

## VIEW FROM THE CHAIR....



As this is my first posting in the role of Urban Design Group Chair, I should set out a bit of a vision. This chair doesn't provide too dizzy a height but hopefully enough elevation for a perspective on where the Group members might find themselves now - and where to go next. This year could turn out to be more interesting in several senses, than we all had hoped for.

The October Conference in Leeds (where I will no doubt see you all! See details on next page) is entitled *Urban Design on the Edge*:

## THE UDG AWARDS

An award event will be held in the Royal United Services Club at 61, Whitehall, London on Wednesday 2nd February. Details can be found on the adjacent page.

The UDG Awards Programme has been expanded, so that five awards will be made at this event:

### PROJECT AWARD

To be awarded to the practice that, following publication in the magazine, has been voted by members and possibly by those at

when we planned it, we had not quite realised how well this would relate to a range of initiatives we have underway, as well as the political climate and overall field of urbanism – reflecting the fact that change is the only constant at the moment. Change can be a good thing, and I think the UDG is well-placed to respond positively to this pressure – to be the leading edge rather than over the edge.

My intention for the period that I occupy this chair is to reinforce the UDG's leading edge qualities. As well as supporting the current excellent activities of the Group (monthly events, tours, awards and the magazine, among others), I am keen to increase the profile of the Group and of urban design in a more general sense. We have started a number of different initiatives with this goal in mind.

First of all, the website: for most organisations the website has now become their 'front door'; it is increasingly the main place where you expect to easily locate interesting and inspiring information and links to other sites, and to be able to communicate with and within a particular organisation. The UDG's potential has outgrown its existing website and over the next couple of months we expect to be re-launching our new-look in cyberspace with a much more up-to-date and user-friendly structure, and improved graphics. This will also introduce a range of additional links and interactive components, which will respond to members' needs as well as becoming a base for attracting new ones and communicating with a broader audience.

We would like to enable the members of the Urban Design Group to participate much more in exploring ideas with other members, joining in research projects, as well as in

the event to have produced the best project of the year according to the criteria defined in the conditions.

### PUBLIC SECTOR AWARD

To be awarded the local authority or public sector agency that has been voted as having submitted the best urban design initiative of the year.

### STUDENTS AWARD

This will be awarded to one or two students decided by voting both on the website by members in January, and also following their presentation at the awards event.

more general discussions, and making good contacts. We hope that the new website will make all these activities easier to carry out.

Communication is the key, extending both the medium and the message. Another way of expanding our communication base is to increase our connections with related organisations in the fields of landscape, planning and the built environment in general. We have started talking to the related professional bodies to discuss how we could jointly broaden our impacts, for instance by holding joint events and better connecting our communication systems in order to reach more interested people.

The UDG's awards have been a great success and this year we aim to extend the programme and add several more categories of award to encourage greater participation from our members. As shown below we now have a public sector award, a student award, as well as awards for urban design journalism and books.

Politics is a challenging subject and never more than at the moment as we wait to see what the coalition government has in store for the industry in terms of changes to the planning regime as well as to public sector project funding. Better channels of communication within the UDG members may help us formulate responses to these changes quickly, as well as provide support to affected members.

So, the view from the chair is a mixed one although the Urban Design Group itself is in good shape, with increasing numbers of Recognised Practitioners and a steady group of Practice members, as well as an increasing profile to look forward to... so welcome to new beginnings at the end of 2010!

● Amanda Reynolds

### PUBLISHERS AWARD

To be awarded to the publisher whose book has been voted by a panel of 4 readers as the best urban design book published in the past 18 months. All books are reviewed in this issue.

### JOURNALISTS AWARD

Journalists writing on urban design for national papers are being invited to select an article written in 2010 and submit it to the UDG for member voting in January 2011.

The awards programme is being coordinated by John Billingham who chairs an awards working group and it is administered in conjunction with Louise Ingledow. ●

### Current subscriptions

*Urban Design* is free to Urban Design Group members who also receive newsletters and the directory at the time of printing

### UDG Office

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### Annual membership rates

**UK individuals** £40 **UK students** £20  
**International individuals** £50  
**Recognised practitioner in urban design** £80  
**Practices** £250 (including a listing in the *UD* practice index and on the [udg](http://udg.org.uk) website)  
**Education** £100 (including a listing in the

*UD* practice index and on the [UDG](http://udg.org.uk) website)

**Local authorities** £100 (including two copies of *Urban Design*)

**UK libraries** £40

**International libraries** £50

Individual issues of *Urban Design* cost £5

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This issue has been generously sponsored by Atkins plc

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Beijing fireworks over Bird's Nest Stadium  
Courtesy S Vision

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## DIARY OF EVENTS

Unless otherwise indicated, all LONDON events are held at The Gallery, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ at 6.30 pm. Tickets can be purchased at the door from 6.00pm: £5.00 non-members, £2.00 members, £1.00 students.

### WEDNESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2010

#### Urban Design for Developing Cities

Speakers Prof Nabeel Hamdi (Housing and Urban Development Department, Oxford Brookes), Ed Parham (Space Syntax) and Tony Lloyd-Jones (University of Westminster) explore the challenges and lessons to be learned from urban design in developing cities.

### THURSDAY 21 – SATURDAY 23 OCTOBER 2010, LEEDS

#### The National Conference on Urban Design: Urban Design on the Edge

What does an 'age of austerity' mean for urban design and placemaking? What role do those involved in shaping the urban

environment have to play in an era of cuts in the public sector and when the private sector is being starved of funds for development? What can we learn from places and projects that have already shown us how to live – and thrive – in the current economic context? How should urban designers work alongside local communities and their elected representatives to help fulfil their potential?

The conference will bring together speakers from a wide range of backgrounds who have already begun to address the contemporary economic, social, political and environmental challenges facing our neighbourhoods, towns and cities. It will hear from those involved in innovative projects that have successfully engaged with – and made the most of – the relationship between design and local economic sustainability.

Booking is now open. Full day conference and UDG annual dinner on Friday 22 October, with related events on Thursday 21 and Saturday 23. For further details please see [www.udg.org.uk](http://www.udg.org.uk) or contact [admin@udg.org.uk](mailto:admin@udg.org.uk) / 020 7250 0892

### NOVEMBER 2010

#### Kevin Lynch Memorial Lecture

Details TBC.

### DECEMBER 2010

#### UDG Christmas Celebration

The UDG's annual celebration of the festive season held at another curious London location. Full details TBC.

### WEDNESDAY 19 JANUARY 2011

#### Urban Design & Anthropology

This event will look at the relationship between anthropology and urban design. Speakers will address the influence of culture upon the design of places and how the study of anthropology can be of practical benefit to urban designers.

### WEDNESDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2011

#### UDG Awards Event 2011

To be held in the stunning surroundings of Royal United Services Club (RUSI), 61 Whitehall, London. Drinks and canapés will be served between 6.30 and 7.15pm in the first floor library followed by the presentation of awards in the historic Wellington Hall. Seating is limited to 150 seats with a certain number of these being made available to speakers and guests related to urban design courses, practices, the public sector, publishers and journalists. The UDG office will deal with requests for tickets which are expected to be available from 1 December 2010. ●

# ALL CHANGE

'Legacy is our *raison d'être*. It ensures that the Olympic Games are more than metres and medals... Wherever the Games have appeared, cities are changed forever.'

Jacques Rogge, IOC Chairman, 2007

This issue examines the controversial topic of Olympic legacies, through critiques and reflections on London 2012 and other Olympic bids and events, from an urban design perspective.

As the normal political context for urban design interventions continues to change and become less clear with each new government pronouncement, the UDG is also changing. In this issue, we welcome Amanda Reynolds, the UDG's first chairwoman, who will lead the Group and speak out on important issues. We therefore thank outgoing chairman Duncan Ecob for his excellent leadership over the last two years. His democratic approach has led to many initiatives becoming UDG policy, and the 2009-10 AGM reflects this year's successes.

This issue also includes the first Publishers Award, book reviews considered by a panel of four members. This initiative has prompted the editorial team to reflect on our long-running book review section, and we would welcome your views to ensure that it is still relevant. Please contact Richard Cole, our Book Review Editor, via the UDG's office either by post or e-mail with your views on the following points, by the end of November 2010:

Do the books reviewed cover topics which interest you as an urban designer?

1. Are the reviews too short or too long?
2. Are there certain books that you would like to see reviewed?
3. Are there other points that should be considered in this review?

The feedback from this will be reported in a future issue of Urban Design.

● Louise Thomas and Sebastian Loew

## Urban Design Group

CHAIRMAN Amanda Reynolds  
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**Material for publication**  
Please send text by email to the editors, images to be supplied at a high-resolution (180mm width @300dpi) preferably as jpeg

## Trees and Climate Change

The Gallery, London 19 May 2010

We often forget that the 20th century witnessed the eradication by disease of the elm from the European landscape. Perhaps more devastating than disease is the disregard of the value of trees and the design of developments devoid of long term arboreal ambition. However in Jeremy Barrell and David Cashman of Barrell Tree Consultancy the UDG found two individuals with huge enthusiasm for ensuring future generations live in a green environment. During their evening talk they set out a compelling case for trees, with benefits including pollution reduction by absorption of particulates onto leaves, shade and shelter in summer, and interception of runoff; not to mention the benefit to wellbeing, which is massive and can be monetised. They showed how easy it is to kill mature trees during the construction process, by cutting through roots or compacting soil. Building too close to trees could create conflicts for future occupants, leading to the trees being felled, and never replaced. The right tree in the right place is the mantra, and plant big trees.

One of their illustrations was a photograph of a housing estate street. On one



side was a view of buildings cradled by large majestic trees; on the other, nothing but stark, unrelieved roof lines and the odd dwarf conifer. The difference was profound. One begins to realise that the legacy of trees in most urban areas is a living fossil: they are the inherited hedgerows and mature trees of the pre-existing rural landscape. Where the Victorians boldly planted plane trees and other forest species that could achieve a height of 100ft or more, the modern urban planting list is too often limited to flowering cherries.

We need to dispense with the unambitious post-war approach to tree planting and look towards creating a living urban landscape for future generations. For several

years many have been forecasting that the days of the horse chestnut are numbered as disease, drought, and a leaf mining moth take their toll; we have been accustomed to seeing the leaves turn brown in June as the moths make their homes. This year the leaves are still green, and it seems that the severe winter has killed off many moths but no doubt not all. Some will have survived and their descendents will continue the job. So let us enjoy this year's unblemished horse chestnuts, and reflect on the impact of climate and invasive species. But of course the biggest threat to trees is our own inaction, and the failure to plant anew - it is time perhaps for a 'treenaissance'.

● Robert Huxford

## Suburbs

The Gallery, London 16 June 2010

Coinciding with UD issue 115 on Suburbs assembled by Jon Rowland, this seminal subject had until now avoided discussion at UDG perhaps as it seems to hover between being both too important and too banal to warrant a whole evening to itself. Bob White of the Kent Design Initiative started by claiming to be a child of suburbia; a sustainable suburb with local industry, a nearby tube station and 30 dwellings to the hectare, laid out in an orderly hierarchy of streets with front and back gardens. Bob illustrated his well-researched talk with tales from Herne Bay, Ashford and Dartford, with a passing reference to award-winning Lacuna at Kings Hill. He told of how residents preferred old fashioned streets to home zones in one area, while others had their front gardens replaced with acres of block paving without raising any concerns. He also shocked the audience with images of stone kerbs replaced with plastic - for health and safety reasons.

Jon Rowland followed with the 21st century suburb - the forgotten bit of urban design. He reported that CABE Design Reviews are inundated with urban extensions,

the new name for suburbs, but lacking philosophies of what these places are meant to be. Rather than sprawling places to flee from, suburbs were once aspirational healthy places like garden suburbs 'that take account of everything that makes life worth living'. Jon showed how great architects had an influence; an original model for the suburban semi detached house was Pugin's design for a rectory, and the Letchworth plan was copied from Wren. Suburbs also drive the economy containing many start-ups and allowing the hybrid lifestyle for today's three million people who work from home. Perhaps they are models for the new localism, co-ops and condominiums, and self-build? After the talks, the eager audience wanted to ask questions

or express an opinion, or both (always a good sign). Are suburbs an end in themselves or just a stage in development along the urban transect? Can they be sustainable? Will an end to garden-grabbing result in sterility? Although we live, breathe and dress urban, many of us design housing at densities that are actually suburban-ish. After all family housing with gardens is what people want and it is difficult to achieve at densities much above 37 to the hectare, so what is the alternative? The conclusions were that more thought is needed, more design awareness, a new philosophy, and a Suburban Task Force was called for. Now who should be on the panel of experts?

● Malcolm Moor

## UDG in the North-East

June 2010

The first regional Urban Design Group event in the North East was held on 20th June in the bright new Clore Suite in the newly refurbished and rebranded Great North Museum. The event was organised by regional convenor and Urban Design Lecturer at Newcastle University, Georgia Giannopoulou and sponsored jointly by the UDG and Devereux Architects who have a regional office in Newcastle.

The event was held in the context of the annual North East Festival of Architecture, and the subject fitted in with this year's overall theme of Reducing CO<sub>2</sub> as well as Newcastle University's second Societal Challenge theme of Climate Change, aiming to engage a range of professional and community members. A number of speakers, including academics, architects, urbanists and community members involved in Transition Towns, introduced the concept with short and pithy 10 minute consecutive taster presentations on various aspects of transition, accepting that this was by no means an exhaustive list.

Talks were also included on retrofitting buildings, permaculture, sustainable transport and health, transition and its relation to



planning and urban design, as well as case studies from local places that have acquired transition status and are in various stages in their development: Hexham (Roger Higgins, Urban Designer, Carlisle) and Newcastle (Chris Benson, Transition Towns-Newcastle). The talks were wrapped up by newly-appointed UDG chair Amanda Reynolds who also chaired the discussion afterwards. Questions included issues on the challenges faced by communities trying to transition into a more sustainable and resilient lifestyle, issues of funding, and conflicts in implementation. The event was oversubscribed with delegates

from a great breadth of disciplines and roles, including community members; the atmosphere was very positive and the event managed to raise the profile of the UDG, resulting in the recruitment of a number of new members. The talks and Q&A were followed by a reception in the venue's garden. This was the pilot in a series of local events unpicking the various aspects of transition in more detail, with the first one planned for this autumn.

● Georgia Giannopoulou

↑ LeeRushworth.com, courtesy of Northern Architecture

## StreetLondon Walk: The Bankside to Cityside

July 2010

Under the umbrella of the UDG and the London Festival of Architecture 2010, Louise Duggan led the recent StreetLondon walk around the northern part of the London Borough of Southwark. We walked away from the known areas and witnessed the changes within the neighbourhood.

The meeting point, just outside Bernie Spain Garden, provided us with a first glance at the area's multiple characteristics. This ranged from the garden's lush vegetation, through to the housing developments near Coin Street and the banks of the river Thames, to the commercial buildings that include the Oxo Tower. Next, thanks to the hospitality of Coin Street Community Builders, we gained a comprehensive view of the whole of the South Bank area from the model kept at their community centre.

Walking through The Cut and familiarising ourselves with the rich and long history of the place, we found our way to Glasshill Street, where Richard Galpin showed us a creative



answer to the last downturn in property market: a disused, small post-industrial complex used by upcoming artists as studio space and gallery.

Discussing the social and economic changes taking place in Southwark, we walked to the Better Bankside headquarters. There, we were greeted by Valerie Beirne, Bankside Urban Forest manager. She spoke about up and coming initiatives within the Bankside fringe area. From Southwark Street, taking a minute to peek at yet another project for the LFA 2010 - the Union Street Urban Orchard - we went to Cross Bones Graveyard. Here Andy Lockwood gave us a talk about the history of the last undeveloped plot in Bankside. The site was used as unconsecrated graveyard in post



medieval history, and was rediscovered during the excavations for the Jubilee Line extension. Since then the Friends of Cross Bones Graveyard have been campaigning for the establishment of a Garden of Remembrance.

Our last stop was the Red Cross Garden, originally established by Octavia Hill, the founder of the National Trust, at the end of the 19th century. The space has recently been regenerated by the Bankside Open Spaces Trust. Tim Wood explained how collaboration with the St Mungo's Association has generated some well loved spaces in Mint St. We ended our walk at The Lord Clyde on Clennam Street, which is London's shortest street, with a cooling glass of cider.

● Anna Nasalska

## Urban Design Group's Annual General Meeting

The Gallery, London 16 June 2010

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The year for urban designers has continued to be dominated by the global financial crisis. Periodic recessions are an unfortunate aspect of the life-long career of an urban design practitioner. However they are part of a cycle that we have seen before, and little over two years ago tremendous activity in the financial sector was driving urban development. I trust that just as the recession came upon us quickly, so too will the recovery.

Recessions can also be times to think hard about what we do and to sharpen our skills, systems and policies in preparation for the next economic cycle. Whilst the past decade may have seen a growth in bureaucracy, the work of designers is directly productive, ending not merely in reports but in better places and ultimately better lives.

There are a number of areas which give grounds for some optimism. The 2012 Olympics will bring a focus for regeneration and help in changing the mood. Scotland has seen the publication of *Designing Streets*, with its foundation on balanced decision-making - where urban design practitioners excel. Ireland has been exceptionally hard hit by the economic crisis as part of the European economy, but, as international markets revive, we can expect that money will move into the Irish economy to stimulate a revival. There continue to be major opportunities globally - in China, India, the Middle East and an emerging Africa; wherever there are people there is a need for urban design.

The Urban Design Group continues to be a focus for discussion on urban development that meets the wider aspirations of society and communities. As purse strings are drawn tighter by central government, urban designers must be brave in putting their design, negotiation and inclusive dialogue skills forward to deliver best value, thinking laterally about problems of cost, design and implementation.

The UDG itself continues to grow in strength with more applications for the Registered Practitioner in Urban Design. We have already had a successful inaugural Student Award scheme and an extremely enthusiastic response to the first Public Sector Urban Design Award. We look forward to celebrating this great work at our special award presentation event on 2 February 2011.

I wish all our members well for the coming year and I hope to see you in Leeds on 22 October for our 2010 annual conference.

● Duncan Ecob

The following were elected to the Executive Committee: Amanda Reynolds who is also the incoming UDG Chair, Hugo Frieszo (Treasurer), Ben van Bruggen, Philip Cave, Andrew Dakin, Duncan Ecob, Sebastian Loew, Colin Munsie, Katy Neaves, Paul Reynolds, Barry Sellers and Alan Stones.

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Despite the impacts of the global financial crisis, individual membership of the UDG has remained fairly constant throughout the year. A research initiative was launched with results due later in 2010, and all back copies of our journal *Urban Design* will be digitised so that they are publicly available on-line from the very first editions. Press coverage for the UDG has included letters published in the national media and the *London Evening Standard*.

The email newsletter service has maintained a direct circulation to around 1,200 individuals. It provides a concise monitoring service of government websites across the UK, as well as news of research in areas that add richness to urban design including psychology, sociology, public health, technology and economics. There have also been improvements to the UDG website [www.udg.org.uk](http://www.udg.org.uk), including an improved display for directory listings, and the parallel website [www.urban-design-group.org.uk](http://www.urban-design-group.org.uk) has helped to provide additional flexibility and enhance the resources.

The 2009 Annual Conference held at Peterhouse in Cambridge under the title of 'Is big still beautiful?' was supported by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Joint Urban Design Team, led by Glen Richardson. The opening event on 'Is Tall Beautiful?' was well attended and generated a lively and interesting discussion. The UDG annual dinner, held in the college's medieval dining hall, was an atmospheric and memorable evening and two of our patrons, Alan Baxter and John Worthington, attended.

