

## WHERE URBAN DESIGN MEETS CULTURE

**Glasgow Forum April 1990**  
**Reports on Glasgow and Liverpool Conferences**  
**Professional Institute Debate**

UDQ Issue 37 JANUARY 1991 ISBN 0266-6480 £2.00

**URBAN  
DESIGN  
QUARTERLY**

**PROGRAMME**

**Spring 1991  
RENAISSANCE CITIES**

Thursday, 24 January, 1991

**Paris  
Martin Meade**

Martin Meade is a long time Paris resident. He will talk about the Grands Projets and other major urban design initiatives.

Wednesday, 13 February, 1991

**Berlin  
Brian Hatton**

Brian Hatton who is a cultural historian will look at past history, recent projects and a vision for the future

Wednesday, 13 March, 1991

**Frankfurt  
Peter Cook**

Peter Cook has been involved in practice and teaching in Germany. He is now head of the Bartlett School of Architecture. He will review recent projects.

Wednesday, 3 April 1991

**Barcelona  
Octavio Mestre**

Octavio Mestre is deeply involved in major regeneration efforts in one of Europe's most exciting cities.

**Summer, 1991,  
CITIES OF THE PACIFIC RIM**

April 1991

**Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne  
Francis Tibbalds**

Francis recently completed a study tour of the east coast Australian cities and found them an interesting series of contrasts.

May 1991

**Hong Kong  
Prof. Derek Walker**

Derek Walker's practice has completed a project for a public park in central Kowloon which brought them into contact with many aspects of Hong Kong culture and its impact on urban design.

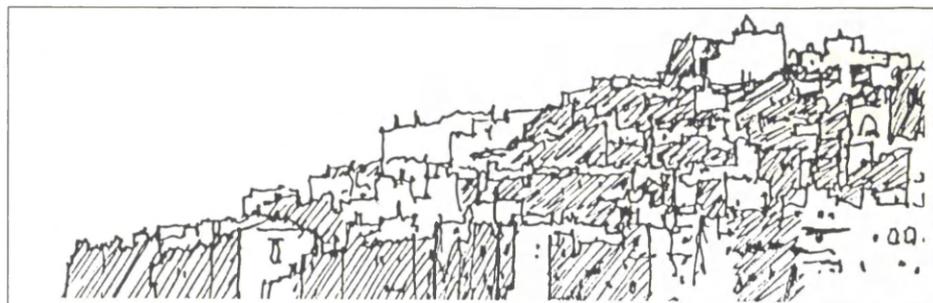
June, 1991

**Japanese Cities  
John Worthington**

The President is a long time Japanophile. Here he reviews possible lessons from the world's most technologically advanced yet most conservative cities.

**The Spring Programme of four lectures will be held at: DEG, 8 Crinan St., York Way, LONDON NI**

**Refreshments will be available. Events start at 6.00 p.m. for 6.30. Members £2; non-members £3. Further details from Philip Cave on 071 240 2430.**



**International Making Cities Livable Conference, Venice July 2-6th  
Call for papers**

An international conference for city officials, architects, planners, landscape architects, urban geographers, social scientists and others committed to making cities livable. Those wishing to present papers or case studies on the following topics or serve as a moderator should send a 100 word abstract or letter before March 20th.

The topics include the following: appropriate urban architecture; reshaping suburbia and urban sprawl; designing lively urban public places; new traditional town planning; architecture and well-being; public art in cities; restoring historic and social landmarks; innovative affordable housing; historic cities in crisis; successful mixed use; the city for children; reviving the heart of the city; community : essential architectural and social features; healthy urban environments; and energy efficient urban architecture.

For information contact: Suzanne H Crowhurst Lennard, PhD (Arch), Conference Organiser, IMCL Conference, PO Box 7586, Carmel, CA 93921, USA. Telephone (408) 626-9080. Fax (408) 624-5126

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON NEW COMMUNITIES**

It is hoped to arrange a day conference early in the summer on the subject of New Communities. It would be held at a venue in Milton Keynes.

The conference would cover the following subjects:-

- Background of New Towns programme
- Current demand for new communities.
- Consortium Developments proposals.
- Other current developments in Britain and abroad.
- Post modern ideas for new communities.
- Future approaches.
- Structuring new communities.
- Making things happen.

It is hoped that an optional tour of Milton Keynes and a discussion can be arranged for those able to stay overnight.

**Southern Italy Study Tour  
Organised by the Urban Design Group  
4-12th May**

The 'heel' of Italy, Apulia and Basilicata, is a region that has been bypassed by the cultural and economic development of modern Italy. Ranging from wild, remote mountains to the vineyards and olive groves of the coastal plain, it has many dramatically sited white-washed hill towns. This is also the region of the trulli, strange conical stone dwellings which may be the product of North African influence.

Travel will be by rail to Bari and then by minibus. Accommodation will be in tourist class hotels. The price of £395 includes rail travel and sleeper accommodation from London, minibus travel around the region and six nights' bed and breakfast.

Further details from Alan Stones, Fullerton, Church Street, Kelvedon, Essex CO5 9AH or phone 0245 492211 ext. 51642. Last booking date is Friday 1st March.

**FORUM AT DUBLIN**

It is proposed to arrange the 1991 Weekend Forum in Dublin to coincide with its designation as European city of Culture and it is hoped to arrange this in September. Jimmy O'Connor and Dermot Kelly are the two members who are making local arrangements who should be contacted if people wish to give any assistance.

**TREASURER**

Ann Dunton has acted as Treasurer for the last two years but is now regrettably having to give up this role. Anyone who is interested should contact Ann for further details or Lawrence Revill.

**ISSUE 39 CONTRIBUTIONS**

This issue due to be published in September 1991 will include examples of design work by members. The issue will be guest edited by Arnold Linden and members who wish work to be considered should send information to Arnold at 54 Upper Montagu Street, LONDON W1H 1FP

## EDITORIAL

This issue contains a selection of papers from the Weekend Forum held in Glasgow in April 1990 on the subject of 'Where Urban Design meets Culture' as well as reports on the Liverpool conference on 'Urban Design for Urban Renewal' and the conference on 'Urban Edges' held in Glasgow in September 1990.

Issues that linked these conferences together were the contribution that an urban design approach can make to the environment and the community's role in the process.

Barcelona is an inspiring example of the way in which urban design has been given a high priority in the new democratic structure of the city. The establishment of an urban design team with a specific budget and function separate from planning or architecture has enabled key projects to become part of a policy of regeneration of the existing fabric of the city; a policy directed to redefining spaces within the public realm for the benefits of the community.

Both the process and the product serve as clear examples, but how many authorities in Britain have been or are prepared to follow in this direction?

On the other hand, the culture of an area needs to be recognised and understood to provide the roots for future change. Failure to do that will produce elements that are foreign to an area and have no connection with the organic development of a culture or the spirit of a place, a point well made by many at the weekend forum.

Kevin Lynch pointed in one direction a number of years ago by finding out from people living in an area what their perception was of the structure of their community. Perhaps we have not taken that lesson on board strongly enough to enable urban designers to be properly aware of the public's reaction to their community as an aid to future action.

The subtitle to the Liverpool conference on Urban Design of 'Whose City is it Anyway?' reveals a similar concern. Local communities need to be part of the process, not reactive bodies after a proposal is put forward.

The Glasgow 'Urban Edges' conference concluded that a new approach is needed to achieve significant urban change that would involve a different coordinating framework and participation of the public. The word 'Urbanism' needs to be given a stronger meaning and definition so that the lessons and benefits of what has happened in Barcelona can be applied to a wider setting.

Finally, congratulations are due to two longstanding members of the Group, both with strong Spitalfields connections. Firstly to Richard MacCormac who will follow Max Hutchinson as President of the RIBA and secondly to Peter Studdert who has been appointed City Planning Officer of Cambridge.

**John Billingham**

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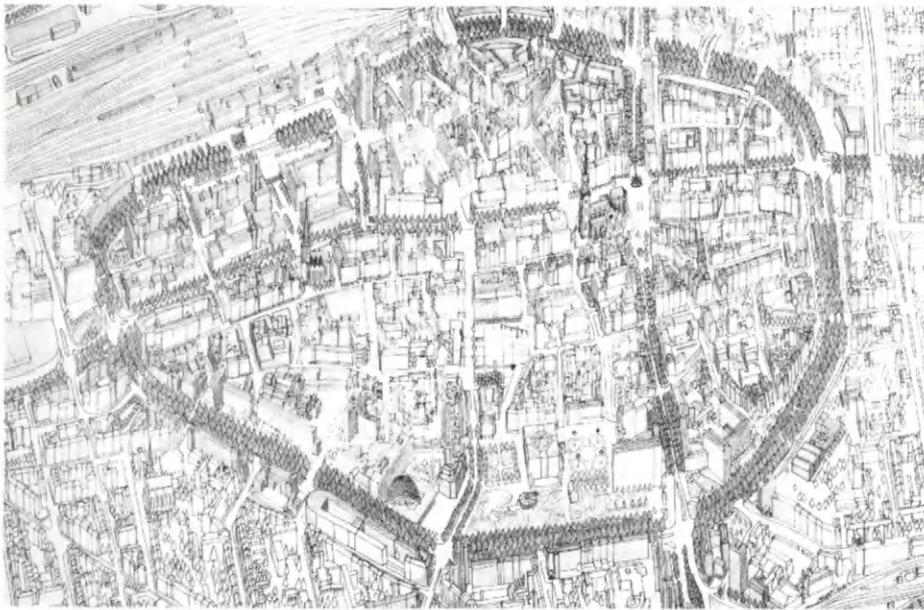
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## URBAN DESIGN FOR URBAN RENEWAL or WHOSE CITY IS IT ANYWAY?

by Chris Couch and Rob MacDonald

Urban Design for Urban Renewal was the title of a conference that took place in Liverpool on the 19 and 21 September 1990 organised by the Liverpool Polytechnic and the Urban Design Group.

In the opening session Sabine Weismuller of Dortmund City Planning Department and Rod Hutchinson, Liverpool's Principal Urban Design Officer presented a pair of papers illustrating contrasting approaches to city centre planning in Dortmund and Liverpool. It was interesting to note how the Dortmund 'City-Konzept' offered a master plan for the future and a clear vision not only of the future role and function of the centre, but as shown in the illustration, a vision of 'what it should look like'. Reflecting both the contrasting economic situation and planning tradition, the Liverpool approach, while being no less impressive, was pragmatic and relied heavily upon making the best of opportunities as they arose. Another sharp difference between the cities seemed to emerge in their attitude to public spaces. In Dortmund these appear to be created, nurtured, managed and used by and for the whole population whereas in Liverpool, as in many other British cities, such spaces are fewer, poorly managed by the public authorities and little used or appreciated by the citizenry.

After an orientating coach tour of Liverpool's inner city, participants heard talks from Barry Shaw, Head of Urban Design at London Docklands and David Sibeon, a Principal Architect at Merseyside Development Corporation. Again there was a contrast of approaches to urban design reflecting the differing economic climate in the two

areas and the relative power of the Development Corporations to impose planning and design controls upon prospective developers. Delegates discussed the merits of preparing 'master plans' for large scale urban renewal projects and were told that Richard Rogers had been appointed to prepare such a plan for the reclaimed docklands to the south of Albert Dock. Whether such a plan will prove helpful in a depressed economy remains to be seen.

Halina Dunin-Voyseth, from Oslo School of Architecture, provided a stimulating paper entitled 'Urban Design versus Townscape Design: Can we Learn from the Japanese?' in which she presented a brief history of townscape design in Japan since 1919, with special reference to the cities of Yokohama, Takayama, Tsukuba Science City and Sapporo. She also touched upon the nature of townscape for the 21st Century with a look at the hypermodern Minato Mirai 21, a future international city awake around the clock with continuous on-line links to all major cities of the world. Seeing this vision of the future tempted the question in whose interests does such town planning or townscape design take place? In relation to human aspirations what is the purpose of such a wholly artificial environment?

Andrea Lane, a researcher from Manchester University, made some interesting comparisons of urban morphology in Italy and Britain. Drawing upon examples from Genova, Roma and Firenze she demonstrated the value of a rigorous methodology in approaching questions of urban design. At the same time and to the approval of many participants, she reminded us of the timeless value of Gordon Cullen's approach to townscape analysis. There is clearly considerable scope for the introduction of urban morphology appraisals into urban design strategies for British cities. There is now an 'Urban Morphology Group' at the University of Birmingham providing a strong research

methodology in the spatial morphology of urban tissues.

The evening's highpoint was a Chinese banquet followed by a poetry reading from Adrian Henri, one of a famous trio of Liverpool poets. He included a reading of "City 2000", a poem about urban design especially written for last year's WHO Healthy Cities Conference.

On the second morning, Guus Delleart from the Hogeschool Midden Brabant in Tilburg, and Ian Bentley from Oxford Polytechnic's Joint Centre for Urban Design, contrasted Dutch and British experiences in housing renewal with particular regard to public involvement in the decision making process. Both seemed to agree that the Dutch model of formal mechanisms for community participation in urban renewal, supported by local authority resourced but independent expert advice to community groups, had achieved an exceptionally high standard of area renewal; at the same time functionally successful and aesthetically sensitive.

This was followed by a presentation from Roger Zogolovitch describing his proposals for a 'Creative Industries Quarter' on the edge of Liverpool's city centre.

Rob MacDonald started the final session with a presentation about the contribution of the housing co-operative movement to urban design and renewal in Liverpool. This provided an introduction to the processes of citizen participation in urban design and was followed by a lengthy presentation and discussion of the development and merits of Urban Design Assistance Teams (UDATs) led by Alan Simpson from Liverpool University, John Thompson of Hunt Thompson, Rob Cowan of the AJ and John Worthington. Of particular interest was John Thompson's talk about his recent involvement in the Alternative Kings Cross Plan that would retain the Great Northern Hotel and provide for a significant increase in the low income housing and a range of community uses.

**At the end of the conference one could sense that one particular issue had emerged in a number of presentations, sometimes implicit and sometimes more explicit: who was urban design for?**

**The new city squares in Dortmund are implicitly recognised by the city council as being for local people to use as they wish, but who, apart from shoppers, will use or care about the windy spaces between buildings in Liverpool city centre? Dutch housing renewal has evolved to respond clearly to local community needs, but who asked for Minato Mirai 21?**

**What do the present Kings Cross proposals give to the people of London? Why has it become necessary to have a community action group to challenge the developers proposals? Why should there be any need for a UDAT? Whose city is it anyway?**

# PROCEEDINGS FROM THE URBAN DESIGN FORUM HELD IN APRIL 1990

The Urban Design Group held their Weekend Forum in Glasgow on April 6th and 7th 1990.

An overall summary of the papers presented to the Forum follows on this page as it has not been possible to include the full text or significant extracts of all the papers within this issue of the Quarterly. Further material can be obtained by contacting Mike Galloway at the Glasgow City Planning Department, 231 George Street, Glasgow G1 1RX.

The Urban Design Group would like to record its thanks to Mike Galloway for organising the Forum, together with Brian Evans of Gillespies and Douglas Brown of DEG. The forum was sponsored by a number of companies, businesses and practices who are listed on the back cover of this issue and whose financial support is gratefully recorded.

In recognition of Glasgow's designation in 1990 as Cultural Capital of Europe, the topic selected for this year's forum was the interface between culture and urban design reflecting the many interventions that are being made to regenerate the city.

The first paper was given by David Mackay of the architects Martorell Bohigas and Mackay of Barcelona, a city that has undergone significant change over the last ten years or so, and now preparing itself for the Olympic Games in 1992. There were no democratic civil elections in Spain during Franco's regime and when that ended Barcelona had its first elected mayor for about fifty years. The mayor invited Bohigas, Mackay's Partner, to establish an urban design team to re-establish an identity for the city centre. About twenty architects were employed in that team identifying work that could be done to improve the city's public realm and thus to encourage opportunities for associated private development. Work that has been undertaken includes the removal of buildings to create urban spaces related to public uses, paving at various levels to define routes for pedestrians and traffic and the provision of major open spaces.

The practice won a competition for the layout of the Olympic Village which uses the nineteenth century city grid plan as its starting point, but also takes into account twentieth century requirements of sunlight, open space and the vehicle. The traditional grid plan has been interpreted as a larger grid in a superblock form which also acknowledges the location of the area adjacent to a major open space. The proposal is that the total form of the development established by the competition will be designed by about twenty five firms of local architects to achieve the necessary variety.

Benjamin Thompson from Boston noted for his work on Quincy Market and Festival Markets throughout the States presented his views in a multi media show of slides, music and commentary. Evocative slides of environments of quality from around the world were shown including waterfronts, nautical details, people and food in locations including Venice and Paris. He described the way in which Quincy Market was saved from the otherwise inevitable redevelopment and showed how these ideas had developed in Baltimore, New York, Florida and California.

The message appeared to be that urban design should provide opportunities for all the good things in life that people enjoy experiencing and that create the magic of a place.

Mike Galloway provided the context for considering what has happened in the City Centre. He gave the background of historical development, the Bruce plan (highways and little else), the CDA Strategy linked to the road line and subsequent developments. The definition of the Central Conservation area, the change in plans for the East flank road and the abandonment of redevelopment of the Merchant City area had all provided a new agenda. District Council plans and policies and the support of the SDA offered

new opportunities which were being implemented.

Brian Evans of Gillespies described work undertaken for the SDA concerning the City Centre. One of the interesting points he raised was to examine the qualities of great cities of the world and whether these existed or could be achieved in Glasgow - a famous street, famous spaces, a historical core, institutions of renown, natural features and famous icons or buildings.

David Page's practice Page and Park have carried out a number of interesting designs in the city and he described some of the practice's projects. The redesign of the approach to Glasgow Cathedral was won in a competition. Philosophically the scheme is now perceived as the city extending towards the Cathedral whereas previously it was seen as open space extending from the Cathedral. The Italian Centre within the Merchant City was designed as a mixed use development aiming to strengthen and enrich the existing context of its setting and location within listed buildings.

Lee Polisano of Kohn Pederson Fox Associates is a newcomer to Glasgow involved in an apparent reassessment of proposals for part of the Broomielaw area lying alongside and to the north of the Clyde from the motorway to the Central Station viaduct. BDP have designed the first phase of the Broomielaw development now on site, and KPF are reviewing what should follow. Solutions used elsewhere by the firm are being examined for Broomielaw and whilst mixed use appears to be the rule of the day, ideas for a sixteen storey art deco influenced tower seemed foreign to Glasgow's culture.

Jim Patrick of the City Planning Department described the background to the renewal of the Merchant City area and the way in which changes occurred that altered market conditions. CDA powers had enabled the City Council to acquire about a third of the area and a number of key factors occurred by about 1980: The roadline that had affected the area had moved further to the east; the amount of greenfield new housing in the region's structure plan was reduced to make sure that brownfield sites were given a priority; housing improvement grants legislation was less restrictive.

Inner City housing began to increase in popularity so the District Council decided to examine possibilities in the Merchant City. The first schemes needed subsidy from the District Council and then the SDA became involved through one of its programmes. Over 1100 dwellings have been completed in the area.

Developers continue to wish to provide office schemes in the area but these are permitted now only as part of a multi use scheme. Jim Patrick ended his contribution by emphasising that the image of the Merchant City will be higher than people would experience on their walkabout later that day.

Douglas Brown of DEG described work that was being done to improve the public realm in the Merchant City. There was a need to improve the quality quickly and to

solve operational issues. The existing street and paved surfaces were substandard and if improvement could be achieved this could encourage developers to proceed with schemes more quickly.

No formal master plan had been produced for the Merchant City although he felt that the time might now be opportune to introduce a strategy with an image that was unique, Glaswegian and contemporary. The strategy would seek to define primary and secondary routes, reduce through traffic using streets in the area and reduce cars on the street by traffic calming devices. The quality of the paving was felt to be all important.

Alistair Mackenzie, Chief Planner of the SDD, described work undertaken on the cultural legacy of the small town in Scotland. He identified six factors that he felt needed to be present to achieve successful urban regeneration which also appeared to apply outside that scale of community: *a lead person or organisation; joint working; public, private and community use of all available resources; community commitment; an agreed strategy; and priorities for action.*

Proposals being considered for Paisley were described by Gwyn Kennedy and by George Mulvagh of Gillespies. This work was being undertaken for the Renfrew Development Company which is seeking to regenerate the economy of the area.

The proposals involved: restating the symbol of Paisley by reinstating the Cross at the Centre; introducing traffic calming measures in the commercial area; remodeling the Piazza shopping development which had destroyed some of Paisley's characteristics; removing roads space around the Abbey.

Bill Morton of the Scottish Development Agency spoke about a study looking at Glasgow's prospects in the 21st Century and examining steps which might be taken to increase its standing among European cities. His assessment is that Glasgow is eleventh by comparison with Milan's first ranking and the study has set an objective of achieving a place in the top five in five years time.

The closing contribution was given by John Worthington of DEG, comparing Glasgow with other European Capital Cities. He saw London, Paris, Madrid and Berlin as global cities, with separate groupings of Riviera cities, Scandinavian cities and the Glasgow, Edinburgh axis.

Gwyn Kennedy, who acted as Chairman for the conference, summed up the proceedings by seeing Urban Design as a part of culture, a dimension of it. But to be able to achieve results champions were needed to lead the way and ensure the involvement of various bodies that could make a positive contribution to the changing city.

**John Billingham**

## PROGRAMME

### DAY 1

INTRODUCTION  
Gwyn Kennedy, Chairman

THE URBAN DESIGN AND THE CULTURAL INTERFACE  
David Mackay, Partner,  
Martorell, Bohigas and Mackay,  
Barcelona

THE CULTURE OF URBAN DESIGN  
Benjamin Thompson  
Benjamin Thompson & Associates Inc.,  
Boston

### GLASGOW CITY CENTRE

IN THE 1980s  
Mike Galloway, Glasgow City Planning  
Department

IN THE 1990s  
Brian Evans, Gillespies

### CITY CENTRE PROJECTS

THE CATHEDRAL PRECINCT, CAMPUS  
PLAN AND ITALIAN CENTRE  
David Page, Page and Park Architects

THE BROOMIELAW  
Lee Polisano, Kohn Pederson Fox  
Associates, New York

DINNER AT HUTCHESONS'S HALL,  
MERCHANT CITY  
Professor Isi Metztein

### DAY 2

RENEWAL OF GLASGOW'S MERCHANT  
CITY  
James Patrick, Glasgow City Planning  
Department  
Douglas Brown, DEG (Scotland)

THE SMALL TOWN IN SCOTLAND - A  
CULTURAL LEGACY  
Alastair MacKenzie, Chief Planner, SDD

PAISLEY - SCOTLAND'S GRANDEST  
TOWN

PAISLEY INTERNATIONAL  
Gwyn Kennedy, Chief Executive,  
Renfrew Development Company

THE URBAN CONTEXT  
George Mulvagh, Gillespies

GLASGOW IN THE 21ST CENTURY  
William Morton, SDA

GLASGOW AND OTHER EUROPEAN  
CAPITAL CITIES  
John Worthington, DEG

## INTRODUCTION

**Gwyn Kennedy**

I firmly believe that the turning point in Glasgow's recent history was one morning when I was coming into the City to see a huge pall of smoke above the Charing Cross area. When I got there, it was the world renowned St Andrews Halls which were ablaze. That started a debate which went on for many years about its replacement. One evening on television a leading local, I think it was the Lord Provost at the time, was reputed to have said that what we need in Glasgow is a bit more 'kulture' and 'kulture' was spelt with a 'K'. Now I think that that 'K' was very, very important because I think culture was all about identity and that 'K' identifies with Glasgow and am very glad to still see that 'kulture' is spelt with a 'K' in Glasgow.

