

130 **URBAN  
DESIGN**

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**CENTRAL AND  
EASTERN EUROPE**



**URBAN  
DESIGN  
GROUP**

## VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



↑ Potsdamer Platz and the station. Photograph (top) harry\_nl, (bottom) by danielfoster437 via Flickr

This year marks 25 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, and I have recently returned from a visit to this city where for a long time Eastern and Western Europe were divided. It is fascinating to see how the city has been regenerated in this time. I first visited it about 10 years after the wall came down, and at that time there was a frenzy of building activity as the vast tracts of land that had been sterilised by the wall – which was in fact two walls with a wide no mans land between – were being re-planned and developed. Nowhere typified this more than the area around Potsdamer Platz.

This square was once Berlin's most iconic public space, on a par with Times Square or Piccadilly Circus. It represented the geographical centre of the city, and was the meeting place of five of its busiest streets in a star-shaped intersection, said by some to be the transport hub of Europe. However, wartime bombing decimated the square and surrounding areas. After the war some activity returned, but before long the space was again under attack, this time being divided by the wall that ran through its centre. After the wall came down, the square became the focus of attention once more: it was a rare opportunity – a large (some 60 hectares) attractive, development site in the centre of a major European city. Consequently its future was the subject of much debate amongst architects and planners. If Berlin needed to re-establish itself on the world stage, then

this was where the city had an opportunity to express itself. More than just a building site, Potsdamer Platz was a statement of intent. In particular, due to its location straddling the erstwhile border between east and west, it was widely perceived as a 'linking element,' reconnecting the two halves of the city. Today it is almost completely built out, and arguably offers a very contemporary interpretation of a city quarter. Working with a sound masterplan, the area has good pedestrian and cycle links, public transport at its heart, and offers a blend of commercial, residential and retail uses that support a vibrant street life. However, it somehow feels slightly corporate and sterile, in stark contrast to the surrounding neighbourhoods in the former eastern half, where the dominant architectural style is still a legacy of large monolithic communist housing blocks.

It will be fascinating to see their regeneration over the next 25 years. Germany may be the economic behemoth of the Eurozone, but has not been immune to the global economic downturn, and while big development sites are now few in number, it is clear that the biggest challenge is yet to come – regenerating of these high density housing blocks of the former communist east. While Potsdamer Platz may be seen as the statement of intent, the way that Berlin improves these existing neighbourhoods will be what determines the lasting legacy of reunification.

● Paul Reynolds

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Cinemas brought about immense changes in urban life during the 20th century. They enabled the masses to enjoy the same shared cultural experience. Many of us had a glimpse of this at the UDG's Christmas celebration held in the Cinema Museum in the former Lambeth Union Workhouse. But the rows of well-worn seats, the Art Deco style and arc light projection equipment seemed a world away from today's flat screen multi-channel televisions, smart phones and video-sharing websites. Our experience of culture is now much less shared, and so much more individual, and life seems so different. Or is it?

As part of the evening event, there was a

screening of Charlie Chaplin's silent film *City Lights*, a story of boy meets girl, boy tries to earn money to win girl, boy wins girl. It is a story as old as history, repeated as many times as there are people on the planet. Technology changes, but the most powerful drivers in human life – love, desire, ambition, sorrow and regret – these remain the same. And it is to enable human life that we do our work of designing towns and cities.

And is the shared experience dead? Absolutely not, as 1,100 people flocked to hear Jan Gehl speak at the Hackney Empire and see a screening of the film *Human Scale*. Who attended? It was us, and people like us. These shared experiences help to define who we are: people who share a vision for better towns and cities and who want to do something to bring it about...

### NEW RECOGNISED PRACTITIONERS IN URBAN DESIGN

Barry Sellers, Julie Crawford, Chris Duffy, Barry Gaffney, Raquel Leonardo and Duncan McLean.

**The Registered Practice Logo is now available for all current UDG practice members.**

### CALL FOR ABSTRACTS: 2014 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON URBAN DESIGN

**Urban Design for All,**

**Nottingham 18-20 September 2014**

Laura Alvarez and Stefan Kruczkowski are developing a striking programme for this year's conference which will include parallel sessions. It is a great opportunity for researchers and practitioners to share their insights in the wide world of urban design. If you would like to present your ideas, please submit an abstract by 25 April 2014 –

full details are available on the UDG website [www.udg.org.uk](http://www.udg.org.uk).

● Robert Huxford

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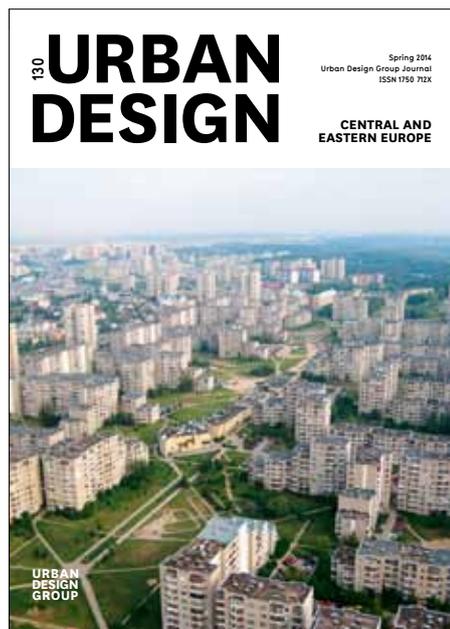
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Collective housing area in Lazdynai, Vilnius built  
in 1969. Photograph by Dalia Bardauskiene

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## DIARY OF EVENTS

Unless otherwise indicated, all LONDON events are held at The Gallery, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ at 6.30 pm.

Note that there are many other events run by UDG volunteers throughout the UK including a free seven event lecture series in Nottingham. For the latest details and pricing, please check on the UDG website [www.udg.org.uk/events/udg](http://www.udg.org.uk/events/udg)

### WEDNESDAY 23 APRIL

#### Estate Regeneration

Demolition? Selective reconstruction? Adaptation? Alternative management and housing allocation policies? Paul Reynolds and others will consider the best ways to improve the attractiveness and quality of life offered by large housing estates.

### MONDAY 12 MAY

#### UDG & Urbanista Series: Rebooting the Masterplan Part 2

The UDG will host the second instalment of this two-part lecture series exploring the future of masterplanning, led by Urban Design Book Award winner, Lucy Bullivant ([www.Urbanista.org](http://www.Urbanista.org))

### THURSDAY 22 MAY

#### Dealing with Density

With population levels continuing to increase, the need to provide additional development has become inescapable. The question is what form should this take – should it be Garden Cities, Superdensity or the Euroburbs? Join the UDG to debate the issue.

### WEDNESDAY 4 JUNE

#### Central & Eastern Europe

An evening guaranteed to broaden perspectives on towns and cities, picking up the theme of Urban Design issue 130 and led by Judith Ryser.

### WEDNESDAY 18 JUNE

#### Vital & Viable: A Joint UDG-CABE Event (including UDG AGM)

A wide-ranging consideration of how design can be used to turn around flagging settlements. How can high aspirations be translated into a viable financial proposition?

### WEDNESDAY 9 JULY

#### Waterfronts

Led by Jody Slater this evening will feature the latest innovations in how to make the most of waterfronts and create truly spectacular urban settings.

# READINESS FOR CHANGE

For the first time, *Urban Design* is looking at Central and Eastern Europe; an area once tightly controlled by the state and then suddenly opened to the free market, it has seen great turmoil, confusion and change in the last 20-25 years. The articles in this issue demonstrate the strong degree of self-awareness that has emerged as countries, regions, cities, towns and their people are now adopting better approaches to development. From Lithuania to Serbia and the former German Democratic Republic, the story that emerges is about recognising the need for overarching strategies, cooperation, understanding cultural and social contexts, and ensuring design quality at all levels. Eastern Europe is asserting its readiness for business on new terms.

Here, as the flood waters in the South East of England slowly drain away, and politicians start work on their pre-election positions and manifestos – no doubt reflecting on public spending levels – it would appear that localism, neighbourhood planning and the Big Society have been given a major boost in the need to cooperate in adversity and defend one's local area, not least from water,

but also for spending on river dredging, libraries, children's services etc. Meanwhile, the government's strategy of helping more people to buy homes is being judged as successfully jump-starting the house building industry, while local authority planning and design teams are still accused of slowing down planning approvals. So, how long will it be before all sense of urban planning is completely eroded? Is the practice of looking at sub-regions and regional strategies now an academic art form, while town planners and urban designers are distracted with lots of small pockets of change?

What does the big picture of urban design in Britain currently look like? And who is overseeing the state of urban design quality? Will we soon watch these post-Communist countries with envy of their determined grappling with the market? This topic should prove food for thought.

● Louise Thomas

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## Events at the Gallery

### KEVIN LYNCH MEMORIAL LECTURE WEDNESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2013

#### Walking with the dreamers

Listening to Kelvin Campbell is always enjoyable, but by the end of this lecture I was left wondering whether I had gained some understanding or been lost in a complicated translation of ideas. Since we were on this journal's Editorial Board together, he has completed many reports (supported by the government of the day) and developed ideas about the built environment enlarged by his experience across the world. In essence, what he was saying is that the structure of the built environment has changed and is changing, so we need to evaluate and re-evaluate what society and the UDG can do.

Very few images of built form were used during the lecture, and his pertinent quotations could not replace an understanding of physical form. In many cases images would have overcome the different interpretations that people might have placed on what Kelvin said. While any changes to thought or legislation will rely on words, not images, to those working in the built environment more illustrations are desirable.

Kelvin's presentation began with the following points: how do you deal with complexity when you have static plans? We want responsive environments but we are getting prescriptive environments. The system creates 'bigness' – the challenge is to do more with less. He quoted Gloria Steinem who believes that dreaming is a form of planning, and he drew parallels with ideas being raised outside our industry. Dee Hock considers that clear purposes give rise to complex and intelligent behaviour, whereas complex rules and regulations give rise to simple and stupid behaviour. Philip Ball states that human behaviour is not so complex that it cannot be understood on the basis of a few simple postulates or by the operations of



BOTTOM UP



The following talks, seminars and debates have been organised by the UDG and held at The Gallery, Cowcross Street, London. Some, but not all of these events are recorded by UrbanNous and available to watch again on the UDG website, thanks to the generous support of Fergus Carnegie.



what we regard as natural forces. Michael Batty believes we need to think of cities not just as artefacts but as systems built more like organisms than machines. John Turner's view is that in squatter cities people have total freedom to do their own thing, everyone acts similarly. Informal settlements are just cities in progress – like any emergent system, a city is a pattern in time and beneath all the turbulence the pattern retains its shape.

Kelvin asked why not just sit back and let humans self-organise? Why have rules when creativity sits on the edge of chaos and order? We have been doing complex and non-adaptive things – it is not that we THINK, it is about HOW we think. The idea is that nature happens where urbanism doesn't; as environmental impacts drives our agenda, we fit urbanism in between, but this is wrong, good urbanism needs good nature. He also questioned whether thinking globally and acting locally creates a conflict between top down and bottom up approaches. Top down approaches involve outcomes, complex rules, place-making, command and control. If rules become too complex people break

them anyway. Bottom up approaches involve complexity, emergent vernacular (adaptive), self-organising, thinking and doing. The two are not compatible, and so the top down needs to release the bottom up through simple rules. He ended with a statement from Darwin: it is not the strongest species that survive nor the most intelligent, but the ones most responsive to change.

A number of concerns arose in the discussion which followed: what should a planning authority be doing to encourage development sympathetic to an area? Is there a gulf between architects and the planning authorities that cannot be bridged? Does the future lie with the involvement of other disciplines and professions? Are any diagrams in documents anything more than just stopping people from doing silly things? A lot of frustrations are more to do with the structures of society, such as the way we organise the housing market; change is needed not just in planning and design but in society and the economy as a whole.

● John Billingham

### URBAN DESIGN LEADERS OF THE FUTURE – 28TH JANUARY 2014

In quick-fire sessions, a range of speakers gave their visions on topics at the core of their work, including:

- **LIVEABILITY INDICATORS, Chris Sharpe, Holistic City Software**  
How software can calculate and supply objective indicators (e.g. average distance from a dwelling to a convenience shop, or park, or post office) but which of these indicators matter most to the people who live there?
- **PUBLIC REALM, Dan Jenkins, Jacobs, London Inn Square, Exeter**



The redesign of busy city centre spaces

- **CLIMATE AND CLIMATE CHANGE, Graham Freer, Super Urbanism**  
Tackling climate change through urban design, and why urban design has a crucial role in tackling climate change.
- **LIVING WITH WATER – FLOODS AND FLOODPLAINS, Ian Lyne, Chairman of Placedynamix, Aquapolis**  
Solutions to the urban form of sinking expectations? A short story of bathtubs, rubber duck debugging, SUDS and DRIPS.

See these events at [www.udg.org.uk](http://www.udg.org.uk)



## Estate of the Nation

30 January 2014,  
The Building Centre

CABE initiated the *Estate of the Nation* discussion and the large audience of built environment professionals, standing up during the first half of the event, were keen to hear about doable solutions. Clare Devine, Director of the Built Environment CABE, set the scene by exposing the key contradictions of the housing market and its astronomical rents, which many Londoners cannot afford although they are vital to London's economic and cultural life. She stressed the importance of the human scale, size and diversity of developments, collaborative design and involvement of inhabitants in planning their homes. Paul Finch, Deputy Chair of the Design Council, who chaired the evening, put forward his own ideas about how London's affordable housing crisis could be alleviated.

Looking at the city's housing history, he denounced three myths, namely that the planning system, building regulations and a lack of land are impeding house construction.

Despite his overview of social housing and innovative contributions by philanthropists, Dickon Robinson, formerly of Peabody Trust, joined developers' requests to 'predict and provide' housing on relinquished public land, ignoring Macmillan's proviso about selling the family silver. Conversely, Alan Powers put forward a plea from the perspective of the Twentieth Century Society to acknowledge the worth of many good contributions from the modernist period, instead of demolition for short-term gain.

The second part of the event concentrated on the production of social, public or affordable housing, from the point of view of a developer, Mark Mitchener of Rydon Construction and the architect, Stephen Fisher of PTEa who designed the regeneration of Rydon's Packinton Estate in Islington, and Alison Brooks who showed her social housing projects in London and beyond.

In conclusion, Paul Finch suggested taking a leaf out of the landed estates by producing equally durable and high quality housing estates which would reinstate citizens' pride. Elsewhere, Wakefield and District Housing with 31,000 social homes has just completed a neighbourhood of 91 zero-carbon homes without any special subsidies, but with the Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians support, applying state-of-the-art technologies, providing skills opportunities for its workforce and engaging with tenants to promote sustainable living. Perhaps the way to go?

● Judith Ryser

## UDG/ CPRE London Liveable Cities Film Series (Part 2)

Voices of Co-housing,  
3 February 2014, The Gallery

At this interesting evening, Maria Brenton spoke for the Co-Housing Network and about its growing popularity. Hundreds of co-housing schemes exist in Denmark and Holland but there are just 17 in the UK. In the film shown at the event, residents speak of sharing lives, the mixing of generations, overcoming of prejudices and finding inspiration in community. Decision-making is by consensus with the downside of lots of meetings. Car, space and facilities sharing, all save money, and reduce their ecological footprints. Eating together is valued and cooking rotas give people more free time. A 41 homes scheme in Lancaster has recently been completed and the oldest co-housing group is 20 years old.

Patrick Devlin, architect, spoke of how much he had learned designing with people and the difficulty of finding suitable sites. He has worked with Hanover Housing Association who are delivering schemes through forward funding.

Personal space is only marginally smaller in co-housing schemes, for example retrofitting existing housing by removing fences to share back garden space. The main barriers in the UK were identified as expensive building land, cultural suspicion, and a lack of understanding of how to support it.

● Tim Haggard

## UDG National and Regional Groups



## UDG Scotland

UDG Scotland has run four successful events in the past year, including three in Glasgow and its first event in Dundee in June 2013. All have received a strong level of interest and have frequently been oversubscribed.

The purpose of the Dundee evening event was to consider approaches to the delivery of public art, and mark the unveiling of exciting artwork for the new Centre for Translational & Interdisciplinary Research on the University of Dundee campus.

To describe this truly collaborative approach to delivery, we heard various perspectives from Jo White, the Project Architect at BMJ Architects; the project client Professor Mike Ferguson, Dean of Research at the College of Life Sciences at the University of Dundee; and, the artist Professor of Fine Art,

Elaine Shemilt of Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design. The development of public art has formed an integral part of the building design, with artistic abstraction portraying the four scales of life: Molecular, Organellar, Cellular and Tissue. These bold images will reflect the activities of life scientists working within the building, whilst also reinforcing a sense of place and identity within the fabric of the city.

We are keen to further explore collaborative approaches to urban design during 2014 and strengthen links with other professional bodies including RIAS, RTPI, IHBC, AoU and SEDA. Ideas for future event themes are always welcomed at [scotland@urban-design-group.org.uk](mailto:scotland@urban-design-group.org.uk)

● Francis Newton and Jo White, BMJ Architects

← The Centre for Translational and Interdisciplinary Research at the University of Dundee.  
Photograph by BMJ Architects



## STREET North West

STREET NW is going through an exciting transition; after three years directing the group, Emma Zukowski is passing the baton to Mark Foster and Rebecca Newiss of Turley Associates (Manchester) to continue to raise the profile of the Urban Design Group in the North West of England. We aim to build upon the great effort and enthusiasm that Emma brought to the role, and to encourage

young urban designers and built environment professionals to get involved in the UDG's programme of events. We intend STREET NW to become a forum for students, professionals in their early careers, more experienced urban designers and other young built environment professionals, to discuss and explore our region's current hot topics and development agendas. Through a programme of tours, workshops, presentations and social events, this is an active network with strong connections between those in education and those in practice.

The North West is an exciting place to be

due to the impressive projects currently on the ground that demonstrate the growth in the region, in particular Manchester. Recently completed is phase one of NOMA – the Co-operative's headquarters – which, through a £800 million ten-year regeneration scheme, hopes to deliver office, residential, retail and restaurant space in the heart of the city. The Beswick Community Hub will see the expansion of Manchester City Football Academy, as well as new local community facilities including a sixth-form College, leisure centre, the Manchester Institute of Sports Science and clinic, commercial and retail development. The redevelopment of St Peter's Square is an important phase in the Town Hall transformation programme, which will create a world-class pedestrianised space, with a striking glass link between the Central Library and the Town Hall and accommodating the Metrolink Second City Crossing.

If you are interested in receiving STREET NW information on upcoming events, please email to: [street-north-west@urban-design-group.org.uk](mailto:street-north-west@urban-design-group.org.uk). We look forward to seeing you at our events throughout 2014.

● Mark Foster and Rebecca Newiss

↗ The Co-operative's new headquarter building NOMA Architects

## East Midlands UDG

Three towers in Radford were recently demolished and 52 new family homes are being built on the site as part of the 'Building a Better Nottingham' programme led by Nottingham City Council and Nottingham City

Homes. Currently underway is the demolition of five 16-storey tower blocks in Lenton.

Originally an agricultural village, Lenton was built to accommodate manufacturing and residential uses during the industrial revolution. The area grew in popularity over time due to its convenient location and accessibility. In 1928, the University of Nottingham moved their premises from the city centre into its main campus located adjacent

to the area. In 1960, five residential tower blocks were built transforming the neighbourhood's landscape and its scale. Queen's Medical Centre, the largest hospital in the UK until February 2012, opened its doors in the area in 1977. These major interventions, along with the infrastructural and demographic changes associated, are proof of the historic resilience of the local community and its capacity to adapt.

Initially the scale of the intervention triggered some community resistance about the demolition of the iconic towers; however the buildings were no longer fit for purpose. Alternative accommodation with better environmental performance, quasi-mimicking the Victorian urban terrace, will gradually replace the towers, providing higher standards of well-being. Lenton is a neighbourhood with a history of dramatic transformations and it is no surprise that the demolition of the tower blocks is now being perceived locally as an opportunity to trigger positive change in the area...TBC.

UDG East Midlands is hosting the annual conference entitled *Urban design for all: A life less ordinary* in Nottingham, 18-20 September 2014. For more information on our programme of events in 2014, contact [udgeastmidlands@googlemail.com](mailto:udgeastmidlands@googlemail.com).