STREET London has gained in strength, led by a team including Katy Neaves, Louise Duggan and Steve Lorimer, with popular walking tours around London and a study day in Margate. The UDG events programme in London continues to include a diverse range of speakers, including the annual Kevin Lynch Memorial Lecture which in 2009 was given by Leeds Civic Architect John Thorp. Planning and co-ordination of the events has been led by Alan Stones, who has also run two highly successful international study tours to Berlin and Croatia during 2010. The UDG continues to support the Urban Design Alliance through the dedicated efforts of Barry Sellers; Urban Design Week 2009 was successfully staged with much valued support from RUDI and the IHBC.

Finally the UDG has greatly valued the contribution of Louise Ingledow to whom we owe the smooth running of the organisation; her support, co-ordination and encouragement were reflected during the course of the year by her promotion to UDG Development Manager.

● Robert Huxford

INCOME	
Subscriptions	£ 82,464
Publications and Awards	£ 13,875
Donation from Urban Design Services Ltd	£ 5,974
UDSL Contribution to Office Costs	£ 5,000
Interest Received	£ 1,282
Inland Revenue: Gift Aid	£ 7,749
Miscellaneous Income	£ 44
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£116,388</b>
EXPENDITURE	
Publications & Awards	£ 38,671
Management & Administration	£ 72,749
Development Expenditure	£ 1,200
Governance costs	£ 940
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£113,560</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>£ 2,828</b>
<b>BALANCES BROUGHT FORWARD</b>	<b>£125,973</b>
<b>FUND BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>£128,801</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>£129,740</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>£ 940</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>£128,801</b>

### UDG TREASURER'S REPORT 2010

The Independent Auditors Report for the year ending 28 February 2010 was provided for the UDG and Urban Design Services Ltd (UDSL).

On Income: for the UDG and UDSL, the combined net surplus is £2,828, which compares with a surplus of £47,672 in 2009 - when the *Urban Design Directory* and *Design & Access Statements* were published, attracting high levels of sponsorship. Subscriptions income has fallen by 8 per cent, as a number of practices have discontinued their membership. UDG subscription rates have been the same for the last five years and a review is due. UDSL contributed £5,974 to the operation of the UDG, as the result of two successful international tours led by Alan Stones, and the annual conference in Cambridge.

On Expenditure: general costs have risen by 4.3%, reflecting inflation and additional development expenditure.

The Forecast Opportunities and Requirements for 2010-11 are that a baseline budget for the operation of the UDG was approved by the Trustees, with development expenditure allocated to the suggested projects of digitising back copies of *Urban Design*, further development of the Urban Design Awards, research initiatives, and support for UDG regional activity. As in last year's report, the UDG Trustees, Executive and members wish the Group's assets to be put to profitable and promotional use, and would welcome a wide range of proposals.

● Hugo Frieszo

## UDG Study Tour of Venetian Towns on the Dalmatian Coast

15–23 May 2010

Thirty seven UDG members and friends spent a week looking at the best examples of mediaeval Venetian colonial towns on the Dalmatian coast, to assess whether they were generic in design or diverse responses to topography.

The Dalmatian coast is arid, backed by mountainous terrain, and protected by many islands with good harbours and anchorages. From the 11th century the Venetians, Croats and Byzantines were already competing here, with the Venetians seeking to establish ports for trading and tapping into the resources of the Balkan interior. They were ejected from the region by the Hungarian monarchy in 1358, but a dynastic crisis in 1409 resulted in the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia selling its rights in Dalmatia to Venice. For four centuries the Dalmatian coast was ruled from Venice, with each town presided over by a Rector answerable to the Doge. The towns prospered thanks to trade with the eastern Mediterranean, particularly the Turks, and the population was swollen by Croatian immigrants fleeing Balkan conflicts during the 15th and 17th centuries. However, Mediterranean trade declined following the discovery of America, and the Venetian Republic finally fell to Napoleon in 1797, but Italian culture continued to dominate. Dalmatia became an Italian speaking province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, until joining the new state of Yugoslavia in 1918.

### THE TOWNS

Korčula (formerly Curzola), the first town visited, is walled and sits on a promontory facing the straits between Korčula island and the Pelješac peninsula. Its main street, about 3m wide, runs along its spine with narrow side streets. The central cathedral faces a diminutive square opposite the Rector's palace. Throughout there are Venetian gothic windows and door cases on substantial grey stone houses: most buildings date from the 13th to 15th centuries and some are now derelict.

Hvar (formerly Lesina), is also protected from the sea by islands. The Venetians built the Romanesque cathedral, which is linked to the harbour by a generous square fronted by aristocratic mansions and a 17th century arsenal. A grid of narrow streets ascends the slopes on either side, and the town has both a Dominican and a Franciscan monastery, but is not fortified.

Trogir (formerly Trago) retains its walls, even along the waterfront, although its position as an island between the mainland and a larger island makes it seem impregnable.



There is a square fronted by a Romanesque cathedral, a 15th century town loggia with clock tower, Venetian gothic mansion and a bishop's palace. A grid of narrow streets fills the rest of the walled town.

Zadar (formerly Zara) also enjoys the security of being on a promontory. It did not join Yugoslavia until 1947, having seen heavy Allied bombing during the Second World War. As a result only part of the original walls and network of narrow streets survive. The huge 9th century St. Donat's Church was reduced to a shell by Napoleon, but there is a Romanesque cathedral, 16th century Venetian guard house with clocktower, and town loggia. The seafront repaved in 2005 incorporates a musical sea organ which is powered by wave action and is a great attraction.

Rab (formerly Arbe) is the most atmospheric of the towns, perched on a promontory and walled. It has three parallel streets on ascending contours, with the lower two fronted by the Rector's Palace and patrician houses, and the top one linking four Romanesque campaniles.

Šibenik (formerly Sebenico) straggles along a hillside above the present-day port, and focuses on a 15th century cathedral and the town loggia. A strongpoint in Venetian struggles with the Turks, Šibenik was more recently an industrial port.

### FORM OR TOPOGRAPHY?

These Venetian towns did not seem to follow a generic plan, but respond to defensible topography. This is not surprising, as they were thriving, self-governing towns, with a Venetian cultural influence and buildings erected when the Venetians were in control. From the 18th century, the obscurity of these towns fortunately secured their preservation, and the Yugoslav state located hotels and tourist facilities outside the historic cores.

We also visited two important cities which although under Venetian control did not fit the Venetian colonial category: Dubrovnik populated by Slavs, came under Venetian control in 1204-1358 and later becoming an independent republic with favoured Balkan trading status. It has a main street along the watercourse, fronted

by merchants' houses, each separated by secondary streets. Prosperity during the 15th and 16th centuries brought the splendid Rector's Palace and custom house, fountains, monuments and squares, and walls - still intact and with superb views into the town centre. However, an earthquake in 1667 left the city in ruins, and although rebuilt with elegant baroque town houses, the economy never recovered and the city passed under Austro-Hungarian control in 1815. The 1992 siege by the Serbs seems to have had no lasting impact, and the city thrives today from cruise passengers and tourists.

Split (formerly Spalato) is unique, being founded within a Roman emperor's palace. The emperor Diocletian had planned a palace for his retirement in his native Illyria - a big complex measuring 200m x 240m, with a *cardo*, *decumanus* and perimeter wall. Disused by the 7th century, it was turned into a town by squatters, and by the 14th century had doubled in size with defensive walls. Venetian rule, from 1420, brought an upsurge in trade with the Turks, and the port's location led to further expansion under the Austro-Hungarians and the Yugoslavs. Visiting today, it is remarkable how much of Diocletian's palace is intact after 1,700 years. Peristyles at the carfax are still in place, the emperor's octagonal mausoleum is the cathedral, and the temple of Jupiter the baptistery. The visitors' vestibule, with its huge brick dome reminiscent of the Pantheon in Rome, sits over a street, whilst the emperor's private apartments have become a slum (until recently the red-light district). The Riva (waterfront) in front of the palace has recently been repaved and fronted by stylish cafés. This impressive new place is an antidote to the industrial decline of other parts of the city, yet the sweeping view from the nearby Marjan Hill of the city and port in its bay made a memorable end of our tour.

● Alan Stones



☞☞ Split - view from Marjan Hill  
 ☞ Dubrovnik - before the earthquake  
 ↑ Trogir - town walls on waterfront  
 ↑↑ Rab - from waterfront  
 → Dubrovnik - Stradun from the town walls  
 →→ Hvar - aristocratic mansion

## Getting the big picture right

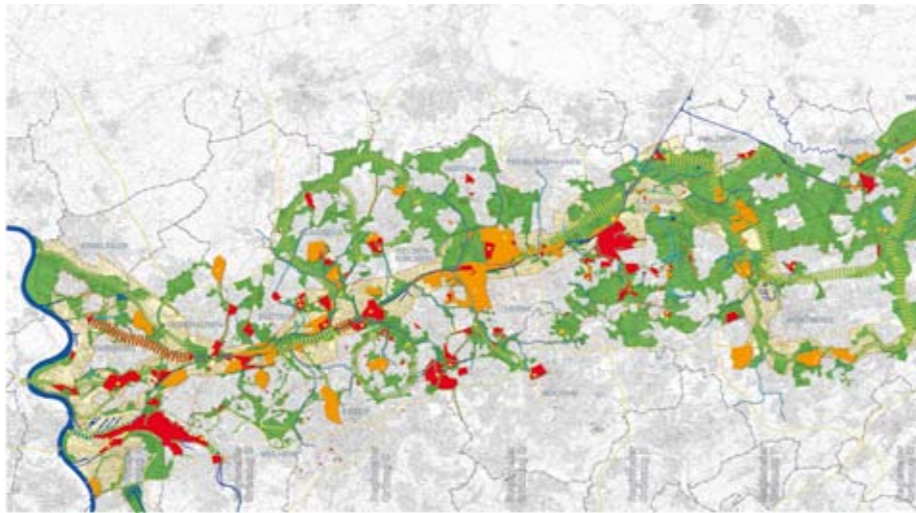
The Government intends to create a bottom-up, neighbourhood level planning system. But some development cannot be tackled at the neighbourhood, or even local authority, level alone. Large infrastructure projects often straddle local boundaries. Their impact stretches beyond a town or a city. Sometimes, it is beyond the ability of any single authority to address the challenge of climate change or make a place competitive. How we deal with these kinds of issues that affect the lives of people over large areas is the focus of a new guide from CABE, *Getting the big picture right*.

Over recent years local authorities have started to tackle cross-boundary issues through the planning system. In some areas sub-regional strategies were produced as part of regional strategies, to sit above and inform local development frameworks. Elsewhere groups of local authorities decided instead to produce joint core strategies, to replace individual plans. At the same time, many sub-regional or city-regional partnerships emerged in England that developed non-statutory strategies to outline priorities and actions related to the physical fabric of their areas.

CABE has been working with many of these partnerships and experience suggests that they should adopt a more creative and collaborative approach to planning for the future of their area, that goes beyond generic visions. Their approach should focus instead on improving the quality and distinctiveness of a place, considering social, economic and environmental performance at the same time as its physical characteristics.

This prompted CABE to explore new ways of tackling cross-boundary issues through urban design. It took two years to develop a methodology, based on successful cross-boundary strategies in the UK and abroad, as well as direct project experience. The methodology now provides an ideal framework for the proposed Local Enterprise Partnerships and other types of cross-boundary partnership that:

- want to improve the quality and distinctiveness of what gets built in their area
- have a concentration of social, environmental or economic problems in the area and need to have a thorough approach to dealing with them constructively
- are performing well and growing, and wish to either accommodate this growth or spread its benefits across the wider area, particularly significant housing growth
- need to strengthen the links between town and city centres or within a natural economic area
- need to plan strategic infrastructure such as water or waste management, energy



- production or a network of green spaces
- are planning new facilities such as hospitals or large leisure and shopping centres
- want to improve coordination between sector-specific or local strategies, initiatives and projects
- want to protect or enhance important natural, cultural or heritage assets.

The new approach can be described by the distinctive features which set it apart from recent practice and that chime well with the new planning agenda. It is:

- selective in its interests, addressing issues that are of genuine cross-boundary importance, and cannot be tackled at any other spatial level. These are often the most difficult and complex issues that will test the strength of the partnership. The selectiveness of the approach applies not only to the scope of the project but also to its outcomes - a limited set of strategic themes and projects.
- a spatially led, three-dimensional and visually rich approach, that deals with the physical characteristics of a place in all its complexity. It results in proposals for specific projects and sites, grounded in the physical context of a place.
- an integrated approach to planning for the future of a place, considering how its physical, economic, environmental, social and cultural aspects all contribute to its success. It brings together analysis and design, work across spatial scales, disciplines and sectors and considers the existing and new urban fabric of a place alongside its natural characteristics and assets.
- based on an engaging and inclusive process, centred on a number of workshops where key players come together, assisted by an expert team, to scope the work, input data, prioritise areas or themes, draw up preferred proposals and projects and finalise plans for implementation.
- focused on delivering change on the ground, through the development of an implementation plan that sets out who the key partners are and what their contribution is. By providing a clear implementation framework, it stabilises, coordinates and

- directs development activity and, in areas with low values and little (or no) developer interest, creates more attractive conditions for developers and investors.
- flexible, so that changes can be reflected upon and proposals amended as necessary. While being capable of providing flexibility and change, the process and its outputs provide nonetheless enough guidance and detail to ensure the quality of the final projects.

There are many good examples of successful spatial strategies, which provided the basis for this new approach, including the joint effort of twenty local authorities in the Ruhr area in Germany to reverse the decline caused by the closure of steelworks and mines. They produced a flexible, shared strategy to guide the work at local level. In the UK, the Cambridge Futures project is an example of bottom-up working between local businesses, authorities and the university to address growth pressure. More recently the Hertfordshire charrette developed a number of spatial options for long-term growth in the county through a seven-day workshop involving local interest groups.

There is no one model that fits all. Partnerships need to focus on the qualities and opportunities of their place and come up with their own version of the design process that will allow them to address these qualities and opportunities in a spatial, creative and collaborative way. This publication and web resource provide enough useful guidance and case study material to encourage them to do this. See [www.cabe.org.uk/publications/getting-the-big-picture-right](http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/getting-the-big-picture-right) and [www.cabe.org.uk/strud](http://www.cabe.org.uk/strud)

- Biljana Savic, senior advisor at CABE

↑ Emscher Park 2010 master plan

## The Urban Design Interview: Rochelle Friend



### What is your current job and how long have you been there?

I'm a Principal Planner in the planning policy team at Islington Council. I've been working there since September 2009. Prior to this I worked in the former planning project's team for four years on a variety of projects, including the EC1 Public Space Strategy.

### Can you describe the path that you followed to become an urban designer and what motivated you?

I was inspired to be an urban designer when Jan Gehl came to speak at a planning conference I attended after graduating. I was convinced that urban design was the way forward. As a planner I always thought urban design was an essential specialism to have. My understanding then was making places work for people, and that's exactly what it's all about and what motivates me.

I completed my Masters at Westminster University, graduating in 2005 (Terry Farrell bestowed my Masters upon me as he received an honorary degree the same day!). Since graduating I've worked on a number of master plans, planning briefs and numerous public realm projects, from developing the vision to seeing schemes built on site. I find it very rewarding work as it often makes a big difference to people's everyday life.

### What do you find exciting about your work?

Knowing that the planning policies I formulate will be in place for the next 15 years and therefore shape design in Islington for some time to come! Influencing the shape of places is a real privilege.

### What do you think are the most important skills of an urban designer?

Understanding the complex interrelationship between physical, environmental, social, cultural and economic factors, which is often referred to as considering things holistically. The skills to empathetically analyse, evaluate, visualise and respond sympathetically with a creative approach. Then to communicate ideas with people at all levels. The skill to engage local people and key stakeholders to encourage ownership of schemes is also very important. Having the creative ability to inspire and surprise helps too!

### What would you like to be doing in ten years' time?

I hope I will continue to be excited and inspired by new people and places and continue to be passionate about what I do. I think I will have returned to New Zealand for the lifestyle and opportunities to advance my career in a different direction.

### As an urban designer, do you have a role model?

Jane Jacobs and Jan Gehl. Their work is so well considered, insightful, and practical yet inspiring. Jan Gehl's books are well worth sourcing. I believe Jane Jacob's work is necessary background knowledge for any good urban designer.

### If you were to recommend an urban design scheme or study (past or present) for an award, what would you chose?

A controversial scheme I worked on in 2005/06 - the St. Luke's Framework. In my opinion it was a visionary piece of work. It stirred up a lot of interest in the community, and I think this was because it was beyond the scope of the EC1 Public Space Strategy that it emerged from. There was always a risk it would fail; however most of the public realm projects associated with the framework have been implemented and improved the neighbourhood for the better, so all in all, a success. Quite a few of the projects I've been involved with in the EC1 area have received awards or have been shortlisted. I'm really proud of what we've achieved.

### Where is your favourite town or city and why?

It's very difficult to pick just one favourite town or city... I guess I would pick London. The reasons are: it really is a world in one city; with the fascinating history, from Victorian architecture to the great churches of Christopher Wren, monuments from the past at every turn; the special character, from the quiet Georgian squares, medieval streets and alleyways of the City to the boldness of the modern Canary Wharf; the diversity of people; the ease to get around without a car (whether you loathe or love it, public transport is a very convenient way to discover the city); great work opportunities; there's a fabulous range of things to do, with world class museums, galleries and

theatres such as the British Museum, Tate Gallery and Shakespeare's Globe, wonderful markets like Borough and Spitalfields; so many wonderful places to enjoy, such as the South Bank, Brick Lane, great cafes in Soho like the Milk Bar and afternoon tea at places such as the Wolseley; shopping in Covent Garden, Seven Dials, Oxford St departments stores and Regent St; and of course many fabulous pubs/ bars, my favourite is Gordon's wine bar. Also, London is surprisingly green with many fabulous parks like Hampstead Heath and Regent's Park, not to mention Hyde Park, St James Park and Green Park.

### Where is your most hated place and why?

Suburbia...I dislike the remoteness, the lack of connectivity and convenience to services and facilities, the reliance on cars and the sameness. I guess that's why I've always lived centrally, with everything in walking distance from home: school/ work/ shops/ parks.

### What advice would you give UD readers?

Travel and experience places, watch the world go by in various locations, enjoy new and different cities/ places, learn from what works. Realise that there is no one-size-fits-all and no matter how many text books you read nothing can make up for life experience.

### What should the Urban Design Group be doing now or in the future?

UDG should be encouraging discussion and perhaps more peer review of work. There is a wealth of knowledge out there which could be shared more effectively.

### Finally, who would you like to see interviewed by UD?

A member of the public, asking them how recent projects have influenced their lives, so we can learn from that. ●



# SEGREGATED SUBURBAN POST-WAR ESTATES

*Jasdeep Bhalla considers how to re-integrate some of Britain's most segregated areas*



## INTRODUCTION

The post-war council estate remains one of the defining features of the contemporary British city. Much of this development was constructed in response to the enduring dearth of affordable residential stock. 19th Century working class housing was characterised by overpopulation, pollution and disease, and consequently deemed unacceptable. Bomb damage sustained during the Second World War further exacerbated shortages, following which the nation witnessed unprecedented levels of publicly subsidised residential development.

Inspired by modern planning philosophy, successive post-war governments embarked upon accelerated suburban development programmes. The new approach to residential planning sought to establish a connection with nature, light and air, and in doing so provide inhabitants with a higher quality of life. It is therefore a cruel irony, that despite such altruistic and philanthropic origins, the product of these endeavours now embodies the very legacy it once sought to eradicate.

Industrialised construction techniques were employed as house-builders sought to meet the targets set by central government. Economies of scale were relentlessly pursued, as large expanses of social housing were built in concentrated localities. The reduction of cost, and consequently quality in construction frequently led to building failures. Residential dwellings and their wider environment quickly began to deteriorate. Furthermore the experimental nature of modern residential layouts further compounded structural problems, and

have since been linked to declining social conditions.