I was thinking about this whole question of identity when I was coming through Geneva Airport just recently, right in the middle of the ski-ing season. If anyone has been to Geneva Airport at that time of year, they will know what I am talking about. Its terrible, there are about 10,000 people all bobbing about this hall and about 9,000 of them are British people trying to get back from their disastrous ski-ing holiday. When you are in a normal airport lounge or a railway station, you normally get this signature tune before something is about to be announced which goes 'Ting, Tong' and everyone knows there is going to be an announcement. But in Geneva, they have a thing that goes 'Ting, Tong, Tong, Tong, Tong' and in unison, we heard these nine thousand bored people adding, 'In the Window' completing this phrase, as everyone was bored out of their tiny minds. But it started me thinking about what identity was all about because the thousand people who were not British did not have a clue what they were all doing. And I thought about how that little song 'How much is that doggie in the window' would sound in French, "Combien est le chien dans la fenetre?, Le chien avec la chou agite" and I thought that doesn't sound quite right in French. The language was not right and similarly I think that urban design is a language, various languages, international languages and national languages and local languages and the language has got to be right for the setting.

Now today, we are in Glasgow which is a very specific city with a very specific language of urban design which reflects the culture of this city, the aspirations of the city, the various eras that we have been going through. The ubiquitous tenement, the grey skies, the Victorian heart, the comprehensive development areas and peripheral estate mistakes and now we are in the era of the Merchant City. We are coming into a different vibrant era. It is so vibrant they can't get the covers off the stonecleaning of the major buildings which are going to be used during the City of Culture.

# URBAN DESIGN AND THE CULTURAL INTERFACE

David Mackay

**Barcelona is so much in the news, probably because of its history. Franco lived too long and didn't die until 1975 so the democracy and the democratic institutions didn't get going in Spain till much later than they did in the comparable countries elsewhere in Europe after the Second World War. The enthusiasm of the country began moving somewhat before 1975, but the reality started in 1975. Barcelona came to the European scene much later and it was fortunate to coincide with a time when everybody in Europe was somewhat jaded. The enthusiasm had petered out. Everyone was quite aware of their mistakes and Barcelona could learn from these mistakes from a privileged position, benefitting from the enthusiasm of people to be able to develop instruments to apply some of the correcting factors to the mistakes that had gone on before in other cities.**

In Barcelona in 1975, there was a very strong neighbourhood movement. A very popular one, making demands. In other words, there were large, well-organised, very articulate neighbourhood groups asking for more public spaces, more parks, pedestrian crossings, more schools, health centres and so on. There was pressure from below. On the other hand, there was a very close tie between the University and the political groups of the opposition under the dictatorship, so that when the first political parties appeared, both at a national level and a local level, they were led by people from the Universities or with very close connections. In Barcelona, there was a very close connection between the city and the University. The first politicians are still a majority, but I don't know that they will last because it is a very exhaustive business being a politician and the people go back to University life which is more comfortable. The union of political groups and the University resulted in a lot of people with a good sense of cultural direction of what should be done and good connections between the different professions, between economists and architects for example.

## URBAN DESIGN TEAM

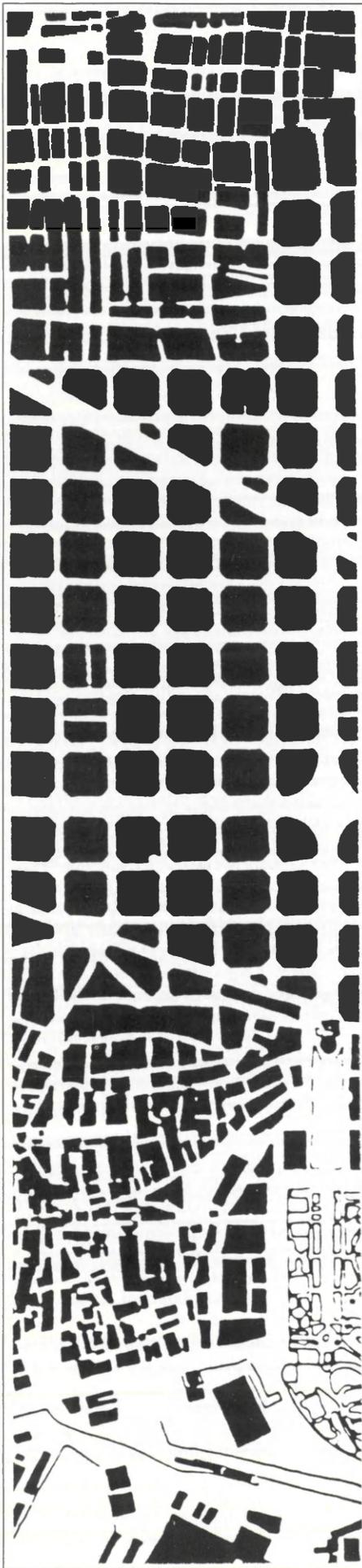
The mayor of Barcelona, the first elected major for 50 years realised that the popular demand from neighbourhood groups was to see a change made vocal by living in an epoch of visual culture, all keyed to seeing things through a television screen. Everything is visual and so the politicians had to give a visual response to popular demands so that they could retain the support of the Electorate. Things had to be seen to be done. So he called upon the Director of the School of Architecture, who at that moment happened to be my partner, Oriol Bohigas, to form an Urban Design Department - in the full sense - not a Town Planning Department and not a Department of Architecture, but a department of people concerned with the design of the city. What was realised is that for so many years, cities were without any professional in charge. There were many professionals but they lacked direction in a coherent team. In Barcelona in the early 1970's, everything was split up, the city lighting, drainage, transport, housing; everything was in a different department; there wasn't somebody who thought about the city overall as a formal design objective. Bohigas set up a small group of 20 architects to tackle that problem and to set about reconstructing the city. It wasn't a question of producing a new city, it was a question of re-establishing the identity of the existing. They spread out the commissions to over a hundred different private practices, some well established ones, a few competitions and many to young practices straight out of the School of Architecture who were recognised as the best students and were given small jobs, but they were given an opportunity to participate with enormous enthusiasm.

The main objective was to dignify the historical centre - the area with the primary

role in identity, after all if people were in Barcelona then what was Barcelona? it was the historical centre where everybody went, therefore there were certain features that should be re-established, reinforced in that primary role of identity. There was the whole problem of the sub-urban, not in the English or northern European sense of very garden-city with houses and gardens, but in the area between which is the domain of the large blocks. How to monumentalise these areas - not in the sense of Beaux Arts but in a sense of creative memory to create a sense of urban identity in those areas devastated by anarchic buildings from the 60's and 70's.

They established main objectives which were public money for public spaces, stimulating the private money for building the areas around it. Public money was poured into the streets, squares, odd corners, tidying up or establishing public places of identity that would stimulate private investment around them. Another was to recognise the absolute failure of town planners and town planning since the beginning of this century. After all, where can you go in the world and say "that city has been solved, they've got the answer", which means the first thing to do was to get rid of town planners. No doubt, there are town planners here, and if you are here, it means that you have understood the problems as well as architects. We do recognise that the cities were a complete failure of town plans. They have not produced answers. It doesn't mean to say that architects are going to produce answers. In fact, there is a failure of architects too because there is, on the other hand, that feeling that an architect gets a commission and with his building he can re-establish the identity of a city which is false. You can't design a city with buildings and you cannot design a city with town planning - neither one nor the other, both fail. You can't just plonk down a big building and think that is going to solve an area. So recognising a failure of partial intervention or this sort of global intervention from specialised fields of uncommunicatable proposals because the public isn't worked up to great enthusiasm about town planning proposals. Nobody understands it. It is terribly boring but if you propose a new square or street, it is something they can touch and it occurs within 18 months, within the electoral period. If people can actually touch it, enjoy it and feel it, then it's something people understand, criticise and participate. Town planning goes on for 25 years and leaves the city desolate while politicians never make any decisions. So there is that sort of blight of town planning and on the other hand, there is an opportunity, direct intervention in very small areas and recovering, shall we say, the street and the square for everyone.

The old city is formed by the Roman city in the centre and the Medieval city which was walled up to the middle of the last century when we had the wonderful intervention of the engineer Cerda who produced a great plan for Barcelona. I won't talk about that now but just say that the City has this



19th century plan which has given the framework for most of our thinking and activity in Barcelona. We also have the equivalent of Mackintosh, Antoni Gaudi, with his buildings. Most people know his buildings where the shape is a rather exciting expressionism but don't realise the rationale behind them. Barcelona and its citizens are therefore accustomed to a certain quality of architecture and innovating 'avant garde' attitudes such as the Park Guell and an amazing chapel by Gaudi, just outside Barcelona with the twisted walls and deep windows. Later on, in the 20's and 30's, the 1929 Exhibition was held which included the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion which has just been reconstructed. The city council spends taxpayers money rebuilding architectural monuments, such as the Mies Van Der Rohe Pavilion without receiving any protests from anyone. In other words, they are very proud of it and they use, take pride in their buildings and they are very proud that this is a world renowned building that has been reconstructed. Modern architecture has not been discussed very much in Barcelona. Everyone is convinced about it. There is no crisis in the modern movement as there has been in many other countries. Mainly, I think because of the Civil War which was lost by the Republican Government. Modern architecture was always identified with the political Left of the Republican Government and therefore after 40 years of the fascist dictatorship - rather inefficient at times - of Franco which abolished and identified modern architecture as politically identified to the Left, made the whole cultural feel of society automatically accept modern architecture as it was a political identification.

I don't think you can identify modern movement, either to the left or the right. I think it is something that is quite independent of that. Because of the political circumstances in Spain, it has therefore not really been questioned. It only has been questioned as "how do you go on from where you are and develop it and how do you connect it back into history?" But we also have our areas in Barcelona that are not shown to tourists. Sub-urban areas which create no street, become the destruction of the city by planners and architects. Barcelona is a very dynamic city but just by placing strange buildings next to each other, you don't design a city. I think this is not the way to go about it. That isn't a real concern about urban design.

#### DESIGN STRATEGY

I'll describe briefly the strategy in Barcelona of visualising the city from little corners which can be identified with the people living there. So considering the city as a large area to be redesigned globally, it was necessary to reach and contact the people themselves. One example in the historical centre is where an area was created to provide a breathing space in front of a church. They took down a whole block, even though one of the houses was where Picasso

once lived. This brought a protest from a historical group, but the house wasn't worth living in, so they built in a plaque that said "This is a plaque to commemorate where the house was, where Picasso lived" and everybody was satisfied. You mustn't overplay your cards on historical preservation. Sometimes it's necessary to create a decent urban space. Another intervention in a suburban location involved trying to create a sense of identity. Another area involved clearing out the cars and planting trees to create a small pedestrian area which is much more lively on market day. Again, a little alley enhanced by stopping the traffic with a very careful design of the repaving and producing an immediately dignified area from a small pedestrian street. We are not very keen in Barcelona on pedestrianising areas of the city because you could consider a city only works when it creates opportunities for accidents. I don't mean road accidents but as many accidents as possible should occur in a city, the accidental meeting place. After all, if you segregate a city, you will kill it. If you segregate residential areas, working areas, shopping areas, you are killing off the interaction which is necessary like the University Campus which is completely separate. Without exaggerating, the object is to mix things. I remember in Dusseldorf, down a pedestrian street with shops, wonderful, a lot of activity and then in the evening, I didn't dare go there. It was frightening, all the shops shut down. There was no activity. There were strange characters about. So walking through the city, you are kept aware by the traffic, you felt safer. There is a real danger of over-pedestrianising, you segregate the city and you avoid that lively interaction between traffic and the pedestrian. I think the more you mix, the better. You can segregate it on different levels, you get flyovers in the middle of the city, but you don't want that. Of course, you have to keep heavy traffic around it but to over-segregate, is to kill a city. If there are any pedestrian areas, then try to keep them as small as possible so that people can always see at the end of a street where traffic is moving and you get a reference to a certain amount of safety and the opportunity of getting a taxi. I have been caught in the city of Cracow with a heavy suitcase and having to walk to the station for half an hour because there was no traffic about in the centre of the city. You couldn't get a taxi. It was really inconvenient that people can't get to their homes in a car.

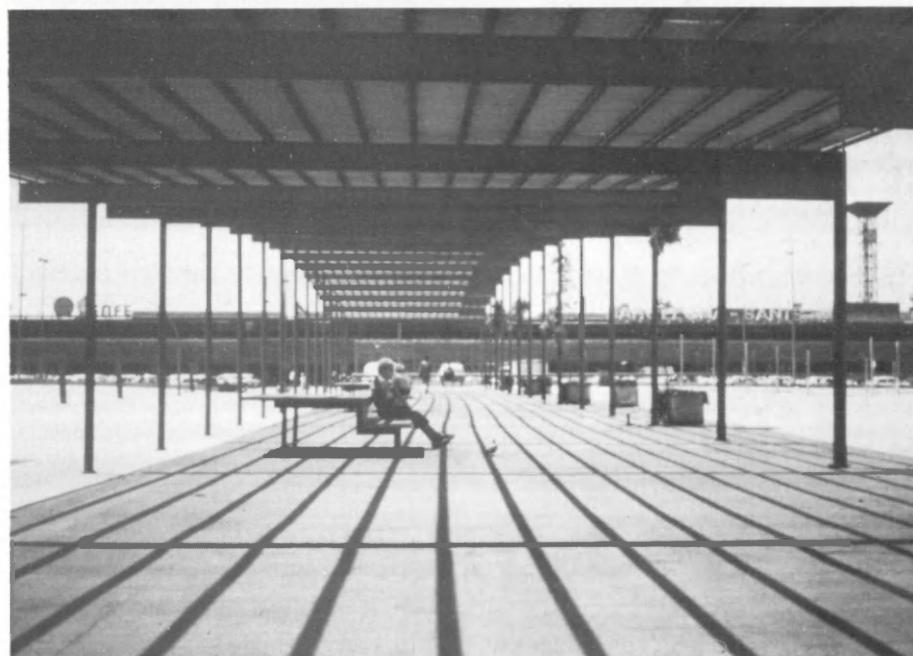
In the suburbs, small interventions, not perhaps brilliant, not perhaps of world notice, but these little things, planting a tree, careful design and co-ordination between the different city departments is what this ginger group of urban designers arranged. Everybody was consulted and co-ordinated and they managed to re-establish these poorer corners of Barcelona. Getting rid of lorries being parked, creating a new space where people could sit, children can play, trying to finish buildings that were never finished off. An architect was commissioned just to finish a facade while other architects designed a

new square between one row and another. An urban motorway was proposed and because nobody took any decisions for 20 years it became used for disorganised car parking and finally it was made into an urban pedestrian area in the centre with traffic on either side. And now it has become a centre of identification of this neighbourhood with sculpture being introduced. Another example involved a square, where the buildings were very non-descript and the New York sculptor Serra designed a long wall in the middle of the square. There was a lot of protest because the neighbours couldn't understand a new space with a wall going through the middle. They said that the first thing they were going to do after it was built, was to knock it down. In fact, one political party said, if they win the elections, they would knock it down. But the City Government held on in spite of the lot of criticism in the Press, went ahead and it has been enormously successful because of the close collaboration between the sculptor and the architects working together. One side of the wall is paved and heavily treed with benches and it is where the elderly people sit and watch over young children. It is a quieter area and on the other side is where younger, more robust people play ball. The neighbourhood has set up a vigilante committee that watches the wall to see that no sprayed signs appear. They have almost a 24-hour watch and old age pensioners are there watching it as they love it and consider it's their wall. They are very pleased about it and if you go there, they will show it to you and explain about it. It has become a very successful integrated element of urban identity.

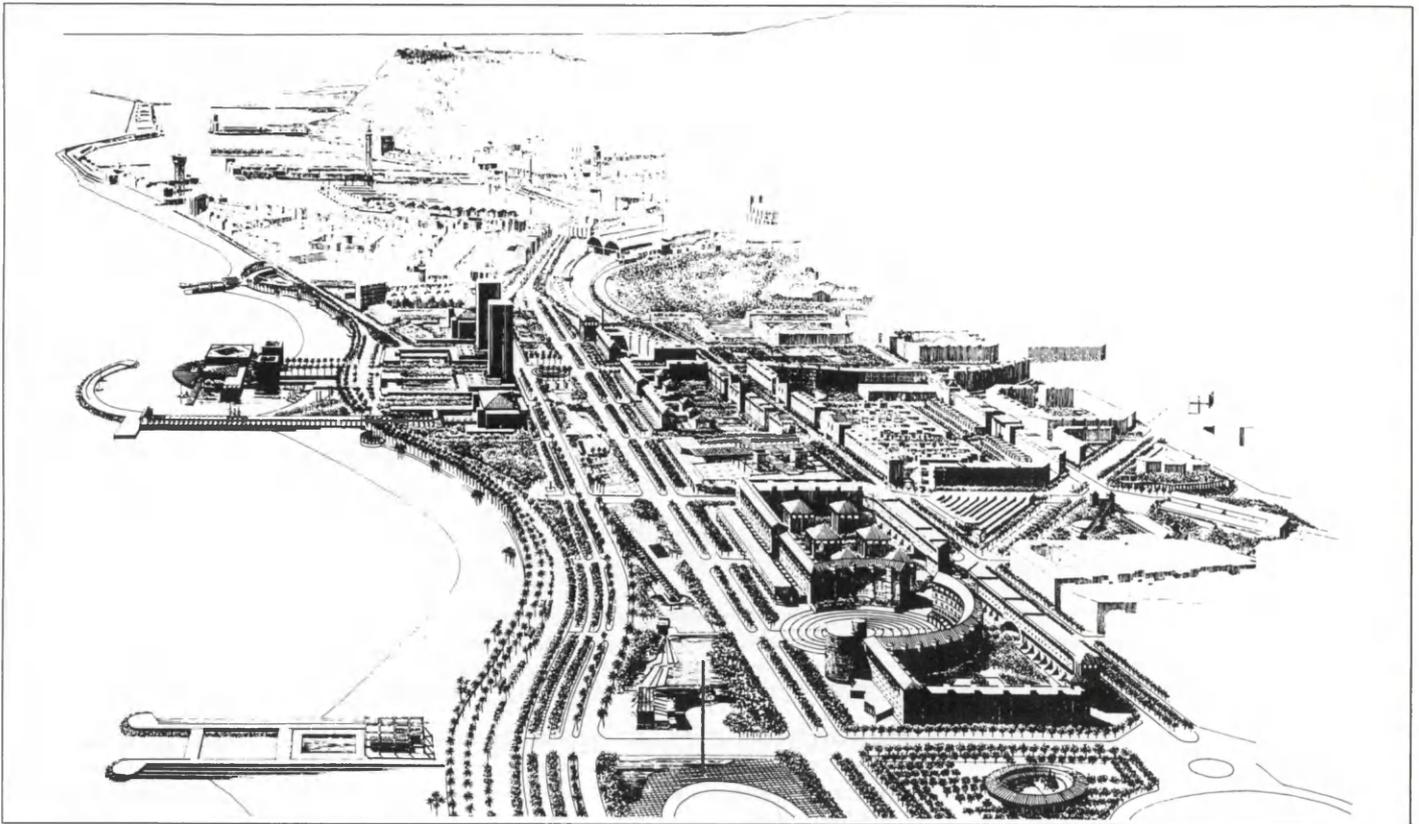
We have got other things like the 'anti-monuments' to Picasso. You cannot make a monument to Picasso, because he was anti-academic. This was designed by Antonio Tapies. The architects working with the sculptor cased it in a glass case, but the problem was protection from the sun. The build-up of heat would be so much that it would burst into flames, so they had to install air conditioning. So a monument with air conditioning is obviously very much an anti-monument. The technical problems continued because with cold air conditioning in the centre within the case and hot Spanish sun on the outside, such thermal differences between inside and outside the glass would break, so the only solution was to douse the glass continuously in running water to cool the glass off so the whole thing could work. The result is this sort of hazy reflected vision of the anti-monument to Picasso.

I explained a little detail of that because it just shows an attitude of the city to culture that is prepared to risk 'avant garde' sculpture in the middle of the city and shows something of the spirit of Barcelona that has a very close connection with cultural adventurousness. They are prepared to make mistakes, even big public ones. The public, perhaps a little bit bewildered, accept it. After all, if they would accept buildings of Gaudi, they could accept this.

Further interventions include pavements



**Above:** Examples of place-making in Barcelona  
**To Left:** Cross section through Barcelona plan showing medieval city structure at bottom, Cerda grid and diagonal route in centre and later extensions to the top



and steps in the old city and then an old quarry which we designed as a lake which could be used for children and adults for swimming in the summer. That's very popular, with a large sculpture suspended over the lake.

## OLYMPIC BUILDINGS

But apart from the small interventions which we have seen, there are also larger ones, more strategic planning on a larger scale which came about in Barcelona's bid for the Olympics in 1992. There are four areas which were selected because they were on the edge of the city where all the problems are.

The reason for the city of Barcelona is its port which is commercial, dirty and busy and therefore, if one wants to see the Mediterranean, one must get in a car and drive out of the city to the beaches beyond. The city hasn't got any proper connection with the Mediterranean, so one of the historic aspirations is that it should relate to the sea. So it was decided that the Olympic village could perform that function. Housing for 15,000 competitors for 14 days, was rather stupid if you put them up in huts or tents. There was no need to go to this enormous expense for 14 days. But they used the Olympics as a generator to reconstruct the city at its critical points. Barcelona played its cards very strongly, in that it assumed it was going to be awarded the Olympics and began two years before the actual decision was made. So some of the sports buildings were completed and others were well on their way before it was actually chosen and I think that

was very much in its favour.

Opposite the main new railway station and the railway yards, the railway engineers had decided there would be a new car park without consulting the city authorities. The city authorities had already said 'no' to the railway which is very difficult because the railway company is worse than the Military. It's a complete enemy of society, it seems it works on its own and it's very difficult to deal with. But finally they were dealt with and architects designed a new square. You couldn't plant any trees on top of the railway lines so they had to create an urban space, a very hard one with artificial elements and a rather Edwardian design with sun-shades, screens and other elements and sloping the paving up and down, to create different areas and fountains, where children can run in and out with bicycles and get wet in the summer. The whole place is a very lively area in the mornings or evenings and on Saturdays. Next to it is a park which was proposed for housing but because of active demonstrations, people sitting down in the streets and police battering the crowds, the city bought the area up and converted it into a park. It's very popular with the people, architects are not quite so enthusiastic about the actual architecture, of the styling of it. It's more like Walt Disney, but it's a very popular area and works extremely well.

Another area which used to be the slaughter-house, a great big urban box was converted into a new park and has a large sculpture by Miro. Another aspect of this park was palm trees and sun-shaded pergolas. For the Olympic area they decided to renovate the old stadium and there is a new

building by Isozaki and a building by Ricardo Bofill. The stadium was reconverted and has now been completed, keeping an element of the city and providing better conditions for the Olympics.