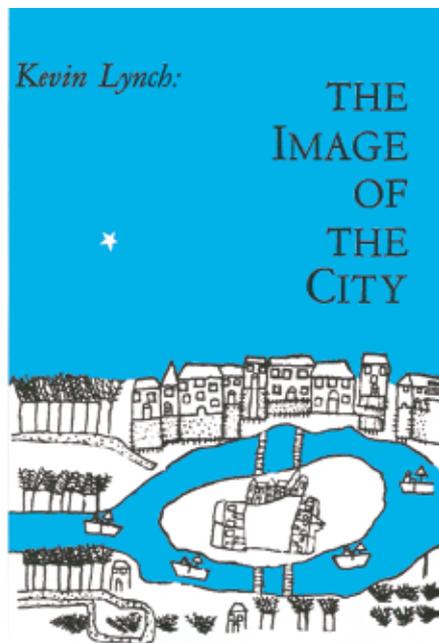
● Laura Alvarez

← Lenton Towers, Nottingham. Source: Nottingham Post, 11th April 2013



## THE URBAN DESIGN LIBRARY # 11

Kevin Lynch: The Image of the City (The MIT Press, 1960)



The American urban planner Kevin Lynch (1918 – 1984) was one of the most significant contributors to 20th century advances in city planning and city design. Having studied at Yale University, and Taliesin under Frank Lloyd Wright, Lynch received a Bachelor's degree in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) where in 1948 he began lecturing and went on to become a professor. In his career Lynch wrote or co-wrote seven books, and the posthumously published collection of writing and projects *City Sense and City Design* offers a fascinating insight into his life's work, and more broadly, to his shifting concerns about planning and urban design.

Lynch's most famous text is undoubtedly *The Image of the City*. Published in 1960, it predates by one year significant works within the urban design cannon from the likes of Jane Jacobs and Gordon Cullen. On the dust jacket a reviewer from the *Architectural Forum* anticipated that this 'tautly organised, authoritative volume' may well prove as important to city building as Camillo Sitte's *The Art of Building Cities*. Indeed my 1998 edition is a 26th edition, and half-a-century after its publication the book remains a core text in urban design and architecture courses throughout the world, including in Warsaw where I first encountered it as a student.

Where Jacobs and Cullen viewed their works as a means to react against suburbanisation and the more expansive forms of city that emerged in the post-war era, Lynch was more prepared to grapple with how to make

sense of new, more dispersed and complex metropolitan and regional patterns of living, and also the emergence of mass automobilicity, later made explicit in *The View from the Road*, co-written with Donald Appleyard and John R. Meyer.

Starting with two key questions – 'What does the city's form actually mean to the people who live there?' and 'What can the city planner do to make the city's image more vivid and memorable to the city dweller?' – the city is not merely considered as a thing in itself, but rather Lynch explores how the city is perceived by its inhabitants in ways that amount to the creation of a mental map. The findings are developed into a theory of *imageability* – or, alternatively, legibility or visibility – with elements rendered measurable and therefore comparable, and formulated as new criterion for city design useful to city designers faced with building and rebuilding cities.

The legibility of place is explored through the use of questionnaire surveys and interviews with inhabitants, conducted in three different types of city in the United States. Boston was selected for its diversity with its multiple elements; Jersey City was chosen for its lack of distinctiveness; and finally, Los Angeles was included as a new typology of city. The office-based interviews that accompanied the survey included requests for descriptions of the city, along with sketch maps (a drawing of their mental map), and a description of an imaginary trip through the city. Lynch's simplified plans allied to fragments of the interviews help bring the subject matter to life.

The results, highlighting mental representations of memorable features of the city and how they fit together, helped Lynch to isolate a small number of generic categories. These are his famous elements, often beautifully illustrated through simple, reductive graphics in the page margin; paths (the channel of the observer, which people move along on their travels); edges (breaks in continuity with the surrounding areas, for example, walls or riversides); *districts* (substantial two-dimensional elements with a common character); *nodes* (strategic points where a concentration of city features occurs); and finally, *landmarks* (external references points such as a significant building, monument or object that helps orientation). The five components are mixed and connected with one another, and the same features can reappear with different meanings, for example, a motorway will be experienced by a driver as a path but by a pedestrian as an edge.

For Lynch, the benefit of using such elements in design was to create a more coherent spatial organisation at large scale, so that new types of city could also have 'sensuous form'. This hints at an interesting aspect of the book. While Lynch's research was conducted at a time when specialist, scientific methods were becoming increasingly familiar on both sides of the Atlantic, and city planning and design was becoming more technocratic, Lynch retained an interest in people – the city user as he called them – and the reader can still see a poetic and romantic point of view. Lynch retained a belief in urbanism as art, and accords importance to the emotions of individuals and city users.

Half-a-century on from *The Image of the City*, we can see this book as a fine example of how Lynch's early work encapsulated the relatively confident outlook of the post-war era, one in which designers and planners retained faith that the new forms of city could not only be understood but also comprehensively designed: 'only powerful civilisations can begin to act on their total environment at a significant scale' he said. He understood his work as part of the initial attempt to provide imageability for the new functional unit of the age, the metropolitan region, and suggested that further development and testing was required, not least given his view that urbanism is in constant process of change.

However, even in the immediate years that followed *The Image of the City*, confidence started to dissipate, both in Lynch himself and in society at large. Sadly, Lynch ended his career amidst the heightened fears of the 1980s Cold War, fretting over 'waste cacotopias' and 'the urban environment after nuclear war'. Given that these early insights have remained largely under-developed at a regional scale, today we could do far worse than re-engage with this project. ●

### READ ON

Suzanne Langer; *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art* (Scribner, New York, 1952)

Gottmann, Jean; *Megalopolis. The Urbanized Northeastern seaboard of the United States* (The Twentieth Century Fund, New York, 1961)

Oskar Hansen; *Towards Open Form* (Revolver, Berlin, 2005)

● Julia Lasek is a member of the organising committee for *Critical Subjects, Architecture and Design Summer School 2014*

# Urban Design Interview: What does Urban Design mean to me?

Matthew Lappin

## Current position and work

Senior Associate, David Lock Associates

## Education

BA(Hons) Town Planning and Diploma Town Planning (Newcastle University); Diploma Urban Design (Oxford Brookes); MRTPI

## Past experience

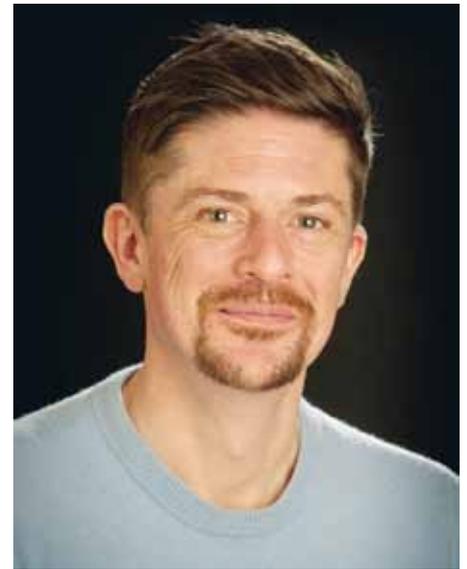
1994 – 1995: Assistant Planner, Redditch Borough Council  
 1995 – 1998: Planner, Wealden District Council  
 1998 – 2001: Senior Planner, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council  
 2001 – present: Town planning and urban design consultant, David Lock Associates

## Ambitions

Be happy, stay healthy...

## Specialisms

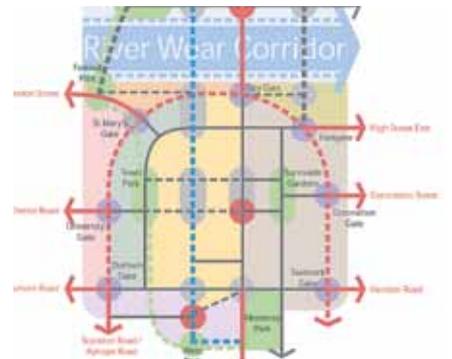
Regeneration and Delivery Strategies.  
 Town and City Centre Masterplans.  
 Development Frameworks.  
 Design Guidance.  
 Strategic and Local Design Policy Formulation.



↑ Circular Quay, Sydney: vibrant, exciting, functional and memorable. Photo: Matthew Lappin, David Lock Associates



↑ Kings Cross St Pancras: reinventing venerable gateways into amazing places. Photo: Matthew Lappin, David Lock Associates



↑ Sunderland Urban Design Strategy, Communicating city complexities and design ambitions. Diagram M Lappin and N Pile, David Lock Associates



↑ Copenhagen: model for reclaiming the public realm. Photo: Matthew Lappin, David Lock Associates



↑ Dead Good Design: barriers yet to be addressed... Photo: Urban Provocations, David Lock Associates



↑ Nottingham Playhouse Square: convivial, handsome, and humanly scaled. Photo: Matthew Lappin, David Lock Associates



↑ Durham Lumiere 2013: animating and delivering the City's Vision. Photo: Pete Chambers, David Lock Associates.



↑ Princes Hay, Exeter: Skilfully integrated new mixed-use streets. Photo: Matthew Lappin, David Lock Associates



↑ The future? Capturing ideas, delivering viable, inspiring places. Photo: Matthew Lappin, David Lock Associates

## ON SWANSCOMBE MARSH

*Peter Luck describes redevelopment at the urban periphery through photographers' work*



Swanscombe Marsh is a peninsula pointing north within a loop of the River Thames below Greenhithe. To the south it is bounded by cliffs left after two centuries of chalk quarrying. The flat lands, once marsh grazing and saltings, have been

transformed since the beginning of the 19th century by cement and paper industries to the south, by riverside industrial development to the east and by successive waves of landfill including the reclamation of the saltings in the early

20th century. The Channel Tunnel Rail Link emerges from its river crossing in the south of the marsh.

From 2005 I visited the marsh from time to time, slowly finding new ways into it and seeing traces of the past cement industry: a pier, workshop sheds, the floor plates of demolished buildings, stray lengths of railway track, and the several generations of landfill. Vegetation was overgrowing all. In summer 2012 the requirements of an exhibition made my visits more frequent and more purposeful.

One day my familiar route on to the marsh was barred by a security man who directed me to a different path where a second security man guarded a gate, normally closed, now open. He explained that the closures were due to the land now being owned by the cement company, Lafarge. But they and their predecessors had owned it for many years. While we talked a large car full of 'suits' came slowly down the track and over the next landfill hillock. 'Lafarge?' He nodded yes.

### PROPOSED THEME PARK

Soon after, the news broke: a theme park based on Paramount block-buster movies was planned. Precise information on the proposal has been scarce, but initial reports indicated some possible 27,000 jobs. The local planning authorities appeared to love it – no surprise in a depressed area. Just one computer-generated image has been circulated and that is impossible to locate. Recently a scoping planning application has been made to the two local authorities sharing the overall site, and so it is now possible to trace its limits on the ground and see an approximate distribution of elements.

The entertainment zone sits in the middle of the peninsula; to the west reed beds, home to rare water voles, are preserved with hotels ranged around on the landward side; the point of the peninsula remains open as a country park or event ground (and maintains maritime sight-lines). The industrial zones to the east and tucked into the old quarries to the south are not included. But could the predominantly unsocial work of recycling and car breaking continue close to the theme park and its attendant hotels?

As often, there is rhetoric of 'mere wasteland' – a zone full of detritus. A walk on the marsh soon shows that this is a misapprehension, applicable only

✓ At the mouth of the Broadness Moorings.  
 ✓✓ Once the 'colour shed' in the whiting works, it is now used by a welding company.  
 Colour photographs by Mike Seaborne

to parts of the industrial perimeter. The interior is a varied landscape of low land-fill hills, scraped fill, surviving grazing and surprisingly beautiful tracts, particularly the reed beds and around a small lake, the remains of a clay pit. Near the point of the peninsula is the Broadness Moorings, an isolated and deeply scruffy collection of boats and sheds. Random survivors from industry have an enigmatic presence. Such marginal lands become semi-wild places, quiet zones, and escape zones. They have a value of their own.

We recognise (with regret) that in the present dispensation, such values will lose to market forces. We also recognise that the drive to develop is not rooted in the site of development. There has been debate among photographers as to whether it is possible to make a critical photography which shows the off-site operations of capital in development. This debate fed in to our thinking on what to do here. The conclusion was that we could only show the present state of things, possibly contributing to the future historical archive. The operations of capital would have to be implied by a documentary account of the history of the marsh and the proposals for its future.

#### PHOTOGRAPHERS INVOLVEMENT

The Swanscombe Project came together after a presentation on these themes to the Crossing Lines group which is a forum of members of London Independent Photography and the Centre for Urban and Community Research at Goldsmiths College. By January 2013 there were sixteen photographers signed up to the project, professional or committed amateurs. The strategy is to each record our personal reactions to the marsh, preferably over time, and to demonstrate that this is a landscape rich enough to sustain a variety of interpretations, countering the 'wasteland' rhetoric.

As I write (January 2014) a tiny selection of our work with very brief accounts of the history and futures of the marsh is on show at the Asda store in Greenhithe, next to the marsh. Public reactions are giving us a greater awareness of the recent history and present knowledge and attitudes. We make no alternative suggestions but gently hint at the question whether the pioneering cement industry could have been memorialised in development instead of being obliterated. There will be a



larger exhibition of our work with a more detailed account of the history and futures, at Goldsmiths College in April 2014.

It is too soon to draw conclusions from this exercise. We hope to provoke further projects, with or without our participation, in the locality. The historical account will develop further into the past and future, as several photographers have determined to follow the future developments whatever they are.

● Peter Luck is a photographer and researcher of urban and industrial history specialising in London and the lower Thames. He was formerly an architect

For more information, see Richard Mabey: *The Unofficial Countryside Little Toller 2010* (first published 1973); Paul Farley & Michael Symmons Roberts: *Edgelands Vintage 2010*; Jason Orton & Ken Worpole: *The New English Landscape Field Station 2013*.

↑ Old excavation, trees on landfill, becomes quietly beautiful. Monochrome photographs by Peter Luck  
 ↑↑ On landfill, enigmatic survival  
 ↑↑↑ Uses are still sought for areas of surviving yards and floor-plates

# HEALTHY URBAN PLANNING?

*Daniel Black counts the costs of modern living and illustrates the importance of local-leadership*



Every day 38 million tonnes of crude oil sets off by sea somewhere in the world. Just over 100 years ago this number was zero. In other words, the rate of oil consumption has grown 2 billion times faster than population growth.

The UK government has called climate change 'one of the greatest public health threats of the 21st century'. Its first national Climate Change Risk Assessment (2012) reveals that impacts are expected across all sectors: disruption of transport networks and communications, increased competition for water, energy and materials, and flooding and coastal erosion.

The Environment Agency estimated that the 2007 floods cost £3.2bn. One of the primary issues faced by flood victims was lack of potable water. DEFRA reported that farming fell 14 per cent in 2011-12 due to unusual weather. We do not know for certain if these extreme events are a result of man-made climate change, but we do know that five of the wettest years in the last half-century have been post-2000. Not only does our climate appear to be changing more rapidly, but our health is deteriorating. The UK now spends more money (£11bn per year) on the treatment of physical inactivity and obesity than on the entire transport system.

Most urban designers know that 21st century lifestyles are unsustainable, yet many still design settlements built to that specification. In so doing, urban design

appears to have shrugged of its utopian roots. It has become a strange hybrid of paint-by-numbers master planning and marginal street design.

## SUPERFICIAL SUSTAINABILITY

We now have so many impact assessment methods that there is a real sense of impact assessment fatigue. The limitations of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) have long been recognised, hence the legal evolution of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA), created to consider the strategic anticipation of alternatives upstream. The government has acknowledged that a weakness of EIA is the lack of stakeholder engagement, particularly with the public and with non-statutory stakeholders. More recently, it has been argued that SA/SEA suffers from similar issues: a 2010 government report acknowledged the inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of SA/SEA citing lack of skills, wider stakeholder participation and clear spatial focus. These legal and policy drivers provide consultants with work, but their impact on the health of the planet is marginal.

Transport appraisal faces the same challenges as EIA and SEA, and is similarly hamstrung by policy and legislation. Other more recent appraisal mechanisms, such as *Building for Life*, have also attempted to plug this gap, but with little quality assurance or resources, and a starting list of objectives that is often at odds with

local policy, one can't help but feel it was doomed from the start.

## NEW MODELS OF DELIVERY

Yet as the old cliché reminds us: out of crisis comes opportunity, albeit one that needs complex negotiation and, above all, strong local leadership. For example, the extended invalidity of the volume housing sector has prompted some asset-holders with long-term interests, such as public authorities and housing associations, to take courage from overseas exemplars, re-think out-dated delivery models, and put themselves in the driving seat. Bristol City Council, under its new Mayor, George Ferguson, has created a Property Board that unites different departments. Though too early to measure success, local initiatives like this do provide the potential for a paradigm shift. With this in mind, the following three case studies on different topics and at different scales illustrate the importance of local leadership at every level of urban planning.

## WATER – SMALL SCALE

Our health is dependent on many things, but water comes top. Although completed back in 1998, Hockerton Housing Project in Nottingham is still a pioneering example of autonomous water supply and closed-loop local waste management. Water consumption is divided into three distinct systems: high grade potable; medium grade non-potable; and untreated water for irrigation.

For the drinking water, rainwater is collected from glazed conservatory roofs and slate porches with a crude solids removal trap at the entrance to each downpipe; the water is stored underground in interconnected tanks that ensure long dwell time to enable particles to settle; the water is then pumped out through three filters. It requires regular, but simple maintenance.

For baths, showers, toilets and non-potable taps, surface water run-off from roads and fields is collected via swales, then pumped to a storage pond/reservoir where it is supplied via gravity feed through filters before going in to a holding tank. The site is self-sufficient in water and residents use an average of 54 litres a day, 32 per cent better than Code for Sustainable Homes level 6.

The black water from toilets is treated using a reed-bed filtering system that

← Hockerton  
(Nottinghamshire) housing  
and lake, receptor for all  
human waste on site and  
clean enough to swim in  
(Credit: Hockerton Housing  
Project)

forms part of an aquaculture lake that reaches EEC bathing quality standards, thereby providing a natural swimming pool and leisure facility. Though land take is relatively high for wetland systems, advantages are: low maintenance, resistant to shock loading, no power supply needed, very low operating costs, rich in biodiversity, provides leisure facility and is aesthetically pleasing.

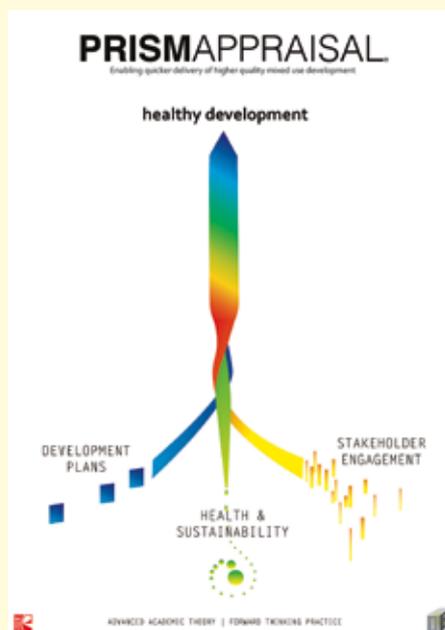
The success of this project was reliant on the energy and enterprise of the resident-developers. With Localism, genuine high-level political support for custom-build and public equity in the mix, surely it's only fear that stands in the way.

#### APPRAISAL – URBAN EXTENSION

In 2012, South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) commissioned db+a and the University of West of England to help with the stakeholder engagement and independent appraisal of the spatial plan for the north Bristol urban extension, Cribbs-Patchway (5,700 units), and feed into the SA/SEA work. The north fringe of Bristol is the economic powerhouse of the South West; yet residents of the surrounding neighbourhoods are unable to find work there, levels of deprivation are high, and the public realm is based entirely around the convenience of car users. The justification for the urban extension was the need to rebalance the whole area and create a new, less-car dominated urban centre.

SGC have a Herculean task on their hands: three volume developers are at different stages of the planning process, and while the area is located within Bristol City Region, it's under SGC's administration. Given the very limited time available, we agreed to run two PRISMAPPRAISAL events, one as part of the plan development and another as part of the formal consultation period. Each workshop involved around 80 people on a range of issues identified by us and verified by SGC and the stakeholder group. Unsurprisingly, there was no magic cure but there were valuable lessons to take forward.

The PRISMAPPRAISAL process highlighted the main issues facing the area, such as the unresolved discussions between the two local authorities on retail allocation and education provision, the gaps in evidence base, and the lack of integration between individual



masterplans. The output of each event was a comprehensive, but concise list of actions to take forward.

