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BRITAIN'S HERITAGE

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2018

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Reimagining Manchester's historic core

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BRITAIN'S HERITAGE NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2018

Director's introduction

The front page image gives you a good idea of the historic splendour of the Empire cinema on Haymarket in London's West End – now celebrated and protected from demolition as a listed building as a result of our successful campaign. We're currently in talks with the Crown Estate about the future of their newest designated heritage asset.

The other headline story is our victory at the Court of Appeal. In October we won a landmark legal challenge against the Secretary of State on giving reasons for call-in decisions. It is a fantastic result that opens up the decision making process for highly contested decisions across the country and a major victory for openness and transparency.

In Manchester, we were delighted to publish alternative proposals for the controversial development site in the city's historic core known as 'St Michael's'.



Our alternative proposal for Manchester shows Bootle Street resurfaced and used as a shared street for vehicles and pedestrians. The existing 1930s police station (shown on right) is retained and transformed into a hotel/residential building (image: Ian Chalk Architects).

Working with Ian Chalk Architects, our alternative concept shows how the 1930s former police station headquarters and surrounding streets can be brought back to life and transformed with a conservation led approach.

Back in London we are focused on Whitehall – and the grade II* listed government offices built just 30 years ago to the designs of Sir William Whitfield – currently under threat from demolition. In this issue we show case Michael Hopkins' alternative plans which could save the building. In Ayr, on the west coast of Scotland, we are working with a local group to save the grand 19th century Station Hotel currently standing empty and at risk, and in Bradford we submitted strong objections to the demolition of a listed Victorian school – the first in England to have its own swimming pool.

This issue also features guest articles from Dan Cruickshank on the destruction and 'resurrection architecture' in Palmyra, and from Alec Forshaw on the restoration story of the Sessions House in Clerkenwell, central London. We also have an in-depth review of our grand tour of Liverpool back in June.

After four successful years at SAVE, Emily Lunn our Senior Fundraising Officer has moved on – we wish her well in her new job in Richmond. We are recruiting for her replacement so if you are interested in applying (see our website for details), or know someone who might be, we'd love to hear from you.

Thank you to all our supporters for your help and generosity this year. From all of us here at SAVE, we wish you a happy Christmas and look forward to working with you in 2019.

Henrietta Billings



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CONTRIBUTORS

Thomas Bender is the SAVE conservation adviser. Formerly Thomas was the lead adviser for design review at the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment.

Henrietta Billings is the director of SAVE Britain's Heritage and editor of the SAVE newsletter.

Marcus Binney is the executive president of SAVE Britain's Heritage.

Tom Bolton is an urban researcher and writer specialising in the culture and history of London. Tom wrote *London's Lost Rivers: A Walker's Guide*.

Dan Cruickshank has written many books on architecture as well as presented numerous programmes for the BBC, including *Britain's best Buildings and Marvels of the Modern Age*.

Peter Elson is a journalist based in Liverpool. He wrote for the Liverpool Echo for 17 years.

Alec Forshaw is a historian and writer, formerly a conservation officer at the London Borough of Islington.

Liz Fuller is the buildings at risk officer at SAVE Britain's Heritage. Liz has a background in law and manages the production of the annual Buildings at Risk Catalogue.

Leigh Stanford is the administrator at SAVE Britain's Heritage and has worked in the charity sector for many years.

Diana B. Tyson is a medievalist with a particular interest in French history. Diana is a SAVE Saviour.

A Hollywood fairy-tale – Saving the Empire Cinema

The campaign to save the Empire Cinema – formerly the Carlton – on Haymarket in London is one of our great success stories in 2018. The Empire is the last grand 1920s entertainment palace in the West End, and as a result of an intense campaign and new information, it is acknowledged and celebrated as a grade II listed building.