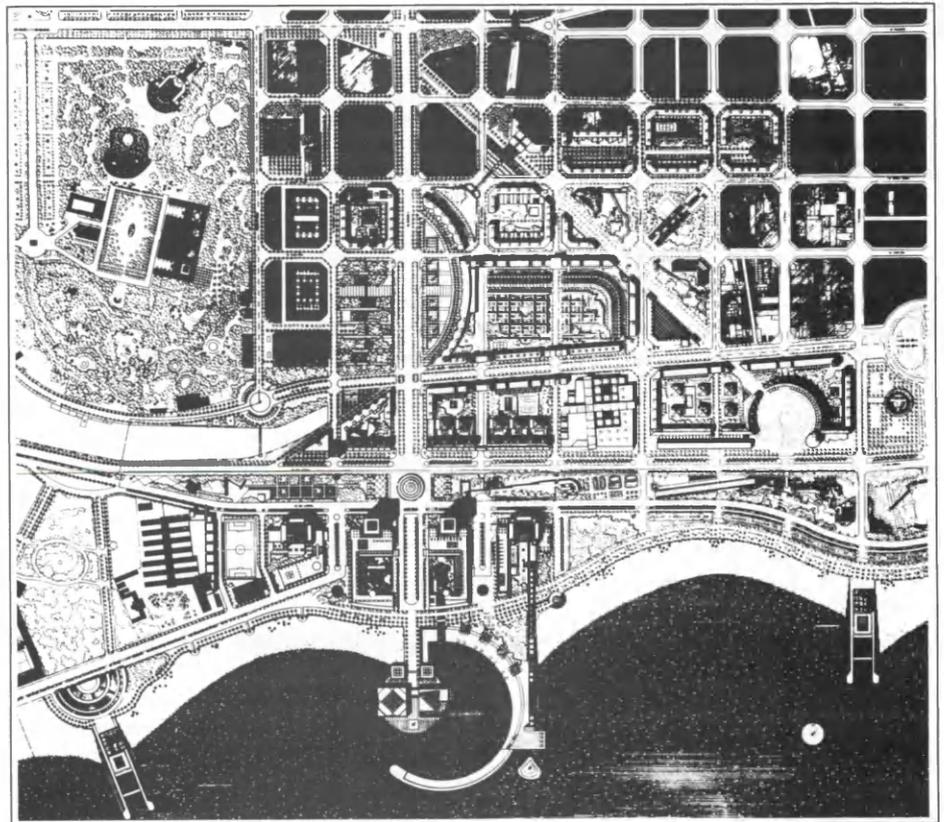
The Sports Hall was designed by Isozaki, quite a spectacular structure. The opening up of the city to the port was designed by the architect, Sola Morales. This was previously where warehouses were located and he designed a large paved area where people could stroll about. The traffic routes were reorganised so that some were sunken with pedestrian areas bridging over it. It is a successful example of how to handle heavy traffic loading and also allow the city to filter over and reach the harbour itself.

## OLYMPIC VILLAGE

The Olympic village itself occupies the area where the railway served the port. There were railway yards, factories, then the factories moved out to be replaced by warehouses and then it became somewhat desolate. As it was very near the centre of the city it was chosen as an area to accommodate an extension of Barcelona towards the sea.

The basis of this design by my practice was to take the 19th century grid plan of Cerda. We didn't want to create a new city, we wanted people to think that their city was reaching the sea. On the other hand, we wanted to keep all the best things of the 19th century city, of the corridor street and square but we didn't want to give up all the advances of the 20th century housing such as sunlight, through ventilation and the intro-

To the left a perspective view of the Olympic Village housing and the redesign of the port area. To the right a plan of the same area showing how the Cerda grid is continued into the new development and from which a superblock of three blocks is created.



duction of the linear parks that string their way through the housing. So what we did was to take the grid plan of Cerda, change it to the super block which had been proposed in a plan in the 30's and create a super block which occupies three city blocks. It enabled us to introduce different typologies of housing into this area.

Another principle is that we said a city cannot be designed by one architectural firm, however big it is, however capable it is, as this would be a disaster. We didn't want, shall we say, whatever its merits, the Barbican system, because it is so big and in the hands of one firm, the same architects get tired of it after twenty years. We said this must be handled by many different architects, like an ordinary city and so the commissioning of the buildings was given out to about twenty-five different firms. We worked with these designers of this area to ensure that each architect worked in conjunction with architects that we knew. If they didn't get on together personally or if they were not on speaking terms, we didn't put them next to each other. We managed to separate them for personal reasons or stylistic reasons. We then gave each architect a corner. In other words, instead of giving them a block (the building was half way down a street), we gave them half the building and told them to turn the corner because they were to design the buildings and design a city. They had to solve the problem of meeting their neighbour and had to work together. We didn't want to fall into the error of giving separate buildings to separate architects because then everyone would do their own little buildings, it would be back into the error of architects trying to

make a city and you can't make a city just with architects, nor just with town planners. You have to design the street so it is very important that these architects were involved in turning corners, thinking about how the building was going to face other designs and join up on the other side of the road.

We are also designing the port, which is a new urban space for us. We consider this as a wet square and the whole idea is to allow us to organise the design of this so that the private part of the port, the yachts, wouldn't ever affect the public access. We always considered this port must be designed thinking of the city and the citizens so that they must be able to go down to the water all the time and the shore must never be in private hands. It has been designed in a way that the sporting facilities and the yachts can be accessed separately from the public area but the public can then go down to the water. It's one thing for the city to arrive at the sea, but there are an awful lot of citizens who like to go down to the sea with their shoes on, not only in the summer, which means elderly people, or in the evening when they want to go and have a drink or eat something by the sea when the beach is not always the ideal place. It is nice to have a hard surface by the water. So we have developed an urban area where people can walk along in the winter, when the beaches are not so much used and be in contact with the sea through paved streets and squares that go out into the sea.

One of our main concerns was the design of the main dyke or the breakwater, that it should be very low. This is one of the first times that architects have been involved in designing a port and we insisted that the main

breakwater should be very low, which of course is contradictory, because, of course, it has to be very high for the waves. But they developed a system of underwater dykes, and with a system of floating steel platforms, tied down to the sea bed with cables that vibrate to the same vibration as the waves, and therefore breaks up the wave as it comes in to a lower frequency, before it hits the breakwater. That allows us to lower the breakwater so that people walking along the promenade will always see the horizon, because once the harbour comes along and blocks off the horizon, you feel you have another object in the way between you and the sea. It's very important to design this so that the horizontal viewlines aren't interrupted and so that the city reaches out into the sea.

In designing the Olympic village area we have had to intervene between the private ownerships, the private promoters and the architects to ensure that the developers didn't submerge the architects when they took over and also to ensure that the architects did respond to the reality of the developer and kept to the original ideas of the urban design of the city. It is a new experience in designing the city. It's neither town planning nor architecture - it is a very difficult area in which to work. We will see in two years whether it has worked or not.

**David Mackay who trained as an architect in London is a partner in the practice of Martorell Bohigas Mackay in Barcelona. The practice have won many awards, the most recent being in an invited competition for a bank in Sienna**

# GLASGOW CITY CENTRE

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Mike Galloway and Brian Evans

**Mike Galloway is a Assistant Chief Planning Officer for the Central Area with the Glasgow City Council. He describes the way in which the city has changed in order to provide a basic understanding of the context in which development is occurring. Brian Evans, a partner in Gillespies, outlines some of the conclusions of a study carried out by Gillespies in conjunction with the District Council.**

The first permanent development on the site of Glasgow took shape around the 5th century with some form of defended settlement on the high ground between the Molendinar and Glasgow Burns. On this site Mungo (known at St Kentigern) built his church in 543AD and, reputedly, named the spot 'Gleschu', meaning "Dear Green Place".

Following the flight of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Glasgow after the Reformation, the Merchants and Tradesmen took control and as a result the status and form of the city began to change. By 1650, therefore, a distinctive urban pattern had formed. The most important buildings were still the Cathedral and Bishops Palace, situated to the north of the 'Wyndheid' along with the many other religious buildings. Down the hill ran the High Street, on which were situated the non-secular buildings of the ordinary townspeople.

At this time, therefore, the urban grain had two main focal points; the old ecclesiastical centre to the north, and the new emerging mercantile centre to the south. By 1660, Glasgow had become the second city in Scotland, despite the fact that most of it was destroyed by a dreadful fire in 1652 which lasted for 3 days.

With the increase of trade with the south west of Europe and the Mediterranean, the Atlantic shipping routes originating from the west coast of Scotland became more important. Despite the construction of the first quay in Glasgow at Broomielaw in 1688, however, the city was held back by the shallowness of the Clyde which prevented ships of any great size coming nearer than Port Glasgow, 14 miles from the city.

## THE MERCHANTS

In 1768, a deep water channel was eventually cleared and large vessels were able to reach Glasgow, and by 1775 Glasgow imported 46 million tons of tobacco, of which 43 million tons was exported to Europe. From this lucrative trade, Glasgow became comparatively wealthy.

Originally, even the wealthiest merchants, the Tobacco Lords, lived in flatted accommodation in the tenements on the main streets. By the 1740's, however, they had begun to acquire the land north of the Trongate between High Street and Cow Lane (now Queen Street) for their town mansions and large gardens.

Between 1753 and 1796, seven new streets were cut through the Tobacco Lord's mansion properties and this opened up the hinterland, which was laid out on a unique offset grid pattern as a fine new town of residences for prosperous city merchants with impressive public buildings terminating each street vista. This area, now known as the 'Merchant City' was fully developed by 1800, and it was one of the finest pieces of urban design of its time. Even while the Merchant City was still being developed, a second new town was being planned for the area to the north and west of the first, by the Architect James Craig. Once again a grid-

iron pattern was adopted, but this time the grid was open, the street blocks were of uniform size, and the scheme was superimposed without regard to natural contours over Blythswood Hill (after which the project took its name - Blythswood New Town).

## THE VICTORIAN PERIOD

Victorian redevelopment schemes dramatically altered the original building scale of the Georgian New Town; taller infill buildings towered over their neighbours and extra storeys were often added to existing Georgian buildings. The basic rhythm of plot boundaries was, however, mostly maintained, and within this strong framework, and the unifying discipline of the street grid, the city centre was virtually rebuilt in new machine cut red sandstone from Dumfriesshire quarries.

The growth of the railways had a considerable effect on the city's fabric. At first trains from the south were prevented from crossing the river into the city centre by the authorities, but, when they eventually relented, two rival stations were constructed (St Enoch Station by the Glasgow and South Western, and Central Station by the Caledonian Railway) and each had its own bridge; Buchanan Street Station, serving the north, had been operating since 1849. The construction of these railways dramatically changed the character of the city centre and the St Enoch area in particular, sweeping away large, but mainly run-down districts. The Railway Companies did, however, still lack a suitable Goods Station, but this was solved by acquiring and demolishing the old University Buildings in High Street, and relocating them (some of them physically) to Gilmorehill amongst the new salubrious west-end residential districts.

## TWENTIETH CENTURY PLANNING

The pre-war and inter-war periods were typified by a slow but definite decline of the city's manufacturing industries prolonged only by the artificial demand created by the two world wars. Glasgow, more than any other city perhaps, had weathered economic change and misfortune in the past; twice before the city's main source of wealth had collapsed (firstly tobacco and secondly cotton), but new sources of economic development had taken their place and had created even more prosperity than before. This time, however, a new source did not readily materialise.

In the late 1940's, two plans had an influential effect on the shape of the city to come. Firstly, the Clyde Valley Regional Plan and secondly, the Bruce Plan for the city centre. So strong was the desire to sweep away the past and embrace a new future, that this latter document (by Robert Bruce, the then City Engineer) proposed almost complete demolition and the replacement with the highest office and residential blocks in Europe and the largest motorway network outside of North America. Although the

Bruce plan was not implemented in 1959, twenty nine Outline Comprehensive Development Areas were declared in Inner Glasgow, and the Highway Plan for the city proposed more miles of motorway per head of population than any other city in Europe (and this in a city with one of the lowest car ownership levels) creating a motorway box around the city centre isolating the Cathedral and carving through Anderston, Charing Cross and the Merchant City.

By the mid 1970's the northern and western flanks of the M8 motorway had been constructed, and proposals for the eastern and southern flanks were blighting the Cathedral Precinct, Merchant City and South Bank areas. Three Comprehensive Development Areas had also been carried through to completion in the city centre at Anderston, Cowcaddens and Townhead; these swept away the existing fabric and urban grain replacing it with a new and foreign form and pattern of development.

Elsewhere within the city centre, there were many new modernist redevelopments of whole street blocks; and while these generally kept the street grid intact, they ignored and destroyed the fine grain and rhythm of their Georgian and Victorian predecessors.

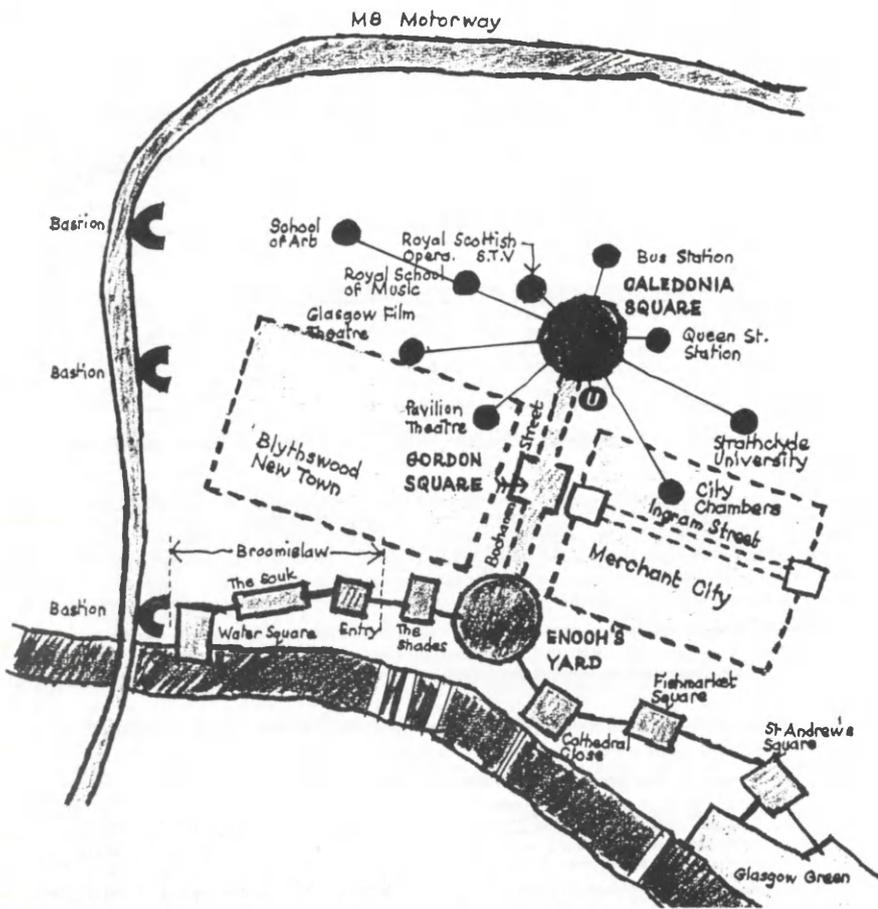
With the rationalisation of the national railway network, two of Glasgow's four railway termini were effectively redundant and these were eventually demolished (Buchanan Street Station and St Enoch Station) leaving large new vacant sites for development. The demolition of St Enoch Station was one of the last great losses in terms of the city centre's architectural heritage.

Following a report by Lord Esher in 1971, the Central Glasgow Conservation Area was declared in 1975 and the beginnings of a new approach to the city centre's regeneration was born. The comprehensive redevelopment of the Merchant City area was abandoned, the scale and alignments of the eastern and southern flanks of the motorway box were radically altered, Buchanan Street, Argyle Street and Sauchiehall Street were pedestrianised and the Custom House Quay Gardens on the riverfront were laid out on the site of former vacant dock sheds.

The end of the 1970's were a watershed in the planning of Glasgow City Centre. The city was on the threshold of a potentially disastrous spiral of decline. The city had acquired a bad image through a number of reasons; poverty, violence, urban decay and drunkenness for example.

Whether these were real, imagined or exaggerated did not matter, they were certainly contributing to increased disinvestment in Glasgow. This disinvestment was not only in the traditional heavy manufacturing industries, but throughout the local economy; and it led to the further deterioration of the city's image, especially to outsiders, and this in turn could have led to further disinvestment, and so on. Somehow this cyclical relationship had to be broken before the spiral of decline was too steep to reverse.





## THE REGENERATION OF GLASGOW CITY CENTRE

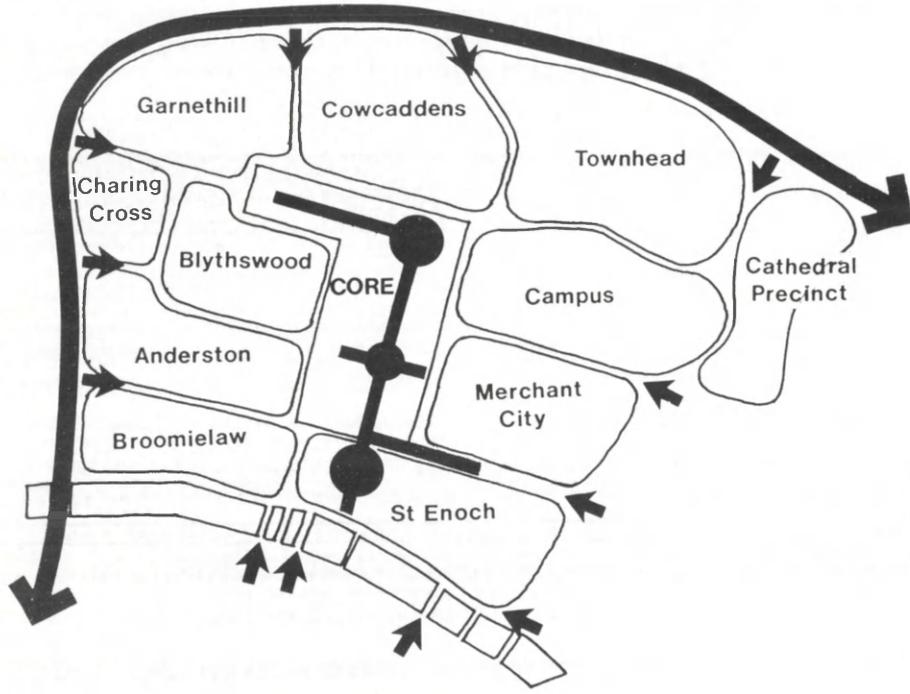
How could the city intervene to break this Spiral of Decline? The financial resources to fund a massive reinvestment were not available from either the public or private sector at that time; therefore, Glasgow had to concentrate on dramatically changing its image and thereby, hopefully, attract new investment which would in turn improve its image further, and the spiral would be reversed.

The marketing of Glasgow's image at that time was, however, an almost impossible task, so bad was the city's reputation. Then there appeared, almost accidentally, a spark to the city's revival: MR HAPPY! The 'Glasgow's Miles Better' campaign, despite being ridiculed then and even now, achieved something almost magical in the city's regeneration. It put Glasgow on the map again, it made the city 'stick its neck out' - especially when it was emblazoned on London buses and taxis. It gave the city and citizens something to aim for, and gave them a reason to be more positive about Glasgow and its future.

Incidentally, the other spark to the city's revival was an 'Act of God' back in 1968 when a disastrous storm hit the city doing untold damage to property, particularly the Victorian housing stock. This meant that immediate repairs had to be carried out in advance of the proposed demolition and redevelopment programme in the then Comprehensive Development Areas. For the first time, therefore, this focused attention on the possibility of refurbishing Victorian buildings rather than replacing them, and the emphasis of the city's housing capital account was switched from new build to rehabilitation.

Quite quickly attitudes about Glasgow began to change, people wanted to know more about the city and how it had become 'miles better'. The truth is that the slogan was not saying that 'Glasgow's Miles Better' than before- (because in all honesty it was not) but that 'Glasgow's Miles Better' than you think it is. Therefore, all that had to be done was to get people to look at the physical reality of the city (particularly the city centre) with its superb urban form and Georgian and Victorian architecture (albeit a little grimy), and already the impression given was that this was a city on the way up.

In 1983 the Scottish Development Agency and Glasgow District Council were convinced of the need to investigate the economic and environmental potential of Glasgow City Centre, and they commissioned McKinsey and Co (Management Consultants) and Gordon Cullen (Urban Design Consultant) to study the potential and to identify opportunities for its realisation. Their 1984 report concluded that the current situation was that the traditional industries were continuing to decline, there was a low (and declining) number of local headquarter offices, there were relatively few exports, most services were provided locally but some specialist



Top shows Gordon Cullen's Strategy proposed in 1984 with the central axis of Buchanan Street terminating in Caledonian Square to the north and Enoch's Yard to the south. Bottom shows the Strategy Diagram from the Central Area Local Plan 1990 indicating the location of project areas.

services were imported, the population was declining there was high unemployment and there were very few discretionary visitors. But, they also concluded that the city centre had potential, and recommended the pursuit of seven individual but interlinked initiatives, (1) attract new HQ's to Glasgow, (2) develop local services, (3) export these services, (4) develop the local tourist industry, (5) improve training infrastructure, (6) further improve the city's image and (7) improve the city centre environment.

#### NEW STRATEGY

Cullen's approach was to firstly, distill his impressions of Glasgow's character (or local culture); he felt that "Glasgow is a real city. It is rough, it rains a lot but it is not pretentious, and it is the flipside of Edinburgh. Glasgow works, it tastes good it is nourishing and it turns you on."

Secondly, he wanted to capitalise on the city's growing belief in its own viability and culture by creating a vibrant and confident central core, which would be achieved by a strategy of 'implosion'; or in other words, by concentrating the essence of 'Glasgow' within the core axis of Buchanan Street in order to create a 'spark' that could ignite the physical regeneration process.

In diagrammatic terms, the strategy was to emphasise Buchanan Street as the central axis with two 'poles' at either end at, what he called, "Caledonia Square" and "Enoch's Yard" and with a central focus at "Gordon Square". Linkages could then be made to the east into the Merchant City and west into Blythswood New Town, and to a riverside chain of linked spaces or events which threaded its way through the Broomielaw and St Enoch's areas. The underlying principle, therefore, was not the expansion of the central core into the surrounding 'soft areas', but the formation of a compact city centre which comes alive and captures the imagination.

The emphasis on Buchanan Street, which was critical to the whole strategy, was achieved by creating new development nodes at either end; in the north, the formation of a civic and cultural centre with its own new square and, in the south, the creation of a more 'earthy' focus in the existing St Enoch Square. The 'centre of gravity' for the Buchanan Street axis, and therefore for the whole city centre, was the crossroads at Gordon Street.

The 'implosion' approach was, however, balanced by the proposed formation of a 'city wall' and 'bastions' along the city centre's interface with the M8 motorway, thereby creating a strong edge with emphasised gateways. Cullen also wanted to reinforce the identities of the individual precincts which bordered onto the core - such as Blythswood New Town and the Merchant City - and tie these into the emerging urban structure by using, for example, Ingram Street as a secondary spine. The riverside chain was proposed to stretch from St Andrews Square in the east, through

Fishmarket Square, Cathedral Square, Enoch's Yard, to a new Water Square at Broomielaw in the west. The overall strategy was both stimulating and valid, and proved to be seminal in many of the regeneration projects of the 1980's.

The real value of Cullen's work can only, however, be realised when it is seen in conjunction with the Central Area Local Plan which was written at the same time as the McKinsey/Cullen study - in fact there was more than a considerable amount of cross-fertilisation of ideas between the two. This partnership approach was never really made externally explicit, but it was nevertheless a quite deliberate attempt to develop a consensus strategy.

#### CENTRAL AREA PLAN

The process of preparing the Central Area Local Plan began some twelve years ago, and yet it is still only in a draft form and has not been formally adopted.

The plan looked at the central area not simply as a collection of land uses, but rather as a place which meant different things to different people; to some it was a place to shop or work and to others it was a place to live or have a night-out. It also looked at the city centre as a collection of smaller areas or precincts with their own separate character, identity, issues and opportunities.

The nature of the issues and opportunities in some of these smaller areas was considered to be so crucial, that four of them were declared as 'Special Project Areas'; these were the Cathedral Precinct Area, the Merchant City, the St Enoch Area and the Broomielaw.