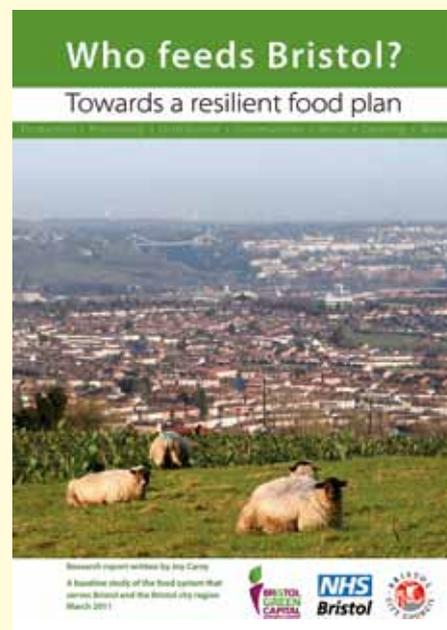
The two key lessons were that practitioners need to engage with local authorities much further upstream, and that resources could have been saved if developers undertook to commission an independent appraisal process that would not only ensure comprehensive development, but also satisfy the local authority and the community that they were doing all they could to meet the local aspirations.

As the land is in private hands, SGC is limited to resource-intensive development control. Sensible negotiations could provide a route as long as the right processes are in place. Either way, local leadership and inclusivity are essential, both in negotiation and appraisal.

#### FOOD – CITY SCALE

Food is a daily concern, and yet, particularly in urban areas, responsibility for its delivery remains outside of people's control. In 2011 NHS Bristol published *Who feeds Bristol?* (Carey, J.), a descriptive analysis of its food system. This report points out that cities are not just consumers of food, but generators of 'potentially valuable resources of heat, energy and organic waste'. It provides recommendations for the integration of food into the management of existing settlements and the planning and design

↙ Prism appraisal process  
↓ Cover of report examining  
Bristol's food supply by  
Joy Carey, 2011 (photo by  
Juliet Dearburgh, Bristol City  
Council)



of new development, including the establishment of a Food Policy Council (FPC). Established in Bristol in 2011, this is 'a small group of committed individuals with expertise and local involvement in food production, preparation, distribution and retail'. In addition to a variety of food supply chain representatives, Bristol's FPC members include agricultural and planning academics, health professionals and politicians.

It is too early to say what impact the FPC is having, but given that emerging development management policy has not yet picked up on the report, it seems safe to assume that it will not be straight-forward.

This recommendation for a cross-sector group on food appears around the same time as the introduction (via the Health and Social Care Act 2012) of Local Authority Health and Wellbeing Boards. These offer a perfect opportunity for urban planners to rediscover that utopian vision. The central message from the report is a call for a 'strategic integration of agriculture and food into the way cities are designed, planned and managed...that builds a mutually supportive relationship between the city and its hinterland', and highlights specifically the important 'role of planners in shaping city food systems'.

● Daniel Black, Director of db+a, is an independent consultant. For more information please visit [www.db-associates.co.uk](http://www.db-associates.co.uk)

# URBAN DESIGN IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE



Some forty years of communism – from the Second World War until 1989 – have left a tangible mark on the urban settlement structure of Eastern Europe. Soviet spatial policy was diffused throughout the countries of the Comecon, founded in 1949 as counterpart to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Translating communist political, economic and social objectives while borrowing modernist urban design principles akin to those in the West, these spatial interventions affected the fabric of many cities devastated by the war or still standing. The ideological pursuit of levelling the importance of dominant cities,

often capitals, aimed to transform the whole Eastern European city network.

## COMMUNIST IMPACT ON CITIES

Arguably the two most noticeable signs of this urban policy were heavy-polluting industries, sparsely sheltered by rows of trees, together with large-scale prefabricated housing estates whose design was dictated by the assembly technology. Both were usually implanted into the heart of the urban fabric or on the edge of historic remains. An early notorious example is the Nova Huta smelter plant on the fringe of Krakow, where iron ore and bauxite were imported on designated rail tracks from thousands of miles away, processed and exported to the Soviet Union, leaving only spoils and intense air pollution behind. The workers were housed next to the plant in an estate designed according to modernist principles – inspired by pioneering developments in the pre-war Soviet Union. Since the demise of communism, the plant is defunct and the housing estate has become very desirable.

Of course, urban development varied during the communist era, not least due to different land and property ownership rules in Eastern European countries but, on the whole, top-down planning prevented urban sprawl. Some cities resisted blanket interventions. Examples are the reconstruction of the completely destroyed old towns of Warsaw and Wrocław in their previous forms, the preservation of Prague which saw little war damage, as well as more remote areas left untouched by communist levelling.

Although outside communist rule, Vienna and West Berlin were affected by the communist era, as they were deprived of half or all their hinterlands. Confined, they preserved their already high-density urban fabric and provided urban services from within, due to a lack of space for urban sprawl. Ironically, these cities which pioneered the ideas of the compact and sustainable city, underwent market-led sprawl once opened up again.

Apart from unforeseen events such as wars, natural disasters, political sea-changes like the demise of the Iron Curtain, and autocratic planning rules which have strongly affected

cities in both Western and Eastern Europe, urban change is generally inert. This also applies to Eastern European cities which have preserved many features of their pre-war urban settlement patterns. Taking a very long historical view, it could be argued that settlement patterns reach centuries back to the Middle Ages. Historic atlases show a clear difference of settlement patterns in the centre of Europe, from Denmark to Benelux, Germany, the Czech Republic, Western Poland (Silesia) and Italy, as opposed to the larger centralised countries with their oversized capitals east and west from there. This difference can be attributed to the political and organisational structures of city states and church protectorates in the centre and by empire and absolute rule on either side – the Iberia of the Conquistadores to the Swedish and Austro-Hungarian empires, and tsarist Russia.

### POST COMMUNISM CHANGES

After communism, the Eastern European countries have undergone almost a quarter of a century of neo-liberal urban change, notwithstanding their alignment with EU membership to EU structural objectives of global competitiveness, regional balance and social inclusion – expressed in spatial policies, such as the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP). In record time they caught up with western suburban sprawl – housing, shopping malls, logistics nodes, mass private mobility and related road networks – and aided by migration, ballooning and shrinking cities with increased social and economic polarisation and privatised gated urban spaces.

Eastern European countries and their cities have undergone three exceptionally contrasting phases of urban change pre- and post-World War Two. They were a unique field of experimentation and could now become invaluable test cases of contradictory urban design theories. Nevertheless, spatial development varied across these countries and their cities, as well as across the three main phases of urban change under different political rule. The aim of this issue on Central

and Eastern Europe is to show a selected range of responses by city administrations, urban designers, and inhabitants, to these rapid and intense geo-political changes at different levels: neighbourhoods, cities and metropolitan regions.

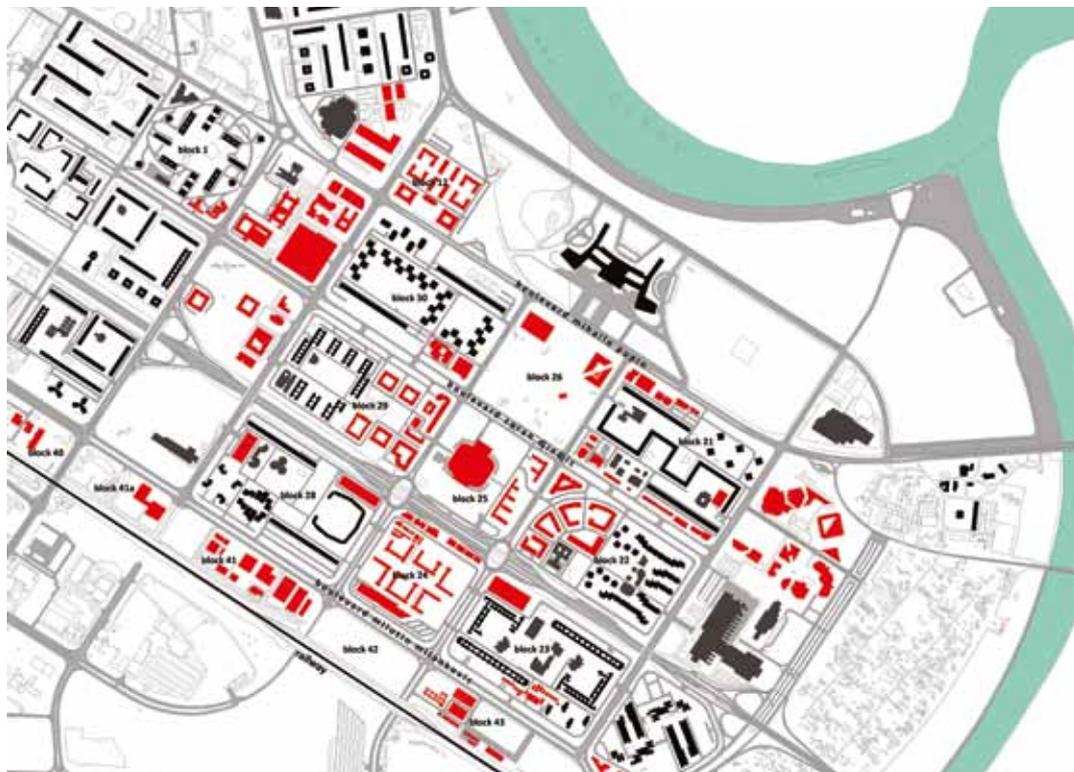
The examples of New Belgrade and Bucharest illustrate the three phases and current urban design solutions. In Belgrade, spontaneous action took over during the hiatus period which brought both life and chaos, and relegated planning to post-hoc rectification, while Bucharest experienced a lull between central control and free-market principles, which was soon regulated from above. These contrasting contexts affected the way that urban design has changed past, often monotonous, megalomaniac interventions, and adjusted the remaining fabric to new citizen demands and socio-economic forces.

Reusing large amounts of brownfield land in post-communist Europe has created a need for environmental management, with lessons from Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland and former German Democratic Republic which could be learned in the West. At the other end of the scale, fine-tuning is going on in many cities; in Budapest, as in many other cities, high streets are suffering a decline and require imaginative urban design solutions, including temporary uses. Older urban structures, such as the famous Red Vienna housing estates have high quality communal spaces. Vienna's population growth requires new communal housing and research shows the difficulties of attaining that interwar quality for their open spaces. At an urban scale, many Eastern European cities were lacking a convivial public realm including open and green spaces, something that Vilnius is rectifying at the city-scale despite spontaneous sprawl. At a larger regional scale, urban designers are aiming for greater cooperation and coordination between cities on the Baltic Sea. The last example shows how the citizens are intervening directly to affirm their rights to their part of the city against global financial investment.

● Judith Ryser

# TIMELESS MODERNITY, SHIFTING IDEOLOGIES

Aleksandra Stupar and Mira Milakovic describe changes on a key New Belgrade street



The focus of this article is the relationship between traditional and modern concepts of street design and regulation, which have been overlapping, growing and declining for decades.

The Boulevard of Jurija Gagarina in New Belgrade is an interesting example of a street constructed during the 1960s. The original modernist idea is still recognisable in impressive prefabricated housing blocks, shaped according to the ideas of the original Athens Charter and the Modern movement. The road, originally planned as an important transit artery started to transform its landscape during the period of transition in the 1990s. The position of New Belgrade, its available empty space and existing infrastructure have triggered a new wave of change, attracting the attention of city authorities, investors and entrepreneurs. However, these transformations have not been supported by planning concepts which would have improved the overall condition and quality of life in the area. In the face of economic efficiency and profit, this planning has tried to tackle the sensitive issues of spatial organisation, social cohesion, redefined urban needs and questionable sustainability.

The case of the Boulevard of Jurija Gagarina represents a testimony of planning ideas, efforts and failures, generated by multiple shifts and turbulences at all levels of Yugoslav-Serbian society. Simultaneously, it is an expression of the urban vibrancy, dynamism and uncontrolled forces which can be identified in many contemporary cities.

## SHAPING A MODERNIST FRAMEWORK

Designed under the strong influence of CIAM and the Modern movement, the original streetscape of New Belgrade followed the principles of the Athens Charter. The traditional development of street space was negated, while the open mega-blocks, with a lot of 'sun, space and greenery', were promoted. This approach changed previous morphological patterns, as well as the size and scale of urban blocks and streets. Car-oriented transport became the focus of the new concept, putting pedestrian spaces inside blocks and enabling free movement and recreation by their inhabitants.

The boulevard represents a specific area of New Belgrade which was designed according to official plans. However, its development was shaped by conflicting social, political and economic interests. At first, the area around the Boulevard was mostly planned as an industrial area, only partially inhabitable. However, subsequent amendments from 1965 changed the original idea imposing exclusive residential developments. The main artery – the Boulevard of Jurija Gagarina itself – has become the backbone of the area consisting of several types of open blocks. Initially, the street was planned with two types of structures on the left and right side:

- blocks 45 and 70 (along the river) have an identical spatial organisation consisting of two types of elements or buildings. They are positioned (and repeated) in a park setting,

↑ The urban tissue in New Belgrade today. Black – residential structures built in accordance with Modernist principles (up to 1980); grey – public services also built in Modern times; red – new structures, mainly housing and commercial activities (post 1980)

while car access to buildings and parking spaces is provided by a few internal streets and blind alleys;

- blocks 61, 62, 63 and 64 represent a symmetrical macro-composition which consists of two regular linear series of residential buildings, linked by the central axis. Vehicular and pedestrian traffic is strictly segregated – vehicles at ground level, while pedestrian movement is above, integrating public, free space and access to residential structures.

Envisioned as a transit route, the Boulevard of Jurija Gagarina is 60 metres wide, with six lanes for cars, two tram lanes and large green buffer zones between the road and the buildings. However, the area remained on the outskirts of the city, with a prevailing residential function and without intensive development. Consequently, the boulevard acts as an access road to existing residential buildings.

### FACING TURBULENCES

The beginning of the 1980s was marked by the economic crisis which also influenced the efficiency of Yugoslav's self-management socialism. Changing conditions and general instability in the system and society triggered a number of other shifts which finally led to the disintegration of Yugoslavia in 1991. The economy began to move to an open market, introducing privatisation, decentralisation and deregulation.

The local authorities ignored previous models of development, and refused to define alternative long-term strategies and visions. They mostly followed ad-hoc decisions enabling the uncontrolled commercialisation of urban space. Consequently, during the last decade of the 20th century, the process of transition was visible in urban planning as a unique paradox: decisions were actually centralised, but their implementation and legitimacy were achieved by a number of decentralised decisions from various parties in the planning process. This situation created fertile ground for corrupt behaviour and uncontrolled private growth, while the importance of the public good was neglected. The contradictions of the new system were reflected in architecture too, shaping a new landscape.

Offering unused spaces and well-developed infrastructure, New Belgrade gradually reshaped its socialist image and generated a new identity. The urban tissue was invaded by new activities and structures which did not comply with the original concept, but despite its inconsistent, hybrid style, this part of Belgrade increased its significance and value.

The streets of New Belgrade have changed their physiognomy too. The Boulevard of Jurija Gagarina became a social arena (instead of a transit route), which needed a formal and functional continuity. The construction of new buildings started during the 1980s, when first small-scale shopping malls appeared along the street, in the former green areas. However, the significant transformation began after 2000, when foreign investments intensified and a number of European and global corporations reached the Serbian market. New Belgrade was recognised as a perfect site for business, services, exclusive residential buildings and new shopping malls.



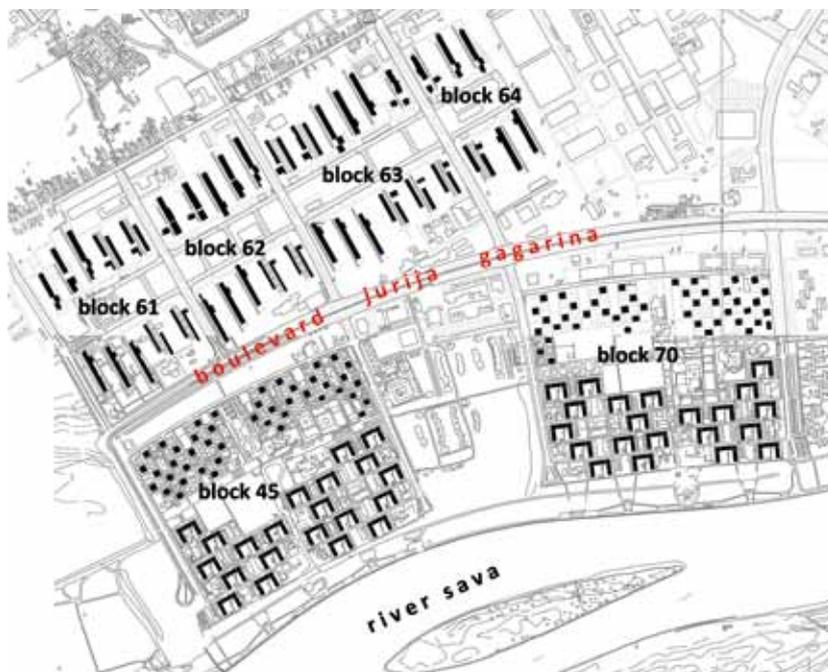
The introduction of a postmodern paradigm launched a different design concept, promoting a traditional model of the street. The Boulevard of Jurija Gagarina was gradually transformed into a compact urban form, with high density development and decreased green areas. These changes do not represent the outcome of planning visions, strategies or procedures to improve general environmental quality (Bajic Brkovic, 2009). Instead, they are a consequence of different investments which took advantage of the flexibility and insufficient determination of the incomplete modernist framework.

### OVERLAPPING PATTERNS

The present constellation of power, interests and needs in the Boulevard of Jurija Gagarina mirrors 'the crisis of a non-concept'. The new development is clearly visible along the street, and the open spaces of housing blocks are occupied by the commercial drive of private capital, expanding its boundaries into public areas. Demarcation lines are set between physical structures from two epochs creating a distorted image of this space. At present, it is full of contradictions, which coexist and overlap, shaping a surreal environment (Stupar, 2006).

The streetscape of the Boulevard of Jurija Gagarina changed its density, function and overall narrative, all of which have been visible for almost half a century. Its empty land has been filled with

↑ Block 1 in New Belgrade: the model of the original plan and current situation – unplanned built structures



↑ Block 21 in New Belgrade: the model of the original plan  
 ↑↑ Original structures along Boulevard Jurija Gagarina – a zone initially planned for industry, but transformed to a residential area  
 ↑↑↑ The Boulevard of Jurija Gagarina after the transformation

traditional street scenery, but the lack of a vision and a unifying plan has totally distorted the existing architectural expression (Milakovic and Vukmirovic, 2011).

In terms of the physical environment, the construction of new buildings has threatened both the public space along the boulevard and the spaces inside the blocks. The current and planned construction activities are already beyond the original proposed capacities, while new high-rise buildings do not respect the rules of positioning, orientation, vertical regulation and environmentally responsible morphology. The level of comfort and the ecological quality of urban life has decreased. Meanwhile, the higher density of inhabitants and users has brought a significant increase in the number of cars, making existing parking areas insufficient. Consequently, public spaces and pedestrian areas are being used as informal parking spaces, and some have even become legalised.

From a social perspective, the main problem is related to an altered use of public spaces. What is taking place is a clash of two opposing concepts – the modernist model, promoting the internal space of a block as a gathering place, and the post-modern

model, which underlines the importance of a street for public life. In spite of this ambivalent perception of space, general opinion is positive because all users appreciate a new daily dynamic, for both blocks and streets.

The sustainability of the boulevard and its surrounding area remains questionable. The intensification of activities has increased employment possibilities and created a more buoyant local economy and market, but new activities are not evenly distributed and still do not provide a satisfactory balance and variety of services. Consequently, some office and commercial space remains empty, confirming the lack of spatial and economic strategies which could stabilise supply and demand.

The flexibility of the modernist space has been brutally tested and confirmed, but the accumulated problems demand immediate and forward-looking strategies

### CONCLUSION

The transformation of the Boulevard of Jurija Gagarina has been a metaphor for discontinuity and the turmoils which the ex-Yugoslav and Serbian people have faced since the 1990s. The overlapping concepts, unsynchronised actions and conflicting interest have shaped the morphology of this space, creating a confusing urban landscape and a distorted image of anticipated modernity. Disregarding the original ideas and urban regulation, but benefiting from their generous spatial forms and available empty space, the latest phase of aggressive and largely uncontrolled urban intensification has brought an unexpected vibrancy to a previously dormant residential area. However, the newly created urban-economic system is not stable and needs proper tuning to contextual changes.