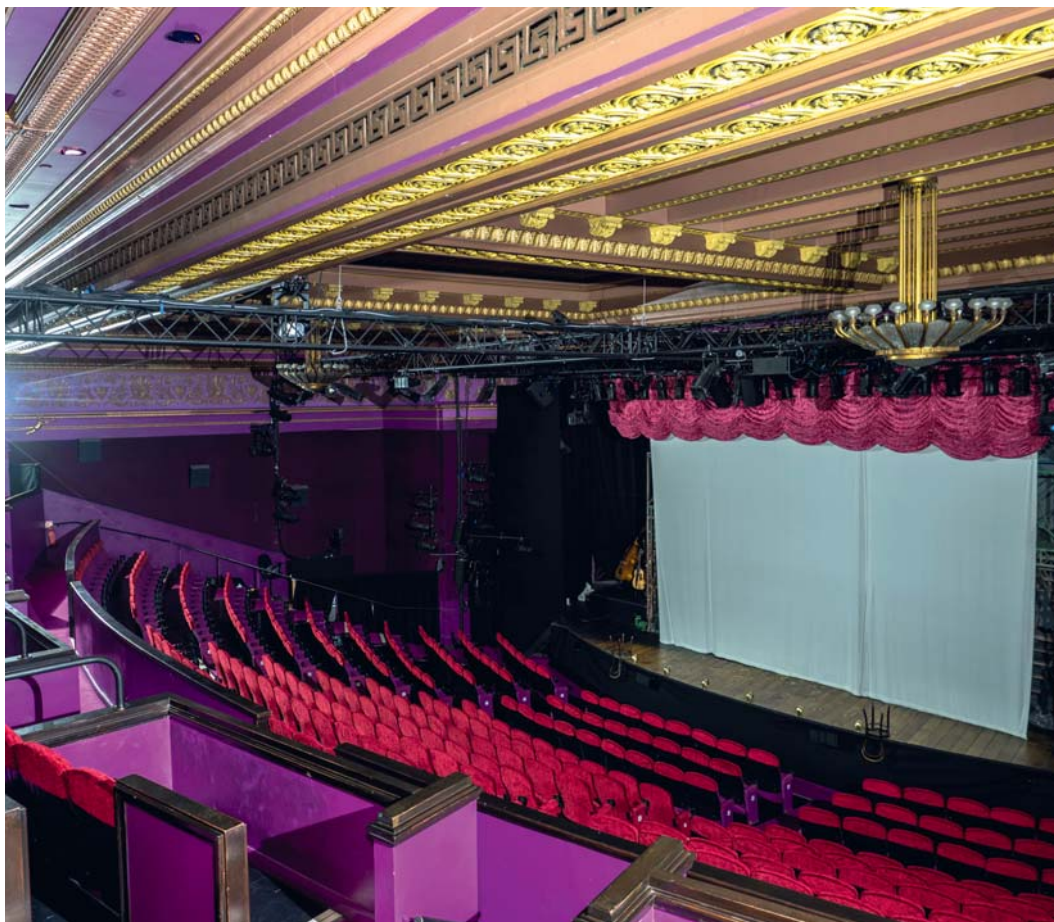
The cinema was at risk when its owner, The Crown Estate, applied for a certificate of immunity from listing (COI) earlier this year to clear the way for the site's redevelopment and a new office-led scheme. SAVE fought a long battle in collaboration with the Cinema Theatre Association to save it from demolition. In October, we succeeded – the cinema is now a grade II listed building and registered on the National Heritage List for England.

The listing decision is particularly significant as the designation of the Empire Cinema was previously refused. However, the recent re-inspection by Historic England brought to light a number of historic features that survived and had been previously overlooked. This new evidence in conjunction with the fact that many other historic cinemas have been lost since the last assessment of the cinema ten years ago has resulted in a new appreciation of the historic significance of the building.

Now, The Crown Estate is rethinking its plans for the site, and we are looking forward to seeing a fresh approach to these historic interiors.

Fighting the battle

Our campaign included commissioning a photographic survey of the cinema to highlight its special significance and to raise public awareness about this fantastic building. We published a series of beautiful photos by Ian Grundy of the spaces: the grand foyer in neoclassical style that leads up to the upstairs' bar, the splendid main auditorium with its impressive Renaissance palazzo-style ceiling and many other exquisite features, including the elegant 1920s panelling of the former stalls and a hidden bar in the basement. The building's façade and much of the historic interiors have retained their original beauty and survive virtually intact. The completeness and special



Left: Many of the original features survive in the main auditorium. The richly decorated beams under the Italianate ceiling disguise the ventilation system (image: Ian Grundy).

Right: The upstairs bar has remained virtually untouched since 1927 and has an elegant character with fine detailing (image: Ian Grundy).





The original 1920s decoration with wall panels and light fittings is still visible in many places (image: Ian Grundy).

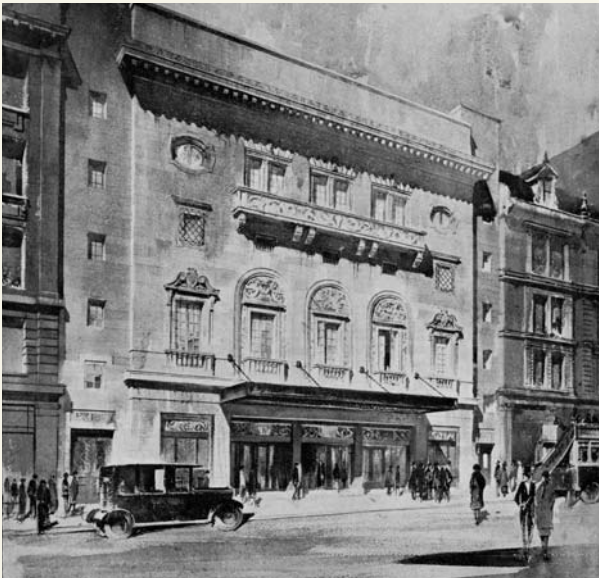
With imagination and determination, it could be a world class West End entertainment venue, continuing a long-running tradition of entertainment in this part of London.

historic character of the cinema can be seen in the short film that we commissioned from film maker Andy Hylton, with SAVE director Henrietta Billings and chair of casework of the CTA Richard Gray. Earlier, SAVE's conservation adviser Thomas Bender gave an interview on the BBC, inviting people to visit this rare cinema gem.

With imagination and determination, it could be a world class West End entertainment venue, continuing a long-running tradition of entertainment in this part of London.



