



Good architecture and urban design in London

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2. Presentation outline

Sustainable Urbanism in London

- The responsibilities I have in my current position as Design and Conservation Officer at Islington Council;
- How what I learnt during the MSc in Sustainable Heritage at the Bartlett informs my work;
- An overview of my own opinions on what types of built environment does and doesn't contribute to making London a sustainable, liveable city;
- A brief look at some scientific research which supports some of my hypothesis.

3. My role and challenges

Senior Design and Conservation Officer at Islington Council

2 Main roles:

1. To provide advice to applicants and determine applications for listed building consent to preserve and/or enhance the special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings, and to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas.
2. To provide design advice to architects and developers on both small and large scale developments – main focus of my presentation.

Achieving “**Sustainable development**” is the concept that is central to all government policy and guidance with regard to development.

However

- Housing density in London increased four fold between 2000 and 2004 and continues to increase
- Over 300 towers of over 20 storeys have been approved over the three years. Many are far taller than this. This will dramatically and irretrievably change London's skyline. This is very tall for London

4. Key concepts learnt during my MSc in Sustainable Heritage that inform my current work and what I learnt “on the job”

1. **Conservation physics** an understanding of how materials work and age.
2. **The Sustainability mind-set – holistic thinking** . How to reconcile any project’s competing environmental, social and economic priorities.

What I’ve learnt “on the job”:

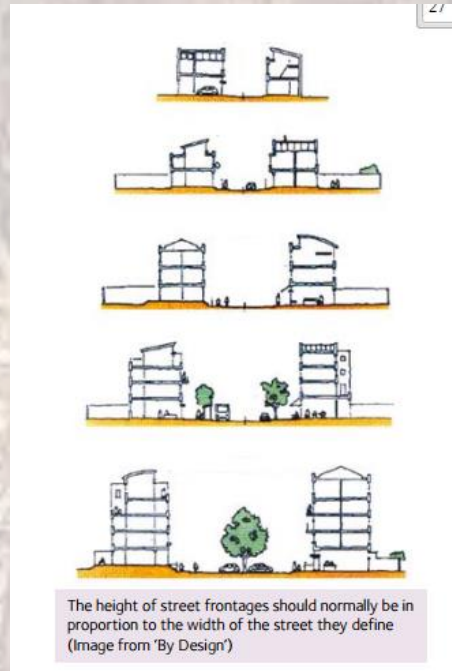
1. Many developers have short term **profit maximising objectives** and architects are often motivated by the pursuit of **positive peer reviews**. I will be looking for **high quality, contextual design**. Reconciling the different priorities is not always easy.
2. National and local planning policies require “a presumption in favour of **sustainable development**’ but nearly all projects approved are overdeveloped by over 50%.
3. **Fight and Tenacity**– Essential in achieving real sustainable solutions!
4. **Natural materials and finishes rather than manufactured materials** are preferable on the exterior of buildings.



5. Urban Design for
harmonious, “liveable” environments –
focusing on housing but applicable to all building typologies.

1. Human scale buildings with good proportions
2. Buildings that engage with the street
3. Facades that break down the massing
4. Façades with textured materials that a.
acquire a patina of age and b. provide
decorative elements
5. Sense of privacy/enclosure
6. Landscaping

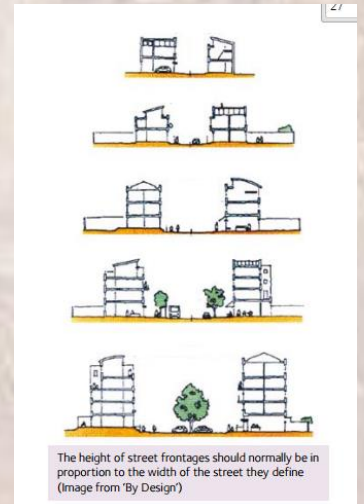
6. Human Scale and good proportions predominant characteristics of pre-war residential architecture



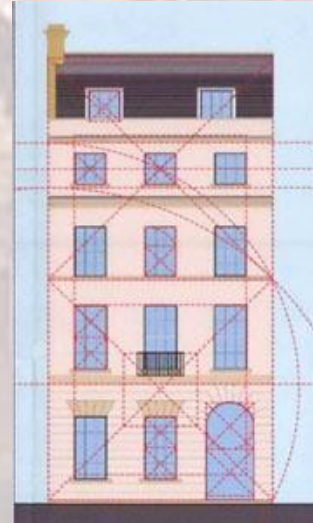
7. Common features of (residential) post war architecture and recent developments