It would be unjust to suggest that all such forms of development have fallen into disrepair. However there is a clear correlation between deprivation and concentrated areas of post-war social housing needing regeneration. Despite various forms of intervention, professionals have seemingly struggled to devise a comprehensive and long term remedy to the complex array of problems presented.

## REGENERATION

The scale and nature of improvement mechanisms employed to date can be broadly categorised in two types. Within the first are public realm schemes that seek simply to redecorate elements of the environment, including open spaces and building façades. These are typically low in cost and unobtrusive. The second is total demolition, as many authorities opted to simply dispose of their problems. More recently we have seen the emergence of a third approach that seeks to rehabilitate existing housing stock and its wider environment. Established in connection with the renaissance of traditional urbanism and renewed emphasis on community participation, this form of intervention aspires to preserve existing social ties. This type of regeneration is the focus of this article.

Notwithstanding the poor structural quality of earlier blocks, local councils have consistently demonstrated that it is economically viable to refurbish various dwelling typologies. When combined with other design mechanisms at appropriate scales, this form of holistic intervention

can potentially deliver lasting renewal. Such schemes can be implemented with greater sensitivity than the crude alternative of total demolition, and are more progressive than low-level public realm enhancement schemes.

Fundamental to this process, is the identification of physical and social components within the estate that continue to cultivate segregation and disadvantage. Despite variations in size, location and demographic composition, many large British post-war suburban estates share common characteristics. In order to deliver comprehensive renewal, it is necessary to develop mechanisms of intervention across this urban spectrum. The following comprise proposals at various levels, identified by examining a number of estates on a national basis.

## STRATEGIC

### Access to employment

Often located on the periphery of settlements, many estates are isolated from the majority of employment opportunities concentrated in urban centres. This separation has frequently been aggravated by the decline of manufacturing industries, a sector many deprived communities were once heavily reliant upon. When accompanied by appropriate social policy, increasing physical access can potentially remove perceptual barriers to employment, reduce benefit dependency and raise communal aspiration levels.

### Public transport infrastructure

Despite their affiliation with the high rise block, post-war suburbs are frequently low

← The Cole Valley has the potential to provide a unique identity for Chelmsley Wood  
→ Convoluted and over-permeable pedestrian network in Harpurhey, Manchester

in gross density and consequently have limited access to rail services. Complex residential spatial arrangements also impede the integration of bus routes. Designers should consider appropriate intensification to generate the critical mass required for such services. Increasing access to public transport acts as a dual economic and social stimulus, as individuals and businesses often choose to reside within well connected neighbourhoods.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD

### Identity

Characterised by monolithic repetitive buildings without decoration or variety, post-war estates often lack distinction. Despite their physical austerity, they remain rich in social capital and often house well established communities. It is critical that this social legacy and other distinguishing features of heritage, are harnessed during the regeneration process and used to convey a sense of unique identity.

### Socio-economic diversity

Many commentators have condemned the political decisions that unintentionally concentrated the least upwardly mobile sectors of society within the confines of a single type of neighbourhood. It is now widely acknowledged that the creation of a demographically balanced community is vital to ensure the long term success of all residential communities.

### Hierarchy of movement

In an effort to embrace modernity and accommodate the automobile, vehicular and pedestrian movement in estates was segregated. Despite ambitious initial visions, areas built in this manner are frequently illegible. Pedestrian movement is often relegated to a particularly convoluted network, as residents are forced to negotiate a complicated series of poorly overlooked pathways. The introduction of an integrated and hierarchical network would provide a more structured and less intimidating environment.

### Variety of use

Built under the principles of zoning, estates are commonly dominated by residential land use, giving non-residents little reason to enter. This reinforces

stigmatisation, as outsiders often perceive many such neighbourhoods as no-go areas. The concentration of employment, retail, and leisure facilities in appropriate locations can entice visitors to enter the estate, and in doing so increase vitality within the public realm. Furthermore, the combination of non-residential land uses also creates a greater sense of hierarchy and legibility.

## BLOCK

### Built frontage

Inspired by the quest for light and air, many blocks are surrounded by unadorned open space and dwellings have little relationship with the public realm. This lack of frontage has been correlated to high crime rates and declining social conditions, as residents are unable to observe activity on the street. New frontage that shares a close relationship with the public realm can be realised through the partial demolition and strategic construction of new dwellings to ensure public space is well overlooked and enclosed.

### Access to space

The weak relationship between residential buildings and the public realm also undermines the distinction between public and private areas. The typical housing estate comprises a complex series of ill-defined courtyards, verges and alleyways. These spaces are frequently accessible to the public, and attract anti-social behaviour. Limiting inappropriate access would help to distinguish public and private areas, allowing residents to execute territorial control over their personal space. Pedestrian activity would be concentrated on the street, consequently increasing vitality within the public realm. The demarcation of space can also be achieved through the considered demolition and construction of new dwellings.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that the post-war suburban estate presents a challenging context with a complexity of several interrelated physical, social and economic issues. Although the scale and significance of the characteristics outlined will undoubtedly vary with location, regeneration schemes must be developed in relation to the urban condition at varied scales.



Historically such programmes have often been preoccupied with isolated aspects of the built environment, typically through small scale redevelopment, or initiatives primarily concerned with the aesthetic value of the public realm. Although such features do have a role to play in the regeneration process, it is imperative to first consider the relationship between the neighbourhood and its wider context. Large concentrations of isolated social housing require a more comprehensive, holistic, and perhaps radical, approach to regeneration in order to sustain lasting change.

The need to salvage existing social housing stock has been intensified by the compounded effects of the Right to Buy policy and the inadequate rate of production of new affordable homes. Given the dual political emphasis on both housing growth and social justice, it is perhaps alarming that the renewal of post-war estates remains somewhat marginalised on current planning and regeneration agendas. The reconciliation and partial densification of such areas has the potential to gain greater recognition within planning policy to promote this form of community led regeneration on a national basis.

Finally, although physical modifications undoubtedly are integral to such schemes, design alone does not present an all embracing panacea. Estate modernisation has proved most effective when physical improvements have been accompanied by changes in social policy and management. This integrated approach has the potential to foster both material improvement and wider social reform. Furthermore, by working within the remit of the existing fabric, such schemes can ensure the network of social ties built up often over the last half-century remain intact. Council estates have not yet run their course as part of the built environment, and remain fundamental in the quest to maintain national social sustainability.

● Jasdeep Bhalla, Urban Design Professional, Alan Baxter and Associates

# OLYMPIC LEGACIES

Over the years the Olympic Games have grown in scale to the point that almost every nation is represented, but such growth has created numerous challenges; the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has had to adapt the Games to the world's changing social circumstances, including the creation of the Winter Games, the Paralympics Games and the Youth Olympic Games. The Games also had to adapt to the varying economical, political and technological realities of the 20th and now 21st centuries. Mass media and corporate sponsorship have brought the Games to a much wider audience and it is only natural that one acknowledges the legacy that this event can leave for the host nation, city and its community.

It is difficult to clearly measure the impact of such mega-events, especially their legacy. The various host cities differ in context, culture, approach, technique and ability. Sometimes the legacy can be a major regeneration project, infrastructure upgrade and major sporting venues, or even the growth of media exposure, technological advancement and social integration, as the adjacent table indicates.

An Olympic history marked by major cost overruns and unrealistic budgets suggests that learning from the past is not high on the agenda. The modern Games seem to have had credibility issues and certain questions keep coming up: white elephants (big event stadiums); spiraling costs; budgets underestimated; forceful displacement of existing communities, with minimal monitoring of the impact not only on relocated business, but also the changed character of part of the city in terms of affordability, vibrancy, diversity and cultural assets; the effect of a large construction site on communities; the effect of post-event gentrification, post-event clean-up, change-over costs and efforts; the impact on the local economy of job creation; and now the effect of the global downturn.

More recently the IOC has introduced the Olympic Games Impact (OGI) Study to try to quantify the legacy of future Olympic Games. This is now a requirement for all host cities. Vancouver was the first Games

to do this Impact Study and we look forward to the feedback from this.

The Games also constitute a major opportunity for the host city and country to promote and showcase themselves to the world. It offers a step change in the development and regeneration of the city and even more so of those areas that are in dire need of transformation (environmentally, socially and economically). It offers a holistic approach to regeneration that neither the state nor the market could achieve on its own, with the risk and financial burden of the Games becoming a national challenge.

Change is most radically felt in mainly one city - improved infrastructure is usually the most tangible legacy and proof of success of these mega-events. Winning cities use these events to rejuvenate, accelerate and expand their infrastructural investment that might have been shelved or seen as less critical or not feasible within the status quo. For some, London 2012 is 'unfinished business' from the Development Corporation days, in terms of the wider Docklands and east London regeneration initiatives. If this is the case, then it offers a 'refocused' focused approach!

So how can we relay the valuable lessons learned? Which cities should get a Gold, Silver or Bronze medal and are there any prizes for coming last in legacy terms? Did anyone drop the baton or are we handing down knowledge to those who will live with the legacy of the event? What happens after the events are over and the facilities are deserted by visitors and the sporting elite? This issue offers some critical viewpoints as to how London 2012 is preparing and moving towards delivering a legacy and the leverage this gives to regeneration. We look at some world-wide case studies, as well as an unsuccessful bid to see what lessons, if any, cities can learn. We also look at two key elements of the modern day events: communities and parks, and touch on a recent conference that explored how to measure the legacy. We should not be scared to learn from past.

● **Liesel Kruger**, Principal Professional Officer for Urban Design at the Cape Town Metropolitan Council

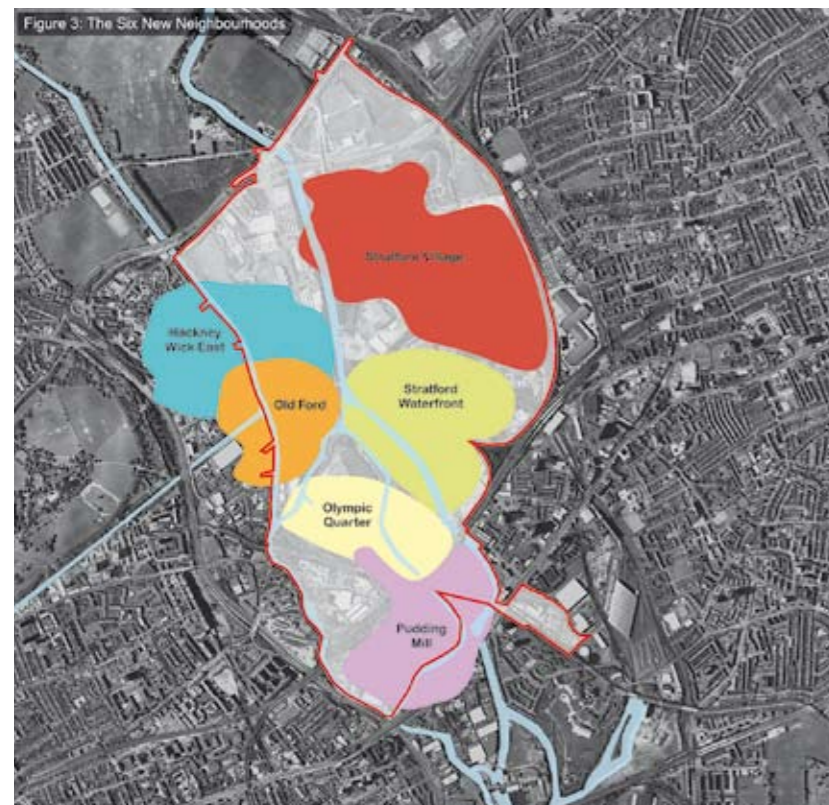
# OLYMPIC GAMES TIMELINE

1896	<a href="#">Athens</a>	Start of the Games where sport dominated
1900	<a href="#">Paris</a>	Development of specific built form for the Games not seen as priority
1904	<a href="#">St Louis</a>	Poor organisation of event
1908	<a href="#">London</a>	Sports venue created specifically for Olympics at White City
1912	<a href="#">Stockholm</a>	Technology taking Games one step further - photo finishes, speaker systems, timing devices
1916		Olympics awarded to Berlin but not held
1920	<a href="#">Antwerp</a>	Olympic flag developed that signifies 5 Continents at peace
1924	<a href="#">Paris</a>	
	<a href="#">Chamonix</a>	First Winter Olympics at Chamonix, previously figure skating and ice hockey were part of Summer Olympics
1928	<a href="#">Amsterdam</a>	
	<a href="#">St Moritz</a>	Known as II Olympic Winter Games. The first to be held on its own and separate from the Summer Olympics
1932	<a href="#">Los Angeles</a>	
	<a href="#">Lake Placid</a>	Expansion of facilities with 105,000 seat stadium and Olympic village community park for athletes
1936	<a href="#">Berlin</a>	TV Broadcasting, Political Propaganda, torch relay, large scale
	<a href="#">Garmisch-P.</a>	Last year when both summer and winter Olympics hosted in the same country
1948	<a href="#">London</a>	Post War impact on financial and human resources, rapid organisation of Games in just 18 months
	<a href="#">St Moritz</a>	Venue chosen based on experience in hosting (London) and neutrality in War (Switzerland)
1952	<a href="#">Helsinki</a>	First Olympic Park themed to attract tourists
	<a href="#">Oslo</a>	First and only Capital City to host Winter Olympics
1956	<a href="#">Melbourne</a>	First time Games are held in Southern Hemisphere - remote location proved problematic. World conflicts also halved participants
	<a href="#">Cortina d'Ampezzo</a>	USSR's first winter Olympics - acceptance as legacy
1960	<a href="#">Rome</a>	Growth in World economy and technology (television rights sold for first time) Major upgrading of public transport and other infrastructure
	<a href="#">Squaw Valley</a>	Influence of climate realised with lack of snow nearly cancelling event
1964	<a href="#">Tokyo</a>	World wide satellite broadcast of Games. The recently invented computer used at Games for first time
	<a href="#">Innsbruck</a>	Influence of climate realised with lack of snow but snow brought in this time
1968	<a href="#">Mexico City</a>	More focused on comprehensive urban improvement schemes
	<a href="#">Grenoble</a>	Technology used for sport - frozen demineralised water produced a faster track, TV broadcast in colour
1972	<a href="#">Munich</a>	More focused on comprehensive urban improvement schemes. Terrorist attack
	<a href="#">Sapporo</a>	First Games in Asia
1976	<a href="#">Montreal</a>	Long term debt and bad planning led to economic reforms and the introduction of global sponsors and public/private partnerships
	<a href="#">Innsbruck</a>	International boycotts
1980	<a href="#">Moscow</a>	First use of artificial snow
	<a href="#">Lake Placid</a>	The use of existing facilities and volunteer system reduced costs. Olympic programme established and more profit made than all previous Olympics combined, international boycotts
1984	<a href="#">Los Angeles</a>	TV revenues increased 5 times
	<a href="#">Sarajevo</a>	Urban transformation and upgrading neglected areas high on agenda. Games used as showcase of country's culture
1988	<a href="#">Seoul</a>	This first No smoking Games took place on artificial snow.
	<a href="#">Calgary</a>	Urban transformation upgrading neglected areas, showcase of country culture
1992	<a href="#">Barcelona</a>	Last winter games to be staged in the same year as the summer games
	<a href="#">Albertville</a>	Called the White-Green Games in response to its environmental respect. Bosnian War but team made up of Croats, Bosnians & Serbians
1994	<a href="#">Lillehammer</a>	
	<a href="#">Lillehammer</a>	Called the White-Green Games in response to its environmental respect. Bosnian War but team made up of Croats, Bosnians & Serbians
1996	<a href="#">Atlanta</a>	Tried to follow LA's example but lacked adequate/existing facilities - lack of major investment
1998	<a href="#">Nagano</a>	Ecological clothing - staff uniforms recyclable
2000	<a href="#">Sydney</a>	Environment issues came to forefront: sustainability, green guidance, eco sensitive design
2002	<a href="#">Salt Lake City</a>	Funding for Games shared by City, state and entrepreneur
2004	<a href="#">Athens</a>	Major change in size approach. Plagued by corruption and strong request for change following the Games
2006	<a href="#">Turin</a>	Largest city ever to host Winter Games, First with mobile phone broadcasts
2008	<a href="#">Beijing</a>	Magnitude and scale was massive
2010	<a href="#">Vancouver</a>	Legacy of cumulative economic, social and environmental sustainability

Summer Olympics   Winter Olympics

# PLACEMAKING AND LEGACY IN THE 2012 OLYMPIC PARK

Pat Willoughby explains the London 2012 proposals



## THE OPPORTUNITY

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games present a once in a lifetime opportunity to create deep-rooted and lasting change in some of the most deprived communities in the United Kingdom. Sitting cheek-by-jowl with the world's financial institutions, the area displays the classic symptoms of failure: vacant and derelict land, crumbling buildings, inadequate social, economic and environmental infrastructure, a fragmented landownership pattern, declining industries and a poorly skilled population. It has long been the focus of regeneration activity but this has been piecemeal, under-funded and short-term: the sheer scale of the problem has overwhelmed the many fragmented and disjointed initiatives.

Historically, a location for heavy industries and special industrial processes, the site of the Olympic Park has turned its back on the River Lea as it meanders towards the Thames. For decades, the four London boroughs that each control a part of the area, had other pressing problems to deal with, somehow demanding more attention and resources than this huge and complicated location could command. And then came the aspiration to host the 2012 Olympic Games.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF LEGACY

From an early stage, the Olympic and Paralympic Games were recognised as having the potential to

effect significant and long-lasting change: as an event of global proportions, it had the potential to leverage public and private sector investment on an unprecedented scale. Long term plans could be prepared to tackle social, economic and environmental deprivation and funding could be assigned on a scale previously unimaginable. Legacy lay at the heart of the Olympic Bid and, indeed, the Games are sometimes portrayed as a mildly interesting, but temporary, event that will take place as part of a 25-30 year programme to create a new and vibrant heart for east London.

This article considers the provisions being made for legacy in the Olympic Park and the extent to which placemaking is at the heart of this agenda. It identifies the plans and strategies being put in place to guide and control change, and considers how good connectivity across the area will enhance the prospects for successful placemaking. New facilities need to come together in a way that creates a place with heart and soul, a beautiful and distinctive place that people can call home, a good place to work and a place in which to enjoy their leisure time. The plans that shape these areas need to have both a long-term vision and inherent flexibility to let the detail of the development change over time. Above all the communities around the Park need to buy into the vision and adopt the strategy as their own.

## THE VISION

The vision for the Olympic Park after the Games is set out in the Legacy Masterplan Framework (LMF) published in May 2009 following collaboration with stakeholders, and public consultation. This process continues, and recently, the Legacy Youth Panel, made up of 13-21 year olds, has been created to engage young people in the long term planning and urban design of their area. The LMF describes how the site will be transformed from an international visitor destination to the city's major growth area in the 21st century. As a framework rather than a blueprint, the strategy allows for flexibility in relation to the detailed form, scale and amount of development in each part of the site. It very much emphasises the need for a long term strategy, looking at development of the Olympic Park over the next 20-30 years.

Perhaps the single most significant placemaking issue is the focus that the strategy gives to the Lower Lea Valley. Lying at the heart of this regeneration area, the Olympic Park becomes a focal point for interest and activity, unifying the forgotten edges of the four separate London Boroughs. The River Lea is similarly transformed into a unifying element, contrasting with its historic function of separation. The Borough boundaries have tended to reinforce divisions and barriers. The focus on the Olympic Park encourages stakeholders to work with each other and to cast aside traditional barriers.