Detail of the Robert Adam inspired decoration of the foyer (image: Ian Grundy)



The Carlton on Haymarket in the 1920s (image: Faulkner Collection)

Key dates

1927: Paramount opens the Carlton Theatre at Haymarket

1929: The Carlton is wired for sound just after talkies were invented, stars like Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers attend screenings of their films

1954: The Carlton becomes the 20th Century Fox showcase cinema for CinemaScope productions and hosts many glamorous Hollywood premieres – for example with Richard Burton and Charlie Chaplin

1977: The Carlton closes down; the stage block is demolished and rebuilt as office building. It reopens as a triple-screen cinema

2018: Following The Crown Estate’s application for a Certificate of Immunity from Listing, the CoI is refused and the cinema is listed

A splendid rarity

The Empire was built as the Carlton in 1927 for Paramount Pictures and quickly became one of London’s most prestigious movie theatres. It holds a key place in Britain’s cinema history as one of only two Paramount cinemas in the West End, built just at the time when technology changed and “talking pictures” were introduced. It served later as a premiere cinema for 20th Century Fox. The other Paramount cinema, the company’s former flagship cinema, is The Plaza on Lower Regent Street, once a striking movie temple, now a Tesco supermarket with cinema screens in the basement.

Despite the demolition of the stage building at the back and the conversion into a three-screen cinema, the cinema is surprisingly well preserved given that it has served its purpose for more than ninety years. Many cinemas were divided up into smaller auditoriums in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. These divisions were carried out by partitioning which concealed many original features but often left them intact behind the new cladding, walling or ceilings. In the case of the Empire cinema, the Historic England listing report confirmed that much of the original decoration survived such as parts of the proscenium arch and the Venetian windows in the auditorium.

A beauty

The Empire’s refined, solemn elevational treatment must have been quite an attraction among the ostentatious façades around Haymarket. A restrained palette of materials, architectural devices and ornament give the building a noble palazzoesque appearance. Built in Portland stone, the front elevation is composed of a central five bay part and two recessed elements on either side which rise above the central parapet. The front is sparsely decorated with a strong dentilled cornice at the top and elegant pediments above the first floor windows. Today, the façade is partially covered by a large film advertisement screen. It is understood that the second floor balcony with its fine banister and consoles remains intact behind the scaffolding.

Verity & Beverley, the design team behind the cinema, were a firm of distinguished cinema architects, a firm that still exists today. Francis (Frank) Thomas Verity, son of a successful 19th century theatre designer, became the in-house architect of Paramount. Samuel Beverley was Verity’s son in law and joined the practice in the early 1920s. The firm’s oeuvre includes two cinemas that are now listed at grade II, the Shepherd’s Bush Pavilion and the aforementioned Plaza and the private cinemas at Buckingham Palace and Clarence House. However, only the Empire is substantially intact.

Watch our short film “SAVE the Empire cinema” here:

<https://vimeo.com/290492352>

See our complete Empire dossier with many more pictures here:

<https://www.savebritainsheritage.org/campaigns>

The story of the Paddington Cube legal challenge – a triumph for transparent decision making

Henrietta Billings explains the landmark legal victory achieved in October 2018.

It was the culmination of a very hard fought planning battle which started with the ‘Paddington Cube’ and ended in the Court of Appeal. Three Court of Appeal judges agreed with SAVE and ruled that ministers must abide by a published government policy and give reasons for call-in decisions on planning applications. This includes planning applications that were not called in – like the highly controversial Paddington Cube. It is a fantastic result that opens up the decision making process for highly contested major schemes across the country. It literally changes the landscape of decision making – and is a major victory for openness and transparency.

Our involvement began in 2016 when we raised major objections to the proposed demolition of the handsome 1906 Royal Mail sorting office and the replacement 19 storey office block promoted by Sellars Property. The proposals attracted widespread criticism and national media coverage due to the impact the proposals would have on the surrounding Conservation Area, as well as the adjacent grade I listed Paddington Station. The area is characterised by buildings of 4–6 storeys in height, and the Royal Mail sorting office is deemed a ‘building of merit’ within the Bayswater Conservation Area – a status that supposedly protects such areas from overscaled development and wholesale demolition of historic buildings.

The handling of the scheme was contentious from the start. Cllr Robert Davis, then chair of the planning committee gave interviews to journalists in support of the proposals before the plans had even reached his committee, and the Imperial Healthcare Trust which runs nearby St Mary’s Hospital raised strong concerns about the impact of the new road layout on ambulance access. South-East Bayswater Residents’ Association (SEBRA) and the Victorian Society also raised objections with local Councillors and planners. Yet all of our concerns fell on deaf ears, and Westminster City Council’s planning committee resolved to grant consent.

In response, SAVE, along with the Victorian Society, SEBRA and St Mary’s all petitioned the Secretary of State to ‘call-in’ the proposals for a public inquiry so that the planning issues could be independently and robustly examined by a Planning Inspector. In March 2017 the Secretary of State (then Sajid Javid) declined to do so,

and did not give reasons for his decision. It appeared to us as if the proposals met the criteria for call-in of a major scheme – as set out in legislation, so knowing the reasons for his decision was critical.