During the last two decades, the flexibility of the modernist space has been brutally tested and confirmed, but the accumulated problems and actual local and global challenges demand immediate, resolute and forward-looking strategies and actions. The future of New Belgrade, its mega-blocks and boulevards, should be defined in a well-balanced social, economic and environmental framework, while being a hot-spot for all contemporary, innovative and creative impulses of its further modernity. ●

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# FROM INDUSTRIAL TO MIXED USE LANDSCAPES

A team from the University of Bucharest's Centre for Environmental Research and Impact Studies review shifts in land use and form



Urban areas are constantly evolving due to events that shape political, social and economic stakeholders' priorities. Sometimes these have drastic consequences. In Romania, it was the demise of the communist regime in December 1989 which brought an end to the accelerated industrialisation process and centralised planning, and opened the way for the invisible hand of the market economy.

## BUCHAREST'S DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Located in a tabular plain with few restrictions on urban development, Bucharest, the capital of Romania, was first documented in the 15th century. During the communist era of 1947-1989, it developed a highly diversified and large industrial sector. With an urban area of 238 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of almost two million inhabitants, Bucharest is today the most important urban area in the Central Eastern part of Europe.

The diversity of urban design approaches in Bucharest is a reflection of the many changes in its political system. During the 20th century alone, there were four stages of urban restructuring:

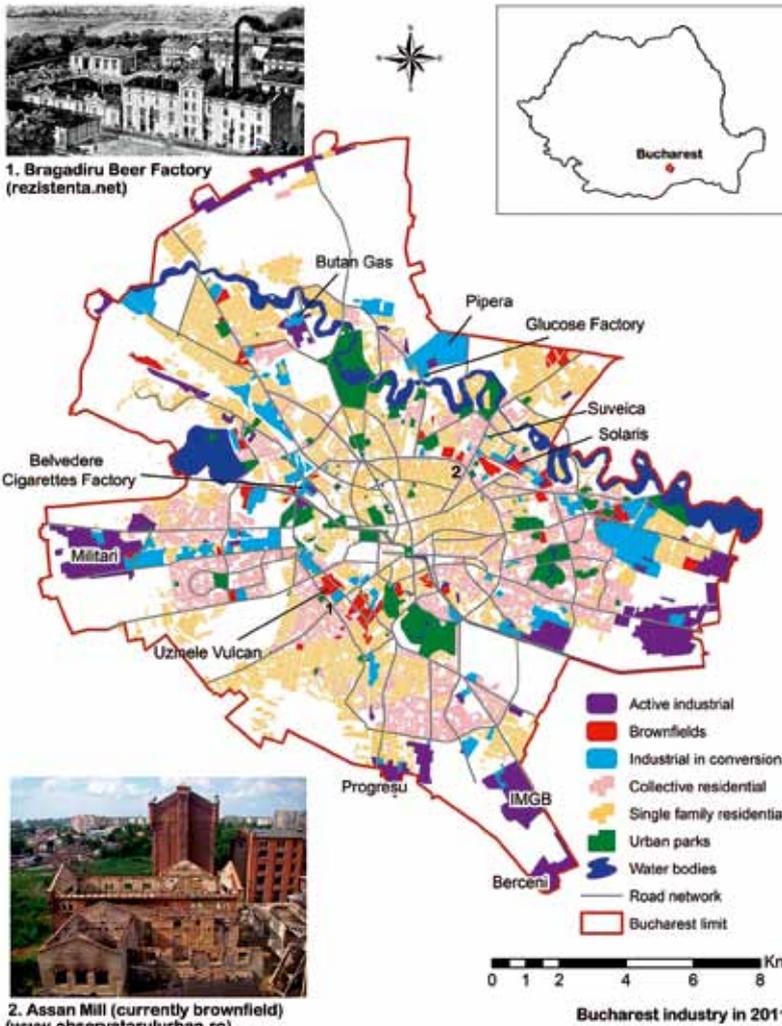
- the first attempts of implementing urban planning measures date from before the First World War
- between the two World Wars, Romania was a

constitutional monarchy and the main trend in urban planning was to systematise and mix small industrial units with single family residential areas

- the third stage was the communist era, characterised by the emergence of large scale industrial areas surrounded by collective housing for their workforces
- the current stage, the post-communist era is defined by market economy drivers, with one of the results being the demise of the large industrial estates.

The communist period started in Romania after the Second World War and in contrast with the mainly small scale industrialisation which characterised the country before 1947, the communist regime imposed a fast and intensive industrialisation process at a national scale, leading to each town having at least one industrial plant, even if it was not economically viable. Also, some cities were turned into major industrial clusters with one or, in the case of Bucharest and a few other cities, many specialisations. The industrialisation process was carried out according to five-year plans and focused on maximising productivity. During this era, almost all industrial units were state-owned, achieved through nationalisation, and the economy

↑ Views of Pipera Industrial Platform



- new laws which eased access to international financing and facilitated compliance with European requirements regarding the ownership of industrial units and the environment.

In Bucharest the main structural and functional changes were caused by restructuring industrial sites through:

- privatisation; as part of Romania’s integration process into the European Union, the industrial units had to function and survive without state subsidies in competitive markets
- closure as a result of failed privatisation
- relocation due to legislative and economic pressure
- conversion; aimed at replacing old industrial activities with new and competitive economic uses, the side effect was also the reduction of adverse environmental impacts.

The city underwent a new phase of restructuring in 2000, when the remaining industrial areas entered an intensive reconversion process. After renovation or demolition and reconstruction, they now host administrative buildings, offices residential areas, commercial facilities, and services, besides some newly emerged industrial activities.

**PIPERA INDUSTRIAL PLATFORM**

The Pipera Industrial Platform was built during the communist period between 1970–80, and is located in north-east Bucharest, next to an industrial core dating from the beginning of the 20th century, and containing the Glucose Factory – a producer of raw material for medicine and the food industry. The Pipera Industrial Platform specialised in top industries like electronics, aeronautics and IT. It also contained units specialising in wood processing, food industry and construction materials. At the end of the communist era, the Pipera Industrial Platform represented a homogenous industrial area, accessed only by its workers. The only spatial discontinuity was represented by two educational units with an industrial form, which complemented the area and where the learning processes benefited from the local infrastructure.

After the demise of communism, the Pipera Industrial Platform was among the first targets for restructuring and conversion in Bucharest. Only one industrial specialism survived the conversion, namely the construction materials industry represented by the Cement Factory and the newly founded Holcim (also a cement producer). The main process which took place was the conversion from industrial uses to office-based service provision, by both maintaining industrial buildings while changing their use, and through demolitions and new projects. A wood processing plant which occupied almost a quarter of the former industrial area was bought, the industrial buildings kept, and new spaces available for rent. Nevertheless, structural changes in this part of the Pipera Industrial area are rare, and new buildings are only found near the main roads. Almost half of the industrial area has undergone a functional shift in the last 23 years from industrial uses to business and service activity. The former buildings were replaced by new and modern headquarters.

was centralised. Immediately after the end of the Second World War, 5,278 industrial units were inventoried in Bucharest, reflecting the low industrial concentration in the economy.

The communist era was spectacular in many aspects, urban planning being one of them. This is when the most important changes occurred in Romanian cities, and especially Bucharest. The capital city was transformed both through the emergence of many extremely large collective residential areas and the construction of monumental buildings, the most important of which is the House of Parliament. Processes like merging different industrial units with related or complementary activities, and the creation of large industrial parks were predominant. Ten years into the communist era, the number of industrial units in Bucharest was estimated at less than 300, due to the concentration of industry, and in 1989 only 156 were left, which covered 11.25 per cent of the city’s area.

**POST-COMMUNIST URBAN DESIGN**

The political and economic changes brought about by the fall of communism were also reflected in the development and urban design of cities. The transformations occurring in the industrial sector in Romania were triggered by a series of factors, most notably:

- the change in the political regime which modified society’s priorities
- the implementation of a market economy system based on competition

↑ Bucharest industry in 2011 showing the key industrial sites

Currently some important companies are located here like Oracle, HP, Raiffeisen, Orange, Vodafone, Nestle, Kraft, JTI, P&G, Veolia and Softwin.

The functional diversity of the area has increased through the construction of residential areas, shopping centres and the opening of the Aviation Museum. Currently, the conversion process continues with projects implemented on the site of the former wood processing plant and in nearby areas which were mainly vacant land. The most important project however is the construction of a new residential area and all the necessary urban infrastructure to the south of the former industrial platform.

From an urban design perspective, this shift has led to an increase of in the land use coefficient and height levels in the former Pipera Industrial Platform area. The area has also changed in

aesthetic terms, from the grey landscape which characterised communist construction to light and reflecting materials; from cubic forms to more fluid lines, and construction with glass and ceramics, not just concrete and steel. While the industrial infrastructure such as railroads and water wells was destroyed or no longer needed, the existing urban infrastructure of roads and utilities is increasingly overloaded.

The Pipera Industrial Platform represents a very complex example of industrial conversion after communism. There are currently over 500,000 square meters of offices, almost a quarter of Bucharest's total office floorspace. Despite its drawbacks, this area has become a significant business and service area in Bucharest over the last few years, second in importance only to the city centre. ●

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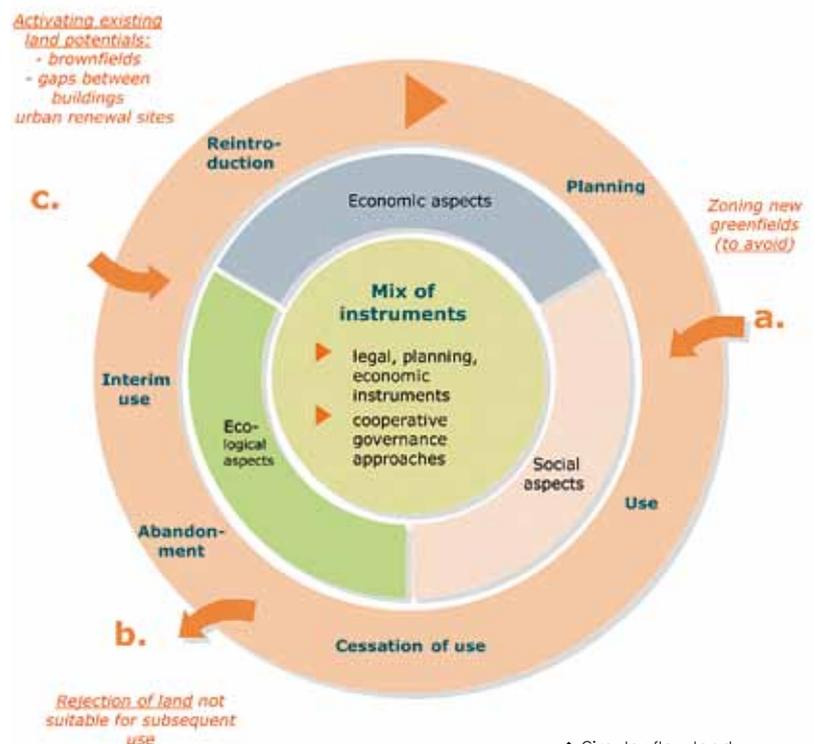
# CIRCULAR FLOW LAND USE MANAGEMENT

Anna Starzewska-Sikorska, Jirina Bergatt Jackson, Maic Verbuecheln, Thomas Preuss and Uwe Ferber set out a better approach to regeneration

## BACKGROUND

A transition to a green economy demands more sustainable urban land use to limit, among other things, land take and soil sealing by development, as set out by the European Environment Agency's *Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe* (COM 2011/571). For decades urban land take in Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries has been rising. Over the last 20 years these regions have been faced with fundamental political and structural changes. The transformation from a socialist to a market economy has left these countries with an exceptionally large burden of dispersed land use patterns. During the transition process, CEE industries rapidly became redundant, unable to compete in terms of efficiency and the marketability of their product ranges. Restructuring and the decline of industries in turn has caused a dramatic increase in the number of brownfield sites. The problem of industrial land inherited from the socialist era is common across cities in the CEE countries and it has started to be seen both as a barrier and an opportunity for further spatial development of these cities and regions.

However, economic growth and the build-up of new infrastructure in post-socialist countries have happened mostly in an unsustainable manner leading to enormous land consumption. This demands better land management, governance skills and a change of land use behaviour in CEE countries. The EU funded project *Circular Flow*



*Land Use Management (CircUse)* has proposed an approach which supports sustainable urban development and provides examples from CEE countries of how to implement a new land use management approach.

↑ Circular flow land use management: the phases, potentials and instruments. Source: Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning (BBR) (Ed.) (2006): *Perspektive Flächenkreislaufwirtschaft*

**MICRO-REGION TRNAVA**



**THE PRINCIPLES**

Circular flow land use management focuses on the potential of developing existing buildings of interest and reusing brownfield sites. The entire lifecycle of a site, from planning to occupation, cessation of use, abandonment, interim use and reintroduction into the economic cycle lies at the heart of this idea. In an ideal scenario, this vision would be accomplished when only land which is currently in use is used for new settlement initiatives. Nevertheless, including small areas of previously unused land for development is not categorically ruled out. Circular flow land use management is an open system: abandoned land without the potential for re-use drops out of the

↑ The municipalities of the Micro-Region Trnava. Source: City of Trnava  
 ↑↑ A proposed development study along the river Elbe in Usti nad Labem. Source: The Usti region

development cycle, and therefore is no longer included in settlement statistics.

**PILOT PROJECTS**

Four pilot regions in former socialist countries, among others, have implemented the idea of circular flow land use management using specialised action plans at local or regional levels. The pilot regions are: Trnava in Slovakia, Usti in the Czech Republic, Piekary in Poland, and Freiberg in former East Germany. The results of such action plans can also help Western European countries which in many regions are confronted with economic restructuring processes and huge underused areas e.g. new brownfield sites. The examples show organisational solutions like using local operators land use management, compensation planting for re-greening ‘brownfields’, brownfield land reuse management plans on micro-regional level, how to combine ERDF funds with national funds, and the development of action plans.

**MICRO-REGION TRNAVA (SLOVAKIA)**

The municipality of Trnava, with 66,000 inhabitants, is located 40 km east of Bratislava. The Trnava micro-region with 87,000 inhabitants consists of the City of Trnava and twelve other municipalities. During the last decade the region has undergone very dynamic economic development. After the demise of socialism, Western European and Asian companies have invested in new production plants, e.g. the car company PSA (France) or Samsung (South Korea). All these companies have built up their production lines on greenfield sites, which are attractive because of their location along newly built highways and motorway feeders with public investment. Furthermore employees’ wages are lower than in Western countries. However, while this has created thousands of new jobs, it has exhausted the capacity of social infrastructure, housing and leisure facilities, as well as creating a shortage of available land for other development in Trnava. This in turn has generated a major population flow towards the suburbs.

The action plan for implementing circular flow land use management in the Trnava micro-region includes the following steps: an inventory of specific information available; a regional workshop with stakeholders; the identification of potential for underused areas and development of a joint strategy; and information dissemination and support for developers.

The delivery of the action plan will be based on an agreement between the City of Trnava and participating municipalities in the suburban micro-region. The main coordination instruments include:

- regular coordination meetings and workshops
- the creation of a strategic development document on the re-use of available underused or abandoned land and properties, and
- a website providing up-to-date information regarding these areas.

The Trnava micro-region has the potential to gain a competitive advantage from the development of networking and inter-communal cooperation. It presents a shift from a competitive to a collaborative strategy across the whole region.

### REVITALISATION OF BROWNFIELD SITES IN USTI (CZECH REPUBLIC)

The City of Usti, with about 94,000 inhabitants, became heavily industrialised in the 19th century. Industries such as mining and chemicals were the city's economic assets. Since 1990, the economic and social restructuring of the city has created industrial and other brownfield sites (about 12 per cent of the city built up area) in a mixed urban context. In parallel, the Usti region has seen a great increase in urbanised land, which does not reflect population development trends.

The objective of the pilot project in the Usti region was to look more closely at the revitalisation of the brownfield areas of Krásné Brezno and Neštémice. These sites are partially affected by the flood plain of the River Elbe and are frequently bisected by the international rail track running from Berlin to Prague and Vienna. The aim of the pilot project is to improve these districts of the city by identifying and reducing development risks, and making the location more friendly, clean and green. Improvements considered for these areas have several objectives. Firstly they aim to support local entrepreneurial activities, secondly to improve the overall image of the place (one of the gateways to the Czech Republic), and thirdly to change local people's perceptions of the whole area. Considering that this is a large site of approximately 140 hectares with many owners (one of three such sites in Ústí), and that for many years the economic performance of the Ústí region has been in decline, the measures considered to achieve these objectives have to be long term and realistic, and they need to be supported by appropriate organisational structures. For this reason as a first step, an urban concept for the area's potential was drawn up. The next steps are being taken by the City of Ústí which started to prepare a new strategic development document in spring 2013.

### REVITALISATION OF BROWNFIELD SITES IN PIEKARY ŚLĄSKIE (POLAND)

Piekary Śląskie is a town in the Katowice agglomeration of Poland, with a population of over 58,000 people. It has a rich industrial past as a centre of mining and metallurgic activities. The population of Piekary Śląskie has been decreasing steadily, and the sustainable development of the town is connected with the redevelopment of brownfield sites located in the Brzeziny Śląskie district.

The tasks for brownfield site redevelopment and marketing have been assigned to the Industrial and Technological Park EkoPark Ltd – established by the city council and a group called Orzel Biały in 2007. In particular, the EkoPark is responsible for the management of sites formerly used for mining activities by preparing ground conditions and infrastructure systems for the sale of these areas for industrial and business purposes. In the CircUse project EkoPark Ltd has been chosen as a model structure for the implementation of the circular land use management concept on areas located in the Brzeziny district in Piekary. At the same time, one of the post-industrial sites in the district (an area of 14 ha) has become a place for investing in re-greening, with tree and shrub planting. The innovative idea of this investment was to combine two functions on a site located between a residential



area and an industrial area. Adjacent to the residential area, a recreation park was established and the remaining land adjacent to the industrial site was designated for buffer planting.

Another innovative concept was connected to ensuring the sustainability of further re-greening and maintenance of the investment area. It was a financial instrument based on using the obligation of compensation planting imposed by Polish law on anyone who removes trees (Nature Protection Law 2004). According to this obligation compensation planting is controlled by the city and directed to the investment site. It means that in practice in each case of compensation planting, the city council indicates the CircUse project investment as a place to fulfil this obligation.

### MASTERPLAN FOR A BROWNFIELD SITE REDEVELOPMENT IN FREIBERG (GERMANY)

The city of Freiberg with 40,000 inhabitants and located in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) is characterised by a medieval historic centre and encompasses industrial urban areas with underground mining. The industrial areas of the city have generally been successfully restructured since 1990. The number of inhabitants of the city is shrinking, but Freiberg has a function as a regional centre with a university and research facilities, and modern technologies, specifically solar panel production, have been established there.

Freiberg intends to pursue inner city development and revitalise large urban brownfield areas for industrial and commercial uses. The main targets include the implementation of the CircUse data management tool to support efficient municipal land management and the implementation of a pilot project. This pilot project concerns the redevelopment of the former porcelain factory Porzeline, which covers more than 4.5 hectares of which about a quarter (11,000 m<sup>2</sup>) is developed.

In the former GDR era, Porzeline was side-lined, and the site was used for mining before it was reused by Porzeline. A masterplan is to be implemented by local stakeholders under the lead of the development agency SAXONIA GmbH, which also owns the pilot site and is responsible for its development. SAXONIA is partly owned by the City of Freiberg and Middle-Saxonia County, therefore

↑ The former porcelain factory Porzeline in Freiberg. Source: Rene Otparlik

close co-operation with the council is guaranteed. The pilot focuses on safety measures on the site and preparing funding for site development to commence. Before that, the demolition of smaller buildings from GDR times was undertaken using ERDF funds. The main historical buildings of the site will be maintained and refurbished. Ideas were discussed for re-using the buildings for the university or a student hall and part of the action plan is the search for developers for the site.

### CONCLUSIONS

In CEE countries there is a strong need to implement a sustainable land use management approach to secure their development potential for housing, industrial and commercial purposes, and to reduce the medium and long term costs of settlement development. CEE regions and cities have taken the first steps towards realising sustainable land use. The implementation of sustainable land use management requires effective co-operation by stakeholders from national, regional, and local levels in order to properly embed the process of circular flow land use management in terms of the concept, organisation and practice. Therefore the existing framework and mosaic of instruments or tools to steer land use have to be applied in a systematic manner. Furthermore there is a need for economic incentives to stimulate stakeholders and decision-makers into reducing land take and strengthening

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inner urban development. However, structural funding can be a problem as it is orientated towards economic not spatial goals, often fostering the use of greenfield sites for development. There is currently no 'one size fits all solution' to stop this, but different approaches do exist, such as the introduction of national targets for land consumption or a reorientation of ERDF funding with a focus on more inner urban development issues.