The LMF describes its proposals to create six new neighbourhoods:

- Stratford Waterfront – a distinctive waterfront location adjacent to the Waterworks River and Stratford City
- Olympic Quarter – a focus for sport, education and housing around the Main Stadium
- Old Ford – a family housing area focused on the waterways of the Hackney Cut
- Hackney Wick East – a learning, living and working neighbourhood
- Stratford Village – a family neighbourhood area to the north of Stratford City
- Pudding Mill Lane – a mixed employment and housing areas in a unique waterfront setting

## THE VENUES

Distributed across these areas are the main Olympic and Paralympic venues that will be retained in the legacy phase of development; some will be down-sized and altered to suit their post-Games function.

Venue	Games	Legacy
Olympic Stadium	Centre piece of the 2012 Games	Retaining athletics at its core; seating capacity reduced to 20,000
Aquatics Centre	Iconic building at the main entrance to the Olympic Park	Centre for swimming at all levels
VeloPark	6,000-seater cycling facility	A centre for world-class cycling
Multi-use Arena	Centre for handball and goalball	Venue for indoor sports, cultural and business events
Press and Broadcast Centres	Home to the world's media with office and studio space for 20,000 journalists and broadcasters	Major employment site offering 91,000 sq. m. in an excellent location
Eton Manor	Hockey and tennis centre	Hockey and tennis centre

The intention is that these new neighbourhoods will expand to meet the existing, surrounding neighbourhoods, each growing into the other, reflecting the character of existing places, and helping to fulfil needs for new homes, jobs and local services. The extent to which these neighbourhoods are shaped and owned by the surrounding communities is vitally important. Lessons have been learned from the 1980s development corporations where gated communities were juxtaposed with seriously deprived communities, resulting in social tension and friction.

## THE FRINGE MASTER PLANS

To ensure that the Olympic Park, permanent venues, new homes and buildings connect well with the surrounding areas, master plans have also been prepared for areas known as the Olympic Arc plans or Fringe master plans, and have been developed by the London Boroughs in conjunction with the LMF. These are:

- Hackney Wick and Fish Island Masterplan
- Bromley by Bow Planning and Design Brief
- Sugarhouse Lane and Three Mills Masterplan



- Stratford Urban Design and Public Realm Strategy
- Northern Olympic Fringe Masterplan
- Stratford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy
- Stratford Town Centre Supplementary Planning Guidance

## The importance of connectivity

This range of planning policy documents emphasises the extent to which connectivity will be a vitally important part of the process, essential to placemaking and the success of legacy. Plan-making has to recognise that connectivity will change over time. Connections that are important to local people today are between:

- key areas of housing and community focus
- places which are centres of employment activity
- mixed use high streets, shopping centres and town centres including the Leyton Hackney and Stratford
- park and green spaces including Hackney Marshes and Victoria Park
- waterside paths and leisure routes
- public transport stations and interchanges including Leyton, Stratford, Maryland, Pudding Mill Lane, Bow Road and Hackney Wick

But as the Olympic Legacy unfolds, these places will not only need to be linked to each other but also with the new developments including:

- Stratford City mixed use centre, complemented by Stratford International Station
- retained Olympic venues including those at Greenwich across the River Thames
- development platforms – the areas of mixed use development that will be subject to considerable change over time
- the Fringe master plan areas
- extensive new parkland running through the heart of the Olympic Park

As the detail of the LMF and the Fringe master plans is worked up, and projects are identified for implementation, the authorities will need to ensure that the plans:

- reflect a broad understanding of the street network that surrounds and crosses the Olympic Park
- focus on points of entry to, and around, the Olympic Park including existing gateways, public

↑ Opportunities to maximise connectivity

↑ Olympic site: the six new neighbourhoods





↑↑ Olympic connectivity:  
where people want to be at  
present  
↑ Olympic connectivity:  
where people will want to be  
in the future

transport stations and interchanges, bridges and water crossings - these will be places of arrival and transition that should be celebrated through the design and layout of the public realm and positively fronted by development

- reinforce all existing routes and connections that approach and link together the places of arrival and transition
- firmly establish the Park in legacy with enhanced patterns of connectivity between new and existing communities
- identify missing links in the network and ensure that a permeable grid of streets is established east-west and north-south

#### WHO WILL DELIVER THIS LEGACY?

Originally, the organisation responsible for planning, promoting and delivering the legacy was the London Development Agency. In May 2009, these powers were transferred to the Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC), formed by the government and the Mayor of London. Significantly, no other Olympic host city has

● Pat Willoughby,  
chartered town planner  
and Director, David Lock  
Associates

established such an organisation at this early stage.

In June 2010, following the change of government, the Mayor of London announced that he would like to control the legacy process. If this comes to fruition, the OPLC would be reformed as a Mayoral Development Corporation, directly responsible to the Mayor and accountable to Londoners. This idea, however, has met with resistance from the five London Boroughs and a final decision has yet to be taken. The private sector, however, is vitally important to the process, taking the lead on the housing-led, mixed use development opportunities over the next 25-30 years.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The Olympic Games have rightly been seen as a unique opportunity to deliver unparalleled social, economic and environmental regeneration, in a world class location. The pressure of operating on a world stage encouraged the UK government to put in place a delivery vehicle for the Olympic Park and the Games venues: the ODA's privileged position of having money, land and power, place it in an enviable position, but this should not detract from their success to date; work is generally ahead of schedule and within budget.

Legacy has always been at the heart of the Olympic Bid and the importance of this has been consistently emphasised by the host boroughs and other stakeholders. Negotiations have been tense at times, but there is a shared sense of purpose and a willingness to work through the inevitable obstacles that will emerge.

The planning policy context is well-formed and there is a continuing commitment to ensuring that the voices of existing local people are taken on board, and to supporting the new communities as they become established in the new developments. The programme of temporary activities planned for the period immediately after the Games acknowledges the need for this area to become an accessible and welcoming part of the city, the antidote to the anticlimax of the post-Games period.

As the plans move towards implementation, the role of urban design will become increasingly important, as the placemaking agenda takes shape. There is a clear recognition, however, that placemaking is more than planning and urban design, and that a wide range of interests needs to be satisfied; importantly, the dialogue with existing communities needs to continue to ensure that their interests are taken on board.

With much of this in place, the greatest risk is undoubtedly that public sector funding streams will dry up and that the private sector will be unable to access investment capital on the scale required. Recognition that this is a 25-30 year strategy provides a sense of perspective and emphasises the need to have sustained commitment. What must also be remembered, however, is the scale of investment that has already taken place, and the obligation that this places upon government to keep the momentum going and to capitalise on this. Worldwide, the most successful regeneration schemes recognise that change takes a generation to work its way through the system; small, incremental steps that lead to the end goal and commitment to the overarching vision will ultimately lead to success. ●

# OLYMPIC GARDENS: A GREEN LEGACY OF THE GAMES

Hanwen Liao describes the landscape aspects of London's plans



#### NEW IMAGE OF THE GAMES

The Olympic Games are not only great sporting contests; they are also about the grand design of competition venues and public spaces in host cities. Each fresh celebration of the summer Games offers the opportunity for an important urban transformation and provides a unique stage upon which a host city can present elements of its culture and aspiration to a world audience. Compared to the colossal scale of construction work in Beijing, London 2012 will be remembered as an unpretentious event from an urban perspective, with greater emphases on the use of existing facilities, temporary sites and low footprint venues. However, London's setting will be no less voluptuous than any of its predecessors. In particular a single dominating feature could eclipse all other Olympic cities and leave the most vivid memory of those Games: the handsomely designed Olympic parks and gardens will provide an innovative texture to the modern Olympic experience: green, vibrant, cheerful and ecologically arresting.

#### A SHORT REVIEW OF OLYMPIC PARKS IN HISTORY

Historically Olympic Games promote green spaces in two ways. One is through urban beautification campaigns to introduce boulevards, cultivating green verges besides roads and buildings, and creating small plazas or gardens for community use. A more attractive option is to introduce centralised Olympic parkland normally combining a range of urban amenities, open spaces and greenery. During the Games, the Olympic Park is undoubtedly the focus and provides celebratory

gathering places for local citizens and visitors to experience the festival atmosphere. After the Games, they become a lasting legacy for the city and often act as tourist attractions. It is estimated that nearly four million visitors frequented the Munich Olympic Park between 1972 and 1988. In Seoul and more recently in Beijing, the Olympic Parks attract over six million visitors annually, even with an entrance fee.

The origin of the Olympic park can be traced back to Pierre de Coubertin (1863-1937), the founder of the modern Olympic Movement's concept of creating a modern Olympia in 'which buildings and landscape are perfectly harmonized in an expression of dignified and lofty purpose'. However such an idyllic pastoral setting did not fully emerge until the 1952 Helsinki Games. Since then, the importance of Olympic parks as a tangible green legacy of the Games and a beneficial inner-city natural reserve, has been recognised by all host cities. Even Atlanta with a comparatively modest venue, set up a small memorial park (21 acres) to commemorate the 1996 Centennial Games.

Not all of the Olympic parks were conceived to embrace the beauties of horticultural landscape: some, such as in Montreal 1976 and Athens 2004 Games, are close to being urban settings with large paved urban squares and mighty architectural ensembles deliberately subjugating the surroundings. Some Olympic parks have established a rather rigid geometric axis in assembling stadia and sports halls to state an expression of order and monumentality (Berlin 1936 and Beijing 2008) whilst others are designed to give a sense of freedom and motion (Munich 1972 and London 2012). Apparently the planning and

↑ Panoramic view of the Olympic Park, courtesy LDA



↑ Master plan of the London Olympic Park by the Olympic Delivery Authority looking from the north  
 ↑↑ An illustration of Kapoor's ArcelorMittal Orbit

design of Olympic parklands reflect the economic and socio-cultural interest of a nation and an era, as well as the collective hopes of the citizens for a different future.

#### THE NEW LONDON OLYMPIC PARK

Improving the green spaces in Stratford was one of the selling points of London's bid. The development of the London Olympic Park will transform over 200 ha of degraded brownfield land into a new urban oasis with a rich collection of sports facilities surrounded by large grasslands, waters and groves. Masterplanned by the EDAW Consortium with Arup and Atkins, the new park will cover four miles along the leafy Lower Lee Valley from Hackney Marshes in the north to the River Thames. Built around a network of rejuvenated rivers and canals, UK's largest new urban park will not be just a vast open space, but will be divided into a series of smaller themed gardens with distinctive characters and design.

There will be a hanging garden set 30ft above ground on the pedestrian footbridge dangling from Stratford City, with meadows, lawns, shrubs and rows of trees welcoming visitors over the main gateway into the park. A London 2012 garden will be laid for half a mile between the Aquatics Centre and the Olympic Stadium as the Games memorial

grounds, featuring picnic lawns, markets, and open air cafes. A 2,200 m<sup>2</sup> Great British garden will also be created on the riverside to overlook the Olympic stadium. Inspired by a century's endeavour of Olympians and Paralympians, the garden is planned as a sequence of themed zones based on the colours of the Olympic medals: the bronze garden includes a bronze water feature, rockery, sandpit and swing seat; the silver garden involves a spinney of silver birch trees and a large sundial set within silver-coloured paving as the centrepiece; and the gold garden includes a monumental oak tree with golden acorns engraved with the names of outstanding athletes.

There is also a Poppy Day garden lined with sweet gum trees which will turn red close to Remembrance Day; two feature gardens to represent the industrial heritage of the host boroughs; and numerous grass covered playgrounds, public arts and unnamed allotment gardens, all linked by tree-lined park roads with specially designed surfacing, lighting and bollards. It has been estimated that more than 4,000 semi-mature trees, 300,000 wetlands plants and hundreds of thousands of plants and bulbs in various species will be planted across the park to create both vigorous and tranquil public spaces and habitats for hundreds of existing and rare wildlife.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Comparisons between the London Olympic Park and its nearest predecessors are not without interest. The 300 metre span trussed arches of the Stadium Australia for the Sydney Games in 2000 (the largest stadium ever created); Santiago Calatrava's £250m futuristic roof for the Athens Olympic complex and Beijing's steel-consuming Bird's Nest, all deliver the same message: with the latest technologies man can harness the nature and tame the environment. The London Olympic Park will depict something different: that the natural environment rather than buildings should dominate; and with this premise, man and nature should live side by side.

Here, there is no attempt at either grandeur or the immortal, but only the light-hearted and human dimension. Whereas Sydney, Athens and Beijing's settings bore the thumbprint of human accomplishment throughout, London's planning and design looks ahead to a new decade of eco-living reflecting the long-standing British passion for horticulture and country life. However there will also be grand structures to 'arouse the curiosity and wonder of Londoners and visitors' – the Olympic Park will be home to Anish Kapoor's ArcelorMittal Orbit, a 377 ft high sculptural steel tower, the largest public work of art in the UK. A new icon for east London, Orbit will be used as an observation tower with unparalleled views of the park and London's stunning skyline. The daring design of Orbit and the gentle scenery of Olympic gardens can perhaps be seen in stark contrast; but each of them is distinctly British in origin and demonstrates exquisite craftsmanship and creativity. The buildings, sculpture works and enchanting landscape will all be indispensable contributions to the success of the Games. Together, they will provide a rich legacy for London and for the modern Olympic Movement, and should be cherished by many for years to come. ●

## LEARNING FROM VANCOUVER

Anne Stevenson praises the city's successful events and legacy



Just as Vancouver's seventeen days of Winter Olympics began years before the lighting of the torch on February 13th 2010, the legacy of the Games will last for decades to come. The long-term impacts will be felt across a wide range of sectors and not least in the fabric of the city itself. It is already possible to see some significant successes, as well as shortcomings, in the urban design legacies of Vancouver's Olympics, and both hold important lessons for London 2012 and beyond.

#### BACKGROUND

The International Organisation Committee of the Olympics (IOC) awarded Vancouver the 21st Winter Olympics on July 2nd 2003. The municipality is home to 600,000 people and the Greater Vancouver area contains over two million residents; it is therefore the largest city to host the Winter Games, and one of the most densely populated areas, matching Greater London density levels. Although officially hosted by the City of Vancouver, the surrounding suburbs of Richmond and West Vancouver also held some of the events – these cities will be referred to here collectively as Vancouver. The organising body for the Winter Games was known as VANOC, the Vancouver Organising Committee, which worked closely with the City of Vancouver, the other municipalities involved, provincial and federal governments.

#### VENUES

Aside from alpine events held in Whistler, the majority of Olympic venues were accommodated within the urban fabric of Vancouver itself. An admirably minimalist approach was taken to venues with many existing facilities upgraded to meet Olympic requirements. Of the six major venues within the city, four were existing buildings that underwent refurbishment for the Games.

Reusing existing buildings significantly reduced the capital investment needed for the Games, and

also ensured that spending was directed towards facilities with a known user demand. This helped to safeguard against building new facilities that would be poorly used and become maintenance burdens. The diffuse location of the venues also guarded against a large area of single-use buildings that could become an urban wasteland after the Games.

Two major Olympic venues were newly built for the Games and both represent an excellent approach to ensuring that buildings are well used in future. The Richmond Oval played host to the speed skating during the Olympics but now serves as a world-class centre for sports medicine, sports science, healthy living promotion and injury rehabilitation services. Removable floor panels will allow the speed skating ring to be used again for national and international events, and the community also now has access to a wide range of facilities within the building including two ice rinks, eight ball-sport courts, a gymnasium, 200m running track and rubberised turf area. The success of the Richmond Oval is already evident. Opened 14 months before the Olympic Games, it has already reported a \$1.1million (£730,000) profit in 2009, despite predictions of an operating loss of \$300,000 (£200,000) in its first year. The facility is run by the Richmond Olympic Oval Corporation whose sole shareholder is the City of Richmond. This project therefore provides a lasting legacy of sports provision, but also a long-term source of income.

The Vancouver Olympics and Paralympics Centre was also newly built for the Games and hosted curling events. It is currently being refitted and expanded to provide an upgraded community centre, to house the existing local curling club, indoor and outdoor pools, a library, preschool, full-sized gym, multi-purpose rooms, aerobics and games rooms, and fitness centre. The full legacy community complex will open in 2011, and demonstrates how the Olympics can be a catalyst for lasting community benefits.

The Olympics were also seen as an opportunity

↑ Legacy is a sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhood that makes the most of its waterfront location and proximity to downtown



to improve the environmental performance of buildings. All facilities used in the Games were expected to meet at least a LEED Silver rating (roughly equivalent to BREEAM Good or Very Good), leading to improved energy performance but also raising awareness of sustainable design.

The study uncovered a rich diversity of colours that provided the Village with a unique palette that also reflected the history of the site

#### TRANSPORTATION

Sustainable transport is one of the most successful legacies of Vancouver's Olympic Games. The need for a new SkyTrain line had been identified twenty years ago, yet plans were shelved due to constraints and lack of a political will. The Olympics provided a motivation for its construction and the Canada Line has continued to be used since, with usership just short of the break-even point for operating costs, and three years ahead of schedule.

Other successful aspects of legacy transport planning include recognising the City's Transportation Department approaching streetcar manufacturers to become partners in a demonstration transport project. In return for the City refurbishing existing tracks between Granville Island and the Olympic Village, Bombardier provided two free streetcars for use during the Games. Bombardier benefited from extensive brand exposure and the Transportation Department was able to showcase new public transit. During the 60 days, over 550,000 journeys were made on the streetcar, including over 10,000 families with strollers. While the City has not been able to continue to finance the service, it demonstrated its feasibility and made residents aware and supportive of this mode of public transportation.

The Olympics also allowed for experiments; several downtown streets were pedestrianised during the Games, and residents and city officials have commended the lively atmosphere lent to Vancouver as a result. While the decision was made to reintroduce buses to these routes, the

↑ The Richmond Oval retrofitted for community use, promotes healthy living in the area

street design is flexible enough to allow temporary closures in the future.

Careful monitoring of movement patterns before and during the Games also provided a strong evidence base for the city's future transport plans. The tracking showed a 30% increase in use and that the model split could be shifted towards more sustainable forms of transport. In a place where people appear wedded to their cars, the Olympics evidence provided solid support for the city's vision for 50% of journeys to be made by public transport, walking or cycling by 2020.

#### HOUSING

Social sustainability and inclusion were also heavily emphasised in Vancouver's Olympic bid, with the Olympic Village built in the most deprived area of the city, becoming one of the most controversial aspects of the Games. Before the bid was declared, local interest groups raised concerns that the requirements of the Olympic Village would outweigh the needs of the local population and provide little local benefit. An Inner City Inclusive (ICI) Statement was therefore developed and submitted as part of Vancouver's bid, with input from local residents and community groups. Similar to a Section 106 agreement, it outlined core principles, including the local employment opportunities, affordable housing and community facilities to be delivered.

After the Olympic bid was won, the ICI Statement became a legally binding agreement, but with only VANOC and the IOC as signatories. However, the community groups involved in drafting the ICI Statement had no means of enforcing it, which led to considerable ill-will; many of the ICI commitments were ultimately delivered, but there has been little recognition of this due to the poor relationships that were created between VANOC and the community.

Financing was another major challenge in the delivery of the Village, as the project fell victim to both the boom and the bust of the global economy. Work on the Olympic Village began at the peak of the global construction boom, which led to skyrocketing costs. The Olympics also created a local, secondary boom so that labour and materials became expensive. The credit crunch also did Vancouver's Olympic Village no favours - the financial group backing the Village's developers pulled out, leaving a massive funding gap which the City of Vancouver filled, to much public outcry.

Even though these issues provoked strong public debate, from an urban design perspective, the City of Vancouver has maintained a strong commitment to the quality of development. There was considerable public pressure to eliminate affordable housing given the significant rise in costs, and from developers to convert family housing into more smaller units to increase returns on final sales. Although half were switched from social rented to key worker and shared ownership tenure units, the full amount of affordable housing was delivered onsite. The number of family units was also maintained, ensuring a more sustainable community in the long run.

