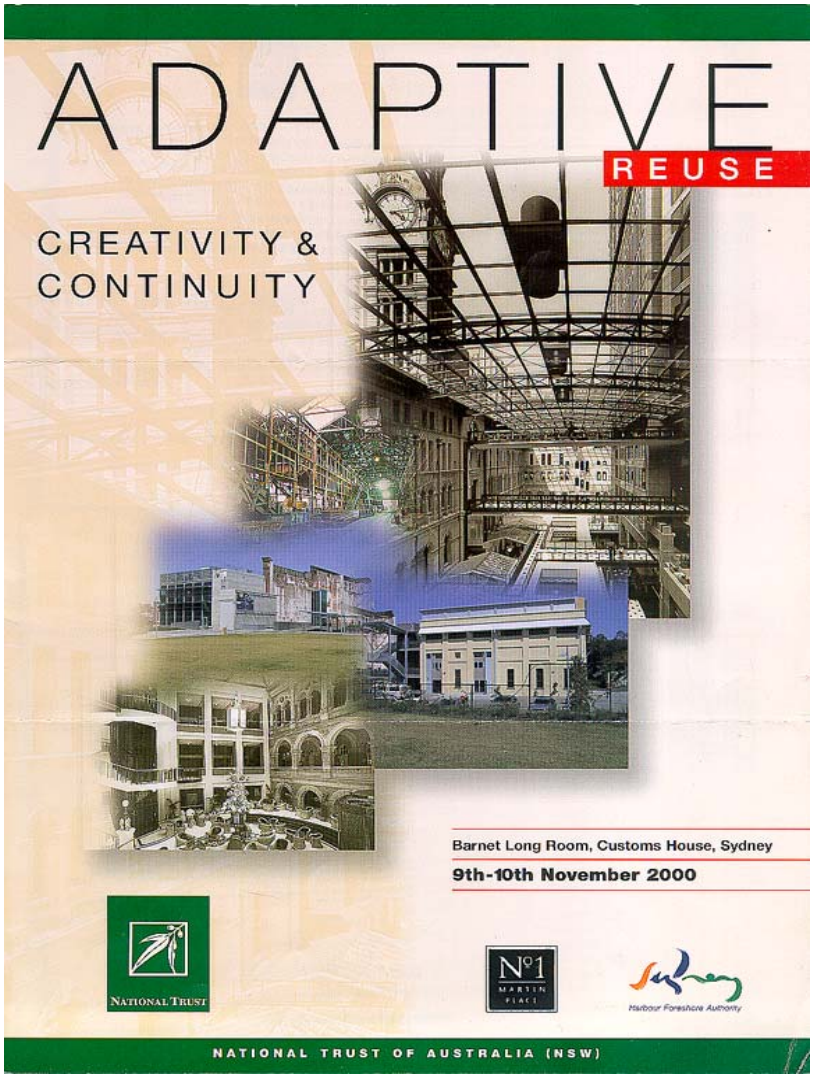
Adaptive Reuse

Creativity and Continuity



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Edited by Jacqui Goddard, Conservation Director

Adaptive Reuse: Creativity and Continuity

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The National Trust of Australia (NSW)

This collection follows the Adaptive Reuse: Creativity and Continuity Conference which was held at the Customs House, Circular Quay, Sydney on 9 - 10 November 2000.

In accordance with the conference, dates and time frames referred to in individual papers have remained as they were at the time of presentation.

Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the National Trust of Australia (NSW).

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Conference Introduction

Ian Stapleton

Ian Stapleton is a Sydney Architect. He is a Director of Clive Lucas, Stapleton & Partners a firm which has received numerous awards for its conservation work. Ian has recently been the Heritage Architect for the conservation and adaptive reuse of the Sydney GPO and the Woolloomooloo Finger Wharf. His publications include *Colour Schemes for Old Australian Houses* (with Ian Evans and Clive Lucas, 1984), *More Colour Schemes for Old Australian Houses* (with Ian Evans and Clive Lucas, 1992) and *How to Restore the Old Aussie House*, (1991). He is a past President of ICOMOS Australia and is the Convenor of this conference.

Having put in the conference flyer the title for this talk as *A New World of Adaptive Reuse* to get you all to come, I have now titled it more modestly *Conference Introduction*. However the original title is what I mean to say, for now after two decades of solid conservation legislation activity it is not a question of whether, but a question of how, significant places will be conserved and reused.

There are of course recalcitrants holding out for that green field site and parts of sites that are completely redeveloped as trade-offs for recycling other parts, but after a period of whinging about the 'heritage' mafia and how conservation architects lack confidence about today, developers and architects are getting used to using old places as the starting point of new works. Some intuitively appreciating their individual appeal and value and others beginning to listen to conservation consultants and the plans they write.

It surely must be a sign of increasing sophistication and civilisation that old buildings and places which embody our history and cultural values are adapted and reused rather than replaced as our society evolves. Any thoughtful society would not wish to live in the past, but it would also record its creativity and values in buildings and places and aspire to greater sophistication and culture than its forebears.

These seeming opposite positions are complicated by civic authorities with responsibilities both wider and often mundane and by the possibilities of limitation of living in a democratic market economy. This is the topic of this conference. How can we be creative and yet maintain cultural continuity in our cultural environment, have the best of both in face of often bewildering regulation and crass commercialism.

The purpose of conservation is well known territory. We do it to retain, for present and future generations, places that will inform us, give us experiences (both pleasant and salutary), inspire us to new things and most importantly, give us identity. We don't do it because we lack confidence in today. But often, when other visions are weak, it seems to many architects that it occupies disproportionately the minds of approval authorities.

We do not want to see loved places such as the Glebe Point artists studios demolished. We do like to see places like the Empire Theatre in Toowoomba preserved and made new again. But how much change is acceptable? The much talked about 1970s Corn Exchange Theatre installation in Manchester was in those days called somewhat of a travesty. But I read in a 1998 publication that the former trading floor 'has become a focus of Manchester's cultural life'.

Perhaps one of our keynote speakers will comment further.

The talk of the season in London is architects Herzog and de Meuron's conversion of the London Bankside Power Station to a new gallery for the Tate Gallery: Tate Modern. In this project the new gallery spaces were accommodated easily into what had been a secondary chamber of the powerhouse. Thus the main hall and the station's huge external chimney remain untouched, providing symbolic and ceremonial functions provided by the classical façade and vestibules of the mother gallery. As a result, Giles Gilbert Scott remains just as much the architect for the new gallery as the recent design team.

Figure 1: Tate Modern, Bankside

But be assured they had loftier goals than this. One critic put it this way: 'Their work combines the material tactility of Joseph Beuys, with whom they collaborated, with the distilled existential silence of Aldo Rossi, who was their teacher.'[1] The question remains however, whether the work adequately conserves the heritage values of the building. This is difficult for the visitor to judge.

Certainly the building retains at least some of its machinery, but who can tell what existed before the recent works? The building's architectural significance has largely been preserved, but what of its place in the townscape? Has machinery been removed which was in some way unique, strongly representative of its era, or indicative of later technological changes?

Figure 2: The Turbine Room in Tate Modern, Bankside

In many instances conservation management plans are supposed to establish the ground rules for such interventions. However, conservation philosophy goes deeper than this, maintaining that changes to important places should not only be minimized, but be minimal. As a result, many architects have refused to adopt conservation terminology and in fact have invented phrases like 'adaptive reuse' and 'recycling' to describe their intentions more adequately. It is often argued effectively that extensive changes need to be made if a place is to have a new economic use, and it is true that architects and conservation consultants usually only become involved when significant change is proposed. The question that has to be asked is whether minimising change is the object? Perhaps Meredith Walker will discuss this further.

In the 1970s change usually meant changes to the physical material of a place or 'fabric', but these days it is generally recognised that uses, associations and meanings can also change, and this can also affect significance. A place may be important because of its continuous use and therefore change of that use must substantially effect that significance. Maatuyker Lighthouse off the southern coast of Tasmania had, until recently, been occupied continuously for over 100 years performing virtually a single use and it is difficult to suggest that shutting down this lighthouse did not have a serious impact on its heritage values.

Even though other places are more flexible my impression of the adaptation of the Queensland Treasury Building as a casino is that loss of fabric was not nearly as serious as the vulgar use installed. Perhaps James Broadbent will be talking further on vulgar uses although I asked him to talk on how 19th century architects thought about adaptive reuse of monuments.

On the other hand, some buildings and uses seem to be meant for one another in that the use can both be comfortably physically accommodated, and also be somehow spiritually attuned. A good recent case of this is the Powerhouse Theatre complex in Brisbane's New Farm where the derelict former tram power sheds, graffiti and all, could largely stand free around a new concrete, steel and glass dual theatre. More of this project later.

Associations people have with places are often more tolerant to quite substantial physical change. An example is First Government House in Sydney which, although most entirely demolished, retains its associations with early settlement and first contact and these have been reinterpreted in recent years. The meanings, including spiritual values, these places can have to people may or may not be affected by use or fabric changes. Meanings tend to weaken over time but can be very tenacious. The meanings too can be confused or obscured by inappropriate activities.

My conservation plan for Norfolk Island suggests that re-enactments of the Mutiny on the Bounty (which have since been staged) would be a confusing activity because, although Norfolk Island's Third Settlement was by the descendants of the mutineers, the mutiny itself took place elsewhere.

Changes of use have not been uncommon in places now considered of significance. The National Trust Centre itself has previously been a military hospital and a school. Mortimer Lewis' 1840s envelopment of John Watts' earlier hospital would not have been approved today. In the 1970s the Government Architect's branch probably didn't need an approval to convert Henry Robertson's first National School to a gallery. In the background along Kent Street virtually nothing is left of the early high rise IBM Centre by Stephenson and Turner, nor does the Stamford Hotel show much of the early functionalist work of Eric Nicholls. Next but one to the unadapted Mann Judd Building I believe there is the Esso Building at the core of Highgate.

Accordingly only the S.H. Ervin Gallery of the seven buildings noted has become a heritage place in its adaptively reused form. Redundancy has occurred in the past, and is occurring particularly now when technological change enables functions once housed in whole buildings to be housed in a suitcase.

In my practice the Sydney GPO project has illustrated to me many issues associated with redundancy and reuse. By 1985 Australia Post had long since been keeping up with the evolving technology of choosing to sort its mail on the perimeter of the City, using large machines in glorified sheds. When Telstra was separated they vacated two thirds of the building in favour of new purpose built facilities.

The first concept illustrated is the finding of a sustainable use. In this case it was as hotel, retail, health club, function centre, restaurant, post office uses and so far appears to have been viable. The early 1980s reuse of Pier One seems to have been a case where tenant mix was not. So far Woolloomooloo Finger Wharf has been thought a financial success and we have asked Malcolm Rose, one of the developers, to tell us how.

The second concept illustrated was the social contract involved of allowing a former public building to be substantially privatised in return for conservation and interpretation works. The developer achieved a commercial asset (although the GPO is still owned by Australia Post) and in return repaired the maximum of old fabric, reconstructed all the main historic spaces and elements of the building. It also retained the post office (albeit smaller) on the site of the original George Street post office and included interpretive spaces and devices.

The third concept illustrated was the brinkmanship involved between developer and authority. The developer attempts to maximise the nett lettable area of new components to offset conservation costs and to increase profit. Part

of this was employing a big name architect, Daryl Jackson, to develop envelope studies. Brinkmanship is a normal part of development in Sydney. I noted a few weeks ago that Metro Edgley said Luna Park 'was dead' without a 750 space underground car park. Perhaps Genia McCaffrey, who walks in the footsteps of Ted Mack as Mayor of North Sydney, can tell us more.

The fourth concept illustrated at the GPO was the way a Commonwealth property owner can influence its chosen developer and not merely leave an outcome to approval authorities such as the NSW Heritage Council. In this case Australia Post had paid up front for the stone repairs to the street façades and through its lease maintained control of content and consultants.

Recently the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority has done a similar thing in obtaining its own development approval for the Jones Bay Wharf prior to calling for expressions of interest for developers to take over the project. I hope Ivar Nelson will discuss further ways Government as owner can guide adaptive reuse and Mary Knaggs will speak in particular about Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority.

Privatising public buildings such as the GPO is always unpopular in spite of the fact that public access usually becomes greater. There are many cases where politicians have taken the easier way out by turning redundant buildings into public museums. This can be a most sympathetic use when a building becomes a museum of itself such as Catherine Mansfield's family house in Wellington, New Zealand, but old buildings do not generally make good museums of other things and this has been demonstrated at the Sydney Mint Building. Sarah-Jane Rennie will speak further about the use of old buildings for museums. Another concept illustrated at the GPO is the inclusion of public interpretation. In this case the exposure of, and mini museum around, the Tank Stream Drain. Sydney Harbour in many ways provides a hothouse for the cultivation of the adaptive reuse of former industrial sites. Buildings such as the White Bay Powerhouse need not be scrapped when they have such handy locations and fabulous views. Just look at the investors leaping in at Jacksons Landing and the former Unilever site opposite in Balmain.

Figure 3: White Bay Power Station

Like the GPO site, these sites are so full of development potential that architects with creativity and will can achieve community benefits including the retention of harbourside landmarks utilising the unusually high resources that can be realised.

My involvement in the Woolloomooloo Finger Wharf has sensitised me also to other aspects of the adaptive reuse debate. Apart from those mentioned above, the first of these is the habit of developers to use prestigious consultants to win agreements with government and to obtain development approvals, but then employ other consultants to actually organise and carry out the work. As creativity and quality are important facets of the successful conversion of heritage places this *modus operandi* may not always be conducive to the best results.

Public owners need to maintain control of the consultants to be used and not abdicate responsibility completely to the consent authorities which by and large can control size, height, bulk and proportions, but are not so successful in controlling quality of design, materials and workmanship. Perhaps Lucy Turnbull, the Deputy Lord Mayor of Sydney will discuss this further and the ways local authorities can use their not inconsiderable planning powers.

Another aspect of the Woolloomooloo Finger Wharf is handling the bold new statement. After the experience at Pier One it can be argued that adaptive reuse should involve a substantial new visual statement as can be seen in the luminous clerestoreys of the Tate Modern and the bold, some might say brazen, steel and glass additions to this Customs House.

It is philosophically beyond question that new elements should not be confused with the old and Chris Johnson and Philipe Robert with their involvement with the recent use of Walsh Bay have promoted effectively the case for the successive layering of physical history of places. I know for this building [Customs House] Peter Tonkin suggested

modern roof top additions were no different to Walter Vernon's mansard roof additions to the GPO. Having built them I wonder what he thinks now?

Such up to date additions can be terribly seductive as Daniel Libeskind's addition to the V&A (Victoria and Albert) Museum in London appears to be. What better than two architectural statements, each representing the style and time of their creation. The difficulty with this is that the new building is only a promise whereas the existing is already a recognised success.

Figures 4-7: Gallery Extension to the Victoria & Albert, London by Daniel Libeskind - from models 1998-99

Just around the corner from the V & A is the fabulous Natural History Museum of 1881 by Alfred Waterhouse. Its 1960s addition is now described by guide books as 'deplorable'.[2]

Also not far away is the celebrated adaptive reuse of the Fulham Road Michelin House now looking a trifle dated. So if we are to have new statements maybe a competition is in order and the intent of the winner must be realised. Could Sydney Deputy Lord Mayor respond please?

Another conceptual issue raised by the Woolloomooloo Wharf is that of the boundaries of the place. On consid-

Figure 8: Michelin House, Fulham Rd London, built 1910 for Michelin Tyre Co. Closed 1985 and acquired for use as offices and shop by Sir Terence Conran

eration the place in this case can be seen to be the whole of inner Sydney Harbour. For whilst worthy of preservation in its own right, the wharf constructed from 1910 to 1915 is one of a group of only five surviving Sydney Harbour Trust period finger wharves and this group is unique in all Australia. Whereas the once numerous industrial sites around

Sydney Harbour are being closed, and many redeveloped, the retention of these wharves in almost any form could be considered maintenance of the Harbour's historic environment. Rod Simpson will discuss other redundant landmarks in Sydney Harbour with adaptive reuse potential.

Woolloomooloo also demonstrated that it was possible to preserve large amounts of old machinery in an adaptive reuse; in this case all of the unique goods conveyors and external travelling platforms and representative examples of other machinery including the goods lift now used as a dining room. For many industrial buildings the functions carried out inside embodied most of their significance and ways need to be devised to interpret this more meaningfully than picking the best looking piece of machinery and whacking it on a pedestal in the foyer.

Finally it will be interesting to see in the next few days if conservation management plans can be made more palatable in explaining acceptable sympathetic uses and controlling changes to fabric, meanings and associations. Whether architects and their clients can see conservation plans and conservation planners as tools devised for their assistance in achieving new uses in creative ways, rather than subjective, arbitrary, uncreative and altogether stodgy constraints on their freedom to create viable modern places. I will speak further on this.

So I have now touched on many of the matters at issue for this conference - creativity and continuity, but also commerce and control - and I am hoping the forthcoming papers can pick these up so that, in our panel discussion, a distillation of ideas may become apparent.

References

1 *SMH* 15.8.00, Ian Perlman, 'Vision-Impaired Syndrome City'
2 Jones E. & Woodward C., *The Architecture of London*, Werenfeld & Nicholson, 1983

Keynote Address

Creative Reuse

Derek Latham

At the time when the prevailing tendency was to demolish old buildings and replace them with something new, Derek Latham's passionate dedication to rescuing and reusing historic buildings meant he was swimming against the tide. Nowadays, that tide has turned and with growing interest and support for regenerating our towns and cities and revitalising built fabric. Derek's approach once ahead of its time, is now very much 'of the moment'. Derek's practice, Latham Architects, has been responsible for such prestigious 'creative re-use' projects as the Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham, the Victoria Quarter in Leeds and the King's Fund Headquarters in London. Derek Latham is the author of Creative Reuse, published by Donhead.

'Creative Reuse' is more than just the conversion or rehabilitation of a property for a new, or continued use. It is a process that harnesses the energy and quality of the original building, whether of special architectural or historic interest or simply a workaday building combining the energy and activity that the new use brings whether leisure, retail, office or residential to the existing.

I hope to demonstrate this by first examining the appeal of older Buildings, then identifying the opportunities for reuse, assessing the challenge, directing the route and concluding by considering the implications once the project is complete.

The Appeal of Older Buildings

Our Victorian forbears were inspired by old buildings. Unconcerned about keeping what they found they 'restored' buildings by correcting them to how they thought they should be. Dogtooth ornament on Norman arches is uneven; carved to match the size of each stone. The Victorian's 'improved' them by regularising them. They did not go unchallenged. Morris and Lethaby founded the SPAB [Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings[1]] with its manifesto of 'Repair not Restore' which is still applicable today. Archaeology is concerned with buildings as pieces of historic evidence, and the intrinsic value of that evidence to our own, and future, generations. Reuse therefore should neither restore nor obliterate, but display (or in certain cases hide and protect) historic evidence, retaining it alongside new material needed to provide for the new use.

A common emotional view evoking popular support, aesthetics can be split into two strands: visual amenity and cultural value. Visual amenity is concerned with popular, fashionable taste rather than fixed criteria. Each successive society values different aesthetics from the one before. Victorian architecture, once reviled, is now lauded. Creative reuse can harness the styles of the past and respond to them in a way appropriate to today's society – whether quietly understated or overtly High-Tech.

So many new buildings are designed today without reference to their context; the *genus loci* , a sense of place. Many of those that are, lapse into a formulaic vernacular. Creative reuse uses existing buildings, buildings that already

fit, and so the character of the locale is maintained. The cultural need to preserve old buildings can be subtly amended into a drive to regain, and creatively reuse, everything possible. The addition of modern contextual design can succeed by serendipity; creating a pleasant surprise when elements of our own culture are juxtaposed with those of the past with sensitivity and ingenuity.

'A city without old buildings is like a man without a memory'. Rapid wholesale redevelopment destroys the fragile sense of time and place towns possess. By keeping all that has the potential to be reused we respond to the continuity required to maintain the psychological well being of a community. Whether originally a church, bank or pottery converted to an office, bar or shop, the cultural value of the original maintains that sense of identity for local people.

The economic benefit gained from retaining historic fabric and improving the visual quality of its surroundings for tourism and leisure is self evident. However, if this is allowed to justify the theatrical creation of 'pastiche' townscape in a competition to attract tourists, then the place is devalued. The 'Disney' approach is fine in a genuine theme park, but the real world can offer a genuine mix of leisure and tourism to a wider audience everyday.

The Cavendish Arcade shopping centre was previously the Old Thermal Baths at Buxton, the basis of ts reputation as a spa, which had lain empty for 30 years languishing between different local authorities with the roof collapsing. A comprehensive repair was needed at low cost, matching existing tiles with new ones ready crazed to blend in and piecing in missing special motif tiles with fibreglass replicas. A central space to attract people into a new tourist shopping centre was also needed and created with a new barrel vault roof. The changing cubicles off the corridors now become shops. A restaurant is incorporated at rooftop level under a glass blue sky which is one way of avoiding Buxton's wet weather.

Figure 1: Cavendish Arcade, Buxton

Reusing buildings can be cheaper than new especially when infrastructure costs are considered and, with the right methods, can be quicker too. Empty buildings are expensive to maintain. Reuse is essential to retain their value. Saving buildings, just as we save other hard won resources is a way of banking our built investment and husbanding the resources, labour and energy they comprise. A derelict block of buildings in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter was purchased by HRH The Prince of Wales to demonstrate the feasibility of inner city renewal. The rear gardens of previously domestic property had been densely developed for workshops but the buildings were near to collapse.

Figures 2 - 6: Birmingham Jewellery Quarter

The objective was to retain the frontage buildings whilst creating modern accommodation. A new arch, announcing the entrance, was given a gateway, symbolic of security and the jewellery to be created within. New light and airy courtyards were created to the rear with a new façade section designed to maximise light to the jeweller's bench. Bricks, slates, pavors and even windows were reused in the new sections.

As our global village comes to realise that conserving material resources is an essential ingredient of sustainability and Agenda 21[2] then the wisdom of retaining the embodied energy contained within buildings will be increasingly understood. This includes not just the material but the skill and labour used to construct them. Furthermore conversion is labour intensive, enabling a greater proportion of the real estate investment to employ people rather than buy products. Reusing buildings is 'Green'.

In a planned economy, or a new town, public facilities can be sited next to prime shopping areas but in a market economy it is difficult for authorities to find sites in prime areas or if they can, to afford them. Old buildings that are often overlooked by the market provide opportunities for community uses whether a social centre for the elderly, an exhibition centre, or an art gallery.

As we anticipate what a new century, indeed a new millennium, may bring we also seek the psychological security of the familiar. The sheer pace of change might make us long for stability and the past. Creative reuse satisfies that craving whilst avoiding preservation for its own sake. I converted St. Michael's church in Derby into studios for my practice by inserting two floors whilst retaining a three dimensional open plan.

Opportunities for reuse

People whether individuals or groups may be seeking premises for a particular use. A Nature Conservancy group wanted to locate a visitor centre in a popular area of beautiful countryside (where new buildings would not be permitted). We found a derelict station (designed by Joseph Paxton who built the Crystal Palace for the Great Exhibition) and restored and converted it to the 'Wildlife Whistlestop Centre'.

Sometimes the activity within a building creates its own brief for reuse. The Ducal Palace at Nottingham Castle was converted into a museum and art gallery by the Victorians following a fire that gutted the building. However, today's museum and art gallery wanted to transform itself into a modern visitor centre for the millennium. This required new vertical circulation through the Ancient Monument's bed rock provided by a new lift and stairs, revitalised galleries and a cheerful restaurant.

Figure 7: The Ducal Palace at Nottingham Castle now Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery

Many of the projects we have undertaken have arisen from the rescue of derelict buildings, abandoned following the demise of their original use and in areas of low real estate value. The key to repair them becomes the identification of a sustainable new use or uses.

At Berwick upon Tweed we converted the upper floors of an old grain warehouse into flats and maisonettes; the middle floors, with no view, to offices, and the lower ground floor, with little light, to workshops. Changes in policy can also create opportunities. The change to telephone and internet banking has led to the withdrawal of face to face services and the redundancy of bank buildings.

The challenge of reuse

The challenge is to harness new policies and legislation to encourage reuse. The conversion of mills in Sheffield to student accommodation is a response to policies to encourage rapid growth in higher education. Students have now become economic generators for renewal. Likewise Government policy changes to planning legislation or building

regulations can enable new forms of developments. In Britain this enabled the creation of Loft Apartments, such as those in Manchester converted from a redundant Department Store. Living in flats, once unpopular in England, has now become fashionable through reusing large warehouses and other historic industrial buildings for residential use. This change in attitude has since spread to new flats in town centres.

Whether a building is thought to be 'worthy' of retention is often dependent upon its age as a criteria for its historic interest. Yet age is relative. Buildings of only 100 years old are thought to be relatively young in Britain, but of significant age in the New World. A derelict station in Darlington was thought to be worthless until listed. Its age did not change but it is now a useful sports hall. It seems that the legislation had to change before people realised it could be useful.

The route to a successful project

Let me now concentrate on how to undertake a successful project. Firstly, we need an initiator. The perception about how useful a redundant building can become is often first realised by individuals who act as catalysts. One such entrepreneur is Kit Martin who worked out how to convert stately mansions into separate apartments without altering the appearance of either the House or its parkland setting. Other catalysts can be new owners, campaigners, building trusts or local authorities indeed anyone who seeks to first question, and then champion, the potential for reuse.

In 30 years of practice I have learnt there is no such thing as a problem building only problem owners. The owner may be unsympathetic, misguided, impecunious, greedy, recalcitrant or just absent. But one person's problem is another's solution. The difficulty may be in getting the building from one person to the other, possibly through compulsory purchase by the local authority, or persuading the first person that they have an asset rather than a liability.

Building Preservation Trusts, with revolving funds can play a key role not just in rescuing one off buildings but also in tackling whole groups. Government or semi-governmental bodies such as English Heritage have a role to play either as owners of buildings or advisers to others, giving grants in some cases. They are also well placed to persuade other government departments of the benefits of reuse rather than redevelopment. The National Health Service were intent upon demolishing all their old hospitals and asylums until English Heritage persuaded them to offer them for reuse, such as the Royal Holloway Sanatorium in Surrey that was converted to residential.

Figure 8: Royal Holloway Sanatorium, Egham, Surrey

Local Authorities can also play a role utilising existing redundant buildings from which to provide their services, rather than building new. For example the District Council at Stroud took over the whole of Ebley Mill and converted it for their own offices. Amenity Bodies are usually associated with words rather than actions, but the more enlightened ones can play a crucial role. The Derbyshire Archaeological Society purchased a derelict remnant of Darley Abbey for a nominal sum and kept it shored up and wind and weather tight for 20 years until my partner, realising it was the only building in this Methodist constructed Mill village without a convenant preventing the sale of liquor, then converted it into a pub. Although the amenity body did not identify the solution they had acted in *loco parentis* until the solution was found.

Regeneration agencies are increasingly utilising the conversion of old industrial buildings as 'flagship projects' to create identity and general interest in rundown areas. English Partnerships, a government agency wanted to reuse a railway warehouse in a redundant Goods Yard but couldn't get the outcome value to cover the repair cost. They approached us asking us to find ways of reducing the costs of repair but when we looked at the building we realised the basement storage area could be used as prime space thereby increasing the value to cover the costs of quality repair.

We then fully glazed behind an arcade to open views into what is now perceived as the ground floor. The crane's loading trough was opened up and the roof over glazed to form an internal street giving access to the basement vaults (now occupied by software companies). Mezzanine accommodation was added and the route of the old railway track was retained to provide an access balcony within the street at upper ground level. Developers act as enablers by looking for the 'fast buck'. Once they can see how to make it they can initiate action quickly.

The developer of a Harrod's warehouse gutted by fire had been asked to provide a modern office building by a client. He retained the façade and built the new building within the shell more than compensating for loss of floorspace by opening up the basement and adding an extra floor. Professional's usually advise others. Architects often act as champions bringing together funders and occupiers to fulfil a building's potential. In one case with an old watermill the architect undertook the development himself, the high risks in a poor market deterred others. But having saved the mill and converted it at a low cost he was able to sell with a surplus when the economy improved. It may not have been the most sound investment financially, but in achieving personal fulfilment his stock could not have been higher.

The starting point for any successful project is to understand the building: 'Reuse must work with the building and not against it'. Too much change and the building's essential character is lost. Enhance selectively and a synergy is realised, worth more than the sum of its parts.

First consider the building emotionally. Take time, absorb the atmosphere, let it speak to you, and form an opinion then keep that close to your heart throughout the whole project. Second, but only second, research. Identify the history. Learn about the people who had the vision to commission it, the erudition to design it, the skills to build it and the commitment to work, live or play in it. Then consider what has happened to it. The changes alterations, extensions, failures, and successes. Walk away from the property. Circle it at a distance. Understand its context both social and physical. Understand its dynamic. Know where it has come from and you might better guess where it can go to. Consider all possibilities.

Keep your options open. Where possible see your intervention as 'temporary', even reversible. If it becomes essential to change the structure do it as a continuum of the past enhancing the range of future possibilities rather than restricting them. Think of the structure as 'long life' and the partitions, services and fittings as 'loose fit'.

We were asked to look at a redundant sanatorium in order to support its demolition. We thought it could be reused but as the governors didn't wish to sell it what would that use be? A project to build a New Music School had been abandoned due to prohibitive cost three years earlier. We decided to use this brief to demonstrate how the sanatorium could be reused. The key intervention was to clear away the small rooms on the upper floor of the central wing to create the rehearsal room.

A plan was devised separating uses to increase sound separation and each room analysed to demonstrate to a sceptical client that it could really work. But its association with illness meant the old 'San' was unloved, so we 're-presented' the building by creating a new access at the back, which, paradoxically, provided the shortest route to the rest of the campus. The old sheds and fences to the rear were removed and a new route provided. The roof of the central section was raised and the new entrance added. Landscaping was then used as a healer, where outbuildings had been removed whether leaning against the building or in the old vegetable plot thus uniting it with the rest of the school campus.

Understanding the users requirements

In finding a new use 'Think laterally about the uses to which the building is to be put'. Brush away preconceptions. Think irreverently. List strengths and weaknesses. Record apparent objections. Once obstacles are removed an erstwhile rejected use may turn out to be the most suitable. A 'Georgian' square in Glasgow, Spring Gardens, whilst in the right location was the wrong plan shape for modern retail. By covering over the square to create an atrium the apparent obstacle became a stunning solution giving access to all levels.

When a reuse project is started without a known user, then it is the building that becomes the client. However, avoid being led too much by the character of the building, for example the building configuration might lend itself to conversion to a hotel but as Conrad Hilton is reputed to have answered to the question what are the three most important factors in creating a new hotel? 'He said 'Location, location and location'. So do not try and put a use into a

building in the wrong location.

We converted an old farmstead next to a quarry purchased by the quarry company because blasting would upset animals and the farmers family into a telecottage to enable local farmers, and their wives, to develop alternative skills and businesses.

Brief

When preparing the brief it is important not to concentrate upon detailed, practical requirements at the expense of wider aims and aspirations. Too often, when converting existing buildings the brief is driven by the building rather than the client's real needs. 'We thought this space might be suitable for .....?' is a phrase often used by clients who have not considered factors such as servicing, access, egress, users of adjacent space, sound or thermal insulation, or aspect (though prospect, the view, is usually considered). To avoid such confusion prepare the brief as if designing for a new building. The brief for new or old should be the same, only the designer's response should be different.

The King's Fund needed new premises with full disabled access, a library, conference facilities, restaurant and research space as well as offices in Cavendish Square. This resulted in a combination of the restoration of the front of the early eighteenth century houses for offices and rehabilitation of the nineteenth century buildings behind, with new levels and a new access for circulation and research space opening up of the old courtyard to increase light and the replacement of a 1950s structure with a new building at the rear to accommodate library conference and restaurant facility over the earlier vaults retained as a bar.

The consequence is a fusion of old and new that serves the client's brief 'to the letter'. At the same time as considering the specific brief for the client, or new use, it is prudent to consider how these might change in the future so that the design allows maximum flexibility for change or growth.

'Look outside the building at its setting'. The conversion of Ashlyn's Hall to offices required a guest arrival area, a service yard, staff parking and a garden front. Each was separated by new walls extending out from the house. First the company extended into the kitchen garden then moved operations abroad. Now the Hall has changed use again to a Nursing home and the same requirements apply.

In presenting the building to the public it is important to let the building speak for itself. If McDonald's with its aggressive house style can either keep its image behind glass as they did in Chester, or just to a single small 'M' on the wall opposite The Tower of London then any company can be discrete.

Enhancing the value

It is integral to the concept of sustainability that the value of the property to be converted, if it is not to be supported by the public purse, is enhanced as much as possible. This will encourage continued investment in repair and maintenance.

Historic buildings can be unique, making comparative valuations difficult and it may be necessary to look far afield for suitable comparative projects. The potential for conversion of Covent Garden in London, for example, was compared with Faneuil Hall in Boston USA to establish its viability. Clearly specialist valuers are required on unusual projects. The value of historic buildings can be depressed by the legal restrictions placed upon them and the cost of using high quality materials for repair. On the other hand the character and importance of a building carries a certain *cachet*, which can add value if the conversion has been well done. Good repair, though expensive, can last longer than repairs to modern buildings. A recent study of historic buildings used as offices in London showed a yield per square foot only 10% less than new, with the gap apparently closing year on year.

If planning and conservation officers understand that value is crucial they will know when to insist buildings remain unchanged and when to allow significant alteration to recover value. If a building is unusable, badly located, in poor condition or unattractive to an occupier, its value will be relatively low and there will be more need to make alterations.

Appraisals must remain realistic. A conversion near a thriving city where values are high might prove viable, whereas an identical conversion in a remote rural area will make a financial loss. In such cases the costs of conversion must be trimmed to be simpler and less ambitious in order to balance cost and income. Analytical appraisals are essential to successful reuse.

If despite trimming costs the project still appears unviable then other resources may be required such as grants or 'soft' loans, or some special marketing to promote unique qualities in order to attract a 'special interest purchaser' who will pay above market value. The County Arcade Leeds had lacked investment and was down at heel. A complete restoration of the arcade including new lighting, new floors and shop fronts, to a design copied from the few originals

that were left, brought back a consistency and feeling of quality to the retail. This had to be paid for by higher rentals which could only be achieved by extending into the next street by covering it with a glazed roof. The roof in part sits over the adjacent building providing a dry environment in the centre of Leeds but at the end drops down between them in a style reminiscent of the former theatre on the site designed by the same architect, Frank Matcham, announcing its presence in the street. The paving was relaid using basic materials but laid to patterns with fine tolerances. Street furniture evocative of the period was added and, of course, planting. The crowning glory is the stained glass roof by Brian Clarke creating altogether a new centre out of the old, The Victoria Quarter, in the spirit of the original but 80 years later. Hopefully now the owners, The Prudential, will continue to maintain their investment.

Figure 9: The County Arcade, Leeds

Presenting the project

Once the appraisal is satisfactory you may need to present your proposal to funders or planning officers or others:

- Think of these people as members of your team. Consider it from their point of view.
- Not everyone can read plans so help them with images they can comprehend.
- Use whatever techniques will best illustrate the proposals.

Remember to tailor your presentation to your target audience. Understand local plan policies and respond to them. A master plan can show the wider context and long term view.

- Timing is crucial. Make sure you have assessed all relevant issues – fire, ventilation, services, refuse, energy conservation, but;
- Allow room for suggestions – be responsive.
- Rather than respond to regulations in detail it may be better to present proposals within an holistic strategy presenting principles at stake rather than the letter of the law. Clearly, the design will need working out in some detail prior to any presentation.

Design

Of course it is no good presenting a project until the design is resolved.

- On large projects it is advisable to coordinate the different disciplines into following an agreed philosophy via a plan of action.

- Use techniques of repair rather than restoration.

Instruct the minimum rather than the maximum repair work necessary. Do not try and turn your old building into a new one. Be prepared to adopt short cycles of small repairs, such as quinquennials, or 15 year life, rather than large scale replacement to achieve a 60 or 100 year life.