According to the circular flow land use management principle, the development of brownfield sites is not the only solution. There are more options, like a green use in place of complete abandonment or an interim use. Planning alone is not sufficient and management is necessary to prevent speculation, to apply the 'polluter pays' principle and to allocate subsidies reasonably. For the implementation of such solutions support by ERDF funds are available, as in Saxony. Urban design strategies can make brownfield sites more attractive, as demonstrated by the International Building Exhibition (IBA) at Emscher Park or Fürst Pückler Land (both in Germany), as well as in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais (France). ●

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## RECYCLING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Daniela Patti and Levente Polyak have a new approach to empty property in Budapest



### THE VACANCY ISSUE

In many cities the most unevenly distributed and scarcely available resource is space. For a long time, the real estate sector has been a leading industry in Western cities, accounting for a significant portion of their economic growth, yet in recent years as a consequence of the real estate bubble and resulting financial meltdown, a significant surplus of available space has emerged even in the most dynamic of city economies.

The devastating effect of this crisis on the construction industry has made architects painfully aware of the unsustainability of previous funding mechanisms and development process concepts. Finding themselves in the midst of unfinished construction work and vacant complexes, many architects have begun to think critically about the speculation-based real estate economy, taking into account the limitations of the shrunken market, as well as noticing opportunities in urban areas neglected by official planning mechanisms. They have also grown more inclined to respond to the

needs of local citizens, giving preference to small-scale, community-oriented and often temporary interventions over large-scale construction projects, clearly responding to the reduction of services and funding previously provided by public administrations.

This is why the phenomenon of vacancy is a new concern for urban designers and planners in the post-speculation era. Vacant real estate is an important element of all property systems; otherwise it would be impossible to find flats, shops and offices to rent. However, above a certain level, vacancy is harmful to everyone. While owners pay charges for their unrented properties, they are deteriorating and losing their value. The commercial activity of a neighbourhood is gradually degraded by the presence of vacant properties that are not generating any traffic and are depriving local shops of potential customers. Boarded-up houses and shops worsen public safety in an area, where nobody sees what happens on the street.

For these reasons, some countries levy extra taxes on properties which are vacant for more than 6 months (e.g. England), or have legal means to requisition long-time vacant residential buildings to convert them into social housing (e.g. France). Other countries offer tax breaks for owners who allow social or cultural activities in their empty properties (Czech Republic, Poland), some municipalities create online maps to show available vacant property (Amsterdam), or even devise legal and financial incentives to encourage the temporary use of unrented shops (Vienna).

### VACANCIES IN BUDAPEST

The problem of vacancies is particularly relevant in Budapest, as the city has suffered more from the economic crisis than many other European cities. The recession, combined with many building types becoming obsolete and no longer able to respond to contemporary needs, as well as the mismanagement of real estate properties by private and public owners, has sapped a significant portion of the city's functions and uses. Over 30 per cent of office space is estimated to be vacant in Budapest alone – an estimated one million square metres of wasted space – not to mention the countless empty storefronts, abandoned residential buildings and even commercial complexes.

With non-governmental organisations (NGOs) starting a public debate around the issue of vacancy in 2012, its dangers have gradually been recognised also by representatives of the public administration, who launched a call for regeneration projects. Without interventions by politicians and planning authorities, the city would witness even more shops and services going out of business with streets losing their appeal to shoppers and consequently their pedestrian traffic.

### COMPETITION SPUR

In 2013, the City opened a competition to allocate funds for refurbishing public spaces, with special attention to empty or underused buildings that might accommodate community uses. The Planning Department focused on the inner city and, in particular on the 7th district as an important zone to address vacancy with City funding. Early in the competition process, it became clear that the regeneration of public spaces proposed in many



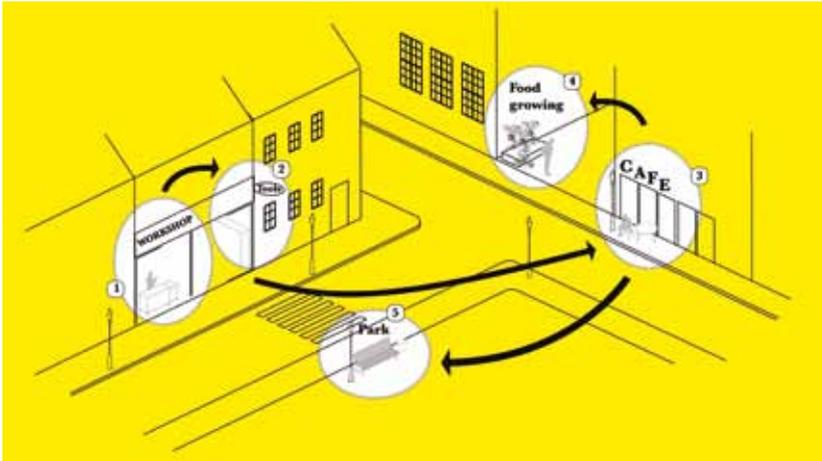
applications prepared by district municipalities not only contained new landscape and street designs, but also guidelines on transportation and refurbishment of spaces and functions. The potential new funding signalled a chance to break with previous policies. In contrast with large scale, top-down development projects, it emphasised the importance of cooperation between various stakeholders, involving a diversity of expertise and experiences. The competition also empowered NGOs which had already been working in participatory processes or real estate management of certain areas, for example KÉK, the Hungarian Contemporary Architecture Centre.

### KLAUZÁL TÉR

The case of Klauzál Tér is an eloquent example of the complexity of handling vacancies. The square, situated in Pest's 7th district, formerly the heart of the Budapest ghetto, is today in the middle of an area which is quickly developing a pulsing nightlife, and therefore has high potential for day and night time tourism. The square is the only significant open space in the area, with a small green park, a concrete sports field and dilapidated street furniture surrounded by countless vacant properties in the adjacent streets.

The design task for Klauzál Tér is closely linked to on-going and anticipated demographic changes, which raises the challenge of how to re-connect generations and isolated social groups through activities in the square and its surroundings. The project proposed by KÉK to the district municipality consists of the renovation of the

← Klauzál Tér with temporary uses. Image by Wonderland, Small Design Office, SKINN  
 ↑ Klauzál Tér square. Photograph by KÉK  
 ↑↑ Klauzál Tér football field. Photograph by KÉK



↑ Vacant properties around Klauzál Tér. Photograph by KÉK  
 ↑↑ The relationship between temporary uses in Klauzál Tér. Image by Wonderland, Small Design Office, SKINN

square. It aims to turn it into the functional and social core of the surrounding area, reinforcing the existing recreational and sporting activities, but also diversifying and increasing the square's potential by attracting missing services like education, gardening or commerce related to social innovation. The plan proposes covered public spaces created by converting some of the vacant space into community facilities. They include indoor playgrounds and educational space, and accommodate start-ups and social enterprises which are offered initially at favourable conditions.

The proposal aims to establish links between the design and planned activities, the square and the available spaces around it, and between residents and tourists. It is the outcome of a long term participation process conducted by KÉK in cooperation with a variety of NGOs, local residents, and experts in social innovation, local economic development and tourism. The square's landscape design draws on potential links to its surroundings, and the nearby popular market hall can accommodate outdoor market stalls and potentially host more permanent pavilions. The corners close to vacant buildings and shops could be turned into pedestrian-friendly crossings, facilitating interaction with future incubator-spaces. Temporary uses will test potential new uses and traffic alterations for the design plans, before significant investment for reconstruction is sought.

A series of testing events were carried out in the square to bring local inhabitants together, as their heterogeneous background is often a hindrance to integration. On the 1st May 2013 a football tournament among the local inhabitants, NGOs and associations took place and after a competitive and

fun afternoon, the final match was played between the Roma team and the human right activists. A football match was an occasion for many people who already knew one another by sight, to start chatting and creating connections, which have been growing continuously since. Such events are an essential element of co-design, as the social cohesion of the involved actors is the starting point for any sustainable process. The project for the Klauzál Tér is to upgrade activities on the square itself and the development of temporary uses of various durations in the vacant properties around it, establishing not only operational but also financial ties between the activities. Temporary uses vary from short term installations in the public realm to five year business activities with start-up economic conditions, which would be encouraged to support each other mutually as this would increase the care, visibility and quality of the space.

Among the already defined activities is a co-working space for young professionals in the area. This would encompass stationary suppliers, printing facilities, workshop spaces with tools,

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Temporary uses will test potential new uses and traffic alterations for the design plans, before significant investment for reconstruction is sought

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and meeting rooms also available for use by the community for contributions in kind. Additional activities in the neighbourhood could plug into this process, such as bike rentals or crafts stores, which could also cater for tourists.

The success of such a process requires a series of factors: entrepreneurial private stakeholders, an enlightened public administration, supportive local communities and the availability of funding. While urban design is essential to ensure the successful realisation of a regeneration project, it does not require a finite brief to ensure the concept's adaptability and resilience, enabling plans to change gradually with the evolution of the project. The final product is not yet decided as many contradictions became apparent during the consultation process. A contrast emerged between a focus on massive physical transformation or on small-scale changes, requiring either a single, large intervention or a series of testing phases. No doubt, the final outcome will be revelatory. It will not only tell about a professional culture, but also a political one – confirming that urban design and planning at the urban scale are ultimately politicised processes. ●

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# OPEN SPACES IN VIENNA'S SUBSIDISED HOUSING

Lilli Lička and Philipp Rode's research explores the quality of design being delivered

The quality of life in Vienna is, according to a survey by Mercer, the best in the world, ranking above Zürich and Auckland. Vienna's social housing department claims to add to this leading position with its website proudly stating that every fourth inhabitant in Vienna lives in its housing. However, the liberal reorientation of the Viennese governance structure in the 1990s brought about a fundamental change in urban planning (Novy et al, 2001) and the involvement of private sector stakeholders caused a shift towards market considerations in the housing sector. The commercialisation of Vienna's social housing has since followed, despite its exemplary history. Here we explore the circumstances and outcomes of this shift through Viennese housing projects, focussing on their open spaces as an important factor of quality of life.

## CONTEMPORARY HOUSING SCHEMES

Open spaces in housing projects play an essential role for the well-being of their residents. This is shown in our research on contemporary built projects in Vienna (see below). Furthermore people want to be able to adapt gardens and open spaces according to their own changing needs. There is also a need for common open spaces within housing estates.

In competition briefs and designs for new housing schemes, these goals are explicitly set out. In the two complementary examples explored in our interdisciplinary research project, the first ideas, aims and even draft sketches show high ambitions for the quality of open spaces. In the scheme for the rather peripheral Breitenfurterstrasse development, the chief architect of the association coined the term 'stapled one family housing', referring to a green structure and private gardens for residents. Similarly in the dense district of Troststrasse, the brief define a strong relationship between social infrastructure at the ground floor level and the open spaces in and around the block.

Although their urban structures are completely different, the open spaces in both projects were intended to fulfil social needs. Both projects clearly advertised their valuable open and common green spaces, as well as their balconies and terraces. In Breitenfurterstrasse, nearby public recreation areas were also part of the promotional material.

Yet despite these ambitions and arguments, the quality of the open spaces diminished during the building process. In Troststrasse the density of the urban quarter is high and does not allow for generous open spaces. Nevertheless the landscape architects developed a decent design for the courtyard using light colours and planting. But inhabitants find it unsatisfactory as there is no strategy for social mediation. Landscape architects were not engaged in Breitenfurterstrasse at all, and so the gardens were not properly designed,



reducing costs to a minimum and prohibiting their use as common open spaces. Without continuous quality assessment, early ambitions get lost between development phases when teams often change. Our research concludes that promotional material often does not match reality, and shows that in contemporary building environments, resources are put into exploiting the site by increasing the plot ratio, and thereby sacrificing the quality of the surroundings.

## REORIENTATION OF HOUSING POLICY

The City of Vienna's housing policy has undergone structural and strategic reorientation since the 1980s, and the increased presence of private sector developers and housing companies became

↑ The Breitenfurterstrasse housing scheme  
 ↑↑ The Troststrasse housing scheme



apparent from the 1990s. (Novy et al. 2001). For new built projects, the focus has been on increasing the usable space and on raising rent and sales prices by creating high-quality residential and office space. For open space, the proportion of private open space has increased by providing terraces, balconies or gardens because they were direct value-enhancing features (Lička et al, 2012).

Changes in stakeholder structures have also created shifts in the urban planning department in terms of a formalised regulatory body. To achieve greater quality assurance, the Land Advisory Board and developer competitions were established. Now once the Land Advisory Board has acknowledged eligibility for funding, the submission to the

building inspection department represents the next level of assessment. At this stage, the focus is primarily on technical issues, which for open spaces means compliance with Building Regulations (site topography, guardrails, subterranean structures, playgrounds for small children, sealed surfaces). The final verification and sign-off takes place only after completion of construction, following acceptance by the building inspection department or review by the Housing Fund. At this stage, open spaces play a subordinate role, and no landscape experts are involved in the assessments.

Since the 1980s, public housing policy has seen the retreat of the public sector as an active stakeholder in the production process, as well as in municipal real estate policy. This has occurred in the context of new relationships between the commercial interests of private sector developers and the quality demands of the public sector. In this situation, creating high density development is in conflict with providing an adequate amount of open space. In the development of quality assurance instruments, more attention is being given to differentiated qualities and functions for open spaces.

### NEW FIELDS OF ACTION

A new regime of regulation in the form of an ‘entrepreneurial city’ was created through the establishment of funding institutions, advisory boards and quality assurance instruments. Due to outsourcing in the construction of subsidised housing, the issues of maximising site use and marketing have become more significant, resulting in a greater emphasis on reviewing costs and pricing. As this gives rise to higher development densities, it further restricts the spatial configuration and usability of open spaces earmarked for residential purposes. Furthermore, the consideration given to open spaces in projects continues to be inadequate – evident in the reallocation of costs within projects. This limits the works possible on open spaces even though good quality design and materials are important especially in high density developments.

Yet open spaces are used for marketing at all levels, in other words as strategic public open areas, common public areas in housing complexes, and private spaces; the latter being key marketing features. The research results from our case studies show that there are significant gaps from urban development, design and use-related perspectives around common public areas. Open spaces as a marketing feature are only treated consistently if they are privately used open spaces. For common public areas, short-term profits and construction costs seem to reduce their quality, causing a discrepancy between the marketing image and reality. Their positive effects are not taken into account in operational cost-benefit calculations or quality assurance considerations.

While certain standards have been introduced and expanded by the regulations and the quality assurance instruments of property developer competitions, the role of landscape architecture in the overall social housing planning and construction process has remained weak. A strengthening of landscape related quality may be achieved by continuous professional support through all phases of projects and by taking

↑ Troststrasse social spaces  
 ↑↑ The proposals for Breitenfurterstrasse  
 ↑↑↑ Plan extract showing the Breitenfurterstrasse spaces

landscape architectural design into account. Yet the case studies reveal standardised procedures and an only moderate interest in creating high quality open spaces, which is not reflected in construction budgets.

It is apparent, moreover, that property developers have a rather limited interest in the fine-grained care, maintenance and adaptation of commonly used open spaces. The input required is uneconomical and difficult to calculate, and yet this shows how important it is to strengthen the focus on open spaces and their function as social areas in the process. More professional support in their development, use and maintenance processes are urgently needed if social sustainability is to be more than the installation of prohibition signs – the traditional Viennese way of preventing conflict.

This suggests that new stakeholders and instruments should be engaged. The reorientation of governance structures offers a new opportunity to free up professional planning and construction processes. But including self-organised groups will be important to embed responsible behaviour, co-determination and the concept of social space, in order to maintain Vienna's quality of life for its residents. ●

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↳ Troststrasse social spaces



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# MASTER PLANNING VILNIUS

Dalia Bardauskiene describes the approach adopted for a long term strategic vision

↓ Vilnius Master Plan 2015, with views of the regional park at Gediminas Hill and communist era housing

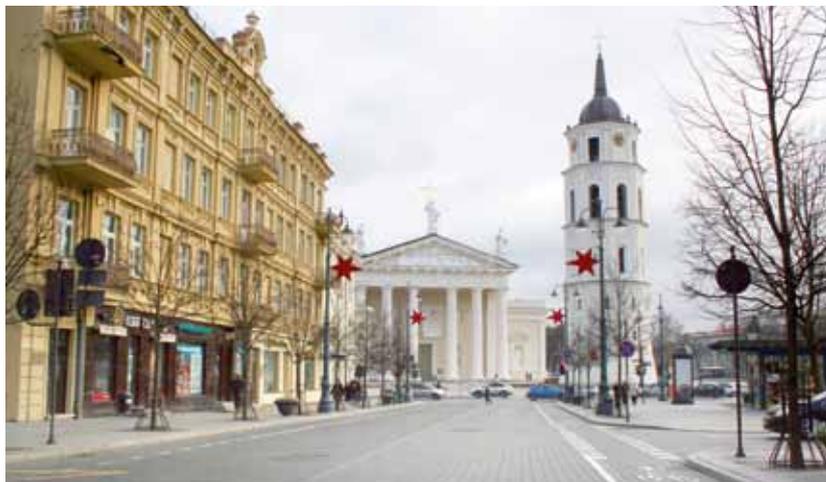
**BACKGROUND**

Vilnius was first mentioned in written sources in 1323 as the capital city of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the letters of Gediminas, who built his wooden castle on a hill in the city. The city became more widely known after he wrote a circular letter of invitation to Germans and Jews in the principal Hansa towns in 1325, offering free access to his domains for men of every order and profession. The town was initially populated by local Lithuanians, but soon the population began to grow as craftsmen and merchants of other nationalities settled in the city.

Surrounded by green hills and forests on the confluence of the Neris and Vilnele rivers, Vilnius' citizens benefit from its geographical location and beauty. The urban structure reflects memories of its famous figures, signs of glorious events, the times of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as well as the sadness of wars, occupations, fires and epidemics. Now the most valuable gift for Vilnius in the 21st century is being the capital of the independent state of Lithuania, a member of the EU.

The last twenty years are only a small snapshot of Vilnius' history compared with what has been achieved since the 14th century when the city was founded. After the restoration of Lithuania's independence from the communist era in 1990,





Vilnius started to operate under completely different political and economic circumstances. An important event was the inclusion of Vilnius Old Town in the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1994. The market economy and democracy brought with them the need for new urban design processes and skills. The rapid changes occurring in the city did not allow time for academic studies to upgrade skills, and so urban designers were trained hands-on in the city. With optimism, hard work and professionalism, supported by foreign know-how and chance, Vilnius has been able to adapt to its new context. The significant markers of urban design and architecture of this challenging period appear in today's patterns and panoramas of Vilnius. These icons both confirm its success and issue a warning for later generations to do better.

↑ and ↑↑ Main street – Gediminas Avenue after reconstruction

↑↑↑ The vision of the new centre of Vilnius on the right bank of the River Neris in 2010

### MASTER PLANNING 1992 – 2015

After the restoration of independence, the preparation of the Vilnius City Master Plan 2005 was the first attempt to design a conceptual plan, designate development areas – mostly for privatisation – and establish regulations for land use, density and building heights. This first master plan focused on commercial and housing areas, public infrastructure and transport, green and blue areas, and the protection of the natural and cultural heritage. The design process was rather lengthy (1992-8) due to a severe lack of knowledge about strategic planning, forecasting in a market economy, public participation and communication. This was compounded by the shortage of urban designers with the experience to work with the new market economy and democracy. Later, this was overcome as professionals and decision-makers accumulated knowledge at international conferences, workshops, training courses and other professional activities. Moreover, a number of young people educated in Western universities joined and contributed their knowledge.

The first Vilnius Master Plan 2005 was useful for the development of the city. Nevertheless, when the economy started to grow before Lithuania joined the EU in 2004, the plan had already become too detailed and restrictive for investments; moreover it focused little on public needs. The second Master Plan for Vilnius to 2015 was designed by the municipal administration from 2001 and approved by the City Council in 2004. Still in place now, it is more strategic, proposing mixed land uses, green wedges and cultural heritage in areas earmarked for urbanisation and beyond. But the forecasts underpinning the new plan to 2015, which designates more than 500 ha for new development in the city, are too optimistic. The population forecast of more than 550,000 citizens living in the city by 2015 is overoptimistic, especially at a time when the population of both Europe and Lithuania are shrinking and ageing.