The quality of the urban design can be credited to a strong and collaborative working relationship between the City of Vancouver's urban design team and project architects. Keen not to impose onerous restrictions on development but rather a consistent level of quality across the site, city officers

established a document of design considerations. Broad principles were established, including the need for distinct neighbourhood precincts, clear street hierarchies, connected public open spaces and parks, heritage recognition and waterfront animation. An example of this is the colour palette for the Olympic Village, where city officers asked the design team to undertake a colour study of the area. Though a derelict industrial site may seem to hold little promise, the study uncovered a rich diversity of colours that provided the Village with a unique palette that also reflected the history of the site.

#### KEY LESSONS

The Vancouver Olympics set a high standard of urban design for host cities. A clear imperative to build venues for the legacy, rather than the Games, has led to a lasting investment in community facilities. Vancouver's transportation experience shows that high quality public transport can convince people to give up their cars and that demonstration projects can raise aspirations. The Olympic Village equally shows the importance of independent monitoring for development gains as well as how positive working relationships between developers and the city can lead to world-class places. Though not without its shortcomings, the urban design for Vancouver's Olympic Games has certainly earned itself a place on the podium. ●



● Anne Stevenson, urban designer, worked in London for the past 4 years and has recently returned to Canada to continue her planning career

↑ Canada Line trains take passengers from international Airport to downtown in less than 30 minutes

## BEIJING OLYMPICS

Jun Huang describes how a new era has started

Beijing's Olympics has been regarded as one of the most successful in history, not only for its iconic stadiums, spectacular ceremony shows and outstanding game performances, but more importantly, for its high spirit. Two years on, when the west struggles in the recession, the Games' legacy continues to inspire not only the nation, but the whole world.

For Beijing the Olympics offered the rebirth of China. As a vast country with 56 ethnic groups, China has always been a place where an individual's interest contributes toward the national interest. This sense of individual purpose and importance has helped the nation to succeed and enabled her people to accomplish many seemingly impossible missions. It also demonstrates how a country, by having a common goal or purpose, can harness its skills, ambition and determination to achieve much more.

#### URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POLICIES

A new generation of decision-makers has emerged, with multiple skills including exposure to international procedures, education and the ability to translate it to fit with Chinese culture. It was recognised that the ongoing development of Beijing as an international city was a critical part of the Olympic agenda. It prompted Beijing's authorities to re-evaluate the city's structure. The Beijing Olympics show how the Chinese think big when



dealing with a problem. Their sense of national pride inspired outlandish plans demonstrating the vision, passion and determination of China and its people, coupled with great co-operation. In addition, the Beijing General Urban Plan (2004-2020) provides for new areas of development around the Olympics site, which alleviate pressure

↑ Beijing - Media Village 2 - Courtesy UA Design in Beijing



to develop land within the city – something which is different to current western thinking.

#### SITE LOCATION

The Olympics site is located between the 4th and 5th ring roads in north Beijing, equidistant to the airport, Forbidden City, and Summer Palace. One may ask why it was not chosen to be in a deprived area as London 2012 is; firstly, Beijing's ongoing boom means there are no such deprived areas, and this location meets Beijing's urban development strategy; secondly, it can benefit from the upgraded training and hotels facilities on the 1990 Asian Games site nearby; and thirdly, its infrastructure development will stimulate the city's economy and its close-to-city location will contribute to a sustainable tourism strategy. It will be interesting to see how out-of-town Stratford fares.

#### SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

The essence of Chinese culture has been that the whole is greater than the individual, which means people are always willing to sacrifice personal interest for the benefit of the national gain. However, the drastic economic reform over the last three decades has had a negative impact on Chinese society with communities being divided by materialism and self interest. This meant that the Olympics also had the purpose to reunite Chinese society. How successful was the Olympics

in bringing the Chinese people together? Society did not disappoint itself - 1.7 million volunteers were involved including pensioners, students and professionals of all ages, and such a number is unlikely to be surpassed by any future Games. The impact it had on China as a nation was phenomenal with most people believing it to be the greatest reunion in many years. The Olympics proved to be the catalyst in bonding the nation and reinforcing key values of Chinese culture.

A new generation of Chinese designers and engineers are now recognised as inquisitive and pushing on the international stage

#### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIP

China's rapid urbanisation and modernisation has impacted profoundly on its relationship with the outside world. Two centuries of scepticism by the west towards China appears to be declining as China continues to be the global leader in industrial and economic growth. But is that enough? The Beijing Olympics was China's first opportunity to show the world what it is about. China sees this as being crucial to developing positive, long-term international relations.

#### CREATIVITY AND TECHNOLOGY

The Olympics and its massive construction projects prompted change for China with new building typologies and innovative ideas. The success was attributed greatly to the close collaboration between domestic and foreign designers, as well as manufacturers and contractors. Ground-breaking concepts would not have been realised without people pushing themselves beyond their comfort zones, creating a strong intellectual base in China.

China had been one of the most advanced countries for much of global history, but was left behind in recent centuries due to foreign invasion and political upheaval. The last three decades of rapid economic reform has changed China's image on the world stage. However being referred to as the world's factory sounds more like an insult than a compliment. Because of this, China is determined to become a creative hub again and has set 'Designed in China' as one of the key aims in the 12th Five-Year plan (2011 to 2015). Therefore China's effort in the Olympics was much more sophisticated than just showing off what can be achieved, but to inspire people to push the boundary and re-establish their confidence and pride. A new generation of Chinese designers and engineers are now recognised as inquisitive and pushing on the international stage.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

China's 11th Five-Year Plan (2006 to 2010) was the first to put ideas of environmental quality before economic growth. A series of decisive measures were taken by the authorities to improve environmental quality, not only for the Olympics, but for the future of the city. Immediate effects and significant improvements have convinced those who doubted and set an example for other cities



in China. This offers a great opportunity for both decision-makers and the public to review the city's economic structure and work together in defining and shaping its future. On the Olympics site, sustainable technologies were applied wherever possible, with a wide range of solar-powered products making significant energy savings and encouraging Chinese manufacturers to develop affordable cutting-edge products for the Olympics.

#### EXPERIENCE

The scale of the Beijing Olympics was unprecedented so the experience gained was immensely invaluable for China as a whole. It has contributed to the Shanghai Expo and Asian Games in Guangzhou 2010, and no doubt to other similar events around the world.

#### LIMITS

Limits, like fears, are always just illusions. For China this means that their nation is held together by the pursuit of targets and its willingness to push limits and achieve immovable deadlines, as demonstrated in the construction of the Olympic buildings.

#### LEGACY

The Olympics is always a huge opportunity for the host nation, not just as a tourism marketing tool or as a catalyst for a programme of urban improvement, but also to instil national pride to encourage generations to come. Because of this, Beijing's legacy is difficult to quantify in numbers, but there are some tangible legacies.

#### THE BIRD'S NEST

The Bird's Nest has been praised as a most iconic stadium; it is the product of a unique historic moment and could not have been built at any other time or anywhere else. Despite being perceived as a very expensive showpiece, the Bird's Nest actually cost a modest £190m, less than a quarter of Wembley's £798m, and few would know that it underwent a massive value re-engineering with a 20% cost saving, including 10% saving on steel, and was still completed on time. There is criticism about its excessive use of steel but it was never intended to be purely a stadium – it is an icon for the event and the new era for China – a place that people will want to visit long after the Games, together with other attractions such as the Forbidden City and Tian'an Men square. That is its legacy and it is akin to the Paris Eiffel Tower and London's Millennium Wheel, as exhibition pieces developing into national treasures.

Generally Olympic venues struggle to find an



← Beijing – Media Village  
← Beijing – Street Scene –  
Courtesy S Vision

afterlife, but it has only been two years since the event and in the middle of a global recession, so time will tell. All of the buildings have been designed to adapt to future uses and The Bird's Nest has already attracted millions of visitors to a series of profitable events. It will take time to recover all of its development and maintenance costs, but this does not concern China, as the nation is proud to have hosted such dramatic and impressive Olympic Games. Indeed one needs to look at the massive impact it has had on the city and the nation, its commercial value, sense of pride and especially its vision – this bigger picture is invaluable for China.

#### MEDIA VILLAGE AND ATHLETES VILLAGE

The case of the Media and Athletes Villages offer a very successful story in Olympics legacy terms. They were both pre-sold before the Games and were altered into commercial flats straight afterwards. Bing Zhang, director of UA Design which designed the Media Village, explains: 'The state got the best media village in the history of the Games with very limited investment. The developers sold all properties at a higher price prior to the Games and the procedure and risks were normal. The residents and investors benefited most with 1.5 fold property value gains in less than two years. This demonstrates how China's top-down policy effectively works and how events like the Olympics should be operated.' Thanks to the Games' high specification, these developments enjoyed top quality infrastructure and facilities, and much more advanced technologies than other similar schemes. Both villages have now become exemplary communities that set the benchmark for a sustainable future development.

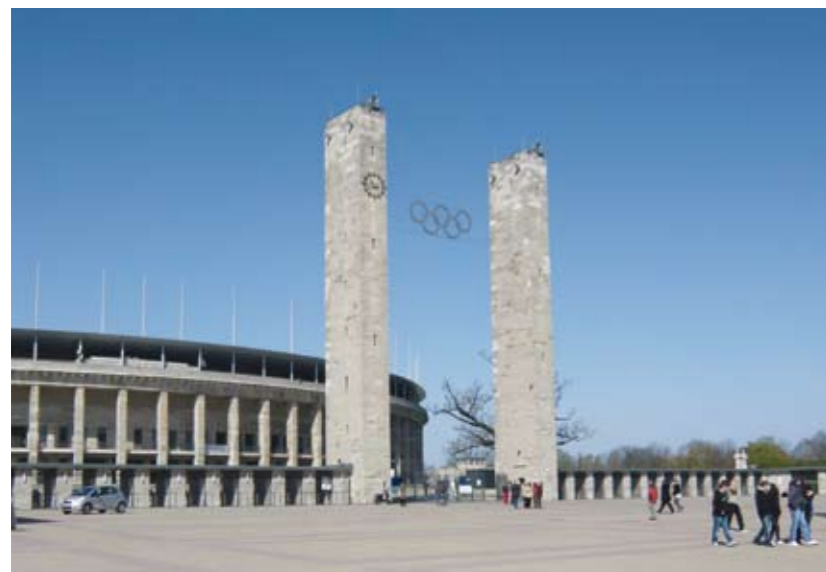
#### CONCLUSION

Looking back, there seems to have been no better time than the 8th August 2008 (08-08-08) for China to host the Olympics. When China lost her first bid for the 2000 Olympics in 1993, the country was perhaps not ready financially nor psychologically. But by 2008 China grew to a stage where she was capable of helping the Games and herself to enter a new phase. The Olympics is much more than just the Games showing off a host city or presenting a country, it is evidence that a world can live in harmony and all the nations can engage and inspire each other to strive for a sustainable success. This is now also evident in the successful outcome of the South Africa World Cup. The question of legacy can be answered by the importance of vision. The essence of the Olympics is about engaging and inspiring the nations to thrive, rather than providing a circus just for fun. ●

● Jun Huang is Benoy's  
Director for China

# THE LEGACY OF THE BERLIN 1936 OLYMPICS

Neil Corteen explains what has happened to the facilities used for the Games



The fortunes of the venues and infrastructure developed for the 1936 Berlin Games reflect much of the city's chequered history. Despite its age and the tainted circumstances of its development, its relevance remains valid to the planning of large sporting events. The lessons are less of its inception, but more of a bold vision which has survived the test of time in a traumatised city.

Major physical legacies and infrastructure remain today; of particular significance are the Olympic Stadium, the Waldbühne (an open air theatre in the forest), an adaptable multi-sports complex, a public open-air swimming pool and

improved city infrastructure. This article reviews the extraordinary circumstances behind these Olympics, the years that followed and what the legacy means today.

## PRE OLYMPICS SITE

The city experienced massive development after 1871 as it took on the role as the new republic's capital. The wooded area that would become the site of the main Olympic complex was developed into a horse racing venue and sports academy in 1909, to serve the expanding population; it was made possible by the building of new roads and an overland rail route. Shortly after completion, a 30,000 capacity stadium and Olympic sized pool was built in the centre of the horse track to accommodate the 1916 Summer Olympics, which was eclipsed by WWI and so never took place.

## THE SUMMER OLYMPICS

The Games were again awarded to Berlin in 1931, a gesture to normalise relations between Germany and the international community. At that time, Berlin was the third largest city in the world with a population of 4.5 million people. The Games were to focus on the existing enlarged and upgraded stadium. Funding was envisaged via the sale of 900,000 tickets to raise 4 million of the estimated cost of 5.5 million Reichmarks. The balance would come from donations and a lottery, and the state was to provide advanced finance and a guarantee of 6 million Reichmarks.

However, the National Socialists with Adolf Hitler as their leader came to power in 1933 and quickly turned the fragile democracy into a dictatorship. The National Socialist movement was unsurpassed at staging public spectacles and quickly realised the potential of the Games as a means to expand their influence and spread propaganda. The change of leadership with its absolute power base essentially hijacked the Games, and the dimensions of the event and facilities took on new proportions.

The 1936 Games became infamous for many reasons. The doctrine of the ruling party was at odds with most participating nations and was almost fully boycotted; Jesse Owens famously disposed theories of Aryan race superiority as he claimed four gold medals. The event was stage-managed for drama and was amongst the first major sporting events to be captured on film and artistically directed. It was also the first Games to be televised live, 25 public viewing rooms were set up across the city so that residents could enjoy the spectacle. In contrast to modern Olympics, winners were modestly rewarded with crowns of leaves and oak trees in pots.

## IMPLEMENTATION

It is widely accepted that the National Socialists were heavily involved in the implementation of the infrastructure and the staging of the Games. The extent of the direct involvement of Hitler and his architectural advisor Speer are disputed. Costs were poorly documented and unreliable, equally disputed was the price paid for land as it was compulsory purchased. The immense costs for the ever grander Games were mostly paid for by the state, as the citizens of the world were to be the guests of Germany; the approach routes were paid for by the City of Berlin. New orders were given for the existing stadium to be demolished and a new 100,000 capacity stadium to be built, along with a major sports area for specific competitions, an outdoor stage, an area to accommodate 250,000 participants (Maifeld) and an Athletes Village.

There was no clear conception until 14th December 1933 when Hitler was presented with three prototypes to choose from, and the final approval was given on the same day without any clear information of costs and details. Much of the labour was provided via a work creation programme to engage the unemployed masses; this is also a reason while so much stone was used as it required a large low skilled labour force.

## REICHSSPORTFELD

The design and building of the stadium, the ensemble surrounding it known as das Reichssportfeld (the Empires sports ground) and the athletes village was mainly credited to Werner March, the son of the architect of the original stadium. He adopted a popular stylistic manner known as der neuen Sachlichkeit (the new objectivity). As this style was also later adopted by the National Socialists for increasingly monumental developments, it was branded as Nazi architecture.

The majority of events were concentrated on a 132ha site on the south west boundary of the city, bordered by forest and the borough of Spandau beyond. Facilities included a sports academy, several swimming pools, training facilities as well as a hospital and accommodation for female participants. The 96,200 capacity stadium was incorporated into the city structure via an east-west axis stretching from the West End, to the 500 metre long Olympischer Platz, the stadium, then culminated with a 76m bell and viewing tower (Glockenturm), which rose above the Maifeld, a 250,000 capacity parade ground. A lesser north-south axis led from an artillery road to Courbertin Platz, the stadium and the swimming pool. The existing over and underground stations were expanded and remodelled as were roads serving links to the city and motorway.

The stadium was conceived so that the sports field and half of the seating were below ground level, making the scale more impressive once inside. Structure and continuity are evident across the complex. The grounds were landscaped so that parking spaces were screened by trees; sports venues were sunken into the ground so that views of the main stadium would not be obscured.

Less known is an Athletes Village developed to house male athletes and delegates during the Games which was built in Döberitz, 14 km to the west, outside the city limits. The village incorporated 140 residential blocks, a hospital, training and



recreational facilities as well as its own heating and water processing plants. The application of the venues post-Olympics quickly became apparent as the stadium and the Maifeld were used for mass public addresses and military parades, the sports facilities used for youth and military training and the Athletes Village became a military barracks.

## THE COLD WAR YEARS

The main Olympic facilities survived WWII with minimal structural damage. As the city was divided, the Olympic stadium complex lay in the Western Allies sector and was commandeered by the British army. The Stadium, Waldbühne and main swimming pool were quickly returned to state control and used by the public. Their use and maintenance were determined by the City of Berlin administration. The stadium was renovated for the 1974 World Football Championships. The Maifeld and the Reichssportfeld were used by the British army until their withdrawal in 1994. The complex was quickly repaired and incrementally modernised, though the physical appearance hardly changed over the following decades. During this time the site was not accessible to the public and the British army enjoyed the exclusive use of the sports facilities. It was well maintained thanks to generous German tax payers' funds. The Athletes Village lay in the sector controlled by the USSR, and was reused as a barracks for 20,000 Red Army soldiers until their withdrawal in 1992. The complex was adapted and new system built housing blocks were erected. Finances diminished and the soldiers lived in deteriorating conditions, isolated from the local population.

↑ The main entrance to the Olympic Stadium  
 ↑↑ The Maifeld during spring re-turfing work, overlooked by Josef Wackerles 'Der Rosseführer'

↑ Looking east from the Bell Tower over the Olympic Stadium with Berlin beyond  
 ↑↑ The Waldbühne, the stage in the forest



↑ The Sports Academy at Reichssportfeld  
 ↑↑ Outdoor training facilities at Reichssportfeld

### TODAY'S LEGACY

It could be hard to befriend the Reichssportfeld complex due to its conception and aesthetic as Nazi architecture. However the Stadium and Waldbühne are particularly embedded in the collective memory of West Berliners as major entertainment venues from the time when the city was divided. The complex belongs to the city but is run as a private venture, allowing many profit-making events to continue to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors to the city each year.

The infrastructure serving the venues has been upgraded but remain much as it was. In particular the overland and underground trains cope with large crowds with ease as extra capacity can be accommodated at peak volumes, and serve extensive exhibition and conference facilities several kilometres west.

The stadium remains the most iconic venue. The most recent adaption was in 2004 in time for the 2006 World Cup Final. Its conversion into a multi functional venue with vastly improved facilities and spectator roof coverage enables it to meet modern expectations and makes it more flexible to extend usage. Expanded facilities including additional parking, with conference and training facilities developed underground to retain the stadium's character. In 2009 alone, the stadium hosted three major sporting events as well as major concerts.

The main entrance building of the Maifeld has been refurbished to house an exhibition, the parade ground is usually marked as sports pitches

● Neil Corteen is a town planner and researcher based in Germany

and is occasionally used for large spectator events. The Waldbühne remains a major summer venue with open air concerts and cinema filling the programme. The Olympic pool remains one of the city's most popular open air pools. Beyond the best known venues are the sports facilities built for the Olympics and now used by registered sport and school groups and as the training ground for Berlin's recently relegated football team Hertha BSC. The facility is of particular use for competition level athletes.

The Athlete Village's fortunes have been less certain. Due to the basic standard of much of the initial development and the poor maintenance during military use by the USSR, many of the buildings decayed. Since the early 1990s parts of the site have been renovated and the remaining buildings given listed status, but they continue to deteriorate. It is open for seasonal public viewing and information is provided in displays and on large hoardings, but commercial interest in the site remains muted; the location is poorly connected to the city by public transport though road access is good. There appears to be a lack of demand or a vision for its future use.

The overland and underground trains cope with large crowds with ease as extra capacity can be accommodated at peak volumes

### SUMMARY

Many of the venues have been in use for over sixty years. There have been periods of uncertainty, requiring public intervention to set up organisational structures and funding for renovation. But despite any initial ideas of future sustainability, the facilities and infrastructure have proved to be robust enough to allow for adaptation for modern needs. Some facilities have fallen into disrepair and still face an unknown future but this is mainly due to neglect during the city's division.