- Ensure that restoration, when it appears appropriate is thoroughly researched and subject to a second opinion before proceeding.
- When making alterations or additions use sympathetic material either as an extension of past techniques, so that it blends in or in contrast to them so that the intervention can be clearly understood.

Judgement about which alternative should be adopted will depend upon the nature of the fabric, the brief, the context, the buildings' setting etc. Empathetic repair and restoration requires skilled people prepared to become emotionally involved in the project. A project to reuse a ruined building on Greenhill in Wirskworth was too daunting for most contractors. Stone masons advised demolition and rebuilding but some joinery craftsman who were short of work said, as long as we told them what to do they would repair *in situ*. They were not preconditioned by experience yet had the inherent skill to learn the techniques required. Use proven techniques, natural materials and traditional craftsmanship in preference to high tech solutions. Removing rainwater quickly is essential. Be prepared to redesign methods of rainwater disposal to improve flow whether at the bottom of a valley gutter or from behind a window which has never been glazed.

Where traditional methods would be destructive, use modern technology as a hidden means to preserve fabric *in situ*: reinforcement and concrete to create a ring beam around the top of a ruined structure for example. Where decayed lintels were replaced, a mould was set around them in Plaster of Paris within shuttering. The powdery decayed lintel was removed and reinforcement and concrete added. The shuttering and Plaster of Paris were then removed to reveal a concrete lintel similar in appearance to the oak lintel it replaced but stitched securely into the masonry.

The timber partition supporting the valley gutter in the middle of the structure had collapsed. Once the new trussed roof was spanning between the newly consolidated walls steel beams were placed in the position of the lost oak beams and supported by the steel columns placed in the centre of the building where their foundations would not affect existing walls.

Use subtle repair techniques ensuring that the building appears in good repair rather than newly repaired. The quality of the final product is determined by the choice of procurement route, the time devoted to design detail and the preparation of good contract documents. Occupied or vacant the building must be protected. Remember to have security at all times. Valuable fireplaces were stolen from the King's Fund building overnight between the security guard vacating and the contractor starting.

There are a whole host of procurement methods but whichever one you choose make sure you can still select and communicate directly with the trade contractors involved and retain the flexibility to respond in detail to what the buildings says to you. The available methods include: Design & Build; Detail and construct; Management contracting; Contract management; Trade contacts; Time and materials; Rates and re-measurement; Approximate quantities; Fixed price; Variations. Ensure the client understands the processes involved in procurement and allows time for the team to prepare all the information required to instruct work on site: Detailed design; Coordination of structure & services; Communication; Drawings and schedule; Specification; The contractor; On site; Discovering the unexpected; Team spirit.

Completion of a reuse project marks its rebirth. The building will need good management and care to reach its optimum life span. The management will need to maintain the building in good condition, respect the building's history as well as to understand the needs of the users. Long Life elements of a building such as the structure and historic fabric need to remain undisturbed as long as possible. Ensure short life elements such as cable ways are accessible for repair or replacement.

Avoid introducing complicated control systems where simple solutions will suffice. For example open windows in preference to air conditioning. Consider the life of each element. A perfectly good slate may slip because a nail is rusty. Tingling[1] the slates, rather than reroofing may last for years but this may depend upon access. Remember, it is cheaper to replace slates one at a time on a single storey building than on a church steeple. Because of this the new owner needs to operate a policy of continuing repair undertaken at intervals as part of an overall maintenance plan. In certain cases such repair may be allied to a monitoring programme, for instance climatically controlled dry rot.

Rowton House, a workhouse in Birmingham was converted into a hotel. The original tiling of the dining room still remains. Photographs on the wall enable comparison between 'Then' and 'Now' which is a simple means of interpreting its history. Consider the interpretation of the building in the most innovative and attractive way for the user and the

public. The infamous prison at Alcatraz, now a visitor centre, has an even less intrusive system of interpretation: earphones. The visitor can 'relive' events of the past without any signs or paraphernalia. Sometimes not even this is necessary. As long as all the elements to enable the building to be interpreted are there it may be better for people to interpret the building's history for themselves.

Figures 10: Tutbury Castle

The remnants of a castle at Tutbury could not be easily seen on the skyline because of trees which would not have been there when the castle was in use defensively. The trees were removed so that the strategic advantage of the open site could be fully realised by visitors. Finally here is a simple example. Field barns lie empty throughout the Derbyshire upland, no longer required for modern farming. The Duchess of Devonshire wanted some of them to be used for camping. We prepared some simple proposals, a timber platform for sleeping, a stone bench for cooking, hooks and lines for drying clothes, water supply outside and an earth closet in the corner of the field. When we applied for permission we were told we had to comply with Building Regulations and include a D.P.C, fully insulated walls and roof, light, ventilation, drainage etc. It would no longer be a barn it would be a house – Impasse!

To get around this problem I applied instead for a camping licence for a 'stone tent'. I argued it was no different to a canvas tent. The 'stone tent' was pitched whenever the building was used for camping and once camp was struck all that remained was an empty stone barn. After some discussion with amazed officials a camping licence is now issued annually. Even Parliament has now amended the Act to include 'stone tents' or 'camping barns'.

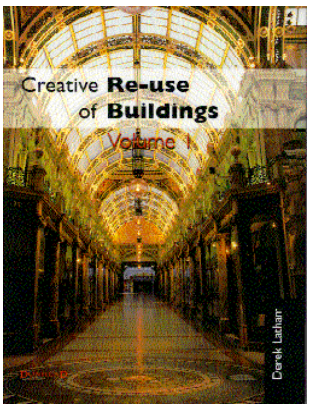
I put to you ladies and gentlemen that this is 'Creative Reuse'.

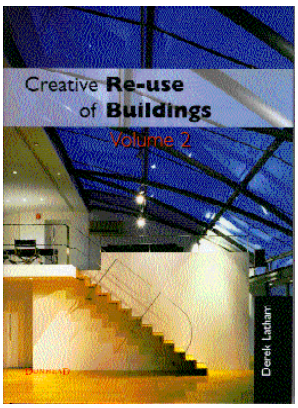
References

1 a copy of the SPAB *Manifesto* can be found at www.spab.org.uk

2 Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action designed to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organisations of the United Nations System, Governments and major groups in every area of human impact on the environment. It was adopted by more than 178 Governments at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held at Rio de Janerio, Brazil, 3-14 June 1992

3 Tinging slates is where 'tingles', coppper wire fixings, are used to fix in place isolated slipped, broken or missing slates that require re-securing or replacing rather than renailing.





Derek Latham's 2 volume publication *Creative Re-Use of Buildings* is available from Donhead Books at www.donhead.com

Adaptive reuse in developing economies: Trying to be World Class

Augusto Villalón

Augusto F Villalón is the Commissioner of the UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines responsible for the inscription and maintenance of five Philippine sites in the UNESCO World Heritage List. A former Commissioner for Cultural Heritage at the National Commission for Culture and Fine Arts, he presently Chairs the Heritage Conservation Society of the Philippines. In addition, Mr Villalón writes a weekly column on architecture and conservation in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, the leading newspaper in the country. He has received two major awards in recognition of his efforts in heritage conservation, the Medallion of Honor from the City of Manila in 1998, and the Padre Burgos Award from the Municipality of Vigan in 2000.

During the past half-century one Asian country after the other managed to free itself from the yoke of colonialism. Each country regained its own nationalism by showing the West the door. Without anyone realising it, the West slipped right back in through the region's open windows and is once again reconquering Asia.

This time the West is not taking over Asian territory or its resources but is taking over the Asian soul. This new invasion is taking place without any conscious plan, without any political agenda, but the process has taken a serious hold of Asia and shows no signs of letting off: the concept of modernity. Take a good look at the Asian city today and see the strong foothold of modernity. "Copying what is 'new' and 'modern' has become an obsession for which there is no remedy," writes columnist Tiziano Terzani. The obsession is clearly taking over Asia.

In Beijing the last of the courtyard houses are coming down. In Bangkok glistening skyscrapers have replaced low-rise traditional neighbourhoods. The Art Deco district of Bandung is in danger of vanishing in the name of progress. The same story is repeated in cities all over Asia. In all villages of Southeast Asia, whether in the Indonesian *kampong*, in the serene hills of Laos or in the Philippine *barrios*, the telling sign of prosperity is when man-made materials replace natural traditional materials.

Progress is when corrugated sheets replace thatched roofs and concrete blocks replace walls of woven bamboo. No matter that the iron sheets make the small house an oven during the summer or that they deafen the occupants during the monsoon season with the resonant sound of rain drumming on the roof. The inappropriate architecture of man-made materials is the current status symbol for the rural house, symbols of having shaken off bondage to the old by embracing what is new and progressive. In the cult of modernity, it is considered an embarrassment to still live in a traditional house in this day and age. That's the way it is going all over Asia. Small wonder that villages with traditional houses are fast disappearing. With a mindset that equates the new with progress for decision makers to look into the possibility of adaptive reuse without seeing it as taking a step backwards requires radical new thinking.

The Chinese, forgetting that they are heirs to a four-thousand year old culture that has bequeathed a firm belief of spiritual superiority still very evident in their present generation, are obsessed with re-imaging their cities. With a compulsion for modernity, Chinese cities race to bulldoze their historic districts and to erect glass and steel skyscrapers over the rubble. It is a battle of the styles. In keeping with the neo-Stalinist urban planning tradition, ten lane boulevards

slice through the cities in straight lines, connecting clusters of skyscrapers and disconnecting old residential districts from one another, isolating them on either side of boulevards of concrete. And between the skyscraper clusters, the traditional architecture has given way to bland, sterile architecture with the white tile façade uniformly seen throughout Chinese cities. That is the image of 'progress', and the Chinese cannot have enough of it. Chinese authorities say that they are re-imaging their cities to elevate them to 'World Class', so that their urban centres can hold their own when compared to the glitz centres of Hong Kong and Singapore, or those of Bangkok and Jakarta.

To Asian city fathers, the idea of being 'World Class' brings identical images of rapid progress and cutting edge technology that can only take place within an envelope of skyscrapers. The image, well ingrained in the minds of decision makers and of the majority of the population, is rapidly turning Asian cities into copies of each other. At this point, a new way of looking at progress should be introduced. The new thinking should develop an awareness that in the face of globalisation, it is cultural traditions that sets nations apart, identifying each people and the cities that they live in as unique and individual.

The new thinking, therefore, should realise and maintain the individuality of the traditional villages and old sections of cities that now face the danger of demolition. They should be preserved and once again reintegrated into the daily lives of people, to serve as a link to history and to maintain the quality of life that its residents have always identified with and have enjoyed for generations, and to establish the individuality of a city in the face of today's globalisation.

In many Asian countries, there is the culture of monumentality (reverence for the old, grand monuments of the past) that rightly deserves respect and preservation. However, the ordinary, everyday culture lived by the people in cities and the villages is disregarded. Both aspects of culture are equally important. A new way of thinking must remove culture from its high pedestal. It should recognise the mundane as significant since today's ordinary culture will be tomorrow's heritage. The new thinking should bring an awareness that the traditional villages and old sections of cities that face the danger of demolition should be preserved and reintegrated into the daily lives of people because these are the cultural touchstones that maintain a traditional way of life.

After carrying through with its obsession with modernity, Singapore urban authorities realised that the new development had removed practically all traces of the traditional shophouse districts, cutting off the connection of the city with its past. The redevelopment of what remained of the historic districts took on the 'culture of monuments' approach, focusing attention on bringing back the shophouses to brand-new conditions to create row upon row of pretty houses lining both sides of the streets in 'heritage' sections of the city. The sight is pleasing but empty. Not much regard was given to maintaining the traditional life that flourished in the historic districts. The newly conserved areas are empty outdoor backdrops, without the people and the sounds, smell and movement that gives life to an area.

The opportunities for reviving the Quiapo district of Manila through adaptive reuse are not noticed by city authorities. The district, down at its heels today, was where Manila's elite lived at the turn of the century. As families moved to the suburbs after World War II, their grand homes fell into decay, many of them deteriorating as slum housing for the urban poor. The city grew around Quiapo, today it is a business, religious and educational hub of Manila that serves a large sector of the city population. The old homes are underutilised assets that could be reused as business locations, dwellings for university students, or as subsidised housing for the urban poor following Latin American examples notably that of Quito in Ecuador.

There is a lack of good examples of adaptive reuse in Asia that recycle existing building stock into appropriate new uses that effectively revitalise decaying city centres and improve the quality of inner city life. With the poverty that exists in many Asian countries, heritage and culture have been made to appear as luxuries that can be given place only after progress has been achieved. Although there are economic indicators for progress, the image of progress is not complete unless the urbanscape reflects the modernity that is believed to be the hallmark of progress. Reusing old structures for new purposes, therefore, runs counter to the present Asian romance with modernity.

Paris is an example of maintaining its face while rushing to keep up with progress. It has ultimately become one of the leading capitals of the industrial world where the luxury and precision industries located within the city boundaries are complemented by large-scale manufacturing in the suburbs, making it the biggest industrial producer in France. What is the phenomenon that has sustained Paris at the forefront of development and progress without compromising the aesthetics of its urban tradition? Not many cities in the world have such a strong tradition of architectural unity as Paris.

Finally, the new thinking should realise that the legal framework to encourage adaptive reuse is very weak, or nonexistent in most Asian countries. With effective legislation that provides good incentives, combined with sensitive zoning, each Asian city could combine the skyscrapers with traditional architecture in the same manner that many cities around the world have done. It is having the best of both worlds in a city, with areas designed and built to the cutting edge specifications of modernity while historic sections are upgraded with all the amenities of the moment while the

street pattern and architectural envelopes of the structures remain the same.

It looks like no Asian country can resist the doctrine of modernity. Without modernity there can be no progress, and progress we all must have at whatever cost. As we look at the rapidly homogenising Asian city, the price being paid for progress is obvious. What has not become obvious to many Asian minds is that adaptive reuse is another means of progress that maintains traditions while updating Asian cities to the 21st century.

The Tyre Swan: Continuity Vs Creativity

James Broadbent

Dr. James Broadbent is an architectural historian and conservationist and a senior curator with the Historic Houses Trust of NSW. He graduated from Architecture from the University of Sydney, then studied Fine Arts at the same university before reading for his Doctorate of Philosophy in the Department of History at the Australian National University. He is the author and curator of a range of publications and exhibitions including: *The Australian Colonial House: Architecture and Society in NSW, 1788-1842*; co-authorship of *Gothick Taste in the Colony of New South Wales, The Golden Decade of Australian Architecture: The Work of John Verge, Restoring Old Australian Homes and Buildings* and *The Age of Macquarie*. He has written and lectured widely on nineteenth century houses and gardens, conservation philosophy and practice, early colonial society and taste and early colonial trade, decorative arts and furnishings.

In another moment Alice was through the looking glass and had jumped lightly into the Looking-glass room . . . Then she began looking about and noticed that what could be seen from the old room was quite common and uninteresting, but outside all the rest was as different as possible.

'Nothing is what it seems', exclaimed Alice.
'Exactly the contrary', said the Red Queen.
'Things are all the wrong way round', continued Alice. 'Banks are restaurants, warehouses are blocks of flats, post offices are hotels, hotels are shops and shops are post offices. Everything is something else.'
'It is called Adaptive reuse,' replied the Mad Hatter sternly.
'But isn't Adaptive reuse a tautology?' asked Alice, innocently
'Don't be impertinent', said the Mad Hatter, crossly, adjusting his bow tie.

I wonder why 'making do' is the term used in the decorative arts - particularly Australian vernacular decorative arts - and 'Adaptive reuse' is used for architecture? One sounds so much more important than the other, but of course what Alice didn't know is that 'architects' speak' is almost, *ipso facto*, tautological. It seems to me that Making-do and Adaptive reuse have a lot in common. Take for instance the Tyre Swan. (I frequently take for instance the tyre swan: its imagery and layers of significance are so . . . adaptable and reusable). The tyre swan is one of the most innovative contributions Australia has made to the decorative arts, and probably its major contribution to the art of gardening.

The American architect Robert Venturi used to write about sheds and ducks. I will talk about tyres and swans. Here we have a perfect example of adaptive reuse. What was once mundane and obsolete has become a work of art, ingeniously adapted to its new use as a garden ornament. What was once a tyre, is now a swan. The transformation is simple, witty and consummate. Isn't this the exemplar of architectural recycling and making do? Yes, for many obsolete buildings. It's always a pity to waste anything, whether a tyre or a building, if something useful can be made of it. Better still, if something beautiful can be made of it. But what if a building is more than an obsolete, but convenient, container? What if it already has architectural, or more importantly, social significances to us or to others?

No-one is worried, yet, about destroying the integrity of a tread worn tyre, by transforming it into a swan, but there are concerns about architects turning time worn tyre buildings into swans in the name of adaptive reuse. How can the integrity of a tyre building be conserved if the desired end result is a swan? The contrast between wharf No 4 Walsh Bay and the Woolloomooloo wharf makes my point. Wharf No 4, the Wharf Theatre, is a tyre, 'adaptively reused', but still a tyre. The Woolloomooloo wharf seems to me to be a tyre recycled as a swan: the elements are there, mostly, just rearranged and embellished, so that it doesn't feel like a tyre anymore.

Integrity is a word that is very easy to use, but very difficult to define in building conservation. Stylistic integrity is most readily accepted – just so long as it looks roughly the same, it's all right. This is different to physical integrity, where a modern fake is not as good as the old original, and different again to historical integrity with its respect for continuing social and historical values. When, in turning a tyre into a swan, does physical intervention, even in the name of adaptive reuse, actually mean architectural or heritage rape? The building can't scream 'No'. The public sometimes does, as happened with the Conservatorium of Music. But architects, in my experience, very rarely say 'Enough's enough'. The Conservatorium of Music was a mess. It may, when work is finished, stylistically look the same, even better than what it was. It may remain largely physically intact, under its new roof and on its artificial site, but I still believe that it has been raped by the New South Wales Government Architect, its over development compromising the historical integrity of both building and site.

It may look the same again, but will it feel the same again to anyone knowing what has happened to it, how it has been molested? The same applies to buildings that are moved and rebuilt. Rape doesn't have to result in overt physical damage or change. And, of course, there are always the old arguments – 'Geez, your honor, I done it but me mates made me, and if I 'adn't, someone else would have done it bad. Besides, she was asking for it, the state she was in'.

Perhaps there should be Heritage Conservation Awards to architects who say 'No'. There wouldn't need to be many given. One of the problems seems to be that architects often have Cinderella complexes. They're schooled to believe, as I was schooled to believe that there is a design solution to everything and they have it. Like the ugly stepsisters, they believe that they can fit any crystal slipper. Or perhaps it's the rich man and the camel complex – architects of course can pass through the eye of a needle. It's their God-given gift. And it's perfectly obvious that the Old Lady who Lived in a Shoe should have consulted the best adaptively reusable architect instead of going to a family planning clinic.

'I think it highly unlikely that a building exists which cannot be improved by bringing it into the contemporary context', said the Government Architect, pontifically. 'How impertinent' thought Alice, humbly.

Luckily, in the real world slippers are rare things and thongs are more adaptable and luckily also, that time-honoured architectural maxim still holds – 'Function follows Form'. What a pickle adaptively reusable architects would be in if that early twentieth century aberration of 'Form follows Function' was really true. How could any crystal slipper be made to fit all the old lady's children?

Buildings ARE very adaptable, for generally, if one is honest about it, from their very beginning their use has been tailored to fit whatever form, prevailing fashion and style or artistic inspiration has directed. And that's not such a bad thing. Also, if one is honest, how many more buildings are made redundant and demolished, really because their style is obsolete, rather than their function. Like the Rural Bank in Martin Place – how unfashionable a decade or so ago its Art Deco pastoral imagery was to Mr. Nicholas Whitlam and the board of the newly-hatched State Bank. How appropriate, alas, now to its latest manifestation as the State Colonial Bank.

The fashion for recycling is, I trust, stemming this, and I sincerely hope that that fashion is developing into an ethic, but I am cynical in disbelieving that adaptive reuse and conservation are synonymous. Salvation does not lie in adaptive reuse, although that may be one rocky road to salvation. I was puzzled earlier this year when I received an invitation to the National Trust's Heritage Conservation Awards, to be announced in a reception room in a new city hotel. Why at an hotel? Then someone told me that it was the General Post Office, but the awards were to be at the Westin Hotel – the G.P.O. no longer existed.

What's in a name? A lot, I think, in the community's consciousness and sense of history and place. I am profoundly saddened when now I walk through Martin Place. One of the social *foci* of the city – a city with very few such *foci* - has been destroyed. The G.P.O. no longer exists. It's architectural style remains; the fabric largely remains (except for anything which has to do with the Post Office). Everything else – its history, its role as a major civic building in a major civic space – has been destroyed. Its rape has not been as violent as that of the Conservatorium. But rape, the forced theft of its historical integrity – call it what you will – has left a shell, an expensively plumaged swan. As I walk along its lifeless arcade with its barricaded doors hiding expensive boutiques, I don't know which offends me more – the tawdry mini supermarket to which the Post Office has been degraded at one end, or the up-to-the minute stylish private banking office – vulgar in an ever-so-smartly designed way – at the other end. It makes me remember fondly the old disfiguring partitions and telephone booths. They gave a public purpose to a public building. Both have been lost.

If the purpose of a building is part of its historical significance, adaptive reuse can be as destructive as architectural remodelling. The city becomes a disorientating sham. 'Why, it's all just like a game of charades', thought Alice. Thank you.

That's just to show that I don't really condone architectural fashion, but 'Well, Gees, your honor, if I 'adn't done it, gentle-like, someone else would 'a done it, and besides they was asking for it'.

The former General Post Office, Martin Place, Sydney

The Pram Factory and other stories

Meredith Walker

Meredith Walker is a conservation practitioner, Heritage Futures, with a background in local government planning. She has worked throughout Australia on a wide range of projects, including town studies and conservation plans for individual places. She is a former president of Australia ICOMOS, and a conservation activist. Meredith is actively involved in the review of the *Burra Charter*, the standard for good practice and is co-author of *The Illustrated Burra Charter: Making Good Decisions for the Care of Important Places*. Another important recent publication is *Protecting the Social Value of Public Places*, published by the ACNT[1]. Meredith is a past member of the National Parks and Wildlife Council and various Heritage Council Committees. She is currently a member of the Museums Advisory Committee of the NSW Ministry for the Arts. She has had a long-term involvement in heritage management including community-based identification programmes.

When I was a teenager I sometimes accompanied my great aunt, who was nearly blind and an octogenarian, on her annual train journey north from Melbourne to Brisbane. Every now and then she would ask me the number of miles to Sydney and I would look out the window for the Griffiths Bros. Tea sign and provide the answer. I thought the sign implied the opportunity for a cuppa at the end of the journey but it wasn't until I became a resident of Sydney, ten years later, that I realised that the signs also referred to a building.

Whatever the intended message, the Griffiths Bros. Tea signs were part of railway journeys in both New South Wales and Victoria, known and appreciated by thousands of train travellers. The signs have long been removed and now it is the building that reminds me of the signs! Advertisements for tea, Bushells, Griffiths, Goldenia, Lipton's and Robour, were a common feature of cities and country towns, especially on buildings, and nowadays are recognised as part of the history and character of a place, a valued sign from another era.

Buildings have lots of associations and meanings for people. Some might be publicly known and acknowledged, such as the events surrounding the building of the Opera House. Other meanings might be known only to a particular group of people such as users or regular visitors, or people associated with establishing the use and some stories are awaiting rediscovery via research.

The essence of heritage conservation

The conservation of buildings is about retaining and continuing the importance of a building to people. The first step in planning for the future of the building is to understand it through research of its history and context, through documents, by examining the building and its context in detail, and by discussion with people associated with it. From analysis of this research a statement of significance is prepared. The understanding of the building and its significance provides the basis for developing a policy that addresses the care of the fabric, the use or compatible uses of a building, the setting and the relationships between the place and other places, and also policies about interpretation and management. The document that is produced is commonly known as a conservation plan, or conservation policy.

Understanding a building and its context is fundamental to good conservation practice and to recycling. Under-

standing a building, assessing its significance and preparing a policy based on that significance, is more than merely keeping what you like or what is fashionable (such as terrazzo) and getting rid of the things you don't like (such as linoleum). It is more than using the building as a frame for a new building. Building conservation is about retaining a building and its story of use and associations.

The Melbourne Cup provides an analogy. Watching the cup or listening to a broadcast and winning money by punting or in a raffle is fun, but that's only part of it. The Cup is made much more interesting by some knowledge of the horse and the people associated with it. Part of the excitement of this year's event was finding out that the jockey, Kerrin McEvoy, had just completed his apprenticeship and was riding in his first Melbourne Cup race. The story had added appeal because the horse was named Brew and it was the last year of sponsorship by Fosters. I am sure you all know the story. As reporters have said, it was fairytale. Every Melbourne Cup race has its own story. Buildings are similar. Each has its own story and associations and part of their conservation is retaining both the visible and invisible stories and conveying them to a new audience.

The Griffiths Tea building is recognised for its heritage value and it is currently being recycled. But what about the stories of buildings that aren't recognised as 'heritage'. Dapto, south of Wollongong, is a town that dates from the mid-nineteenth century but you'd never know it. Successive waves of development have removed all but one of its nineteenth century buildings and current development and planned expansions threaten the relatively few mid-twentieth century buildings. In community workshops to identify the character and heritage of Dapto several people spoke about their wish for Dapto to develop a sense of the past and the need to retain ordinary mid-twentieth century buildings, even if it was inconvenient for the planners. As one resident, who arrived in the 1960s said of this hall, it isn't a question of architectural value, the hall was their hall, funded and built locally, but is to be demolished for a shopping centre which will include a new hall. Buildings from the mid-twentieth century are very vulnerable.

The value of keeping the ordinary and developing a sense of history was one of the themes of David Malouf's National Trust 'Heritage Lecture' this year. Many places have been successfully recycled prior to the modern era. In the 1960s, The Australian Performing Group moved into an old factory in Carlton. Originally built as a carriage works, they adopted its most recent use as their name and logo. It became the Pram Factory. 'Factory' in this context implied both production and difference from the main stream theatres of Melbourne. It was a hive of talent well recognised at the time as a major influence on theatre in Australia. Unfortunately, the owners sold the building in 1980, with protest form the group, and it was demolished for a supermarket. I expect a plaque commemorating the Australian Performing Group will be erected sometime in the future. Nowadays, I'd like to think that at least the façade would be kept, and some of the memory of use retained, irrespective of whether or not it was listed.

Since the naming of arts premises after the past use has become the norm: The Jam Factory in Adelaide, the Gasworks at South Melbourne, the Powerhouses in Sydney, Casula and New Farm.

Figure 1: The Pram Factory, Drummond St, Carlton, Victoria. A centre for contemporary Australian Theatre which saw the beginning of the careers of the likes of David Williamson, Greig Pickhaver (HG Nelson), Helen Garner, Sue Ingleton, Jack Hibberd & Max Gillies. It was demolished to make way for a supermarket.

An overview of theory

In Australia, the theory for the conservation of buildings is based on the *Burra Charter*[2], prepared by the Australian National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites, otherwise known as Australia ICOMOS. It is the standard for conservation practice in Australia, with most statutory provisions using it as a source or reference.

The principles in the Charter are together directed towards keeping the story of the building and the opportunity to continue to 'read' it in the fabric, spaces and features. And, if the use has changed, to use one's imagination to recreate it in the mind's eye, with the fabric, spaces, equipment and objects as prompts.

The skill in the conservation of buildings of significance is to retain the building so that its qualities and stories can continue to be understood without difficulty. Of course, people's abilities to understand a place and appreciate past uses vary, and it is often necessary to provide interpretation. It should also be recognised that changes to the building are themselves an interpretation and might inadvertently confuse some people. Conservation often requires restraint rather than innovation.

Understand the building and its context

The first major principle is to understand the building and its context and to assess its significance. Quoting from the charter:

> 'Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects.'

Adopt a cautious approach

'Conservation is based on a respect for the existing fabric, use, associations and meanings. It requires a cautious approach of changing as much as necessary but as little as possible.'

At the former Lands Department building in Brisbane another exit was required at the side of the building to meet public safety requirements. It was created in a plain manner. It changed as much as necessary and as little as possible, without embellishment.

Use may be significant, or find a compatible use

Many buildings are specific to their function and the use is a major component of their value and meaning to the community. Buildings whose continued use has been fought for by communities in recent decades include theatres, hospitals, swimming pools and of course post offices.

In some circumstances to retain the use it might be necessary to adversely affect other values. The Sydney Fire Station is an example where the conservation plan identified the use as a fire station as a major component of its significance, and subsequent planning involved options for continuing the use. An older building alongside will be demolished so that a new building suitable for modern equipment and functions can be constructed and a tower constructed at the rear, using the transferred floor space.

Assess archaeological potential and investigate

In city centres many buildings that are candidates for recycling are on sites that might have significant remains from an earlier period and the recycling process might provide the opportunity to investigate. Similarly, the repair of the building itself is likely to provide opportunities to investigate below floors and in the floor to ceiling spaces. Land that is the subject of additions may have archaeological potential.

It is important to remember that the overall purpose of archaeology is to contribute to the common knowledge, based on the belief, backed up by experience, that the physical evidence often provides information that is not, or cannot be, in the documentary records. If it is important to dig, it is important for the community to have access and to learn from the dig as it is undertaken. Archaeology is not solely for archaeologists!

Context – don't restrict the use by subdivision

The unbuilt upon land at the rear of significant buildings has often been subdivided to provide opportunities for development. This practice is usually to the detriment of the building as it severely reduces the opportunities for use as most uses require modern facilities that would have been able to be accommodated had the unbuilt upon land been kept with the buildings. This is particularly pertinent to government properties. The use of the Travellers Rest Inn cottages at Parramatta was restricted by subdivision and the new buildings also adversely affected their setting.

Make use of knowledge, skills and disciplines that can contribute to the building and its care. In the planning for work to the Fire Station, the architects investigated the repair of original tile-work and the making, by the original supplier in Britain, of tiles to replace those that have been lost. The builder has taken the opportunity to visit their factory and discuss the needs in detail and to understand what's involved.

A new use should involve no change, or minimal change to significant fabric and use and should respect associations and meanings. Keep traces of additions, alterations and use, new works should assist and not impede their understanding. Traces of past use and of recent changes to the building have been retained at the Eveleigh railway workshops in Sydney.

Keep signs and advertisements

When the use changes, the old signs and advertisements provide ready recognition of the past use. At the Bushells building in The Rocks, the retention of old signs and advertisements was part of the policy contained in the Conservation Plan.

Figure 2: Bushells building with its distinctive sign, Harrington St, The Rocks, Sydney

Retain spaces and their character

At the Bushells building the floors have remained virtually free of new partitions. A new floor was created above the old to provide space for wiring for computers, etc. To retain the overall character of the space, the ceiling was left unlined.

Keep contents, fixtures and objects which contribute to significance

Retain and interpret the building so that its past function is readable, at least in outline. Contents, fixtures and objects are likely to be evidence of the past use and therefore part of the story. At the Bushells building the old lift wells have been converted to waiting rooms for visitors. Examples of the tea hoppers which occupied most floors have been kept and converted to use as discussion rooms for workers. A hopper with graffiti is evidence of the life and times of the building.

Changes which reduce significance should be reversible

One of the important good practice concepts is that new work should be reversible. This means it should have minimum impact on the fabric of significance, and provide the opportunity for change at a later date. One of the best examples, is the use of Lyndhurst, the house used as offices by the Historic Houses Trust of NSW. Each of the rooms has bookcases and shelving that looks like fittings but is carefully designed or chosen so that intervention in the fabric is not needed. In significant buildings used as museums, the conservation plans have required that display cases be structurally freestanding and some display cases have been air-conditioned separately, whilst the room itself retained its 'natural' climate. At Hyde Park Barracks, reinstating the 'natural climate' was an important aspect of the interpretation of the building.

Avoid imitation in new works. New work should be recognisable as new

In recycling the new work becomes part of the story of the place, and should be readily recognisable as new work. Whilst vernacular building conservation often imitates past details, the important consideration is to ensure that the story of work can be read in the fabric. Dating new work is one method.

Retain views to and from the building

The scale and form of the building may be a major component of its significance, as it was with the Woolloomooloo Wharf and the Walsh Bay finger wharves. Keeping their form visible and retaining the context of water front use, would or should have been an important objective in both instances.

Involve people

People associated with a place should be involved in the conservation process, in collecting information about the place and its operation and in contributing to the statement of significance. It would be desirable to speak to the former workers to understand how industrial buildings functioned in practice. Their memories of the building will throw new light on the fabric and its importance. They may also have old records and photos, or even objects, as it is a common practice for workers to appropriate furniture and other objects that are being thrown out by management.

Keep records. Records of changes to a place become part of the story. They will help future managers and users understand the place and the works undertaken in recycling and why. Keep the story. In the midst of the current fashions for glass and other shiny surfaces, evidence of past use has been kept at Eveleigh Railway workshops. Overhead is a gantry crane, and at ground level a row of basins (no longer in use), with a plaque that tells the story. The basins were installed to provide washing facilities for the workers, but management would not allow their use in working hours, so they were not used. After a stalemate, management relented.

Provide opportunities for access before recycling. When buildings are recycled their character is inevitably changed. Even if the changes are minimal they look different. The peripheral evidence of occupation by real life people (such as tattered girlie pictures, trophies from seven a side football, or signs about the use of machines) are difficult to keep but they often provide the most tangible evidence of former use and convey something of the character of the occupants.

Signs, and other evidence of use, such as the smell of the place, disappear in recycling. This combined with the new character created by the new work mean that interpretation and public access before work is of major importance if the building and its significance is to be appreciated. If the building is worth keeping and its use or past uses are significant, then that use can be better appreciated before works begin.

This obvious but infrequently recognised truth has been acknowledged for a few public places, such as Eveleigh Railway Workshops and Pentridge Gaol, but it also applies to more modest and private buildings. Explanations for not adopting this approach include public safety and the risk that greater public knowledge would lead to greater expectations of the end product. I don't know why this hasn't happened more, especially when interpretation plans have been required as a condition of consent such as that at the Woolloomooloo Wharf. Perhaps the consent authorities (Heritage Council, local councils, etc.) are too timid to make such a requirement.

Interpret significance during construction. For some buildings it is practicable to provide interpretation during construction. This is especially pertinent when the removal of fabric reveals new information about the place and information that might be obscured by the new work. At Old Government House Parramatta the removal of the concrete render (to ameliorate problems of damp) revealed evidence of previously unknown features, including the base for the

chair rail and other details,now interpreted in a temporary display.

At Woolloomooloo Wharf, some evidence of past use has been kept, but the overall character of the places has completely changed, in and out. Recalling or imagining the past character is difficult. The displays now in preparation will be of a high quality but they are no substitute for experiencing the character of the place before work started. The protesters of several years ago that succeeded in convincing the government to protect the building were not protesting to secure more opportunities for development, but to secure the values of the place, and are likely to be a little disappointed with the result. This new look could be called 'industrial chic', and it's an attractive and interesting environment, but I would like to have been able to appreciate the building more before it was changed and learn about the stories of the place.

Some of the meanings and associations of a place could be conveyed during work by large billboards with historical photos with captions, or historical plans. Perhaps the works to Woolloomooloo wharf might have been able to be regarded as 'minimal impact on significance', if the story had been embedded in the minds of the people during construction, through interpretation. This would have been a good option for the Wharf, given its scale and location. Changing a billboard every few months would convey much about the significance of the place, and would make it a landmark. Perhaps this approach could be used elsewhere?

There appears to be a resistance to interpretation, perhaps because owners/ developers/ architects don't want the building to look like a museum. I suspect that they might not appreciate the opportunities and benefits of interpretation but see it as a requirement to be met but not wholeheartedly engaged with. There is considerable room for improvement. Interpretation, and possibly any work that is non-standard, or specific to that project, seems to encounter difficulties in a world of building run with a climate of reducing costs and cutting down the prices of suppliers.