The approach adopted in the Cathedral Precinct Special Project Area was based on tourism and involved a directly interventionist approach; the Merchant City Special Project Area was predominantly based on housing and was essentially a 'pump priming' exercise; the Broomielaw Special Project Area was identified as an office expansion area and was private sector led; and the St Enoch Special Project Area area was initially based on the provision of one single large retail development, which has since attracted considerable spin-off development interest from the private sector, particularly in offices.

The concentration of activity down in the core area was given particular emphasis in the Plan; particularly in terms of shopping, with the proposed contraction of the 'Z' shaped retailing pattern. This approach complemented, and if the truth be told predated, the Cullen Strategy, and put the emphasis on Buchanan Street as the main shopping spine. The plan also proposed (again before Cullen) the formation of a strong focus at either end of Buchanan Street, by the development of the St Enoch Centre (which is now open) and the Buchanan Centre (which is now being constructed alongside the new Concert Hall).

The Plan also gave added weight to the 'Conservation Presumption'. Most of the

city centre was now a conservation area, and a large number of its buildings were listed, the Plan emphasised that the city had a strong presumption in favour of the retention of existing buildings (particularly those that are listed), unless a developer could prove that it was not structurally or economically feasible to retain and re-use the building.

The Plan also strongly advocated the principle of 'urban quality' that is the attainment of high environmental and urban design standards in new developments. The aim was to encourage (and if necessary insist upon) more respect for the traditional architectural context in Glasgow city centre. That does not mean that we are attempting to retreat behind a pastiche or overly derivative approach to the design of new development, but rather to foster a contemporary style of architecture which contributed to the rich culture of the 'Glasgow Style'. Recent examples in the city show that this approach is having some effect. These buildings are unashamedly modern but have a character and quality all too often lacking in recent decades.

The 1980's have been a particularly successful period for Glasgow. The level of development activity has been running high, due in part to the effectiveness of the economic regeneration strategy formed at the beginning of the decade; and this has enabled the city to build upon this initial improvement in its external image, and to insist on higher and higher quality in the design of new developments.

**We must be honest, however, and say that there is no cause for complacency, the recent successes have a 'fragility' to them that very easily the city could experience such a 'cooling down' effect that the momentum of the regeneration process could be lost. This is a testing time for Glasgow, the early regeneration projects have been well acknowledged and flashes of 'greatness' have been achieved through the 'Garden Festival' and 'Year of Culture'; but there is a concern in the city that Glasgow might have reached a plateau and that many other cities in Britain are rapidly catching-up. Most of the cities are not so peripheral as Glasgow, and this factor will become more and more important as the European 'Centre of gravity' shifts eastwards.**

**The city is also aware that, in the 'image game', as soon as the media put you on a pedestal, the first thing they want to do is knock you off it! Glasgow's burgeoning renaissance has been criticised as being mainly hype, it is now time, therefore, to turn the hype into reality. The image being marketed is normally ahead of reality, but if the gap becomes too wide, the campaign loses its credibility - Glasgow needs to narrow the credibility gap if the momentum is to be maintained.**

## FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The District Council is as aware as ever of the importance of the city centre and is currently updating the City Centre Local Plan in order to better reflect the current situation and to set out a new strategy for the 1990's. At the end of 1989, the SDA appointed Gillespies to update a vision of Glasgow's City Centre, working in conjunction with the City Planning Department. The project is only just now concluding, and it is still too early to put before you, in detail, the output of the work. But it is possible to talk about some of the key issues and ideas which have arisen during the currency of the project.

Let us examine two powerful but contrasting urban images. The first image is clear and the city it represents is legible - there is a clear hierarchy of buildings and their relative importance and uses are clear; it is physically permeable; and there is a clear definition between public and private space. There is little wasted space and the city performs well whether considered in the terminology and analysis of Kevin Lynch, of Bentley et al or of Norberg Schultz. It is a mouth-watering image and has evolved for the use of the human being. Florence is archotypically European.

The second image has a confused skyline resulting from the competition of buildings to stand out amongst our neighbours. It is visually permeable, but has little hierarchy to assist the casual visitor in movement around the city. It has developed throughout its history with mechanised transport a realisable possibility, and has been designed for the use and convenience of motorised transport. It has severed links between the city and river and there is ample evidence of spaces which have been lost from the public realm. Melbourne is an Australian city, but is archotypically North European.

In our opinion, one of Glasgow's problems is that it has become inherently schizophrenic. Through the evolution of its regular grid and replacement of its medieval core, and introduction of an urban motorway system, Glasgow's urban form has become hybrid; that is, it is not easy to decide whether Glasgow is truly European or is becoming North American in its characteristics. Given the increased importance in the future of the wider European dimension, it is our assertion that Glasgow and its urban form should relate more towards Europe than North America. One of the key questions to be addressed in Glasgow at present, is whether or not the city centre is to be experienced by foot and for the ease and use of pedestrians or whether it is to be experienced by people using car and by bus.

The issue of traffic is one which places greatest stress on cities today. Free accessibility to the city centre by car, rising car-ownership and deregulation of bus services has led to congestion within city centres of an unprecedented nature.

However, the solution in Glasgow is not necessarily total pedestrianisation. A busy,

even congested street, can become a windy wasteland if completely pedestrianised. In our view, the secret to successful pedestrianisation is scale and the need to relate activity in the street to the human scale.

A narrow, medieval street is not only acceptable as a pedestrian way, but was designed as such and is extremely desirable to retain as a pedestrian street. A similar feeling of scale and enclosure can be experienced in a small market town where the relative width to height of buildings is contained. However, this feeling of scale may well break down in a large boulevard in a modern city, where perhaps it is desirable to achieve sequences of spaces across the street to encourage different activities and uses within the street.

Traffic calming is a much talked about concept these days in Glasgow as it is elsewhere, and one which implies some sort of balance between the extremes of traffic congestion and total pedestrianisation in large scale urban streets. In our opinion, however, certain preconditions require to be satisfied and these include:- sufficient activity at street edges; no through traffic; no casual traffic; pedestrian priority; restricted servicing hours; small scale public transport and taxis; radical improvement to street environment.

## LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT

In conjunction with an improved pedestrian environment, we are currently considering the introduction of a Light Rapid Transit (LRT) system in the city. Glasgow, of course, once had a very efficient tram system and one which was held with great affection by the population of the city (as witnessed by the popularity of the temporary reintroduction of trams at the Glasgow Garden Festival). The intention would be to run modern light rail vehicles into the city centre from the outer areas using a combination of existing and former railway lines and new dedicated surface routes; these lines would then run at street level when they enter the city centre, in the same way as the former tramway system operated. All of these lines would then run at street level when they enter the city centre, in the same way as the former tramway system operated. All of these lines would then join onto a loop which would encircle the main core of the city centre providing high levels of penetration and interchange.

Of course, this infers that the area within the LRT loop would have a pedestrian priority with only limited service access, and there is a need to create a network of efficient and attractive pedestrian linkages radiating from this pedestrian core throughout the city centre. An examination of the linkages within the central core of Glasgow was undertaken as part of a renewal strategy for Glasgow Green, proposing means by which the Green could be better linked to the city centre. It picks up on clear, visible, visually permeable, routes as well as more intricate wynds and byways through the city area making the central core permeable both visually and physically.

As with the concept of traffic calming, certain key preconditions require to be considered in the creation of a successful pedestrian network. These requirements include:- strong routes with clear linkages; clear hierarchy of routes with appropriate scale and treatment; multiple attractions such as key visitor destinations and points of interest; possible theming of routes depending on architecture, toilets and access to transportation.

## CITY QUALITIES

Resolving the fundamental paradox of traffic and pedestrian, (and for whom the city is designed and intended) lead us onto the examination which we undertook of other famous cities (which are not national capitals), and into what makes them tick. We started by examining all of the factors which contribute to a great city. Briefly, the parameters which guided us were:- critical mass: in size, prestige and status giving a metropolitan stature; a distinctive personality enabling diversity of character, experiences and places of interest; an attractive and hospitable environment, with an emphasis on quality, ease and comfort of movement and opportunities to gather and to watch the world go by; an air of confidence and an awareness of place.

We considered where best these aspects were represented in cities of a similar size and status to Glasgow, and looked at Barcelona, Milan, Dublin, Frankfurt, Copenhagen and Oslo.

We concluded that a 'typical great city' exhibits a number of characteristics:- a famous street; a famous square or urban space; a famous green space or park; a recognisable historical heart; characteristic natural features; famous city icons or buildings; a strong urban structure and local character.

For example, if you think of Paris, you think of the Champs Elysees, Susseldorf has the Konigs Allee, (the Bond Street of Europe) and Barcelona has the Ramblas. The other interesting factor is that all the cities which we looked at had not attempted to "internationalise" their architecture and their style. This, we think is a very important lesson for Glasgow to learn.

## NEW ICON

So we began to think what Glasgow perhaps needs is to concentrate on improving the quality of its main street (Buchanan Street); its main square (George Square); its main park (Glasgow Green); its historical heart (Cathedral Precinct and the High Street); and its urban structure and local character. The city also possibly requires an icon, a building which is instantly recognisable by day and by night as being 'Glasgow'. A building or feature of international quality, perhaps housing an institution of national renown.

Of course, Glasgow has existing icons on

its skyline such as the University, Park Circus, etc. There is no doubt, that in the control of the skyline the erection of a substantial landmark has (in those cities where one exists) been very successful in ensuring that no other buildings rise up to challenge the structure.

We believe that a new tower strategically placed related to an important space might well be an important factor for the city. It must be made clear what we mean by a tower; we do not mean the type of large commercial skyscraper all too prevalent nowadays, but rather we envisage a slender, more modest, but nevertheless distinctive feature which can contribute positively to the city's skyline.

The climatic conditions in Glasgow are an important factor, but other northern cities are able to overcome their climate. It is possible to introduce facilities into the city street which help to ameliorate the effects of weather. Activity in the street is very important if the urban form is to be animated and brought to life. Glasgow has improved dramatically in this respect in the last few years, but further improvements are required. The encouragement of outdoor activity, throughout the day and into the evening hours, still has to be achieved.

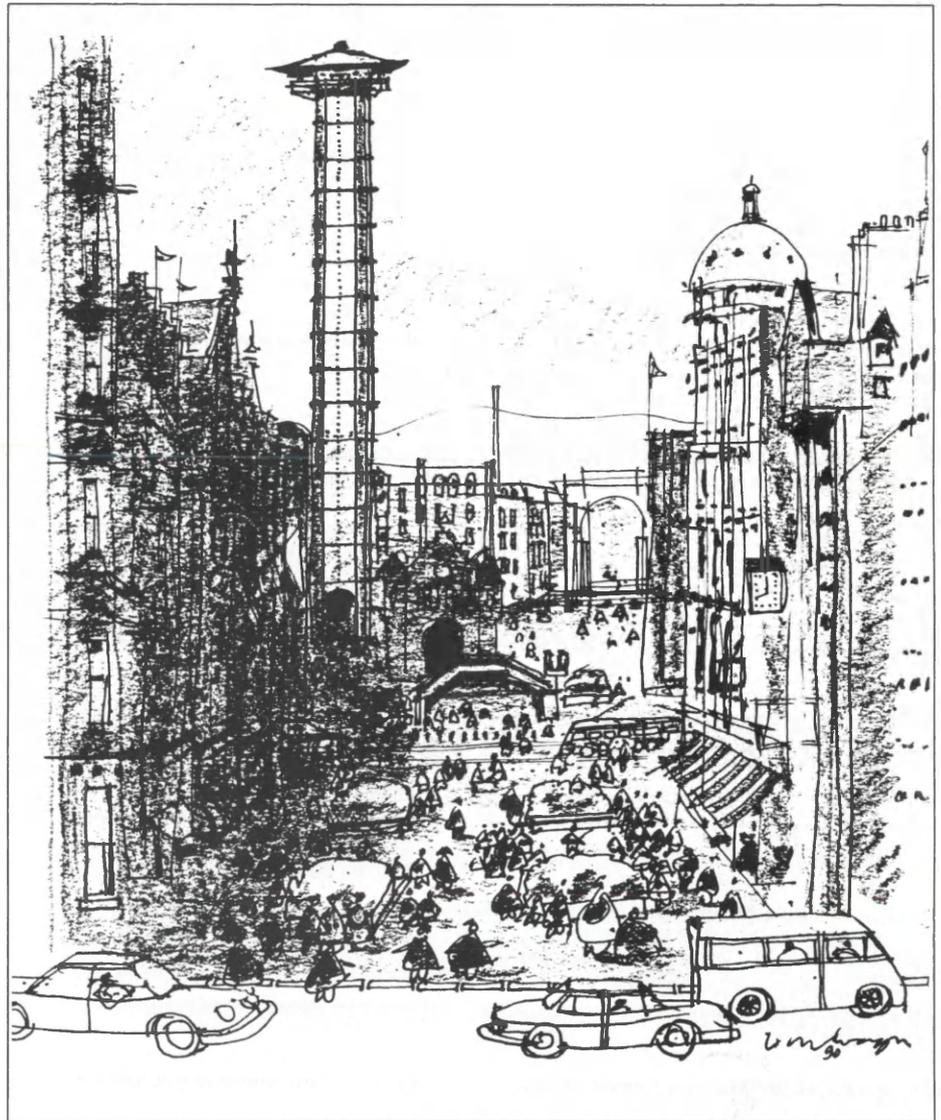
#### RIVER CLYDE

The River Clyde is extremely important to Glasgow's City Centre as it proceeds through the central area. Currently the city centre relates very poorly to its waterfront, despite the creation of the riverside walkway. This is particularly important because this additional richness of detail helps the legibility of the city. In order to encourage people down to the Clyde, the city centre's structure needs to be more strongly connected to the river, perhaps by continuing the Buchanan Street axis down through St Enoch Square to Clyde Street.

New development could be used to frame new riverfront spaces, and new activities could be encouraged along the existing quayside walkways at the river's edge. The continuation of these activities by day and by night is also particularly important.

**In conclusion, we feel the future for Glasgow lies in the wider European context and Glasgow needs to compete in that market. Its urban form and environmental quality has a rôle to play in that process, and we feel that Glasgow should move away from becoming a hybrid mid-Atlantic culture and that it should rediscover a more European form and character.**

Final Section of this paper is based on a study carried out jointly by Mike Galloway (Glasgow District Council Planning Department) and Brian Evans (Gillespies).



Top shows extract from Gillespies' study of the city centre showing how identity might be provided at the southern end of the central axis.

# RENEWING THE MERCHANT CITY

by James Patrick

The Merchant City is the term used to describe 18th century Glasgow. The best developed and most important parts of the city at that time lay within its boundaries. New trade links with the Americans were transforming Glasgow's function from an Ecclesiastical centre into a commercial one and the Merchant City marked the growth that took place as a result. Today, the Merchant City is still Glasgow. This time symbolically. A representation of a decade and more of change in the city. Change in image, self perception and perhaps more importantly in attitudes towards the cultural value of Glasgow's heritage.

Underlying this background is a much more potent symbol; that changes of the sort that may have attracted many of you here to the conference, can be made to happen; that pragmatic intervention guided by clear, straightforward objectives and commitment can alter market conditions to a significant degree.

I propose to explain three stages in the Merchant City's mid life crisis: what the Merchant City means and how it nearly died; how circumstances combined to initiate the recovery process; and what the response has been like.

## ITS MEANING

The Merchant City lies at the heart of the city centre and extends from Buchanan Street in the west to High Street in the east and from George Street in the north to Argyle Street and Trongate. It is a discrete, well defined and easily identifiable area where, quite clearly, the quality of urban design is its lasting value.

Physically the Merchant City developed over a relatively short time into a compact arrangement of Merchant's residences and public buildings contained within an offset or closed-grid street plan. The privately generated expansion established the parameters for land uses and explains the particular form that developments took. The balance between public and residential uses was emphasised by the practice of siting important buildings on terminal features at the ends of the characteristically short streets. This design approach and the staggered street plan created a feeling of closure and definition. This sense of place - a city within a city - remains intact today and contrasts sharply with the open grid iron street pattern established west of the Merchant city by the Victorians.

Two hundred and fifty years of land use change brought to the area a variety of architectural styles unparalleled elsewhere in the city. Individuality often marked by variation in height, colour and texture is

superimposed upon the Georgian street plan but in a way that adheres to the control of the building line.

This combination of effects produces a townscape quality that is a blend of Georgian town houses, Victorian splendour and robust inter-war warehouses; all set off by the intimacy of the street space.

There is, of course a flipside to this - a deterioration of usefulness eating away at the fabric like some cancer, or perhaps a giant moth. So what went wrong?

Until the 1960's, the Merchant City's central location proved of sufficient advantage to attract a healthy range of commercial activities. Warehouse storage and distribution as well as clothing manufacture became the dominant uses and at the peak period, three million square feet of warehouse floorspace was concentrated there. The failure over time, however, to cope with change began to erode this. New demands, practices and preferences for warehousing together with outdated facilities progressively highlighted the problem of building obsolescence as well as the inadequacy of the streets to cater for increasing traffic. So began a programme of decentralisation sparked off by the relocation of the regional fruit and vegetable market in 1968. Running concurrently with this, and reflecting renewal policies of the time, were two major land use schemes with significant consequences for the Merchant City.

The most important of these was the proposal, formally introduced in 1965, to build an inner ring road around the city centre. If progressed, the east flank of this road would cut through and remove the eastern edge of the area. The other proposal involved the expansion southwards of the Strathclyde University campus across George Street and into the north east sector of the Merchant City.

Land use problems as well as demands of this sort ultimately brought about the designation of the Merchant City as an Outline Comprehensive Development Area; an approach which it should be made clear is founded on widespread clearance and redevelopment made possible by public sector land acquisition on a large scale. Despite everything, the crisis intensified: over 80 businesses ceased trading because the fruit market moved away; the University's planned expansion failed to materialise and decisions on the eastern stretch of the new motorway were never taken. So was set in motion a chain of events common to many old urban areas in the UK: increases in vacant property accelerating the process of decay leading ultimately to demolition on an unpredicted scale.

By 1980, after ten years of comprehensive planning, the Merchant City had fared rather badly: about a third of all property was vacant; about a third of all property was in

Glasgow District Council ownership, of which 60% was vacant; the east flank motorway was continuing to cause uncertainty; large scale redevelopment was unlikely to occur; and the physical fabric and urban qualities were being seriously endangered because of underuse and neglect.

## THE INITIATIVE

The various problems being encountered in the Merchant City were translated into three issues: how to stimulate new market interest; how to promote new uses for old buildings and vacant land; and how the Council could use its property holdings to better effect. There is, of course, nothing new about these issues - every urban area is required to face something similar. The key for Glasgow and the Merchant city lay in a particular set of circumstances coming together and advantage being taken of them.

In the late 1970's development interest in new build inner city housing for sale was beginning to emerge as a serious proposition. This was in response, largely, to policy initiatives by Glasgow District Council that sanctioned the release of publicly owned sites as a means of stimulating development; reducing population decline; and redeveloping vacant land.

So emerged the first indications that housing may offer similar opportunities for the renewal of city centre sites such as those being found in the Merchant City. Taking this further, Glasgow District Council undertook to examine a group of three Merchant City buildings in its ownership to determine their suitability for conversion to residential use. The working group concluded that structurally, housing would be practical; environmentally, new standards could be devised; and financially, costs would be prohibitive. The clear implication of it all being that housing would not work without subsidies of some sort.

Three further things happened at this time that clarified the extent of the housing opportunity and began to address the question of subsidies.

Firstly, in response to the Secretary of State's decision on the Structure Plan, Strathclyde Regional Council finally took a decision in 1981 on the line of the east flank motorway which moved it east of the High Street leaving the Merchant City intact.

Secondly, at the same time, the Structure Plan introduced policies that protected greenfield land against housing expansion to allow the redevelopment of inner city sites.

And finally in 1981, new legislation changed the way in which Local Authorities could make housing improvement grants. Until then, individual householders in receipt of grants were required to repay them if the improved house was sold on within a specific timescale. The resale rule was removed making it possible for authorities at their discretion, to grant aid, for the first time, the conversion of non-residential buildings into houses using budgets financed by Central Government.

All of these things combined to support the allocation of public resources as a means of stimulating housing as a new use. A subsidy package was thus assembled which took the form of conversion grants at an average rate of £5,100 for every house created; the release of suitable buildings in public ownership; and the development of positive planning controls suitable for city centre housing.

Which still left a problem:- who was interested in developing housing in the Merchant City and did anyone want to live there? The trick lay in promoting the belief that public subsidy and involvement could bridge the gap between a desirable objective and a feasible opportunity. Although there were traditions of social housing in the city centre, there was an absence of core townhouse living. Glasgow District Council could make clear its willingness to assist, but it remained for developers to respond.

## THE RESPONSE

So what about the response? It would be convenient to say that the house builders flocked to the Merchant city encouraged by the new opportunities and that their action saved the day. I can't say that, however, because their reaction was predictably negative. The Merchant City was felt to be marginal and of no long term prospect.

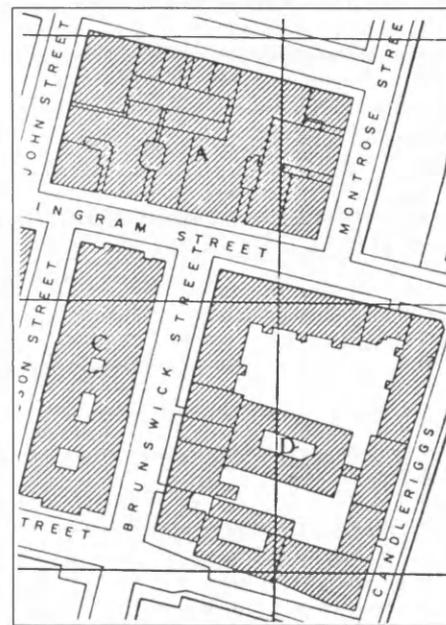
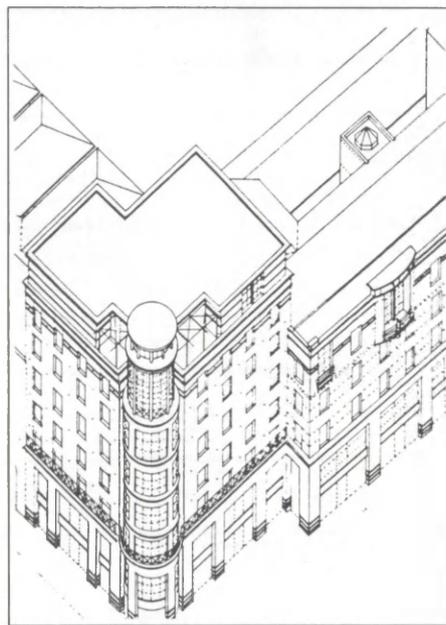
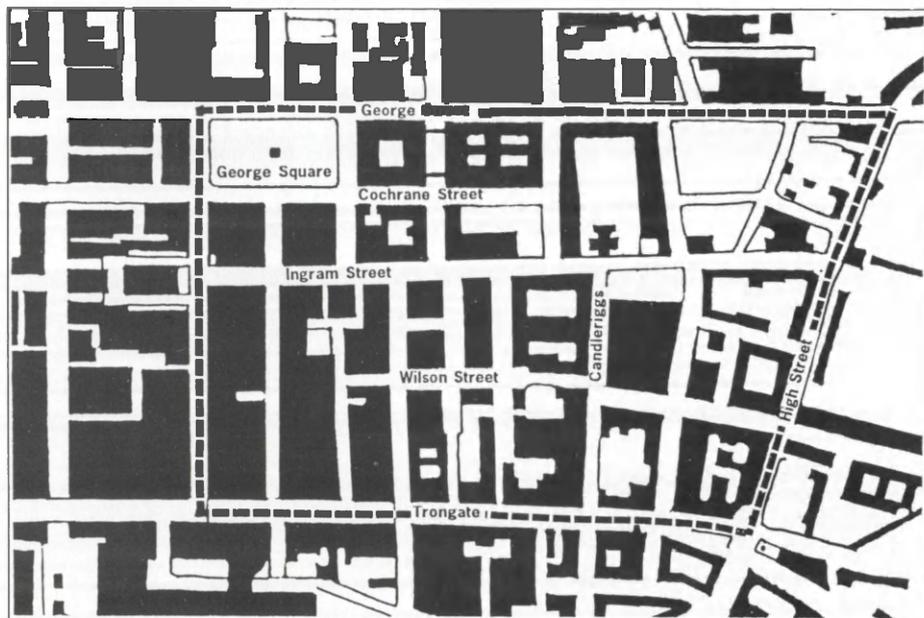
This may explain the interest of Windex Ltd - a small local company whose concerns initially were not for long term prospects but who were prepared to evaluate the viability of housing on a limited scale based on individual building merits.