Today the stadium, Waldbühne and Reichssportfeld in particular provide a framework in which to juggle diverse and conflicting uses. Usage is monitored and future potential is reviewed so that demands can be accommodated and facilities adapted. Importantly, they are now successfully managed at arm's length to balance the need to raise private capital, as well as serve public use and national interest. Many other benefits are long forgotten or simply not known by the public, such as the improved transport links, or the range of training facilities for top athletes. It would be difficult to imagine the city without these Olympic venues and the events that have taken place there. ●

# CAPE TOWN 2004

Peter de Tolly reflects on the urban design legacy of this unsuccessful bid



On 5 September 1997, President Nelson Mandela, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, government and sporting dignitaries, and the Cape Town 2004 Olympic Bid Company gathered to present Cape Town's Bid to host the 2004 Olympic Games. It was Africa's and South Africa's first city to bid to host the Games; a developing city in a developing country, in a predominantly third world continent. It was one of the last shortlisted cities, with Athens, Rome, Stockholm, and Buenos Aires. That Cape Town had made it this far was recognised as an outstanding achievement, as seven other cities had not made the second round. When IOC President Samaranch announced the winner as Athens, that was the end of the city's dreams. Yet the Olympic Bid's stated developmental philosophy was unique in Olympic history and drew attention to third-world issues, challenging 100 years of first-world cities.

### THE CITY

The Cape Town Bid was recognised by its competitors as being technically very strong, including a Transport Plan to 2010, but also by being developmental and urban design driven, so that people development was added to the IOC's traditional Sport, Culture and the Environment. The Olympic Plan not only met the IOC's and Sporting Federations' requirements, but assisted the post-apartheid city, as an ethical stance pursued by the Olympic Bid Company, the City of Cape Town, the national Olympic Committee and national government. While the Games are for athletes, the legacy must focus on the city's and nation's people, so urban design, with its concern for the structure and form of the city, was the foundation of the legacy of the Olympic Plan.

As a result of its colonial and apartheid

past, Cape Town faces problems rooted in the distribution of assets, income, rights and power over the use of resources. The challenge in creating a sustainable future for the city was to bring a positive relationship to three key elements: the environment, poverty and development. The Olympic Plan would be the start of this as it organised the location of facilities and connecting infrastructure, while hosting the Games would continue this process.

### SPATIAL AND TRANSPORT PLANS

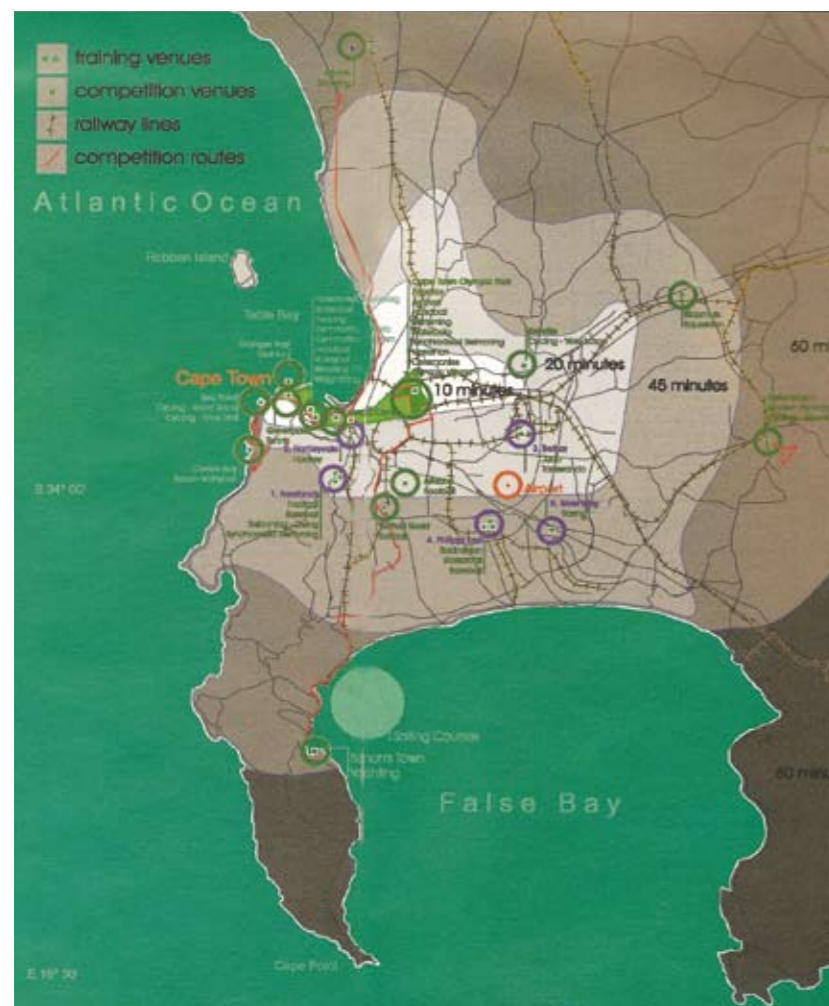
The Olympic Plan and Olympic Transport Plan were underpinned by the Metro and City spatial planning frameworks and an integrated metro transport plan. They:

- provided planning frameworks and site information for twenty existing and new metro sub-centres
- developed the framework for a hierarchy of sports and recreation facilities well into the 21st century
- developed an integrated approach to the provision of sports and recreation facilities, as multipurpose community centres
- defined a transport system to take Cape Town through to 2010, with the provision of efficient, safe, co-ordinated public transport for all
- provided the impetus for accelerated longer-term plans for Cape Town Airport and associated capital improvements.

The Olympic Plan's spatial proposals were designed to leave a functional and qualitative city-wide legacy by:

- concentrating large facilities within the Olympic Corridor encompassing the City Centre and Cape Town Olympic Park

↑ The Olympic master plan



↑ Map showing the impact of the Games on Metropolitan Cape Town

- locating other new venues in a semi-dispersed distribution within highly accessible existing and future growth centres
- providing mixed-use development for commercial opportunities
- making the best possible use of existing infrastructure
- dispersing training venues and facilities in relation to local community needs.

At the heart of the Plan was a 10 km Olympic Corridor, within which five Olympic centres contained five villages and 21 sports. The Victoria and Alfred Waterfront would be home to the IOC Family; the harbour would provide the Centre for the Sponsors; part of a rehabilitated railway yards (Culemborg) would be the Media Centre and Village; and connected by freeway and two rail lines was the main Olympic Centre – Cape Town Olympic Park at Wingfield.

The Park was a 330 ha site for athletes and officials. From this, six sports in eight disciplines were within easy walking distance, as well as being linked by electric shuttle. The Village bordered the rowing and sprint canoeing course and north of the Main Stadium would be the Village for judges and referees - normally housing parliamentarians when Parliament is in session. Both Culemborg and Wingfield are government-owned sites – a WW2 airfield and an operational railway yard respectively. Both would require remediation and new infrastructure; only the magnitude of investment to host the Olympic Games could make this affordable. The remainder of the Olympic

● Peter De Tolly, Former Director of Planning and Environment, Cape Town 2004 Olympic Bid Company

Centres were semi-dispersed in nearby towns, and responding to the developmental needs of the metropolitan population, the eighty-five training venues were dispersed according to highest social need. Sports halls were designed as multi-purpose centres to provide the focus for community life, opportunities for small business development, information resource centres, vocational training centres, and cultural activity.

#### FUNDING

Central government was to fund Priority Projects to R350m (\$79m) in total, with R86m (\$20m) on sports facilities and R250m (\$59m) on transport planning and improvements. Projects were chosen where they would act as catalysts for other employment-creating developments, government public facilities, and much-needed facilities. Transport funds were spent in the metro south-east - the area in greatest need. The creation of housing needed for the athletes and media posed major challenges but the scale and impetus of hosting the Games was a much needed catalyst to action. Affordable housing was then and still is a major need, together with after-use sustainability.

The Olympic Plan provided for affordable, sustainable housing developments by:

- aiming to leave a legacy of housing for the middle income among the subsidised poor
- allowing for future demand for affordable housing on well-located city sites - the plans included relocatable structures to release inner city land afterwards, for more permanent denser rental housing stock, or other scenarios
- allowing opportunities for an increase in tenure options, potentially fast-tracking new joint ventures for housing between local government and the private sector
- remediating land and high-quality public spaces; and
- designing housing in mixed-use centres.

#### CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, Cape Town's Olympic Plan had two aims: to help the City of Cape Town to realise its vision for the future, and to host a Games of the highest quality for the athletes, IOC Family and media, and spectators. The Cape Town Bid sought to make people development central to the traditional Olympic Vision - an emphasis wholly appropriate for a developing city in a developing country. It also took the environmental challenge seriously, and urban design played a central role in the preparation of the Olympic Plan. The Bid Company's in-house team was complemented by volunteer urban designers, architects, urban planners and other professionals to ensure that its spatial design would be appropriate to purpose and place. The detailed designs for the Olympic Centre at Wingfield and the Media Centre at Culemborg show the spatial environment that would have been created. The Priority Projects that were constructed give a snapshot view of what would have been had Cape Town been successful. ●

# ANATOMY OF MEGA-PROJECTS

Judith Ryser gathers critiques of the legacy planning and its opportunities



Mega projects like the Olympic Games are in a league of their own in the urban development process. Their sheer scale and timeframes put them outside normal practice. What has been transforming their rules of engagement is securitisation, the brainchild of the liberalised financial sector, attributing a financial and fiscal role to real estate by converting it into a commodity, and effectively dislocating the built environment from its use value. Mega projects have therefore become the Mecca of the development industry, yielding extraordinary profits, benefiting from overt or indirect public subsidies, externalising risks, and sheltered from ultimate failure, commanding state bail-outs and tax payers' rescue packages.

It is this chain of interdependence which mediates initial disruption and creates institutional instruments, combining land ownership, regulatory powers, the public purse, development know-how and marketing, assisted by inescapable Olympic Games deadlines. A crucial part of this process is the narrative devised to win establishment support and appease the local population. Central to the case of the 2012 Olympics is the legacy promise - yet another attempt to lift London's East End out of its predicament. There is no space here to go into lack of transparency, changes of direction, throughput of actors, budgetary acrobatics, and lottery of winners and losers. What matters is what happens when the show is over.

The 2012 Olympic Games have merely accelerated regeneration already planned by the private sector, as part of Thames Gateway

development strategies. Ultimately Stratford City will see the international Eurostar station, Crossrail, an improved underground rail network, and new interchanges, turning it into the most important multi-modal node in East London, and lending itself to high-density mixed-development. Public money raised for the Olympics has freed more land for development and the legacy will accelerate housing provision. But how much will benefit local communities?

One way of exploring the future of the Lea Valley and the East End is to obtain views from diverse parties. Institutions claiming a stake in this process have mushroomed; the Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC) set up in 2009, and a panoply of partners give a panorama of official positions.

#### SOCIAL DIMENSION AND CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

The City Centre in Queen Mary University's Department of Geography preserves a keen interest in the legacy of the Games, especially for the local population: a symposium in 2009 highlighted the local expectations. Is the People's Legacy of the London Olympic Games 2012 going to set new standards for the social, economic and political legacy compared to previous initiatives in London?

The Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC) is in charge of developing, managing, operating and marketing community participation. But it has institutionalised a consultation process exposed to scrutiny by local pressure groups. Among them, the Legacy Now Youth Panel is keen to see concrete projects for its own use, but frustratingly these are

↑ The Fletcher Priest/ARUP and West 8 master plan for Stratford City which accommodates the Athletes Village



↑ ↑ ↑ Olympic Park under construction  
 ↑ ↑ Saunders Waterway  
 ↑ The Bromley-by-Bow Centre

stretched out to 2035 by the OPLC implementation timetable. The Architecture Centre 'Fundamental' is designing infill projects for affordable housing on scattered brownfield sites, and London Citizens intend to found a Community Land Trust to carry out self-development. Yet, when these groups of young local people try to obtain sites, such as the publicly owned St Stephens mental health hospital in Whitechapel, they quickly find their way into the hands of private developers.

Lord Mawson, a veteran social entrepreneur of the East End, is adamant that empowering local communities requires perseverance and pragmatism, radical thinking, high aspirations, self-reliance and a strong support network: a Bromley-by-Bow project aided by an innovative, self-managed and self-generated alternative community, has generated higher living standards and nurtures ambitions for betterment. How successful will the legacy of the global event next door be, and will it be capable of enhancing London as a world city as promised?

Mark Saunders, a documentary maker, is following the trajectory of the local inhabitants and businesses that have been displaced from the Olympic site. He is interested in how mega projects override democratic accountable practices and grab land to restructure cities according to market requirements. Part of what has been incorporated into the Olympic site belonged to urban indeterminacy. Abandoned marsh yards and neglected open land, some under pylons, was taken over by local businesses for scrap metal, car repairs and many other activities. Lammas land, a commons since medieval times, was turned into allotments by people including those from surrounding boroughs. This was resented as a take-over of communal land, while Hackney Marshes, the biggest open space in the area and the tidal flood banks along the Lea remained untouched. Not surprisingly their incorporation into the Olympic site displacing 350 businesses with 15,000 workplaces and 450 dwellings provoked fierce resistance. No promises or symbolic plans would persuade the locals that the legacy Park would compensate for the 10,000 felled trees and unrestrained access to this area.

#### DESIGN QUALITY

Due to the configuration of the existing site, master plans contain divides which will remain barriers within the park as well as around it. The new fences, around paying event venues, will leave further marks on the site already cut up by waterways and rail tracks. Mass public transport access exists only at the southern fringe of a very large site, and design efforts are being made to overcome some of these barriers.

Francis Duffy has been co-opted onto the Newham Design Review Panel, which aims to assure high design quality for the Olympic legacy. While attention to design quality is a laudable pursuit, the already long institutionalised leeway and the imponderables of volatile markets may jeopardise these efforts, especially as no institutions can guarantee long-term design quality, let alone equitable access. Paul Finch, chairman of CABI and the London 2012 Design Review Panel has been instrumental in supporting design reviews for the whole area up to 2012, but what will happen when the momentum slackens?

#### OLYMPIC LEGACY MASTERPLANNING

Meanwhile, master plans are being prepared and revealed to the public with great reluctance. The transformation of the installations specifically built for the Olympic Games (Olympic Stadium, Aquatics Centre, Velopark, Eton Manor, Arena 3, and Press Centre) aims at high performance sports activities as well as at local people - suddenly expected to become aficionados of sport. Owned in part by the Lea Valley Regional Park Authority these scaled-down venues are assumed to serve all Londoners and beyond. The Media Centre will accommodate businesses and the Olympic Village will be turned into some 2,800 dwellings with a large educational complex and healthcare facilities.

The official plans (Legacy Masterplanning Framework or LMF) for six neighbourhoods are encroaching the Olympic Park boundary, albeit lacking easy connections with the existing urban fabric around; areas surrounding the park are developing their own fringe plans or design strategies, but the approach is traditional, laying down schedules of collective facilities and connecting infrastructure. Judging from the list of current plans and frameworks, the Olympic Games offered rich pickings for masterplanners, notwithstanding work undertaken and commissioned by the five statutory planning authorities, the GLA and the Mayor of London. What will be implemented is another matter...

Everything is conditional, without a development timetable or priorities. After the 2012 Games, parts of the Olympic Park may be completed and reopened to the public after a short time. The official line is that most development on the surrounding area will occur over a longer period, ensuring a responsive and lasting legacy. Over £9.3 bn will have been spent on this short-lived venture, but the costs of legacy development are not specified. The overview is therefore missing, together with quantitative data about the numerous developments, their function, density, accessibility and whether the market can absorb them.

It is clear that spectacular projects are not the best way to regenerate a city. The last International Architecture Biennale held in Rotterdam (IABR) in 2009 explored the role of design visionaries in the service of recycling financial capital, aided by planning deregulation. Spectacular large scale designs are key to attracting the political capital required by



↑ The future of the Olympic site (EDAW/AECOM and Allies Morrison)

developers to achieve alternative agendas. Even if spectacular designs have intrinsic quality, secured by design review panels, their chances of getting implemented are contradicted by the way that financial capital is using the property sector.

All these perspectives are just that: vision, prediction or fear of the future. None of them can confirm or refute whether urban change implies destruction, invasion, segregation or polarisation and whether, at a finer urban grain, there exists a connection between creative colonisation of abandoned sites and gentrification. Is site dereliction a prerequisite of impromptu occupation, are creative activities a prerequisite of luring in speculators, is post hoc claim of ex ante ownership a prerequisite of repossession, or gating a prerequisite of land grabbing? Is privileged land acquisition a prerequisite of urban regeneration mega projects, ejection inherent in gentrification, displacement a precondition of spatial social segregation? Mega projects like the Olympic Games should lend themselves to explore these questions.

In the meantime the show must go on. The Olympic Games process fits neatly into the concept of securitised real estate, generating fictitious money in a cycle of permanent destruction, rebuilding, selling at a profit, frequent changes of hands, and subsequent decline or blight, starting yet another cycle, regardless of resource management, sustainability principles, let alone quality of life ... ●

● Judith Ryser, researcher, journalist, writer and urban affairs consultant to Fundacion Metropoli, Madrid

## MEASURING THE LEGACIES

On 3-4 June 2010, the University of Greenwich Business School hosted its third annual conference on the legacies of the Olympic Games. Presenters were invited to share their thoughts and research on measuring the legacies. Topics included: the use of technology for archiving the Games for future research and measuring levels of social interest; the transport and wider legacies of the Beijing Games; the impact of volunteering on employability; plus, a number of conceptual papers on the idea of legacy and its rhetoric.

The conference also included a play-reading based

on a local theatre company's verbatim interviews with local residents exploring their views on the Games and the impact on local lives. Participants were able to visit numerous 2012 Olympic sites such as Stratford, ExCeL, the O2 Arena, Woolwich and Greenwich Park. Academics from the neighbouring University of East London, local business people and government agency representatives also took part. Following this event, a series of coaching seminars to help local businesses make the most of the London 2012 opportunities will be delivered in the coming months. ●

● Peter Vlachos, Principal Lecturer and Enterprise Leader, Business School, University of Greenwich



# MAIN TOWN SQUARE CAERNARFON

Taylor Young showcases a public realm scheme for this historic town



- 1 War memorial and water feature
- 2 Stepped edge and seating (existing tree retained)
- 3 Shared surface plaza
- 4 Pedestrian crossing point
- 5 Taxi rank
- 6 Parking for disabled people
- 7 Market space
- 8 Steps to link the square with the quayside (to be implemented as part of a future phase)
- 9 New tree planting/seating to define edge of square
- 10 Relocated monument

← Illustrative masterplan showing the integration of landscape, existing village and proposed development

The project's aim was to aid the regeneration of Caernarfon through improving the character of the town's main square. The scope included considering the traffic management regime of the square. The aim of the design for Caernarfon's Castle Square was to create a space for life in an area whose life had been ebbing away. The design wanted to restore the dignity of the buildings in Caernarfon so that local people would remember that they were living in a unique place with fantastic quality and history. The approach taken was to create as simple a space as possible to exhibit the amazing buildings surrounding the space. Foremost is King Edward I's castle which is a World Heritage Site and dominates the eastern end of the square but the square is also surrounded by excellent but unappreciated Georgian buildings.

The contract was phased over an 18 month period to enable continued

vehicular access to the square and pedestrian access to the shops and services around the square with the last phase of the project completed at the end of 2008. The contract was administered by the Gwynedd Consultancy team.

The project has resulted in a transformational change in the character of Caernarfon. The town did not live up to its potential and exhibited a very tired character exacerbated by the A55 which was constructed to bypass the town centre which it achieved both physically and psychologically.