On advice from our legal team, Richard Harwood QC of 39 Essex Chambers and Susan Ring from Harrison Grant Solicitors, we launched judicial review proceedings at the High Court against the government and the refusal to give reasons. We argued that under existing policy, announced in the House of Commons in 2001 and restated in 2010, ministers are obliged to give reasons when they decline to call in planning applications.

Our case rested on the argument that in 2001, Lord Falconer, the attorney general, stated in the House of Commons that: “...the Secretary of State gives reasons where applications are called in but, up to now, they have not been given when he has decided not to call in an



The handsome 1906 Royal Mail sorting office adjacent to Paddington Station (image: SAVE)

application. In the interests of greater openness he shall, from today, give reasons in both circumstances...As part of our fundamental review of the planning system, we have decided that as from today we will give reasons for our decision not to call in planning applications. This decision ... is in the interests of transparency, good administration and best practice.”

This position was re-stated in 2010, and referenced as policy in a 2017 House of Commons briefing paper to MPs on call-in applications. This policy was overlooked by civil servants and ministers since 2014 without apparent explanation, and since then, reasons were routinely not given for decisions not to call-in planning applications.

“Since a promise had been made to operate a particular procedure then, as a matter of good administration and transparent governance, any change to that policy also had to be announced publicly.”

Lord Justice Coulson

Our judicial review was heard in the High Court by Justice Lang in November 2017, who dismissed our case. This led to the Court of Appeal hearing in September 2018 in front of Lord Justice Singh, Lord Justice Coulson and Lord Justice MacFarlane. In the judgement written by Lord Justice Coulson, he said: “Since a promise had been made to operate a particular procedure then, as a matter of good administration and transparent governance, any change to that policy also had to be announced publicly. It is not a question of fettering the future exercise of discretion, but simply making public the decision that something which had been promised and provided in the past would not be provided in the future. In my view, good administration and transparent government required nothing less. Of course, this did not happen here because no-one in the Department knew that they were changing a promised policy (because they had forgotten about it).”

Lord Justice Coulson added: “An unequivocal promise was made, and that unequivocal promise should have been publicly withdrawn when (or if) a conscious decision was taken no longer to give reasons for not calling in applications For these reasons, I consider that SAVE’s legitimate expectation case has been made out.”

Lord Justice Coulson also pointed out in the judgement that nobody in government appeared to know about their own policy: “From the Secretary of State’s point of view, therefore, so far, so bad: but it gets worse.

Ms Lieven QC¹ was counsel for the Secretary of State in the Westminster case. When Mrs Justice Lang² asked her how it was that the change in practice had occurred, it was apparent from her answers (given on instructions) that, at the time of the Westminster case in 2014³, nobody in the Department recalled or had in mind the unequivocal promise made in 2001 (and repeated in 2010). Thus, Mr Harwood QC was right to submit that the change in practice relied on by the Secretary of State was brought about in ignorance of the 2001 policy promise. So, even on the Secretary of State’s case, the promise to give reasons was never consciously withdrawn, whether for good reason or not; it had instead been forgotten altogether.”

SAVE initially linked the legal action over reasons to the Paddington Cube planning permission – with a view to ultimately overturning the planning permission. However, this element of our case was disallowed by the Court of Appeal when we were given permission to appeal. Therefore the Court of Appeal decision is separate from the planning permission for the Paddington Cube – which still stands.

Since we won the case, Cllr Davis has resigned from Westminster City Council after an internal investigation (published on 8th October) found he had breached the authority’s code of conduct in relation to the acceptance of gifts, dinners and holidays from people including developers with schemes in the borough. In light of the report, we have written to the Leader of Westminster Cllr Nickie Aiken requesting a full Council led inquiry into the handling of the Paddington Cube planning permission. We intend to keep up the pressure on this disgraceful case.

Read the Court of Appeal judgment in full:
[savebritainsheritage.org](https://www.savebritainsheritage.org)

This article was first published in SEBRA magazine November 2018

1. Ms Nathalie Lieven QC was also the Counsel for the Secretary of State in the Paddington Cube case.
2. Mrs Justice Lang was the judge in the High Court over the initial Paddington Cube judicial review which was refused.
3. The Westminster case refers to a planning application to Lambeth Council for Elizabeth House at Waterloo with potential effects on the Westminster World Heritage Site and objected to by English Heritage (now Historic England), Westminster Council and UNESCO.

Rescue bid for grade II* listed Whitehall landmark: alternative Hopkins proposal for temporary House of Commons

We are backing an alternative proposal by renowned architect Sir Michael Hopkins for the temporary House of Commons chamber, required by the £6bn refurbishment of the Palace of Westminster. The alternative proposal would reprieve the grade II* listed Richmond House on Whitehall – currently slated as the government’s preferred site for the temporary chamber and threatened with major demolition and redevelopment.

Designed by Sir William Whitfield and his partner Andrew Lockwood, Richmond House opened in 1988 to critical acclaim. Initially the proposal was to place the temporary chamber in the courtyard of the Whitfield building which (in theory) could have been reinstated when the refurbishment of the house of Parliament is complete. However, proposals now under consideration involve the complete loss of the Whitfield building except for the Whitehall frontage.