And so Glasgow District Council and Windex came together on one of the pilot study sites - the Albion Building - a four storey warehouse built around 1875. Planning consent was granted in 1982, and the following year 23 flats were released for sale introducing the first new housing into the Merchant City for around 100 years. The basis of the public/private deal amounted to a subsidy equivalent to 35% of the development cost.

The most notable feature of the project in terms of its impact was the unequivocal response of buyers. All of the flats were sold before the development was completed on site (a typical price then would have been around £21,000).

And so it began. Uncertainty, no masterplan, no indication that a major renewal strategy with such far reaching implications was beginning. In quick succession, the remaining pilot study buildings were converted based as before on similar subsidy arrangements. The next of these was on Candleriggs where 21 flats were created above six shops. And the final one at Blackfriars Court, another development by Windex this time of 64 flats.

This stage also marked the start of the SDA's contribution to the renewal process. The potential benefits to the city centre economy of housing in the Merchant City began to be recognised and supported in the



Top : Plan showing Merchant City today  
Bottom : Ingram Square (D on plan)

form of grant aid made available through the SDA's LEG-UP programme, thereby strengthening the extent to which the public sector working together could make things happen.

The credibility of housing as an attractive new use made viable by public subsidy grew rapidly, drawing the attention of other potential developers as well as other property owners. By 1986, some 300 houses had been developed in a total of eight separate projects.

The first promising signs were also being seen of what is generally accepted to be the most important development so far undertaken and completed in the Merchant City - Ingram Square. Important in a number of respects - it raised the scale of development beyond the scope of the single building to the complexities of complete street block

renewal. It also altered the way in which the public and private sectors were prepared to operate together. A fully constituted partnership on the basis of equity shares established a firm financial and operational footing that allowed such a comprehensive scheme to be developed. It proposed the first new build housing in the Merchant City designed to meet the contextual needs of the city block infill and repair gaps in the fabric.

But Ingram Square did more. It dealt with the complexity of integrating car parking for large numbers, of relocating partial uses and with long term phased programming. The eight stage development of 239 flats (including some for students), shops and offices took five years and £8 million to complete. Perhaps encouraged by this, other developments began to support the additional costs of new build.

The essence of public support in the renewal of the Merchant City has been the targeting of large resources in a concentrated area over a sustained period. Between them Glasgow District Council and the SDA have spent the equivalent of £13 million since 1982 and so far housing remains the characteristic new use. All developments either completed on site or with planning consent add up to a total of 1143 houses, with potential, perhaps, for 400 more. Which may tend to imply a petering out of development activity and opportunity. Far from it.

Glasgow District Council and the SDA are acutely aware that the Merchant City remains an integral part of the city centre and as such should participate in providing the range of services people expect to find there. Recently, perceptions about the commercial possibilities in the area have been forming, based on a number of factors: the Merchant City is seen as a successful and highly visible example of area renewal; the style, quality, rate and manner of improvement have been impressive; and the area is in an advantageous location adjacent to the regional shopping centre, which at present is being redefined, upgraded and expanded along the central axis of Buchanan Street.

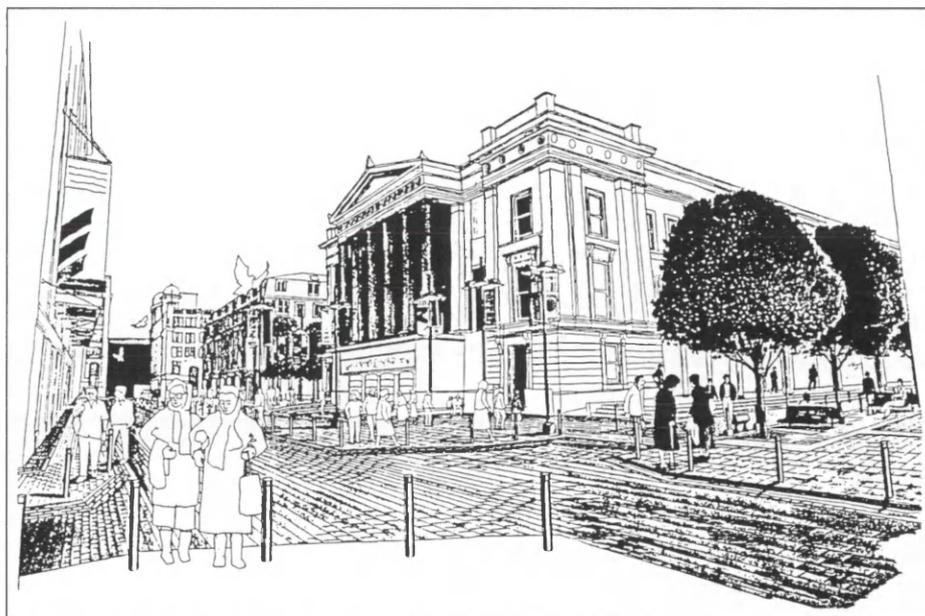
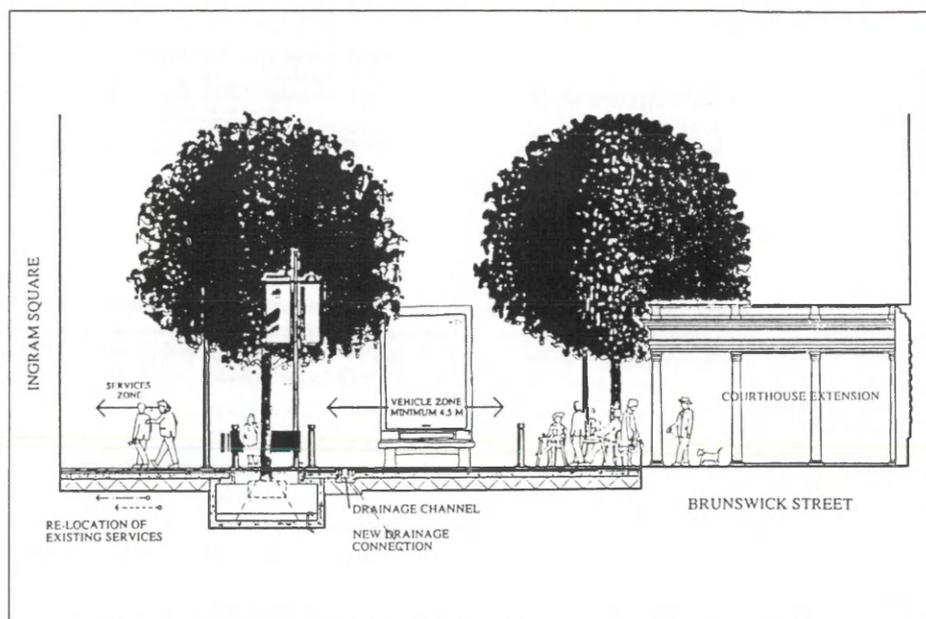
The market interpretation of these factors is being expressed in development forms new to the Merchant City: - large scale, multi-use projects with an increasingly dominant retail core; in pressures for new offices; and a range of new facilities orientated towards tourism. Together developments like this can give new impetus to the renewal process; broaden the mix of uses by taking advantage of opportunities not suitable for housing; and help to reintegrate the Merchant City back into the city centre.

## NEW PROJECTS

Retail projects include the completed Princes Square on Buchanan Street, thereby linking in the Merchant city, and the Italian Centre, another project where the District Council is involved as a partner and which seems to encapsulate the essence of Merchant City change. Others in this same category, which might be described as thematic shopping, are Virginia Court and the proposal based on the American concept of festival shopping to convert and extend the former Sheriff Courthouse into a fashion centre.

In supporting projects like this, Glasgow District Council and the SDA are seeking to complement mainstream shopping like the massive St Enoch Centre, to expand upon the range and quality of retail choice and to reinforce the attraction of the city centre. For example, two new multi-storey car parks are being developed in the Merchant City as a means of supporting this rate of activity.

There remains a danger, though, in commercialising the success of the Merchant City and of yielding to other forms of pressure such as offices. The concern can best be expressed as a wish to ensure that a proper balance is reached between the needs of an establishing residential neighbourhood and those of a modern city centre.



As an approach towards containing these pressures, office uses are viewed now as an enabling activity which means being permitted only as part of a multi-use proposal and where it can be demonstrated that the project as a whole could not otherwise be sustained. An example of this type of arrangement would be the Cochrane Square project where offices were introduced as a means of supporting what will be the highest quality of new housing so far built in the Merchant City.

The mushrooming of new uses in this way and the image attaching to the Merchant city seems well suited to visitor attraction - new hotels, theatres, restaurants and galleries are encouraged as a means of providing budget accommodation and developing the city centre tourist node.

All of which adds up to a comprehensive picture of co-ordinated area recovery. Each of the remaining development opportunities are at the pre-planning application stage and will be redeveloped over the next three years.

**Potential improvements to the area proposed by DEGW also showing conversion of former Sheriff Courthouse to fashion centre.**

**James Patrick is a Planning Officer with Glasgow City Council involved with the Merchant City Area**

# THE CATHEDRAL PRECINCT AND ITALIAN CENTRE

by David Page

I am going to talk about two projects, the Cathedral Square and the Italian Centre. I want to look at each project in some detail and I hope you will bear with me. It is that detail attitude that characterises our approach moving from the strategic to the detail but also an understanding that urban places are made by lots of people - by planners, by architects, by roads engineers, by water department officials and by people from the local community. It is not a vision brought on from above but it is something that grows through that working together of people and moving towards the best solution.

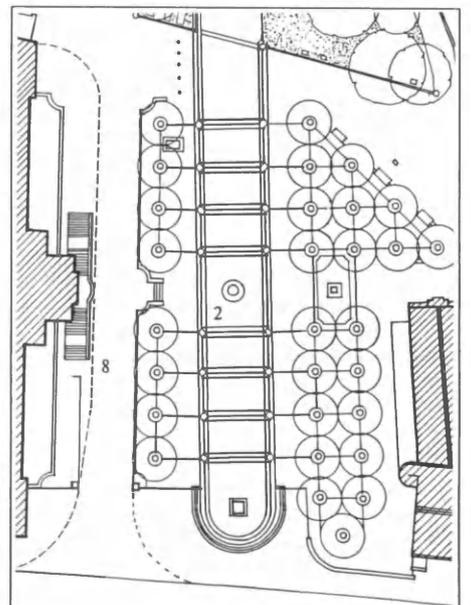
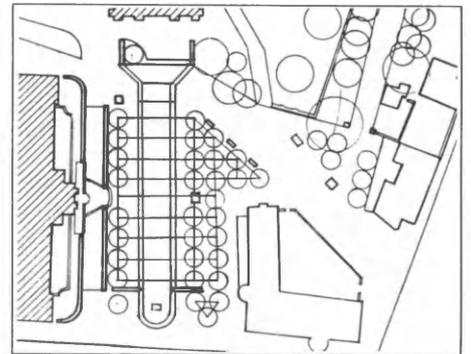
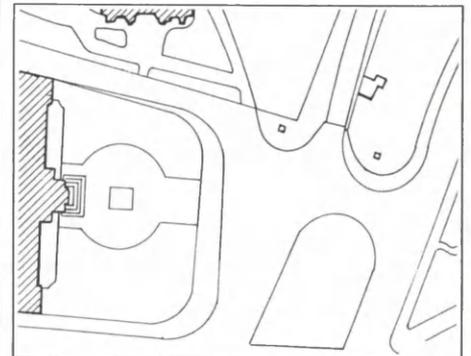
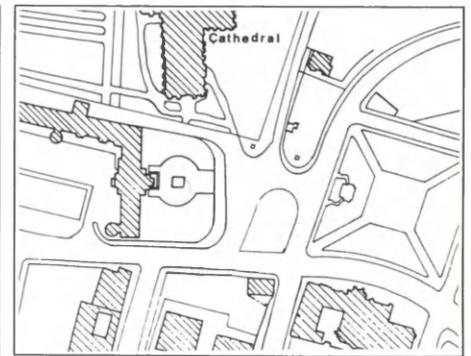
As the city expanded to the west, the University moved out in that direction. So the Victorian city fathers ultimately purged themselves of their medieval past. In many respects, they had to. The environment had become a slum. So Glasgow lost its medieval past and our Royal Mile - the High Street - had lost its interest and the result was the industrial Victorian city that evolved. The Bishop's Castle which sat to the front of the cathedral was the first to go, opening up a space in front of the cathedral defined by its two towers which then ultimately became the forecourt for the Adam Infirmary. The Adam Infirmary on the left hand side of the cathedral, owned the Bishop's Castle and the space in front of the Cathedral was not publicly used. During this time, one of the congregations moved out of the cathedral to the first Barony Church which you see directly adjacent to the cathedral. This in its own right was ultimately demolished. The Victorians then sanitised the western facade of the Cathedral and Miller built his Royal Infirmary which was three storeys higher than Adam's building and the relationship with the Cathedral was completely destroyed. Further improvements ultimately opened up the south Cathedral square. The inner ring road was proposed to the west of the Cathedral and will now be in a cutting instead of elevated.

In 1984, a competition was held by Glasgow District Council to look at the precinct. Our firm and Jack Sloan won that competition. Jack Sloan was an artist. Our approach was simply to extend the gardens of the cathedral and acropolis towards Castle Street. One route extended the existing route to the cathedral and the other extended a new approach to the cathedral west front which had been sanitised by Victorians. The towers had been removed and the formal facade formed. The problem with the formal facade is that it looked onto the infirmary car park. Part of this proposal was that the car park had to be removed in order to extend the formal approach. Jack used the opportunity of the gardens to celebrate the activities of the cathedral incorporating various sculptures,

honouring angels to Victoria, a Jacobs ladder, one of the cheapest sculptures ever - a B&Q ladder with wings on top. Hanging over the entrance to the motorway channel, Nebuchanedzar's chariot. It is worth noting the inscription on it - "The Chariot shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against the other in the broadways, they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings".. Nehemiah 2, Verse 4. I remember I was at a meeting later on with Gwyn Kennedy who was very skillfully trying to organise his way through all the various problems of getting the cathedral precinct moving and I had under the desk this little sketch which I presented half way through the meeting when Gwyn was just getting where he was with the Roads Department. I could see Gwyn putting his head in his hands as if to say what on earth was I doing. I said "wouldn't it be nice to have a sculpture" - I didn't say "a chariot", just "a sculpture" to announce that it's the cathedral precinct and the lighting guy looked at the roads guy, the roads guy looked at the traffic light guy and he looked at his boss .... and his boss and they looked at me and I changed it and said could we have a nice balcony - a handrail - overlooking the cathedral. He said "Mr Page, we have a standard detail for handrails in the city and we think it would be appropriate to continue that in this instance".

What happened though was rather than the cathedral extending itself towards the city, the city has in fact extended itself towards the cathedral. We formed a team with Ian White Associates as landscape architects. Ian Begg was to do the Visitor Centre building and worked with the SDA to re-urbanise the precinct, to take the city to the cathedral as opposed to the way we had originally shown. Two new paved approaches are formed. The thing that we like to say is that we don't see them as urban squares or spaces in their own right. The important thing was that they were streets - approaches - to the cathedral. The ground has been excavated from the edge on Castle Street to form a shallow ramp down towards the front of the cathedral. On the other hand, the cathedral has also extended its nave out terminating at the Statue of Livingstone on Castle Street. To the north against the Infirmary the plinth is extended out to give access by means of a terrace to the various service areas of the hospital and to the car parking beyond.

Below the line of the terrace, there is a series of trees and seats to define the edge of that terrace and on the other side, the growth of trees leads to the cathedral gate at the bottom. The visualisation was that rather than spaces be formed as a square, let the spaces be seen as an extension of the Infirmary.



Plans of Cathedral Precinct  
Location  
Area before alterations  
Redesign of Area  
Detailed design



The tracery of the grid of the cathedral is extended out to define the lines. The pattern of the cathedral extends through the space. The angle of the Royal Infirmary sits at 2.5 degrees to the cathedral itself so we have used that 2.5 degrees and carried it as much as possible into tree guards and in walls. The city wasn't ready for Jack Sloan and his sculptural intention. We have sought to get that kind of uplift within the details that we are using. A stone sofa in the square with a granite back rest, almost a funeral seat. The forecourt and approach is also extended in the existing processional route which is redefined. The Visitor Centre by Ian Begg sits on top of a cloister overlooking the garden behind a high wall which will, when the centre is opened, create a secluded place for the activities of the building. The plan, therefore, has three layers. Firstly, the approaches to the cathedral. Secondly, the 'thick' edges as we have called them, define those routes of the various activities serving those places with trees or seats and service areas. Thirdly, more distinct activity spaces which while related specifically to the activities of the place, contribute to the nature of the whole approach with the specific activities of that building, the specific activities of the private garden. There is a hierarchy of very public and very private but the private is semi-public because the public can see into it.

The Italian Centre brief was for the conversion of a disparate group of commercial buildings in the classical style into a complex of flats, shops, offices and restaurants. A mix of activities that essentially would promote Italian goods and design but also evoke, to a certain extent, the culture and atmosphere of Italy. For an architect getting that, he can make it trivial or he can make it

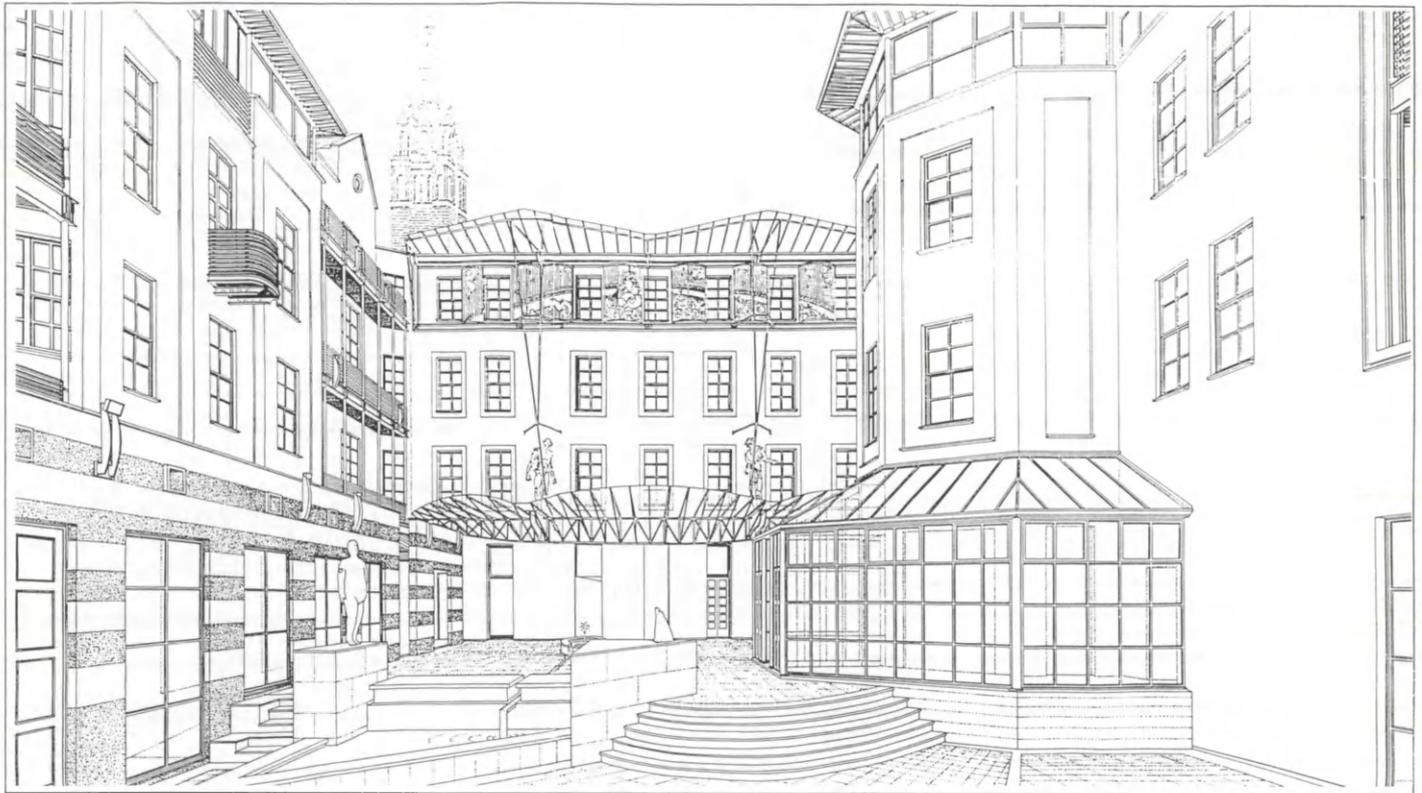
serious and I think that what we did was to make a serious attempt to look at that kind of relationship. It came from the developer - there are a number in Glasgow now who actually patronise architects and artists and have a completely different attitude to development than perhaps we have seen up to now. The buildings that make up the centre were originally shops and warehouses. They form half a city block, fronting on Cochrane Street onto John Street and then onto Ingram Street at the bottom. At street level, there were shops, doorways and the closes gave access to small courts at the back. The classical facades are generally rusticated and have regular shallow recessed elements.

The centre of Italian life or city life which is what we actually read into the Italian Centre, is not so much the street but also the piazza or courtyard which is a kind of theatre. Accordingly, the proposal they accepted was to preserve and enhance the classical facades, to place the main entrance on John Street and behind the facades to create an inner court that would become a social centre for the residents, but also another dynamic place of passage in the city accessible from these three streets through shops, restaurants or pends. We had no hesitation about working with these existing buildings in the city but they were almost like found objects. They are special to the city. In terms of the structural rationale of the buildings, there are structural reasons why we kept the existing external walls and not just purely to create a facade on the outside of the building.

What we sought to do in terms of the detail of all the spaces is that each shop area acts as a gateway through into this new urban space in the centre of the court. By using voids around the spaces, it opened up various basements in order to let light in. Likewise

within the flats themselves, we sought to carry on a similar kind of structural idea to form the actual spaces. On the streets, the classical facades remain basically intact but their stylistic unity is enhanced by four new elements. One of the attitudes that we have brought is that we are not frightened by the historical fact that in terms of conservation. You can enhance and actually work with old buildings if they are not grade listed or a Mackintosh building and re-invigorate their use. The first was the formation of a granite plinth to give dignity, the second was to form a glazed projection onto John Street which has been glazed in and which can expand out onto the street, really the first example of use of the street within the city and has needed a major change in attitude from the licensing board. As I said, making a city is about so many people changing their attitudes. The third element is metal and glass grillettes across the ground floor windows and a suggestion of the dilemma between the historical facade and the new use of the building.