In 2000–1, the municipality of Vilnius began an open process for a long-term strategic plan for the city. There was an emerging need to develop and implement a plan which would cover and integrate all major aspects of development in the city, and indicate the preliminary need for financial resources for the actions identified. Before Lithuania joined the EU, Vilnius adopted a new vision in the region to become more competitive and desirable. The Strategic Plan to 2011 positions Vilnius as a city in a strategic location at the intersection between the Northern Dimension countries, Eastern Europe and Central Europe. In this new geopolitical context, Vilnius set itself strategies for being the regional centre of economic, cultural and political activities, and as a bridge spanning from East to West.

In 1996 Vilnius Council established a municipal enterprise, *Vilniaus planas*, which still operates as an effective tool for monitoring master planning and decision-making. This has sustained the quality and speed of Vilnius' master planning.

### CURRENT ICONS OF THE CITY

Today Vilnius is a liveable and green city, and like many others, it is in the process of overcoming the economic crisis and continuing to improve the quality of its environment. The most important

achievements in architecture and urban design during the post-soviet era can be illustrated by: the new administrative and business centre on the right bank of the River Neris, the upgrading of the main high street – Gediminas Avenue, new housing areas, galleries and museums, a new communication centre and other buildings at the university campus, the entertainment park which hosts the Siemens arena, an aqua park and other leisure facilities. It is important to mention public infrastructure development (mostly financed by the EU structural funds). They include south and west bypasses, water and utilities, street lighting, and bicycles lanes.

### CITY IN THE FOREST

Perhaps the most challenging achievement is how the city has managed to bring large green areas into its urban fabric. Green wedges (forests, regional parks, urban open spaces, rural land, collective gardens, natural unused areas) constitute 70 per cent of the total city area. They are a treasure for recreation and climate change. The blue ribbons along the Neris and Vilnelė rivers, together with the green wedges constitute Vilnius' blue-green identity. The wide range and concentration of different morphologies of natural landscapes are the most important features of the green wedges.

Vilnius is one of greenest cities in Europe, as 36 per cent of its territory is occupied by forests (5 per cent more than in Lithuania overall), and protected green areas consist of about 18 per cent. An increasing amount of Vilnius' forests, parks and squares are arranged and adapted for recreational activities and cycle paths. However, after Independence, the green landscape of Vilnius was affected by land privatisation and rapid real estate development, so urbanised land increased by about 3 per cent of the size of the overall urban area.

### DOING IT BETTER?

Vilnius never stops growing and changes come faster than the city can afford or designers can cope with. Nevertheless, from a strategic perspective, urban designers can see positive changes to the urban environment and community life. Most importantly, what has been done in Vilnius during the last two decades can be perceived as a period of changing mind sets, perceptions, and understanding of what it means to be part of an open global community.

Globalisation brings new ideas, but it also makes cities more similar; therefore when creating new spaces urban designers need to be very aware of local cultural and natural heritage. An important task for the future is the better integration of the forests and other green-blue wedges into the urban structure to form a liveable city for the benefit of citizens. This also applies to better access and the use of the Neris and Vilnelė river landscapes.

The greatest threat to the blue-green character of Vilnius is urban sprawl. In the future, there will need to be a curb on development sprawl, more urban facilities and better public transport links. The rapid growth of car ownership has been a major force behind the uncontrolled suburbanisation of Vilnius, degrading the urban environment and contributing to increased CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Due to rising land prices, collective gardens were quickly converted into detached housing areas in



a fragmented way, without social infrastructure and utilities, and not always aesthetically pleasing; and so the future of collective gardens remains unsettled.

Perhaps the most difficult heritage of the soviet period are the high density, multi-storey housing estates which have been abandoned by young people moving to the outskirts or settlements around the city. Renovating the huge areas of multi-storey housing and its environment remains the biggest, and so far, unsolved problem for the city. Until recently only 100 dwellings have been renovated out of a stock of 3,500 dwellings. Hopefully, in the near future some of them will be given a new life and a new aesthetic, but demolition may be preferable for others.

### CONCLUSIONS

Today Vilnius is an open and dynamic city, where urban designers have the opportunity to tackle new challenges within the unique green and historic urban pattern of the city. A recent census showed that the people of Vilnius appreciated its beautiful natural landscapes as much as its Old Town, and are attached to the history and cultural life of their city. The question therefore becomes one of the quality of urban design interventions, and in particular whether modernist or classical architects are willing to respect the natural and cultural heritage, together with the values dear to the citizens of Vilnius in their proposals. ●

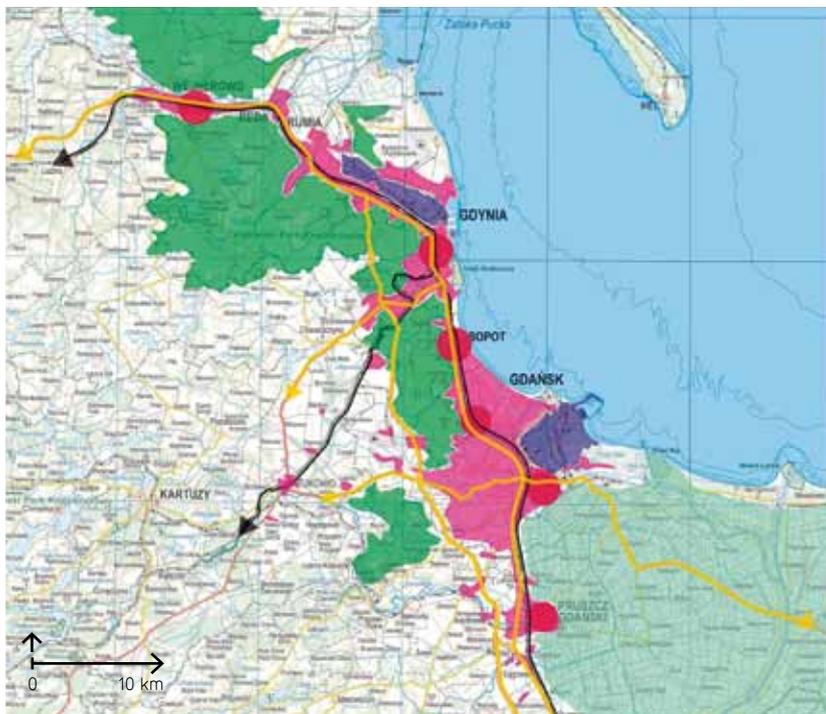
↑ Master plan of current restoration of historic Sereikiskiu Park in the city centre

↑↑ Multi-storey housing after renovation 2011-12

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# TRANSFORMING THE GDANSK BAY AREA

Piotr Lorens, Dorota Kamrowska-Załużska and Małgorzata Kostrzewska review this Tri-City area



The political transformation of Poland in the early nineties from a centrally steered economy to a free market entailed changes in the spatial planning system. The impact of these changes on the spatial transformation and current shape of urban structures in the Gdansk Bay Metropolitan Area is apparent and significant. This article concentrates on the present spatial phenomena of the Gdansk Agglomeration area resulting from the main development strategies for spatial planning and urban design.

The processes of globalisation and the political and socio-economic characteristics common to post-socialist countries are two main phenomena that have shaped the Gdansk Agglomeration area. The spatial structure of this area is also continuously influenced by the evolution of the spatial planning system in Poland, determined by the economic transition, as well as by the deep fiscal and institutional decentralisation that have both been taking place over the last 25 years. The main effects are new, and local and regional authorities have acquired broader competences and a higher level of independence, strengthening the role of the regions and planning powers at community level, as in most developed countries.

## NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORIC CONDITIONS

The Gdansk Agglomeration area consists of the three coastal cities of Gdansk, Sopot and Gdynia – Tri-City – which lies along the southern coast of the Baltic Sea, where the two main Polish harbours and

shipyards are located. The spatial structure of the area is determined by specific eco-physiographic conditions that have influenced the linear shape of the Tri-City, which evolved from the Middle Ages to the 20th century into a narrow but long strip of land located between the sea coast and the edge of the plateau surrounding the Bay of Gdansk.

These historic conditions significantly influenced the location and arrangement of particular functions within the area, especially the location of industrial areas for the ports and shipyards. From the outset, the development of Gdansk has been based on maritime trade and transport. Given its location and openness – a characteristic of coastal cities – Gdansk played a leading economic role in the Polish Kingdom, having built its identity on multiculturalism and tolerance.

Gdynia, by contrast, is a city that was built on green fields in the 1920s. In the interwar period Gdynia belonged to Poland, while Gdansk was a Free City under the protection of the League of Nations, administratively and economically independent from the Polish authorities. Although Poland could have exploited the port of Gdansk commercially, the uncertain political situation of the Free City forced it to build a national commercial and military port elsewhere. The construction of the port gave the impetus for the development of a new, modern city. Gdynia has become a symbol of the vibrant economic development of independent Poland, and a vision of modernity in practice. Gdynia is a unique city in Europe – an example of modernist architecture and town planning principles, which gave it a specific character and uniform architectural style. After the Second World War both cities found themselves within Poland's borders, but in the Eastern Bloc in the Soviet sphere of influence. This resulted in two major ports and shipping industries operating within 40 kilometres of each other.

However, the leading economic role of the harbour and shipyard industry was mostly in communist times. After the socio-economic transition starting in 1989, the shipyard industry failed to be the most important economic sector and the industrial centres lost their significance. Now the redundant port and shipyard areas belong to the most important strategic parts of current urban transformation plans, with a focus on the post-shipyard areas of Gdansk and Gdynia. Nevertheless, the maritime industry has experienced a renaissance in the last decade. Due to the latest production technologies and types of services, the inner-city port areas are no longer disruptive industrial zones. The new face of this industry has made it possible to mix city and maritime functions.

↑ The Metropolitan area with the existing settlement structure showing Gdansk, Sopot and Gdynia

## STRATEGIC AND SPATIAL PLANNING POLICIES

Although the last two decades have brought about new planning instruments, the integration of strategic and spatial planning policies is still weak. Strategic planning is compulsory only at the national and regional levels. Most municipalities in Poland prepare Local Development Strategies or Local Regeneration Programmes, but in most cases these documents focus on social and economic development and are of a non-spatial character. The majority of these plans were also prepared while municipalities were applying for EU development grants for infrastructure. This required the applying municipalities to show coherence with an overall strategic vision for their development, which may have limited the value and influence of the documents on spatial development.

The three cities have separate aspirations for potential development, and management strategies for the emerging metropolitan area. Although there is a tendency to create metropolitan structures, the ambitions of particular cities and towns, especially Gdynia and Gdansk, has led to a situation where two separate metropolitan groups came into being bringing together different municipalities and counties. Gdansk established the Gdansk Metropolitan Area (GOM), while Gdynia inspired the Metropolitan Forum Norda. Because each unites only a part of the municipalities and counties, neither reflects the functional and spatial structure of the whole metropolitan area. Gdynia's aspirations for a stronger competitive position can also be seen in its lack of support for the proposed Metropolitan Act, which has been discussed in Poland for some years. Fortunately, regardless of the two groups, the Metropolitan Council of Gdansk Bay, which includes all county presidents and mayors, operates in the region. This is a very important sign of intent, but it is only the first step of many to metropolitan cooperation. However, there are positive examples: the Metropolitan Transport Association is responsible for the integration of public transport and has managed to introduce common ticketing.

## FLAGSHIPS, COOPERATION AND COMPETITION

A major part of the current investment activities in the Tri-City area is supported by considerable EU funds. It is worth emphasising that, since Poland's reconstruction after the Second World War, such investment was lacking, both in terms of the scale and cost of projects, which could have been important for the future spatial development of these cities and their region. Many of the recently built projects have had a positive impact on urban regeneration. However, pressure from developers and investors can lead to the creation of low quality urban spaces or even to the destruction of important symbols of the maritime industrial heritage.

Given the necessary and required cooperation between Gdansk, Sopot and Gdynia, some projects have been undertaken as common investments. One of the largest and most important is the Metropolitan Railway. This new railway is based on the pre-war route which had connected Gdansk with its suburban areas; the existing railway embankments have been used as walking and recreational paths. They are currently being

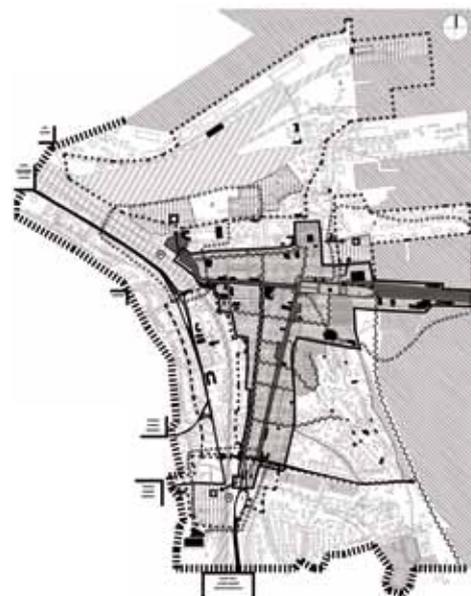
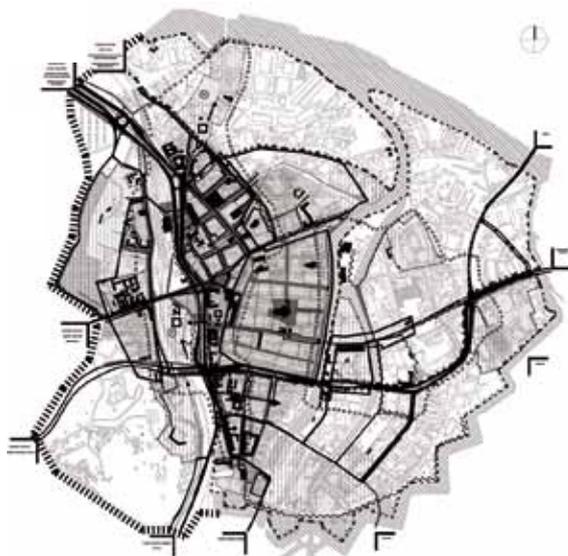


reconstructed and regenerated to accommodate the railway route and the demands of urban mobility. This new and much needed public transport will connect downtown Gdansk and Gdynia with the international Lech Walesa Airport, as well as the rapidly expanding suburban residential districts. Alongside, new tramlines have been developed in Gdansk in recent years.

In contrast, the authorities in Gdynia have decided to undertake future investments to compete directly with those in Gdansk. Gdynia is building a new passenger terminal at its existing military airport. However, today's aviation infrastructure in Tri-City is not overloaded, especially as the previously inefficient Gdansk airport opened a new passenger terminal in 2012. There is no economic justification for Gdynia's airport investment, which is solely motivated by a desire to compete with Gdansk for progress, according to a statement recently put forward by the European Commission. Of course, the need for the second airport (especially for cargo handling and general aviation purposes) in the rapidly developing metropolitan area can be justified, but a higher level of cooperation in managing this infrastructure is necessary.

Conversely, the evidence of good cooperation between cities is the construction of the sports and events hall undertaken by Gdansk and Sopot. Ergo Arena hall was built on the border between Gdansk and Sopot, and the new address – Square of the Two Cities – was agreed in 2012. The border was moved to run along the arena's central axis. The hall met the demand for events space in northern Poland and is of regional importance. Gdynia on the

↑ Construction of the new European Solidarity Centre in the Young City area  
 ↑↑ Gdynia's former Maritime Terminal building



other hand has built Gdynia Hall, the first sports and event hall built in Tri-City with interesting architecture referencing the surrounding landscape of forested hills. Initially, these two investments were considered as being in competition with each other. Fortunately, their different scales (5,000 spectators in Gdynia and up to 15,000 spectators in Gdansk/Sopot arena) cater for very different events and sports competitions, with Gdynia Hall being of local importance and successfully serving local sport teams, while Ergo Arena meets the needs of the region.

One of the most spectacular flagship projects in Tri-City was the construction of the stadium for the European Football Championships in 2012. The decision to host Euro 2012 in Poland accelerated the implementation of many key infrastructure projects. In Gdansk, the local authorities decided to build a new stadium in the district of Letnica. The area was a socially and spatially depressed semi-industrial urban district where garden allotments had formerly been set out. Thanks to the Euro 2012 event and the stadium location, the Letnica district was selected as a priority regeneration area in the Local Regeneration Programme. As a revitalised district, Letnica has great potential for attracting new residents and investors. Nearly 120 new apartments are being built there at present. In Gdansk, Euro 2012 became a catalyst not only for the regeneration of the residential area, but also for the whole district, where the Amber Expo Exhibition and Convention Centre for the Gdansk International Fair Co. was built recently. The previous location of the Gdansk Fair was out-dated and too small. The new exhibition centre is one of Europe's most advanced business facilities equipped with the latest technologies for exhibitions as well as business, cultural, and entertainment events. Being in the vicinity of the stadium and Amber Expo centre strengthens Letnica's potential as a revitalised, vibrant district of Gdansk, restored to a rightful place in the residents' consciousness. Furthermore, this investment could act as the catalyst for the redevelopment of much larger post-industrial areas surrounding these sites.

Undoubtedly, the most important role for the redundant shipyards in Gdansk and Gdynia is preserving the marine identity and industrial heritage of Tri-City. Nevertheless, the two cities

decided to deal with the spatial, economic and social problems of these areas in different ways. In Gdynia the industrial area, which had previously been spatially very uniform, was divided and sold to several entrepreneurs and businesses. Dividing the area among that many independent companies without any common economic relationship will ultimately lead to conflicts. The most contentious issue is how to deal with communication and transport problems, caused by some plots being left without any public or independent access roads. In spite of the problems, the Pomeranian Special Economic Zone (PSSE) has been involved in the regeneration of Gdynia's shipyard, investing in the renovation of buildings and constructing technical and communal infrastructure.

Under the aegis of the PSSE, an international student design workshop was organised with Gdansk University of Technology (Poland), HafenCity University of Hamburg (Germany) and École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Nantes (France) in July 2013. The aim was to develop a concept for the future role of the derelict shipyard area and its inclusion into the existing city. The students also worked on the possibility of adapting the historic former power plant, protected by conservation legislation as a significant feature of the industrial landscape and its architectural dominance over the area. Such events, bringing together academic institutions, businesses and local government offer hope for a sensible approach to managing problematic, but very precious areas, for their economic value and historic shipbuilding industry heritage.

In Gdansk, by contrast, a single Danish developer, BPTO, is currently developing the derelict shipyard area called the Young City, on the edge of the medieval urban core. Dense traffic in the city centre and an inefficient road system led to a new road being proposed to cut through the Young City area. This project has caused much controversy, discussion and debate and the emergence of alternative projects. The opponents of the proposed road perceive a danger for urban space. Firstly, there would need to be demolition and the destruction of many valuable elements of the shipyard's historic heritage; secondly, the district would be divided by the car and tram arteries going against the desirable social and

spatial integration of these two parts of the city. This barrier could also hinder pedestrian access to the waterfront, which should be the main public space in the Young City. The alternative projects show the need for urban space for people, not cars, and of a human scale. However, it was argued that the new road was essential for access to the new investment areas of Young City and to release traffic congestion in the city centre. The Gdansk shipyard workers, including Lech Walesa and the Solidarity movement, had a special place in the quest for national independence during the 1970s and 1980s. Therefore the demolition of any physical remnants of this significant period would always provoke opposition.

### CONCLUSIONS

In Tri-City one can observe both complementary and competitive investments. The investments that lead to social and spatial integration are always welcomed by the residents who want to see their home towns cooperating, especially over public transport systems, bicycle route construction, common ticketing for different means of transport, etc. Each of the cities has a different history, character, architecture and role within the region. The authorities should aim to fill the gaps in residents' needs rather than compete and duplicate investments. Each of the cities should be able to build its own role based on its identity and character.

But what are the next directions for the development of the Gdansk Bay Metropolitan Area? What is the best location for new developments? What shape should such investments take? There are many different solutions starting with cooperation on a voluntary basis and ending with obligatory and regulatory solutions. Without national regulations, cooperation may include

only those areas where all partners see benefits. Hopefully, in future this will cover not only technical and transport infrastructure – the most obvious fields – but also joint territorial marketing, tourism development strategies, specialisation and clusters of activities, and environmental protection. The Pomeranian regional and Baltic Sea development strategies will depend on the effectiveness of the role played by Gdansk Bay Metropolitan Area in this greater cooperation.

Some key questions remain: what are the conditions required for the Tri-City cities to develop a common and consistent strategy for specialisation leading to complementarity rather than competition? Is synergy possible? Some of the main factors in this are the integration of spatial and strategic planning. Scenario development should be used as a basic planning tool to facilitate new investments. There is a need for new efficient operational planning tools at the metropolitan level to strengthen the impact of the existing regional strategies. Clearly financial instruments and direct grants from European Funds will be insufficient to finance the entire development process and it may be necessary to resort to public-private models of financing.