8. Common features of residential and corporate architecture over the last 30 years



9. Where do people want to live?

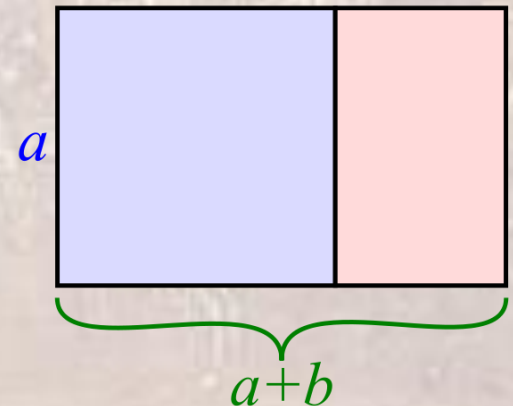


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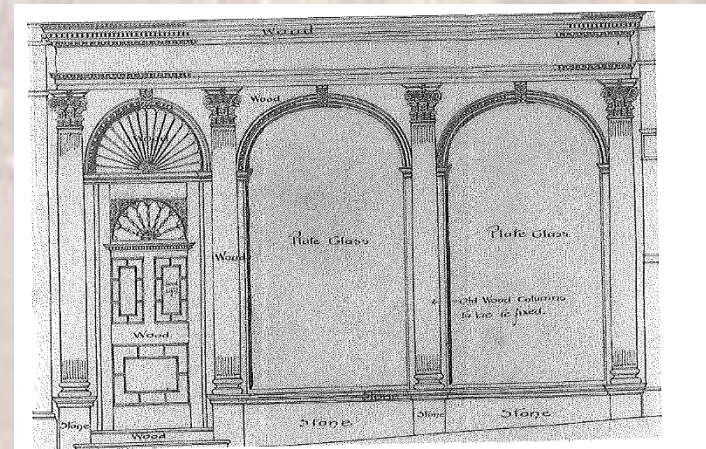
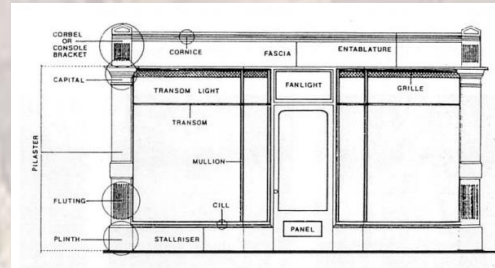
The six most expensive boroughs in London: K&C, Westminster, Camden, H&F, Richmond, Islington are characterised by their Georgian and Victorian architecture.

a

b



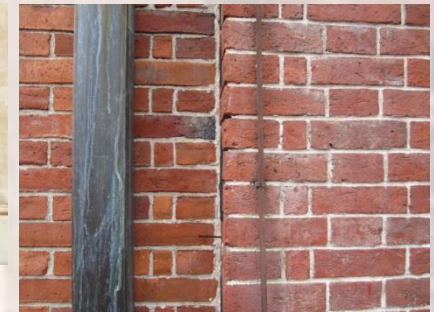
10. Street level. Human scale and fine grain especially at ground floor



11. Street level. Tall, alienating glass wall ground floors

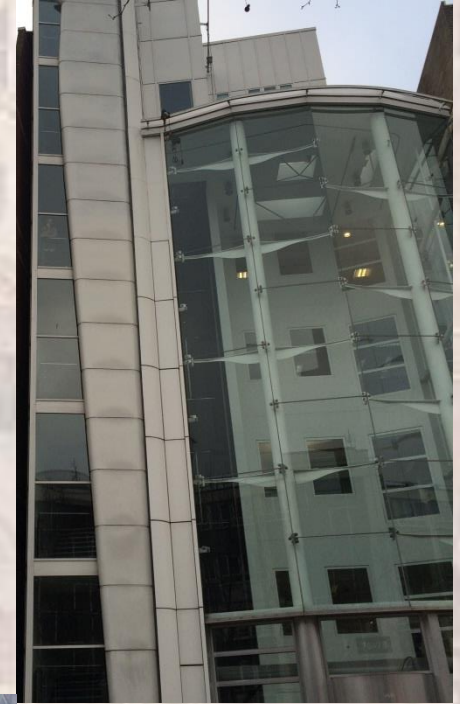


12. NATURAL MATERIALS – Enlivening facades – use of textured and natural materials



13. MAN MADE materials and Portland cement

No attractive patina of age – flat, smooth, materials



14. Breaking down bulk – good proportions and articulating the facade



15. Breaking down bulk. Bad proportions and little or no articulation



16. Carbuncle Cup 2013 – Building Design Magazine – worst building in the UK



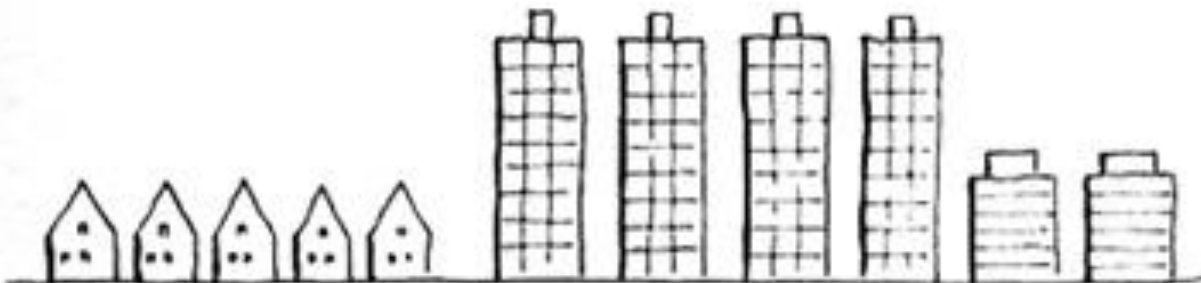
17. King's College – The Strand



18. Leon Krier – Drawing for Architecture



I am a good place to live in
architectural SPEECH



I... I... I... I... I... a... a... a... a... am... am

architectural STUTTER

19. Q1: which of these would you most want to see built on an urban street very near to where you or a close friend live? (order randomised in Pop-up Poll)