Interpretation should continue to be a condition of consent and perhaps to ensure that it is more wholeheartedly accepted a bond could be required prior to work starting and refunded afterwards if the work was satisfactory. It would need to be many times the cost of the work to be effective. Perhaps some of the more enlightened builders and developers who are willing to accept the conservation approach will soon set a new standard that others will be expected to follow. Perhaps the consent authorities need to increase their expectations of developers and builders?

Issues for practice

The Australian way – a generally good standard of practice

Generally speaking, Australian building conservation practice is outstanding in world terms, at least in relation to the understanding of significance and in the standard and scope of reports and investigations. Façadism has been recognised as a little hollow! There are many good modest sized projects but the end product of recycling is sometimes a disappointment in relation to its significant values.

I am sure there are instances (buildings) where people might wonder whether or not the end product was worth all the heartache, or put more directly, whether or not the building was saved rather than surreptitiously or inadvertently replaced by a similar, but new, building. Somehow during the construction phase, detail gets lost, interpretation is inadequate, and the end product is another restaurant and café. Social commentators have recognised this in humorous ways such as cartoons. In the UK in the 1970s, solutions such as making buildings into craft shops, and cafés, was labelled 'heritage pollution'!

Recognise that many new uses involve more than minimal change and do have an impact on significance

Whilst the Burra Charter has a principle that a place should have a compatible use and that a compatible use is one that involves no, or minimal, change to significant fabric in practice changes are not minimal. Yet I think many of our conservation architects and others would say that they practised within the terms of the Charter. The recognition by some that changes are not minimal has, I believe, prompted people to say that they are not working within the Burra Charter but are undertaking a recycling project; or stated another way, that the Burra Charter doesn't apply to recycling projects. Another option (that I am told is in use) is modifying the assessment of significance to support or allow the extent of change desired and of course to work to remove the building from statutory lists, especially local lists.

I suspect there might be significant numbers of architects and developers that don't really think that the lists or the processes of their compilation are legitimate. Or are these practices merely the cut and thrust of development (as some people have suggested to me); i.e., that it is a legitimate development practice (or sport) to contest listing, and to continue this contest throughout the development and building process, for example by objecting to conditions of consent or avoiding the thorough implementation of conditions.

In recognition of the substantial changes that occur in recycling, and the consequent desirability of improved interpretation, perhaps two categories of development consent could be considered. An owner might apply for a type A

consent, where by the building was recycled with minimum change (a shed used as a shed); or a type B consent where the change was substantial and included irreversible changes. The type A consent would be a relatively quick procedure, with some recording; and the type B consent would involve substantial interpretation, including oral histories, public access before work starts and possible a temporary museum approach, so that the significance of the place were thoroughly demonstrated and appreciated, throughout the project.

Changing attitudes and habits is difficult. Societies, like individuals, get stuck in the manner of doing things. For the stories and values of buildings to be appreciated and retained in the consciousness of the community, I believe that change is worth the effort involved. To start the process of change perhaps we can all adjust our behaviour a little. For example, the heritage organisations could provide clearer direction about the importance of retaining the fabric of a place and could sponsor some pilot projects that demonstrated good practice in interpretation? Perhaps developers could take the time to learn more about existing buildings and their conservation, rather than seeing it as something to be avoided? Perhaps project managers and builders could consider how they might assist conservation?

Our achievements in building recycling are impressive. Going the 'extra mile', so that meaning of buildings would be conveyed and appreciated as part of the recycling project, would benefit both the heritage appreciation, and is likely to generate goodwill towards both the new use and everyone involved in the project.

References

1 The ACNT is the Australia Council of National Trusts, a small secretariat for the 8 independent National Trusts across Australia (Australian Capital Territory, NSW, Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia,Tasmania, Victoria, Western Australia). It was formed in 1965 to lobby at a Federal level on behalf of the States and Territories.

2 Australia ICOMOS, *The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter)*, Canberra, 1979, revised 1999, www.icomos.org/australia

Keeping Buildings Alive

Balancing Contemporary Uses with Conservation

Peter Tonkin

Peter Tonkin is a partner in Tonkin Zulaikha Greer a firm which has a special interest in public spaces, public buildings and 'fringe' architecture, often providing buildings with a new life outside their traditional functions.

The firm has completed a number of major public projects of which two significant examples are the restoration of the Hyde Park Barracks as a museum for the Historic Houses Trust of NSW and the $25m refurbishment of the historic Customs House at Circular Quay for Sydney City Council.

I'd like to start with a response to James Broadbent's tyre swans. I think my vision of those tyre swans is that those tyres aren't tyres any more but at least they're being used and loved. They're not landfills. You can't hold back progress and you can't hold back the changes in society. Societies that don't change die. Cities that don't change die or become theme parks (which is a change). The architect is quite a long way down the food chain in the use of a building and by the time that someone rings us and says 'We've got an old Customs House - what do we do with it?' The Customs have already moved out and you don't have the opportunity of keeping the tyre on the wheel and driving on it in your car. It's already become something redundant, and if Alice is aghast at the changes then other people love what has happened to their tyres.

Most of the work we have done in our practice has been adaptive reuse and much of it has been with buildings of significance. Although just as much of it has been with buildings without a lot of inherent significance. I've got a list of six principles that I'll try to demonstrate in the work rather than simply reading them out.

A long time ago I worked with Lawrence Neild and Partners and won by myself a competition to turn a shipping terminal into a venue for tourists and still operate it as a shipping terminal [Overseas Passenger Terminal, Circular Quay]. I think that was a case where the building had no recognised value and we could do anything we liked with it. It has since been adaptively reused again and I won't say anything about that, except that adaptive reuse was intended to make it look better so we had a very free hand.

We do a lot of domestic adaptive reuse work and it is not so much reuse but adaption and the adaption comes from the changes in what society demands of houses. In cases where there was a heritage imperative, largely contextual rather than individually inherent, I don't believe the significant aspects were overly weakened. The building is kept alive and there's a continuity of relevance to the daily lives of people in the by now 21st century.

A tile warehouse becomes a cinema. A perfectly ordinary tile warehouse so we keep the box and slap a new front on it harking back to Victorian goldrush towns. You know the Queen Anne front and the Mary Anne back of a lot of Georgian development. We maintained the embodied energy, if you like, of the structure in the way that Mr Latham was talking about this morning but with no sense of heritage involvement whatever. Internally you expose the industrial structure so that keen-eyed people will get a sense that there is a bit of layering going on, less keen-eyed people can

still, I think, appreciate the richness of texture and patination that you get when you overlay one thing on another. That job involves quite a lot of funky things like designing lights as well as the whole commercial pizzazz of a cinema project.

In the Rocks we adaptively reused what was basically a carpark as a shopping centre, and the architectural work there was wrapping up a very ugly 1970s building that had been built as a mixed-use development, so that it better matched the historic warehouse next door, that we also turned into shops, and the surrounding context of Victorian development. Again adaptive reuse, again layering the building, but the heritage constraints were largely external rather than internal. We were very careful to try and keep to a palette of materials internally that were consistent from the early warehouse to our new work so that you got a sense of continuity in the retail environment, a sense of the old talking to the new. This dialogue and layering and history makes cities vibrant and exciting places to be.

A job we didn't get was adapting a former oil bunker in Woolloomooloo. It was really a case of the government trying to make some money, thinking 'We've got this huge structure, let's see if someone can invent a use for it'. I mention it as an example of the tremendous and exciting volumes and spaces and surfaces that you get with old structures. You simply could not attempt to build that from scratch today and the best of adaptive reuse in my mind is capitalising on the potential of these things that were built for something else that you just couldn't recreate. You could not get a spaceof such richness and complexity if you set out to build, in this case, an office building in Woolloomooloo.

Hyde Park Barracks was our first job that involved a serious approach to heritage. I can't think of a building with a more interesting history in Sydney and a history more relevant to the way our society started and gradually grew and developed over time. This was a building that had had something like fifty-seven different government uses since it was built and which had been turned into a kind of general museum which failed. Our brief was to turn it into a museum of itself, working with a conservation expert, Clive Lucas, and a with a very intelligent and informed client, the Historic Houses Trust. The exterior had been restored by Public Works some time previously and we were left with an interior which had been fairly corrupted, both by a 1980s' fitout as a museum and by the successive layering of occupation. Our approach was to maintain all of the significant fabric. The only things we demolished were the 1980s' work and to strip back the various layers, including the 1980s', work to reveal how different occupants had changed the building from the original construction as a convict barracks though a succession of uses. This really was, in the early 1990s, a fairly untried approach and one which was fairly open to contention but which we could argue fairly carefully from historical principles. I think it has proved very successful. The museum has had minimal change in its appearance and still I think looks very fresh and very relevant today.

So new things were kind of floated in, they were made to look obviously new so that there was no confusion in people's minds about the period from which fabric dated. The different floors were treated in different ways. The bottom floor, which had been most bastardised by different uses, was left fairly neutral. The middle floor, which was most intact in its Victorian fitout, we preserved and in some cases restored Victorian fabric. Paint scrapes were undertaken and preserved rather than being painting over, and the new elements were made to, as far as possible, float weightlessly in the spaces. New things by and large were painted white, whereas old things by and large were painted in historic colours. The top floor was quite thoroughly and very scholarly restored to Francis Greenway's time by Clive Lucas and Ian Stapleton. Our fitout of that space was kept absolutely as quiet as possible so that the fabric was allowed to be its simple and evocative self.

Another classic tyre swan was a former power station (heritage listed by Liverpool Council) which had become far too small to be economic and which I think has interesting parallels with the Tate Modern which Ian [Stapleton] discussed. Liverpool Council held a plebiscite about what to do with this thing. They wanted to turn it into a depot and they thought the local community would want it to be a sports hall which is quite easy to fit into a power station. They were a bit embarrassed when people voted for it to be a cultural centre. The budget was minimal, the uses were quite community-based, and we worked on a kind of loose-fit, low-tech, maximum flexibility, retro fit of this power station, preserving its patina which we thought was vital to its appeal as a structure. That richness of dirt was always going to be more interesting than a coat of paint, no matter what colour we made it, and to keep the new work as evocative and exciting as we could. It's interesting to note that the major grant that building got was from I think the Heritage Council of NSW, but it's faded in my memory and might have been the Australian Heritage Commission. The grant was to conserve the chimney stack which clearly was the worst old tyre in that it had no use whatever even as a cultural centre but everybody thought it was quite vital as an advertisement for this quite hard to get to industrial relic.

We preserved the major interior volumes, cleaned up the outside, commissioned Robin Backin to do that beautiful artwork on the windows facing the railway line. Judy Watson did a floor piece. The budget trick here was to cheapen building finishes so we could pay for some art works. A quarter of the budget went into establishing trunk services to the building because it had no electricity and all the sewerage used to go into the George's River. The major turbine hall space became a kind of flexible party venue, theatre, exhibition space, corporate function room and wedding space for the Liverpool community. Various different gallery spaces fitted in amongst the remains of the industrial uses of the

building. You can see the Xs and the word OUT on some of the steel. It was all about to be demolished when we got our commission. We stopped that demolition and left, I think, every single piece of that kind of mad constructivist system of gantries in place and floated the smaller uses in the building as boxes in between the steel structures.

The project was incredibly successful. Again, you could not build volumes like that for the budget that we had. You couldn't gain the excitement and kind of drama that building possessed, even if you tried to build it from scratch. Patronage has been nearly doubling every year. We've just got some major grants, partly from the Ministry for the Arts to do a third floor fitout which had been left alone and I think to fit out a big box that we left within the building as a 200 seat theatre. So here's an example where I think the heritage of the building is vital to its success. We worked with the grain of the building rather than against it. We were able to create a very durable and functional kind of artefact for a quite impoverished and difficult to deal with outer suburban community.

In the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial there was a little competition to design the Tomb of an Unknown Soldier. We were briefed to remove the sculpture which had been put in the Hall in the 60s and no-one ever liked, and where this fabulous mosaic by Napier Walker was the dominant item. It is a supremely important space. It's proposed use is, I think , supremely important as well. Again we kept the new, the simple sculpture of the four elements done with Janet Lawrence which kind of mirrors the mullions of the windows. It is a very simple treatment to the Tomb in the centre of the floor so that it seems to own the whole space and I think enlivens and gives meaning to a very beautiful room which previously had always been a little bit purposeless. There you can see, I think, the true national spirit of the entombment ceremony of a soldier dug up from the war fields of France and enshrined in the heart of our nation.

You are in the adaptive reuse of the Customs House. A project where, to respond slightly to William Winterton's question about how do you deal with the bureaucracy, we were able to meet our client's brief, which was to create something that was clearly new and which advertised its newness by looking at the history of the building and each architect who had worked on it and done a major alteration in his own architectural style. We were really adding just a sixth layer to what had been a very complex and evolving artefact.

Figure 1: Customs House, Circular Quay, Sydney

The building was a mess, having been vacant for five years. It had a permanent conservation order placed on it because at the stage when Customs vacated it was going to be sold. It had degraded very seriously and treated very roughly by Customs. Our aim when we worked on it, in association with Jackson Teece Chesterman Willis, and with Orwell and Peter Phillips as the conservation planners, to create something which met the client's brief and where the significant fabric didn't look new but where it looked cared for rather than bastardised over its hundred and forty year life. The major focus of our new work was to create modern services and vertical circulation in what was a kind of building without a brief. It was to be a six storey cultural centre with unknown users in a completely untried mix of cultural, tourism and commercial functions for the City Council who were very very nervous about the whole project. We kept almost all, I think, of the surviving Victorian fabric except in one corner where we had to clear out floors to create a liftshaft and another corner where slightly more aggressively we created a fire escape, but that enabled us to create the more significant rooms (and you're sitting in I think the most significant, the former Barnet Long room. This was

Barnet's public room within the building). We were able to keep them free of intrusive services and to keep the very simple four-square Victorian office spaces much as they had been, yet supply all the services that a contemporary cultural centre (air-conditioning, acoustic control) needs. Parts of the building, like the oakeshott foyer downstairs with its swastikas were retained, in the face I think of some quite serious objections and in the face of the whole complex nature of a conservation exercise in a building like this of how do you treat all the different layers of fabric. What do you 'restore'?

Well, we restored virtually nothing and we kept most of the significant layers. A great deal of the budget went on conserving the external sandstone. The plaster was removed from the inner walls that had once been external before the inner courtyard was enclosed in 1918 and all those marks of history were simply left there to show what all these different occupants had done. That was partly because there was no way we could have afforded to try and fix all of that sandstone in a satisfactory fashion internally. We selected a very minimal palette of new materials, steel, glass and zinc as just about the only materials we used as complimentary to the historic nature of the building. The clients' brief was that they wanted something that was visible from the outside and the very contentious roof that I think Ian Stapleton referred to follows the footprint and outline of a blob that was on the roof from the 1918 period, but recreated in a contemporary fashion to create a new restaurant. This was vital to the ongoing success of the building and signals to people that this isn't a Victorian office building any more.

Figure 2: Cafe Sydney on the top floor of the Customs House with the new glazed roof

We wanted to control and modulate the daylight down into the building, which was a deliberate way of offsetting the fact that the Victorian rooms soaked up all the sunlight on the north and all the people spaces and circulation at the back was very dank and overshadowed. We wanted to get as much rooflight down into the building, and to give that light as much sparkle and interest as we could so people felt that this was an exciting and welcoming place, not something that was as forbidding as the original building's dank little centre had been.

The back wall was an infill between the existing lightwell and we reinstated on either side those red frames, the steel skeleton of the oakeshott and that glass from wall to wall is an explanation and a kind of celebration of the fact that this was once a courtyard. It enabled people very clearly to read the original Victorian U-shape of the sandstone building. The new work was all put on an orthogonal whereas oakeshotts had been at this slightly strange angle. We get this I think very interesting combination of weird angles. That back facade and the cleaning gantry so that people can abseil down the glass and clean it starts to speak to the Victorian cornices. We use quite a contemporary architectural language to ensure that the new work and the old work have a dialogue. The new circulation was made as exciting and as clear as possible, threaded along the back wall of the building, so that people would be invited up and it's interesting that the most successful functions in this building are the ones that are highest up. The ground floor is yet, I think, to find a satisfactory usage. The necessary lift towers were treated as new zinc elements but clad in such a way that the masonry kind of talks to the zinc cladding and there you can see in the last slide the major intervention into the building of its glass roof.

The building remains contentious; I'm very pleased with it, to answer Ian's question, and I don't know that I'd do much of it differently, although I don't think many aspects of it show a high level of craftsmanship and that I think is a reflection on the Australian building ethos, specially with regard to old buildings, and to the whole project management and value engineering approach that is inescapable in a lot of public architecture.

One of the conditions of the Section 60 consent[1] was that we recreate the original shoreline of Sydney Cove; that was done in the grid pattern that was the grid of Alfred Street crossing with the grid of Customs House to give you

a sense of the waves breaking on the shore and recreates where in 1788 Captain Phillip came ashore, as far as we can understand.

Currently under construction is the Sir Henry Parkes War Memorial School of Arts in Tenterfield which is a project jointly funded by the Centenary of Federation, the National Trust and Tenterfield Council. We are conserving a

Figure 3: Customs House, Circular Quay. New circulation along the back wall made as exciting as possible

Figure 4: Central atrium space, Customs House, Circular Quay

fabulous little collection of country halls as a museum of Sir Henry Parkes' famous Federation oration of 1896, a new library for Tenterfield and a conserved theatre that becomes the town's movies and meeting hall. I think this is a very exciting project, both for us because of the interest of its different periods of architecture all shoved together and certainly for the community of Tenterfield, which is establishing itself with a Federation and Sir Henry Parkes industry.

The last project I wish to discuss is adaption but not reuse and is a contemporary piece of architecture. It is Col Madigan's National Gallery of Australia, a building that you at the same time love and hate. It is a building with a tremendous level of architectural commitment and craftsmanship, but a building which in many ways never fulfilled its designed role as an art gallery and where the architecture and the function in many respects compete. Our work there is to build a new entrance to the building and to address some of the functioning difficulty of its interior spaces. A very, very challenging job in a politically sensitive environment and where the only part of the building which has statutory protection at the moment is the Sculpture Garden by Col Madigan and Harry Howard. The Sculpture Garden is a listed item of the Register of the National Estate. We're doing that very, very difficult exercise of conservation work on a garden, a living thing. We are working with Barb Buchanan, Harry Howard's partner, to restore some of the original plantings. Internally we're trying to uncover many of the surprise secrets of Madigan's architecture which have been covered up. By constructing a more user-friendly and much more exciting entrance to the building we hope to turn around people's impressions of a very forbidding concrete artefact. We are hoping to show them something which I think architects have always been able to perceive: the excitement of that original building.

So the principles that we look at are fabric conservation I think quite strictly, making new as new as possible and the old look as cared for as possible so that you get that exciting challenge of the building in long-term flexibility. Your adaptive reuse, with all the damage it necessarily entails, only needs to happen in minimal amounts. You can create an artefact that can have another hundred years or so of use, being as inventive as you can with services, building code compliance, fire safety access, challenging your consultants and your client so that you can achieve conservation ends but still get the relative humidity, comfort conditions, fire safety etc, that are absolutely necessary in today's world.

I think my last point was challenging preconceptions. Everybody that comes into an adaptive reuse programme, yourself included, comes into it with a lot of baggage. Right through the process from beginning to end you've got to keep asking yourself 'why, what does the building demand, how can we best work with the building and with the talents of the whole team to achieve a result which is successful'?

References

1 Section 60 of the NSW Heritage Act requires an application to be made to the relevant approval authority, accompanied by the appropriate form and fee, for an works to a place listed on the State Heritage Register or subject to an Interim Heritage Order.

Should It Stay or Should It Go

Sylvia Hrovatin

Sylvia Hrovatin has been a Town Planner for 16 years, spending time in both private practice and local government. For the last 17 years she has been Exceutive Town Planner and project manager for Meriton Apartments. During her time with Meriton she has been involved with a number of projects associated with 'heritage' buildings.

I cannot pretend to speak on behalf of other developers and nor would I dare to on such a sensitive topic as the reuse of historic buildings. So today's talk is limited to the experience of one developer, Meriton Apartments, a company that I have worked with for the last seven years. We have developed many sites where historic buildings have had to be retained and we currently have a number of projects involving their adaptive reuse for a variety of uses not just apartments. I would like to share these experiences with by taking you on a journey across Sydney starting at St Leonards, then to the former BHP site at Chiswick, then heading along Victoria Road to Gladesville, back to Ultimo where there were once many wool stores, into the Sydney CBD, out to the former ACI glass factory site at Waterloo and then finishing at Balmain on the former Lever and Kitchen factory site. Of course if you were walking this tour Balmain would be an excellent choice given the numerous watering holes they have in the area.

Before I start, I think it's worthwhile noting some of our observations on adaptive reuse. In terms of market forces there is no demand by buyers for apartments in historic buildings. That is to say purchasers do not ring us up asking if we have any on the market that have been adapted for residential purposes. Their requests are more along the lines of 'are you building in Ryde?', or Bondi Junction, or Hornsby. With this request, which goes with the 'location, location, location' maxim, comes the presumption that all stock that is being built is new; it's not second hand. It is interesting to note that where we have adapted historic buildings for apartments, these apartments in the 'heritage' part are generally the last to be sold. Those in the new part sell fast and first. This is despite the fact that both are of equal quality.

No doubt there are those of you in the audience who just can't fathom why someone would chose a new apartment over one which has, for example, five meter high ceilings, timber window frames, old columns and beams made of iron bark. However that is the case and it may have more to do with our cultural history than anything else. What I am saying is that there is no strong market demand for these apartments, the reason that there is a supply is only because consent authorities impose land use controls through their LEPs and DCPs, requiring the retention of these buildings. After they are refurbished however Meriton has to work very hard to market them successfully. Providing apartments within a historic building or behind a retained façade is really quite difficult because of the need to comply with amenity controls in respect to the size of the apartments, the depth of the living areas and the light and ventilation

issues. Of course you know there are economic considerations as well. It's much easier to convert a historic building into a commercial or retail use or recreation facility as these uses are more flexible in their floor plan layouts.

The repair, restoration and reconstruction involved in these projects is expensive yet planning controls rarely acknowledge this. FSR [Floor Space Ratio] incentives or other bonuses are generally not offered as compensation for works involving these buildings. This is an issue that should be closely examined by consent authorities as a means of encouraging not just the retention of historic items but there repair, restoration and reuse.

Meriton at the Herbert Street site in St Leonards, is currently constructing a residential development consisting of four apartment buildings containing approximately two hundred apartments. One of these buildings includes the adaptation of the railway substation building. The substation building was built in 1927, and has elements of Georgian Revival. The interior has a central void running north to south. Steel columns support a steel trussed roof and steel frame stairs connect the concrete floors. When we purchased the site the SRA [State Rail Authority] had removed all the internal electrical switch gear from the building, so it was largely a vacant space. Although it is not listed as an individual item under the Willoughby LEP 1995, an assessment report prepared on behalf of SRA identified the former substation as having cultural significance and as being of state value due to its association with the SRA. The assessment report recommended that adaptive reuse be the preferred future management strategy for the building. Whilst there were no local statutory controls which directly affected the substation building the Willoughby LEP had clear provisions for the retention of the sub station in the redevelopment of the site through a bonus floor space ratio. The site permitted a FSR of 3:1. However Council consented to the development on this site up to a floor space ratio of 4:1 because the former substation brick building was retained for adaptation. The proposed development conserves and adapts the former substation building for residential and retail uses. Approximately thirteen apartments are proposed to be accommodated within the conserved building. The ground floor level will accommodate the communal recreation facilities and the level above is where we have the apartments. Externally the adaptation of the substation involves the addition of individual verandahs surrounding the building servicing the apartments on the top floor.

The seven Nissan Huts on the site were listed by the National Trust and identified as 'an interesting adaptation of war time prefabricated structures to suit industrial uses in a near city location which has survived a mix of high-tech development at the CBD extension'. They have been demolished but prior to that they were recorded internally and externally by means of photographs and measured drawings. We offered them for free but there were no takers and we couldn't find any use for them.

We are currently developing the former BHP site, on the southern foreshores of the Parramatta River in Abbottsford Bay at Chiswick. The site is approximately 11 hectares, and it's proposed that approximately 700 apartments be developed on this site. Initially it was thought that the whole site would have to be remediated which would necessitate the removal of all the structures and contaminated soil. However with further research we were able to retain a number of historic items such as the canteen, the gate house and the toilet block. The conservation of these buildings was required by Drummoyne Council as part of the conditions arising from development consent of the site. In the context of the overall significance of the site the three retained historic buildings are important for their ability to provide an insight into the administration of the former BHP complex. While predominantly functional in character the buildings are remnants of the Sydney wire mill site and provide an insight into the day to day life of mill workers and administration staff. These buildings require physical conservation work to ensure the cultural significance of each building is retained and current building standards applicable to public buildings are met.

Conservation will primarily involve maintenance of each building which will focus on retaining the character of the buildings. As they are on land that is open public space, they eventually come under Council's control and the final use of the buildings is yet to be determined. An interpretation strategy has been prepared for the site and an original waterside crane has been restored and will be placed in the public open space on the foreshore along with a number of other industrial elements within the buildings.

The building known as Squireville was as an early orphanage run by the Sisters of Mercy and later as a girls school. Located on Victoria Road it was one of the first projects where Meriton adapted a historic building. It was converted in the early nineties to two strata title units; one on each level of the building. Purists may argue that it was not a very successful adaptation of a building but nonetheless it was an early example and we've come a long way since. The building we think was the Chapel is currently being used for a community room and sits behind the building the main building.

Back now to Ultimo and the former wool stores that we adapted for residential apartments with commercial floor space on the ground floor. In order to accommodate the residential apartments three structural bays were retained back from the façade. The internal core of the building was demolished to make way for a large landscaped courtyard. We've retained all the timber window frames. We hardly had to replace any as the building was in substantially good order and lent itself easily to a conversion. There were many items of original machinery associated with its former wool

store use, such as wool presses, conveyor belts, scales, dumping machines, work benches, tools etc. Many of those went on to museums, but the foyer of the building has an excellent display of some of the original pieces together with photographs of the wool trade. You can visit that building and the manager would be most pleased to show you around. It is at 95 Jones Street, Ultimo.

In one part we had a building where the brick work had been chipped around the edges of a former loading dock. This damage had been caused when the horses pulled up with their carts and the wool was loaded and taken away to the railway station and then to the ships bound for England. Originally we approached Council because the builders and the marketing people in the company didn't like that worn look and wanted to render that portion of the building but the best they could do was little red bollards on the side. It is all that Council would let us do.

Interestingly the first units to sell in this building were those within the interior courtyard. It is a square shaped building so you have the units looking across from one to another. I would have presumed that the apartments to the exterior of the building would be the ones that people would prefer, because they have the views of the city. Unfortunately that is not the way the market voted with their dollars. At the time the development consent was granted for the adaptive reuse the previous developer proposed a museum within the three levels of the building. We explored many avenues to try and use that section of the building as a museum but it was proven to be uneconomical and unviable. The Powerhouse was approached along with other small institutions and nobody wanted to take it on. The Council and the local community was very committed to the idea of the space being used as a museum. We approached the Council to use the space for commercial purposes but their preference was for retail because of it's public accessibility. We marketed that for a year and there were no takers so we went back to Council to plead again to allow it to be used for commercial purposes as an office. Council finally approved with a number of conditions ensuring that there is some kind of public access on a regular basis. The space contains elements of the conveyor belt and the dumping presses as well as other machinery over three levels. Access is gained from a side street.

It's interesting when we talk about the market because the person who bought this space lives in the central west on a sheep farm and his house and out buildings are listed as heritage items. It takes a like mind to buy a like property. He bought this as an investment and rents it to a graphic design company who chose this space because it was different. It is a very specialised market and it took a long time to find the right purchaser. It took nearly three years.

Buckle House, 569-58 George Street, in the CBD of Sydney, is opposite the World Tower site is, I think an example of façadism that has worked actually very well. Buckle House was originally listed in Council's Heritage Inventory, however the site had been the subject of several development consents which permitted the demolition of this building. The situation eventually led to the building being excluded from the Heritage LEP. In 1995 when another development application was considered for this site, Council's Heritage Planner advised that the existing building had architectural and streetscape significance and retention of a significant portion (to about a depth of 20 meters from the façade, including some notable internal features) was desirable. Internally the building had suffered from neglect otherwise it was in reasonable condition. Council retained an independent design consultant to consider whether or not it was feasible to retain the front section of the building and to integrate it into the overall scheme that was originally suggested. The consultants found that the retention of the front building was not feasible, as it would severely hamper the construction process and compromise the residential component of the development. He strongly recommended the retention of the façade, only as long as new flooring levels and building uses adjacent to the façade were related to the existing fenestration and were sympathetically handled. The balance of opinion concerning significance of the façade of Buckle House was clearly in favour of its retention, despite the pervious consents that had been given for demolition and the fact that it wasn't on Council's LEP. What won the day was the plan to maintain the relationship with the façade and its association with the adjoining RSL building. The incorporation of the new floor levels into the façade required some further rationalisation from a design point of view, in particular to present as genuine an appearance of active uses to George Street. The front of the building reads as five levels, which includes the ground floor however there are eight new levels behind that façade. The ground floor and all the levels match up, the ground floor is essentially retailing and there is an arcade that leads through to Douglas Lane, which is also an item under Council's LEP. Above the ground floor, we have seven levels which comprise one level of commercial floor space and above that we have residential apartments. The residential apartments and commercial floor space are built back to a depth of approximately fifteen metres and behind that we have car parking. Each of the front apartments are two storey dwellings, with living areas on the first level and the bedrooms on the second.

Another project involved the demolition of all but the brick façade of the former YMCA building on Pitt Street and the subsequent construction of a 40 storey residential building with retail on the ground floor. The façade of the Pitt Street building was to be retained with a new five storey apartment building taking place behind the original interior. Two buildings opposite the Water Board are a nice Victorian Gothic Revival building on Bathurst Street and another building

in Pitt Street also listed in Council's Heritage Inventory. They were in derelict condition and presented severe problems for conservation *in situ*. The structure and layout of both were such that they were not easily modified for reuse in a modern context without removing most of the fabric which could be considered of significance. The consent authority however had other ideas and deferred consideration of the application to enable the significance of the interior of the building on Pitt Street to be investigated, with a view to it being restored. Subsequently the previous developer appointed independent consultants to investigate the issue of the signifcance and structural condition of the front portion. Eventually the consent authority determined that the most appropriate way to deal with the historic issues on this site was to demolish the bulk of the Bathurst Street building and to retain the sandstone façade. The façade is currently being dismantled and is meant to be erected somewhere else. A possible location for that is at Loftus at the Tramways Museum. It remains to be seen how successful that is.

Part retention and reconstruction of the front portion of the Pitt Street building is also a condition of approval. In this case five structural bays are partially being retained, restored or reconstructed. The ground floor will be faithfully restored to its former early 20th century style and proportions. Above this four levels of residential apartments are to be provided within the original fabric of the building.

365-375 Kent Street did present some problems because the three original buildings on the site are architecturally different; not only just because you've got two brick buildings and a painted and rendered building, but because their styles are fairly different. Although some would argue that they are similar because they are part of the historic streetscape in terms of their massing and proportions. The difficulty was trying to get some sort of architectural similarity but in the end we gave up and decided that we would just do something different. We decided we would just restore the buildings, paint them up, fix up the paint work and leave them as they are.

I think it is another good example of façadism. I think that it works well at a pedestrian level and this is where you mainly view these façades. From that level you can see the beauty and the character of these buildings. Intially in this proposal we sought to demolish them and provide an infill development replicating the design. Council wouldn't have a bar of it and the National Trust objected but I think in the end this was a good resolution.

The ACI site at Waterloo is a very, very large site. I think it's over 12 hectares. The Green Square area previously had many industrial buildings and they have since been declared obsolete. This area has been declared by the state government as right for redevelopment. The former ACI Glass factory site had 33 industrial buildings on it. They moved their operations out to the Western suburbs and were proposing to build mainly a residential development, approximately 2,500 apartments together with about 50,000 sq meters of commercial space. The site has been opened up by the provision of public roads that tie into the existing street grid and there's also public open space that will be provided on the site which will be dedicated back to Council. It has been approved through a master plan.

Initially we ran a design competition for this site, seeking ideas as to its overall development. A conservation plan was prepared and that plan recognised a number of buildings that needed to be retained. One of these is called the Administration Building and fronts South Dowling Street. Eventually it will provide the focus for the development because there is meant to be a beautiful square in there called 'Watchful Harry Square', named after the weigh bridge operator. His name was Harry and he used to watch the trucks that came and passed the bridge. The building was the General Manager's office and now is being converted into eight commercial office suites. This area is a great location so hopefully that will be an incentive in itself. The building was in quite good condition except for upstairs because the roof had rotted away and there was therefore a lot of water penetration into the first floor. There was a little bit of work to fix it up but otherwise very little has been done to the building. Timber frames have been repaired, glass panels fixed up and it is currently being used as a sales office. The classic *Art Deco* AGM building on the corner of South Dowling and Lachlan Streets doesn't belong to us. It was once part of the site but we've subdivided and it is being sold to another owner. His intention is to use it for storage purposes. Council has given a temporary consent limited to five years for that purpose, until such time the area picks up. After that time I think his intention is to use it for commercial purposes.

There was another building on the corner of Bourke and Lachlan Street, which was known as the Crown Corning building and is currently being used by Toyota. These two properties involve other people but the rest of the site is currently in Meriton's ownership. One of the historic items being retained on the site is the chimney sitting at the axis of the main roads that enter into the development. There is meant to be landscaping around that. Behind and in front there will be buildings. It was part of the old powerhouse complex and there was a number of machinery items that sat in a very large building behind it. The chimney was kept because I guess it is a land mark feature and also appears on South Sydney Council Letterhead.

There were many, many industrial machines in the former Powerhouse complex and virtually all of them went to museums, but the prevailing view is that some of these should be retained on the site. The question is where do you put them? As a residential apartment developer we didn't really have uses or spaces that we thought that we could put

these in and it was decided that they should go into some sort of public open space and this is at the rear of the office building discussed above. It will form part of the public open space network. They will be painted, they've all been looked after, all the nuts and bolts have all gone back onto them, all that remains is to paint them and hopefully they'll look a lot better. I'm not really convinced that this was the most appropriate way to deal with these items, particularly because they're machines and the attractiveness of machines is when they work and make noise and do things Just sitting there you can't really understand their context and it's a bit boring. We're also going to paint a mural and we've found some old sketch plans and templates of bottles that were produced on this site. There will also be signage here so people will understand where this all came from. We have photographs.

The interpretation strategy is currently being prepared, which would include the chimney, this building, the industrial items along with another structure that we have, a cast iron building, which is being dismantled and is going to be reerected on the ACI site.

The Councilors made us retain another façade at ACI and I think you could get a far better design solution. It is an occasion where I think façadism will not work. It's so boring and because it's far away from the AGM building on the corner of Lachlan and South Dowling Streets. There is just no context or relationship it can offer to the site. It's more than 100-200 metres away from any other historic item and it's going to be completely obliterated by new buildings. I'm sure that the architects will think of something to integrate this building to whatever is happening up above (which on this site is something like a 16 storey building) but I think you could get a better design resolution and something far more interesting if we were allowed to demolish it. It's a great place for advertising structures any way.

At the former Lever and Kitchen site, used for soap making, we have approximately 400 apartments, it was a master plan site and within the site there are 4 historic buildings, all of which have been adapted for commercial uses and one which we have retained for a swimming pool. There is also a heritage interpretation strategy being prepared.

There is a lot of open spaces so people can wander through the buildings and get up close to the historic buildings. Even though they are actually in private ownership the curtilage in which they sit is adjoining public open space. This site was entered into the MBA (Master Builders Association) Awards, but didn't win anything. I don't think they liked the brick work. They didn't value the wonderful historic characteristics. One of the historic buildings was just an open vacant structure used as a warehouse. We've retained all the rafters and the beams but didn't do anything to the brick work. We just left it the way it was and built a swimming pool inside it.