We have seen that various spatial scenarios can be devised both for the entire metropolitan area and for particular parts of the cities within it. Some of them seem to have huge development potential – many include the post-industrial and waterfront areas in the cores of Gdansk and Gdynia. Although certain plans are already in place, more opportunities need to be researched and discussed for Tri-City, and not for single cities. The single metropolitan area is as a powerful attractor to the region and the municipalities should take this into account when planning for further development and transformation. ●

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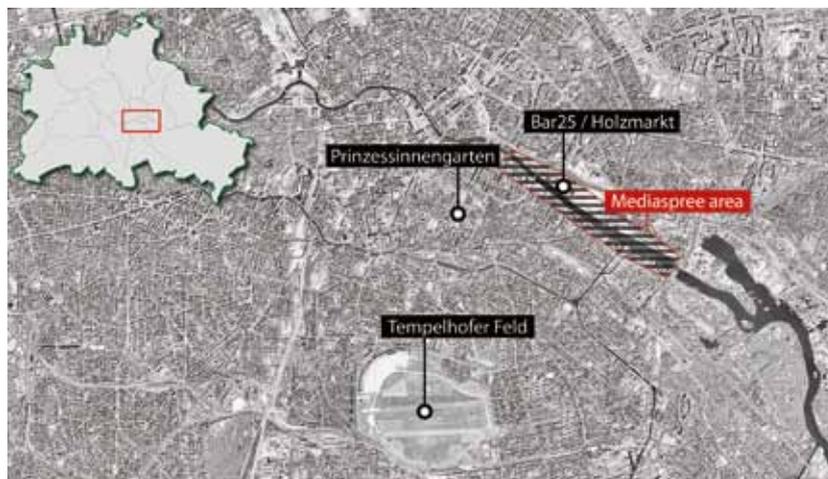
## INTERMEDIATE USES IN BERLIN

George Hubman and Jana Perkovic examine the city's adoption of interim uses

In December 2012, the city of Berlin announced a €50 million redevelopment of a key site on the River Spree, a stone's throw away from Alexanderplatz. Holzmarkt will be a mixed-use urban village, comprising a nightclub, public park, hotel, village of artist studios, student dormitory, restaurant, and a 24-hour day-care centre. The project, backed by a Swiss ethical investment fund, has been hailed as a radically new approach to urban development. Instead of selling a large site to an anonymous, out-of-town developer for a standard package of upmarket offices, shops and apartments, the city has struck a business partnership with a wide coalition of alternative groups, investors and local crowd-funders: a mix reflected in the variety of proposed uses.



↓ The Holzmarkt proposal, with different public spaces



Holzmarkt is seen by many as a permanent version of a makeshift club Bar25 run by the same group of creatives-turned-developers, on the same plot of vacant land from 2004 to 2010 and on a series of temporary contracts. Bar25 started off as a van serving drinks at illegal open-air parties, and grew to include a club, sauna, circus tent, swimming pool and restaurant. It gradually became a beloved focal point of the thinly built-up neighbourhood around the former Berlin Wall, and found its place on the city's marketing brochures. By the time it closed, after a prolonged legal battle with the landlord, Bar25 had helped to redefine Berlin as the European capital of music tourism.

In a contemporary context, the practice of temporary uses has come to mean the short term re-use of an under-utilised, vacant or public space, and may include temporary buildings. Temporary uses have been increasingly employed as a legitimate method of managing urban change, but nowhere more so than in Berlin, where they have had a particularly long and fruitful history. The transition from the informal, semi-legal Bar25 to the multi-million euro community project Holzmarkt spearheads this shift in policy. To understand why planning here has shown surprising tolerance, we need to look back at the history of Berlin.

#### A HISTORY OF DISRUPTIONS

Top-down governance has had a strong hand in developing Berlin from its establishment as the seat of the Prussian military government. After the end of the Second World War, the administrative hold remained strong in both halves of the divided city, as both East and West Berlin indulged in lavish spending on showcase projects, and grand

technocratic redevelopment strategies, like Potsdamer Platz. However, by the 1970s, West Berlin had slid into a housing crisis. By 1980, 80,000 people were registered as couch-surfing, a product of both immigration and the policy of inner-city clearance known as 'rehabilitation by eviction'. House owners and housing associations deliberately let buildings fall into disrepair, expecting to use government funding to demolish and rebuild them, and lease them out at higher rents later.

This policy provoked considerable resistance, especially in Kreuzberg, a neighbourhood surrounded by the Wall on three sides and earmarked for extensive redevelopment, full of vacant buildings and populated by immigrants and students. During the 1980s a huge squatting movement had developed in West Berlin. In the first wave of squatting, provoked by a corruption scandal involving construction companies and the Berlin Senate, houses were occupied by squatters on an almost daily basis, peaking in the summer of 1981 at around 165 houses.

The government negotiated diplomatically, partially to retain its traditionally strong control of the city, and partially because the squatters had broad popular support. A precedent was thus set for regulating informal projects. The city government mediated between landlords and occupiers, guaranteeing rental incomes for the former, and security of tenure for the latter. Twenty and thirty-year subsidised lease contracts were signed. Squatting communities could apply for urban renewal loans to renovate their buildings, and gain work-for-dole experience. The funding came from welfare programmes and urban reconstruction programmes. The outcome was a strange hybrid: participative urban renewal, enacted by counter-cultural groups, and aligned with the principles of market capitalism.

#### POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Although the squatter movement lost momentum due to in-fighting, the principles of participatory and sensitive urban renewal were gradually adopted by the city. This learning process led to the International Building Exhibition (IBA) in 1984. International architects were invited to implement their ideas in six model areas along the topics of 'critical reconstruction' and 'gentle urban regeneration'. Public participation became a substantial element, aiming to bridge the gap between star architects and local neighbourhood groups. For all its architectural merits, IBA is usually interpreted as marking the decentralisation and participatory focus of planning efforts in Berlin.

The second wave of squatting came in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Of 120 houses (squatted largely by West German youth moving into East Berlin), about 90 were eventually legalised. However, the city immediately adopted a new, hard line policy – the *Berliner Linie* – which tolerated no new squats from 24 July 1990. Spectacular violent evictions, such as the two-day street fight for the control of Mainzer Strasse, were a clear message of change.

Early in the reunification process, the Berlin Senate opted for the classical neo-liberal model of urban renewal, selling land cheaply to attract large

↑ The location of the temporary uses experiments  
 ↑↑ The Vision for Holzmarkt along the river

commercial developments. After a construction boom, by the late 1990s this model turned out to be a manifest failure, leaving the city full of new vacant offices, on top of the existing industrial wastelands, and a bankrupt city government. Looking for new development models, Berlin chose to reinvent itself as a creative city, in Richard Florida's terms, and during that process informal urbanism which had quietly grown inside its cracks was rediscovered by accident.

### RE-APPROPRIATION OF INFORMALITY

Tobias Rapp, chronicler of Berlin's techno culture, believes that the 1990 summer of squatting shaped attitudes in Berlin decisively. Residents learned to take over buildings and turn them into whatever they pleased, to try things out while waiting for the forces of law to intervene. By the early 2000s, informal use of space became a fairly mainstream activity, not limited to a radical minority. The first studies of Berlin's creative niches found dozens of informal urban projects: techno clubs, artists' studios, community gardens, youth outreach projects, sports grounds, childcare centres, and makeshift beaches. While not fully legal, neither were they seen as criminal. Local councils and landowners supported informal projects with funding and formal contracts, recognising them as welcome activity in a slack market. Planning legislation recognised interim uses as *Zwischennutzung*.

Claire Colomb pinpoints the year 2000 when perceptions of temporary uses shifted from a threat to respectable development, to an officially commended practice, and when, in her analysis, the uniqueness of this informal urban ecology captured the attention of local politicians, planners, and city marketers. The Berlin Senate began to integrate them into existing strategies, and support them with new policies. Large redevelopment projects, such as Tempelhof Airport, are now planned for a temporary experimental first stage. For the planners, temporary uses have become a magical term – a silver bullet – regenerating the urban fabric attractively without capital expenditure and generating community-building and tourism simultaneously, all without compromising relationships with large capital investors.

Not all informal actors have appreciated the readiness with which the Senate has tried to appropriate interim uses for its own PR and tourism campaigns. Prinzessinengärten, a local community garden, has been depicted as relevant to the whole of Berlin, despite not being part of its strategic infrastructure. Bar25 appeared on city marketing brochures for the full duration of its legal battle with its landlord, the city cleaning agency (BSR).

But the failure of the city government's attempt to co-opt temporary projects into its plans for urban renewal became most apparent through the struggle around Mediaspree. This consisted of a plan to harvest the energy of makeshift music businesses lining the banks of the River Spree (alongside Bar25) to redevelop the area into a creative cluster of music multinationals. The grassroots initiative which opposed this project, *Mediaspree versenken* (Sink Mediaspree) consisted of a broad alliance between radical activists, community groups and temporary businesses operating in the area, spearheaded by Bar25.



Without any political allies, it succeeded against all odds to put the project on indefinite hold. Analysts attribute this victory largely to the coalition's ability to mobilise a large following of organisations, such as Bar25, into mass rallies by explicitly linking weekend parties on the river to the politically charged notion of 'the right to the city'.

After having been the meeting point of Berlin's party scene for six summers, Bar25 lost its court battle and evacuated the site. The closure provoked a broad political debate about the management of public land in Berlin, resulting in a change of the property policy. Suddenly, it seemed that nearly all political stakeholders were in favour of more nuance and community-mindedness. The return of the owners of Bar25 to the same location confirmed that something had shifted.

### THE FUTURE OF INTERIM USES

Temporary uses in Berlin sit between commercial necessities and utopian potential. As they have become mainstream, their overly radical roots are no longer visible in their public branding, their legal set-up, or what they do: selling drinks, building gardens. But their overtly commercial orientation may be less important than the funding, planning and design processes that they have pioneered, which stress participation, inclusiveness, as well as gradual and long-term change. The 'right to the city' implies the right of all citizens to shape their city in the present, and imagine its future. Whether this right is taken and where, will be the ultimate test for temporary urbanism in Berlin. ●

↑ Mediaspree – the makeshift music businesses along the bank of the River Spree. Photographs by Gertrud K and Jana Perkovic

● Georg Hubmann, urban design student at Tongji University Shanghai and TU Berlin, and officer at Environmental Policy Research Centre, FU Berlin, Germany.  
Jana Perkovic, urban design student University of Melbourne, visiting student at TU Berlin.

# NATIONAL URBAN DESIGN AWARDS 2014

*Louise Ingledow provides an overview of the awards made this year*

The 2014 Urban Design Group's National Urban Design Awards ceremony was held in the Victory Services Club in Central London on Wednesday 12th February. Hosted by former UDG Chair Amanda Reynolds, the evening showcased some great examples of urban design work produced throughout the UK over the past 12 months. This year's awards attracted well over 50 entries in total.

The awards were presented in six categories by Janet Tibbalds on behalf of the Francis Tibbalds Trust. In addition to the well-established Practice, Public Sector, Student, Book and Lifetime Achievement Awards, a new Developer Award was introduced to recognise developers who are working to create better, more sustainable places.

The winners in the Practice, Public Sector, Developer and Student Award categories were selected by a vote of the Urban Design Group membership, following shortlists drawn up by this year's panel of judges:

- Louise Thomas – joint editor of *Urban Design* journal and Chair of the judging panel
- Charlotte Harris – Kingston University
- Artur Carulla – for 2013 Practice Award winner Allies & Morrison
- Meredith Evans – formerly of Telford & Wrekin Borough Council
- Jon Hearn – for 2013 Public Sector Award winner Winchester City Council (PUSH)
- Noha Nasser – Chair of the Awards Committee
- Ben van Bruggen – Public Sector Award Convenor
- Graham Smith – Student Award convenor
- Malcolm Moor – Practice Award Convenor

The Book Award judging panel comprising Alastair Donald (Chair), Juliet Bidgood, Marc Furnival, Jonathan Kendall and Laurie Mentiplay, reviewed and shortlisted the eight books. The Lifetime Achievement Award is made by the Trustees of the Urban Design Group.

The event was generously sponsored by the publisher Routledge and Allies & Morrison, with founding Partner Graham Morrison giving a keynote address. The awards were successfully planned and managed by Robert Huxford and Louise Ingledow.



## PRACTICE AWARD

Introduced by Malcolm Moor

Winner: **Urban Initiatives Studio** for Middlehaven Development Framework, Shortlisted:

- **URBED** for Icknield Port Loop
- **John Thompson & Partners** for Chilmington Green
- **AREA** for An Camas Mòr, Rothiemurchus

All entries published in *UD 128*.



## PUBLIC SECTOR AWARD

Introduced by Ben van Bruggen

Winner: **Bristol City Council** for Know Your Place: A participatory approach to place-making. Shortlisted:

- **Barking & Dagenham Borough Council** for Short Blue Place: A public space to link new developments
- **Bolsover District Council/ Chesterfield, Borough Council/ North East Derbyshire District Council/ Bassetlaw District Council** for a joint approach to Residential Design Guidelines
- **Conwy County Borough Council** for Porth Eirias: A scheme combining regeneration and coastal defence.

All entries published in *UD 129*.

Mayor of Bristol, George Ferguson commented 'This is a great endorsement

for the high quality of the Bristol City Design Group. Bristol is a place where we celebrate and champion the diversity of our population and every individual, organisation, business and community is encouraged to play an active role in the life of the city.

The participatory approach to place-making that Know Your Place promotes is helping to enable citizens and communities to have real influence over what happens in their neighbourhood.

Through tools like these we are helping to strengthen support for the work of voluntary and community organisations in the city, making sure we focus on achieving the city's objectives.

Know Your Place enables developers and their design teams to gain a better understanding of Bristol. Our communities value their neighbourhoods and historic built environment. Know Your Place aims to enable and inspire great design across the city.'



## DEVELOPER AWARD

Introduced by Noha Nasser

Winner: **Barratt London** for Maple Quays, Canada Water, London

Shortlisted:

- **Blueprint Regeneration** for Green Street in the Meadows, Nottingham
  - **Linden Homes** – Boxgrove, Guildford
- Commended:
- Torre Marine, Torquay by **Barratt & David Wilson Homes**
  - Plot Q, Leith Harbour by **Barratt Eastern Scotland**
  - Derwenthorpe, York by **Barratt**
  - Edenbrook, Hampshire by **Berkeley Homes**
  - Graylingwell Park, Chichester by **Linden Homes**



### BOOK AWARD

Introduced by Alastair Donald

Winner: **Masterplanning Futures** by Lucy Bullivant (Routledge/ Taylor & Francis)

Highly Commended Finalist: *The Urban Masterplanning Handbook*- Eric Firley & Katharina Groen (Wiley)

Shortlisted:

- **New Urbanism: Life, Work, and Space in the New Downtown** – Ilse Helbrecht & Peter Dirksmeier (Ashgate)
- **The Shape of Green: Aesthetics, Ecology, and Design** – Lance Hosey (Island Press)
- **Designing Suburban Futures: New Models from Build a Better Burb** – June Williamson (Island Press)
- **The Street: A Quintessential Social Public Space** – Vikas Mehta (Routledge/ Taylor & Francis)
- **Urban Design Ecologies: AD Reader** – Brian McGrath (Wiley)
- **New Urbanism: Life, Work, and Space in the New Downtown** – Alexander Garvin (W.W Norton)

The panel's reviews were published in issue *UD* 128 p44-49.



### LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Lifetime Achievement Award for 2014 was presented by UDG Chair Paul Reynolds to Professor John Punter in recognition of his major contribution to the development of our understanding of

design quality, through his years of tireless research around the globe on planning, design and regeneration. He has worked in universities in Canada, Australia, England, Scotland and, significantly, in Wales at Cardiff University where he has played a central role in the team behind the highly successful MA Urban Design. In so doing he has inspired a generation of urban designers who will serve society in 21st century.

In accepting his award, John said that he was delighted and surprised as he was 'not really an urban designer'; the award signified for him a final accolade and acceptance into the urban design world. Having always valued the UDG as an organisation between the three main professional bodies, he reflected on issues for future debate: how to attract British students to urban design courses for the future of planning in the country; the demise of CABE and all of its good work; greater social justice given the decimation of local authorities cutting staff and no longer able to provide a good service; and, the role of the UDG in lobbying for a better service and to celebrate good planning and urban design policy.

John Punter will deliver the UDG's high profile Kevin Lynch Memorial Lecture in the autumn.

### STUDENT AWARD

Introduced by Graham Smith

Winner: **Sarah Cawse (Newcastle University)** for *Designing Incentives for Health Lifestyles, Elswick Ward Newcastle upon Tyne: Promoting food access, physical activity and social interaction through design.*

See overleaf for full article  
Shortlisted:

- **Shen Gaojie (Cardiff University)**  
Designing ordinary, everyday marketplaces: An alternative regeneration approach for Wushan (Cixi, China)
- **Akolade Akiyode (Cardiff University)**  
Rethinking the High Street, Swansea
- **Tong Shu (Cardiff University)**  
New Home – Critical Learning from Chinese Work Unit: From Urban Design to Social Sustainability

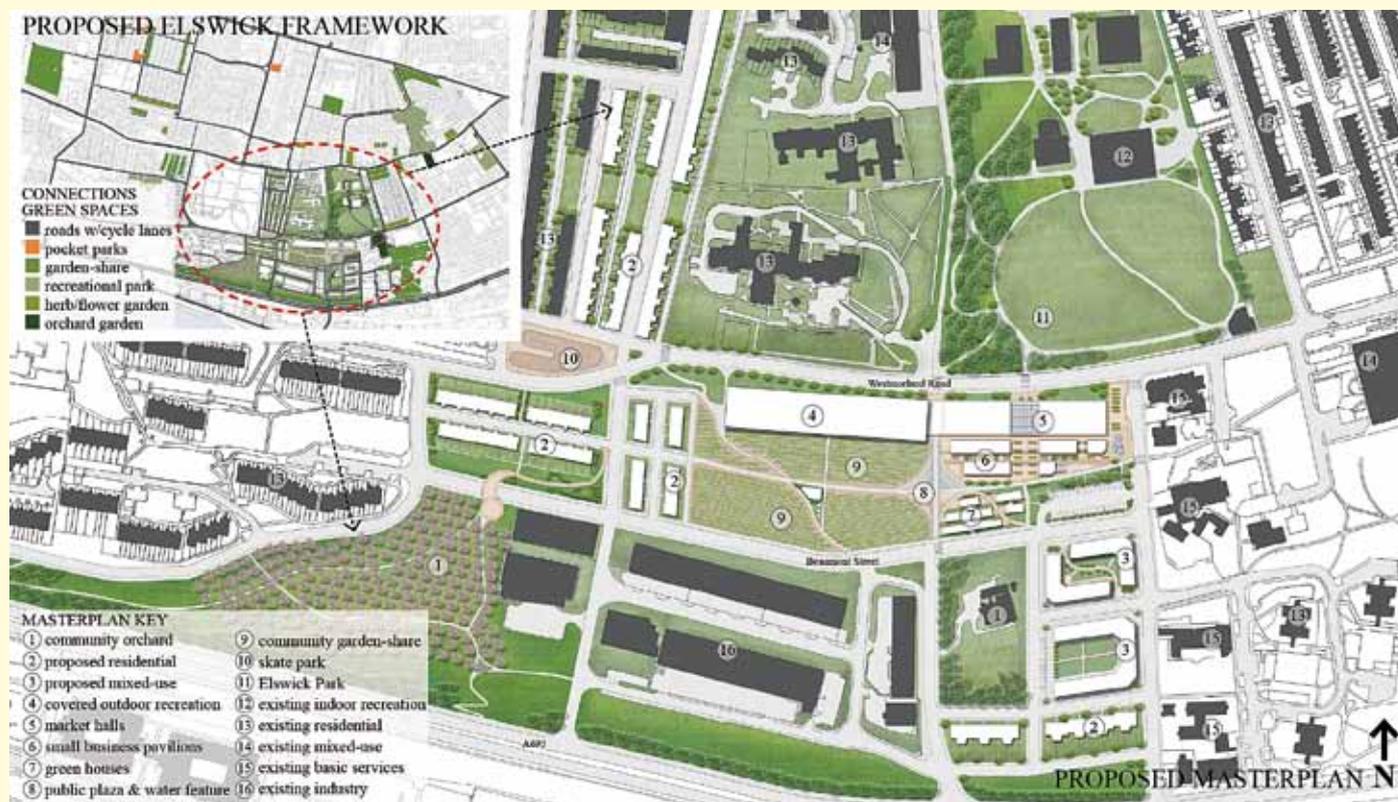
Congratulations are extended to all the winners and the finalists, as well as a huge thank you to all who attended and took part in the event.