The alternative plans, drawn up by Sir Michael Hopkins, show how the dimensions of the existing House of Commons chamber could be accommodated within the large atrium of Portcullis House, the Stirling Prize nominated office building for MPs opposite Big Ben. It was designed by Hopkins and opened in 2001. Though not yet developed in detail, the proposal demonstrates there is space for the Ayes and Noes lobbies on either side of the chamber all set within the atrium.

The temporary chamber would only occupy half the internal space of the atrium leaving the other half free for its present use – meeting space and cafés for MPs and visitors etc. The temporary diminution of atrium space for MPs would be counterbalanced by major time and cost savings – integrating the chamber into the Portcullis House atrium would cost less than virtually rebuilding Richmond House. Just 30 years after it was completed, its redevelopment is also not justified in terms of sustainability and embodied energy. Richmond House could be sensitively adapted to provide ample office space for MPs.

Richmond House

Writing in *Country Life* in 1988 Roderick Gradidge, a leading critic of contemporary architecture, wrote Whitfield is “one of the most distinguished architects of his generation...”. He continued: “There has been no staircase as grand as this in a Whitehall Office since Scott built his intentionally overpowering staircase in the Foreign Office”.

Whitfield’s Richmond House, incorporates the handsome Regency Richmond Terrace, designed in 1819 by Thomas Chawner, and built in 1822–4. The official listing description of 2015 sets out the quality and importance of Whitfield’s work citing the “high quality interiors.... Richmond House has a notable, monumental succession of principal internal spaces, unparalleled at the time in purpose-built post-war government offices”. All these could be swept away in the proposed rebuilding of Richmond House as offices for MPs.

As completed in 1988 Richmond House provided, according to the magazine *Building*, “15,000 square metres [150,000 sq ft] of all-purpose government offices to house some 450 bureaucrats”. Whitfield’s new buildings back on to New Scotland Yard a handsome red brick building designed by Richard Norman Shaw, one of the most original and acclaimed of late 19th century architects. Whitfield’s staircase towers echoed Shaw’s distinctive palette of materials in a modern idiom – hefty grey granite bases and red brickwork banded with grey granite.

We are urging MPs to consider the Hopkins alternative which potentially offers major savings in both time and cost.

Right: Richmond House on Whitehall by Sir William Whitfield (image: SAVE)



RICHMOND HOUSE
29 WHITEHALL



Whitfield created a range of spaces for Richmond House, from office suites (above) to beautifully crafted reception rooms. The photograph (right) shows the Minister's staircase – “the grandest in Whitehall for a century” (images: *Country Life* Picture Library).



Sir William Whitfield’s involvement at Whitehall goes back to the 1970s when he was commissioned to develop a masterplan for the site around Richmond Terrace. Building Design Partnership (BDP) refurbished and remodelled the Regency buildings in the early 1980s. The façade was retained, and new rooms reinstated reusing the historic fixtures and fittings created behind it. A corridor designed by Whitfield connects Richmond Terrace to the main building. Richmond House itself is arranged around a series of courtyards that face onto the adjacent Shaw building.

Around the time when he designed Richmond House, Whitfield developed the masterplan for Paternoster Square at St Paul’s Cathedral, one of the most prominent schemes in London, where Whitfield created a new

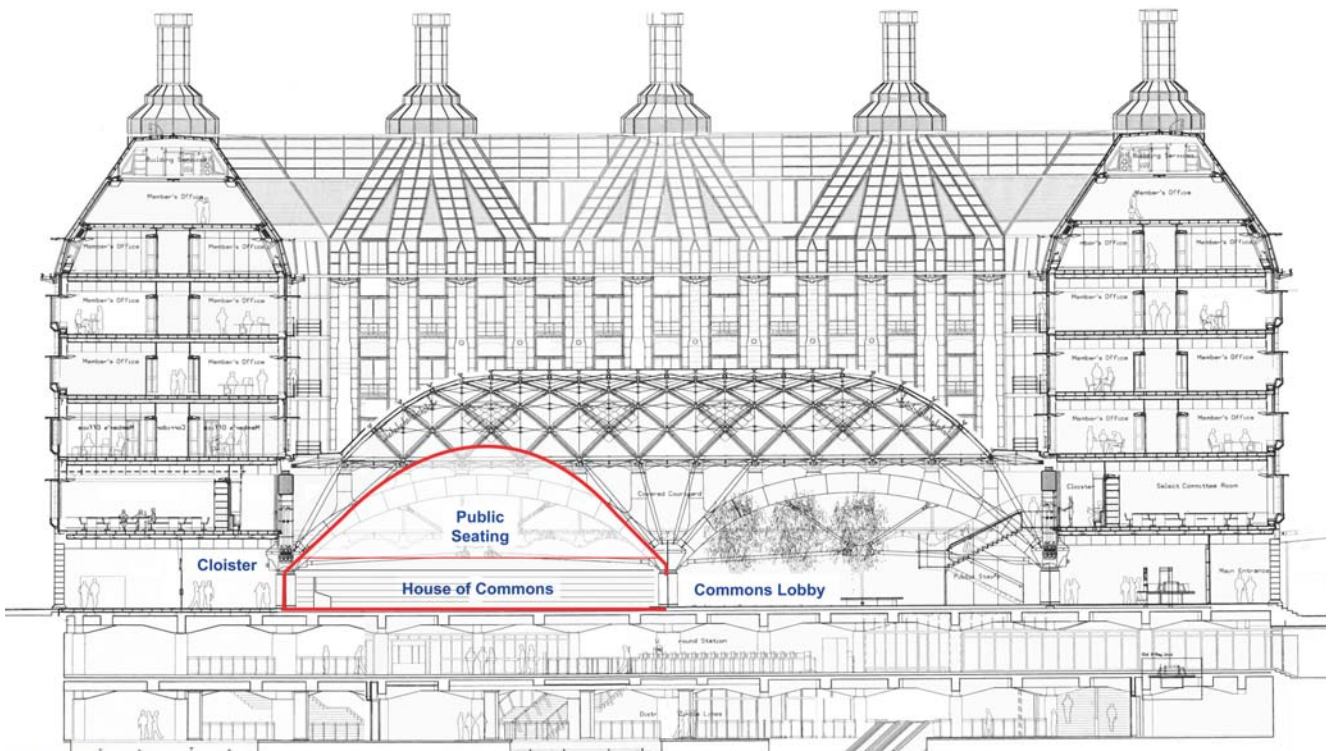
thriving public plaza next to Wren’s masterpiece. Throughout his work, Whitfield managed to combine a wide range of architectural styles, spanning from the brutalist designs for Glasgow University Library, completed in 1968, to Tusmore House, a Neo-Palladian mansion in Oxfordshire, finished in 2000. Richmond House combines the different influences and beautifully complements the Regency Richmond Terrace and Shaw’s Victorian building.

