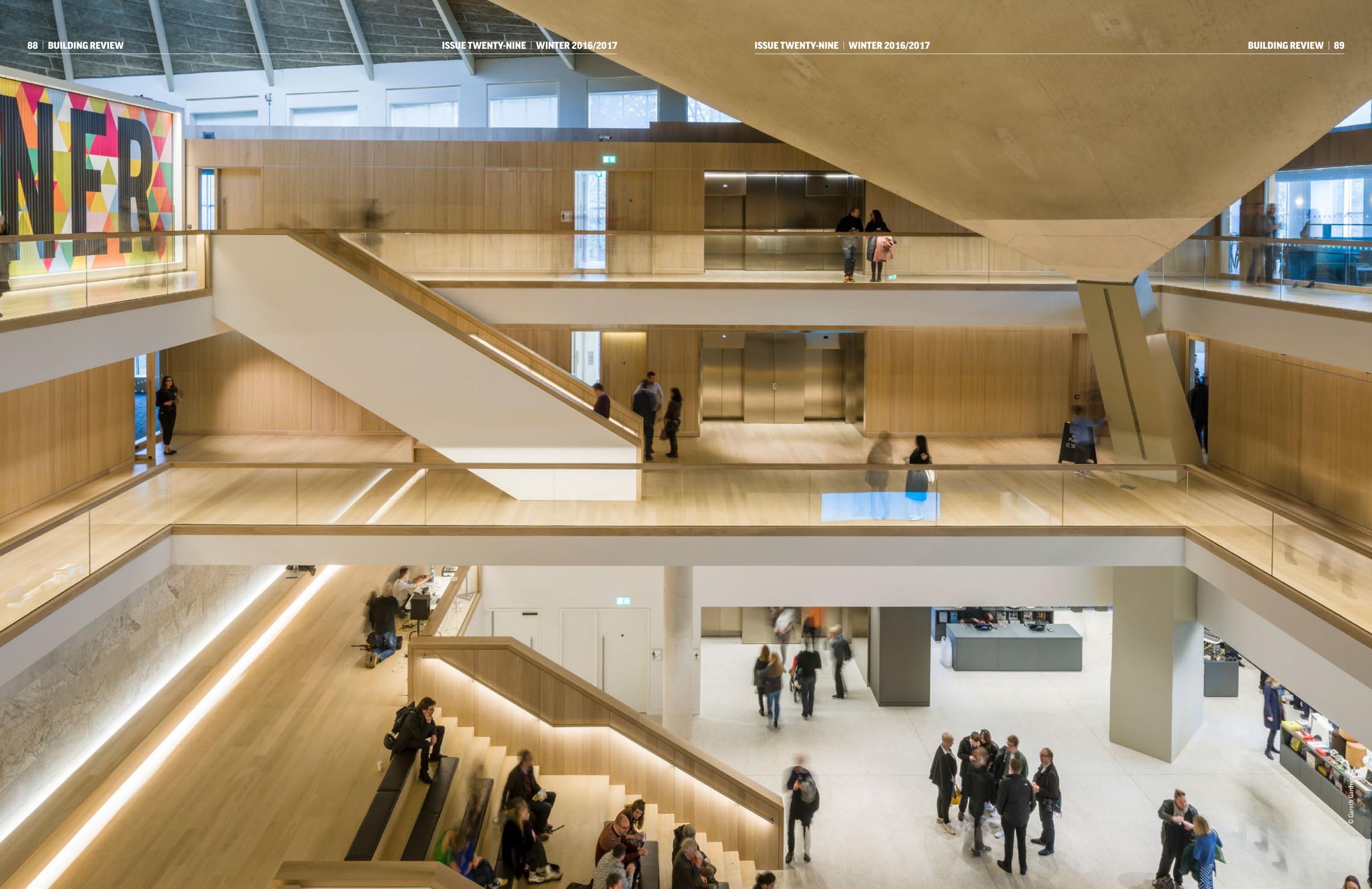
We also had to ensure that none of the M&E work was visible in certain sections, such as the second floor, which features designer-in-residence rooms. This involved taking up positions in various parts of the building to make

sure that no M&E work could be seen and where it was, be promptly hidden.

Sustainability has been a major part of this project and we excelled in our environmental performance. We achieved 44 in the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS), scoring a minimum of 8 ('Excellent' standards) in each section, equating to an innovative credit under BREEAM.

'This is a prestigious project that will see the Design Museum become one of London's biggest attractions'

This is a prestigious project that will see the Design Museum become one of London's biggest attractions. We are very honoured to have completed the fit-out and refurbishment of the museum. The refurbishment has not only transformed the building – it has also given it a new life and purpose.



THE CLIENT'S ACCOUNT ALICE BLACK, DIRECTOR, DESIGN MUSEUM



We at the Design Museum set out to create and sustain the world's leading museum of contemporary design and architecture that will serve as an international centre of excellence in design. Our vision is to inspire everyone to understand the value of design, and through this project, the museum set out to fulfil the following strategic objectives. We wanted to enhance the impact and reach of the museum's programme. We set out to raise the profile of the institution in the UK and internationally, establishing the Design Museum as an influential authority on design and architecture, and wanted to enhance the quality of the visitor experience and engagement with the museum's activities. Finally, we wanted to ensure the museum developed a sustainable and efficient operational model.