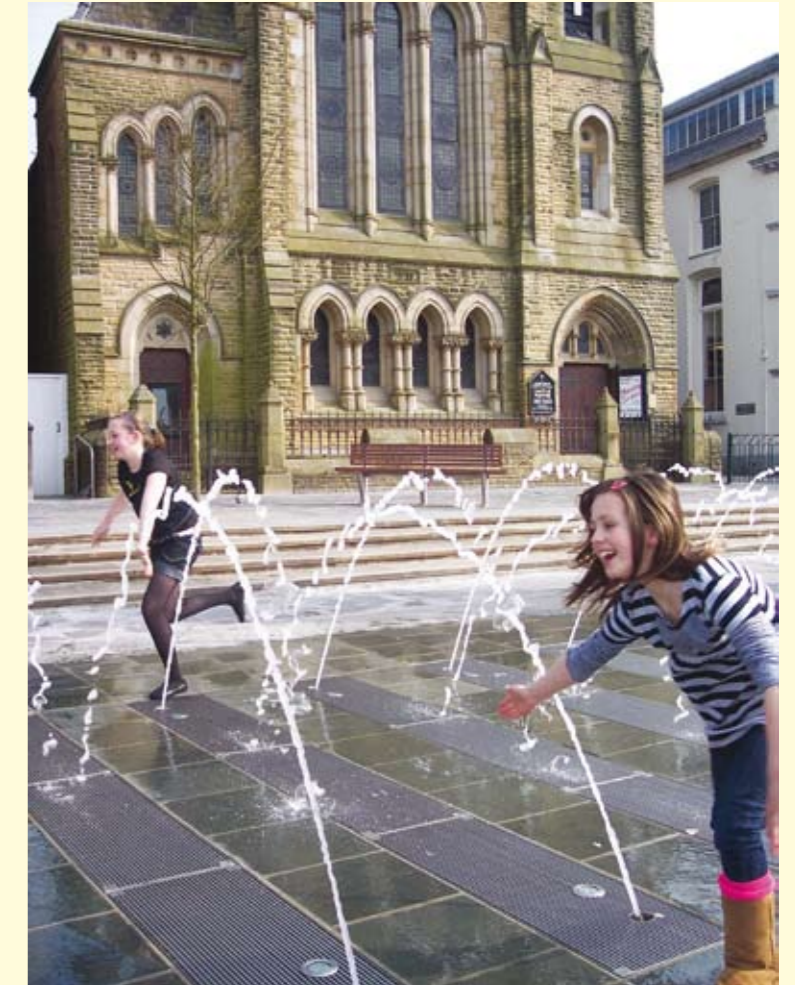
## SHARED SPACE

The new shared space scheme is arguably the largest and most ambitious shared space scheme completed in the UK and it can be a model for future schemes. It proves that through environmental design you can fundamentally affect the way people drive.

By removing rights of way, highway drivers and pedestrians are forced to interact with one another and they almost universally display a courteous nature in the interactions both between drivers and between different modes of transport. It's fascinating sitting at one of the new pavement cafes watching how people behave in the space; traffic speeds are dramatically reduced and the square now feels like a place for people within which vehicles are tolerated.

The square had a reasonable traffic flow and pedestrian footfall which had to be accommodated including servicing of shops and coaches dropping off tourists. The simplicity of the concept led to proposals for a shared space which, thanks to bold decisions from the local authority, were pursued. There are no road markings in the new square and drivers often appear confused when they arrive. This level of confusion makes the drivers more aware of

↘ Children now enjoy coming to the town centre  
 ↓ Before: Y Maes in 2004  
 ↓↓ After: Y Maes in 2009



their surroundings and they automatically drive very slowly (generally under 15mph). Pedestrians treat the whole space as their own and will happily stand chatting in the middle of the square letting drivers navigate their way around them.

## MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The scheme has resulted in a lot of discussion in the local press with pedestrian safety a major concern. Six months after the scheme was completed the safety discussion is less prominent in the newspaper and parking is seen as a big issue. The area is defined as a restricted zone with no parking apart from disabled spaces. The openness of the design leaves lots of space for parking and a reasonable number of cars stopping for short periods can positively activate the space, but for a few times each day the parking numbers get excessive and the square becomes cluttered. This is an ongoing management issue which the local authority is keeping a close eye on with proposals for automated CCTV ticketing a possibility. The design always allowed for an option for retrofitting strategically placed street furniture to restrict vehicle movement if required.

## ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS

The western end of the square has an impressive group of bank buildings and

the prominent Presbyterian church adjacent to the sandstone war memorial. A new fountain here adds to this group to create a counterpoint to the dominant castle and an alternative focus to the square. It celebrates an historic fountain which was the first safe communal water supply in Caernarfon and helped stem a cholera epidemic. The new fountain has been a great success and is loved by local children.

An impressive flight of steps is proposed to link the square with Slate Quay, at a later stage. The steps would make the river visible from the square and create a dramatic gateway to the square from the tourist parking areas on the quay, where currently the first view of the square is the public toilets and David Lloyd George with his back to them. New public toilets would also be constructed as part of this phase.

A number of trees were lost to open up views within the space. The lost trees were of poor quality due to the low specification of tree pits in which they were planted. New tree planting is in high specification pits and in time will help to soften the space.

The overall cost of the scheme was £3.25m and it was delivered by the council's in-house engineering consultancy team, which resulted in a number of

elements of highway infrastructure being introduced at a late stage.

There are ongoing management issues with regard to proliferation of street furniture in the form of sign posts and guard rails. The local authority is going through a learning process trying to understand how best to manage this exciting space, but must be congratulated for making some bold decisions.

Extensive public consultation took place in the design stages of the projects starting with themed stakeholder workshops:

- Heritage and Culture
- Commercial and Tourism
- Movement and Transport

At these workshops and meetings with local councilors, consensus was obtained on the general approach to the design as a simple shared space. A three day public consultation event was then held at the Presbyterian church on the square and responses were recorded through questionnaires resulting in a very high level of approval in a town that has a reputation of being resistant to change. ●

# OXFORD CIRCUS IMPROVEMENTS

Atkins public realm team describe innovations and early results in the Circus



## URBAN DESIGN BACKGROUND

Oxford Circus had become less of a place than a congested space, although it is one of London's most famous townscape names, forming an architectural and transport junction between Oxford Street and Regent Street, two of the world's greatest shopping streets. Although continuing to maintain success through changing retail trends, urban design analysis and improvement strategies led by the City of Westminster, have regularly been proposed since the 1980s, in the face of concerns over competitiveness with out of town and shopping mall developments.

The current Oxford Circus improvements, proposed in 2008, are part of wider strategies for the West End and have

been focused on improved pedestrian crossing arrangements and decluttering. Pragmatic outputs of these studies have been implemented in November 2009 to significant acclaim.

Oxford Street developed from its early origins as a Roman route whilst Regent Street was built in the early 19th century as a symbol of elegant living with style and grace. The street was planned from 1811 by architect and developer, John Nash, who could be considered one of London's first urban designers. His vision was for a wide boulevard with sweeping curves. It was designed to connect the royal estates and redefine the less fashionable streets of Soho, and as a compliment to Nash's patron the Prince Regent.

The optimum use of pockets of Crown Estate land meant that the New Street had to contain a number of twists, which Nash designed so as to create great townscape set pieces: at Langham Place, and where the street enters Piccadilly Circus via The Quadrant as well as the original two Regent Circuses.

Completed in 1825, Nash's refined stucco buildings needed renewal at the end of the 19th century with changes in the building construction and in retail space requirements. Completed in 1927, the elegant, building lines and broad footways and carriageways remained constant, in spite of the increased height and bulk of most redeveloped buildings and some spaces, such as Piccadilly Circus. The replacement architecture adopted the consistent use of neo-classical stone, to a formula set by Sir Reginald Blomfield, in collaboration with other leading architects.

## THE URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The Crown Estate freeholders have reaffirmed in their mixed use redevelopment strategy that the essence of a successful shopping environment, is in the freedom to move between shops, window browsing, without noise, smell, danger or disruption by vehicular traffic. But both Oxford Street and Regent Street were laid out to maintain four or more lanes of moving vehicles without impediment from pedestrians. At Oxford Circus this created a divide between the north and south and the east and west sides of the two streets, at a point of arrival by underground (approximately 230,000 people per day) and transition of about 2,000 bus movements on 23 bus routes an hour. For the approximately 43,000 pedestrians per hour, crossing at Oxford Circus had become an unpleasant, risky, major undertaking. Westminster City Council (WCC) working with Transport for London (TfL) and the New West End Company (NWEC), had been analysing the issues and opportunities for an Oxford Street, Regent Street and Bond Street (ORB) Improvement Action Plan, and the Crown Estate had in parallel been preparing a Regent Street Public Realm Strategy, seeking to redress the balance between pedestrians and vehicles.

← Regent Street: John Nash's grand axial route then and now (from The Crown Estate archive plan)  
 → Ground level view on opening day  
 ↘ Oxford Circus before improvements.  
 ↙ Final stages of construction showing the new arrangement of crossings



## THE PROJECT PROCESS

The proposals for Oxford Circus were commenced by Atkins public realm team, with a street furniture audit, pedestrian movement analysis and highway capacity assessments. Working with WCC, the concept of improving effective footway space by clearing clutter, and widening by reducing central road island widths and crossing arrangements, was developed to enable increased pedestrian capacity, with maintained bus and essential vehicle access and movements. Pedestrian signal controlled crossings which were realigned and shortened (to between 11.5 – 13.8 m long) to restore the desire line movements of pedestrians wishing to go east-west along Oxford Street and north-south on Regent Street, within an all-red vehicle traffic signal arrangement, also helped to restore the symmetry and formality of the Circus townscape. At a series of meetings with the project team, promoters the Crown Estate, TfL and Westminster's Director for Transportation, Martin Low, the idea was put forward of introducing 25.8 m long, diagonal pedestrian crossings. This type of crossing had been developed in American and Japanese grid cities, but had not been considered for such a densely congested space as Oxford Circus. The advantages appeared to benefit pedestrians, in creating extra route choices and increasing the speed of road crossing, therefore also helping in re-starting vehicle traffic, by reducing informal and unsafe crossing on red phases.

To test such an innovative approach Atkins Transport and Intelligent Space pedestrian modellers initially developed computer models including 2D real time simulations for vehicles (VISSIM) and pedestrians (LEGION). The urban design team combined this data and prepared a 3D animated, photo-realistic environment (3D Studio Max model) with specialist Design Hive, which was used for stakeholder and public consultation. A particle-based system modelled the 5,000 virtual people, which the animation programmed to walk and idle, when the lights changed for traffic signals.

The result is difficult to distinguish from a real piece of video footage.

A seven month programme of site operations had to coordinate with London Underground improvements, maintain safe and convenient retail operations,



street clutter clearance and utilities works, as well as implement improvements including concentric granite paving, lighting mounted on buildings and Legible London wayfinding. The works were timed for the Mayor's opening on 2 November 2009 and the Christmas lights.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The completed project has drawn significant public and professional support and Oxford Circus is again a place to visit for its change in character by day and by night. The movement of traffic appears to work as predicted with a dramatic reduction in pedestrian congestion. The lessons for these changes are that the highway authorities are involved with the

full range of design professionals from inception to completion. Consultations are all about the communication of ideas and proposals, in ways that are accessible, engaging and believable. The work at Oxford Circus has made a major contribution to a placemaking tool and a case study of a project that is being monitored and validated. ●

# FIREPOOL, TAUNTON

*NEW Masterplanning explains the redevelopment of Taunton's cattle market site*



Taunton's cattle market occupied a prominent 16 acre, riverfront site. It was a defining feature of Taunton for over a thousand years but has been largely derelict since the market relocated. At the same time young people were leaving town, office demand was focused on the M5, the cricket club was planning to move out of town and proposals for Firepool focused on retail warehousing.

In 2004, the Taunton Urban Design Framework (UDF) recognised Firepool's potential as a finer grain, mixed-use development which could act as a catalyst for wider regeneration of the town centre. This was the start of a process which saw Project Taunton select St. Modwen as development partner on the basis of a master plan which will deliver over 50,000 m<sup>2</sup> of offices, 600 apartments and town houses, a hotel, fitness centre, shops, food stores, restaurants and community facilities.

2010 will see work start on Phase 1,

delivering riverfront offices, apartments and a new park. Within the last 5 years Firepool has become a focus for regeneration in Taunton, combining bold new interventions with an understanding of market town character, and putting the river at the heart of the community.

## **BOLD NEW INTERVENTIONS**

Station Boulevard will be a grand new entrance to Taunton, taking visitors from the railway station to the new waterfront space through the heart of the new office and retail area. It is carefully aligned to gradually reveal views of the three church towers which dominate and define the Taunton skyline.

A slender tower, with potential for a hotel and rooftop restaurant, has excited officers, members, businesses and residents as a 21st Century addition to the skyline. Views of the tower will complement the existing church towers and mark the arrival into Taunton by rail

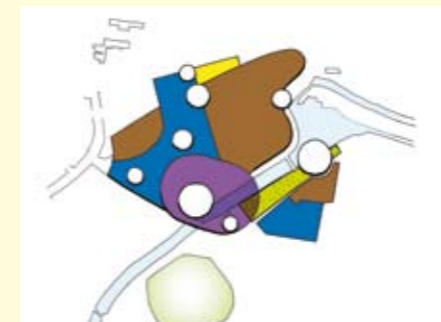
and road. At lower levels the tower's core changes to a wider footprint to minimise costs associated with tall buildings.

Warehouse style, 5-6 storey offices and apartments bring a new building typology and scale of architecture to Taunton's waterfront. Careful use of physical models, 3-d visualisation and sections has delivered a dramatic waterfront which sits comfortably with the surrounding 2-3 storey buildings.

## **MARKET TOWN CHARACTER**

Firepool's terraced streets integrate the waterfront architecture with the existing scale and grain of Taunton. They open up views to the waterfront and bring the River Tone into the heart of Firepool. The riverfront and curving terraced streets are natural extensions of longer distance, east-west, pedestrian and cycle routes. Larger spaces along the riverfront and smaller internal spaces also help the transition in scale.

- ✦ Illustrative photomontage
- ✦ Strategic connections to town and river
- ✦ Competition winning masterplan
- ✦ Design principles: land use, streets and spaces, movement



All streets in Firepool have a mix of offices and residential uses, and support a range of local shops and amenities to create a neighbourhood character and vitality. Station Boulevard and the riverfront are the focus for activity whilst quieter terraced streets with town houses can attract families and local businesses.

The master plan provides for large footprint uses such as a food store and a multi-storey car park, but ensures that they are incorporated within mixed-use perimeter blocks with active frontages to the street. Detailed design of undercroft and courtyard parking in all blocks hides cars from the streets.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

The master plan recognised that Taunton is no longer just a market town and created a modern, exciting waterfront destination, distinctly different from the rest of the town centre. Creating a connection between town and country delivers a natural extension of a market town. This dual approach has helped stimulate developer interest and maintain local support.

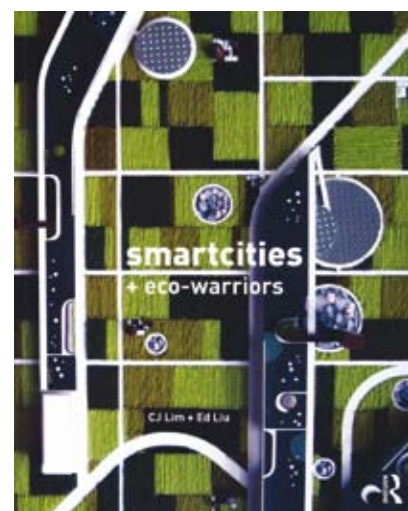
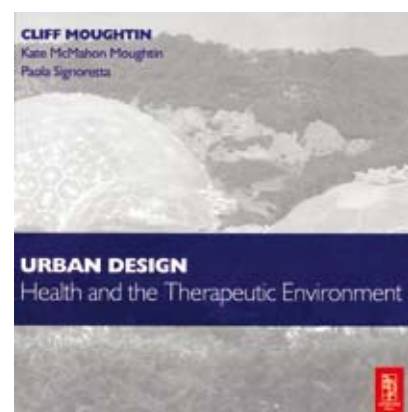
Detailed design at the strategic masterplanning stage created confidence for the public and private sector that this bold new strategy was both deliverable and appropriate for the town. In particular it persuaded the County Cricket Club not to relocate but to build a new, mixed-use, stand on its existing site.

A consistent commitment to high quality design has built genuine partnerships with officers, members, Environment Agency, Natural England and Creating Excellence in the South West. This support has enabled the design team to respond quickly to new occupier requirements or funding opportunities. Flexible design of local and regional offices, apartments and town houses has also helped maintain occupier interest despite the recession.

Fresh input from the developer, architects, public realm and lighting specialists continually challenges and refreshes the scheme whilst a core masterplanning team helps maintain the essential principles and boldness of the original design. ●

## PUBLISHERS AWARD

The UDG Awards Programme now includes a Publishers Award (see inner cover of this issue for more details of the Awards Event): publishers whose books have been recently reviewed in the journal and others in the urban design field, were asked to nominate a book published in the last 18 months. Eight entries were received and are reviewed on the next four pages. A panel of four members was selected (Juliet Bidgood, Marc Furnival, Jonathan Kendall and Lee Pugalís); they reviewed two books each and were asked to shortlist one of the two books. The four shortlisted books are due to be circulated around the panel which, under the coordination and chairmanship of Alastair Donald will choose the winner to be announced at the award event in February 2011.



### Urban Design: Health and the Therapeutic Environment

Cliff Moughtin, Kate McMahon Moughtin and Paola Signoretta, Architectural Press, 2010, PB £29.99, ISBN 978-1-8561-7614-9

This final book in the series on Urban Design by Moughtin et al. researched and written in collaboration with a psychotherapist and a social scientist, aims to open up the subject to a wider arena. It sets out to explore the nature of a therapeutic environment and identify how this can be designed. The first of three parts sets out the theoretical background for health and the therapeutic environment, the second relates this to British radical and philanthropic traditions, and the last extrapolates design principles. Its scope makes it a good primer for those wishing to broaden their understanding of the context for urban design.

The concept of a therapeutic landscape as a place where people traditionally sought healing powers was defined by the cultural geographer W. Gesler and the book uses his definition of therapeutic environments to analyse a series of case studies. This pluralistic reading defines place as made up of natural, built, social and symbolic elements. Epidaurus and Bath serve as historic examples of places dedicated to healing, Cuba as an example of a modern state that has successfully prioritised health and self-sufficiency with limited resources. Examples where a therapeutic environment is being fostered are also drawn from Nottingham, Copenhagen and Freiburg.

A convincing case is made for the primary role of the environment as sustaining the family. Arguments from feminism give a different conception of the important and often undervalued roles women and carers play in society, and outline how they might be better supported by a therapeutic environment. It is suggested that design schools should teach listening and emotional literacy in order to increase contextual awareness and create design cultures more attuned to the needs of the majority.

The principles identified are for the city to be designed as part of an interdependent bioregion, for the needs of the family to be at the heart of city planning, for city structures to integrate green spaces, for neighbourhoods to be renewed or developed as carbon neutral healthy quarters, and for cities to be proactive and participatory in achieving ecological planning.

Moughtin et al point out that climate change will intensify the pressures for population growth and increase demand for new communities to be built. They conclude that to sustain humanity in harmony with the environment, the planning system will need the popular authority to fully engage with the challenges of climate change.

● Juliet Bidgood

### Smartcities + Eco-warriors

CJ Lim and Ed Lui, Routledge, 2009, PB £29.99, ISBN 978-0-415-57124-1

Smartcities is an exploration of the idea of creating a city of 'closed sustainable eco-systems' undertaken by CJ Lim and Studio 8 Architects. The book adopts the polemical style enlisted by Le Corbusier in *La Ville Radieuse* (1933): here too the vision presented is of a tightly controlled three-dimensional aesthetic. The book also draws on the 'let's do it' vibe of Archigram, referencing the work of this group and that of the Japanese Metabolists. Its aim is to set out a utopian view as a stalking horse to the status quo.