Read more about Richmond House here:

<https://www.savebritainsheritage.org/campaigns/current>



The Hopkins plan shows how the temporary House of Commons would sit within the atrium of Portcullis House. The chamber and its lobby would only occupy part of the atrium and leave the remaining space for cafes and meeting space for MPs as existing. As a lightweight structure, this intervention is designed to be reversible.



6. Portcullis House
 Long Section with House of Commons Chamber superimposed
 1:200 at A3
 Hopkins Architects
 27 Broadley Terrace London NW1 6LG 020 7724 1751

SAVE unveils alternative scheme for site of proposed 40-storey tower in Manchester conservation area

As part of our campaign highlighting the threat to Manchester’s civic centre, we worked with Ian Chalk Architects to publish an alternative scheme.

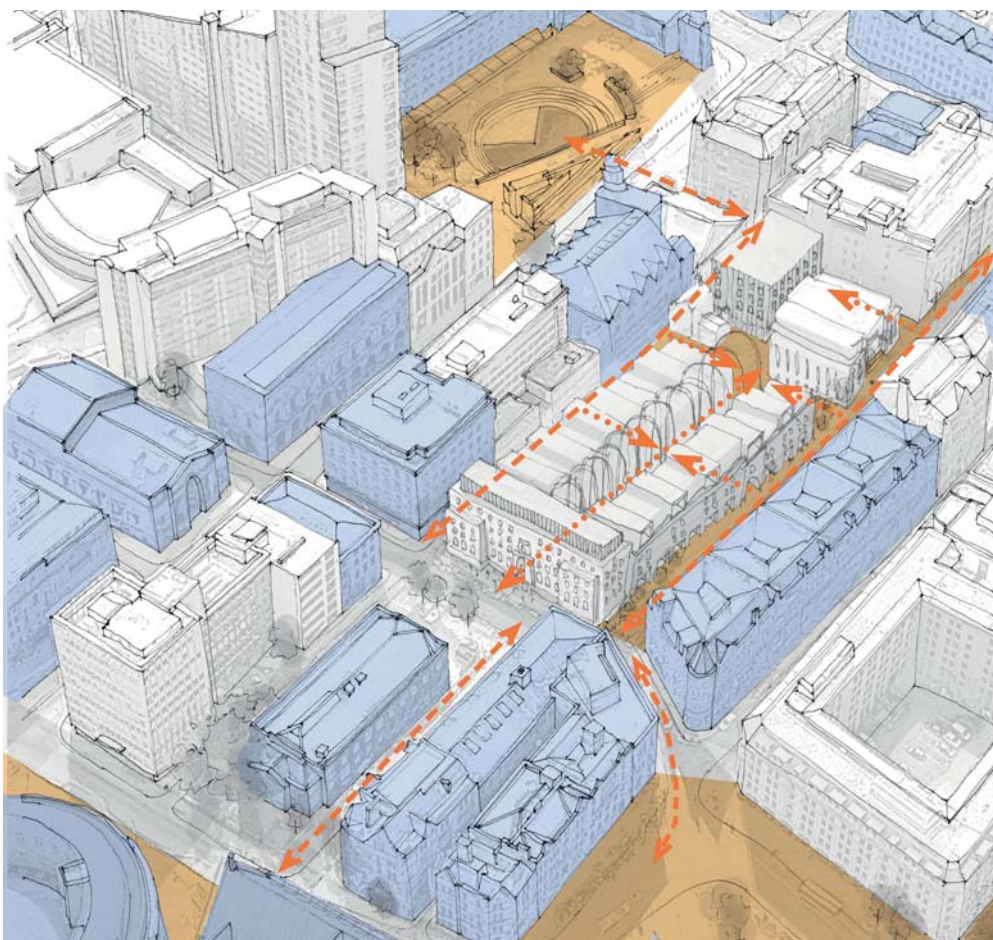
Our indicative scheme shows how the 1930s former police station headquarters and surrounding streets can be brought back to life and transformed with a conservation led approach. The scheme retains the existing buildings and sensitively integrates new elements. It helps stimulate ideas and debate about how the increased footfall, regeneration benefits and many of the new uses promised by the St Michael’s scheme could be achieved, but without the far-reaching harmful impacts of a 40-storey tower on the surrounding historic buildings and conservation areas.