In terms of the Design Museum's development strategy we had other objectives: to rescue a threatened landmark building and develop this as a new location for the Design Museum; increase visitor numbers; increase the Design Museum's educational role; promote design as a national asset; and support creative talent.

The site on Kensington High Street, immediately south of Holland Park, comprised a vacant building previously occupied by the Commonwealth Institute at 224-238 Kensington High Street and a shop on the ground floor of the residential development on the High Street. The Grade II* listed Commonwealth



Common wealth - the new museum promotes design as national asset

Institute building was completed in 1962 and was highly regarded for its unique 'hyperbolic paraboloid' shaped roof, it stood on the English Heritage Buildings at Risk register. The site also includes landscaped gardens, which are Grade II listed on the English Heritage Register for Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.

We entered into an agreement for the lease with the developer (224 Kensington High Street Limited Partnership) who redeveloped the site they had acquired in 2007 to incorporate the creation of three new high-end residential blocks of flats, the modernisation and reconfiguration of the Commonwealth Institute to accommodate the requirements of the Design Museum and the landscaping of the whole site.

Planning consent was granted in 2010 to 224 Kensington High Street Limited Partnership, which paved the way for the developer to undertake the following as part of the 'shell and core' element of the works to the Design Museum:

- Demolition of the administrative wing

- Stripping out of the existing interior
- Creation of a new basement under the parabola
- Creation of new floor slabs
- Remedial work to the roof
- Re-cladding of the exterior of the building
- Provision of incoming and some central services.

The Design Museum provides approximately 10,000 sqm (as per architect's brief). In addition, about 80 sqm of the ground floor of one of the new residential blocks has been leased to the museum to provide visibility on Kensington High Street.

Following the completion of the shell and core work to the building by the developer, the transformation of the Design Museum set out its requirement for the internal fit-out of the museum, which included: the creation of temporary and permanent exhibition spaces; spaces for learning activities to cater to a wide range of ages; event spaces; catering and retail spaces; an auditorium; and associated office, storage, circulation, back of house areas, plant and plant-related spaces. ●



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© Luke Hayes

↑
The scheme aimed to 'rescue a threatened landmark building'

←
The site includes listed landscaped gardens and three new blocks of flats

BATTERSEA

By *Carlin Fier*, director, marketing and communications, Brookfield Properties



A respite from the city – Battersea Park's Peace Pagoda

For the past three years my London has been Battersea. Prior to settling here, I lived in several SW and NW postcodes and worked in both the West End and the City. As I am not a millennial, I feel strongly about keeping a fair distance between my work and home lives. The separation is ingrained in me after decades in NYC, which until recently also had very clearly defined work and play zones. My 20s were spent working in corporate/tourist areas like Wall Street and Rockefeller Center, while living in hipster areas Chelsea, Alphabet City or Brooklyn.

My 30s have been no different, though perhaps a little less edgy. Battersea Park could not be more different from my work life in the

Square Mile. Less than a two-minute walk from my front door, the park feels like my own garden, supersized and well-manicured – and is arguably the best single amenity in London. There are dozens of trails to wander, quiet hilltops where I can relax with my coffee and sketchbook, and boat and cycle hires, tennis courts and tracks for the more athletic types. The park is also host to year-round cultural, and not so cultural, events like the Decorative Antiques and Textiles Fair, the Affordable Art Fair, bonfire night fireworks and the Formula E.

Aside from the park, there is a dearth of amenities along Queenstown Road (I do not count the Shell and Waitrose at the roundabout). While I anxiously

await the opening of new amenities up the road, my weekends typically include a trip to nearby Northcote Road (yes, Clapham Junction is actually in Battersea) where I can graze among the various butchers, fish stalls, cheese shops, boulangeries and boutiques. Heading in the opposite direction, I often walk or take the bus over the river to Sloane Square to see what is on at the Saatchi Gallery, have a late brunch at the Botanist or munch my way through the Saturday food market in Duke of York Square and the American food aisle at Partridges.

As a New Yorker, I enjoy fast and easy transport to work, which is well provided for in Battersea. Despite having no Tube lines, the buses and the overground stations at Battersea Park and Queenstown Road make this arguably the best-connected neighbourhood in London. Even before Crossrail 2 arrives.

My favourite commute to work is with the 344 bus, which takes less than 45 minutes. Most days, it's faster than the Tube and heads east past all the new development at Battersea Power Station, Embassy Gardens, Riverlight and Nine Elms and is akin to being on my own NLA tour. Continuing on to Embankment with a picturesque view of Parliament, I soon arrive at the ultimate foodie temple – Borough Market. Past The Shard, over London Bridge, stopping in front of our offices at 99 Bishopsgate, I can jump off and gaze up at 100 Bishopsgate – my first project in London – or continue on to our other site, Principal Place, where the 344 ends.

The reason this bus seems to only fail during Tube strikes must be part of that British humour I keep hearing about. ●



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EPR Architects

Peruvian Wharf, Newham

The transformation of an 8-hectare industrial site into a vibrant residential district built over a working aggregates wharf. Our masterplan proposals offer a high quality residential-led, mixed use development with a well-connected public realm integrated with a unique landscape scheme.

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