The examples that I've given here today demonstrate that heritage buildings can be adapted for a variety of uses. When converting into a residential use it is easier to do so when the original spaces are conducive to that conversion. That is where there are large floor areas unencumbered by walls and the floor levels match current standards. This is also applicable where buildings are being adapted for commercial or recreational facilities. The adaptation of a historic building for apartments is certainly not our first choice. We would much prefer to start with a clean slate and so would the market, however we all recognise that these buildings contribute enormously to our environment and our culture. The problem is that many of these buildings fall apart through neglect and because appropriate uses cannot be found for them. One way to encourage the adaptive reuse of these properties is for local and State government to provide incentives and to be more flexible in their approach. This hopefully will lead to more old buildings being retained and by the way we have a lot of very attractive apartments in converted historic properties for sale, so if you're interested please call 9264 7177.

Adaptation: a legitimate response to redundancy for public sector heritage

Ivar Nelsen

Ivar Nelsen is Manager of the Historic Places Section of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment in Victoria. Prior to taking up this position, Ivar worked in various conservation roles for the Commonwealth and State governments and private clients in South Australia and New South Wales. In his current role, Ivar has the opportunity to apply his previous on-ground conservation experience at a more strategic management level.

Organisation Overview:
The Department of Natural Resources and Environment manage public land throughout Victoria. The portfolio of the department includes hundreds of redundant public buildings - court houses, police lockups, railway stations and mechanics institutes as well as archaeological sites associated with mining and forestry activities.

In 1979 the *Burra Charter*[1] legitimised 'adaptation' as a conservation process. The *Burra Charter* really sanctioned a process which probably pre dates conscious conservation itself. Adaptation and adaptive reuse of buildings is neither a new or threatening process.

In public sector Victoria particularly however it is interesting how adaptive reuse has never been fully embraced and in fact has been demonised. Somehow buildings in public ownership must be 'restored', preferably as house museums or else just the opposite, left completely as found, but again preferably as house museums. They must be open to the public, they must be maintained for however long, through the public purse. They must for some strange reason become temples to public works architects or venues for interpreting every theme or story associated with them, no matter how obscure. Converting a public building (a building held in public trust) for an active, useful, dare I say 'viable' role (and particularly if it's not an original role) is still in the first instance sacrilege and those who promote or encourage it (particularly bureaucrats) are to be viewed with suspicion.

Meanwhile next door in the private sector shops, banks, factories and houses are adapted and converted to all manner of uses. Two different standards seem to apply. This is all the more interesting when one considers the extremely limited resources and low priority of cultural heritage within public policy. I exaggerate of course in some of these pronouncements but only to make a point. The adaptation of private sector buildings in Victoria can still be controversial but it is still less in relative terms than in the public sector.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment finds itself well and truly in the middle of this situation. While the Department is responsible for the management of public land in Victoria, we do in fact tend to get the 'duds' and we have in the past become the dumping ground for a plethora of redundant and unpromising court houses, police lockups, Mechanics Institutes, railway stations and other public and industrial buildings. Added to that are literally thousands of archaeological sites on public land relating to mining and forestry activities. The Department's heritage portfolio is something like your Historic Houses Trust with a very bad thyroid condition. When a building is declared redundant by a government department or authority in Victoria it is first referred to the Victorian Government Property Group who reside within the Department of Treasury and Finance - a nice place to live! If the building has a significant profile or 'commercial' potential they either remain with, or are sold by, that Group. Those which don't are given to the

Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

Our response in the past has been to accept whatever was offered. The intention was noble and in the past it was appropriate. Unfortunately resources very seldom came with the properties and over time a number of the Department's larger properties have become an embarrassment of under-utilised, under-maintained and, in too many instances, still vacant buildings. While we have claimed the moral high ground of offering protection, our performance in terms of actual care and management is less than outstanding.

In reference to the adaptive reuse of public buildings though, there is usually an essential prerequisite to the activity and that is political instruction. A case in point was the Melbourne Customs House which was adapted as the Migration and Hellenic Museum at the instruction of the last Government. While the conservation movement 'saved' the building in the 1950s it remained essentially vacant and under threat until the Government initiative three years ago. At Government's instruction it happened and the building today enjoys a new lease of life and facilitates far greater public access and awareness of its history than in the 40 years since it was 'saved'.

The Customs House example I feel also illustrates a fundamental problem with the management of significant places to date which is an excessive level of effort has been applied to the identification of that significance, with relatively little effort then applied to its management. While the movement has made significant strides in studies, assessments, survey techniques etc., it has been less than enthusiastic in the effective management of historic places and particularly in the acceptance of adaptive reuse.

As with most businesses and government departments, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment has embarked upon a performance based management of its activities. As a direct response to that opportunity, and the comments I have just made, the Department is now actively encouraging and facilitating the adaptive reuse of historic places on public land through a range of policy and management initiatives I will be describing. While the Department does not require adaptive reuse, it is encouraging and facilitating it wherever it is appropriate to provide a sustainable management scenario and assist in its conservation.

Policy - DNRE Position Statement

At a strategic departmental level we have developed the *NRE Position Statement for Non-Indigenous Heritage Management*. It provides a context for the operations of the Department and for the activities of our delegated managers.

The Position Statement has four main principles:

- DNRE will act in a responsible and professional manner in addressing and managing its heritage obligations on public land for present and future generations;
- DNRE will conserve and manage a state wide representative sample of historic places on public land in the form of a Cultural Sites Network (CSN);
- DNRE will enlist and utilise a wide range of management options to best conserve and utilise historic places on public land for the benefit of all Victorians;
- DNRE delegated managers and providers will acknowledge and utilise this position statement in the management of their own property portfolios.[2]

Each of these 4 principles has further subtext to support them which I will illustrate shortly.

The focus for the 'change in attitude' for the use and adaptive reuse of public buildings is contained in the second and third statements. The statement, '*DNRE will conserve and manage a state wide representative sample of historic places on public land in the form of a Cultural Sites Network (CSN)*' is directly targeted at the perceived role of the Department to manage all redundant public buildings and to use them exclusively as 'museums'. Neither of those roles is defined or mandated in legislation, corporate plans or strategies such as the Victorian Heritage Strategy. Confronting this presumption head on, the Department has defined or clarified its own role in terms of what we are calling a 'Cultural Sites Network'. It is not my intention to expand upon this Network here, except to say it provides for identifying a smaller, more representative, heritage portfolio upon which the Department can focus its limited conservation resources for that traditional educative, interpretative role. By default, the Cultural Sites Network will also identify those places for which the traditional roles are not as implicate - therefore available for a greater level of adaptive reuse and regeneration into the community.

The full text of the next statement is:

- DNRE will enlist and utilise a wide range of management options to best conserve and utilise historic places on public land for the benefit of all Victorians.

- DNRE will recognise, encourage and facilitate the use of historic places on public land by government authorities, local government, community groups, private industry and individuals - 'conservation by use'.
- DNRE will, wherever possible, facilitate the maintenance and/or conservation of historic places on public land on a self-supportable basis. This is particularly relevant to buildings but may have application to other site types as well.
- DNRE will utilise both direct and delegated management and the latter may include responsible disposal and even informed loss in selected circumstances.[3]

'*The DNRE will enlist and utilise a wide range of management options to best conserve and utilise historic places on public land for the benefit of all Victorians*', is directly aimed at the management of historic places. Aimed at clarifying that conservation is not necessarily the end product of management. It is the utilisation of the place which may incorporate various levels and aspects of conservation. The statement stresses an involvement by all possible players not just government, the concept of 'conservation by use' (which is now a principle incorporated within the Victorian Heritage Strategy as well) and the self-supporting of maintenance and conservation works. All of these are aimed at encouraging and promoting the appropriate adaptive reuse and regeneration of public heritage places.

The issue of self supporting management is raised as well. Sustainability and self sufficiency are sensitive, but in the building context extremely relevant, subjects. A restrictive view of adaptive reuse frequently sentences historic buildings to limited roles, frequently roles for which there is no demand, and also sentences the public to financial support maintenance and management blindly into the future. The 'future generations' the *Burra Charter* suggests we represent may not be all that thankful for the liabilities we leave them.

Conservation Management Plans

At a more practical level, the Department has been addressing the use of conservation management plans in order to encourage and facilitate adaptive reuse. The *Burra Charter*'s endorsement of 'adaptation' contains important qualifications, through the definition of the associated term 'compatible use'.

Adaptation for a compatible use must:

- involve no change to culturally significant fabric;
- be substantially reversible;
- have minimal impact.[4]

I expect a conservation management plan to address these points with some clarity. Unfortunately conservation management plans seldom provide detail on, or in many cases even address, the issue of 'adaptation' or 'compatible use'. Conservation management plans, like my previous observation, have excessively focused upon establishing significance at the expense of addressing the management issues and adaptive reuse in particular.

Within NRE this disappointment is resulting in the Historic Places Section increasingly preparing its own CMPs or engaging consultants to prepare just the 'analysis' while we prepare the 'plan' (referring to the two halves outlined by Dr Kerr[5]). Where CMPs have previously been prepared outside the Department we have now begun to prepare '*A Response to the Conservation Management Plan for . . .*'. This involves leaving the original document intact but providing comment on the 'analysis' and a revised section on 'Influences on Policy Development' and 'Conservation Policy' in order to clarify to delegated managers what NRE's expectations are in their management of our property.

Response to the Conservation Management Plan
1.0 Introduction
2.0 NRE Statement of Significance
3.0 NRE Conservation Policy
  3.1 Influences on Policy Development
  3.2 Conservation Policy
  3.3 Implementation Drawings
4.0 Appendices[5]

In terms of establishing the significance of a place (essential because of the principle that what can happen to places is based upon why it is significant) conservation management plans generally have failed to provide 'light and shade' or hierarchies of levels of significance. It is too easy to say that all aspects of a places' history and its fabric are significant.

In regards to the Statement of Cultural Significance (NRE is using the term Statement of Cultural Value) we are using the terms 'significant', 'important' and 'of interest' to deliberately introduce hierarchies of value which are then further graded by the different physical contexts of national, state and local. Implicit in such a process is the assumption

that not all fabric of a place is of equal value and that the degree, location and extent of value will inherently identify the corresponding degree, location and extent of opportunities for adaptive reuse.

NRE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
The following Statement uses the terms 'significant' 'important' and 'of interest' to deliberately imply a hierarchy of value.

The Port Fairy Public Gardens is significant:
- at a State level for its contribution to, and reflection of, the development of Port Fairy as an important coastal township;
- at a local level for the provision of sporting, passive recreation, entertainment and camping facilities to the local community and visitors.

The Port Fairy Public Gardens is important:
- at a state level for the traditional natural and man-made remnants of the gardens which remain intact to provide a tangible link to the garden's history;
- at a local level for the involvement of local curators and in particular Henry Hedges and James Prior;
- at a local level for the traditional picturesque character of the remnant portions, including views to, from and within the gardens.

The Port Fairy Gardens is of interest:
- at a State level as component to the state wide network of botanic gardens and public parks;
- at a state level as a traditional (if compromised) element within the proximity of the important port facilities and defences of Port Fairy;
- at a state level for its one-time reservation as a botanic garden an and the plant exchange and horticultural connections associated with that status;
- at a local level for a general scientific value of some of the vegetation.[6]

Going back to the *Burra Charter* definition of 'compatible use', the issues of changes being 'substantially reversible' and of 'minimal impact' are more debateable. I have yet to see a conservation management plan which provides real direction for these issues. However a Statement of Cultural Value which has real 'light and shade' has a greater potential to encourage and facilitate adaptive reuse. Inherently the terms 'reversible' and 'minimal impact' are subject to interpretation by individuals and no guidelines or statutory legislation can dictate a strict interpretation or application.

A 'change in attitude' is required to make real progress in the application of this terminology. If heritage authorities and practitioners want to find problems with proposals they will find them. I would rather however that those in authority or key positions take a more progressive, cooperative and less defensive attitude in considering what is 'reversible' and what has 'minimal impact' in terms of adaptive reuse.

Getting back to the conservation management plan, I am still amazed how many of them still jump directly from Statement of Cultural Significance to Conservation Policy and neglect to embrace what Dr Kerr refers to as the 'Information needed for the development of Conservation Policy' and what NRE is calling 'Influences on the Policy Development'. The inclusion of a discussion of the crucial management issues, before the Policy is prepared, is vital to not only the philosophical basis of a conservation management plan but to its adaptation as well. NRE is approaching this section of the conservation management plans with renewed vigour and analysis.

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL VALUE
(part two - the conservation plan)

NRE CONSERVATION POLICY
Influences on Policy Development
Fabric Associated with the Statement of Cultural Value
Integrity
Condition
User Requirements
Resources
External Requirements
Opportunities
Conservation Policy
Implementation[7]

As well, in the 'Conservation Policy' and in the 'implementation' sections of conservation management plans, NRE is deliberately including and addressing 'adaptation', particularly with reference to fabric. This is not an optional extra it is mandatory. For example:

POLICY STATEMENTS

- The former Eaglehawk Court House must be conserved to protect and enhance its relative heritage values, with adaptation to encouage and facilitate sustainable use, occupancy and the maintenance of its fabric.

- The active sustainable use of the former Eaglehawk Court House is to be encouraged and facilitated wherever possible, acknowledging the necessity for adaptation with an appropriate degree of care in sensitive areas and with essential features as noted above under fabric associated with Statement Cultural Value.
- The character, layout and materials of the Court House should be respected, but its restoration/reconstruction is not required. Adaptation should be permitted, as detailed below, but must recognise and address the building's inherent distinctive public character - as opposed to residential or commercial buildings of the same age.

The interpretation of the history and value of the former Eaglehawk Court House is encouraged - although this need not be extended to its use as a 'house museum'.[8]

In terms of the 'Implementation' section of the conservation management plan where NRE is the author of a conservation management plan, we have been exploring some standard phrases to address adaptation and physical change for buildings. For example:

5.5.2 The primary room (2) must remain intact as spaces and shells. In relation to this room:

5.5.3 Ancillary rooms (1, 3, 4, 5, 6 an and 7) may be altered to a greater degree to accommodate an ongoing use and occupancy. In relation to these rooms:
they may be further subdivided or amalgamated, or new openings introduced as indicated on the attached drawing and where such proposals do not compromise the building's structural integrity;
the plaster wall and ceiling finishes, fireplaces, timber joinery, doors, windows and timber floors must be maintained;
the retention of the counter/partition in room 4 is encouraged, to the extent of permitting alteration/relocation in order to retain it within the building;
the reinstatement of appropriate fireplace surrounds into the fireplaces is encouraged but not mandatory;
the reinstatement of an authentic or traditional colour scheme is not required, although neither is it prohibited.[9]

likewise, alterations and additions are specifically addressed in terms of their physical nature and expression. For example:

3.4.11 Additions/significant alterations may be appropriate if;
they are confined to rear (north) - refer to attached plan drawing;
they do not unnecessarily distract from the appreciation of the original building as seen from the street;
the essential form and integrity of the original building is unimpaired and /or identifiable;
for minor additions/alterations, they reflect a greater level of continuity with the existing materials and details;
for more extensive additions/alterations, they are expressed in current design terms;
the height of the eaves and ridge of any addition does not exceed the lowest existing eaves/ridge and the total area of any addition does not exceed the combined area of rooms 3, 4 and 5;
it is desirable if additions and alterations utilise and reflect the existing materials and building form - without replicating the detailed building[10].

The application of these guidelines is not faultless. The terminology we have used is not put forward as the pinnacle of expression. There is still an element of interpretation involved in words or phrases such as 'unnecessarily distract', 'essential form and integrity' and 'reflect existing . . .' However, they are used in the context of accepting adaptation and change and that in itself is moving forward in the perspective of public heritage management.

One of the major concerns about allowing the adaptation of our built environment is the fear of 'bad design'. At the same time, can good design be dictated or prescribed? I am sympathetic to the views expressed by Melbourne architect Peter Elliott almost 10 years ago that 'If improving the standard of contemporary design is your aim, then I think prescriptive control mechanisms are intrinsically counter-productive.' There is no formula or Australian Design Standard for design quality, despite the misleading name of *AS 9000 Quality Assurance*. Heritage generated design controls will enthuse a new interest in the traditional. Mr Elliott went on to suggest that terms like 'complementary architecture' or reference to establishing a 'dialogue' were favourable to the more predictable phrases like 'sympathetic' or 'contextual'. There is no magic answer here and rather than debate semantics, I will suggest that continuous improvement is needed in changing attitudes and encouragement rather than developing standards carved-in-stone wordings.

Again however, there are levels and hierarchies which could be applied to align the need to control or direct the design of adaptations but they should never prohibit it. This area does require further investigation, but only in terms of establishing design principles not dictating design solutions.

Bonegilla

NRE is in the process of acquiring a new historic site, in recent times an unprecedented step. The Bonegilla Migrant camp near Albury Wodonga is being transferred from the Commonwealth to the State and Albury Wodonga Regional Parklands will be appointed delegated manager under the *Crown Lands (Reserves) Act.*

The management of what will be the Bonegilla Migrant Historic Site has taken an interesting 'twist' by virtue of the people involved at the local level. This is very much a 'community' project and the interpretation is managed through the Regional Arts Board. The result is an artistic interpretation scenario, rather than academic architectural or historical result. It recognises that the physical fabric of the site is there to provide a venue for telling stories and experiences and that that 'telling' may require new fabric to be introduced. (This was recognised in the Exemption Policy developed by NRE and Heritage Victoria).

NRE is in the process of developing guidelines to provide a continuity of approach for the development over time of the site and the following is an initial draft of the principles involved.

- Creativity and artistic expression in design generally is encouraged. While there is the potential for such expression to intrude upon the appreciation of the fabric, the assessment of that intrusion should objectively consider artistic merit and appreciate that the objective of conservation at the Bonegilla Migrant Historic Site is not to recreate any specific period or appearance.
- Corrugated iron is the dominant construction material at Bonegilla and should remain so. Its continued use is appropriate but the specific application should consider its creative use to distinguish it from other applications.
- The use of other materials should not impede the dominance of corrugated iron in their application or extent of application.[11]

This wording is not intended to be the ultimate in phraseology, but demonstrates a clear acceptance and embracing of adaptive reuse and the non-restoration physical expression that may take.

Summary

Conservation must become more a part of the everyday life of Australia, not a cult movement living on the fringe of society. Historic places need not become places visited on Sunday afternoons between 2pm and 5pm or when relatives come down from Queensland on holidays. Public historic places, like their private sector partners, may become places of everyday activity while subtly facilitating a greater appreciation of their history and character.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment have developed these initiatives to encourage and facilitate a greater level of adaptive reuse in public buildings and to create an environment where historic places are integrated, not isolated into the fabric of our society. I have noticed in UK publications particularly there is a growing use of the term 'regeneration', I like it. It expresses a positive emotion. It implies an ongoing and constructive contribution. It looks forward not backward.

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The Heritage Advocate: Championing Community and Heritage Values

Genia McCaffery

Genia McCaffery is Mayor of North Sydney, elected in 1995 she was reelected in 1999 for a further 4 year term with a first preference vote of 66%. As Mayor, Ms McCaffery is committed to managing development within North Sydney, to responsible financial management of Council, to protecting the environment and to maintaining strong community involvement in local government. She grew up on the Lower North Shore of Sydney and has a Bachelor of Economics degree with honours in government. She has been involved with many issues amongst which was helping in the coordination of the media campaign to prevent the redevelopment of Luna Park in 1992.

Surrounded by all these eminent experts, I think I'm probably on safer ground if I explore the conservation of our built environment in terms of the links between heritage and community values and the role politicians can play in establishing policies that promote conservation not demolition.

Of course your own life experiences shape your values. Maybe it was growing up with a mother who was passionate about antiques and restoring old houses and then being a teenager in the sixties when so much of Sydney's past just disappeared, then a university student in the seventies when saving our built heritage became battles between the community and developers in Victoria Street, Woolloomooloo, Paddington, Glebe and The Rocks which shaped mine.

Those battles in the seventies established a strength in communities; a belief that they had the power to influence the direction and pace of change in their own community. They also taught community groups that by forming partnerships with local politicians and other organisations like trade unions, they could be much more effective in achieving their goals. The growth in the eighties and nineties of resident action groups is both part of that process and a reaction to the fresh waves of demolition and redevelopment in the economic booms of those decades. So I'd like to explore why the conservation of our built heritage has become so important to many communities. Why conservation of areas does not mean no change but requires any development to respect that community's identity while allowing that identity to grow and change.

I'd also like to discuss some of the new controls North Sydney has developed to protect our community's heritage and encourage new development to retain and not demolish existing building stock in conservation areas. We have developed a clear set of policies to assist applicants in adapting housing to meet current standards.

As a local leader I have a great opportunity to harness the strong desire of my community to retain North Sydney's unique cultural character. There's a growing awareness that our historic precincts refer not just to the buildings but reflect the culture and the lifestyle of North Sydney since white settlement. If we destroy these precincts we will lose much more than just the buildings. We lose the physical evidence of our own history. Individual buildings can recall family events. The subdivision patterns can mark major periods of economic and social change. Building materials and design can reflect significant technological change. The precincts of housing types can reflect the broader patterns of

social movements. Then of course part of this community revolt can be just a reaction to the pace of change but that reaction in itself I think is a healthy one.

The 'Save Our Suburbs' movement in Melbourne was a reaction to the urban consolidation policies of the Kennett Government which saw the large scale destruction of the existing urban character of many suburban areas. Much of this housing was constructed between the end of World War I and the beginning of World War II. These interwar bungalows represented one of the great periods of suburban development in Australia and yet their value has only recently been appreciated in the community. Conservatism and resistance to change probably saved many of these houses that we are now just starting to treasure.

I often remind people that those great Paddington terraces were often disdained in the sixties and regarded as substandard housing. I recall that those buildings were only 80 years old then, the same age in fact as the interwar bungalows in 2000. Urban consolidation policies here too have also posed a threat to heritage buildings and conservation areas. Planning controls which aim to achieve higher residential densities often directly conflict with the heritage values.

This is particularly true in conservation areas where heritage values are often intrinsically linked to the scale and form of their buildings, their subdivision and building line patterns. This has not been as great a problem in densely populated conservation areas like Kirribilli and McMahons Point because their subdivision patterns and current density of development already achieved the higher densities sought by urban consolidation policies. The problem lies in conservation areas where heritage values are linked to low density development patterns.

The challenge for the Council and our community has been to develop a new comprehensive Local Environment Plan (LEP) which ensures the zoning in our conservation areas are compatible with our heritage controls while also responding to State government requirements to maintain residential densities. In our current LEP most of our residential areas are zoned for higher densities. This has placed the Council in an extremely difficult position when defending appeals against demolition of contributory buildings in conservation areas.

Generally when our conservation areas have zoning controls which conflict with the heritage controls, the Court has supported redevelopment even when it completely contravenes all our heritage provisions. It merely requires the developer to employ a heritage planner who will support demolition and the building has gone and the conservation area loses another piece of the jigsaw until there's nothing left. Over the past five years the Council, with extensive community involvement and support, has developed a new LEP incorporating new heritage controls and a supporting Development Control Plan (DCP) based on a Heritage and Cultural Resources Study. The new plan is now with the Minister awaiting gazettal.

In a series of public meetings the Council first identified the key objectives residents wished to achieve with the new controls, and then we discussed the proposed controls which could achieve those objectives. In particular we discussed the need to respond to the State Governments' requirements for residential densities which meant we had to increase densities in some areas to offset the affects of downzoning in conservation areas. Community support for these changes were largely linked to their overwhelming desire to protect conservation areas and shift new development to where it would have the least impact on those areas.

I have been privileged to lead a Council and community which has a long history of understanding the importance of heritage in its community's life. Early battles by citizens in the 1890s saved Cremorne Reserve and in the 1930s saved Balls Head Reserve for public open space. Just recently residents fought to save State owned ex-industrial land at Waverton earmarked for housing by the Fahey Government. Like his predecessor Jack Lang in the 30s Premier Bob Carr supported our local community and has ensured that these three foreshore ex-industrial sites will be conserved for public use. Oh and speaking of adaptive reuse the coal-loader site presents a great challenge and opportunity!

We were the first Council in NSW to prepare a heritage study which provided a list of 900 heritage items, largely buildings. This study was reviewed in 1991 and the heritage inventory was extended to 1800 items. It now included not just buildings but items of cultural heritage such as parks, bushland, monuments and the whole precinct of Luna Park. For the first time 22 conservation areas were idenified. The study was completed in 1993.

As I said earlier an important part of our planning controls is a new Heritage and Cultural Resources DCP which provides a framework for the strategic planning of all of North Sydney's cultural assets and resources. It will also provide a mechanism for the management and conservation of our cultural life. It is largely different to our previous heritage controls because it explores and expands on the themes I spoke of earlier. Heritage is not just about buildings but how all those physical elements fit together, forming the cultural life of a community.

The cultural policy framework for this document explores eight key themes. They are:

- a well respected topography
- views great and small

- on the waterfront
- an enviable urbanism
- landmarks
- layers of history
- a vibrant economy

These eight themes are then identified in each Conservation Area and help guide the broader policies for each Area particularly in the public realm such as views and vistas, and sandstone kerbing and retaining walls.

The DCP also involved a major review of our controls in conservation areas. Four categories of places have been identified:

- heritage items
- contributory items which are not significant in their own right but make a contribution to the character of the conservation area
- places of minor heritage value or neutral impact on the conservation area
- places that are intrusive and detract from the heritage value of the conservation area.

General Conservation Policy for Conservation Areas is outlined and then a detailed Conservation Area Character Statement and Specific Conservation Policies for each Conservation Area is given. The Cremorne Point Conservation Area is an example of this. Our new controls see the buildings in a conservation area as just part of a much broader urban context. They do not try to prevent change but to guide it by identifying the many elements that combine to make an area unique.

Many speakers at this conference will talk about how we can save a heritage item by finding a new use that will ensure its survival into the future. But this will not happen unless all levels of government are committed to developing planning policies which will ensure that it happens!

Sydney's history sadly has been largely one of loss/demolition and it's really only been its citizens that have championed its heritage. I hope this will change and government will now with its community protect our heritage, putting in place policies that manage change not promote it despite its costs. The challenge from my own Council is to ensure that we do this; that our policies manage change in North Sydney without losing the rich mix of physical and social elements that identify our culture.

The risks are that the topography and the layers of history which make North Sydney special are lost as higher densities produce more people, traffic and businesses. We need to meet the various pressures for increased density in ways which do not obliterate our cultural identity. It's really a challenge that is not only at the core of heritage conservation but of community concern at the decline of the quality of their urban environment. It is a challenge that we must meet.

The Wharf at Woolloomooloo: A Developer's Perspective on Adaptive Reuse

Malcolm Rose

Malcolm Rose is a developer with 30 years experience in the industry. He has a Bachelor of Economics and worked with Walker Corportaion for 12 years before it was taken over by the Development Bank of Singapore in 2000. He now works for McRoss Developments.

The aim of adaptive reuse is the installation of a new and viable activity in a building that was used for other purposes. The new use usually is a significant change from the original use requiring considerable imagination in order to visualise the opportunity presented by the old building and its new use. These buildings usually, or often, have beneficial locations; construction with character made more attractive by the passing of time. Some have even reached icon status within the community. Such a building was, or is, the Finger Wharf at Woolloomooloo, an example of a major building with unique characteristics.

Figure 1: Woollomooloo Finger Wharf in 2000

Walkers got involved with Woolloomooloo wharf after it had floundered with a number of other development corporations. At that time it was evident that they had not taken advantage of the great opportunity presented. The Woolloomooloo Wharf is a wool shed made up of 4 major buildings which was built at the turn of the century. At 400m long it is one of the largest timber structures in the southern hemisphere. We needed to understand what we had, a waterfront development, wharf, pier or something else? We had to come up with a vision for this building. Our experience as a developer gave us a fairly good understanding of what the market was and what we were used to developing and selling.

The wharf itself offered a fantastic opportunity but there were many issues to contend with. One was the integration of new materials with a wonderful old timber building. The two quite often don't go together and particularly with, what had been, an industrial building. The apparent regularity of the timber structure was deceptive. The building was severely deteriorated, certain parts were full of white ant and the substructure was certainly defective. Out of 3,250 odd piles we had to pull out well over 1,000 because they had deteriorated. Which I suppose is a wonderful thing because they were put in originally at the turn of the 20th century. What we were trying to come up with were uses which would work in this location. The building had a terrific number of benefits; good location, it had character, interesting construction and the appearance of icon status.

We wanted to capitalise on all of these. In terms of its location historically the wharf is at the bottom of that big hill which comes down from up near Taylor Square. I believe the wharf was built there because the wool drays could come down the hill with a certain amount of ease. Woolloomooloo Bay had all the history and association with early Sydney. What we tried to do was come up with what the problems were or had been with its development. When Multiplex and Walkers, who were the joint venture partners, took over the wharf at Woolloomooloo there was a number of development opportunities. The ones we were looking at we didn't think were quite appropriate and I know that there is probably a lot of difference of opinion in whether we've come up with a reasonable balance. There will obviously be points of criticism made of the building but what we as developers were trying to do was to get a commercial marketable product which we could deliver. That is the object of what we were trying to find; the solutions that were offered by the privilege of developing this building and to come up with something that would express the entrepreneurial 'point of difference' that would allow us to go out to the marketplace, finance it and develop it correctly. The success of the wharf is that we did pick this 'point of difference' from the point of view of the commercial aspects. Looking at where the wharf is the features of it are water on both sides which is fairly rare for any building and as we used to say to sell it to the marketplace 'the building is surrounded by water, even underneath'.

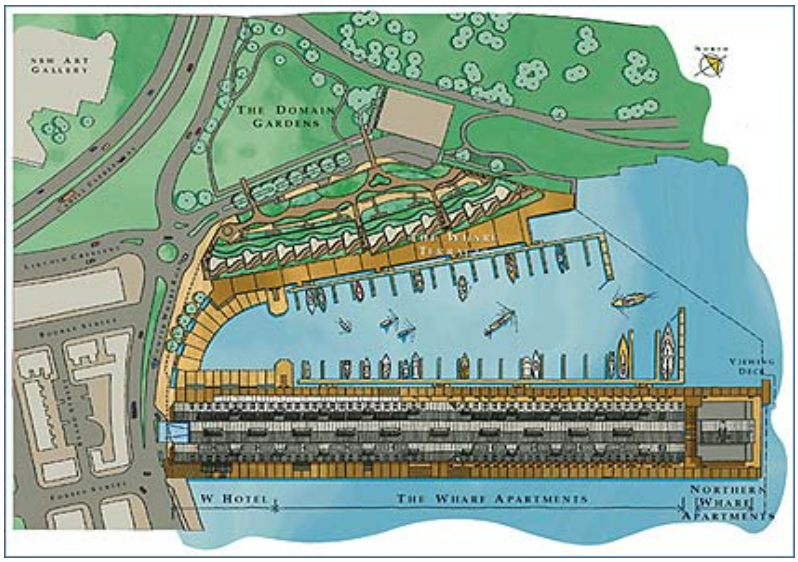


Figure 2: Development Plan

Cowper Wharf Roadway was pretty run down when we got there. There were some examples of interesting buildings, some of them had been restored but generally the place was run down and getting very seedy. There was a lot of vandalism and lots of problems associated with drug use. We went down there, took on the 'vision' if you like and tried to create an efficient design. We looked at a number of uses and tried to figure out a mix. One of the important things we tried to do was not to just make a residential enclave. A lot of these buildings can become isolated from the community. There was quite a lot of discussion with Clover Moore and with Sydney City Council about the amount of

public realm and whether we had an entitlement to take away from the public access to certain parts of the buildings. We tried to find a balance which would work from the development aspects and from the public realm.

We finished with 345 residential apartments which varied from quite large to quite small. Some of them were studios so there is a whole range. The essence was to come up with not just one stereotypical product. Because of the vast number of apartments we had to offer something different to each part of the market and we wanted to get a broad base to ensure that we could sell it. We put in a hotel because part of the original application that we took over did have a hotel in it and I think we saw that, even though hotels don't make money, as part of the vision that we thought was good because it would make the building less residential. The retail presented a huge problem but it was obviously something which has been very successful because it has invited the public to come down there to use the building. It has a range of uses from quite humble, you can buy a cup of coffee up to an Otto's meal which I should imagine is one of the more expensive meals in town but it certainly is a very pleasant place to go to in the afternoon and to sit and enjoy a meal.

Figure 3: Marinas on the east side of the Wharf

The marina in short 'filled up' the bay as it were. It brought colour and brought a point of difference to it. The car parking was necessary and an important element in order to sell the residential and to make it work. One of the more controversial elements is the northern building which was a brand new concrete structure. There is still a lot of controversy about whether that building is good, bad or indifferent but there was considerable work done in trying to get it to balance with the very important structure of the wharf itself. There were about 6 schemes done, maybe a few more. A lot of people said they would prefer not to have it at all but it needed to go in for a variety of reasons which I'll talk about. Also included in the development was the top side of the bay which is a series of apartments, 36 in number on 2 levels, and a necessary part of the financial equation.

That is to some extent how the wharf came out in plan form. The obvious advantage for the site is, as I've said, the Sydney Harbour location. You've got the Sydney skyline which works extremely well down there from sitting on the edge of the wharf. The Domain contributes to the ambience. It is a short walk to the city of Sydney and it's not that far from Kings Cross. We've tried to create public access to this area by tackling a number of areas such as the Board Walk. The low part is the marina but next to that is the walkway which goes right along the edge of the building from Cowper Wharf Roadway to the end which allows public access.

Figure 4: View from the Domain

Notwithstanding all the advantages of its location, the heritage values and potential of the building, the developer needed to come up with a return which would work. We normally work on about a 20% return on the cost of a project. In this particular case the project had around about $350m worth of sales value therefore we were trying to make about $70m profit. The big problem we had was that we weren't making much profit out of the original scheme. In fact it was a very risky venture for us so we needed to recreate the image. We in fact paid an additional amount to government which was well in excess of $35m to take over the privilege of developing this site and we will also give to the government notionally the whole of the development at the end of the lease period. We have a 99 year lease which in itself was rather difficult to finance because it was a bit unusual.

The development then went through a period of negotiation with the authorities to develop the 'point of difference' we were looking for. What we needed to do, as I talked about with the northern building, was create a series of apartments at the northern end. Those 12 apartments generated around about $36m worth of revenue and as I've said became a fundamental part of the financial equation. Without that and the buildings on the city side of the bay we would

Figure 5: North addition of 12 apartments

not have generated sufficient revenue to cover the costs of doing the wharf up. The substructure for instance was a cost well over $30m because the whole structure had to be rebuilt, i.e., the actual structure that the building was sitting on where it integrated with the piles. In most cases we had to cut out the storey posts and then put new piles in to the sea bed. The sea bed was 20m of water then a further 20m of clay and sand before we hit bedrock. It was a gigantic problem to hold the building up while we were constructing the substructure. You can't just lift the building off and take it away you have to work around the structure. It was taken back to the bare structure and all of the facade was removed. A lot of the old tally rooms, offices and ablution blocks etc., had to come out.

We worked with a team of very talented consultants. One of the issues was to get the vision, which I've talked about, the mix of residential, hotel, retail etc., but then also we had to come up with the construction and engineering expertise to take on a project as big as this. It represents, in terms of hard construction costs, well over $200m which in its own right is a very large financing exercise and you can imagine how cost over runs would have completely crucified this project. We had to make sure before we started that we knew we could deliver.

The process that you go through is the standard one of working with costing and architectural people and working up the feasibility. Once we got to the stage where we'd worked out the best mix we actually knew pretty well how the revenue was going to fit in. With the residential it is quite easy to predetermine the thing once you figure out the type of product you're building.