The conservation area is characterised by substantial brick buildings of different periods, generally at a scale of 3 to 5/6 storeys. The scheme looks to work with the building scale and add a series of extensions and in-fills which effectively help to repair the urban block and enhance the conservation area. The new extensions and

structures on the site are arranged around a new covered arcade and external public square, creating a series of public spaces, which provide an appropriate setting for the historic buildings.

Known as ‘St Michael’s’, the consented development has drawn widespread criticism for the looming and overbearing impact that the 40-storey tower would have on the conservation area, Manchester town hall and the Albert Memorial. The plans were granted consent by Manchester City Council on 20 June 2018. The legal challenge by Steve Speakman, the chairman of the Manchester Civic Society, was rejected by the High Court in September 2018.

Read more about the alternative design concept here and see pictures of the historic buildings on the site: <https://www.savebritainsheritage.org/campaigns>



Left: The alternative scheme shows the police station, synagogue and pub retained with new routes created through the site (centre) fitting seamlessly into the historic context (image: Ian Chalk Architects)

Right: A covered arcade links to a new public space between the retained historic buildings (image: Ian Chalk Architects)



Too much? Tall building proposals and designated heritage assets

As well as the major SAVE campaigns – like St Michael’s in Manchester and the Paddington Cube in London – we have objected to a series of other tall building proposals across the UK. Thomas Bender provides a round-up.

Five cases in Norwich and London illustrate the challenges for local planning authorities to resist developer pressure and protect their historic environments. High land values and property prices, housing targets and foreign investments still play a major part in fuelling development across the UK. As a result, developers seek planning approval for even bigger and taller proposals, which now reach areas that have previously been spared. Norwich, for example, is still largely a medieval city and the cathedral still dominates the skyline, while large parts of Kensington and Chelsea are characterised by four to five storey Victorian terraces

and garden squares where very tall buildings stick out like a sore thumb.

Listed buildings and their settings and conservation areas are designated heritage assets and should be protected by the National Policy Framework and legislation. Tall building policies are often not rigorously applied or ignored, leave too much room for interpretation or do not exist at all. As a result, many building proposals are too tall and sit uncomfortably in their context, bringing with them the common problems of towers – overshadowing, overlooking issues and wind effects.



The proposed 20-storey tower within the Anglia Square development would undermine the prominence of the cathedral (image: planning application documentation)

Anglia Square, Norwich

SAVE has submitted a strongly worded objection to Norwich City Council in relation to the planning application for the Anglia Square redevelopment. The planning application, designed by architects Broadway Malyan, is for a mixed-use scheme on the site of the former Anglia Square shopping centre. It includes a 20-storey tower, and blocks of 4–12 storeys.

The harm caused by this scheme is twofold. Firstly, it fundamentally changes the skyline of Norwich. Until today Norwich remains one of Britain’s best-preserved mediaeval cities, where the outstanding role of cathedral and church spires, the castle and town hall is still legible. Largely unaffected by 19th and 20th century additions,

this unique tableau would be irrevocably damaged by the new tower visible in the city views and it would undermine the prominence of the cathedral.

Secondly, the proposal would cause substantial harm to some of the city’s iconic streets and squares, including Castle Rampart, Elm Hill, Princess Street and Upper Street, lined by outstanding grade I, II* and II listed buildings, and the surrounding Norwich City Centre Conservation Area.

We urge Norwich City Council planning committee, which is expected to make a decision in December, to save Norwich from this short-sighted development and refuse the proposals.

Paris Garden/Hatfields (Southwark), London

We have also formally objected to plans for a mixed-use scheme which includes a 20-storey tower at Blackfriars near the River Thames in London. The proposal directly affects two grade II listed buildings, the surrounding conservation areas and the London skyline as a whole.

The loss of historic fabric from the listed buildings, particularly of structural bays, floor plates and the roof structures would, in our view, cause substantial harm to the integrity and character of the buildings.

Large development proposals, either nearly completed, on site or consented, are replacing the historic structure of Blackfriars and fundamentally altering the appearance of this part of Southwark, the river frontage and the skyline of London. This new proposal in the capital's heart exacerbates the situation and we requested Southwark Council not to grant planning permission. The planning decision is due in December.