The function is partly protective but also architectural with the wall requiring an extra membrane which reinforces the line of the classical rustication. When open, the wings fasten back against the wall, the wall plane moves forward and creates, by contrast, the dark openings into the shops and the glass pend catches the light. The fourth element is four large neo-classical sculptures. Three at roof level on John Street and one on the street. These are designed by an artist called Sandy Stoddard. One of our attitudes was that while we respected the classical tradition - we didn't love it - he loved it and actually works within the tradition and he seemed the appropriate person to enhance what the building was really trying to say.



On the inner court, we have been left with these fragmentary facades and had to make some changes to those facades. The brief for the inner court was that it had to have a walkway around the perimeter but it was basically an open space. It should be seen as an additional urban space in the city. The west facade has three large elements giving it character and rhythm, the gabled stair tower, the central bay and the metal screens which infill the existing projections. The east facade, has likewise the gabled stair tower, a central bay including a conservatory and a large void or opening. These two elevations are directly designed to answer each other. It doesn't mean that they are in any way the same but somehow through their detail, they are complementary but saying slightly different things. The east elevation is informal and individual and attempting to have a certain dynamism about it whereas the west facade is formal. In a sense what we are trying to do is to actually say "What are the fragments of the city, what are the elements of the city?" and collecting them together. It is almost like the richness of a good novel, where you actually take pieces of the feeling of coming out of a good novel and that you have actually experienced life through it. These two elevations set the facade, set the scene. In a sense the extravagant elevation is the one which faces south and receives most light and stands where you see the towers of the City Chambers beyond. Two large metal brackets at the bottom support a large canopy and these brackets then extend up to support roof glazing at the top which relates to the traditional detail we have round here but done in a different way.

The diversity, richness and modernity of these three facades are a way of trying to capture for Glasgow some of the vibrancy of

city life. Behind that are flats, a low level restaurant, bistro and offices. The sculptural synthesis of these ideas that Jack Sloan worked on are the formation of a frieze at the top of the building. On the frieze are two large figures which have the convention of classical statuary but are contemporary in their repose. That intensity of expression found a foil in the south elevation and the sculpture of Shona Kinloch. Her sculpture will sit in the middle courtyard. In some ways in direct dialogue to Sloan's sculpture. Sloan's is perfect, the classical ideal. Shona's is the ordinary, Glasgow's every man. Shona Kinloch's man stands on tiptoes with his dog looking up at him. Tattooed on the man's arm is Bella of Bellahouston - an oblique reference back to Scotland and Italy.

The Italian Centre is for us about the careful strengthening and enriching of the existing context which is the exterior context and the formation of a pedestrianised space in the street. A new urban space inside seeks in a way to be almost more intensely urban than the exterior and seeks to interpret and extend this idea by the intensity of the space.

In our work, we have sought, with the various people that we have worked with, to take the city as we found it, reinvigorating it, sometimes returning to the past but other times moving forward to meet new needs. Facades, walls, streets and memories then become neither framed, in a conservationist frame, nor destroyed by the reuse and are vigorously re-interpreted to tackle the new needs and new uses. In many ways for us, it involves an intellectual struggle between the modern city, the so-called utopia as it was, the needs for efficient movement to meet car parking and the historical city. Our response to that struggle has been to ask "Can we in any way make it a duet?"

**Left hand page shows perspective of the Cathedral Square redesign. Right hand page illustrates inner courtyard of the Italian Centre**

**David Page is a partner in Page and Park Architects who won the competition for the redesign of the setting for Glasgow Cathedral in 1984.**

# THE BROOMIELAW

by Lee Polisano

The Broomielaw proposal is work-in-progress. The reality of it is how one can satisfy the requirements of a commercial development that integrates into the city successfully and make it a habitable environment. Phase I of the Broomielaw is already under construction. It has been designed by the Building Design Partnership, Glasgow office, and is approximately about 340,000 gross sqft. We are responsible for developing a masterplan for Phase II of this area and we are working in association with the Glasgow firm of Elder and Cannon. The masterplan involves about 1.2 million square feet of mixed use space which includes commercial offices, residential, a hotel, retail and hopefully a small national museum. What are some of the issues that we have to deal with in the Broomielaw? It is an area that includes a number of listed building. In James Watt Street there can be seen some of the finest Victorian warehouses in Glasgow. York Street contains the Queens Tea Store. Robertson Street contains an old workshop of the engineer, James Gilchrist.

One of the challenges within the masterplan is how one reuses these buildings within the environment of a commercial scheme. One of the more difficult challenges, however, is how the Broomielaw will

become successfully integrated into and become again part of the city centre.

The Broomielaw is unique in terms of the block pattern which was established in this part of Glasgow. The very short truncated block with alleyways in the middle, narrow depths for offices and commercial buildings and a very short north/south dimension. This grid stops at Argyle Street and in a rather abrupt way shifts at Argyle Street to become a more north/south grid. The blocks in this area were basically pre-determined by the warehouse use which were typically very long in plan. Another issue which needs to be reconciled is the continuation of the Glasgow 'string of pearls' idea extending into the Broomielaw and beyond.

When we started the urban design aspects of this, our approach was to look at a number of different ways to analyse the context and through numerous three-dimensional models to explore the ways of introducing a change of use into the area and finding the satisfactory urban plan to accommodate the amount of commercial space that we have been told is necessary to make the project a reality.

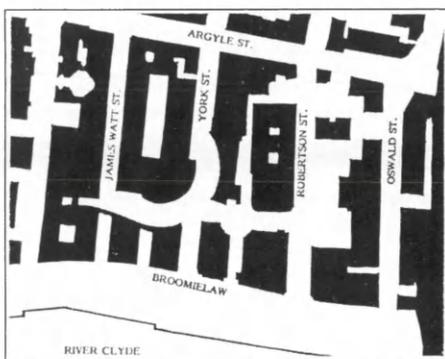
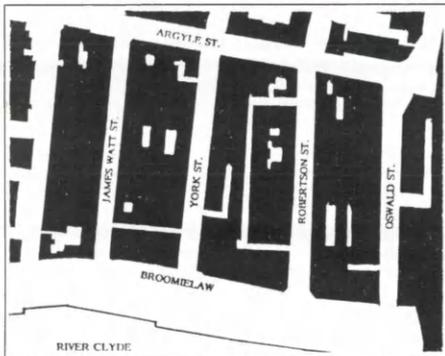
Our proposals looked at a way of manipulating the city streets. The schemes addressed the change of use in the area, the large scale of commercial development which needed to take place in the area, the integration of housing and other types of urban functions and the creation of a number of different sized building blocks or units which could accommodate various types of commercial activity and allow the property developer the

opportunity to market this project on an international level. There is a lot of interest from businesses and institutions from outside of the city who are looking to locate in Glasgow. So one of the charges of our brief was to look at and to create a series of building types or models that afforded the opportunity for numerous users to have flexibility within the scheme.

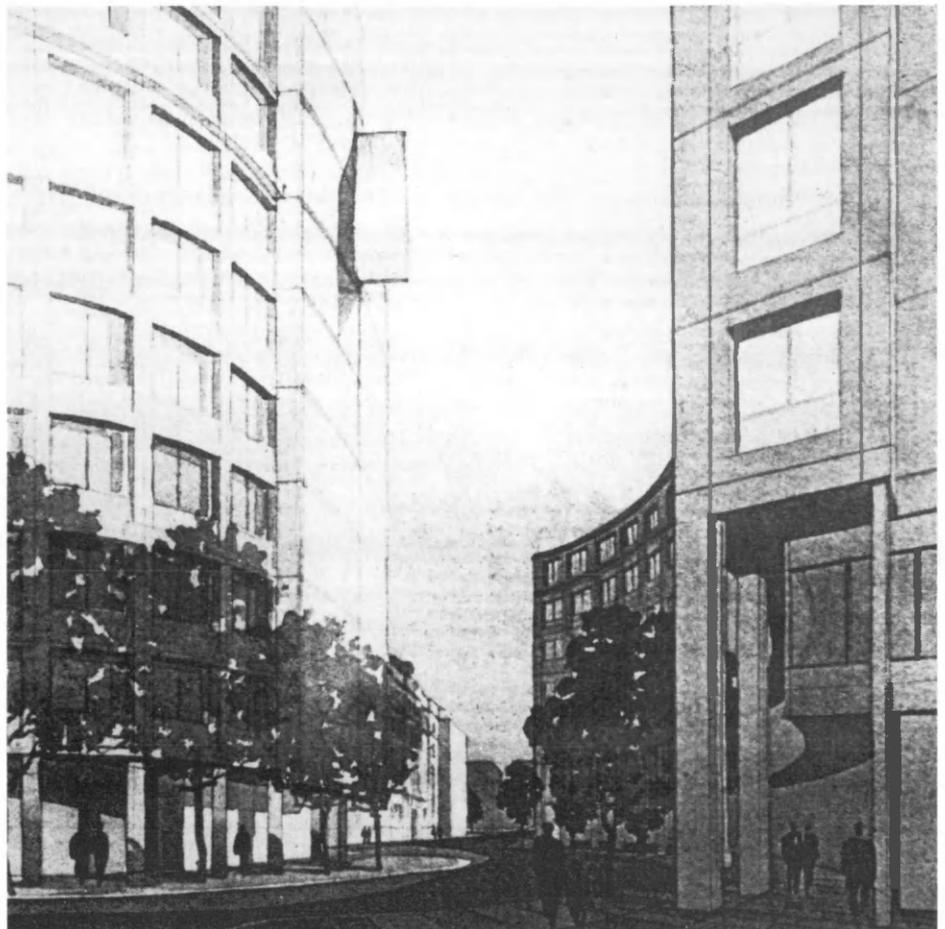
Current proposals introduce the device of a serpentine or crescent shape street as an overlay into the rigorous north/south grid that exists. This shape is a formal attempt to reorganise the area and create a series of distinct building parcels that can allow for flexibility for future development. On James Watt Street, the listed buildings are retained in facade only, and these will be reintroduced as a residential component of the project. In addition to that, the ground floors will contain a national museum. The Queens Tea store will also be retained and reused as a hotel. The Gilchrist warehouse formally in this location will become part of the reconstruction of the buildings on James Watt Street

We have been experimenting with the notion of a sixteen storey building within the area which is a controversial proposal and would enable a commercial need to be met. The effects of redistributing this area into lower buildings is something that we are currently examining.

Lee Polisano is a partner in Kohn Pederson Fox



Top shows original built form in East Broomielaw with plan of Phases 1 & 2 of Glasgow & Oriental Development below. On the right is a perspective view of reworked scheme without tower block



# GLASGOW - A CAPITAL CITY

by John Worthington

We have heard a lot about the nuts and bolts of urban design and in my view urban design is all about process. I want to talk about that aspect which is looking from the other end of the telescope to try and put into context some of what was said about the detail of urban design.

What is the context that we are working in, and particularly in this discussion about Glasgow? We do have to think about some different perceptions. We have now got a whole different set of thoughts about Europe. I have called it "Capital Cities" and Glasgow in its European context. I mean by "Capital Cities" that cities now maybe more important than the country.

If you look up the definition of "capital", its something which is top of the pile. What I mean by "capital" is the place of excellence in something which suggests that we should begin to think in that way about our cities. What is Glasgow's role in the European context? What is it going to set itself to do excellently? Historically, what we have thought of as "capital" was the seat of power. Glasgow, dare I say, looked at Edinburgh and London. I'm sure all that's broken down now.

## SPECIALISATIONS

Europe, I think, is going to be made up of cities with these unique specialisations. If we look at Germany, it is very interesting because in the last war it had its capital wiped out and split up. What you have is a federation of states with places of excellence. Hamburg is the centre of trading; Munich is a centre for electronics and also the arts and culture; Berlin, although difficult to get to, is very much a place for students; Frankfurt is for finance and insurance; Cologne is for the media - television and newspapers; Dusseldorf is very much for fashion.

I think there is a model there that is probably post-1992, not just because of 1992 but because of ease of movement we are going to see the same situation within Europe. What I find very frightening when I sit in London is, that London isn't going to have it all its own way. London is still very much a part of the global scene but many things could be syphoned off from London. I think in the way we have been talking, a lot of people are getting their act together.

So, how do I see the competing cities. I think in Europe there will probably be four global beacons - London, Paris, Madrid and the last one, which is much more tentative, is Berlin. Now that the wall is down, its new role needs to be seen in terms of moving eastwards into the whole of eastern Europe and right through into Russia. I then believe there is going to be a whole bunch of capital cities.

These capital cities are interesting because a number of them are very distinct cities. A number of them are really creating their 'head of steam' by working together. The one we know best is in the Randstadt, Amsterdam, the Hague, Rotterdam, working extremely well with each city having its own identity but happily coming together to market themselves in a wider market place and also working extremely well in understanding how their different expertise relate one to another.

There is another example which I call 'The Riviera', the area based around Nice Airport. Other ones would be Lyons, Grenoble, the area up to Geneva and it is the development potential between those cities as much as in the cities themselves because of the firms that want to go there and the type of development they want to do which is perhaps lower density and larger buildings.

I see potentially a fourth one which covers the area from Glasgow through to Edinburgh. I know it causes absolute horror when one suggests that link but in this context, I see the strength in seeing that as one place.

## BREEDING SUCCESS

What might breed success? I would like to put five points down. Firstly and very importantly, is what I would call 'celebration of place'. Actually making great places and transmitting why they are good places. Some of those will obviously be great places because of their historical or natural qualities, others will be man-made developments which have raised them up. Essentially, that is something we can contribute very much to nurturing and enhancing that sense of place. That's one of our major roles. Glasgow is making huge strides in this, Milan has a wonderful thing about the 'city of sculpture' which was held over a summer of sculpture around the city.

The second which I think breeds success is providing the appropriate building stock. When I am talking about the appropriate stock, I think what is very important is to look at your city and understand the variety of firms that might want to settle here. If we are talking about the economic stock, have we got the whole range from small pieces of space, independent units to large spaces which will be appropriate for a multi-national firm.

The question I have in my mind is should that necessarily be in the city centre? It could well be up towards the airport and other places. A classic example here would be Paris, who very strongly said to themselves that they don't want to destroy the city centre. We want to retain the qualities, we want to keep the grain and we will put it out in places like La Défense.

That's a very positive point of view and then you put the infrastructure in to achieve it. I don't believe that demand for that sort of space goes away and I think the need is to analyse what is the variety of space required for work, events in terms of venue spaces, visitors in terms of hotel spaces and the whole range is absolutely critical.

## ACCESSIBILITY

The third thing I think is important is investing in accessibility. Accessibility isn't just rail and air - it is also the ability to get data around. The ones which are most interesting in Europe must be Frankfurt which has already put in place its huge new airport and similarly Munich and to see the impact on generating development. There I believe are two cities which are getting themselves in gear to be able to be extremely accessible and attract the airlines. That's going to be an important issue. Hopefully, Glasgow and Edinburgh are thinking a great deal about it.

Fourth would be retaining and attracting what I would call a lively and intelligent population. That is very much concentrated around the concern for the quality of your further education. That is what is attracting people into the city at the age when they can have an influence and probably stay. That is going to be a key component of the cities we are talking about.

The last one, I am going to call 'ownership of place - civic pride'. The feeling that people who are living in these cities want to do something about them, want to get involved in the cities and feel that it is their city. That is something we could well discuss more because my concern is, about all those agencies which are taking on the work, they will be the people who are doing it, but why should it not be the people who are living and working here. Where were they in this performance? They are going to be the 'real' people who are going to drive successful development.

**To sum up the role for Glasgow, it is what I would call an outer fringe to the centre. It is well connected particularly to second cities in terms of the links outwards. I think it is a place in which is now good to live and will be a place from which ideas will be exported. I see that increasingly happening as Glasgow becomes a place where people decide to settle.**

**I have tried to identify a context. Hopefully, it is useful in terms of thinking about the issues confronting Glasgow because all the time, we are pulled between talking about very local issues and very broad, international issues.**

**John Worthington is a director of DEGW and President of the Urban Design Group**

# GLASGOW IN THE 21ST CENTURY

by William Morton

**William Morton of the Scottish Development Agency describes his involvement in developing a strategy to increase Glasgow's international standing amongst cities in Europe.**

The SDA project has as its central role the development of a strategy for the future of Glasgow at metropolitan level. We set ourselves a Mission Statement. Effectively, it is to increase Glasgow's international competitiveness and secure the resources necessary to accelerate its development and prove its future standing amongst cities in Europe. We believe that there is an urgency in all of this because over 10-15 years after 1992, there is going to be a lot of things happening within Europe. Glasgow has a long way to go. There are a lot of cities which are already ahead of us and are starting to mobilise. They are looking for resources to fund their own development. We have actually got 10-15 years to make an impact. I will take you very briefly through each of these stages in terms of what we have been doing. In Europe at the moment, about 90% of the population live in cities, and about 50% live in what we would call larger cities (ie cities over 300,000 inhabitants). There will be some cities that will get their act together in the development process. They will succeed and will become, within their respective regions, the focal point of communications, cultural development, innovation and commerce. Others will fail. We don't want to be a city that fails.

## SDA AUDIT (1990) PRIMARY REFERENCE CITIES

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Milan      | 9. Naples      |
| 2. Hamburg    | 10. Manchester |
| 3. Amsterdam  | 11. Glasgow    |
| 4. Barcelona  | 12. Birmingham |
| 5. Lyon       | 13. Bremen     |
| 6. Marseilles | 14. Lille      |
| 7. Turin      | 15. Valencia   |
| 8. Antwerp    | 16. Essen      |

We identified Glasgow City Region as an area that gave us a city that was about a million population that was predominantly urban, that had a function, that was a non-capital city but was the focal point of a number of other activities that were very much of a regional significance within a European context.

So the Glasgow that we have actually defined is what we call the city's daily urban system. We looked at the way people move about, looked at the way people buy houses, how they shop and we have come up with a central Clydeside conurbation. It is effectively Glasgow and the eight districts which surround it.

We set out to find out what sort of quality of life that area offered at the moment - that was not easy. We decided that quality of life was an equation between economic factors and amenity factors. The economics would be things like influences on people and business prosperity, about income, growth of funds, productivity of workers and so on. We mean by amenities, not just the traditional narrow concept of amenity but the total environment. Amenities of our project range from people and property security, ease of mobility, health care, education, quality of the cultural environment and the quality of the environment itself. All we have done is audited Glasgow in 1990 choosing indicators that reflect that equation.

We have done it in such a way that we didn't just find out about Glasgow itself. We wanted Glasgow to be seen to be part of a network of cities with which we will compete and hopefully collaborate. We identified reference cities. A first group of primary reference cities such as Milan, Barcelona, Lyons, Marseille, Lille, Hamburg, Antwerp, Amsterdam. These are cities that we have to try to relate to, cities that are mobilising themselves.

A second group of reference cities include some North American examples. There are new techniques being applied and ways of organising change and funding it. There is a new wave of regeneration cities in the United States from Seattle to Indianapolis, from Dallas and Fort Worth to Tampa. We have tried to find out about these cities so that we can constructively do what they are doing, modify it and apply it here in Glasgow. The upshot of this exercise was to try and find out if there is a league table of cities that are especially going to succeed in Europe and where did Glasgow currently stand?

We examined Glasgow's amenity-economic profile which is a rather grand title for a graphic representation of the strengths and weaknesses in terms of the quality of life that we offer. It looks at though we are doing very well in terms of EC funding. That is actually bad news because that isn't opportunity driven, that's problem solving. That's not what we want to be identified with. Equally,

it does not look at though we are doing very well on housing in spite of a lot of change. That is a measure of the fact that the housing infrastructure within Glasgow is not being renewed and that is a symptom of a much more serious problem which is that we are not as dynamic as other cities in Europe.

We use that profile, not on a policy-perspective way, but to suggest areas that we might want to examine. The condition of Glasgow when translated into competing groups shows that in 1990 we are in 11th place. If we were going to succeed, we would need to be in the top half 15 years from now. Ideally, somewhere in the top 5. That's the competition we are up against.

We then had to decide how do you find out about tomorrow's Glasgow and how do you produce a vision, how do you project ahead and we decided that whatever we did on the basis of partnership, the vision had to be shared. We became involved in a consultation programme. Bear in mind that we have been at this for about 9 months and there were other things happening and we were very keen to make progress. What we did was we took representative samples of interest that this project might affect and represent the metropolitan diversity of the city.

We also thought it was important to take a wider view and we consulted many people in other places including a study visit programme where we started to build relationships with the cities that we are particularly interested in. We became involved in scenario planning to try and see where the global, economic, social and political trends are going to lead us. How does that affect Europe, how does that affect urban development and how might that affect Glasgow as part of the network of Euro-cities. But we also thought that it was important to identify Glasgow's strengths - we could do that because we had audited Glasgow. We knew what the other cities were doing. When you talked to other cities, you will find that they are all looking broadly at the same set of development opportunities in the years ahead.

We decided to structure a strategy which was based on these. Effectively you are talking about an international city. Glasgow at the moment I don't believe is an international city. I don't think just the airport will make us one. What we need to do is to internationalise the economy of Glasgow. We also discovered that the environment is of importance and a critical area for development and even the government recognises that. We see environment as having two themes with it. One is that you can actually 'green' the city and that would take us into things like comprehensively greening the city with a view to generating economic and social benefit and specifically to do something about the city centre environment. Much as it is good at the moment within a local context, it doesn't really bear comparison to our European counterparts. There is a long way to go in terms of the quality of the environment.

Glasgow is a creative city and by the end of 1990 the Year of Culture, there will be about 20,000 people employed in the cultural industries in Glasgow. We think that is an overt strength and is something that can drive the progress forward. So we want to do something about exporting a consolidated cultural face for the city within Europe. We are also a city of knowledge. It has been suggested that Glasgow has at one time taught the world and might do it again! We have excellent beacons within the higher educational sector in Glasgow. The problem at the moment is that neither do they exist corporately (they are all one off's), nor do they actually do anything for their host city in terms of being in any way tied to urban development.

A city needs good communications. You can only network if you are well-connected and at the moment, people think the priority is about improving physical infrastructure - roads, rail and air transport in order to move people and goods about. The most important thing in a post-industrial city is telecommunications and Glasgow is not connecting. It is inadequate in that term and we have to do something about that. You can't do any of this for Glasgow unless it is instilled with a fairly firm grasp of social justice. Glasgow has also got to be a good city and seen to be so by those who live here and those who might live here in the future.

So in trying to develop the strategy based on these themes, it is important to internationalise the process and aim to internationalise Glasgow. Don't just rely on the idea that you can generate indigenously. There is a lot of good experience going on elsewhere in the world, try and bolt that on to what we are doing. Again, networking with other cities is vital. We have 10-15 years to engineer a fairly significant shift in Glasgow's fortunes. We have got to invest in a state of the art process and good quality projects. If you don't do that and compromise then you are not going to achieve your objective. It has a lot to do with integration. We were looking at economic, environmental and cultural things, all with an equal billing. Glasgow has done quite well out of things like the Garden Festival and then the Year of Culture. If you can create these artificial development horizons, it does quite a lot in terms of pride and impetus to the process but it also helps you as you pass them as milestones to measure the attainment of the progress that you are seeking. It has a lot to do with marketing. You have got to tell people what you are trying to do and convince them that Glasgow is not just hoping to become an international city but has the basis to get there. We carried out a gap analysis to find out how Glasgow in 1990 related to how Glasgow would have to be in Year 2005. We found three things. There were areas where you needn't do anything about Glasgow - they were OK or couldn't do anything about Glasgow like its location or climate. There were other areas where we had the basic economic and amenity interest structure but for one reason or another it was under-

performing. There are much bigger gaps where our amenities are deficient altogether or the economy is somehow under-performing or is poorly structured. That is the quantum leap which this project has got to make to generate a much steeper incline in the development path. We have got to make things, that might have otherwise happened in 15 years, happen in 5.