When we started this project we were a bit nervous as we were the first wharf. Subsequent to that Mirvac has had great success with not actually an adaptive reuse because they completely destroyed the building but this was the first wharf marketed in Sydney and we didn't know what the price was. We didn't know if we could get $6,000, $7,000 or $8,000 a metre so we were trying to look into the crystal ball and come up with something that was reasonably safe so once we figured out what we wanted to put into it, once we figured out the metrage, we had to test it in the marketplace. We marketed 'off the plan'. The big issue then was adapting the vision, getting the approvals sorted out and negotiating with the authorities. We had a lot of discussions with the National Trust because they were concerned about whether we were being 'heritage sensitive'. We also had a lot of discussion with the Council. I think Council was very good because the Council officers we dealt with were quite practical about it. I think there was an attitude that this building had to be saved, had to be redeveloped and I think once they got comfortable with the fact that we had a good solution which mightn't have been perfect they were prepared to work with us.

There were many hurdles but once the efficiency of the saleable space was achieved then the viability seemed certain. A revised DA had to be negotiated with Sydney City Council and this required a tempered mixture of Developer 'point of difference' and 'heritage sensitivity'. There was a will within the Council to proceed therefore the main obsta-

cles were reduced to issues of detail. While these obstacles seemed almost insurmountable at times, the resolution was eventually found. In a process like this adaptive reuse there are no guidelines and one must rely on the good will of all the players to move forward.

There were certain things such as the lifts in the main beautiful central part of the building which really had to go into the space which you would call private space. We had problems with the use of aluminium windows and the

Figure 6: New lifts in the central space

treatment of the exterior. There was the question of the cargo doors which were part of the fundamental image of the outside of the building and the solutions that we came up with I think probably don't go as far as some people would like to have seen but we had to have something that was practical from the point of view of people living in and using the building and also I should say at a cost that we could afford.

We developed a range of values of things that needed to be preserved with the heritage consultant we employed. These were items of high ranking (1 & 2) down to items of lesser importance (3 & 4) which we should try to keep and if not we should record and make sure there was use of parts of it if it could be done, such as gates and some structural elements that were put into various parts of the building.

The vision throughout was that we were dealing with converted sheds and that's what they were. They were huge cargo warehouses so to develop the usage inside with bedrooms, carparking spaces and views we had to make some fundamental changes to the building such as the balconies and the way we handled the outside of the building. The building itself was probably terribly inefficient from the point of view of what we were dealing with because there is so much volumetric space we didn't, or couldn't, use but the building itself was a fantastic challenge. I think we found something that worked notwithstanding that there were certain troubles with the freesale conditions which lead us to having problems with some of the selling 'off plan'.

I make a note here about the problems with the 'beam'. On the 5th level there was a structural beam which was holding the roof up and because we used loft apartments these beams do interfere with the ambience of the apartments. This became a marketing problem. We had to sell to people and explain we were dealing with a converted shed, we were dealing with water and we were dealing with a structure that is over water. It wasn't sitting on a piece of

Figure 7: The Beam on the 5th level

concrete like most buildings. The sale was terribly successful initially. In the first couple of weeks we sold virtually half the building but when we tried to get the purchasers to convert their contracts they wouldn't do it. They had come in on the basis that they'd take a look at it, they put a lot of money down and then they walked away from their contracts because they were not interested in buying over water. So then we got down to the hard work and we started to sell. Over a period of about six months we achieved the level of pre-sales that was necessary to allow us to start work. There was a huge effort put into marketing because until we got that level of pre-sales none of the work could start.

The building obviously has some fantastic features (the transept is one) and it can still be seen very clearly in its original intention which was as one of the entrances to the midway point. The building can't look like it was. Some of the windows are similar to the originals and some of the balconies are starting to intrude into other spaces. Attempts have been made to achieve the cargo doors with the use of screens etc. on the outside part.

Figure 8: The transept

The other features that were kept and worked with were the old platforms that were used to load the ships etc. There were originally four of these, there may have been more, but when we got there there were only two left and those were found on the eastern side of the building. You currently drive underneath those to head down to the carparks. Also there were loading docks and other things there which we have retained. It is one of the features that people don't pay much attention to, it's there, people drive underneath it. It did cause a lot of controversy and a lot of agony when we had to confront it and use it in the redevelopment but it was also one of the things on the important list of retention so we did make the sacrifice to work with it.

We wanted to make sure that the space was activated. We worked hard with the restaurants and entertainment. They invite the public to come down there and allow a good public interface. People can walk up and down. People are sitting in restaurants. People are using the space.

As I mentioned before the authorities were pretty realistic with what we had to do here. We weren't given our 'head' but we worked through the problems and I think that congratulations are due to the team that we had and the

Figure 9: Before

Figure 10: After

authorities we were dealing with. It may be better in some cases that a lot considerations are outsourced. I think there are a lot of experts out there in the community who are able to prepare the proper reports and give advice and the more we can work with outside consultants the more we can end up getting the visions that will work. This building will live on, I don't know how long but at least 100 years as it has to be kept in this condition for the duration of our lease.

Other challenges included the wool elevators which were a feature we kept. A lot of the building was lead contaminated, paints etc., were a problem but we overcame most of that. Smoke and fire protection was a major problem because the building was so big it didn't comply with the regulations. I remember going down there at nights and seeing the building when we let off smoke bombs to see if it would vent properly. A lot of work went into that aspect of the proposals. We tried to keep the huge space that existed in the central concourse although some interventions were inevitable. The cross overs were there and added to in a couple of cases. Some internal galleries were additions. There is one in the top level to provide access into the residential apartments which is an intrusion. The lower part was meant to be a reproduction of the internal part of the walk. We tried to keep its industrial character and industrial colour schemes. We didn't try to jazz it up, certainly in the public areas although there may be a difference of opinion on the outside part.

The label at the end of the day we ended up with is the W Hotel. It's an interesting hotel. It fits with the space quite well. The ownership of the hotel doesn't give us a lot of return. I've done about 3 hotels but I don't think we've made any money out of them but it formed part of the mix. It is alive and has a different use.

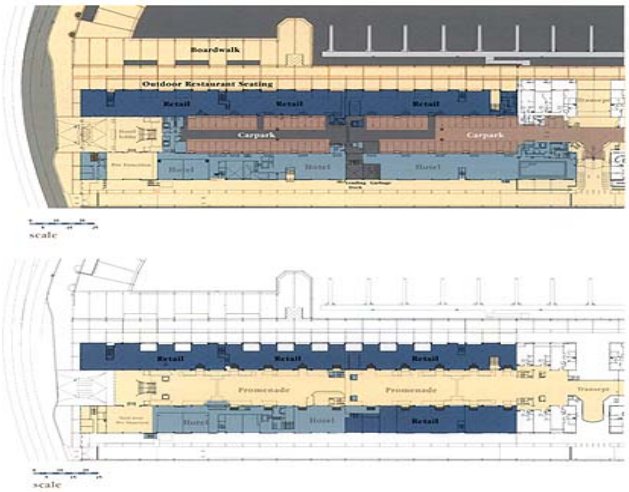


Figure 11: Plans showing mixed uses

Figure 12: W Hotel interior

The front part of the building probably is how it used to look except for the *porte cochere* which came about on the basis that we needed some protection for people arriving and we tried to make it as light and unobtrusive as possible.

We are very proud of the Wharf at Woolloomooloo. Other buildings we have been associated with are Grace Bros at Broadway Student Accommodation, Piano Factory, Port Office Melbourne, Power Station Richmond Vic, Country Road Head Office. We have embraced a lot of these refurbishments and adaptations of buildings and are pleased with the result.

It is interesting that the Premier has indicated that buildings should have a life and not just be there for sterile heritage reasons:

> 'Heritage is about keeping what we value. The best way to show our appreciation for the places and things we want to keep is to continue to use them. Adopting a heritage item for a new use helps to ensure its survival and continues its life into the future. Recycled buildings help us to retain the vibrancy, character and diversity of the built environment, both urban and rural. There is also an economic value for recycled heritage places through the benefits of heritage tourism.. . . . There are clear benefits in the successful integration of heritage and development. The challenge is to find creative ways to manage change so that what we value about a place is retained.' [Premier Bob Carr]

The wharf at Woolloomooloo was considered to be a building which could have become an Art Gallery or one of many other uses but there were no public uses that could afford to develop it. It needed to have this adaptation. We've recycled the building. We've created something alive today which hopefully in my child's time will be looked upon as a good development and a good example of the recycling of important buildings.

Pressures on the Designer

Andrew Andersons AO

Andrew Andersons has been a director of Peddle Thorp and Walker since 1989 and was formerly Assistant Government Architect, Special Projects Section. He is part-time Professor of Architecture at UNSW since 1989 and Visiting Professor since 1981. Past and present projects include the Bicentennial wing of the NSW Art Gallery, additions and refurbishment of the State Library of NSW, the renovation of Capitol Theatre, East Circular Quay and Walsh Bay.

Adaptive reuse of buildings has been a matter of common sense for centuries in traditional urban centres around the world. Australia, like many other 'new-world' cultures, has followed the pattern of redevelopment of valuable sites, wherever development controls have enabled financial gain through this process. However in the last 20 years increased public focus on heritage issues has led to the statutory protection of buildings and sites deemed to have cultural significance. Consequently there is enormous interest in the often difficult conflicts and issues associated with the adaptive reuse of such sites.

Sydney is a port city with a rich legacy of maritime facilities; the residuals of technological and economic change. Sydney is also a city obsessed with the beauty of its harbour and the enormous value of real estate with harbour views. On the one hand its opinion leaders lament the loss of character resulting from the accelerating decline of the working port and the associated privatisation and gentrification, on the other endless 'lifestyle' material bloats the media celebrating the rich and famous in their harbourside settings. It is in this difficult environment of emotive debate that strongly polarised views often obscure issues which are capable of intelligent management and solution.

Many of the precepts set out in this paper arise from my involvement in varied capacity with the redesign of waterfront precincts in locations such as Woolloomooloo, Circular Quay, Walsh Bay, Darling Harbour and Pyrmont. Up to the 1960s the whole of this waterfront was lined with timber finger wharves or parallel timber shore sheds. With the coming of containerisation of cargo and cheap jet aeroplane travel for passengers, in a very short period of time, this enormous body of structures became obsolete. From the 1960s the Maritime Services Board commenced a massive programme of reconstructing the harbour edge to meet contemporary requirements. The greatest change was along the west side of the city, along Darling Harbour where massive land filled container wharves were built, totally altering the relationship of the city to the harbour. Elsewhere many other fine timber structures were demolished for new naval facilities at Woolloomooloo, for improving the approach to the Sydney Opera House at Circular Quay, for building a short-lived heliport at Pyrmont Point and for building the Darling Harbour development.

By the 1980s the Maritime Services Board saw the timber structures at Walsh Bay and the finger wharf at Woolloomooloo as 'surplus-to-requirements' and began the sequence of tenders to find new uses and to transfer the financial responsibility for maintenance to the private sector. However, in either case a lengthy series of failed initia-

tives, prior to both the current developments, highlight the difficulties and perceptions of high risk associated with finding economically sustainable solutions for maritime structures with their associated high recurrent costs. It is interesting to note that the Ministry of the Arts faces an annual maintenance bill of a million dollars for Wharf 4/5 Walsh Bay, for which the original conversion cost was less than $4M in the early 1980s. Clearly the Ministry of Arts would prefer that its precious share of state revenues goes to funding the arts and not to pile maintenance. Hence the desire by government to find commercial outcomes is understandable.

The challenge is to find economic new uses for these structures which do not detract from their cultural significance. The problem was further aggravated by the lack of maintenance while the MSB had no use for these structures and disposal took far longer than anticipated. Infestation by termites and marine borers is often far more critical than superficial inspection will reveal.

Most of these buildings were built for tying up ships and short term cargo storage. Frequently they retain remnants of old loading equipment. They are essentially windowless but usually up to 50% of the façade length is made up of large timber cargo hatches or doors. There are generally 6 metre floor to floor heights and often the structure achieves its strength through 'strong-back' reinforcement of timber beams or similar devices. The aesthetic appeal lies in the robust nature of the detailing of these buildings, the solidity of their façades and the large scale and extent of their interiors. Unfortunately it is difficult to find new uses that preserve these qualities and generate enough revenue to maintain these structures. A further complication is the increasing desire, by the community at large, to have public access to the water's edge in a secure and pleasant environment, rich in its diversity of activities.

There are further complications with such matters as the difficulty of obtaining finance for purchasers of impermanent timber structures over water or concern by developers regarding customer expectations and satisfaction if large amounts of high maintenance original fabric is retained.

Unfortunately perceptions of market factors are often diametrically opposed to commonly held planning and conservation objectives. The following tabulation illustrates this dilemma.

CONSERVATION AND/OR PLANNING OBJECTIVE	MARKET PERCEPTION OF GREATER VALUE
Public access to water's edge	Restricted access to create private water frontage
Vibrant, public waterfront activities	Residential value enhanced by serene and private environment
Large-scale shipping activity maintains sense of 'working port'	Private moorings for recreational boats
Solid facades maintained evocative of industrial use	Maximum glazing to facades to optimise views
Large volumes maintained to preserve feeling of original interiors	Maximum subdivision to optimise financial return
Maximum retention of original fabric	New cladding to minimise maintenance costs
Retention of timber piled substructure to preserve character	Replacement of timber piled substructure to minimise maintenance cost
Maintenance of uninterrupted extent of wharf decks	Subdivision of wharf decks for private outdoor space
Distinctive architectural detailing effecting continuity of industrial aesthetic	Conventional architectural detailing to minimise construction cost
Retention of industrial archaeology preferably in original location	Minimise retention of industrial archaeology, or move to locations where less loss of sales potential
Natural ventilation and sun-shading	Air conditioning high performance glass

These are but a few of the conflicts between the objectives of good planning and conservation and perceptions of maximising commercial value which minimise risk factors in relatively unprecedented developments.

Most architects by natural inclination side toward good conservation practice and the objective of planning for public benefits rather than minimisation of the developer's risk or the maximisation of their profit margin. Naturally they would prefer both peer group acclaim as well as client satisfaction. Unfortunately often the designer faces a difficult dilemma of finding balance in the conflicting factors between approval by consent authorities and client confidence. Too zealous a pursuit of conservation can lead to the architect's dismissal after, say, development application approval has been achieved. In other situations, such as the Walsh Bay Project, the highly reputable client consortium has maintained high standards and continuity in what has been, at times, a difficult and damaging situation from the point of view of public relations.

One of the problems with development tenders involving adaptive reuse of heritage buildings is the absence of normative measures for the intensity of allowable development. With new buildings, the 'floor space ratio' together with other development controls give a reasonable indication of the value of a site. Usually a statement of cultural significance, or a conservation plan gives insufficient certainty about the ultimate economic outcome. One way of managing this problem has been demonstrated by the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority in its Jones Bay Wharf development where clear norms have been established in the sales documents as to the extent of mezzanine levels as a percentage of floor area or the extent of retention of unaltered façades is specified.

Another contentious issue faced by designers is to find the optimum balance between the expression of what is new, reflecting new uses for a site, and the maintenance of past character and a sense of history. This often becomes

an emotionally charged, highly subjective debate. Most designers are keen to make a creative input which embodies current modes of architectural expression. In such a way there can be a clear reading of the evolution of a particular site. Most conservation and planning approval agencies pay lip services to the principles contained in the *Burra Charter*[1], but take extremely conservative views when time comes to exercise their authority, the less apparent change, the better.

A good example of this is the fate of the public promenade at Walsh Bay, proposed by French architect Philippe Robert. Robert, who heads a celebrated practice in Europe, specialising in the adaptive reuse of major defunct industrial structures, was called in to advise on Walsh Bay when previous development proposals had reached an impasse. Robert proposed the creation of a clearly legible public amenity in the form of a promenade. This would be a clear exposition of the latest stage in the evolution of Walsh Bay, from the restrictions of access, associated with working wharves and bond stores, to the inviting welcoming statement heralding a mixed use cultural, residential and commercial precinct. It is interesting to note that while the Heritage Council, used to the frequent consideration of difficult philosophical issues, supported Robert's concept, the Director of Urban Affairs and Planning took a more conservative view and opted for a compromise, truncating the length of the promenade and retaining two of the wharves with their original shore-shed to finger configuration.

Good conservation principles are in my view entirely compatible with creativity and visual expression of evolutionary factors. Unfortunately sensationalist media attention often does little to broaden debate but serves to polarise already entrenched opinions. More open attitudes and clear articulation of objectives on all sides of the conservation and development debate can remove the constraints faced by designers and lead to a more culturally resonant and distinctive urban environment. This should be our society's collective aim.

References

1 Australia ICOMOS, *The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter)*, Canberra, 1979, revised 1999 www.icomos.org/australia

The Rocks Experience

Mary Knaggs

Mary Knaggs is an architect currently working with the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority (SHFA) as its Senior Heritage Officer.

The Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority (SHFA) is a NSW State Government body formed in 1998 to facilitate the sustainable development of State owned or controlled land in Sydney's Inner Harbour. I use the word 'sustainable' here in its holistic sense. The three functions of the SHFA involve managing and promoting heritage and nature conservation; managing and implementing viable economic use or development; and creating and maintaining excellent places for people (residents, workers and tourists) in the inner city.

The SHFA was formed from the amalgamation of the former City West Development Corporation (created in the 1980s and responsible for the redevelopment of Pyrmont & Ultimo) and the Sydney Cove Authority (formed in 1968 [as Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority] to redevelop The Rocks, but was later equally focused on the adaptive reuse of The Rocks).

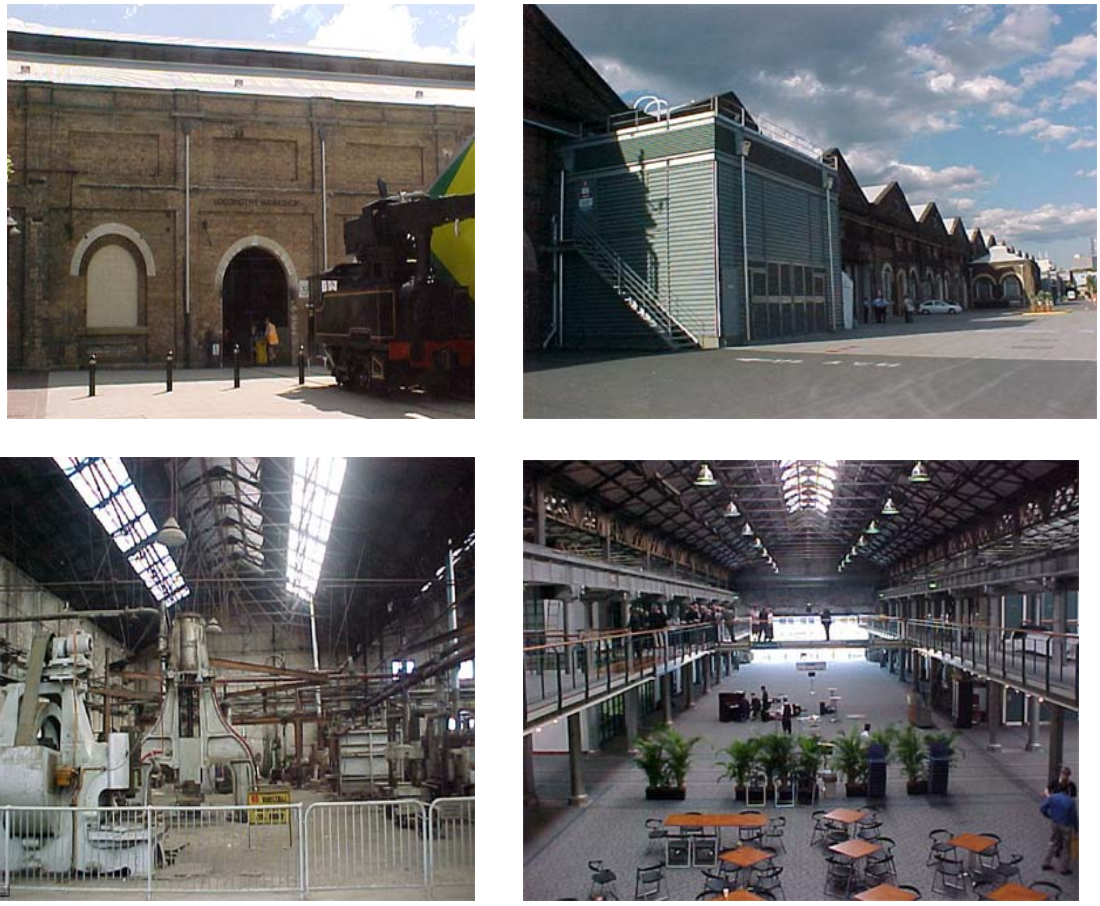
Despite the Act showing a large area of inner harbour foreshore under the influence of the SHFA, it is really the Rocks (which it largely owns and leases on medium to long leases) and the undeveloped sites of Pyrmont/Ultimo which are its main focus. Large areas of public domain (parks, roads and promenades) around The Rocks, Circular Quay and Pyrmont also form the focus of many SHFA's activities at present.

During 2001 the Darling Harbour Authority will also be integrated into the SHFA. In the future public accessibility to Garden Island and the cultural uses at Walsh Bay may play a larger part in the Authority's work. Like any large organisation the SHFA is made up of many multi-disciplinary teams. Conservation and adaptive reuse sit mostly within the Built Environment team, but some larger projects are managed by the Development team. Obviously conservation and adaptive reuse also have implications for Property Management and Maintenance, Visitor Services and Visitor Marketing. The Corporate Affairs team are also there to ensure the Authority meets its statutory obligations with regard to reporting on 'heritage and the environment' and 'heritage and economics'. They are also responsible for delivering good news stories via the media.

The Authority seeks to establish excellent work practices based on creativity, finding innovative new solutions in all our work and continuity, continuing the reputations for high achievement established by the former organisations it now encompasses (the high conservation focus of the Sydney Cove Authority combined with the economic realism and promotion of good contemporary urban design practices from City West). In theory this is a good recipe for

the adaptive reuse of culturally significant places.

The Authority in its many previous lives has dealt with some interesting and unique adaptive reuse projects including: The Eveleigh Railway New Engine Shop and Locomotive Workshops which became the focus of the Australian Technology Park. Conservation Consultants included DPWS (Department of Public Works and Services) Heritage Group, Otto Cserhalmi, EJE Architects. Architects and Landscape Architects included Crawford Partners, Keys Young and DPWS. Another project was the conversion of 3 Victorian Cottages in Pyrmont into 'The Object Studios' comprising Jewellery workshops, gallery and retail space forming part of a lively restaurant/cultural precinct in Pyrmont. The architects were Clive Lucas Stapleton.



Figures 1-4: Before and After: Eveleigh Locomotive works to Australia Technology Park (ATP)

In the immediate future the SHFA has some very challenging projects including Jones Bay Wharf which has received development approval for a variety of uses including serviced apartments, commercial and maritime services, but is now being reconsidered as a commercial only development, which will have less impact on significant fabric and presentation. Another is White Bay Power Station, forming part of a larger master-planning exercise for all of White Bay and Rozelle Bay and still in the very early stages. Some unusual projects which perhaps are more about adaptive reuse and sustainability than 'heritage' include the Government Printing Office in Harris Street, Ultimo.

However today I am going to concentrate on 'The Rocks Experience'. What is the Rocks experience today? As relayed in the SHFA's Rocks '*Experience*' magazine it involves:

- Holidays/recreation
- Shopping
- Cafés and restaurants
- Tourist accommodation
- Art galleries
- Street entertainment
- Harbourside walks and views
- Historical Interpretation

Figure 5: The Rocks' lanes

Like many old townscapes near inner city centres, The Rocks today is the adaptive reuse of a neighbourhood. The

Rocks was once a typical mixed use neighbourhood with people living, working and recreating within the same few blocks, although being close to the harbour it had its influx of workers from both Sydney (to work in shipyards, docks and warehouses) and the merchant seamen from overseas.

The Rocks experience of adaptive reuse involves finding new uses for a range of building stock mostly from the mid 1800s to the early 1900s. Buildings range from large rambling warehouses, through small stable buildings, workers houses, elegant terraces, residential hotels, sailor's homes and chapels to banks and shops with residences above. I am not going to give a history of The Rocks now. You can see that on one of the SHFA's videos. Nor am I going to talk about its finest pieces of conservation; its historical museums, including Cadman's Cottage and Susannah Place.

However before going into some of the nitty gritty of the Rocks Experience of adaptive reuse today, I thought I would run past some of the history of adaptive reuse to be found in The Rocks. We have everything from *façadism* as seen in the DFS Building to Partial Façadism as shown in the Johnson's buildings. Relocation of large building elements can be seen at Federation Hall, now part of the Sydney Futures Exchange. The courtyard was repositioned in the new development.

Removal then reconstruction in the same position can be seen in the interior of the Sydney Visitor Centre. The central gallery which housed sailor's accommodation in the former Sailor's Home built in 1860, extended 1925, was removed for the Marionette Theatre in 1903. During its adaptation as the Rocks Heritage and Information Centre the gallery was reconstructed.

Amalgamation of buildings can be seen at Unwin's Store. Radical Intervention can be seen inside The RockPool restaurant where most internal walls have been removed. Sensitive intervention is evident at The Coach House. The careful conservation of original finishes gives a unique character to the adaptive reuse of this former corner pub as a fine dining restaurant and wine providore. The incorporation of interpretation can be seen at the Sydney Cove Providore and at Foundation Park as part of the most recent adaptation of the Argyle Centre. Clearly modern but sympathetic additions are evident at the former ES&A Bank now a restaurant (often as here following the removal of earlier additions).

The Rocks experience of adaptive reuse today is certainly one of continuity and creativity. We continue to look for new ways of adapting places that have already seen many adaptations. We acknowledge the need for a continuing viable use for places. We need large amounts of creativity to do this well given the myriad of small pressures on significant sites today. Solutions are easier for large warehouse and commercial building conversions although those done with creativity and sensitivity really stand out.

It is the small sites that are the problem, together with the uncoordinated incremental changes of contemporary commercial life. Challenges include the deliveries, garbage removal and storage (the days of open pits and garbage under the floor as found by archaeologists are over). Possible solutions include control on service vehicle access times and off site garbage and other storage.

The so called 'garbage monument' in the Rocks Square allows access under the pedestrian area to a garbage and recycling room. Toilets are another challenge. Many buildings in The Rocks have toilets in separate buildings. At Unwin's Stores, now shops and offices over five terrace buildings and over three floors, the employers and employees share an external toilet block with visitors to The Rocks.

Disabled access and toilets with wheelchair access is another issue. The step at a typical Victorian shop entrance is part of the urban pattern. Internally there is no room for lifts or stair lifts nor complying disabled toilets. What is the solution? The SHFA is working on its disability action plan. It certainly requires some dedicated lateral thinking, but I believe we can find some solutions. There will be compromises on both sides. Perhaps negative effects in terms of the visual impact on heritage places and townscapes (although hopefully reversible when they finish inventing the climbing/off road wheelchair) but wins in terms of making places more accessible to the greater population (although perhaps only the ground floor).

Modern services and in particular air conditioning needs careful consideration as do commercial kitchens shopfront displays and commercial big-noting / signage and lighting. Many restaurants want awnings, umbrellas, outdoor seating, floodlighting, fairy lighting and banners. Again the SHFA is looking for consistent creative solutions. The SHFA has a special duty in The Rocks to not just conserve the significance of one or two buildings but a whole historic townscape. This includes not just the exteriors of buildings but their part in the larger experience of the public domain , and their interiors. The intention is to keep a record and experience for present and future generations.

To this end the SHFA has commissioned The Rocks Heritage Management Plan to examine:

- Why we value The Rocks
- How has historic fabric been managed in the past?

- What skills and management practices do we need to put in place to manage it well in the future?
- What conservation issues are there for all the SHFA's many roles (development, capital works, building and public domain maintenance, commercial and retail tenancy management, visitor services, visitor marketing) and how can they be resolved with creativity.
- What type of planning and development controls and guidelines and processes would work best to achieve good outcomes.

But The Rocks is not a museum. It may not have the same historical sense of community it had before 1968 but it is valued by many communities as a living place with a unique character, both by the people who do live or work in or adjacent to it, but also by visitors from Sydney's suburbs and from Australia generally and overseas. Research and workshops are held as part of the Rocks Heritage Management Plan and the SHFA has regular involvement with residents and community groups,

To stay a living place we must look for continuity of use. Whether that means adaptive reuse or perhaps (in the case of residences) reversion to original uses, matching uses appropriately with buildings is a big challenge. Perhaps less restaurants and more commercial tenants are needed who are sensitive to the need to treat historic buildings sensitively (e.g. tenants who are happy to look at alternative cooling methods rather than insisting on air conditioning).

Of course we have to understand the history of the places we are managing. We need to understand what fabric is important and why, the past changes to the building and its relationship and role in the townscape BUT we need CREATIVITY for problem solving and CONTINUITY of viable uses to ensure the future of our heritage assets.

Lastly I would like to share with you a recent adaptive reuse project in The Rocks. The Coach House is an interesting case where the building's history of adaptive reuse can be broken into two phases: Adaptive reuse prior to 1968 by a series of owners: Stables to Sheep dip manufacturer. Followed by adaptive reuse by State government as part of The Rocks as a visitor attraction come gallery space and most recently adaptation as a Toy Museum and artist's studio.

Interim Sydney Harbour Federation Trust and Woolwich Dock

Rod Simpson

Rod Simpson is an architect and urban designer and Associate Director with Alan Jack and Cottier, Architects. With Rick Leplastrier he has spent two years looking at the overall planning of Sydney Harbour as a consultant to the Interim Sydney Harbour Federation Trust.

The Interim Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (ISHFT) is looking at the planning for six Commonwealth owned sites around the harbour; North Head, Middle Head and Georges Heights, Macquarie Lighthouse, Cockatoo and Snapper Islands and Woolwich Dock. There are two distinct precincts. One is the Heads characterised by bushland and the other, further up the river where industry tended to congregate.

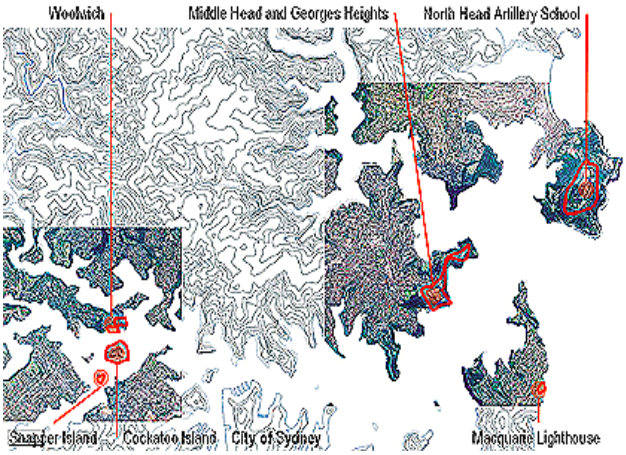


Figure 1: The Interim Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Lands

The Heads are concerned with the control of entry to the harbour and are actively involved with defence. All of the sites were used for defence purposes of various types from the gun batteries and fortifications at North and Middle Heads to the logistic and industrial supportive activity at Cockatoo and Woolwich. All activities have now ceased and as redundant sites they were to be disposed of by the Property Disposal Unit of the Department of Defence. Due largely to community outcry this process was terminated and the ISHFT brought into existence.

The role of community objections should be acknowledged in the prevention of the demolition of the Woolloomooloo wharf for instance. The community has recognised that these sites are of the utmost importance to Sydney Harbour as a whole in a number of ways. What the community is picking up on is the impression that we have of Sydney Harbour as a fantastic juxtaposition of bushland with residential and industrial areas. There is nowhere else in the world, that we have been able to find, where you get that juxtaposition.

That juxtaposition relies very heavily on large areas of bush such as the Heads and the peninsulars which jut into the harbour. There is a shift around the fulcrum of the Harbour Bridge with defence activity out towards the Heads and what is it protecting? It is protecting the industrial, commercial and residential areas as well as all the armament stores taken up the river to Homebush Bay. So you have this defending harbour: the harbour as fortification and at the other end the thing that is actually being defended. The first occupation and settlement was in Sydney Cove because it was in a sufficient distance to be protected.

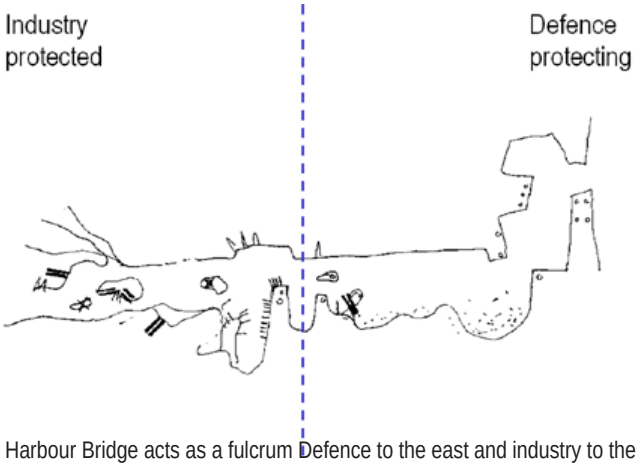


Figure 2: Harbour Bridge acts as a fulcrum Defence to the east and industry to the west

That is one aspect. Secondly and particularly for Cockatoo Island, its former workers and the locals of Woolwich recognise the importance and increasing rarity of waterfront maritime infrastructure. Even without a formal assessment of natural and cultural significance there was a recognition by the community of an intrinsic value and potential that these places had in relation to the whole harbour and the whole city. Cockatoo Island contains enormous, fantastic structures which really are 'cathedrals of industry' as well as switch houses, cranage and so on.

From the outset of the ISHFT there has been a fundamental difference between our process and that of most developments, be they private or public. That includes difference to the process employed by the Defence Department. It is recognising that it is actually the overall context outside these site's boundaries that make them most valuable. It is essentially a contextual significance aside from any individual significance that they might contain.

As we start to think about how these sites might be reused and reintegrated into the life of the city local community expectations start to influence what might happen but the formal process (natural and built conservation legislation) also starts to come to bear. These sites have extensive natural areas and we have probably over 400 built structures as well as extensive modifications to the landscapes. For this reason both the methodologies of natural and cultural heritage need to be applied. In fact the primary objective of the enabling Act for the ISHFT is to preserve the natural and cultural values. The first step in that is to develop plans of management.

What I am going to talk about therefore is how our emerging process incorporates and is consistent with the formalised processes of conservation but is also different. It is different because of this overall harbour context. It is different because we are concerned about use and life and reinvigoration.

Ivar Nelson suggested we replace 'significance' with 'value' and I think that we'd agree with that because the values are not simply natural or built. I think our process differs from a normal development because we have a reasonable time horizon of 10 years of control which may allow the ISHFT to wait and see what is possible rather than being forced to decide whether to adapt or demolish even humble buildings.

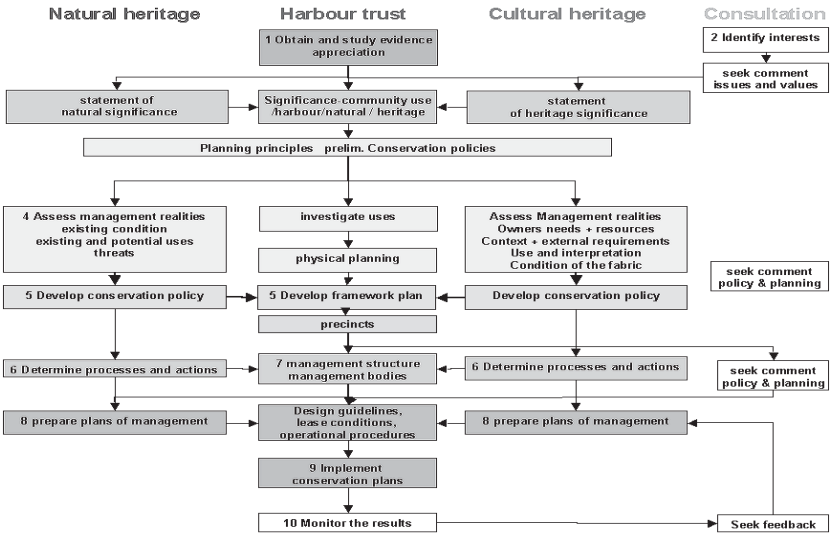
At both Walsh Bay and Woolloomooloo there was a 20 year period where there wasn't a concerted effort to discover and tease out what might be a viable use. Yes, it went to the market and yes, it went to tender but I think it is fair to say that there wasn't any particular agency, the owner, who pursued this single mindedly to work out a way forward. They were handed back to the private sector in a fairly clumsy way.