Create Streets

“CGI” of **Georgian-inspired** terrace



“Pastiche” of Victorian housing built in 1999



“New **London Vernacular**” housing just built*



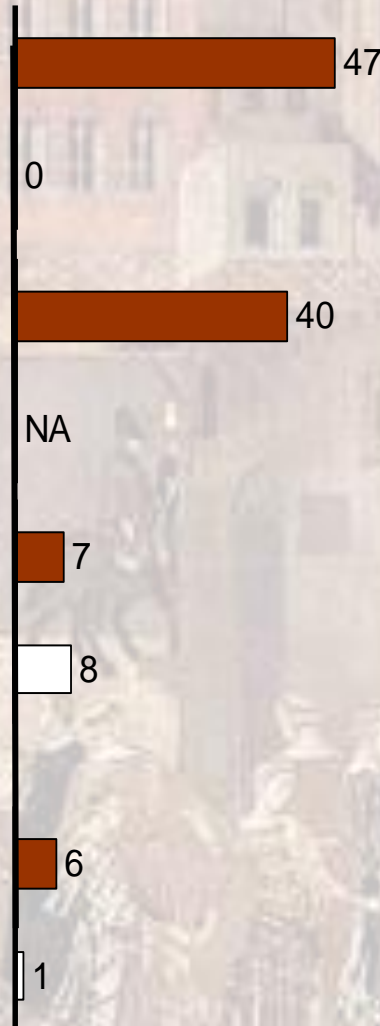
Innovative housing just built*



* Prize-winning. Total of nine awards for these two options

20. Overall results

% of 283 respondents most wanting to see built on an urban street very near to where you or a close friend live



Create Streets

Support for building
of awards

- "Pastiche" of Victorian housing built in 1999
- "CGI" of Georgian-inspired terrace
- No architectural awards
- 25% of supporters worked in planning, architecture or creative arts

- Well-regarded example of 'New London Vernacular' in East London - eight architectural, design or planning awards
- Innovative housing in South London - one architectural award
- 46% of supporters worked in planning, architecture or creative arts

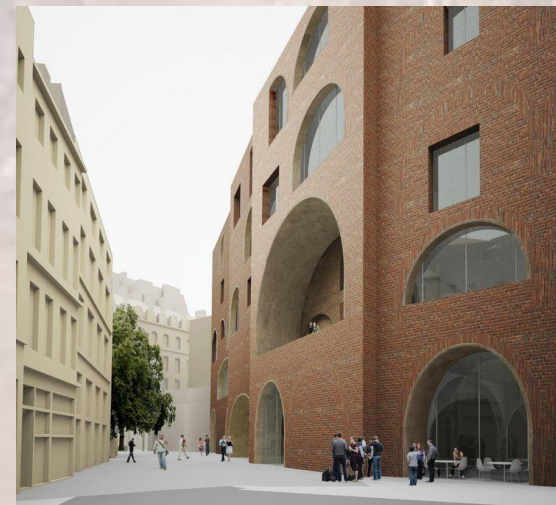
21. Sense of enclosure/privacy



22. Green is good



23 London's Contemporary Architecture. The best pickings



24. London's Contemporary Architecture. The best pickings 2/3



25. London's Contemporary Architecture. The best pickings – 3/3













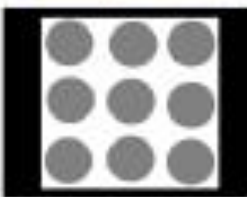

26. Since 2012 a new type of vernacular – there is hope!



27. Visual discomfort and the spatial distribution of Fourier energy

Olivier Penacchio and Arnold Wilkins

	uncomfortable	uncomfortable	2010
1 N=45			-0.080
2 N=70			-0.261 *
3 N=320			-0.123 *

4 N=75			0.255 *
5 N=75			0.367 **
6 N=100			0.001
7 N=80			0.274 *
Average variance explained			5.2%

"We would have nothing of value in this Country today if in the past someone had not fussed over the details, hadn't cared that if a thing was to be done it should be done properly - the face of our Country, whether in our buildings or in the way in which we treat the countryside is moulded by these small incremental essential decisions about detail. In fact I happen to believe that the essence of civilisation lies in attention to detail."

H.R.H The Prince of Wales, February 1991

Conclusion

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