So, once we have developed the themes we decided that the best way forward was if we were to break through and become a competitive European city, the leading edge of the strategy, we believe, is what we call "community-regenerating" projects. There might be one or two which relate back to each of those themes. The reason for the high profile demonstration projects is to act as catalysts. We would show that it is possible all on a very narrow critical path, you are actually discriminating in favour very much of a 'big chance' within the European development resource market. So these two regenerators, we believe, will actually take the metropolitan asset that adds value to the themes that were identified and allow us to make very rapid progress, to break through the professional competitiveness. Once we are in there in Europe you will probably have to work harder but you will get a smaller impact and a much bigger pay-off than you would in the United Kingdom. These resources once there are won, whether its capital or whether its populations doesn't really matter. They are then recycled within Glasgow and they fuel more broadly based, longer term development programmes and that in turn actually takes the metropolitan asset base and shifts it upwards like rungs on a ladder. That's where we come into the situation where we are no longer at the beginning and are talking about getting into the top half.

How is all this going to happen? The short answer to that is that at this point in time, we haven't thought about too deeply. That is where we are at the moment in terms of the development process. It would be much easier to answer these questions if we know what the key regenerative projects are. I'll let you know what some of them might be. For instance, the knowledge base. We think there is a way in what you can take the individual excellence that occurs and you can form a federation of that and what you will do is treble that student population. Glasgow will become a destination for higher, international, intellectual property, will be able to promote Glasgow as a place for institutional development, will become a location for technology-driven business. We might even become a location to form faculties of universities elsewhere. The cultural base that might be used in an international promotional commission which has an Arts sponsorship foundation attached to it.

When talking about the city in terms of the environment, we might talk about a comprehensive greening of the city. We might try and afforest the entire metropolitan area as well as greening the city centre. You

might talk about doing something to sponsor business opportunity where the economy can be green. Areas where process is either going to have to change because legislation dictates that it does or because of consumer demands that will make it happen.

At the end of the day, whatever happens we are going to need to add value to existing key players in the Glasgow regeneration game. We are going to need a partnership of the public and private sector working together. We are also going to have to look at resources. At the moment, the present government uses the business analogy. You have a metropolitan asset base, you have a management structure that brings forward a product, you market that in a competitive environment. You win a share of the development resources - that is the profit. You have to accumulate to speculate. There is a risk investment involved. So we will be able to go to government soon and say that the public sector exposure to risk here is going to be minimised because we have been able to demonstrate that the market mechanism driven by the private sector will fund a large part of this. That will range from commercial profit motivated investment through tax break mechanism, right through to the more creative end which is where they are very good in the United States in using levies, bonds and lotteries. This organisation, whatever it is in its final set-up, will be overseeing the overall regeneration project but will also husband a 'common good' fund which will be used to lubricate the funding process so that these key projects can be brought forward. It is very much about being a project champion for Glasgow and for Scotland.

**Lastly, what is all this for? There are two answers to that. The negative one, if we don't bother Glasgow will deteriorate and will not be able to make use of the assets that we have effectively. The positive answer is that if we become a more successful, more vital city, we would become an area offering a better quality of life within Europe. We will get investment. Glasgow's economy will grow. We will also be able to change the population base. Not in the sense that we would set ourselves idiotic objectives like stemming the inflow population by X% or even trying to increase the population of Glasgow. If you make Glasgow more attractive, hopefully more people will find a need to stay here because that's what they want. Everything they require in life will be on offer in Glasgow and because Glasgow is more competitive in Europe, maybe more people from elsewhere in Europe will come to Glasgow, maybe it will become a more cosmopolitan city. It is about status. Status in image terms but also status in real terms. We are eleventh at the moment. We want to be some place in the top five.**

# POSTSCRIPT

by Brian Edwards

The discussion periods at the forum raised such issues as the qualities that real cities possess, what the essential elements of Glasgow's character are and whether there was a conflict between Glasgow retaining its culture and seeking to be a world ranked city. It was felt that cities need to be alive at night which means that uses should be mixed and not be rigorously segregated. The over pedestrianisation of streets should be avoided and pedestrian malls should not be located to remove activity from adjacent streets.

The philosophy of the Merchant City area responded to the character of that part of the City Centre despite there being no overall plan for the area. By contrast the Broomielaw area was affected by the lack of City Council land ownership and some future ideas seemed to bear little relationship to the cultural tradition of the rectilinear grid and sandstone fabric of the city.

Glasgow's culture is important to Glasgow as well as to Europe and it would be a loss if the pursuit of European status destroyed its essential characteristics.

Brian Edwards of the Urban Design Unit at the University of Strathclyde ends this review of the Glasgow Forum with his own impressions.

Two personalities stole the limelight at the Glasgow conference, David Mackay of Martorell, Bohigas and Mackay and Professor Isi Metzstein.

More than a hundred delegates met in Glasgow to explore the interface between culture and urban design. Only Mackay and Metzstein addressed the central theme with any enthusiasm, the remaining speakers described their involvement with the city in a way which assumed that urban design was automatically part of a city's culture.

Lee Polisano of Kohn Pederson Fox presented the practice's Broomielaw proposals which emphasised the transatlantic thinking behind their riverside scheme. Culture here was global and dealt with both the internationalism of architectural image, and the dictates of financial institutions.

For Polisano, good urban design for the modern office developer, whether at Canary Wharf or Glasgow's Broomielaw, concerned rather more issues of massing than detail: Context he said, should moderate buildings near the ground, but buildings can break skyline rules as long as their tops were interesting. As for 'culture' one felt that this was bred within the first-class cabin of jumbo jets, rather than in the streets of Glasgow.

Ben Thompson, another air streamed US performer, gave us a three screen tape/slide show of urban image and a talk which suggested his lecture notes had been left in Boston. The Celts in the audience pressed at question time for a definition of local culture, and called for an architecture inspired by 'genius loci'. Glasgow's tag as Europe's City of Culture is largely the result of a wild, alien Celtic tradition in the arts and theatre - how, one questioner asked, does this influence urban design?

Without using the high-flown terms of the American speakers, David Page (of Page & Park) quietly and modestly outlined his involvement with the city through the remodelling of Cathedral Square. Page talked of his involvement with local artists and craftsmen, of the exploration of local conditions and patterns of change, of an urban design which grew out of the sandstone and grain of the city. It was like hearing the manager of Partick Thistle describing his game plan, as against that of the New York Jets.

David Mackay was the first speaker to make the weekend memorable. He likened Glasgow to Liverpool and Barcelona (he had to, didn't he). Glasgow was the first real city he ever experienced and he liked it because it wasn't concerned with the artificiality of government. Mackay described Glasgow as pragmatic, with a strong sense of identity and an ugliness he finds fascinating. He said perception of Glasgow in his adopted home city of Barcelona focused too much upon Mackintosh (as Gaudi dominates his own city), yet the city had much more to offer.

Mackay enjoyed being the conference's urban philosopher and set it upon a cultural path, not always followed. He thought the new life of Europe was being acted out in her cities - modern Europe was a culture of cities

not of countries, and the most interesting were not the capital cities but the big non-government ones such as Milan, Frankfurt, Barcelona and, of course, Glasgow.

Mackay talked of the political culture of cities, of a Catalan identity and by implication of the importance of such things to Glasgow.

Metzstein, in his after-dinner talk at the sumptuous Hutcheson's Hall, picked up several of Mackay's points. With regard to the great European tradition, he was asked whether Glasgow was truly a city, or whether it was just a large town in search of a post-industrial identity. He elaborated: Would Glasgow become a city if it were twinned with Edinburgh - then Glasgow would be Edinburgh's west end, and Edinburgh Glasgow's financial centre. He described planners as having the minimum of understanding of urban design and the maximum of influence. The tendency of planners in the post-war period to abstract and disaggregate the city had led to many of today's problems.

Metzstein wanted to go back to 1910 when Glasgow nearly became a city, but then aborted to become merely a shipbuilding camp with a good tram service. To him, Glasgow was essentially a grid-iron city, minimally centralised with the cathedral in the wrong place, and the gaps fast drowning in hardboard. And if one must have a riverside skyscraper (as proposed by KPF) why shouldn't this be designed by competition - or at least we could rebuild the Tait Tower. If Barcelona has used the Olympics to regenerate the city, then Metzstein suggested that Glasgow should host the next World Cup.

How can a city with a democratic grid create a string of pearls of attractions based upon urban spaces and distinctive buildings? Can the grid accommodate spatial hierarchy? Is the grid in fact part of Glasgow's urban culture, and how can a grid based upon the development priorities of the 19th century meet those of the 21st?

Mackay proposed the germs of a solution: extend the central grid outwards modifying its dimensions if needed, but then parcel up the urban block into separate parts which gives each architect the responsibility for the design of the corner as well as a length of wall. Once the corners are in place then you can infill with impunity. As the block corners become the prestige location, Mackay's system undermines the tendency to close streets and form bigger units.

With so many factors tending to internationalise or at least standardise Glasgow, not least the use of international firms of designers and ubiquitous marketing techniques, the distinctiveness of the city is under threat. As Europe's centre of gravity moves further south and east, Glasgow is tending to become ever more peripheral. To maintain its attraction, the city must preserve its urban character, its traditions and Celtic dimension.

Brian Edwards' review was originally included in *Building Design*.

# URBAN EDGES

5TH CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN URBAN DESIGN HELD IN GLASGOW, 26-28 SEPTEMBER 1990

**Hildebrand Frey describes some of the conclusions from this conference organised by the Urban Design Studies Unit at the University of Strathclyde**

Three related issues of particular importance were highlighted at the conference: today's structure of the city and the problems resulting from it; the transformation of this structure as a means to solve some of the problems; and the new methodologies required to carry out effectively this transformation of the urban structure.

## TODAY'S STRUCTURE OF THE CITY

Edges and boundaries have been used throughout the history of urban development in the attempt to create 'order', in particular to define what is on the one or the other side of an edge and inside or outside an urban boundary. However, as human behaviour and sophisticated societies with their subtle social organisation do not necessarily manifest themselves in a spatial organisation of equivalent refinement and rigour, the created 'order' becomes often a strait-jacket of society. Not astonishingly, the creation of an urban world inside a boundary generated without delay creation of an urban world outside the same boundary. Urban development without such development 'extra muros' is therefore an idealistic concept proven unattainable in reality.

Urbanisation can therefore be described as the continuous process of urban development to an extent that today clear outer edges cannot be found in most of our urban agglomerations. There are, however, fundamental differences between past and present patterns of growth and emerging urban structures. In the past urban growth generated new urban areas which in density, mixture of uses and form were relatively similar to the core that was expanded, thus maintaining urban continuity. Recent and contemporary urban growth has lost urban continuity and is responsible for a highly dense and specialised urban core and sprawling low-density and often mono-functional suburbs.

The disadvantages of the structure of contemporary cities are fairly obvious. The central areas become increasingly inaccessible, their environmental quality deteriorates more and more and, due to development pressure, much of the historical substance is replaced by more 'appropriate' urban fabric leading to the gradual loss of identity of the core. The concentration of specific functions, in particular of retail and commerce, in the core increases traffic density between periphery and centre, stressing people, wasting energy, damaging the environment and causing health problems. The continuous

sprawl of monotonous suburbs requires larger and larger and therefore more expensive and less cost effective networks of infrastructure and public transport which have long started to fall behind the required standard. Clearly, such urban development is self destructive.

## TRANSFORMING THE STRUCTURE

Many speakers at the conference agreed that the contemporary city is no longer a homogeneous entity with continuity of urban fabric, density and mixture of uses, but an 'agglomeration of districts' many of which lack real urban quality which has largely become the prerogative of the core and is even there being eroded. The worst aspects of this city is the dualism and inequity between central and peripheral districts.

Several papers reminded the delegates that there are cities within which the increasing inaccessibility of the urban core has led central functions to look for alternative locations in suburban areas with more readily available and cheaper land, a healthier environment, better traffic conditions, and closer proximity to living areas.

The relocation of uses, and with it the creation of 'suburban centres' is basically a process of decentralisation of the city and can be considered as a model or urban transformation that could help solve some if not many of our present-day urban problems. Rather than continuing the concentration of retail and commerce and other central functions in the historical core and generate all the problems of transport, pollution, stress, health and locational and social inequities between core and expanding periphery, their location in other urban areas would help to give individual districts a clearer urban quality by generating 'district cores' with a mixture of commerce, retail, manufacturing and administration close to living. In turn this decentralisation would cause the historical core to become inhabitable and enjoyable again.

But beyond the urbanisation of mono-use areas and dormitory places and the improvement of the environmental quality of both the city centre and the suburbs, the transformation of today's mono-core city into a multi-core city, an agglomeration of 'towns in their own right', would help to diffuse traffic, enable the development of a feasible infrastructure and public transport system linking districts with districts rather than 'nowhere' with a rather distant 'city centre'.

With this transformation of the city, the idea of 'urban edges' gets a new dimension. If presently urban edges are generally interpreted as the outer edges of the city, its boundaries, and the inner edges generated by railway structures, road systems, and rivers and the like, urban edges could in the 'decentralised city' be elements giving individual districts identity and spatial definition. Suggestions were put forward at the conference that green spaces between different urban areas rather than at the periphery of the city would have much higher use value because of the proximity of living and working. Such 'edges' between commu-

nities would not be enclosing boundaries but linking spaces between districts with a multiplicity of specific functions from recreation and gardening to public parks and cultural facilities. Needless to say that housing along such 'green edges' would provide a particularly high quality of living which could be shared by many.

## NEW METHODOLOGIES

Such urban transformation cannot be achieved through separate contributions of individuals but requires co-ordinated actions of all those involved and interested in urban development. This in turn necessitates what one speaker called the transgression of 'non tangible edges' and with it a new planning and design approach.

The split of professional responsibilities as a reaction to the complexity of cities and their structures causes us to think separately of green spaces, buildings, road systems, infrastructure, public transport systems, as if none of these elements of the city had any influence on, or was ever influenced by, any of the other elements. The inability, or even unwillingness, to see the complex interaction and interrelationship of elements of the physical city is responsible for the fact that they are largely planned and designed without a co-ordinating framework and fail therefore to generate an overall coherent urban environment.

To improve the city's structure and overall quality, it is vital to transgress the damaging boundaries of 'professional responsibilities'. Their isolation prevents concerted action which alone achieve could a coherent urban environment in which all parts reinforce each other. And as urban development concerns all users of the city, not only those behind the development or responsible for its control, urban transformation must become a democratic process in which all city users participate. Professional co-operation and participation of the public, however, require new planning, design and control methods and procedures which need to be developed as a matter of urgency.

It seems to me that at the conference the analysis of today's city structure, and of the problems it generates, led to a model of urban transformation that might help to eliminate at least some of the most stringent urban problems we are confronted with today. Maybe the model is simplistic, but it may promote further research and counter arguments which may lead to alternative models. Both the enhancement of the present model or its rejection and replacement by alternative models would contribute to the enhancement of the urban cause. This for me is the modest success of the conference.

**Conference papers will be published by the International Centre for Studies in Urban Design at Florence in the future. For more information please contact Hildebrand Frey at University of Strathclyde, Dept. of Architecture and Building Science, Urban Design Studies Unit, 131 Rottenrow, Glasgow, G4 ONG.**

# AGM DEBATE

SHOULD THE UDG CONTINUE AS AN OPEN FORUM OR BECOME A PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTE?

The 1990 Annual General Meeting was held on 24 May and after the normal business was complete a debate was held to discuss the following alternative propositions:-

1. The Urban Design Group must remain a forum for diverse issues, views and persons or interests without any limitation of access and needs a strategy to meet this objective within a two year period.
2. The Urban Design Group should change its structure so that it becomes a professional institution with limited access, on the basis of education, training and professional experience. The standards of performance are to be established within a two year period.

Nicholas Falk opened the discussion and he was followed by Jon Rowland. Richard Anderson then spoke followed by a number of speakers from the floor. The contributions by Nicholas Falk and Jon Rowland are included in this issue. It is hoped that members who were not able to be at the meeting (and those who were) will send in their views on the issue of whether the Urban Design Group should remain a forum or develop into a professional institute.

## NICHOLAS FALK

The issue we are debating is whether the Urban Design Group should try to turn itself into a professional institute, which would involve seeking to influence and control the people who plan public spaces, through some form of restricted membership.

Sooner or later as any group grows it tries to professionalise itself, to raise barriers to entry and seek a monopoly of power. Bernard Shaw saw this clearly when he called a profession a 'conspiracy against the laity'. The motives are always respectable; to raise standards, to foster education and training, to protect the public. But the results are far from being altogether beneficial. Instead of a healthy debate about what should be done, the various professionals either cower to each other's field of expertise, or fight out ancient battles about which profession should have primacy.

Clemenceau said war is far too important to leave to the generals, and the same may be said about architects in connection with the future of our major towns and cities. Racked with change and uncertainty, and divided by conflict and privilege, many areas resemble a kind of 'no man's land' over which different factions fight. Over the past 15 or 20 years, through research, consultancy and direct action I have tried to establish who and what causes areas to rise or decline, and who or what is responsible for all the blunders. My only certain conclusion is that there is no single villain, and therefore no easy answer.

Instead of looking for the answer in patrons, or particular architects, we surely need to transform the process by which we identify development and improvement opportunities, and orchestrate the different actors so that something harmonious results with which most people are satisfied. This it seems to be is the challenge of urban design, and it is a task that one cannot learn at any college, or practice by joining any profession. Instead, rather like wisdom, which it closely resembles, the skills are acquired by years of living and working in cities, and engaging in trying to manage their problems.

To professionalise urban design would be rather like expecting a school for orchestra conductors or directors to improve the quality of music or the theatre. Of course we need to study and recognise what is done well or badly, but should not assume that anyone has the right to adjudicate. As someone who studied as an economist, (and who knows the dangers of looking to economists to tackle the problems of the British economy) I would hope that urban design can remain an art, and avoid the dangers of becoming a pseudo science. Equally I am sceptical to looking to any self-styled group of experts providing answers to complex problems.

But this does not mean that the Urban Design group should be complacent. Its strength lies both in its large and multi-disciplinary membership and the general disillusionment or distrust of the existing professions, (reflected in some of the sterile debates about architecture.) Though architects may be responsible for putting up

buildings, I would suggest that public criticism is aimed primarily at the places or spaces in between. Nowhere is this more important than in London's equivalents of what Mitterand calls his 'grands projets'. We have them too; they are the areas around the main railway stations, and the new shopping centres and cultural complexes that are still unresolved. There are also the public areas that are increasingly rejected, like the South Bank or Wood Green shopping centre. I feel that in drawing up a strategy for the Urban Design Group we should put the spotlight on these areas, and contrast with what is there or proposed with what is possible, drawing on experience from throughout the world (and not just the U.S.A.)

The innovations that John Worthington has proposed provide the first crucial elements. The essence is a distinct style or process for looking at places, using the Urban Design Action Team method, a kind of intellectual blitzkrieg. A guide to good places, hopefully indexed on many dimensions, could set a standard, and ensure that we recognise achievement and encourage a concern for quality or excellence. But I think we could go further. One way would be to make the magazine more widely available, and to use it to record not only what has been achieved but how. This could be done by a merger with another magazine, such as Built Environment. I would also urge us to go beyond describing and analysing what has been achieved to promoting a campaign for better urban design; a good way would be through joining with other organisations to sponsor and organise competitions and awards, and perhaps 'waterfront' development could provide a starting point. The third party of my strategy would be to encourage the introduction of post experience, 'action learning' oriented courses on urban project management, that will introduce new ways of thinking to those on the urban front line. This is essential to raising the sights of those engaged in urban battles, and would include for example preparing guidelines and illustrations on how to produce effective planning briefs. Finally, and must less predictable, perhaps the Urban Design Group could add its voice to a campaign to set up the London equivalent of the Pavilion de l'Arsenal, a permanent exhibition on the changing face of the city, starting with an event to focus attention on the missed opportunities, and muddled processes for managing urban change. This might eventually lead to 'some kind of' urban design centre, as others have proposed.

So what should be the 'model' on vision for the Urban Design Group. Rather than an inferior profession, I see it as a convivial association. We should be campaigning on a few issues, with demonstration projects (like the Town and Country Planning Association, Friends of the Earth perhaps). But above all we should continue to run ourselves as a voluntary association but this should not stop us from paying a part-time secretary to lessen the burden on the committee, and to make the most of the Group's rich and varied membership.

## JON ROWLAND

I've been asked to put forward the proposition that the Urban Design Group becomes a professional institution, one that sets out the levels of education, training, and professional experience.

Like any consultant the first thing I have done is to question the brief. I have looked at the definition of 'institution' in the OED. ~An institution is an establishment in cure of souls~ - something all professionals obviously need. Sounds like a watering hole. It is also ~an organisation for the promotion of some public object~. I stress the work public and I am taking this definition as my cue for this evening.

What I'm presenting here, therefore, is not a new private club, but something that has grown out of the logic of the situation as I see it. I am proposing a new form of institution based on a community of interest. I hope that this is what Leon Krier would call ~a good plan both of a formal and moral nature...~

I think it necessary for the group to look at this option - because it suggests a different level of commitment and a longer term perspective to which the group can aim.

### AGENDA

First I'd like to run through a bit of background and talk about some of the key issues and objectives that I consider the UDG needs to address. Then I will put forward some of the benefits that could accrue from a move towards institutionalisation. I'd like to explore with you what sort of institution it could be and what will it could do. I will then look in more detail at the functions that this new institution could perform.

### BACKGROUND

The UDG is an interesting organisation. It derives its membership from a broad spectrum of professionals and interested parties who are either involved in, or interested in, the whole question of urban design. It is a community of concern. This multi disciplinary membership comprises architects, developers, landscapers, journalists, surveyors, engineers, planners and Universities and institutions such as the Civic Trust and even solicitors. This is a great richness of experience.

The UDG has recently experienced unprecedented growth. The current membership numbers 850. Two years ago it was growing at 3% a year. It has increased 13% over the last year and it now has more members than the Landscape Institute. The rate of growth shows no sign of abating and this is creating a whole new set of problems. Clearly the nature of the Group must change just to accommodate growth.

### KEY ISSUES

There are a number of key issues that I see arise out of this success. Perhaps they can be seen as short and long term issues. The short term issues are related to management and

administration. The UDG has relied in the past on the goodwill of a number of practices and individuals. This can't go on. Is a management structure with a secretariat required?

The longer term issues are related to the role of the UDG in the future and how it sees its role developing, and changing over the next ten years. What will UDG 2000 be like? Let's deal with the immediate issues of management and administration. The UDG currently organises itself around a few London practices. Subscription pays for basic running costs, but the structure of UDG relies on a small number of people. Is it fair for this to continue? What can replace it?

I think that one objective we should have in mind is that the short term management problem should be part of a longer term strategy for the growth of the UDG. In other words, if we deal with the short term issue of ensuring that the UDG can continue functioning administratively alone, without a business plan for the future, we will end up with a mish-mash of adhocery with odd bits of organisation being continually added to an initial unsatisfactory situation because no clear thought has been given to the future. A sort of Heathrow solution when we need a Charles de Gaulle approach.

In looking at how the administration can be improved and the burden relieved, I believe that the UDG should be considering a neutral location to operate from, with its own secretarial and management staff. But this already implies a different sort of organisation from the UDG we know and love today.

### OBJECTIVES

I'd now like to test some objectives for this business plan with you, and look at some of the possible benefits. What should the UDG 2000 be like. I think there are two basic roles that can be considered.

1. An information exchange which is networked and which operates at a local level. A continuation of the existing situation but tuned to greater numbers and perhaps greater involvement.