Our process, thankfully, is slightly removed from the pressures of redevelopment and the need to make immediate decisions. We are not confronted with a conservation plan fighting a rear guard action having to justify conclusions and recommendations in a way that will ultimately stand up in court or which is sufficiently well defined to 'cut a deal'. It

is also different because in adopting a holistic harbour context functional considerations, for example how well places are set up for industry or simply allowing a boat to come alongside, become important considerations that are not particularly well covered by cultural or natural significance. They may in fact be in conflict.

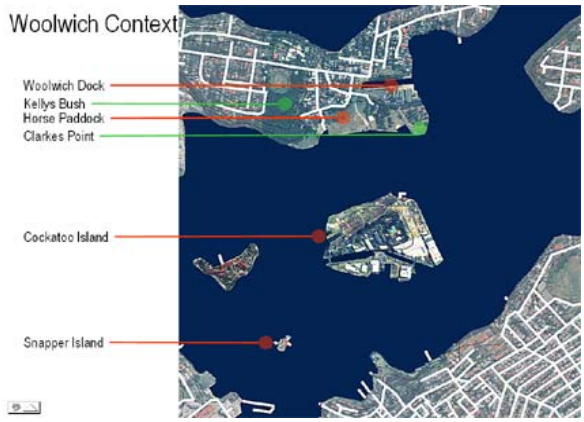
In trying to integrate another set of criteria how do we bring this into something that is consistent with the methodologies we are familiar with? Our highest priority is to make the sites as accessible as possible, as soon as possible. This is fundamental, not only for their reintegration but so that people understand them. There is another thing Ivar touched on, it is possible to think that things gain value and significance through their use in this interim period which is another thing that was shocking, in a way, about Walsh Bay and Woolloomooloo wharf. These places were taken out of the public domain for extended periods to the point where people have forgotten what they are like and certainly apart from people who cut through the fences, me included, no one gets to see them and appreciate them.

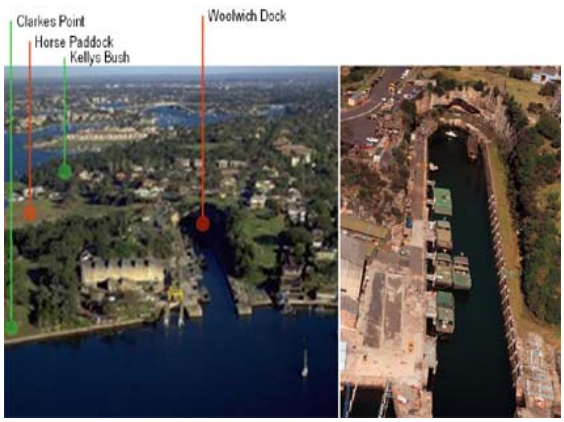
To touch on the equivalence between the processes the common ground seems to be in significance, policy, planning, implementation and monitoring. Although monitoring doesn't come into cultural plans so much but overall there is a consistency in the stages. Adaptive reuse probably comes into the 'planning' sections.



This table goes some way to explain where we see ourselves and the processes we employ in the overall context of conservation planning.

Let's look at Woolwich Dock. It is hidden away, cut into the landscape, near Clarke's Point. It is part of the waterfront reserve under the auspices of Hunters Hill Council. It sits within the area of Balmain, Greenwich and McMahons Point. It is also by Kelly's Bush, the site of the Jack Mundey triumph. The site we are concerned with is not only the Dock but also what is known as the Horse Paddock. Cockatoo and Snapper Islands are also in the vicinity. When you are on the water you wouldn't know that there is a slot cut in and the resulting debris or rock was used to create Clarke's Point. It is a hidden thing.





Figures 3 - 5: The Context of Woolwich Dock

What I'd like to do is look at this in the broader context because the significance of the site is beyond its inherent value or its particular connections immediately outside the site. It is a major landscape intervention in a series of major landscape interventions that exist up and down the harbour. The Woolwich Dock has a relationship to the docks at Cockatoo. It is actually a functional relationship that occurred in the past but it is also a relationship because of the sheer size of the modification of the landscape and it has a relationship to the coal loader that Genia McCafferey discussed. It sits at a point in the harbour where these industrial interventions were major modifiers of the landscape. It also has an extension of bushland, which I touched upon at the beginning. The neighbouring peninsulas are Balls Head, which was denuded completely, Greenwich Point, Berry's Island and Cockatoo Island, with a little bit of vegetation but nevertheless sufficient to give the impression of bushland interspersed with industry.

Figure 6: The juxtaposition of industry with bushland and the harbour at Greenwich.

Historically the large land owning has remained as a single lot. The original land grant was to the Clarke family in 1835. This remained as a ten acre lot and was sold to Atlas Engineering in 1883. They brought out a floating dock from England and extensive reclamation took place. Clarke's Point reserve was begun. Morts Dock took over in 1898 and they started to get into the serious business of excavating the dock. There were three stages of extension and the dock was opened in 1901. The first ship to enter was *Neotsfield.* In 1907 office facilities were consolidated. Business was active in the 1920s and started to wind down during the depression. The Wallace Motorbike Company was there for a while then in 1963 the Army occupied the dock. This was its last period of occupation as a dry dock. It is no longer possible to operate as a dry dock because it has piles put in to allow landing barges to come in to protect the dockside. There has been quite a lot of analysis of these elements and they have been ranked in order of significance. The archaeological sites have been identified, for example the remnant dolphins that once breached the sea wall. The question we have is 'is it sufficient to give us the key to what the site's future might be?'

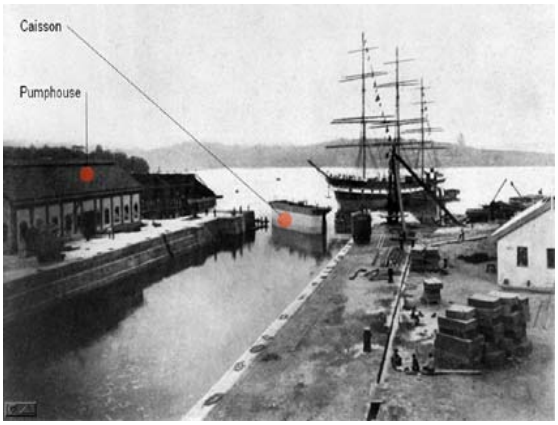


Figure 7: 1901 opening 'Neotsfield enters the dock

Figure 8: 1907-10 consolidationand expansion

It occurs to us that the real significance is the relationship of the dock to other docks. There are only five like it in Sydney, a very small one in Mort Bay, Southern Cross, Sutherland and Fitzroy Docks. The ISHFT has three of those but it is unclear what the demand for dry docks is. There is one in Singapore for which there doesn't appear to be a huge demand. Woolwich also has infrastructure that was put in quite recently, in the 1990s, which allows slings under boats to lift them out of the water. The three main ones of this kind are found at River Quay's Mortlake, Noakes Berry's Bay and Morts Dock at Woolwich. The one at Woolwich Bay is at a very high standard and meets all current environmental standards and so forth. It also slams straight into the historically significant fabric of the dock. At first appearance some would say that it was compromising the significance of the dock and should be removed. It does destroy a lot of the sea

wall and there is tension between the two. The reinvigoration of the harbour as the primary objective means that in the first instance we will wait and see.

The large bunded area, beside the 1940s saw toothed building, was used by the Water Police during the Olympics. The pontoons are temporary and do not compromise the dock at all. They can be removed at some time in the future and there is no immediate need to make a decision. The functional desire to have the future potential for this to be a dry dock and the desire for it to have an economic use as a drydock is something that we are finding quite useful as a touchstone in the planning. We think we can come to terms with the other issues of significance and so forth as well as issues of public access but in a way that doesn't destroy the significance of this infrastructure and in the context of the harbour as a whole.

The elements which form Woolwich Dock are: the sea wall, which might be able to be adapted so that boats could come alongside it again; the bunded area which meets current environmental protection standards; the dry dock itself with the possibility of linking into the sunken area which comes from a previous excavation; and the assortment of buildings which are still perfectly serviceable. They should stay until it is proven beyond doubt that they have no viable use.

Figure 9: 1898 Excavation

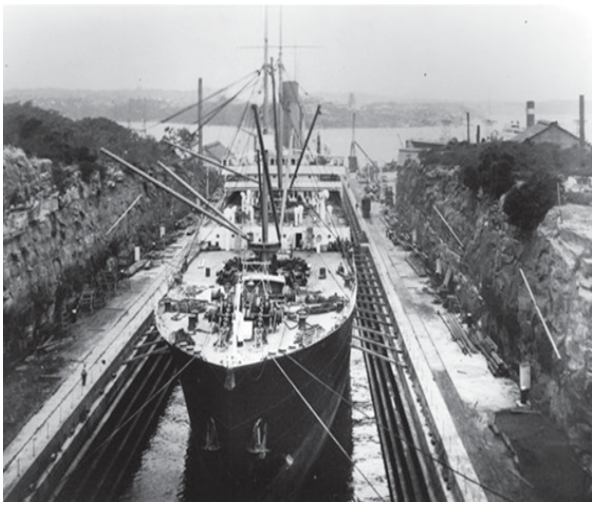


Figure 10: Post war and Army occupation after 1963

The site raises an interesting question about the public/ private functions, in this case industry and access. We see a whole series of walking trails and we see access as not just a good thing to do in the immediate term but also in the interpretive strategy that we think a lot of the sites are capable of, i.e., people walking the sites in particular ways. The very tight walk around the dock for instance is fantastic. You come into a complete overhanging cliff and then you come out, when you reach the end, to the reflection of Greenwich Point across the water. From there a series of ever increasing and integrated walks could be connected with Kelly's Bush. Current State Government planning assumes that industry and access are mutually exclusive and we'd like to question whether that is true. It is conceivable that you can design a series of paths carefully. The conflict is not there all the time. Maybe there is conflict when the travelling crane is in fact travelling. It may be in conflict when someone is doing a wash down with a gurney gun or something on a boat but most of the time you can walk by safely. The possibility of having this active industrial facility with the restoration of bushland, with interpretation of all modifications of the landscape is possible, not either/ or. That layering which we can take into the future is the potential that is evident on all these sites.

The vision is a reworking dock, public access taken as a given managed in particular ways with the dock reused as a dry dock, perhaps for the Maritime Museum activities. We see it as a true integration with the community but also taking into account the importance of this site in relation to the entire harbour, the working harbour catering to natural, cultural and financial needs. It might be 25 years away but our guiding principle is to use this site as a dry dock.

Richard [Leplastrier] and I first became interested and concerned about these sites in 1995. We had a meeting with the Planning Minister in 1996 and produced position papers pointing out many places on the harbour that were coming up for redevelopment. All of the sites have been masterplanned and very advanced commitments have been made. White Bay will obviously be maritime industry but it will probably be maritime industry in a way that is not capable of the dual use of public access. What we are questioning is whether you then put all the minor activity from the harbour in that one place or do we make a concerted effort to have them distributed, partly on the waterfront assets of the ISHFT. Gore Bay is also coming up in the next ten years or so, Berry's Bay is still seeking a reuse. North Sydney are happy to have a waterfront precinct which is fantastic.

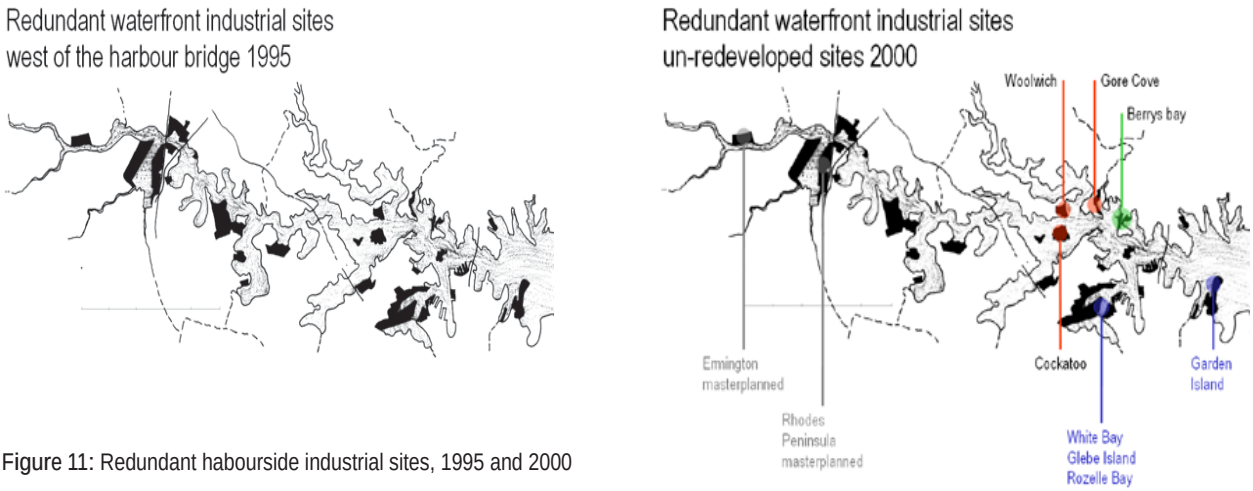


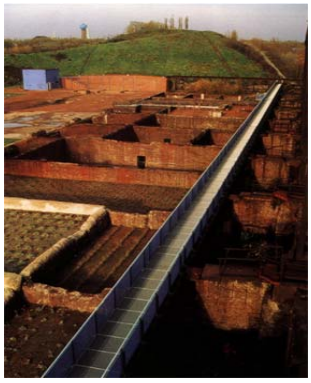
Figure 11: Redundant habourside industrial sites, 1995 and 2000

Other sites however have been treated differently, the Abbotsford site has been developed as residential, as has the Balmain Power Station. Balmain Power Station was the only conceivable land base for Cockatoo Island. It is on a main road, it has direct water frontage and it is not obstructed by low lying bridges. It would have been ideal. Five years ago we found it disappointing that there was no appreciation of the overall context and the infrastructure, which had its own ecology, was disappearing. It would not be possible now to get that land base with any sense of industry.

Figure 12: residential development on the former Balmain Power Station the only conceivable land base for Cockatoo

The last point I want to make is that we are not adaptively reusing we are simply 'reusing'. Reusing in a new way if possible. We do question the need to always bring everything back into use. I'd suggest that there's a way to allow things to just go on for a while. Maybe a few hundred years. Think of the Forum. It was completely overgrown in the 17th century and inspiring Piranesi. These can be places of mystery. Emscher Park in Germany is highly contaminated and dealt with by removing the risk of direct contact; a management strategy to overcome a physical problem and for that matter a legal problem. The Emscher Charter for industrial monuments posits 'places for exercising the imagination'. Some of the places on Cockatoo are equally as potent. Do we redevelop? Do they become simply places that have a resonance which will never be recaptured by reuse and tarting up and obscuring? The ISHFT has an extraordinary privilege to even consider that the thing may just be.



Figures13-16 : Emscher Park, Germany

In my personal view there is clearly a role for Government on very significant sites. It is not for the private sector but maybe Government at the behest of a local community but there is no-one else to do it. Seeing the harbour as a complete portfolio of assets allows you to make decisions about where the best place for particular activities should be. Is it best to have dry docks on Cockatoo operating, Garden Island or at Woolwich? Each one might have slightly different uses, some might be wet docks with top side refitting, some might be community use, some might be commercial. That privilege is also one that belongs to government with devolution of control as described by Mary Knaggs' presentation. People who know the places really well over a long time, be they community groups or people who have leased the site for a period of time are people who start to understand how things work and what needs to happen and so on.

Perhaps some of these things can just be let go gracefully for a while.

The Heritage Consultant: Clarifying the Issues

Ian Stapleton

Ian Stapleton is a Sydney Architect. He is a Director of Clive Lucas, Stapleton & Partners. The firm has received numerous awards for its conservation work and Ian has recently been the Heritage Architect for the conservation and adaptive reuse of the Sydney GPO and the Woolloomooloo Finger Wharf. His publications include *Colour Schemes for Old Australian Houses* (with Ian Evans and Clive Lucas, 1984), *More Colour Schemes for Old Australian Houses* (with Ian Evans and Clive Lucas, 1992) and *How to Restore the Old Aussie House*, 1991. He is a past President of ICOMOS Australia and is the Convenor of this conference.

I've written a paper on the heritage consultant or the heritage adviser, which I propose not to read. It is available for those in the audience who don't know what they do. Most of the audience do know what they do, so I'll just skip to the juicy bits.

Although most professions have their altruistic side, heritage advisers see themselves as protectors of cultural values, which is the basis of our identity and civilisation. This is only one step less in importance than green conservationists fighting to protect life on earth as we know it. It is generally unsatisfactory to heritage advisers that planners should seek to balance competing pressures like pieces on a chessboard, when conservationists argue their interests are not pawns to be pushed about. They're not even bishops or queens. They are the board itself. There is some justification for this, as once heritage is lost it is lost. Fabric can be reconstructed, but significance itself cannot be reconstructed. It takes time for new significances to emerge, and they may not.

Accordingly, trading employment or amenity for heritage will not usually impress a heritage adviser nor will the possibility that an architect, or a client, is proposing some new creative work that will change or replace the recognised heritage place. Whether or not the new work will be of any cultural value is initially unclear. What will impress a heritage adviser is a proposal that is neutral, or that helps interpret a place. I say interpret because it is doubtful whether a new work can actually enhance or increase significance. What will also impress the heritage adviser is the opportunity to salvage places about to be lost, and this includes loss through redundancy. This is generally where adaptive reuse lies in the scheme of things. Adaptive reuse should not find favour with the heritage adviser where the place is already secure and has a future. Even with salvage, change would normally only be acceptable if it is as much as necessary, but as little as possible, in order to secure the future and security of the place. Mothballing or letting things just wait is also an alternative.

In determining this, the assessment of significance is the key and this is really my main point this morning. While we are all interested in creative new endeavour the heritage adviser's first responsibility is to minimise loss of cultural significance, whilst at the same time providing security and a future for a place. For a situation where some loss may be inevitable it is the principal significance, if there is one, that is the target for preservation. Simplistically, if a statue is the only bronze Edwardian Rainer Hoff statue in town, yet there are other Edwardian Rainer Hoff statues in

town, it is the bronze material that is the principle significance and it, above all, should survive.

Dr Miles Lewis, who was a forerunner in the conservation planning process, had good criteria for his statements of significance. He wanted them pithy, and I think when it comes to adaptive reuse we want conservation plans to be pithy. From such statements, clear objectives can be drawn.

Whilst loss of fabric and uses by proposed changes can be assessed reasonably objectively, the impact of new fabric and the impact of its height, bulk, form, scale, proportions, material and colours, etc., is a more difficult matter. Advisers are often accused of subjectivity and for not having design qualifications from which to make an educated assessment of proposals. Nevertheless, new designs may still to some extent be assessed objectively on criteria such as blocking significant vistas, differentiation of new and old, altering the scale of existing places, causing environmental problems, causing maintenance problems, causing functional problems, and so on.

Many years ago, I identified what I called the 'Every Dog Must Have his Day' syndrome about architectural practice. This is when an architect of no particular reputation demands the opportunity to change or add to a monument on the basis that they will be creating a work of art equal or better than that which exists. In reality, about one in ten of these projects is satisfactory and only about one in fifty can be called brilliant.

Without disputing the principle of putting new beside old, the heritage adviser should be insisting on a designer of some track record or competitions judged by designers of some track record. In this way, the chances of failure might be reduced a little.

Now I just have a few pet topics to talk about. Firstly, the place of a new intervention. I think from my experience there is a place for a new intervention on heritage places, something that will give the public and the world at large the sense that a rebirth has taken place, and I suppose this is summed up by this Tate Gallery postage stamp.

At the Wharf, there was a new portico put up and I think a new portico was a good idea. I'm not saying that portico, but it was a symbol of renewal that let everyone know something had happened. If you could think of examples such as Pier One which languished in a way because its presence was really not understood. It might not be the cause but there was no new symbol for Pier One. Also, I think the principle of differentiating new from old is now well accepted, although it wasn't ten years ago, and twenty years ago there was a decided fashion to create pastiche.

Figure: new porte cochere at the Woollomooloo Wharf

The next concept, which I mentioned in my first address yesterday, is exacting suitable public benefits from situations where adaptive reuse was occurring and public assets were becoming privatised. The main Grand Stair at the G.P.O. was largely reconstructed, in the ICOMOS definition, in order to give the building a new sort of centre or heart and it was done at considerable expense, and was really done as the result of a promise by the developer that they would do it in return for getting hold of this asset.

Another of my pet hates is the conversion of buildings in a way that uses planning intrinsically unsympathetic to the old building. The Global Arts Link project at Ipswich is quite commendable. The Town Hall has been converted into a community museum (the middle building in a nice group in the main street of Ipswich) and at the side a new entrance has been formed so that the public can get into the adapted building comfortably. All this is fine. The building is a good example of how you can wrap new fabric round old and still read the old fabric for what it was which is basically an 1860s sort of Protestant church hall form but the front door becomes the fire escape. I think on a much smaller scale it's an example of what happened with the famous Louvre Museum additions in Paris where a wonderful piece of architec-

ture was produced; a glass pyramid, beautiful interior underground entrances, absolutely fabulous, but the outcome is that it elevated all the old entrances to the building to a silent death.

I'm very critical of a development down in Sussex Street in this city where new hotels were inserted but the outcome was that all the old façades of the old buildings are sort of dead and boarded up, and in some places you can even see where the rooms are used as storerooms. You can see the cardboard boxes piled against the windows. There was nothing wrong with the redevelopment except the planning really didn't appreciate the old circulation patterns sufficiently well.

My last point is about tenancy mixes. From my experience, the success of the large jobs that I've been involved with are largely due to those parts of the client or the developer that are deciding on the tenancy mixes or the uses of the buildings. I don't think I realised before how extremely important this was, nor the concept of breaking parts of buildings up into smaller areas and having different tenants who bring along their different designers. It's partly a question of spreading the risk of having a crummy bit, but it's also a question of scale. A big problem with this city I think is the amalgamation of sites and how the historic scale of the city is being lost, or the Edwardian scale is being lost, and this can also happen within a building. If there are different tenants with their own designers working within a building then there is a mix and a scale and a variety which somehow sits more sympathetically with the heritage place.
With that, I'll conclude.

The Architecture of Cebu

Melva Rodriguez-Java

Melva C. Rodriguez-Java is a practising architect in Cebu City, Philippines. She is former Dean and current member of the Faculty of the College of Architecture of the University of San Carlos in Cebu City. Professor Java is a commissioner of the Cebu Cultural and Historical Commission of Cebu City government.

I'd like to thank the National Trust and architect Peter Freeman for making my participation here possible. It is a great privilege to be a participant in this conference composed of eminent conservation professionals, developers, policy makers and legislators. I am none of the above. I haven't come with any answers. In fact I bring with me a lot of questions. I come from a developing country, the Philippines, as described by my friend the UNESCO Commissioner Augusto Villalón yesterday. We Filipinos are Malayans who sometimes think we are Latinos and probably act like Hollywood dudes. If that sounds a bit confusing then you have an idea already of its manifestation in our architecture. This afternoon's presentation is a 'situationer' about where Philippine architecture is today and it will dwell specifically on Visayan building practices.

The Visayas being the group of islands in the central Philippines. I want to be very specific about the Visayan region because we have a range of architectural forms from the northern tip of the Philippine archipelago down to the southern tip. We are comprised of 7,000 islands and we have many shelter forms and many languages and dialects. I am only conversant with the Visayan Islands as that is where I am from, Cebu specifically. It is hoped that after this conference, which is incredibly rich in collected expertise, we can bring home to our country insights and lessons which will serve as starting points and inspiration with which we can develop our own approaches applicable to our situation. To speak of Filipino architecture is to speak of continuity of forms starting from those born as a basic response to the environment through those evolving from different foreign influences. We have been under the influence of the Indians, the Malaya, the Chinese, the Spaniards, the Americans and the Japanese so we have actually a series or family of styles in our built environment.

Early Philippine houses belong to a family of structures found throughout south-east Asia. They were very natural, meaning that they were built out of vegetable matter and materials that came from the earth with scant modification by man. They were natural also in the sense that they fostered harmony between their human inhabitants and the material world. These houses were raised on stilts and thatched with bamboo, palms and grass. They were simple and open to the vast expanse of their surrounds. The space inside flowed into the outside, into nature and into the lives of other people in the community. The fundamental quality of the spaces inside the houses was that they served many purposes. They were multi-functional.

We share many similarities with our S. E. Asian neighbours like Indonesia such as floating volumes, wings at tips of gables, three-tiered roofs and the like. Looking at Philippine village patterns the *Ifugao* villages in the north are built near the rice fields. The rice terraces go back several centuries. The clustering of the houses is dependent on the availability of drinking water as well as the proximity to the rice paddies. This is the *parti* behind the clustering of the houses. They look free form because they are. They are born out of the natural configuration and depend on the availability of natural resources. In the Visayas, the Visayan villages take shape from the topography and beliefs in the supernatural.

Figures 1 & 2: North Ifugao Houses are raised from the ground, squarish in plan and roofed with thatched grass

The Cebuans build their villages in clusters and this is dictated by economics as much as by kinship ties and the topography of the site. Supernatural beliefs also influence the orientation of the houses within the village, for example, no-one may build on a mountain ridge because this is the pathway for the spirits or no-one should face the imaginary great dragon that slumbers in the N. E. skies. To do so would be to court its ire and thus to suffer set backs and misfortune.

Figure 3: Visayan villages take their shape from the topography and beliefs in the supernatural

Figure 4: Visayan House (Balay/Poyag)

A dwelling of northern Luzon is typified by the use of hand sawn timber fitted together without nails. The house proper is lifted from the ground. Posts are made of hardwood and supported by stones and the roof is made of thatched grass. In the Visayan version lumber is not sawn so the curves of the tree trunks remain. The house proper is also lifted from the ground, the posts are made of hardwood, in the local dialect, *tugas,* are dug into the ground and the roof is made of thatched grass. These dwellings are known as *Poyag* and *Balay*, one room dwellings made of wood and bamboo. The main room is called *guinlawasan*. The hearth is made of packed earth. A shelf juts out of latticed bamboo strips which holds the clay jar that keeps the drinking water fresh and cool. It also serves as a dish rack while its low slatted wall is perfect for drying and storing the drinking cups.

Figures 5 & 6: Cordillera dwelling of Northern Luzon

The windows are closed at night and the shades are made of screens of matted bamboo strips with no metal hardware. Slide one pole over another and you have a safe place for the night or take a piece of wood and make it jut out and you have an awning to protect you from the rain. The doors are made of sheets of flattened bamboo. They are put in place and are received by a pivot which is fabricated out of a cup like a section of bamboo poles. The wooden posts support the roof framing and are detached from the walls. This is very interesting because the roof is supported by these posts whereas the walls jut outside. They are independent of the posts. This technology has proven to be very successful in countering the movement of the ground by earthquakes. Later on with the Spanish influence we started building with stone and it was dangerous for stone houses during earthquakes because tremors caused stones to collapse whereas with this system, even when the walls were made of stone, they would stay intact. The roof and post structure would sway together and resist the stresses of the earthquake. Split bamboo halves are sometimes used for walling. *Gogon* grasses are dried in the sun and bundled and used for roofing materials. If well maintained they can serve well for many years.

Details of a Visayan House

Figure 7: A Visayan House is basically a one room dwelling made of wood or bamboo

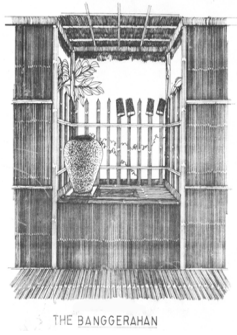


Figure 8: Shelf where dishes and drinking glasses are air-dried

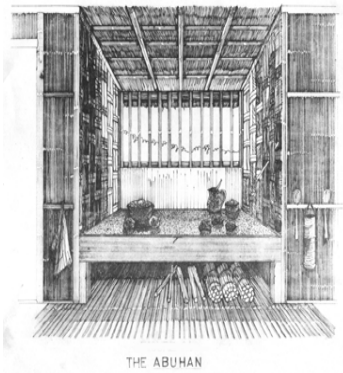


Figure 9: Hearth made of packed earth

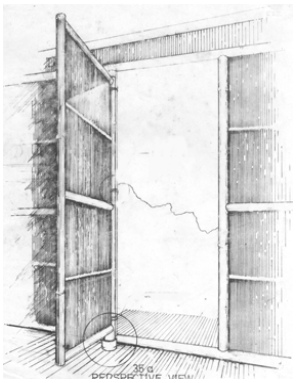


Figure 10: Doors made of sheets of flattened bamboo

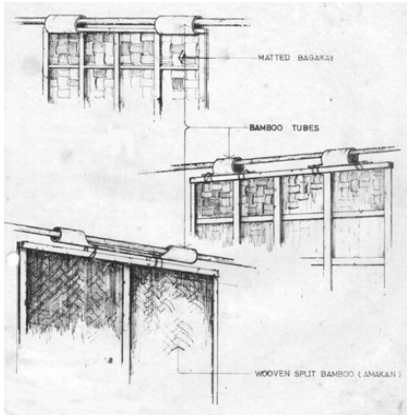


Figure 11: Windows closed at night with screens of matted bamboo strips

In our country house building is a group effort. This practice is known locally as the *Pahabit* system. A prospective house owner makes it known that he intends to build a house then volunteers among the neighbours show up on agreed upon days and assist the owner in putting together the structure. The women prepare the meals for the workforce.

Enter Spain in 1521. When Magellan and his men landed into Cebu they saw *Pintados*, or the natives who painted their bodies very expressively and they saw many villages and many houses as described earlier built upon logs. Cebu stretched for more than a league along the shore where the Spanish fort and city now stand.

Cebu was already well known as a trading port and population centre after Magellan's tragic death at the hands of a native chief, Lapo Lapo. A number of expeditions followed but failed to reach the islands and finally on November 21 1584 an expedition led by Miguel Lopis de Lagaspi left Mexico and finally arrived in Cebu on April 27 1565. On May 8 of that year ground was broken for the fort, Fort San Pedro and Lagaspi proclaimed Cebu as a permanent Hispanic settlement, the first in S. E. Asian Spanish colonialisation. 1565 brought along new ideas about town planning. There was a Royal Ordinance, ordinance, no. 1573, which decreed that Colonial settlements should now follow a grid design. There was one plan for coastal settlements like Cebu and another for inland locations. The plans prescribed locations for the main and secondary plazas, the cathedral, the hospital, the convent and the customs house. In the coastal town the main plaza was to be the starting place for the building of a new town and the church was to be visible from the landing place. So gone would be the organic freeform patterns of our villages. The Royal ordi-

nances of 1573 described the manner of laying out settlements. The church would be the most prominent structure in that plaza complex and then you would have the convent, the tribunal and the customs house and then flanking the plazas would be the houses of the wealthy and the elite, and the rest of the natives would be conscripted to the farther edges of town. This would be our second loss, the more egalitarian distribution of settlement would be gone for ever and in its place would be a more hierarchical set up.

Figure 12: Royal Ordinances of 1573 prescribed the manner of laying out settlements

Figure 13: Church complexes quickly followed the building of forts after Spanish colonisation

Building activity with Spanish colonialisation began with forts. They also built a lot of church complexes. The next 200 years of Spanish presence in Cebu were rather insignificant from 1600 - 1700. The transfer of the Spanish base to Manila and the opening of the galleon trade thereafter, as well as the incessant Muslim raids in Cebu, contributed to the recession but these things improved for Cebu in the 19th century. When Cebu was opened as a world port there began unparalleled expansion. The residences of the *mestizos* began to take on new forms and patterns. The bamboo and grass houses became structures of wood and stone blocks. Windows ran the whole length of the walls made of Lamperon shells and steep roofs were adopted to shed rain efficiently but here we see another loss from the great volume of the early traditional house. Traditionally we allow the air to enter from below up through the slats of the floor and flow upwards to have free flowing air inside which was more healthy for a tropical country like the Philippines. The use of stone closed off this natural flow of air; one of the losses of a native technology which successfully demonstrated the use of passive cooling.

Figures 14-15: Residences of the *mestizos* took on new forms and patterns. The bamboo and grass houses became structures of wood and stone

In the latter part of the 19th century when metal became available some of those who could afford it switched from the use of thatched grass to metal roofing and still others to tile roofing. Vintconilier became very popular during Spanish colonial times. When you slide open the windows (and these can be slid open at will) to allow the air to enter the house and once it is used up and warm it escapes through vents found in the upper transoms and underside the eaves.

Figure 16: sliding windows aid ventilarion

There were changes in the interior also. Spaces became very differentiated. Instead of the multifunctional main space you had now more discrete division of spaces. You had now a living room, a separate room for dining, another room for the master of the house, another room for children and still others for the servants and helpers. Again here we see the change from the egalitarian use of spaces to the hierarchical. The newly found opulence finds expression in the finely carved partition walls. The rich could afford to put stamped tin sheets in the ceilings and sleep in four-poster beds. Social stratification is expressed now in two level houses. The upper floor is reserved for the use of the owners. The

Figure 17: Ornately carved dividers were used with the newly found opulence of the 19th century

lower floor is for the helpers and then we have some churches also that are distinctive in form, decoration or cultural significance. The churches had to be very grand in scale because they symbolised not only Christianity but also the centres of authority of the Spanish government. So the Spanish builders simply transported Spanish and European designs and asked local artisans and craftsmen to interpret them. Unlike churches in Europe which are grand and tall however, although built from the plans brought in from Europe, these are quite squat because of the dangers imposed by earthquakes.

The great battle between theologians in Europe who contended that pagan works had no right to exist and on the other hand theologians in Mexico who insisted that the natives had human rights influenced to a large extent the design of Philippine houses of worship. Finally the Mexicans held sway over the issues and except for idolatry and other worldly excesses the people were allowed to decorate their places of worship in the manner that they are comfortable with and accustomed to. So in the Visayas we have woven mats used as carpets, local flora and fauna found their

places of glory in the church façades. Even local idols took pride of place on the beams or overlooking the towns atop the watchtower

A church in Iloilo (Church of San Joaquin) features stone carvings of St Christopher carrying the infant Jesus as they walk through a garden of lush tropical plants like papayas, guavas and other vegetation. Detailed *bas relief* of the battle of Tetuan (the historic battle where Spanish troops quelled attacks from the northern African town of Tetuan) are also included. Filipinos, particularly Visayans, loved dramatic and expressive songs. So the priest said go ahead, you can have your dramas and songs but please put in for me religious words. If you must dance at all, make it a religious dance. So every year now in Cebu, a festival *mardi gras*, a dance in the streets, is held in honour of Santa Nino. This penchant for expressiveness was exploited by the Spaniards in the Christianisation efforts.

Figure 18: Stone carving illustrating the battle at Tetuan on the façade of the San Joaquin Church in Iloilo

Bell towers were built apart from the church because they were also built as part of the fortifications. They served as lookout and relay stations for warning messages of the approach of marauders or during emergencies like fire and typhoons. Many still guard, tall and proud and many are tired, bent and old. One wonders what language they speak, especially to the young and whether the young would listen at all.

Figure 19: Paoay Church in Ilocos Norte

In conclusion, the Filipino culture is one of sharing. We are on the lookout for what is good for the group. We find strength in each other in connecting. Architecture should be also the embodiment of these beautiful qualities of our people, particularly that of sharing. Filipinos today ask ourselves if our spaces today speak of such responsiveness and sensitivity. Space it is said is circumscribed not only by physical boundaries but also by what we carry in our heads. In the past our houses looked out into the fields or the sea or the wider community, the world.