The Student Award  
Runners up were:  
↑ Shen Gaojie  
↑↑ Akolade Akiyode  
↑↑↑ Tong Shu

# DESIGNING INCENTIVES FOR HEALTHY LIFESTYLES, ELSWICK WARD, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

*Promoting food access, physical activity, and social interaction through design*  
 by Sarah Cawrse



## ANALYSIS

In the UK, approximately 66 per cent of adults are either overweight or obese. Reasons for public health concerns of rising obesity are higher risks of diseases, decreased life expectancy, and a loss in health-related quality of life. The built-environment has tangible and quantifiable elements with a correlation between people and their overall health, so by understanding these elements through examining urban environments and socio-spatial processes, some problems

contributing to decreased health can be solved through alterations in the urban fabric.

The ward of Elswick in Newcastle, UK was chosen for analysis because its residents suffer from high unemployment, low education, low life expectancy, poor eating habits, and limited food access. The ward is lower-class, which is directly related to a higher risk of obesity, negative health impacts, and is inclusive to and subject to the trends of food access in deprived areas.

## OBJECTIVES

Research and analysis were integrated into the design by creating a programme to satisfy the objectives of promoting physical activity, food access, and social interaction, which are related to overall health. The three objectives were parameters determining the form of the physical interventions on the site and how they were interwoven with the surrounding areas. The design also sets guidelines to give incentives for a healthy lifestyle, community, and economy.



- ✓ Covered outdoor recreational space
- ✓ Outdoor public space, bike cafe, and market halls

**DESIGN APPROACH**

A four-step approach is taken to develop a framework within the ward of Elswick:

- 1 Identify vacant, unproductive, or poorly maintained green space that has potential to become productive and support various activities.
- 2 Transform green spaces into garden-shares, orchards, pocket parks, herb/flower gardens, and recreational spaces.
- 3 Create connections to green spaces focusing on access for pedestrians and cyclists, which also promote active and sustainable transport.
- 4 Develop a central site design that implements new social and recreational community facilities, mixed-use, and residential buildings. The design links green spaces together by providing areas to sell goods and produce for local vending and mending. Connections are integrated from the broader community into the site for efficient access.

Through this four-step approach the ward of Elswick transforms unproductive land into spaces that generate a stronger sense of community where social and physical activities may occur. The design expands the existing Elswick Park by connecting additional recreational and green space from the southern edge of the park down to the A695 road that also has access to the National Cycle Route. A large covered recreational space, modelled after Parco Dora in Torino, Italy, is designed as a simple structure with a concrete base to be adaptable for various uses. Two large market halls, modelled after the Torvehallerne Markets in Copenhagen,

Denmark, provide ample space to sell produce and products. Smaller vending and mending pavilions also provide space for classes and knowledge sharing focused on food, health, and urban gardening. Paths connect urban gardens and a large orchard for pedestrians and cyclists, which increase the walkability of the area. Mixed-use buildings and residential buildings surround the community facilities and green space, ensuring its safety and use. A garden-share scheme will be developed and run by an organisation that offers volunteers to work in the gardens, market halls, and pavilions in return for credit towards Elswick Coins, which can be used to buy healthy food and products at the pavilions and market halls. Successful implementation of the objectives will generate incentives for healthy lifestyles and create a robust and sustainable economy.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

Differences between socio-economic classes proves those in the lower-class may not have the options or choices to live a healthy lifestyle, therefore, good urban design practices can give residents of deprived neighbourhoods equal opportunities to improve their quality of life in a multi-dimensional way. Promoting physical activity, food access, and social interaction involves proper planning, designing and implementation to ensure community participation, which was explored in the design process.

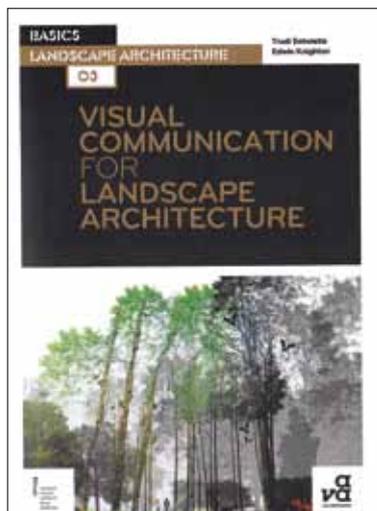
The design reveals how a physical design and social schemes can be simultaneously implemented as top-down and bottom-up approaches where

- ↓ Orchard gardens  
Pedestrian and cyclist pathways through the orchards
- ↓↓ Herb/flower gardens  
Shared-space roads with soft organic paths amongst the plantings
- ↓↓↓ Garden-shares  
Shared-space roads with easy access to raised gardens



both satisfy community and economic needs while providing healthy incentives. By realising how urban design impacts on our overall health, we can begin to understand how to design healthy communities that support strong sustainable economies. ●





## Visual Communication for Landscape Architecture

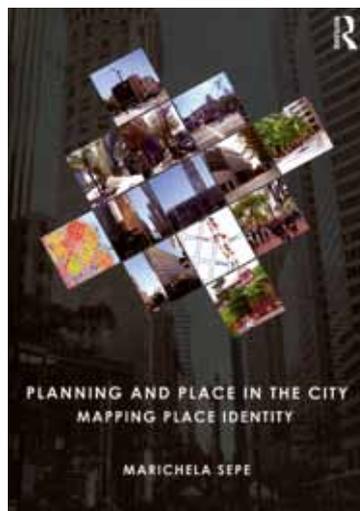
Trudi Entwistle and Edwin Knighton, AVA Publishing, 2013, £23.99, ISBN 978-2940496013

The clue is in the title: this book is a visual delight, full of examples of how to illustrate and communicate good landscape architecture and urban design, and will be of benefit to graphic designers, urban designers and highway designers as well of course to landscape architects and architects.

The book is logically set out proceeding from appraisal through exploration to public engagement and finally to presentation. It practices what it preaches – the drawings and text are well presented within the space of each page (Less is, of course, more), and the sequence feels as if it naturally chose itself: from the first phase of appraisal and ‘reading of landscape’ through an understanding of the creative process, how drawing is both a means for inspiration as well as recording, via the details of 2D and 3D representation and finally, to suggesting how the audience must be carefully understood as presentation is prepared and finalised.

The case studies consistently demonstrate good examples of how the chosen graphics communicate. This is all very positive but a few poor examples would have been a useful comparison. The value of handwriting and the hand drawn sketch versus the computerised graphic, and making the best of each one is well evaluated. As the authors state, the value of drawing is understood as an observational tool. Inspection and inspiration are to be found in the mind’s eye before trying the test of the computer. A good tip is to grab spontaneous thoughts as they happen rather than seeking to force them. There is no rejection of the electronic age here, just a clear sense of what it is good for; CAD is seen as just another tool. Within each stage of the book it sets exercises too. For instance there is a practical guide to model making.

While the book makes many references to the likes of Lynch, Cullen and William Whyte



amongst others, as well as to some significant urban design projects, strangely urban design is not a term the authors use and it is not clear why. This made me question where the boundaries between urban design and landscape architecture lie, and if it really matters when there is such an overlap.

Of all the built environment professions, landscape architecture sits most closely with the principles of urban design. I liked this book and given that drawing and presentation does not come easily to some, I personally would have valued having it during my own urban design studies. How useful it would be for the more experienced professional or graphic designer is another matter, but certainly it is an excellent entry level into the subject.

● Tim Hagyard

## Planning and Place in the City, Mapping Place Identity

Marichela Sepe, Routledge, 2013, £29.99, ISBN 978-0415664769

Examining the effects of globalisation on cities and their identity has been of concern to urban designers for some time, and this book looks at the identity of places and how this is perceived, represented and shaped. The methodology PlaceMaker devised by Sepe is based upon the work of Kevin Lynch on the image of the city, Taner Oc on public spaces and Bernard Lassus on delineating the landscape. This process seeks to understand the relationship between the urban fabric, morphology, culture and history, and people and events.

In Part 1, Sepe examines the nature of place through thoroughly cross-referenced chapters, and this detailed academic style continues throughout the book detracting somewhat from the readability of the ideas in general. The nature of new spaces for living in the city is also explored, along with ‘urban containers’, her term for the non-city-centre retail environments, parks and other places that now dominate people’s lives.

The influences of CCTV, IT, and the range of senses that we use in public places are dealt with in short chapters, culminating in the introduction of the PlaceMaker approach. Part 2 explains this in more detail as a series of surveys and layers of data collection, which includes visitor and user surveys on what they perceive and use.

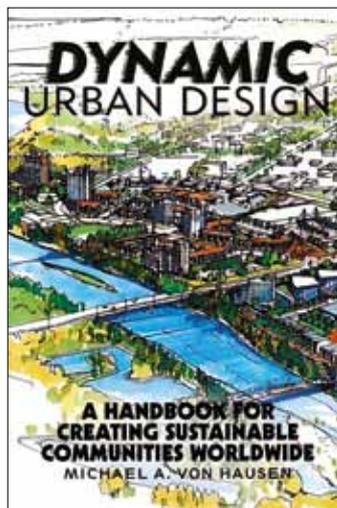
Part 3 describes the PlaceMaker approach in seven case studies: the Trevi-Pantheon route, Rome; South Broadway, Los Angeles; Kitano-cho, Kobe; Market Street, San Francisco; Oxford Street, London; Las Ramblas, Barcelona; and the Esplanadi area, Helsinki. For each the surveys are presented along with sketches and photographs, concluding with the findings of the study – what makes places distinctive and what could be done to enhance that. For each case study, Oxford Street being the easiest to compare, the conclusions are not radically different to those that an urban designer might reach, but the process represents a more democratic way of defining a design brief, drawing upon the perceptions and activity of visitors, other users and residents alike.

● Louise Thomas

## Dynamic Urban Design

Michael A. Von Hausen, iUniverse, 2012, £20.95 pb, ISBN 978-1475949896

First impressions of this book suggest that it would be yet another urban design handbook, with little new to offer. However, it seeks to distinguish itself by including a critical view of what the author calls ‘standard urban design’, something he feels is the mainstream attitude to design. He argues that standard urban design fails to address issues of social equality, cultural programming and economic diversity. He has come up with a model to address these, and Dynamic Urban Design combines knowledge from urban design literature with the rich experience of the author. It is coloured with details of the author’s experiences of cities and citizens



from all around the world including his design projects as case studies.

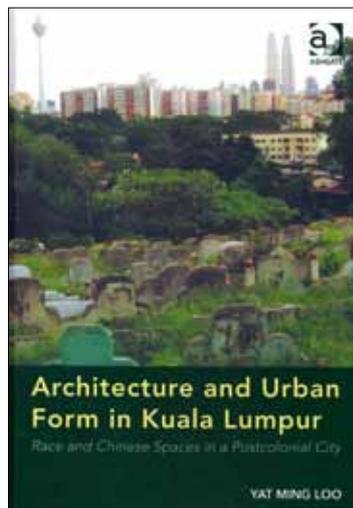
In restructuring established knowledge, this book suggests a dynamic approach (an open process) toward the theories and practice of urban design, trying to align them to 'take urban design to a higher level'. By this, Von Hausen means using design to create more convivial, yet sustainable places.

The book begins with a brief review of the literature of urban design, with an emphasis on North American literature. This is followed by what should be considered the core of the book: a section on analysis and integration. Here the author argues for the benefits of his approach to urban design, with its emphasis on practicality. Von Hausen's method focuses on 'the right tool at the right time', and seeks to free practitioners from conforming to solutions taught at university, encouraging them to do what is right for a particular project.

The book does not go into theoretical debate nor use academic language, which could be seen as a weakness. At points, particularly in chapter three (evaluation and innovations), the discussion digresses from the topics implied by the title. The lack of methodology can be frustrating, for example the reader is told about nine characteristics for a successful place, but no guidance is given as to how these may be achieved – the debate is sometimes not supported by either theoretical or empirical study. Despite these drawbacks, the book is very informative and would be particularly helpful for beginners not yet experienced in urban design.

*Dynamic Urban Design* makes a useful contribution to the literature, focussing on urban design as an open system, taking into account locality while at the same time suggesting 'strategies and processes that can be applied anywhere' which suggests an intriguing approach.

● Hooman Foroughmand Araabi, PhD Research Student, Bartlett School of Planning, UCL



## Architecture and Urban Form in Kuala Lumpur

Yat Ming Loo, Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2013, £60, ISBN 978-140944597

The design brief to Cesar Pelli, architect of the Petronas Twin Towers, was 'to reflect the Islamic and Malay heritage in a modern dynamic image', hoping to put Malaysia on the world map with their own twin towers. Many emerging country leaders use architecture to make a nationalistic statement to reflect their cultural aims. The Malaysian author Yat Ming Loo points out however that the culture of only half of the population is represented in these new buildings, while his own Chinese heritage has been marginalised and even suppressed under the Malay-led government's policy to create a national identity based solely on Islamic Malay culture. Through well researched work funded through the Bartlett Research Fund and a UCL grant, the author demonstrates how government policies have effectively marginalised the Chinese and Indian minorities and their culture in the fifty years since independence, and how this has been reflected in the new architecture of Kuala Lumpur. Originally a Chinese town funded by tin mining with a strong British colonial structure still evident around the colonial set piece architecture around the Padang, KL has become a globalised metropolis with new projects exhibiting Islamic architecture. Through globalisation more countries are becoming multi-cultural with significant minority groups, which begs the question: how should this change be reflected in their built environments? Having lived in KL, it is clear to me that senior government servants and company heads are predominantly ethnic Malay Bumiputra, literally sons of the soil, who greatly benefit from the New Economic Policy bias. It is the Indian community which suffers the most, but the larger Chinese community certainly resents the subjugation of their culture as represented in architectural style. Realists may point out that such

policies actually work where smaller ethnic groups put up with them to share the benefits of economic prosperity, rather than exacerbating tensions that have led to conflict in many countries. This book looks at a very specific form of cultural hegemony, which is becoming more prevalent as emerging economies proclaim their new status with the predictable practice of commissioning foreign architects to design iconic buildings splattered with a tincture of the cultural style of the governing ethnic group; should the architects share the blame?

● Malcolm Moor

**OTHER CONTRIBUTORS**

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

● Tim Hagyard is Planning Team Manager, East Herts Council

● Joe Holyoak, architect and urban designer

● Sebastian Loew, architect and planner, writer and consultant

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

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

● Louise Thomas, independent urban designer

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

We welcome articles from our readers. If you wish to contribute to future issues, please contact the editors.

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**PRACTICE INDEX**

Directory of practices, corporate organisations and urban design courses subscribing to this index. The following pages provide a service to potential clients when they are looking for specialist urban design advice, and to those considering taking an urban design course.

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The MSc/Dipl Urban Design & City Planning has a unique focus on the interface between urban design & city planning. Students learn to think in critical, creative and analytical ways across the different scales of the city – from strategic to local –and across urban design, planning, real estate and sustainability.

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**UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE**  
 Town and Regional Planning  
 Tower Building, Perth Road  
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**W www.dundee.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/advanced\_sustainable\_urban\_design\_msc.htm**

The MSc Advanced Sustainable Urban Design (RTP1 accredited) is a unique multidisciplinary practice-led programme set in an international context (EU study visit) and engaging with such themes as landscape urbanism, placemaking across cultures and sustainability evaluation as integrated knowledge spheres in the creation of sustainable places.

**UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM**  
 Department of Architecture and Built Environment, University Park, Nottingham NG7 2RD  
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**W www.nottingham.ac.uk/pgstudy/courses/architecture-and-built-environment/sustainable-urban-design-march.aspx**

Master of Architecture (MArch) in Sustainable Urban Design is a research and project-based programme which aims to assist the enhancement of the quality of our cities by bringing innovative design with research in sustainability.

**UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH**  
 School of Architecture  
 Eldon Building, Winston Churchill Avenue, Portsmouth PO1 2DJ  
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**W www.port.ac.uk/courses/architecture-property-and-surveying/ma-urban-design/**

The MA Urban Design course provides the opportunity to debate the potential role of design professionals in the generation of sustainable cities. One year full time and two years part time.

**UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD**  
 School of Architecture, The Arts Tower, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN  
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**W www.shef.ac.uk/architecture/study/pgschool/taught\_masters/maud**

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**UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE**  
 Department of Architecture, Urban Design Studies Unit, 131 Rottenrow, Glasgow G4 0NG  
 T 0141 548 4219  
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**W www.udsu-strath.com**  
 The Postgraduate Course in Urban Design is offered in CPD, Diploma and MSc modes. The course is design centred and includes input from a variety of related disciplines.

**UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND, BRISTOL**  
 Faculty of the Built Environment, Frenchay Campus, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol BS16 1QY  
 C Janet Askew  
 T 0117 328 3508

MA/Postgraduate Diploma course in Urban Design. Part time two days per fortnight for two years, or individual programme of study. Project-based course addressing urban design issues, abilities and environments.

**UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER**  
 35 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5LS  
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 MA or Diploma Course in Urban Design for postgraduate architects, town planners, landscape architects and related disciplines. One year full time or two years part time.



← The green streets of Howard's Letchworth. Photographs by Noha Nasser

↓ The site for the Black Country Garden City or Albion



## Albion promoted

As I write this early in 2014, there is again political talk within the coalition government about new garden cities as a response to the national housing crisis. Among the debate, there is a competition organised by Policy Exchange, allegedly David Cameron's favourite thinktank, for the best proposition for a new garden city. I am sure some UDG members have been working on submissions.

It is not the kind of design competition that we are familiar with, but an economics competition. It requires words, not drawings. The brief is pretty vague in defining what counts as a garden city, but reading between the lines, the promoters seem to imagine something in direct line of descent from Ebenezer Howard's 6,000 acres of agricultural land, detached from any other settlement. A group of concerned people convened at MADE, the regional built environment centre, and decided that this idea is unsustainable in 2014 (we are not alone in this conclusion), and so we are entering the competition with a proposal that takes off from a radically different starting point from Howard's, and seeks to reinvent the concept of the garden city for the 21st century.

Instead of locating new development in the countryside, we propose to locate it in the middle of Sandwell in the Black Country, on redundant or underused brownfield land in the towns of Smethwick and Oldbury. The location is a corridor, which Thomas Telford's Birmingham to Wolverhampton canal and the West Coast main line run through. Alongside these are extensive areas of ex-industrial land, allocated for either residential or

employment use in Sandwell's local plan. Here a new linear settlement can be built.

The difficult part lies not in designing it, but in proposing how to make it happen economically. It would seem to call for a body with the political clout and resources of a 1980s Urban Development Corporation to catalyse inertia into enterprising large-scale action. But the competition brief, coming as it does from a market economy perspective, says that we should 'show how the city can avoid relying on a single penny of public money and be self-financing'. We have yet to work out how to do this, if indeed it is possible at all.

Residential densities will be significantly higher than in Letchworth, of course. We are borrowing from Richard MacCormac's *Sustainable Suburbia* study, which sets out to demonstrate how higher densities can be made compatible with the kind of green suburban qualities which house builders tell us that buyers expect, even in Smethwick. It can be done.

One promising avenue (tree-lined of course) is to pursue the findings of a research initiative which Sandwell's planners and health professionals have been working on for some years. They have been making connections between spatial planning and public health, many of which involve the availability, or more precisely the unavailability, of fresh food in parts of the borough. It has resulted in an enterprising food-growing programme in various physical forms, which we think could be imaginatively extended so as to become a really distinctive characteristic of the garden city. No urban development can ever become autonomous in food production, but I can imagine a weekly farmers' market, selling produce from within a two mile radius, being achievable.

The Black Country Garden City also

needs to develop a recognisable identity, so you know when you are there, just as you do when you arrive in Letchworth, from the existence of a number of signifiers. Much as I grumble about the superficiality of branding, I have to admit that there could be a job for it here. The oxymoronic status of the Black Country Garden City could be a starting point. But it needs a snappier name to sell it, and we think *Albion* might be appropriate – evoking an Arcadian or urban English garden city. The location is within a mile of the centre of West Bromwich Albion and the WBA ground. Can't you already just see the sales literature with photos of pretty girls in summer dresses (and shalwa kameez) skipping happily through the Black Country cabbage fields?

● Joe Holyoak



A different

# Perspective

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