2. A group that is a centre player in the environmental design arena into the next decade, setting the agenda for a better urban and rural settlement.

The UDG is the sum of its members - so do we want to be this centre player? If we do - what is the best way of getting there? I submit that this is the direction that the UDG should take. If we don't then I suspect that the UDG we will keep, will be an undirected group. I suspect the prognosis could be:

- that we would become an unwieldy organisation continuing to rely on too much good will from small groups of people.
- that the UDG would not have the political clout to influence environmental issues in any major way because of its diffuseness.
- that it would be marginalised, as other existing institutions better placed to operate in the political arena step into the scene - and I think here of the RICS, RIBA RTPI

- and that the community of interest will gradually wither as these other organisations take over.

The more pro-active strategy will be to take on this central role in the Environmental Design arena. In broad terms I think that this role will be mainly:-

In the field of Public awareness to help coordinate the interest currently shown in UD and promote it in a major way to local communities, industry, politicians, professionals.

In the field of Legislation to input into environmental legislation - not only in an advisory capacity, such as assisting the integration of European directives into existing or new regulations - but also actively lobbying for recognised quality control.

As a support mechanism to provide assistance to local authorities, communities and industry in critical areas of environmental decision making.

### BENEFITS

What are the benefits that accrue from this central role?

In Public Awareness this means providing the basis for generating a more informed and aware background around which decisions regarding design and environment can be properly taken.

We are all aware of the paucity of information and education on environmental design in this country. Our schools are only just touching the subject. Our design professionals are too bound by their Institutes' narrowness. Our politicians and those charged with deciding the nature of our environment are not aware of or not able to work within what you might call the 'ecology of the design environment'.

If this situation were improved it would be a major benefit. Another benefit is better legislation. Here I see the benefit of a central role for the UDG being the emergence of a new sort of environmental framework against which development can be judged. At one level a form of Environmental Impact Framework drawing on the provisions of section 22 of the Euro-legislation, and at another an Environmental/Urban Design Framework for areas in critical environmental and design contexts. This is not the local or structure plan as we know it, but more a series of design frameworks dealing with capacity, volume, form, landscape, access, in a three dimensional mode.

Recent urban design commissions all show the need for this form of overview. I believe the UDG and its members are best placed to define, propose, and assist in generating such legislation.

This brings us to the third benefit I see arising out of a major role - Quality. A Better Environment would be the result of development and design being viewed in a more holistic or relevant way than currently - not as tack-on, so that if you're lucky you end up with good design - but as something more intrinsic that can be built into the basic decision making machinery associated with

design in our environment. We could move from the generally negative and cumbersome local plan or development control procedures to more dynamic support mechanisms.

Such pro-active mechanisms could carry the UDG seal of good housekeeping - rather as NHBC, Medallion, 'Which', or Green consumers guide provides its accolade to recommended products which meet a range of specified criteria. An ozone friendly design solution!

Quality of environment needs to be recognised and codes of practice can play a major part in establishing the criteria for environmental evaluation. Providing something like certification means addressing these criteria. The benefit of the UDG growing into an institution means these whole aspects of quality control can be addressed.

I'd like to return to these issues later when I talk about the roles of an institution in more detail.

## THE UDG INSTITUTION

What I'd like to do now is explore how a new institution can come about without losing the richness and diversity of the current membership. I think it's vital that this mixture continues and contributes - because otherwise we end up with mono-cultures of architects, or engineers, or planners, and the built environment is too important to continue to be left to such directed interests.

If we look at the nature of the membership there are those people who are interested in ideas, in information, in going to lectures and so on; There are also those who are prepared to get stuck in and do battle on behalf of urban design. Our past chairpersons and presidents have all pushed the UDG forward. So our new institution has to cater for a multi-professional constituency which comprises a group of activists and a large community of interest.

I think that to cope with this situation we need to design a new sort of institution. I've been looking for models and have found it very difficult to find any. All I can conceive of is something which would resemble a cross between Friends of the Earth the Architectural Association, and the professional institutes as we know them.

The FoE has members and practitioners - people who suggest and contribute and people who do - who make this happen. The AA has both its institutional environment and educational base. The new institute would also operate at two levels - members and practitioners. It would not be involved just in Urban Design - after all we carry out Urban Design projects and Rural Design projects - but would draw on the experience of its cross-cultural membership and be involved in all aspects of design in the built environment. It would be what Charles Jencks calls 'a form of radical eclecticism which mixes these elements within one building'.

The new institution could be called the Environmental Design Association. The EDA would be unlike other institutes in that because of its diverse membership, it would

be geared to protecting the interests of the built environment and not the interests of a single profession.

## THE ROLE OF THE EDA

I'm now going to look at the Role of the EDA and suggest in more detail how it could function in the 3 main areas that I considered are crucial to the strategy - public awareness, legislation and support.

### Public Awareness

Lets look at the whole question of public awareness. It seems to me there are three main areas of awareness that need to be tackled - improving the awareness of the general public in urban and environmental design; improving the awareness of those who take decisions about our environment; and, improving professional education and training.

Raising the profile of urban design is happening. But it is still an area where a lot has to be done. Few magazines have a section set aside for urban design. The media is only just getting to grips with architecture.

We need a strong body if we are to shape the way people will start to think about their surroundings. We need to engender an understanding of quality, scale, volume, proportion, uses, levels of development, environmental impact, energy resourcing, and so on. This means successful media coverage, discussions with industry, local authorities, developers, environmental professionals and above all government. Its about getting messages across.

This area of public awareness offers many of the diverse interest groups currently involved with UDG an opportunity to contribute. But to do this without a basic strategy or in an unorchestrated manner seems to be typical of the British love of amateurism.

We know it cannot be done through the existing professional institutes. The RIBA and RTPI are afraid of opening up their professional doors. Cross disciplinary discussions are considered threatening. But an Environmental Design Association would be able to bring a rounded voice (with no vested interests) to the arena.

I mentioned amateurism. Nick quoted Bernard Shaw's view that all professionals are conspiracies against the laity. Nice if it were true. I think both parties hold each other in mutual dread. We bemoan the state of our built environment, but much of that is in the hands of our local politicians, who are amateurs. Now I'm not saying that professionals are better placed. What I am saying is that better training and education in environmental design would make our decision makers more aware and better able to respond to change and development in the environment. After all our magistrates have to go on courses through the Law Society to be able to dispense justice. Why shouldn't our planning committees have to go on courses to ensure that they help dispense design quality?

To quote David Gosling:

*"they say that for urban design to be successful the effort is as important as the product, that it must examine all elements of the community, that it must be interdisciplinary and not the work of a single profession and, above all there must be citizen participation. If public private partnership in urban design is to work, Government and community must mutually understand the development process and how to make it operate in the best public interest."*

The EDA would be the best placed group to provide these courses and qualifications or certificates because of its broad perspective. This is a very important role and one that needs to be urgently addressed.

### Improving professional education

Finally there is the need to improve the education and training of the design professionals. The current debate on the fiscal review of education in the environmental and design areas in the light of European harmonisation comes at an opportune time for the UDG. The shock and horror of the architectural profession to the idea that architects could be qualified after only four years needs to be set against a more radical idea about education in environmental matters. Perhaps there is much to be said for a completely different and fundamental change in the way we view environmental design - not in slices of environment relating to categories of profession, but in overall understanding. For instance we have interviewed for our practice many planners who are applying for urban design posts having been through an urban design course. Planners' education is essentially two dimensional and broadly negative, in that much of the course centres on development control rather than positive planning. You can have an urban design credit to a planning course and you will get a better awareness of the built environment. You will not get designers. We have also interviewed architects. Their education is much more three dimensional but often too myopic in context. The site is still the generator, and too often the grain of the area the architect is working in, is ignored. He finds it difficult to work at a large scale.

As Rob Krier says "*planning and design is a craft*", so instead of thinking of urban or environmental design, as a post graduate tack-on, let's treat environmental design as the core element of any coursework for professions involved in the environment. All proto-architects, planners, landscapers and transport engineers would have to go through a designated course before entering a post graduate course majoring in architecture or planning or transport engineering and so on. A common grounding can only be positive.

I do not think this will be possible through the recognised channels of the RIBA or the RTPI or other existing institutions because of their particular concerns. Our new institution, the Environmental Design Association, would be in the forefront of encouraging such changes in the way we view our professional training.

## LEGISLATION

It seems to me that there are three areas where only an institution such as an EDA can bring to bear the necessary pressure to change legislation for the built environment.

- Generation of codes of good practice
- Environment Certification
- Establishment of Environmental Design Frameworks.

### Codes of good practice

Urban and rural design is seen as a relatively new field of professional work, involved in the blurred area between two dimensional planning and the piece of architecture. Local authorities, developers and many professionals are not versed in the vocabulary of urban design concepts, streetscape, landscape or traffic calming. An Environmental Design Association is best positioned to bring together the disparate elements of the different professions to provide a series of design codes of good practice.

### Environmental Certification

The corollary of this would be the idea of design registration. Currently architects can certify buildings whether designed by themselves or others. This is an idea that needs to be considered - especially in the light of the European directives associated with Environmental Impact Assessments. To ensure good quality development both in context and design the EDA could be responsible for an environmental design registration and certificate scheme, that responds to our needs to raise the standard and quality of our built environment.

Such a certification system could start soon, with the UDG giving environmental design certification to a range of projects and the seal of good housekeeping to examples of a good practice.

### The Environmental Design Framework

Finally I see the role of this new institution as promoting the requirement for urban design frameworks. New forms of legislation are needed for areas deemed to be environmentally critical that have to respond to development or regeneration pressures - town centre sites, conservation areas, brown or greenfield development, and so on. An Environmental Design Statement on any major new development could help define the form, use, scale and design and direction of development. This is not a planning exercise but one that would look at development in a landscape whether urban or rural.

A lot of recent commissions involve providing local authorities, Development Corporations, and private clients, with urban or environmental design frameworks. Too often the Local Plan system fails in its appreciation of the 'ecology of development' that can affect, say, a town centre. The local

plan formula indicates a broad two dimensional view of development opportunities - what is required is a means of translating these into a three dimensional appreciation of such aspects as capacity, scale, volume, landscape, use, access and traffic management against which development can be judged - and which in fact can be used by local authorities in a positive manner to generate interest and investment into their area.

At present this whole area of design frameworks, and design briefs is missing from our development process. Because of its multi-disciplinary membership I see the new institute as the vehicle for pressing government for this form of legislation, establishing the guidelines and assisting in the way frameworks could be drawn up for these environmentally critical areas.

### Support

Another major role for the new institute would be support and assistance to local authorities and developers.

This I see happening in two ways:

- acting as a clearing house when cries of help come from beleaguered areas, identifying needs, and matching skills with these needs.

- activating environmental design hit teams to provide support or assistance to those who require it.

These are dynamic mechanisms which build on the brainstorming form of design. The RUDAT form of support is an example of charetting in the US. In this country, there have been occasional workshops to deal with the pressure of development in critical areas. The recent example at Haringey has been reported in the press. This form of catalytic intervention is a type of interactive design our practice uses successfully. It allows a multi-disciplinary approach to establishing issues and set its design agenda and it can include a range of ideas people who are not necessarily professional - and that is its strength. It therefore provides the diverse membership of the new institute the opportunity to be involved in the generation of such design frameworks.

### SUMMARY

I hope you have followed how I see the logic of a new sort of institute. Perhaps I should summarise.

- The UDG has reached a watershed. It has to change.
- Any movement towards improving and enlarging, the management or administration puts the UDG on the road to some form of more formalised organisation.
- The decision to move along any management change needs to be taken with a long term view of where the UDG wants to be at the end of the century.
- One view is for the UDG to be a central player in the environmental agenda with roles in education, legislation and support.

- To be such a player requires depth, commitment, and the sort of robustness that an institution can give.

- But this needs to be a new sort of institution that builds on its diversity of membership, that operates at different levels of supporters and practitioners.

- Such an institution would not only be involved in urban design, but rural design and design in the built environment and it might attract a wider constituency if it became the Environment Design Association.

- Our new institution would be able to pressure for change in legislation affecting environmental design, draw up codes of good practice, certify projects. It could also act as a vehicle for assisting local authorities and others to generate design frameworks for critical sites.

- Our new institution could also provide the basis for a radical change in the way professionals and laity are educated in environmental design.

- The existing professional institutions cannot do this as they are too locked into their own interests and don't have the broad base of support that the UDG has and an Environmental Design Association would have.

- Some of the benefits of going this route will be tangible such as better public awareness and better environment. Some benefits may be more intangible namely less dabbling by UDG members and a new commitment to make things happen.

### CONCLUSION

As you can see from this view of the role of the new institution none of the ingredients of what I'm suggesting is particularly new, but there is a need to see them in a coherent way - pulling together the disparate professional elements to provide a strategic and long term way forward for the UDG. At the turn of the century the UDG will have had to have changed to survive. An institutional approach can bring together the diversity of membership and a series of environmental goals. At an ultimate level the new Environmental Design Association could even become an umbrella organisation to which the other professional institutes would belong - which could help break the professional barriers, opening up membership and avoid the conflicts that continue to mar our approach to the built environment.

So what to do next. This evening you've heard a couple of ideas as to the way forward. It seems to me that this is an immensely important subject that needs careful thought. I'd suggest further discussion and perhaps a series of groups, who embrace the range of memberships to work together to put forward a preferred strategy for the UDG 2000.

**Jon Rowland is a Director of Llewelyn-Davies Planning and a member of the UDG Committee.**

**Nicholas Falk is a Director of URBED, Urban and Economic Development Consultants**



## STUDY TOUR OF HANSEATIC TOWNS May 1990 by Alan Stones

The Hanseatic League was a great trading association of North German towns during the Middle Ages. Not only did its success enable it to play an important role in European history, but its prosperity shaped the form of the towns themselves during the early period of their growth shortly after their foundation.

Typically, the towns were founded by German lords to consolidate their conquest of slav territory in the 12th century. The introduction of German town laws created favourable conditions for mercantile growth, and the incoming merchants found it advantageous to band together for trading and political purposes. An exception to this pattern was the founding of towns by the Teutonic Order of Knights along the Vistula valley in the east of the Hanseatic area, but the Teutonic Order itself became a member of the Hanseatic League.

Being 'planted' towns, many of them feature regular grid plans, though a distinctive regional characteristic is the proportion of multi-nuclear settlements. The townscape is dominated by austere brick architecture influenced by the Low Countries, by wide streets, and by huge churches. The town hall was the most important building. The cathedral was relatively unimportant compared with the merchants' church, of which the most imposing example is the Marienkirche at Lubeck, which had a significant influence on many churches in other Hanseatic towns further east. Similarly, Lubeck's town hall served as a model for others further east, and is characterized by tall, fretwork blind facades. Guild houses, such as the Artushof in Danzig and gate towers, such as the Holstentor in Lubeck, are other characteristic survivals.

The typical Hanseatic merchant's house is tall and gable-fronted in brick with, sometimes, rich architectural decoration, particularly on the gable, which may be pinnacled, arcaded, crow-stepped, or even a rectangular screen to the end of the roof. Originally the house would consist of a single lofty hall on the ground floor with attics above for storing merchandise. Central posts supported the floor beams. Later, counting-houses, parlours and mezzanines were added as subdivisions of the main hall.

Our tour followed the eastward spread of Hanseatic influence, starting from Hamburg and Lubeck in the west. The basic urban topography of Lubeck is still in place, despite having been the target of the first of the RAF's Baedeker raids, whereas wartime destruction has left little of old Hamburg. By contrast, Luneburg was a perfectly preserved town with many fine brick facades surviving. Crossing into East Germany, Wismar had been preserved largely by economic stagnation during the postwar period, and needed substantial investment in its buildings. Rostock, a larger and more prosperous East German port, is interesting as a three-nuclear settlement, but unfortunately wartime destruction has left little of the original townscape. A Stalinist re-working of the Hanseatic architectural theme aroused interest, as did more recent examples of redevelopment and refurbishment in the Hanseatic idiom.

Stralsund is perhaps East Germany's most complete Hanseatic town, with massive church and blind-facaded town hall, but is suffering decay and extensive repair works, increasingly funded by West Germany. Neubrandenburg is notable for its perfectly preserved walls and gate towers, but the whole of the town within the walls was flattened during the last five days of the war and has been rebuilt in an uninspired fashion.

By contrast, the Poles have painstakingly reconstructed the splendours of Gdansk exactly as they were before their complete destruction during the war. This must rank as one of the great cities of Europe, with fine merchants' houses dating originally from both the German and Polish periods of its history, and with a significant input from Dutch architects. The Lubeck-style merchant church is, again, a pivotal feature of the townscape. Travelling up the Vistula valley, we visited Malbork, the impressive original seat of the Teutonic Order, and Kwidzyn, another of their citadels. We were able to view examples of the Order's town planning at Chelmno and Orun, which both escaped wartime destruction, but are in need of investment in building maintenance today.

Apart from an insight into the techniques of town building during a period of past prosperity, this town was fascinating in the way in which it revealed the very different fortunes of a homogeneous architectural heritage according to the degree of wartime damage and the hazards of modern political boundaries.

## TRANSPORT IN CITIES by BRIAN RICHARDS ADT PRESS, 1990, £14.95

If ever we needed to be reminded of the impending crisis facing personal transportation in our cities the last few months have provided the focus. Uncertainty in the Middle East has pointed to the vulnerability of our fuel supplies. The collapse of the money markets have questioned the philosophy of the free for all enterprise society, heralding in a more caring philosophy based on sustainable solutions. Finally the opening up of Eastern Europe has shown us that despite the bankruptcy of political systems, central planning and controlled growth has left a legacy of cities with well used public transport systems and a human scale.

*Transport in Cities* is a must for every Urban Planner as we move with the nineties. It's easy to read, full of excellent pictures, diagrams and graphs, but above all clearly sets down the issues facing us, the vocabulary of solutions available, and the agenda that politicians, transportation planners and designers must address. Brian Richards is well versed in the arguments. After leaving the Architectural Association he was involved with Peter Smithson's studies for movement in inner London. In 1966 his first book *New Movement in Cities* reviewed the impact of movement on City form. Ten years later *Movement in Cities* carried the theme forward, and *Transport in Cities* drawing on the work of traffic engineers and new technology available identifies the strategies available to meet the crisis looming ahead of us.

The modes of movement considered range from walking to a variety of high and low tech guided vehicle systems. Scale is paramount as the appropriate system for a city of 250,000 will be different from the conurbations of 1 million, and the world megalopolis of 10 million plus different again. Having read the book, I felt a future model for habitable cities was emerging in Continental Europe. Conurbations of up to 1 million, with well defined cores relying on the dominance of the pedestrian, and practical public transport systems, applying technology but never letting it dominate. In Britain with our dispersed suburbs, proliferating out of town retail and business parks, growing car ownership and clogged motorway systems, a reappraisal of modes of transportation and locational criteria is essential. *Transport in Cities* is the perfect primer.

John Worthington

## FOOTNOTE

The review of *'Travel in Towns'* contained in Issue 36 was written by Tim Catchpole. The book was published by Macmillan in 1990 and costs £27.50.

*A city that repeats itself endlessly  
Hoping that something will stick  
in it's mind.*



## IMAGINARY CONVERSATION (for Laurie Anderson)

by Bob Jarvis

(Laurie Anderson is most widely known for her record 'Oh Superman' [1982], but she has an international reputation as a performance artist. Her latest piece *Empty Places*, was noted as 'commercials for emotions' in *Rolling Stone*, as a commentary on urban decay by the *Sunday Times*. Her lyrics have been compared to Wittgenstein; her images "a grip on nothing at all").

The trouble with being a professional is you're supposed to know answers. The trouble with being a designer is that you're supposed to solve problems. The trouble with solving problems is that you have to know answers. The trouble with problems is that there are no answers.

**Laurie Anderson:** my whole intention was not to map out meanings, but to make a field situation. I'm interested in facts, in images and theories which resonate against each other, not in offering solutions (1).

**Joseph Rykwert:** The town is not really a natural phenomenon. Its an artefact - an artefact of a curious kind, compounded from willed and random elements imperfectly controlled ....its more like a dream than anything else (2).

**Laurie Anderson:** Hey pal, how do I get to town from here? He said: just make a right where they're gonna put in the freeway, and take a left at whats gonna be the new sports centre and keep going till you hit the place where they're thinking of building the drive-in bank. You can't miss it. And I said: This must be the place (3).

**Joe Holyoak:** We're talking about manipulation here .... developer, architect and advertiser are asking us to suspend our disbelief at being in a huge machine for selling located nowhere in particular .... language is being

abused, as in other realms where advertising and PR operate. But so is reality .... (4).

**Laurie Anderson:** Well I dreamed I was on an island/ that rose up from the sea/ and everybody on that island was somebody from TV/ and there was a beautiful view/ that nobody could see/ cause everybody on that island was saying: look at me, look at me .../ paradise is exactly like/ where you are right now/ only much, much better (5).

**Joseph Rykwert:** So often home is felt to be a miniature of the city, not as it is but how we want it. Patterns of behaviour, even movement may sometimes be explained as being an attempt to reconcile such a conceptual model with the actual, physical structure of the city (6).

**Laurie Anderson:** I came home today/ and both our cars were gone/ and there were all these new pink/ flamingoes arranged in star patterns/ all over the lawn./ Then I went into the kitchen/ and it looked like a tornado had hit/ and then I realised/ I was in the wrong house (7).

**Joe Holyoak:** The effect (in Calle del Pablo, Meadowhall Shopping Centre, Sheffield) resembles a surrealistically enlarged living room where the family is trying to eat dinner, but is continually being distracted by the commercials on the television which has been left on (8).

**Laurie Anderson:** He said: History is an angel/ being blown into the future/. He said: History is a pile of debris/ and the angel wants to go back and fix things/ to repair the things that have been broken/ but ther is a storm blowing from paradise/ and the storm keeps blowing the angel/ backwards into the future/ and this storm, this storm is called progress (9).

**Joseph Rykwert:** Every act of building is necessarily an act against nature. It is an unnatural act, when you chose the site you set it apart from nature. It is different from an animal's choice, of nest or lair. A man knows

what he is doing, the animal does not.....it is part of a terrible world in which we are always doing things we ought not to do, and leave undone the things we ought to do (10).

**Laurie Anderson:** Y'know I can see the future/ and it's a place / about 70 miles east of here.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Laurie Anderson's performance, *Empty Places* toured Europe in 1990. Her records *Big Science*, *Mister Heartbreak*, *House of the Brave* and *Strange Angels* are on Warner Brothers. I saw *Empty Places* at the Dominion Theatre, and it was suggested as a yardstick for student presentations of current shopping developments, for which Joe Holyoak's critique of Meadowhall was the key reference. Joseph Rykwert's book I found by chance at the same time.

## SOURCES

- (1) Interview, *Live*, No 5, p 6, 1975
- (2) *The Idea of Town*, MIT Press, p24, 1988
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- (4) *Spending on a Grand Scale*, AJ, Nov 21, 1990, p 47
- (5) *Language is a Virus*, Difficult Music 1986
- (6) Op cit, p 25
- (7) *Talk Normal*, Difficult Music, 1986
- (8) Op cit, p 41
- (9) *The Dream of Before* (for Walter Benjamin), Difficult Music, 1989
- (10) Op cit, p 174
- (11) *Let X = X/ If Tango*, Difficult Music, 1982

Illustration: The Laurie Anderson Postcard Book, Canal Street Communications, 1990.

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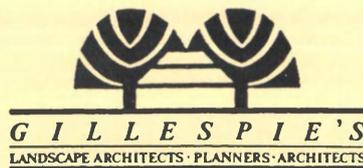
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