

UCL's Stratford plans must strike a delicate balance

Negotiations over the university's scheme for a Carpenters Estate campus should look to King's Cross as an example

"It's always a balance if you want to do something for an area," says Robin Wales, the Labour mayor of Newham in east London. These are words often heard before a much-loved facility or people's homes are swept away — and when the balance tips in favour of the developer.

This is not always the case. At King's Cross, for example, a balance of sorts has been struck between the offices and more public uses such as Central Saint Martins and a park. But this took years to negotiate, which may explain why Newham and UCL have been reluctant to reveal much about their plans for the Carpenters Estate, where the university is proposing a new campus.

On paper it sounds a good idea. The Stratford housing estate is partially occupied but run down, and the council claims repairs would cost too much. A more honest answer might be that it can't find a developer to fund either the repair of existing homes or the cost of new ones, while universities have money to spend.

The story is not unusual. Down the road in Tower Hamlets, Robin Hood Gardens is being demolished because the council is on a mission to improve. But it's never that simple — particularly in Stratford where there's already a fear that the Olympic Park and buildings surrounding it will become a haven, separate from the poverty beyond.

How do you prevent this? Leading the charge from the Bartlett side is Michael Edwards, who earned his spurs from his battles at King's Cross with developer Argent. He is demanding that the development is "ethical" and led by the community — not behind closed doors. He makes a strong case, but it's balance that again is needed.

Academics such as Edwards should be heard but the Carpenters Estate should not become a political football. Stratford will benefit from having UCL on its doorstep, but the deal that needs striking is that new social housing is of the same quality as the campus that will be built in its place.

Lasdun's drawings find a global home

Digitisation means the location of an architect's archive is less important than the quality of its preservation

The news that Denys Lasdun's archive is to be available online is welcome. The digitisation of architectural drawings has opened up a wealth of material to scholars across the world.

According to his widow, Lasdun was of the view that the RIBA represented the most appropriate home for his drawings. With digitisation, however, the case that architects' archives should stay in their native country has been much diminished.

Far more important is the question of which institution is best placed to make

a centuries-long commitment to preserving and defending the archive, while imaginatively representing it in new and revelatory contexts.

Now housed in Montreal's Canadian Centre for Architecture, James Stirling's archive is hardly conveniently located for most scholars but the CCA has done an exemplary job in opening it up to a global audience.

It is this level of commitment that the RIBA will need to match if it hopes to retain the archives of future generations of architects.

NEWS

ELEPHANT & CASTLE

Squire tower's green light

Squire & Partners and John McAslan & Partners have seen two major schemes at Elephant & Castle approved by Southwark planning councillors this week.

Squire's 37-storey St Mary's Residential tower (pictured) is being developed by Lend Lease and marks the first phase of the regeneration of the south London area, while McAslan's £20 million leisure centre will sit alongside it for community use.

The tower, which also includes a four-storey pavilion building, will include 284 new homes and is due to start on site in summer 2013. The leisure centre, which is funded through the land sale of the tower, is due to complete in autumn 2014.

Lend Lease project director Rob Deck called this week's decision "the most significant milestone to date" in the regeneration of the area.



REGENERATION

Call for Whitechapel bids

The mayor of Tower Hamlets is seeking the "world's best architectural practices" to deliver a regeneration plan for Whitechapel.

The masterplan should enable the construction of affordable homes, business growth and new jobs for the local community.

A spokesperson for the council said practices of all sizes are welcome to apply.

"[The] vision for Whitechapel is one that builds on the area's

recent transformation, while retaining its cultural heritage and the working nature of the town centre.

"The successful practice will need to demonstrate they have experience in consulting and working with urban communities to deliver a lasting socio-economic legacy that improves the quality of life for local people."

The deadline for expressions of interest to bid is noon on November 13. The contract is to start in January.

MUSEUMS

Long is new V&A curator

The V&A Museum has appointed Kieran Long as its new senior curator of contemporary architecture, design and digital.

Long (pictured), who is currently the Evening Standard's architecture critic and worked as deputy director of the 2012 Venice Architecture Biennale, will start in the new year.

The newly created position will report to Christopher Wilk, keeper of furniture, textiles and fashion. A further



four posts will also be filled, including curator of architecture and urbanism, curator of digital design and a coordinator of the V&A's Friday Late programme.

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OBITUARY

Gae Aulenti, 1927-2012

The Italian architect Gae Aulenti died late on Wednesday, October 31 at her home in Milan. She had been ill for some time.

Aulenti, who was born in 1927, was best known for her work on museums including the Musée d'Orsay in Paris and the contemporary art gallery at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. She also worked on the Palazzo Grassi in Venice and the Asian

Art Museum of San Francisco. Architect Stefano Boeri paid tribute to her "talent, elegance and innate beauty" and said she was a "great architect".

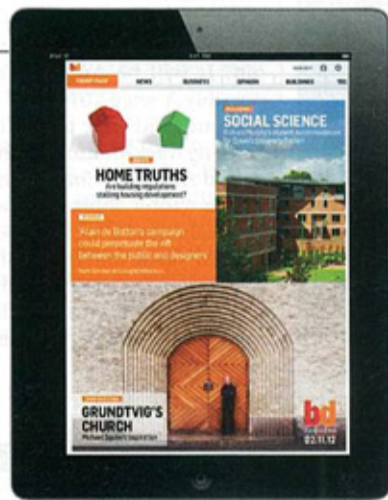
Aulenti studied at Milan's Polytechnic Faculty of Architecture and worked for Casabella magazine in her early career. She was also known for her work in lighting, interior design and industrial design.

THE INBOX

Tablet edition is free to subscribers

Have you tried the BD tablet app edition yet? If not, now is the perfect time to give it a whirl. BD print and online subscribers can get free access to the app, which can be found at bdonline.co.uk/tablet-app

With the launch of the tablet app we have reviewed our subscription packages. To find out more about these, please visit bdonline.co.uk/subscribe



Learn from the masters of comfort and cosiness

Even if you didn't enter BD's competition to design a small hotel room, you can come and hear from the experts how to do it.

The budget hotel room now accounts for a third of all new supply, so if you want to work in this growing sector, pick up some tips from Matt Bell of pioneering hotel chain CitizenM (pictured), Peter Clash of Clash Architects, who has designed hotels for the Sleeperz brand, and Tina

Norden of Conran & Partners. The seminar will be chaired by BD editor in chief Amanda Baillieu and is part of Sleep, Europe's only event focusing on hotel development and architectural excellence. Register to gain free entry and see the full complimentary seminar programme.

Readers can also gain free access to the seminar and exhibition by bringing a recent copy of BD. www.thesleep.com



Sign up for the festive Tweetup

Keep an eye on Twitter for details of the BD Christmas party and #BDTweetup on December 13.

The festive drinks will flow thanks to Autodesk, which is sponsoring the bar. And it will be completely

free to attend for any of our followers on Twitter, LinkedIn group members and Facebook fans. The London location will be announced soon; you can RSVP now at twitvite.com/christmastweetup