Smartcities is organised in manifesto, case studies and commentary. The manifesto sets out compelling reasons for a radical approach to sustainable city design, citing the influence of utopian visions in urban design history. The 13 case studies are mostly speculative projects that span Asia, Europe and America. The first one is for Guangming Smartcity, in China, a new town centre to house 200,000 people. A series of artificially constructed residential hills and craters integrate the infrastructure of a low-energy, low-waste city with an agrarian economy of vertical kitchen gardens and aquaculture terraces.

The case studies search for a richer language for a high-density city. This takes on the Corbusian paradigm but agitates the ground plane so that it becomes more constructed than the buildings themselves. Buildings are overtaken by landscapes, so that in the Nanyui Urban Living Room, towers are subsumed by multiple layers of elevated parkland. The drive is to create 'new hybrid typologies of buildings and landscapes'. Parks are made productive and interlaced with agricultural zones or condense disparate elements such as energy production, hills of lychees, plazas lawns, sound gardens, art and reformed landfill.

Within a typically formal vocabulary, projects set out to intensify sensual experience as in the Tomato Exchange for Trafalgar Square where hydroponic towers introduce the luscious qualities of the fruit to the city. However at times the vision for Smartcity appears too totalising and the scale of structures seems out of kilter with people. When design proposals are developed at a more intermediate scale, a welcome formal diversity creeps in.

The stated need for a more radical review of how we envisage urban living is reinforced in the closing commentary from three different experts. Each one argues for a shift in how we view ourselves, our needs and our interconnectedness with one another and with nature. Indeed we are at a time when we need to think more speculatively, to stretch our collective expectations and Smartcities takes us some of the way.

● Juliet Bidgood

### Designing High-Density Cities For Social and Environmental Sustainability

Edward Ng (ed.), Earthscan, 2010, HB £65.00, ISBN 978-1-84407-460-0

*Designing High Density Cities* is a thorough textbook with chapters by a variety of authors. Edited by a professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the book is strongly focused on that city which sets a benchmark for extreme urban density. As a compiled series of academic texts, the highly referenced chapters read as a refereed journal. While some readers might consume the contents from front to back, it is more likely that specific chapters will be read in isolation, depending on the reader's focus.

It is evident that this volume is aimed at an academic or professional audience with a specialist interest in environmental engineering or building physics. Although many parts are of interest to general readers – I would recommend it to urbanism students seeking conceptual tools for the science of city-making – many chapters quickly develop a high level of technical detail.

The book is notable for its rigour and assumed knowledge of environmental physics. The non-specialist may understand the essence of the issues but it is inevitable that some parts will be explored only by those with scientific expertise. As an example, the chapters on the cooling potential of natural ventilation (a key issue in such intensively mechanically serviced environments) rely on a working knowledge of calculus that will apply to a narrow audience.

Though not really a volume for the general reader, the book still forms a useful reference for those interested in designing at high density. But many issues are not covered: it could have included a greater historical overview (regulatory, social and technical processes that led to high density urbanism) and varied scales of analysis (infrastructure and landscape). Despite the title, the issue of social sustainability needs greater definition and merits further coverage, for example in relation to the roles of public space, culture and family.

It is a shame the illustrations are black and white and of variable quality. The book could have been more lavish, conveying the experiential richness of Hong Kong and other high-density environments alongside the scientific analysis. The title of the book raises high levels of expectation, so that its technical nature and focus on a narrow academic audience, inevitably leads to a degree of disappointment. This is perhaps unfair to an interesting and important volume. But there is another book with an identical title waiting to be written for a broader readership.

● Jonathan Kendall

### The Urban Housing Handbook

Eric Firley and Caroline Stahl, Wiley, 2009, HB £45.00, ISBN 978-0-470-51275-3

It was a pleasure to be asked to review the *Urban Housing Handbook*, as a copy has sat on a shelf behind my desk for several months and I have turned to it many times for information and delight. The book is one of a number published in recent years that categorise housing and urban form, enabling analysis through systematic drawings, diagrams and comparison. Such a description understates the contribution of this book, a rich piece of work operating on many levels.

The *Urban Housing Handbook* is thorough and beautifully illustrated. It is a work of academic rigour and a visual delight that can sit on the shelf or coffee table of those from a variety of disciplines who wish to develop an international and historical interest in dwellings, the basic component of cities.

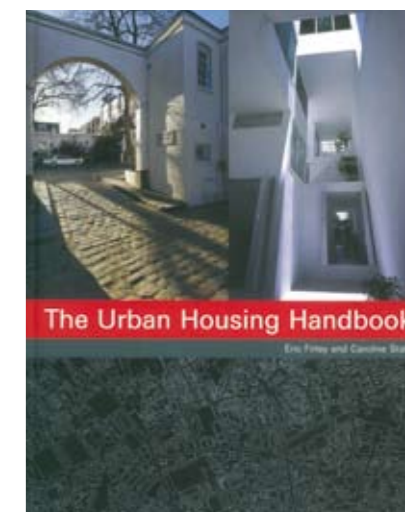
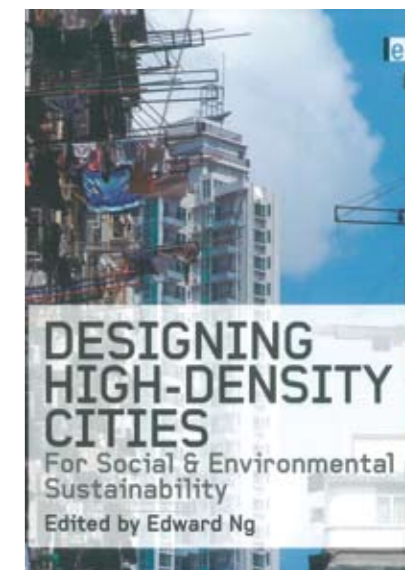
It is the product of two years of full-time work, a level of commitment of time and effort fully conveyed in the text, photographs and drawings. The systematic text is organised around 30 basic housing types, grouped by typology and then by chronology, each of which is the subject of a short contextual essay and a recent comparative housing project chosen to demonstrate the ongoing relevance and value of the type.

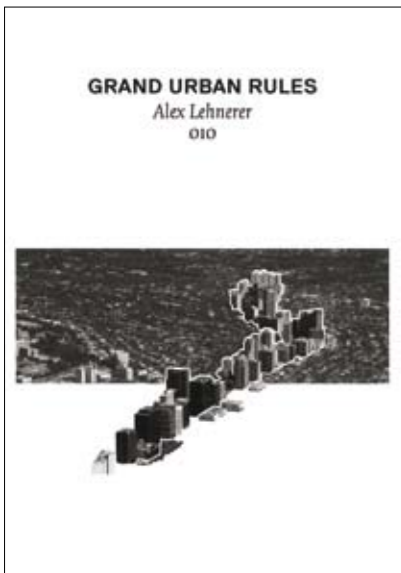
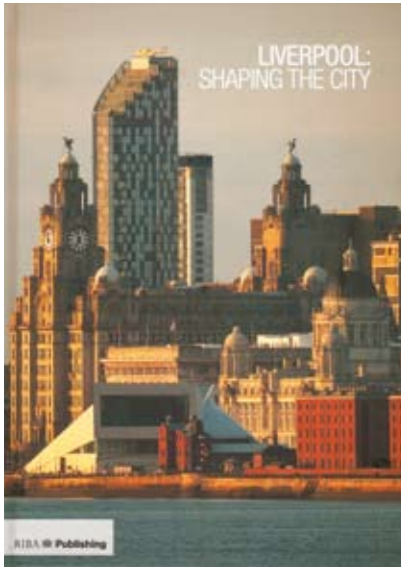
Particularly notable is the exemplary rigour of the drawn information by Katharina Gron, whose drawings are spare and beautiful. Plans, sections and figure-ground diagrams, at similar scales, allow side-by-side urban and architectural evaluation.

The consistently lavish and seductive photography enables links between historic typologies and contemporary equivalents to be drawn, the longevity of some typologies and recent interpretations of them being particularly interesting. Many are new and delightful discoveries. It is interesting to note that many new projects are one-off design responses to peculiar circumstances rather than the product of prevailing development orthodoxy. The typologies are accompanied by strong narratives explaining the social and technological factors influencing urban development; one would have liked a greater discussion regarding the success – or otherwise – of contemporary housing production.

Unapologetically, the book avoids the free-standing Modernist object, concentrating on typologies that are integrated urban components. While understandable, one would have liked greater discussion regarding the implications of increased urban density; only at the very end of the book are the technological and spatial breakthroughs of early residential towers considered. Perhaps a follow-up volume could develop this further, exploring verticality and hybrids in greater detail?

● Jonathan Kendall





## Liverpool: Shaping the City

Stephen Bayley & Paul McMullin, RIBA Publishing, London, 2010, HB £19.95, ISBN 978-1-85946-329-1

Liverpool's status as 2008 City of Culture gave good reason for the surge of building projects in the city centre, most notably the 2009 Stirling prize nominated Liverpool One master plan, which has substantially re-stitched the waterfront back into the city centre. Stephen Bayley, design director and critic, commentator and author, goes back to his roots and adds a journey through Liverpool past and present to this showcasing of recent regeneration work. Although slightly sentimental, this section provides an appealing insight into Liverpool, and will be of interest both to those who already know the city and those that only know it anecdotally. Images by photographer Paul McMullin relate well to the text and take us through a wide range of scales, add tone and give a sense of the place itself.

This hardback edition, which has been supported by many of the companies and institutions involved, divides the second half into case studies sensibly grouped into public realm, shopping, working, visiting, living and learning, each with a helpful, albeit short, introduction. Whilst this is essentially an architectural record, more objective urban design analysis would have been useful with plans, drawings or diagrams to illustrate the context of each scheme. There is some critical comment, although more about what is still to be done, which is laudable, rather than works completed. This does however limit the relevance for urban designers of what is in many ways an excellent publication, a small number of typos notwithstanding.

The book demonstrates well the impressive level of work which has been done with flair, sensitivity and quality, achieving an integration between new and existing, thus breaking the 'out-of-town-in-town' typology seen recently in White City, West London, to the detriment of Shepherd's Bush. What is also conveyed well is the process by which each project came about: the genuine client support and leadership and the dedication and commitment of those involved, showing an exemplar manner of regenerating towns and cities.

By embracing a contemporary yet sensitive approach, a bold new tranche of buildings and spaces have been added as another layer to the rich and varied history of Liverpool, and will give confidence to future clients and commissioners, particularly pertinent in the current economic climate. The question remains to what degree the high quality of the physical change translates into long term socio-economic regeneration, not just for the new quarters, but the city as a whole.

● Marc Furnival

## Grand Urban Rules

Alex Lehnerer, 010, Rotterdam, 2009, HB £32.95, ISBN 978-90-6450-666-6

Whether we are civic administrators, urban designers, architects or private developers, we all feel the weight of regulations. *Grand Urban Rules* raises the idea of rules themselves as a topic, and as potential design tools, which is timely in our current climate of box ticking and overly process-driven projects; the notion of rules clearly needs revising to render it more relevant to a current, contemporary context.

Alex Lehnerer deals with a serious topic through entertaining and illustrative examples. Using the concept of the imaginary city of *Averuni*, he delves into the kafkaesque world of rules, highlighting the often perverse nature and results of usually well-intentioned rules when implemented. After listing a set of rules from around the world, the main chapters examine: context, interface of public and private interests, thresholds, codifying aesthetics, neighbours, shifts in focus of sets of rules, zones, difference and consistency; leading to designed variation, a key theme of the book. There is an assumption that potential for diversity, once created, will be taken up by developers in the way intended.

Each chapter is structured around a series of illustrative accounts, with a supportive but sometimes too brief an introduction. A succinct conclusion for each chapter would have aided the inevitable chains of thought that the text richly induces, and drawn more out of the relevant anecdotes cited, which throw up wonderful terms such as 'grumble line'.

The consideration of rules as tools of design and delivery extends to the fact that many are formulated by lawyers and administrators - rather than design focused professionals - and the, sometimes disastrous, common assumption that rules are directly transferable. It becomes clear that rules should not only be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain fit for purpose, but that we consider a re-profiling of them in general, and a re-framing of our relationship with them. This could allow more diversity to emerge through the consideration of the broader context. The final chapter draws this together through examples of masterplanning analysis. In Kees Christiaanse's final essay, Rem Koolhaas reminds us that 'a "generic city" does not enjoy a long life', which we can interpret as a manifesto to keep rules as guides, leaving space for human-focused design.

*Grand Urban Rules* succeeds in being educational, interesting and entertaining, which is no mean feat. It is a complex topic and to have taken it on at all is laudable. It provides much food for thought, in an often ignored, but critical area.

● Marc Furnival

## Great Public Squares: An Architect's Selection

Robert F. Gatje, W. W. Norton & Co., 2010, HB £48.00, ISBN 978-0-393-73173-6

This book, by New Yorker Robert F. Gatje, does exactly what it says on the tin: it selects and analyses forty great public squares from the perspective of an architect. It is what I would describe as a coffee table book: an oversized hardback with large, bright images interspersed with minimal text of various type sizes. Whilst in the introduction the author describes himself as an architect and planner, I would question the extent to which the practice and theory associated with the latter professional outlook has influenced the work of this book. This is epitomised in Gatje's definition of the square which refers to urban space as that which 'is left between' architectural structures; 'formed by three dimensions of void'. Consequently, the book 'is about space, albeit space that is usually shaped by architects as enclosed between buildings'. If Gatje had reflected on the social dimension of the design and production of space (see, for example, Henri Lefebvre, Michel de Certeau or Ali Madanipour), he may have achieved greater success in revealing spatial experience or lived space. As a result, notwithstanding the quality of photographs, images selected tend to follow Gatje's conceptualisation of urban space as voids by focusing on architectural details and often depicting empty space, devoid of sociality. This contradicts Gatje's own observation that 'The more people in a square, the better it feels'.

As with all selections of great things, choices are highly personal, situated and subjective. What one person considers a great public square may be rebuked by another. The merit in highly selective lists is, therefore, the capacity to stimulate debate. If ten designers were asked to draw up a list of forty great public squares, how likely is it that any would mirror those selected by Gatje? Determining whose list is right and whose wrong, misses the point in my opinion - it is about views. Gatje recognises this and actively invites readers to measure their choices against his.

To summarise, the benefits of coffee table books are that they are easy to read with limited jargon and small blocks of text, visually stimulating with colourful illustrations and photographs. Entertaining volumes, they can alleviate boredom and inspire conversations. On the flipside, they are not very portable, lack analytical detail and the subject matter can be forgotten just as quickly as it takes one to leaf through the glossy oversized pages.

● Lee Pugalis

## Making Better Places: The Planning Project in the Twenty-First Century

Patsy Healey, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, PB £22.99, ISBN 978-0-230-20056-2

Patsy Healey, the distinguished planning academician, continues her place-shaping excursion through her latest publication concerned with making better places. The book is about the 'idea and practice of planning', which in Healey's view is much more than the bureaucratic procedures of planning systems. The aim of the book is to unshackle the planning project - which is about making improvements to the qualities of places with an eye to the future - from reductive practice. Healey does so by focusing on how ideas of sustainable liveability are transformed into action, which in turn has social, material and economic effects on the ground. This circular interaction is organised by exploring the ongoing management of neighbourhood change, the promotion of major development projects and spatial strategy making. Placing theory in the background, the book will be of significant interest to the practising planner, the student planner and those with a stake in the planning project more generally.

As with much of Healey's previous material, it responds to people's concerns about improving social life through a positive tone that advocates liveable and sustainable places. International case studies are interspersed throughout the text, which are intended to help others learn from prior experience, but not to be confused with ready-made best-practice remedies.

Whilst the case studies are useful to a point, bringing a modicum of life to Healey's whirlwind introduction to the planning project, I would not concur that the cases have been fashioned from a method of 'thick description' (see Clifford Geertz or more recently the work of Bent Flyvberg). In my interpretation, thick description is applied in a manner that lets the spatial story unfold and refold through multifaceted, messy and situated accounts. It opens space for the reader to explore issues, rather than being presented with the findings that may either be accepted or rejected. The extent and variety of cases presented throughout the book makes this task impossible. Further, by Healey's own acknowledgements, case material amassed was largely derived from secondary sources which tend to iron-out the messy creases of social life.

Providing a counterbalance to systematic knowledge, drawing more heavily on experiential knowledge from the streets may have helped provide the thick description that Healey obviously sought. Despite these slight detractors, the book is essential reading for all those searching for a 21st Century introduction to the planning project.

● Lee Pugalis



The panel of four members shortlisted the following books from which the winner will be selected:

- Smartcities + Eco-warriors, Routledge
- The Urban Housing Handbook, Wiley
- Grand Urban Rules, 010
- Making Better Places, Palgrave Macmillan

## OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

● Juliet Bidgood, architect and urban designer, director at the design and communication studio - Neat and a CABE Enabler

● John Billingham, architect and planner, formerly Director of Design and Development at Milton Keynes Development Corporation

● Richard Cole architect and planner, formerly Director of Planning and Architecture of the Commission for New Towns

● Alastair Donald is an urbanist. He's currently co-editing *The Future of Community: Back from Beyond the Grave*

● Marc Furnival Urban designer and architect, writer, tutor and urban design consultant

● Georgia Giannopoulou, Lecturer, University of Newcastle Upon Tyne and UDG Northern East Convenor

● Joe Holyoak, architect and urban designer, Principal Lecturer in Urban Design at University of Central England

● Jonathan Kendall is Partner and Director of Urban Design at Fletcher Priest, and teaches on the MArch Urban Design programme at UCL

● Sebastian Loew, architect and planner, writer and consultant, teaching at the University of Westminster

● Malcolm Moor, architect and independent consultant in urban design; co-editor of Urban Design Futures

● Anna Nasatska, urban designer, member of Street network

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Neither the Urban Design Group nor the editors are responsible for views expressed or statements made by individuals writing in *Urban Design*

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## Grid references

Aerial view of the Cerda grid in Barcelona

Aerial view of the Plaça del Sol in Barcelona

Aerial view of the Plaça del Sol in Barcelona

This year is the 150th anniversary of the implementation of the plan for the expansion of Barcelona (the *Eixample* in Catalan, the *Ensanche* in Spanish), designed by the urbanist Ildefonso Cerda. He incidentally is credited with coining the word urbanism in the first place. For my money, the *Eixample* remains one of the best and most progressive urban plans made in the modern period, despite the municipality’s subsequent failure to implement Cerda’s proposed building code. Walking through the grid, as I did with my urban design students in May, one experiences grandeur and ordinariness, regularity and variety, the universal and the local.

Presumably because of the anniversary, there are about ten new books on the *Eixample* in the Jordi Capell bookshop in the College of Architects’ building. Not wishing to overload BMI Baby, I limited myself to buying a small book by Manuel de Sola-Morales called *Ten Lessons on Barcelona*, drawn from his teaching at the Laboratori d’Urbanisme de Barcelona. One of his lessons is about the *Eixample*; another is about the development of Gracia (charmingly subtitled in translation

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five. Each subsequent urbanisation joined its new streets to those of the adjacent ones, resulting in an approximate grid that is not as exact as Cerda’s, nor as grand as the West End, but much more intimate than either.

It is not a spectacular place. It is a local quarter for local people, and is not on the tourist trail. It has only one Gaudi building, the Casa Vicens, although Park Guell is just uphill to the north. But it is a very distinctive and beautiful place, and a remarkable demonstration of how a community can decide on simple parameters of good urban form and implement them; not by imposed rules, but by collective agreement.

- Joe Holyoak