Today our houses look inward and we only hazard a gaze outward through layers of colonial lenses. Society has changed and so also has the way we use our spaces. Or is it vice versa, after all Churchill said 'we shape our buildings and afterwards our buildings shape us'. Today we don't have that many good schools but we build good malls. We don't have that many good hospitals but malls we have. We don't put much creative emphasis in our places of worship but it is in malls where we celebrate. We have suffered another loss; the ability to do with less. Now there is more conspicuous consumption. We have also grown careless about our heritage. We are loosing much of it including our pre-colonial vernacular shelter forms. Together with them there is a gradual dissipation of the cultural intangibles. The values and the shared meanings associated with those ancient forms. There has to be a way in which we can stave off these losses. If creative reuse is to harness the original appeal of a space and place then that has to include retrieving and harnessing the traditions and meanings that peoples attach to these places.

Perhaps it is possible to redefine the criteria for heritage to include the nonmaterial, the spiritual components that underpin our built environment. Australia has been the vanguard of preservation efforts. It has achieved an enviable record of excellence in documentation archiving and conservation work. We Filipinos may appear to be Latinos or sometimes act like Hollywood dudes but we also are open to new possibilities to learn more about fields of which we know little. That is why we are here and we thank you for allowing us to sit with you and listen.

Clever Conversions: Historic Buildings and Museums

Sarah Jane Rennie

Sarah Jane Rennie is Regional Services Officer with the Museums & Galleries Foundation. She holds degrees in both conservation of cultural material and public history. She has worked for a range of organisations including the National Museum of Australia, Harvard University Art Museums, Art Lab Australia, the Australian National Maritime Museum and Sydney Artefacts Conservation.

The museum in whatever form is often seen as a logical use for a historic building which a community has identified as having significance for them, and I've certainly heard a lot of people voice the other side of that in the last couple of days. While there are many good reasons for using historic buildings as museums and galleries, there are also many complicating factors.

I am involved in a project is exploring the issues involved in adapting historic buildings for such uses, through both case studies and discussions. The outcome will be a guide for local councils and others developing such projects. While each development needs to be treated on an individual basis, there are a number of key components which need to be addressed when developing a museum or a gallery in a historic building. On a very broad level, the types of organisation which develop can be divided into three categories:

- Firstly, there are the site museums which include houses, shops, prisons, mines, schools, factories, workshops, which are able to be developed into intact museums about themselves. Where possible, such museums contain *in situ* collections which are seen as closed, with little further material being added to the collection. The major challenge for this type of museum often revolves around how to move people through the site and provide the infrastructure required to run it without damaging its integrity.
- Collection-based museums often focus on a theme which will form the basis of the collection and may relate to the building, but not necessarily. Such museums need to be more adaptable with their spaces which can house changing exhibitions and allow a good flow of traffic. Providing good display and storage environments and facilities for public programmes are central to the development of a successful collection-based museum.
- While galleries will have their own collections, many of the regional galleries that we work with place a strong emphasis on travelling exhibitions. These place particular demands on buildings in terms of the delivery and storage of large crates and flexibility of exhibition areas. Large unimpeded walls with the capacity to house multimedia equipment are also a necessity for galleries who wish to display contemporary art.

I'll just run through some of the key components that we've been looking at in terms of developing museums. Selecting the building is obviously an important first step and often, as we all know, the building is selected before its

proper use has been thought out. People commit to a particular building without having thought out whether that is in fact a good use for it. Some of the things to look at are:

- Is it an appropriate use for that building?
- Is it in an area that has the proper zoning for the sort of activities associated with running a museum or gallery?
- What sort of funding will be required to adapt, run and maintain the facility?
- How easy is it for people to get to the site, either by car or by public transport?
- How will people with disabilities, the elderly, or those with small children, walk through the building?
- What sort of provisions are there for deliveries of collection items, office material, and food, to the site?

Obviously, conservation plans and an assessment of significance will provide great guidance about how the different areas can be used as well as some of the interpretation qualities. One of the most important factors in utilising historic buildings is in interpretation. Good interpretation will not overwhelm the building, but should set the scene as the visitor enters the site, informing them both about the history of the building and those who inhabited it. It's useful to understand the building's current environment and the collection requirements in terms of environment, before carrying out any adaptions to it. There are often passive systems such as verandahs and shutters which can be utilised as part of the environmental control for the building and shouldn't be ignored.

The type of museum or gallery will influence the use of internal spaces. A site museum will require little or no adaption of exhibition spaces, whereas a gallery may require an opening-up of smaller spaces, introduction of hanging systems and the provision of large plain-coloured walls.

Obviously in this amount of time we can't run through all those things in great detail. I'm just going to select a few, including collection requirements, resources, shared uses for the building and continuing maintenance which I think is a crucial step if you are actually going to run a successful museum in the long term instead of the first two years.

Interpretation is, I think, one of the most important factors in utilising historic buildings. The building may have been identified as having historic significance, worthy of conserving for future generations, yet all too often there's little information about the building's history available to the casual visitor. There are all too many museums and galleries around Australia which leave one wondering what was this place? Good interpretation of the site will enhance the visitor's experience. Such interpretation should never be simply just a list of facts and figures about the building's design, construction and original use, but should engage the visitor to explore the building's dynamic, changing uses and the people who lived and worked within it. Evidently the level of interpretation utilised will be influenced by the type of museum or gallery that is being developed. A site museum will have a high level of interpretation about the building as this is its focus. A gallery will need to provide a more low-key form of interpretation, preventing that interpretation from overshadowing the exhibitions in this space.

The Inveresk Rail Workshops provide an interesting example of how various areas of a site can be interpreted to different degrees. The blacksmiths' workshop, which was developed between 1870 and 1940, remains largely intact including both its work spaces and the tools that were used. This area will be preserved in its current condition, allowing the visitors to walk through and experience an active industrial blacksmiths' workshop. The main workshop, which didn't contain as much intact material, is being adapted for use as a gallery space, both for historic and artistic collections. A large gantry is being left in position, as well as some of the work spaces, so that the visitor gets a good feel of what the space was used for. However, there are large open spaces that are available for exhibitions, which can be readily adapted.

I think a wonderful use of interpretation is at Casula. Casula, as you heard yesterday, is an art museum (or part of it is) and they've actually included an artist to help with that interpretation. The tiles in the toilets have utilised blueprints from the original construction of the powerhouse as part of the artistic interpretation of the site. I think that's a wonderful way of reflecting both its current use and its past uses.

The Tweed Regional Gallery has utilised almost an archaeological form to interpret the building's structure. A number of the walls were removed to provide large open space for exhibitions. Light-coloured floorboards were installed where the walls would have been, providing a ghostly reminder of the original space. A small inbuilt desk remains beside a fireplace, again drawing attention to the closer domestic heritage of the site. And that's currently used to house a visitors' book and to invite the visitor to sit at that desk and make a note about their experience.

One project discussed yesterday, Hyde Park Barracks, is worth mentioning again as a very good example of how we can interpret not only the changes over time which have occurred to a building, but the actual evolution of its adaptation into a museum. The floor of one room at the front of Hyde Park Barracks floats over an archaeological dig, and through the interpretation you can get both an understanding of the process of uncovering and the process of

change in the site.

Again, you heard a little bit yesterday about Tenterfield School of Arts. It has incorporated interpretation into the actual exhibition fabric. The original School of Arts Hall was used for many years to host major banquets and dances in Tenterfield. A wall was removed some years ago and it has been reinstated in glass. A photo of the banquet held in the Hall around the time of Federation is to be blown up to life size and screen printed on to the wall. The centre of the Hall will contain a long banqueting-style table with chairs positioned around it. Exhibition cases will sit within the table, which can be viewed from above. In this way, the visitor can sit at the table, look at the exhibition, and glance across at this earlier banquet and actually bringing them into the experience of that space.

When interpreting a site museum with a long history, decisions often have to be made about what period to set the building in. There's often a desire to bring the building back to its earliest period or to emphasise an often brief encounter with a high-profile historic figure. Currently in Australia, you could view this as the 'Henry Parkes Factor'. Parkes ate, drank, slept, debated or orated here. Not only is such a tenuous link difficult to satisfactorily interpret, but it sidelines the main story or history of the building.

For many years, Como House in Melbourne battled to interpret an ad hoc, somewhat 19th century period. The many adaptions carried out in the early 20th century made this difficult and denied the existence of a significant component of the home's history. In the mid 90s, the house was reinterpreted into its Interwar period. I think one of the interesting things about this reinterpretation is that part of that process was to introduce floral covers over much of the furniture, which brings a very strongly-feminine feel to the house and it was indeed a very strongly-feminine house.

In Hyde Park Barracks, rather than concentrating on just one era there's been a very strong emphasis on the changing time, and I think this has been done very cleverly by having different corridors reflecting different time periods, so here we have the convict and again the legal era of the building.

When discussing historic buildings, people concentrate all too frequently on the built structure and ignore the surrounding curtilage. With many historic buildings the surroundings can play a significant part in the building's interpretation. Certainly it's not always possible to retain original grounds, but where these are still in place they should be recognised as an important point of site interpretation which will greatly enhance the visitor's experience. This was really brought home to me with some discussions I had with Sam Malloy at Miss Traill's House. He was saying that the garden was such an important thing to Miss Traill and she actually oriented everything in the house so that you could have a feel of the garden, and visitors are encouraged, by having the entrance at the far end of the house, to walk through that garden before they enter the house and really get that understanding.

Figure 1: Miss Traill's House, Bathurst

A very different but equally significant precinct is formed at the Inveresk Rail Yard Workshop where the various buildings are still linked by rail track which originally allowed the work to pass from one area to another of the site. The industrial nature of the site is emphasised by the broad acreage of it and by the actual structures themselves, and certainly in its development that massive feeling has been retained.

Obviously access is a major issue for museums and galleries and historic buildings, and need to be seriously addressed from the outset of the site's development. As well as the obvious issue of access for disabled visitors, provision needs to be made for general access to the site and access for the various sorts of deliveries required of a museum or gallery and I can't begin to sympathise with the challenges this forms for people because it really is hard. Visitor access to the site is an important issue for all museums. What sort of public transport is available, how regularly does it run on weekends? Is the building close to a major road so that people can easily find it. Is it easy for buses to

Figures 2-3: Inveresk Rail Workshops, Launceston Tasmania

drop off tour groups at the site? This is often an issue within a city building, where the nearest drop-off may be quite a distance from the site, and believe me busloads of small children or elderly tourists aren't very happy about that!

What sort of car-parking is available on site? Again with small suburban areas this can be difficult. Disabled access needs to be considered and we must not forget that with an ageing population many elderly do have trouble with steps and things like that. There is a museum in the north of this State which is all located on the first floor and even some of the members can't get up to it. Also remember parents with prams often have difficulty with steps as well.

Apart from the fact that government regulations require access to be provided for people with disabilities in a dignified manner, a building which provides ease of access for all sectors of the community is going to be far more popular with that community.

And again, you do need to think about how things are going to be delivered into the building, particularly if large crates of travelling exhibitions are going to come in and out. The demands of occupational health and safety are also a very strong consideration.

The Immigration Museum in Melbourne, which was also talked about yesterday, has installed quite a lovely form of lift. On one side there's a little alcove which is a small cloakroom and on the other side it's reflected with the lift. It fits very nicely into the building without actually being seen from the outside or intruding too much into the main space of the site.

St. Raphael's Parish Church in Cowra is quite a small enterprise but I think they've done a wonderful job. Two buildings are being redeveloped as a museum, library and technology centre. They have the advantage of being on a sloping site which means that they were able to provide access to that first floor from the street above.

Obviously it's not always practical or in the best interests of a building to have general access to all areas. Often we find that some fragile structures just aren't built to withstand large troops of visitors running through the place. The Migration Museum of South Australia recognised that providing access to the first floor would seriously interfere with the fabric of the building and increased traffic through this area of the fragile structure would create undue stress. Instead, the first floor has been utilised as offices, which has limited traffic to that area.

Again, as I was mentioning previously, access for delivery of collection items needs to be thoroughly thought out. If you don't have lift access for delivery of large framed paintings that is regularly taken on exhibitions, storing them on an upper floor (and I have seen this done) is not really a good idea. If you intend to take in travelling exhibitions on a regular basis, you need to consider not only how you will bring crates in and out but where you will actually store them. Generally speaking, this is more of an issue for smaller buildings, which weren't designed for such uses. An example where this has been overcome is the Tweed Regional Gallery which has added a building on to the side which acts both as a storeroom and delivery dock and opens into the main exhibition area, using an extra-wide door. The building is clearly not part of the original structure, but I believe it blends in not too obtrusively.

Before tampering with the environment of a historic building, it's important that you understand its current environment. Evidently the conservation plan is going to outline the condition of the building and identify its inherent vices. It's quite possible that the environment will vary from room to room, which may influence decisions about how you utilise the various rooms and space. Some points to consider are the environment in many of these things is a real cross-section between things that are often battling with each other. You've got the needs of the collection, you've got the needs of the building, you've got financial restraints, the types of exhibitions you are going to have, and often we're battling with the inherent vice of the building itself.

In the past there's been a strong emphasis on providing fully air-conditioned spaces. This is not necessarily an effective solution. One of the pleasures of visiting a historic building lies in the experience of being enclosed within an

entirely different world. This experience is severely hampered if the environment is clearly artificially controlled. On a more practical front, air-conditioning for a collection needs to provide both temperature and humidity control and run twenty-four hours a day. Such an expensive process often becomes cost-prohibitive, causing the system to be shut down at night, and which can lead to an environment which is less stable than if there'd been no air-conditioning installed in the first place.

Many historic buildings have a degree of passive control built into their design, through the use of insulation, double-brick construction, exterior shutters, blinds, verandahs or wide eaves. If the collection is already in situ, an assessment of its condition will indicate how successful the passive control has been. Whilst passive control of the building's environment is clearly desirable, you should remember that it's not always effective on its own. Each building needs to be considered on an individual basis, taking into account the material in the collection, whether travelling exhibitions with specific environmental requirements are going to be brought in, the surrounding local climate in the area, and the needs of the people using the building. There's no point in advocating a purely passive system if it's going to cause discomfort to staff and visitors. They'll start to bring heaters in or some sort of air-conditioning, and the whole thing will be thrown out of whack.

However, when you consider heating or cooling a building, you need to take into consideration the effect it has on humidity levels. On occasions you can actually use this to advantage. A number of National Trust properties in England have started using the available simple oil or water heater radiators attached to thermo-couples to control humidity levels. As the humidity rises, the heaters are triggered and will slowly heat up the room, just enough to drop the humidity to a safe level. For some buildings this works with the natural ventilation, whereas installing humidifiers and dehumidifiers often requires sealing-up of an older building which works against its own natural design.

Of course, in some buildings natural ventilation can be taken to extremes. One such case is a slab hut at Callala Cottage in Tamworth. As a conservator, I'd consider this building to have an inherent vice in that the extremely draughty nature of the building will cause a degree of damage to its fabric. However, I'd never consider interfering with this on more than the most simple of levels as it would dramatically alter the integrity and experience of the place. Instead, we acknowledge that the building provides a draughty uncontrollable environment and we work within those parameters. Let's face it, nothing lasts forever! The newspaper on the wall was one of the major casualties of this environment. Clearly someone had tried to deal with the problem some time ago and now the plastic covering flaps in the wind along with the underlying newspaper. I should add that the people at Callala are currently working on this problem and it's a great concern to them. It's just an example that at times these are the sorts of things you're dealing with and you've just got to be a bit clever about how you deal with them.

Again, generally we love deep verandahs and consider them a great advantage, but I would have to say that at Don Bank at times the darkness of the house, by the combination of the lovely large verandahs and the neighbouring high-rise buildings, create quite a dark and damp environment.

The uses and expectations of space for a building or gallery can at times be at odds with the historic building, even when it's being used as a site museum. If the entire building is of significance or the site is extremely tiny, where do the visitors gather? Where do the staff and volunteers carry out any of the back-of-house work? Where are the extraneous material and collection items not on display stored? How can you install toilets, let alone the more complicated activities of the larger sites such as offices, an area for public programmes, need I say conservation lab, registration, exhibition preparation, storage of crates for travelling exhibitions.

I'm not going to have time to go into details about too many cases. I just thought I'd run through some of the issues. As I was saying, you've got the significance of the interior spaces themselves, battling with exhibition requirements, storage requirements, visitor requirements, and the requirements of staff and volunteers.

A further example is one that Como House in Melbourne is dealing with at the moment. They've been battling for thirty years with combining a house museum and office spaces. In the 90s, they've had the opportunity to move a number of activities to subsidiary buildings which has been able to take pressure off the house and allows for a much better flow of visitors through the space. Visitors are now brought up through the garden, which is an important element and it's wonderful to be able to encourage people to experience it. It also slows down visitor flow so that you can have a little bit of control. A new ticket office has been constructed in the garden, quite a distance from the house. They have the great advantage of owning a very large piece of land. The ticket office reflects the outbuildings, which were original to the house, but it's very clearly its own form. At the back of the outbuildings, they are currently constructing a number of small structures which will house both the offices and public programmes for Como. These areas are able to be air-conditioned, they're modern contemporary buildings. The staff can have comfortable, modern contemporary spaces and we don't have to worry about how we're going to get in the wiring for this, that and the other. The wonderful thing about this is that for the first time in thirty years they are able to open the children's wing, or will be able to once this is finished, so that the visitors can appreciate another area of the house which had been previously unavailable to them.

The Polticians Point of View

Lucy Turnbull

Lucy Turnbull is Deputy Lord Mayor of Sydney. She has lived in Sydney all her life. Cllr Turnbull was partner in the legal firm Turnbull and Company and has also worked in the investment banking and corporate advisory field through Turnbull and Partners. Apart from her position on Council, Cllr Turnbull is the chair of FTR Holdings Ltd, a company which invests in Australian technology and is a member of the Information Industry Advisory Board. She chairs the Planning Development and Transport Committee of the City Council, The Sydney Global Committee, the Sydney Traffic Committee and she is deputy chair of the Access Committee and a member of the Central Sydney Planning Committee. Cllr Turnbull is also president of the Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation and author of *Sydney: Biography of a City*. She is a Life Member of the National Trust.

Adaptive reuse is the best architectural solution there is if we want to maintain a sense of culture, history and continuity in a world that is undergoing constant change. The imperative of economic growth dictates that we are constantly outgrowing existing urban and architectural forms. Many new forms would be at home in any big city, anywhere in the world, in Singapore, Sydney, New York or Tokyo or anywhere else you can imagine. So the way we balance the older symbols of our history and identity with those newer forms is an important example of the continuing dialogue or tension in the world today between localism and globalism. Thomas Freedman talked about these dual forces in the post cold war era. He drew the analogy of the Lexus, which of course is the Toyota motor car which is the same anywhere in the world you buy it and the olive tree which has always been an enduring symbol of localism and the need to connect yourself with your local community identity and your past. At its best adaptive reuse is a sensitive and well informed response to both these forces.

All governments and politicians are charged with the task of balancing these forces. We have to respect our cultural heritage and yet still create the conditions for social, cultural and economic growth. We are responsible for looking after public money so we have to act financially prudently if we are the developer or owner of a building subject to adaptive reuse. As the custodians of the public interest we must wisely consider and determine all development applications including proposals for adaptive reuse.

On public and civic projects whatever we spend must be justified by the outcome. Does the new building respect the past as well as work in the present so that the community can enjoy the adapted building? Does it enhance the public domain and provide something the public needs or wants? I don't think anyone here imagined the consequences for this city's maritime urban form when container ships first came through the harbour in 1968. I remember it because it was about the same date as my tenth birthday. The entire stock of finger wharves and piers became redundant in a matter of years. It was very sad but it was a fact of life. Ten years ago we might have imagined that they would all just slowly collapse into the harbour but they haven't and the adaptive reuse of some of these buildings has triggered much interest in the idea of adaptive reuse and much debate which I will not traverse today.

The de-industrialisation of Sydney's economy has also made many old industrial buildings in the inner city area redundant and ripe for use. Sometimes adaptive reuse is triggered by government act. An interesting example of this is in Singapore. Singapore has been described as one of the world's great economic miracles. From a state of third

world poverty and a low standard of living in the 1950s Singapore now claims to be the Switzerland of Asia. In recent years there have been concerns, a little belatedly in our value system, that preserving historical forms is a way of anchoring Singapore's cultural identity as an Asian nation. There are now 20 special conservation areas in Singapore.

The catalyst for this relatively recent change in attitude is interesting. In the early 1980s the Tourist Task Force of Singapore reported that in its efforts to create a modern metropolis Singapore had last some of its 'oriental mystique and charm' best symbolised in the old buildings and traditional activities. So preservation was a response to the need to maintain a high level of tourist activity. Property owners in the Chinatown area, sensing a rise in the value of their assets with their plans for conservation preserved the buildings in accordance with the governments guidelines. They also took the rather subtle hints from the government that the uses should be traditionally Chinese. Incompatible uses such as car and engineering workshops, western style restaurants, supermarkets and launderettes were discouraged. Only newer types of businesses can afford to stay in these newly restored shophouses and in the process some of the-flavour of the old Singapore Chinatown has been lost. When the tourist buses go home in the evening the place is more deserted than it used to be.

The danger that this illustrates is that trying to adapt old buildings for the principle reason of attracting tourists the original flavour of the place might be lost. It is like replacing pungent chili sauce with ketchup. The only consolation is that the alternative might have been wholesale demolition of the area. The challenge is to make sure that the outcomes of adaptive reuse are not only sound in terms of conservation values but also in terms of the readapted buildings having a real existence and having an authentic role that is not too contrived and not too cute. Few people want their cultural identity refracted through a type of Disneyland experience. Attempts at adaptive reuse result in a profound expression of respect for the past yet still manage to give us an inspiring expression of who we are today and what our cultural values are. Buildings should be reworked in a timeless and enduring fashion.

The city today, any city, be it Singapore, Sydney, New York, Tokyo or wherever else is where the economic theory of creative destruction is most visibly played out. Creative destruction is at the heart of the process of urban development especially at the times of high economic growth, as was the case in Singapore in the 1980s and 70s, New York in the early parts of the twentieth century and in Sydney in the 60s and 70s. Sometimes the process of creative destruction is a lot more destructive than creative as was the case in many parts of Sydney in that era but we have to acknowledge the fact that the force of creative destruction is alive in any living city that is more than a museum of the past for tourists. What governments have to do is temper forces of creative destruction with the importance of preserving our history and cultural heritage. An example where the forces of creative destruction were at work in Sydney was at Bennelong Point during the 1950s and early 60s, it would never have been possible to adapt the 19th century tramsheds into the Opera House that stands there today.

Politicians mustn't be responsible for the wanton and senseless destruction of old buildings but we shouldn't slavishly demand that everything should stay as it was originally intended if the consequence of that is that the building will no longer be occupied and work well for contemporary use. Government should encourage a robust approach in the way we approach old buildings whose original use has passed into history. We must preserve the memory of what was once there but not always in a literal way. We should add our own layers of meaning in the same spirit as those who first designed the architectural work.

If we want buildings to work in the present and the future we shouldn't imagine it will always be possible to recycle old buildings within their existing envelopes. In a sense the idea of adaptive reuse at its least imaginative is a denial of the modem architectural principle that form follows function. Any adaptive reuse has to accommodate respect for the original architecture with a strong approach to how to articulate the spaces for today's needs. They have to add cultural and social as well as economic value. The new uses of the building should have a synergistic compatibility with the old form's most significant elements.

Some buildings, or the spaces contained within them, are too big for today's uses, others are too small. In a city where the property values are so high it is seldom possible to justify the expense of adaptive reuse if the envelope remains the same particularly if that envelope is small compared to the surrounding urban form. Recent examples of adaptive reuse where the envelope was changed in the city are the new Raddison Hotel on the corner of Hunter and O'Connell Streets, the GPO building at No I Martin Place, the Mark Foys warehouse and the conversion of the site known as 363 York Street which integrated 19th century buildings in a very sensitive way.

Politicians should always seek improvements to the public domain during the adaptation process. In this city this can be seen best in revitalising the cities lanes. Old lanes I think can be pedestrian friendly mementos of Sydney's Victorian urban form where Sydney can be said to have a much finer grain. A good example runs along the Establishment Building, another is at the back of the Customs House where it has been reactivated and promoted to a higher status than its had for the last 20 years during which time it was primarily a loading dock.

It is much easier and less controversial to remodel within an existing envelope than it is to change the building envelope. Large spaces which existed at the Woolloomooloo Finger Wharf and Everleigh buildings can easily be subdivided and remodeled for suitable use but when that seriously endangers the old fabric of the building its value

should be seriously questioned. One of the more imaginative recent examples of adaptive reuse is the Bridge Climb at the Harbour Bridge. That has created a completely new public space and one of the best walks or climbs anywhere in the world. Walking over the bridge was formerly a privilege of people who worked on the bridge and their families.

Government offices that have outlived their original usefulness are more of a challenge because of their more limiting forms. The Customs House is one example of this. It too has been controversial like so many others when there has been a considerable degree of architectural intervention to make them work. I think the effort has been worthwhile and I think this building is evolving a strong identity with culture and recreation. You only have to see the people enjoying the space outside and in the bars on a Thursday and Friday nights or at lunch time like today and during the Olympics to understand what a recreational precinct this has become. I also think that even more significantly perhaps that it's evolving as an important venue for discussions about the shape and future of our city and our society and what we want and what we would like it to be. The locals use it as well as tourists and I feel that is an important factor in any adaptive reuse.

Customs House is a good example of a smaller government building with all the architectural limitations on readaptation that use bring with it; small rooms, small spans and therefore fewer, if any, realistic options if the original fabric and envelope was to be retained in a literal way. There are other obvious examples of difficult to readapt government buildings like the MCA.

Like Customs House its form is limited by small rooms which are not as appropriate for cultural use as they were for government use. It also has a very poor relationship with the public domain. That building neither addresses the oldest street in Australia or one of the finest coves in the world. Around about that cove there are examples of buildings such as Cadman's Cottage and Customs House to remind Sydneysiders, Australians and tourists alike that we're a city that both respects and acknowledges the symbolic importance of the past. On the other side of course there's the Opera House which reminds us that we have the imagination to break the mould in a manner which has amazed the world ever since it was first conceived.

In the case of private development with an element of adaptive reuse the role of the heritage consultant is vital. Not only at the stage of preparing a conservation plan but advising the client developer on the one hand and the consent authority when issues arise as they inevitably do in any construction project. They must mediate that sometimes contentious domain between what is in the best interests of the owner/ developer with the public interest of preserving the important elements of the past. The fact that the advice of the heritage consultant is independent is what gives it value.

The new Heritage LEP [Local-Environment Plan] in the City of Sydney lists many buildings of significance and establishes a process which involves experts on the Heritage Committee of the site being considered as well as this important codification of the significance of the cities heritage. The City of Sydney has recently introduced planning controls that will ensure better design outcomes through architectural competitions. Architectural competitions or competitive processes are encouraged on all larger sites of over 1,500 square metres or over 55 metres in height. Where Schedule 1 Heritage Buildings are subject to design competitions two members of the Heritage Committee for that site are also nominated by the City to sit on that design jury. That means that taking heritage issues into account will be an integral role not only for the Heritage Committee but on the jury as well.

I think the primary task of politicians is to enable the community that we represent to assert that we have a culture and a sensibility which enables us to express our ability to look respectfully to the past with historic and cultural authenticity and sensitivity at the same time as looking to the future. Sydney is great not just because of its natural location or interesting history but because we live in a constantly evolving culture in a contemporary world. Sydney is a city of layers and it has been for 212 years and 20,000 before that. It will never be a museum city like St Petersburg or Florence. It is a living city which can look backwards and forwards at the same time with authenticity but with fresh eyes and great imagination as well.

Reuse

Alan Saunders

Alan Saunders is originally from London, educated at the London School of Economics and the Australian National University. He joined the ABC in 1987 and for 9 years he presented and produced the Food Program. Since 1997 he has been the presenter of the Comfort Zone, a weekly review of architecture and design, food and landscape.

I often find in conferences like this that I as a broadcaster, and so an expert in nothing, tend to appear either at the very beginning or the very end. My contribution is safely insulated from the serious business of the conference and I'm a sort of Mickey Mouse bookend. Fortunately for me, and perhaps for you, my job on this occasion is to comment on what's been said so I don't have to pretend I've got something original to offer you.

However in my capacity as court jester I'm desperately trying to find something funny to say and all I can think of is Michael Heseltine, a British politician of middle class origins and aristocratic pretensions. It's said that some of his posh chums once observed of him 'he seems a perfectly nice chap but he was clearly the sort of person whose furniture is bought'. The implication of course is that one doesn't buy one's furniture, one inherits it. This is a useful reminder that adaptive reuse is nothing new in the world.

This morning of course Andrew Andersons mentioned Medieval cities in this regard, as an example of constant reuse of existing materials. Of course we can go back farther than this. Behind the 18th century façadeof the church of the Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome the structure is supported by classical columns plundered from other buildings. You can scarcely ask for a name more expressive of adaptive reuse than that of another church Santa Maria sopra Minerva: St Mary on Minerva. A Christian church built over the site of a pagan temple, a 17th century facade behind which there's a Gothic interior that manages to have Corinthian columns.

Figures 1-2: Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome: structure supported by classical columns plundered from other buildings

This I think reveals an interesting difference between us and the people who came before us. We tend to think of the past as radically different from the present. We accept that its assumptions and its material culture are going to be widely different from our own.

In the past of course this was not the case. You see Medieval pictures of biblical scenes wearing Medieval costumes. There is no attempt at the archaeological reconstruction of ancient clothing and both the two churches I

mentioned can use classical elements like this because they did not think of themselves as radically shut off from the ancient world. The one decisive difference between themselves and the ancient world of course is that they have Christianity and the classical Romans, until sometime into their history were pagans but the triumph of Christianity over paganism is something that is still happening. It is a present event when you are building your Renaissance church so you can celebrate the fact that this is Santa Maria sopra Minerva – Santa Maria over the pagan temple.

Figures 3-4: Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome: 17th century facade with a Gothic interior and Corinthian colums built over a pagan temple.

This attitude still persists in parts of the world and I was reminded of it Augusto Villalon's fascinating presentation. I am old enough to remember news reports of the Cultural Revolution in China. I remember at one stage hearing about a temple and some statues that were destroyed and the comment, presumably by the China News Agency, was yes but these were old superstitious monuments. The implication being that they were not to be valued because the Marxist fight against superstition continues just as when Santa Maria sopra Minerva was built the Christian fight against paganism continued.

These ancient statues still represented the enemy and similarly I draw from Augusto Villalón's presentation the idea that in many of the Asian societies he mentioned the triumph over Colonialism continues. Which is why it is difficult to respect and wish to preserve the monuments and buildings of the Colonial era. Added to that of course is the desire to adopt the Modernist style of architecture. It is not true to say that Modernism has no sense of history but old style Modernism had a very distinct sense of history which is of itself the completion of history.

We could preserve a few funny old buildings to remind ourselves of how we got ourselves to where we are but history essentially was over with the arrival of Modernism. So we see in the Roman churches I mentioned a sense of a perpetual present which enables you to make quite cavalier use of old elements and even when a sense of the past starts to develop, it is a sense of the past rather different from our own.

I think this was brought out by Derek Latham's discussion about how the Victorians in England sought to improve or regularise the old buildings that they wanted to preserve and that they liked. They certainly wanted the past to be different from the present but they wanted a particular sort of past. It was their image of the past that they were trying to recreate and there's an interesting analogue to this in the world of music.

Today we expect old music to sound different. We want it to sound as it would have sounded when it was originally played. So we take a piece of 17th century music and we play it on old instruments. We play it in accordance with what we can find out about the performing practices and traditions of the time when it was composed. This is something that has been going on for longer than people think but it has really gathered momentum over the last 20 years or so.

Contrast that with Felix Mendelsohn in 1829 performing Bach's St Matthew Passion for the first time since Bach performed it nearly 100 years before. It was a great labour of love for Mendelsohn to do this with the St Matthew Passion. It was a great act of revival. It brought Bach back to a general audience but it was Mendelsohn's Bach. It was Bach abridged, rewritten and reorchestrated. He treated the façade and the structure in the way those Victorians in England were treating their buildings.

The revival that I've mentioned in early music has, there's no doubt, been enormously culturally enriching. It has added to our sense of musical heritage. It has also done something rather curious, it has made the explanation of music somewhat problematic in that it now becomes something to be explained.

The advent of the CD actually has lead to a serious shortening of sleeve notes but in the last days of the LP you could practically have treatises published with records of early music. There are explanations, there are didactic CDs today and CDs that are put together to explain some particular phenomenon in musical history. There are complete collections of the cantatas of Bach, the concertos of Vivaldi and so on.

Whereas before somebody would choose for you the good ones, now you can get the lot. This suggests that the past once we recognise it as being different requires explanation and again this happens in architecture. Buildings that have been renovated or in some sense are being reused are very often required to bear marks of interpretation. Yesterday Ian Stapleton mentioned this when talking about the use of the Tank Stream in the refurbished GPO. We don't just get the refurbished building we get careful explanations as to its place in history.

Clearly this is sometimes very necessary. In the foyer of this building [Customs House] there is a plaque explaining that the emblem on the floor is something called a *Fylfot* and not as you might suppose a swastika. You can see why they'd want to tell you that but I have to say that as much as I'm in favour of explanation I do sometimes warm to the idea of the past as something that I just stumble across, something that just happens to be have been left there,

Fylfot - Hindu symbol for peace found in the entry foyer at Customs House, Sydney

something uninterpreted . That is why I really warmed to Rod Simpson's remarks about the desirability of just leaving some places alone, of allowing them to preserve a sense of mystery. He mentioned Piranesi being inspired by the rather unarchaeological state that the Forum was in in the 18th century. One might also think of Edward Gibbon who was inspired to write his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* while in the Forum and I wondered if he would have embarked upon that enormous literary voyage if everything had been spruced up and there were guides and perhaps people in togas explaining to you what life in ancient Rome used to be like. I don't think he would have written it. I don't think he would have thought it necessary.

I was pleased to hear this from Rod Simpson because I occasionally worry about my liking for an uninterpreted past and occasionally even for a past that looks a bit run down. There are some buildings that I want to be preserved, repaired to just this side of complete dereliction but I don't want too much done to them and occasionally I've worried that it might be to do with being English, that and a sense of decay and decline. I've also wondered whether it's perhaps a symptom of age. A couple of years ago I was standing outside the Wharf Theatre, with my then girlfriend, looking across to another wharf. She is some years younger than myself and could not see the appeal of the rather dilapidated wharf that we were looking at. I think she wanted something stainless steel to replace it. So I warm to anybody else I find who likes the idea of things just being left as they are.

But the whole question of how much you do, how you do it, whether you do it touches perhaps on the questions of spirit which were invoked by Derek Latham when he talked about the importance of being true to the spirit of the original in adapting a building.

Now similarly there's a musical analogue here because occasionally people who didn't want to play early instruments , didn't want to read old musical treatises and so on just wanted to play Bach on the piano or whatever would say on the record sleeves, 'we are not slavishly following the performance practices of Bach's time but we are being true to the spirit of the original.' Igor Stravinsky said 'Whoever offends against the letter, offends against the spirit'. This is clearly true with music I think where in most cases the 'letter' is all we have, the score, the letter, be it Bach or Vivaldi has lain for centuries unperformed on shelves and any spirit you might talk about is something you have imposed on it, or if you prefer, infused into it.

With buildings of course it is a different matter. Sometimes they've been deserted and neglected but sometimes they have been used continuously since they were built. This brings with it of course its own difficulties to which I am sure you are all sensitive. What is the spirit of the building? Is it the expression of what its builders wanted it to be? or does it have to do with the uses to which the building has been put since it was built? Those uses of course could be widely differing.

The one among us whose sense of spirit was most offended was James Broadbent. He gave us an account of the alterations to the GPO which I thought was astonishing and moving in its ferocity. I've heard something slightly similar in a lecture a couple of years ago delivered I think by Rick Leplastrier. He thought it was a shame that we had

lost essentially a Post Office that used to be a meeting place. Post Offices he said are meeting places for the community. They are the equivalent of the old village well and so on. I have to say that Post Offices do not provide me with the sort of space in which I would want to congregate.

My local Post Office in Paddington has as charming a Victorian façade as you could wish to see. The interior seems well preserved too, but ultimately it's just a modern inner city post office. What this means is it's a badly organised shop. They try to sell you all sorts of things in Post Offices these days but they also want to keep the counters clear for what remains genuine postal activity. As a result the junk that they're trying to shift; the cheap calculators; the plastic covers for computers; the pens; the tourist videos, children's CDs is all allowed to crowd out the centre of the space. Add to this long queues and thanks, I presume, to staff cuts there are always long queues and you have a very unpleasant place to be. No doubt they could be tidied up a bit but even if they were the fact would remain that a shop was being squeezed into a space not primarily designed for buying and selling not much more than stamps and services.

In other words we don't need Post Offices to be turned into hotels and expensive boutiques to tell us we are not living in a postal age. The Post Offices themselves do that for us. Of course I am being unfair to James Broadbent. For him the question is not whether Post Offices can survive e-mail but whether it is proper to alienate public spaces for commercial purposes but my point is that to some extent this is going to happen anyway. Every cubic millimetre of space in a Post Office that is given over to goods which they wish to sell you and which have nothing to do with the post is public space given over to commercial activities.

I think then that we have to face the fact that the notion of public space has changed whether we like it or not and that the places where we gather as communities these days are more likely to be a bar, a restaurant or a shopping mall than a village well and in fact the main danger is likely to be not that places in which we gather are commercial but that we're not gathering at all. We're just sitting at home and logging on.

I'm sorry that James Broadbent is depressed now by walking through Martin Place. He's not the only one. In his lecture this year David Malouf expressed similar views. I have to say one of the more cheering sights for me this year was Martin Place during the Olympics. I was on my way to the gym one evening and I thought, in accordance with fine old Australian tradition, that instead of engaging myself in strenuous physical activity I'd watch somebody else do it. I thought it was very important that I should be in a public space when Cathy Freeman did her 400m run and I'm so glad I did. I'm so glad that I went to Martin Place because there you had a genuine sense of community. Yes, a community briefly created but a community who came together and where of one mind and one spirit. I wondered whether during the run there would be silence or not but of course there wasn't. There was a wall of sound.

That's a one off but it's a reminder of the extent to which everything that has been talked about here is as much about people as it is about bricks and mortar and stone. Augusto Villalón reminded us of this when he talked about the way in which shophouses have been renovated in Singapore and about the hideous theme park appearance of these places.

I thought it was very interesting when I was in Singapore about 8 years ago, we (the small group I was with) were looking for a hawker market. The Tourist Authority said don't go to this one which is a bit Disneyfied, go to that one which is much more authentic. The one they directed us to, which was much more authentic, looked to me like a sort of food court you'd get in an Australian shopping mall. We eventually found one which is probably not there anymore. It was under an apartment building, as they very often used to be and was very rough and has probably been cleared out by the authorities now, but what was had there was a sense, accurate or not, of some sort of authentic experience which was different from the experience that we had at home.

I'm getting a bit random at this stage but when I think of Asian cities I think of the curious Asian/ American amalgam that is the Los Angeles depicted for us, 20 years ago now, by Ridley Scott in his movie *Blade Runner*. The first film that I can think of where we're shown the future as a matter of retro-fit. There are a lot of old buildings. There are a lot of sort of Asian market elements and there are a lot of new buildings. It is meant to look like a hideous dystopia. I don't think I'm alone these days in actually finding it rather attractive. Perhaps I'm a romantic but I think our views of cities have changed a bit. We do like the commerce between new and old and we do like a sense of the gigantic. One of things that so many of these spaces which have been reused have given us is an enormous sense of increased space.

A friend of mine was lying on her bed in Conrad's Hotel, which is part of the converted Treasury Building in Brisbane, looking up at the ceiling and thinking 'they could put another room up there!' and they could because the ceiling is very high. They weren't allowed to bring the ceiling down.

Similarly loft apartments and similarly the building that I am most in love with at the moment, which is Tate Modern in London. I wondered how far we'd get into the conference before it got a mention and it got a mention very early from Ian Stapleton.

I read a critic of this building who says that it looks like a set for a fascist movie. You expect Leni Reifenstahl to be photographing the seried ranks of the Nazis there. Perhaps, but what excites me about it is the enormous sense of the redundant space; the way in which you are overwhelmed by the sense of space. I think that our sense of city life has to some extent moved in that direction now; loft apartments, converted powerhouses and so on. We are used to the rather romantically gigantic.

I want to end as I began, with furniture. Remember Michael Heseltine? The man who bought his own furniture. He has recently published his memoirs where he defends himself against the charge of buying furniture (you can imagine what kind of a sense of humour the man has). He says that how wonderful it is for him and his wife to go around country antique stores and auctions and so on to buy nice pieces of furniture.

I have to say that my immediate reaction to that was 'you're a former British Cabinet Minister, why aren't you supporting modern British craftsmen? why are you buying old stuff?' but then I thought, 'let's be fair about this' and thought about my own domestic circumstances.

I mentioned a girlfriend earlier and thoughts of girlfriends remind me of my *chaise-longue*. Do you know that the British actress Mrs Patrick Campbell, who created the role of Eliza Doolittle in Pygmalion, after an extremely varied love life got married. She commented on the forthcoming event 'Ah yes, the tranquility of the marriage bed, after the hurly burly of the *chaise- longue*.'

My *chaise-longue* is dilapidated at the moment, not sadly because of the hurly burly that has taken place but more because it was old when I bought it, it got hailed on last year and I keep dropping off to sleep on it in front of the TV. So I have a man coming around tomorrow to see whether it can be saved. To see whether it can be adaptively reused.

I very much fear that the man is going to tell me that the repair of my *chaise-longue* will cost more than buying a new one but I hope that it can be repaired. By choice my flat is full of hard modernist lines. A lot of rectangles, there's a Wassily chair (everybody who is interested in design has a Wassily chair. It's the one design icon you can afford) a great deal of stainless steel and granite and so on. I like having something with soft lines against one wall and even more than that I like a sense that this *chaise-longue*, which is an old fashioned sort of quilted back, curvy *chaise-longue* has a past. You can imagine Madame Recamier reclining upon it. I often do. You can imagine Freud psychoanalysing somebody on it. I often do when I make remarks like the Madame Recamier one and it introduces into my flat a sense of that commerce between the past and present.

It gives, in its own tiny way, a sense of depth to my own surroundings and I think that is enormously important. In a way it has to do with a sort of psychological sustainability. A sense that our own experience is not so thin that it completely attenuates in a historical context. That our own experience itself is rich and is being constantly re-enriched by the circumstances in which we live and by the buildings among which we move. It is why I think conferences like this are very important and it's why I've very much enjoyed attending this one.

Closing Remarks

Peter Johnson AO

Professor Peter Johnson was educated at Sydney University. He has been a Director at McConnell Smith and Johnson since 1974 (partner 1955-74). He has had a distinguished career both in practice and education. His positions include Chancellor UTS 1988-98, Emeritus Professor University of Sydney since 1988, Dep Chancellor NSWIT 1981-88, Vice President of the Board of Architects of NSW 1984-88. His publications include *Architectural Education in the Commonwealth: A Survey of Schools*; *Leslie Wilkinson: A Practical Idealist*; *Architectural Education in the Commonwealth: A second Survey of Schools.*

I think that was rather wonderful that the discussion has been extended into music and furniture. A reminder I suppose that all that we have been discussing is concerned with people and the way they use cities. It is concerned with cultures and the viability and continuity of cultures. It was very nice to have that broadening to remind us just how important people are in this whole equation.

In fact while Alan [Alan Saunders p.99] was talking I was reminded of Genia [Genia McCaffery p. 51] discussing the fact that it isn't always the important buildings that really matter to a place, it is the context in which they are situated and very often it is buildings which do not have very much individual importance which are important in establishing the total character and quality of a particular environment.

I'd like to touch upon one or two particular aspects of the conference to sum up. I was intrigued of course by James' [James Broadbent p. 21] earlier discussion about adaptive reuse, which he talked of as tautological and it probably is, and recycling a term we've been using for a very long time. He maintained we should really call it 'making do'. Perhaps there is something in that as that is what we have been doing for a very long time.

I was reminded of various things over the last 2 days, various historical connections, the strange things that I've had contact with or seen in different places and at different times. One was only last year when I attended a jazz festival in Umbria. I went to Spoleto which also has a music festival and there I saw the marvelous Renaissance colonnade put in front of a Medieval cathedral. I wonder whether the burghers of the Renaissance time really felt terribly upset that a modernist was putting a colonnade in front of the Medieval building. Just a small example of the fact that accretions over generations, accretions over different periods, have enriched our buildings often. The very building we are in of course, as was pointed out by Peter [Peter Tonkin p.33] yesterday is the sum product of the contributions of a number of architects and indeed he has pointed out he has added a top to it which some people have observed they are rather unhappy about.

I also read about a building made up of a number of contributions which I will briefly discuss because it draws attention to another particular problem. Stirling Castle, which was the gateway to Scotland and stands on the banks of the River Firth, has a 500 year old Great Hall. It stood as a sort of monument at the entrance to Scotland as a stone forbidding gray building. It had the evidence of the passage of 500 years. It had within it changes which had been made

in order to put into it, at one time, barracks and that was part of its history. What happened? Historic Scotland, the central preservation authority in Scotland, placed a wall around it so that no-one could see what was happening and what emerged was a completely different building. It was a building which shone golden in the sunlight. It was a building that had battlements which hadn't been there before. It was a building that had wonderful heraldic beasts on the ridge line and it was a building which now accommodated all the modern requirements of heating and services that go into buildings.

So here was a building which had history and evidence of what had taken place over the years completely brought back to what it was. All these things had happened because there was evidence that the building was indeed like that originally and instead of, as perhaps many would do, saying this mustn't be touched, this must be left or must be dealt with very carefully so as to preserve the evidence of the passage of history it went back in many ways to what it was originally. However it looks like a new building and it now performs an extraordinary function in providing for wonderful events of one kind or another.

Figure 1: Stirling Castle, Perthshire, Scotland

Figure 2: Stirling Castle, Great Hall, harled (rendered) and limewashed

I only quote that to say that there are complexities in deciding what is vitally important. Is it the passage of history as seen in that building before it was changed? Should we in fact go back to what it was? In what way should we allow the introduction of all of those things which make a building much more useful in the present day and I suppose that's what we've been talking about in relation to adaptive reuse.

I was the one who suggested initially that we have this conference and what did I expect? I expected we would have the richness of discussion we've had. I believe it has been extraordinarily complex and rich and we've looked at all sorts of different areas but the particular thing which I wanted to see us try to come to grips with was, as was I think mentioned the first day, at what point do you in fact allow a change to take place? At what point do you say that change has gone too far? Clearly many of the problems we've had in recent years in relation to the recycling of buildings has been because some of us, the National Trust perhaps and others in the community have felt that certain things have gone too far. What I was concerned about was how we establish just what that point is? What should we do to say well you have gone too far before the point comes where it becomes an enormous issue.

A lot of things we've been discussing have drawn attention to the need for better communication. That is easy to say and not easy to achieve but certainly the question of producing better researched statements in the beginning, better analysed comments of one kind or another would be an advantage.

We've talked about the need for conservation plans which are more creative and I think there's a need for conservation plans which do think more clearly about what might be possible and about what the limits might be so that you don't get to the sort of critical situations you have heard the developers discuss.

I thought it was extraordinarily instructive to hear about the experience of Meriton. Meriton has a reputation as appealing to a particular section of the population I believe but nevertheless what Sylvia Hrovatin [p. 39] said was that they can't sell buildings or units which have 'heritage quality'. Where there is a choice between a unit which has and a unit which hasn't the so called 'heritage qualities' do not sell as well. Perhaps what is needed in that case is greater communication of ideas to the developers themselves so that they sell better what they're producing. I rather felt although they negotiate and have various relationships with various authorities nevertheless they are doing it with some reluctance and they would probably prefer to demolish the lot.

Again that's a question of better definition of what we are wanting to achieve. Better definition in terms of what

the developer who then comes along and has to incorporate that in his proposals and better communications clearly between the two.

Communication is clearly one of the most important things which comes out of this discussion. I wonder whether as a result of all of this, we the National Trust that is, might take a bit more effort to talk to developers to a greater degree. We didn't get as many as we'd like attending the conference. We appreciate very much those who have come and they've made good contributions but I think that we do need now to make greater contact. Perhaps we should look at running a number of smaller, perhaps one evening, seminars and deliberately invite specific people so we can talk about the kind of issues that have been raised during the last two days.

I suppose the other thing I was going to say was to refer back to things that have happened in the past. I actually gave a talk on recycling about 20 years ago [See Appendix p. 109] and I found myself rereading it. I was saying the same sorts of things then as now but I also realised then, and I think that this has been made clear in what we've heard recently, that the process of recycling has always gone on. That what we have perhaps got now is an enormous explosion of development. Enormous changes are taking place at a pace that has never happened before with the result that its something we have now to deal with more frequently perhaps and certainly in terms of the speed with which things can be demolished and put up we need to deal with them more assiduously and with careful thought about what should or should not be done.

I don't want to say very much more because I think a lot has already been said. I want to thank all of those who have taken part. I want in particular to mention perhaps the very thoughtful way in which a number of our speakers have developed ideas. Derek [Derek Latham p.07] gave us a quite remarkably clear and thorough statement yesterday and that was a model of the kind of approach perhaps we should all be taking. I thought that the way in which a number of people suggested greater attention to developing clearer guidelines was beneficial. Preparing clearer initial statements should take place and I think that what is being done at North Sydney Council was very admirable and that was certainly a model for other people.

What Ivar [Ivar Nelsen p. 45] was saying in relation to Victoria was also extremely interesting and again the proposals he was putting up for greater clarity I think were extremely valuable. I think it has been a very productive two days from my point of view. I haven't heard anyone say that they've been bored or that they felt it wasn't worth coming. We've had a good audience and good participation.

Thank you.

Appendix

Paper by Professor Peter Johnson written in September 1976

Community Attitudes: New Respectability for an Ancient Custom

Professor Peter Johnson B.Arch. LFRAIA RIBA

There has been so much discussion on the recycling of buildings in very many countries recently that one might be excused for assuming that the reuse of buildings is something new. Of course not. The very fact that so many old buildings still exist both in this country and everywhere else in the world, some of them hundreds, even thousands of years old, is evidence that mankind has used and reused buildings again and again.

If it is such a common habit why then is so much being said about the recycling of buildings? It is largely because of the overall concern which has developed throughout the world about the conservation of resources and about the need to ration or at least moderate our profligate use of natural resources of many kinds if we are not going to accentuate still further the environmental problems with which we are at present beset.

Buildings are of course a resource. They have been constructed using materials drawn from the natural resources of this planet. When they are demolished and the materials abandoned wastage takes place which in many cases it may be possible to avoid. Not only are materials lost but in addition the physical efforts and the mental efforts, even sometimes genius of those responsible for designing and constructing the buildings are also lost to mankind; and the contact which the buildings give us with peoples of past generations and of past ages is lost.

With our concentration on policies of growth economics and our dedication to the goal of profit we have excelled ourselves at demolishing quickly and ruthlessly, many buildings which were still capable of performing a useful function and contributing to a pleasant and human environment. Now at a time of economic recession when a slow-down in the pace of building has developed it is opportune to re-examine our attitude towards the reuse of buildings.

The primary purpose of this article is to look at examples of recycling, or reuse, which have taken place in various countries of the world and to see what lessons they teach.

First let us examine briefly the term ‘recycle’. Strictly a cycle is a period in which a certain round of events or phenomena is completed which then recurs in the same order in equal succeeding periods. It contains the suggestion that the material under consideration is brought back to the original state. However the term as it is commonly used in relation to buildings has a much wider meaning than this. I propose to accept the widest meaning and to assume that recycling means reuse at the end of one cycle of use either when the use remains the same or when it changes, and whether or not restoration, renovation, addition to or subtraction from the building fabric is necessary.

A purist might say that a building which has been designed for one purpose cannot satisfactorily, or should not, be used for another. Does successful architecture necessarily relate to building use and will change of use adversely affect the quality of the architecture? While on occasions it may well do, the lesson of history is that it does not have to, and that many of the functions which people perform within buildings are more flexible than we believe.

The famous English architectural historian Nicholas Pevsner has this year published a book entitled *A History of Building Types* and it is interesting to note that it is the only book in the English language which has dealt with history by types, indicating how little attention has been given to the influence of use on building form. In discussing houses of parliament Pevsner points to many which were designed for the purpose, all having a monumental, stately and rather bombastic flavour, for example the Houses of Parliament in London, the Reichstag in Berlin, the Ottawa House of Parliament or the Capitol in Washington DC. But there is one in the twentieth century, the Bundeshaus at Bonn, a crisp, clean modern and rather anonymous building, which was originally built as an academy of learning, and was recycled as a parliament building. Even at this level recycling is respectable.

At the other end of the scale one may go back to earliest man to show that recycling is as old as man’s history of shelter. Caves were used and reused by early man, and myths and legends often developed based on the forms of the caves and their relationship to the surrounding natural phenomena of forests, mountains, cliffs, oceans and lakes. The shelter of the cave acquired a symbolic significance, embodied in its form, often embellished by man-made additions – a significance which grew out of the minds and imagination of men.

When a cycle of use for one man or one family or one tribe was completed another followed inheriting the symbolism embodied in the physical form, sometimes destroying it, sometimes leaving it untouched; but more usually adding to it to form a growing and living tradition which took account of new beliefs, new customs or new functions. It might be said that cave0man started us on the habit of recycling buildings.

Let me now list the reasons why we should recycle buildings and then the ways in which they may be recycled.

1 Cost

In our present society undoubtedly the first reason which would be advanced by most building users or building owners for the reuse of an existing building is that it would cost less to do so than demolish and rebuild. That reuse is not always the most economical way to maximize site development is obvious but the assumption has all too readily been made that it never is. One factor alone which may tilt the balance in some cases is the length of time for which a site is unproductive during rebuilding, while handling and other coasts are increasing. More sympathetic and comprehensive feasibility studies are needed, in particular to try to quantify the real benefits which may flow from the retention rather than the disruption of the physical and social context in which the building is placed.

2 Quality of Environment

It now seems clear that one of the reasons for the great interest in recycling of old buildings which has developed in so many parts of the world in recent years has been a growing conviction that much recent building does not have those qualities possessed by past architecture which cause people to respond to it, to derive enjoyment from it. The development of more sympathetic aspects of modern architecture, perhaps by the revival of the use of decoration, or in a better understanding of human scale, or in the use of more approachable materials, is beginning to take place, even if slowly. This development however will not remove the need for recycling of buildings but rather help improve the context in which they can happily sit side by side.

The particular quality of environment made possible by the sensitive reuse of old buildings cannot be achieved by new construction. For many people it is an important quality which allows them to feel part of a culture with historical roots. The contribution which buildings make to the particular identity of a place is important to those who live in or come to visit that place. This is one of the important criteria for retention which is rarely stated clearly nor assessed accurately when argument takes place about the retention of a particular building. While historical or architectural criteria are usually well stated there is a special place for those buildings or places which contribute for other reasons to the special character of a location; for example the contribution that Luna Park makes to Sydney, especially when lit at night, as a foil to the appearance and activities of the Sydney Opera House on the other side of the harbour.

3 Retention of Community

The part which existing buildings or complexes of buildings play in the rich and varied social pattern in which mankind is involved is often forgotten, so that destruction often has broader consequences on social patterns than the obvious physical depredation would appear to suggest.

4 Historical and Architectural Qualities

For the majority of the buildings with which we are concerned here, rigid ideas of preservation involving historical accuracy are inappropriate since some flexibility is needed to allow changes of use. I am inclined to feel that insistence on historical accuracy in some cases can be taken too far, while acknowledging its necessity in buildings of high preservation priority.

5 Resource Conservation

The concept of resource conservation has already been discussed as a major factor which focused attention on the recycling of buildings – it must not however, be accepted uncritically and the implications in relation to each case under consideration must be examined rationally, especially in strongly emotional situations.

Modes of Recycling

In the broad definition of recycling which is used here the examples which will be discussed fall into one or other of the following categories:

i. Recycling in which the use does not change and where there is no major change of the fabric.
ii. Recycling in which there is change in use but no major change in fabric.
iii. Recycling in which periodic additions are made to cater for changed needs.
iv. Recycling in which the building shell is retained and the building interior changed.

v. Recycling in which the façades only are retained to form an element in a new building.
vi. Recycling in which the building is incorporated as an element in a larger construction or in a new sequence of buildings.
vii. Recycling in which elements of the building are reused decoratively or as sculptural elements in the spaces or parks related to buildings.

There has been a great ground swell of opinion throughout the world indicating the degree to which communities value the contribution old buildings make to the identity and quality of the environments mankind inhabits. Allied with this move for retention of the old house there has been a corresponding phenomenon of disappointment with the new, involving a general criticism of our societies and their values. The following items, taken at random, give some idea of the strength and spread of these ideas.

In Europe in 1975 European Architectural Heritage Year was held. It was a year in which public attention was focused on the continued use of old buildings especially those of historic and architectural value and in which many projects were undertaken with government encouragement and sometimes financial support which contributed to improved quality of environment. It was claimed to be a turning point in public attitudes towards environmental quality.

In the Middle East the cities of the Arabian Gulf have begun to realize that the recent rush of development is sweeping away the city fabrics which act as a repository of tradition giving them their special character. In places like Abbu Dhabi the ancient character of the town has almost vanished, while in Muscat and architect professor is working on a recycling process in which the exteriors of buildings are retained and the interiors gutted and modernised.

The mayor of the Southern Italian town of Paestrum near Naples has criticised the work of building speculators, constructors of what he called 'ugly and monstrous houses and apartments' and he has appealed to public opinion to save the town and its architectural monuments from speculators.

In the United States the Educational facilities Laboratory has in recent years published two reports on 'Reusing Railroad Stations' in which attention is drawn to the need to reuse buildings as a resource wherever possible and pointing out that many 'sturdy and unique' railroad stations no longer needed for their original purpose may be used as buildings for the arts, for education, social sciences and for commerce. Grand Central Station in New York has been in danger of demolition to enable the site to be developed and in a shop nearby a citizen committee has been conducting a major campaign to save Grand Central. As a New Yorker put it 'if Grand Central goes – can City Hall be far behind?'. It now appears that the weight of public opinion will save Grand Central Station.

Lively correspondence in *The Times* in London has drawn attention to the problem of the many redundant churches in England and the nature of the uses appropriate or inappropriate to which they may be put.

In Sydney the Kings Cross Fire Station, recently at risk, is now to be restored and converted (or recycled) for dual use as a fire and police station – official recognition of a changing community need has brought about this happy outcome.

The examples which follow indicate ways in which old buildings have been or are being reused in different countries of the world.

The Roman amphitheatre at Arles is an example of a powerful physical form which has changed in dramatic ways over the centuries. Following its original use in Roman times it was completely built over, in the Middle Ages, forming the protective encompassing shell for a whole community with its diverse activities. The powerful form of the external circular shell of the walls gave a special character to the town which grew up within it. Now the walls are bare again and the interior cleared, the building serving its present function as an historic monument, linking past with present, for locals and visitors alike.

There is a fifteenth century farmer's house not far from Hever Castle in Kent which had fallen into a disastrous state of disrepair – to the average Australian builder or developer it was no doubt beyond redemption and even if it were found to be structurally sound it had other apparent defects. The ceiling of the living room consisted of plaster between joists carried on beams, both made of oak – battered, pitted, cracked, split and holed by borers, with the height above the floor varying from 6'2" to 6' 4" to the underside of the joists, about 6' 6" to the plaster. There was a step down from an adjoining room of 6" which meant that the door height was about 5' 6".

But there was of course no question of demolition. The house was recycled – the kitchen and bathroom fittings and plumbing brought up to date, the remainder made stable, retaining as many as possible of the original elements of structure.

Considerable sensitivity was needed to decide when to retain the old, when to replace in a manner which would blend consistently with the old and when to clearly state that an element is new. The character of the house and its close relationship with the surrounding landscape, a relationship developed and strengthened over five centuries has a value which cannot readily be measured in monetary terms. The house is not of great historic importance, nor is it architecturally significant, yet it has value to its owners and to those who visit it or see it which transcends the normal criteria considered when there is a question about whether or not to demolish.

The very irregularities, the faults and flaws resulting from the living use of spaces over time, record history and provide a sense of continuity and stability. They constitute part of the external evidence of a collective memory. Many such parts add up to the physical context which we inhabit and which has meaning for each of us.

Landscape, buildings and artifacts all contribute to a sense of continuity. The process of subtraction and addition as each age and culture makes its won contributions is continuous. However, at a certain point the amount of subtraction which takes place due to demolition of building or destruction of an artifact breaks the continuity and distorts the cultural pattern

causing dislocation and loss of a sense of recognition, even of confidence and purpose. Alvin Toffler in *Future Shock* has drawn attention to these problems in our society and other writers in recent years have taken up this theme.

University and college buildings in many countries come into the category of buildings which have survived many years of reuse and of changing use and which are constantly adapted for new purposes.

Kings Manor at York University, originally a late thirteenth century abbot's house, added to in the fifteenth century and further adjusted by major additions and minor changes over the centuries, with alterations to floor levels, to windows and doorways. Cycled and recycled, one might say, it is now the home of the York Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies – and fulfils its function in an admirable manner providing spaces of a quality which would be hard t equal for their purpose yet deriving their forms from very different original uses. One very monastic looking section of the building upon closer examination is found to contain a boiler house while the original first floor organ gallery now makes an excellent student reading room. The easy informality, the irregular placing of one section of the building in relation to another, produce a character to which it is impossible not to respond with pleasure, and as an architect, with humility. The building is well maintained and sensitively adapted to changing uses from time to time as need arises but there would, I am sure never be any question about whether or not to demolish. It is an ideal case of a building that has effectively been recycled for 700 years growing in size from time to time in the process and continuing to develop depth of character which contributes to its effectiveness of use.

At Minster Lovell in Oxfordshire an old mill complex provides a further example of the way in which a group of old buildings may be reused, added to in a sympathetic manner and beautifully related to the existing context of a village and landscape of great beauty and maturity. In this case the final group of buildings is being used as a study center for the biological and social sciences. The success here of the marriage of old and new is due in part to sensitive selection of materials and to an irregularity and complexity of form in the new which is consistent with the character of the old.

One conversion in England some years ago which was given some publicity and which drew attention to the value of recycling industrial buildings was the conversion of a disused malthouse into a concert hall and recoding studio near Snape in Suffolk for the use of the Aldeborough Festival to which composer Benjamin Britten has made such significant contributions. It has retained the strong character of the original buildings and has produced an excellent and acoustically successful auditorium. It continues to fit into its country setting in an appropriate manner.

Nineteenth century dock buildings in England have often been admired for their forthright character in the functional tradition characteristic of many practical buildings of the period. In many cities they are now being converted for reuse in imaginative ways. Perhaps the most interesting of these developments is at St Catherine's dock in London where an extensive series of buildings is being converted for housing and for club, commercial and retail use including restaurants, in an interesting example of mixed development.

York is a city which has many old and beautiful mediaeval churches, far too many for its present needs. A number of these have been converted for many uses. During Architectural Heritage Year attention was focused in York on the development of one of these churches as a heritage center.

It takes the form of a museum to display the history and the richness and variety of the buildings at York. There are displays including models, photographs and drawings, not only of buildings of the past but of proposals for future development in York. At the crossing of the church an imaginative display using scaffolding and life sized figures illustrates the manner in which the church itself may have been built in mediaeval times.

Of two other recycled churches one is used as an old peoples' center and club while a second has become a small center for performing arts including club rooms and a theatre in the round to accommodate about 250 people which effectively uses the gothic arches of the knave and crossing background.

The Embarcadero Centre development in downtown San Francisco involved the clearing of some blocks to allow major new buildings to be erected, and the parallel restoration and reuse of nearby 19th century buildings to implement a policy of retaining a balance between continuity and new development. Some of the old buildings have been extensively rebuilt internally and some have been retained with relatively little physical change, although they have different and generally upgraded uses to those which they had prior to the development scheme.

The so-called Byker Wall in the Byker district of Newcastle, England and the housing development on Roosevelt Island alongside Manhattan Island in New York are both major housing developments which have in common the fact that they have absorbed into their complexes existing buildings which contribute to a greater sense of cultural continuity in the total new environment. In the case of the Byker development, for which the architect was Ralph Erskine, existing factory buildings have been used as community buildings of various kinds and the sense of visual continuity of the total complex is apparent.

Wit the Roosevelt Island development an existing church now used as a community center and ecumenical religious center is an essential focal point in the town square at the center of the complex. the fact that it is an old building reused adds a dimension of maturity to an otherwise new and raw project.

In the United States a great deal of publicity was given to the conversion of a number of nineteenth century industrial buildings in San Francisco in the '60s. The factories and warehouses now known as Ghiradelli Square and the Cannery at Fisherman's Wharf are used for specialty shops of various kinds and for restaurants, drinking places and places of entertainment. The buildings which survived the 1906 earthquake and fire have massive brick walls, the character of which has been exploited in the conversion. They still remain highly successful examples of recycling and still act as models for development in other cities.

In our own city the work undertaken by the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority, especially in the Metcalf and Cleland Bonds and the previous development of the Argyle Bond in a similar manner have shown that recycling of this kind can take place satisfactorily here.

The character of environment created in this way with its sense of continuity and its links with the past cannot be achieved by new building and it is clear that the public response both here and in other countries has justified the recycling process. To illustrate that the desire to reuse buildings of historic interest is not restricted to the countries of the West, the development of the Telok Ayer market in Singapore as a food center may be cited. Although retention of old buildings in Singapore is not given high priority this is an example of a building originally erected in 1894, with excellent Victorian cast iron structure, which has captured the imagination of the people of Singapore. With a minimum amount of internal alteration and the provision of additional services the building has become one of the most popular food centers in the central business district used by both office workers and by tourists. It too provides a valuable link with the past history of the city.

The idea of recycling elements of buildings, of using the elements as sculpture or as decoration in new buildings which replace the old of which the elements were part is a second best manner of doffing the cap to the past. There are examples to be seen around Sydney. It can be said that it is better to have an apologetic gesture of this kind than nothing at all.

In downtown Manhattan a new multistory police station and offices replaced the Rhinelander building. Five of the polished granite Ionic columns from the demolished building now sit somewhat selfconsciously on the pavement in front of the new building. Some people have said that this approach is an accurate measure of the value which some sections of communities are willing to place on the past.

I do not propose to discuss many examples of recycled buildings in Sydney since they will be dealt with by others. However I do want to make one or two comments some based on the direct experience of my own firm. Our record seems to suggest that so far as our own accommodation is concerned we are fanatical recyclers. The sequence of buildings in which we have established the office of McConnel Smith & Johnson reads as follows. Domestic garage, stable, school, municipal council chambers, cough mixture factory – a polyglot if ever there was one, and not one of them an orthodox office building – how can this be justified?

The first part of the answer is cost, the second location, the third character. In each case the cost at the particular stage of development of the office was less than the alternative amount which would have been paid for an equivalent amount of space in a building built as an office in an appropriate location. Secondly, freed from the constraint of seeking orthodox office accommodation it was possible to look for a building in a location which was convenient in terms of access for members of the office. And finally each of the buildings had a special character which appealed to the romantic spirit of the architects.

The present office is in Surry Hills, formerly used by Woods Great Peppermint Cure and prior to that used as a laundry which necessitated a tall brick chimney, continues to be a visually interesting element in the area, while the building provides very satisfactory office space.

Two examples of some interest in which we have been engaged are the restoration of the NSW Club to be used as offices for Tjuringa Industries and the restoration of part of Horbury Terrace which were once stretched from Bent to Hunter Street. In both cases the restoration was made possible by the transfer of the plot ratio applicable to the sites adjoining or nearby new buildings, a move made possible by city council regulations introduced in the City of Sydney Strategic Plan. In both cases the buildings have considerable historic and environmental value.

There is a great deal of recycling already taking place in Sydney, some of the most significant examples being the renovation of inner suburban areas, including 19th century terraces, especially in Glebe undertaken by the Australian government; and there are various interesting inner city office developments, for example the Sydney Science Centre in Clarence Street and from a completely different point of view the Colonial Mutual Life Building in Martin Place, in which only the external walls facing Martin Place and Pitt Street have been retained.

A number of old buildings have been effectively recycled as little theatres – the Ensemble, the Nimrod, the Stables and the Old Tote. In this area the concept of recycling is well accepted. It is tempting to quote the line from John Osborne's play *The Entertainers*, 'Don't clap too hard, it's a very old building', as evidence that the concept of recycling of the old is well known in the theatre.

Finally let me comment on some recent developments in America and New York which may have lessons for Sydney.

Problems arise whenever changes of use take place in old buildings which cause them to come under the provisions and regulations which did not exist when they were built. In some American states there exist clauses known as 'grandfather clauses' saving clauses 'to take care of grandfather' who may still have an interest. However in New York under a new amendment of Article B of the New York Building Code encouragement is given to the recycling and reuse of buildings which do not comply with the code standards primarily designed for new construction. The manner in which it is being implemented is to start in special cases where there is a high concentration of buildings to be retained and it is hoped that once the proposals prove successful in those areas there will be understanding and sympathy which will allow them to be used more generally. A broad area to which this approach has applied is the 'cast iron' district south of Houston Street in Greenwich Village, an industrial area with many cast iron buildings of considerable architectural and historic interest.

The lofts contained in many of these buildings have caused them to be prized by artists for studios and consequently the area now contains many artists' studios and galleries which would not have been possible without special legislation. It appears that there may well be a lesson for Sydney in the manner in which New York has dealt with this problem.

In New York there has been a tradition of large scale redevelopment with a strong economic motive as the principal determinant but in recent years more and more protests have been raised at the destruction of much that was either architecturally or historically valuable or which merely contributed to the general character of particular areas of the city. The pressures for destruction are always more pronounced in urban areas and in New York with its size and pace of development the cause for conservation has always been a difficult one. However formation of a Landmarks Commission and the Landmarks Preservation Law of 1965 enabled individual structures to be proclaimed landmarks and areas proclaimed historic districts. In authorising proposals to change the environment within an historic district the Commission must consider 'the factors of aesthetics, historical and architectural values and significance, architectural style, design, arrangement, texture, material and colour.'

The powers of the Commission have been upheld in a number of cases in which courts have recognised the right of a city to proclaim land marks based on aesthetic and cultural considerations.

There is always a conflict between those who wish to retain buildings and environments and those who wish to develop them for economic gain. It is only in recent years that those on the side of conservation have had reasonable support in New York from government which has developed programmes to encourage the conversion of existing buildings. The situation in New York, in which there are both strong commercial pressures and powerful and intelligent conservation interests, is an intense example of conflict of values with which communities in so many places are faced.

The following quote from *New York* magazine in relation to the conversion of a restaurant in an old hotel on Park Avenue to be run by a restauranteur from Paris, Regine, touches upon the problems and conflicts. 'Zeckendorf wooed Regine. He was convinced her presence would enhance his success in converting a fading hotel into luxury apartments, hoping that the conversion would fall under New York's J51 programme, one of those sweetheart rulings designed to seduce builders into turning near defunct real estate into living space.' The uncertainties, the commercial pressures, the rewards, the optimism, and the suggestion of continuity of the character of a city are all hinted at here.

List of photographs that originally accompanied the text (unavailable)

1 Typical renovated building in the Embarcadero area of San Francisco
2 The cast iron structure of the Telok Ayer Food Centre in Singapore
3 Cast iron buildings in teh Soho district of New York
4 Wharfside, a San Francisco warehouse now converted to offices
5 Facade of Nash Terraces in The Strand, London, retained with new building behind
6 The remaining part of Horbury Terrace in Macquarie Street recycled as offices
7 The interior of the former New South Wales Club being converted to offices
8 The former New South Wales Club - a reminder of the past in a matrix of a new building

Endnote

Conference Organisers

Well Done Events, P.O. Box 90 Cambewarra, NSW, 2540

Catering

The Avocado Group

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