The proposed tower at Paris Gardens and Hatfields (image: planning application documentation)

Newcombe House (Kensington and Chelsea), London

Another live tall building scheme SAVE has objected to is the redevelopment of Newcombe House at Notting Hill Gate in Kensington and Chelsea. The proposal includes an 18-storey tower, which would be highly visible and affect more than 100 listed buildings and six conservation areas within about half a mile of the application site. Notably,

these include Kensington Palace (grade I) and a number of grade II* listed houses on Kensington Palace Gardens. Originally rejected by the local planning authority, Kensington and Chelsea, the decision was taken over by the Mayor of London who granted planning permission in September 2018.



Image of the proposed Newcombe House (image: planning application documentation)

Kensington Forum (Kensington and Chelsea), London

Also in Kensington and Chelsea, SAVE has submitted a strong objection to the redevelopment of the existing Kensington Forum Hotel, a 1970s hotel tower designed by architect Richard Seiffert. The planning application is for a hotel-led scheme which includes a 30-storey tower and a 23-storey tower sitting on a slab block. As in the previous

scheme, the townscape assessment shows the substantial harm caused by the proposed building to the setting of the surrounding conservation areas. The planning application was refused in September largely on the grounds of massing and scale.

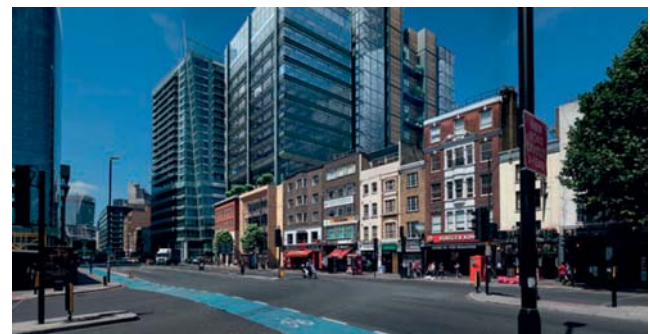


The proposed Kensington Forum redevelopment (image: planning application documentation)

101 Whitechapel High Street (Tower Hamlets), London

This time in East London, SAVE has objected to a tall building proposal at Whitechapel High Street near Aldgate in Tower Hamlets. The proposals, designed by Foster and Partners, are for a 20-storey office block in the Whitechapel High Street Conservation Area. The

scheme would fundamentally alter the character of the conservation area and blur the distinction between the corporate office blocks of the City and the historic small scale urban structure of Whitechapel. A planning decision is expected in spring 2019.



101 Whitechapel High Street – before and after (image: planning application documentation)

LEAVE A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

SAVE
BRITAIN'S HERITAGE

SAVE Britain's Heritage is at the forefront of national heritage conservation. We intervene to help historic buildings and places in serious danger of demolition or decay. We stand apart from other organisations by bringing together architects, engineers, planners and investors to offer alternative proposals. Where necessary, and with expert advice, we take legal action to prevent major and needless losses.

Over the last forty-three years, with the support of our Friends and Saviours, SAVE has successfully fought for some of the UK's most remarkable and threatened historic buildings including Wentworth Woodhouse, the grandest stately home in the UK, Smithfield General Market, now set to become the new home of the Museum of London, and over 400 Victorian terraced houses in Liverpool, known collectively as the Welsh Streets.

But historic buildings all over Britain continue to be threatened by demolition and insensitive development.

With your continued support we can ensure that the best of the past is saved for future generations.

Unrestricted bequests allow the Trustees of SAVE to allocate the money where it is needed most.



It can cost over **£15,000** to take legal action in the courts. To draw up alternative plans with architects it typically costs **£10,000**, and to commission a structural engineer to examine a building at risk of demolition costs approximately **£5,000**.

SAVE does not receive government funding and so a gift in your Will, whatever size, will make a real difference.

We understand that legacies are personal, but if you wish to discuss your Will or find out more about supporting SAVE this way, please contact Leigh Stanford on administrator@savebritainsheritage.org or call 020 7253 3500.

Our heartfelt thanks to those who have pledged and left legacies to SAVE.



Casework

Hitherbury House, Guildford

SAVE is delighted to announce that Hitherbury House is a winner at the Guildford Society Good Design Awards 2018. In 2014 SAVE, along with the Victorian Society, the Arts and Crafts Movement in Surrey, and the Guildford Society, objected to an application to demolish Hitherbury House for replacement with a residential apartment block. This application was rejected.

Since then, the house has been sympathetically renovated and converted into seven flats by Sawkings & Norton, local conservation architects, for Quiditty Real Estate. We supported this planning application. The works included the reinstatement of original features such as the tall chimney stacks and pots, pitched roofs to dormer windows, the repair and rehangng of wall tiles, and reinstatement of leaded lights.

Hitherbury House is an impressive Arts and Crafts villa by Richard Norman Shaw, the distinguished British Victorian architect, who designed the building in 1883. After a fire in the 1960s, the building was used as an office and remained in a sad condition until it was taken on by Quiditty Real Estate who brought it back to life. Congratulations!



Hitherbury House, Guildford

Carlton Tavern, York

In August, news reached us from York that the Victorian Carlton Tavern has been saved. Over several years, SAVE fought to save this handsome public house together with the Victorian Society, the Council for British Architecture and the York Civic Trust. Built as Garth House in the Domestic Revival Style in the 1880s, the building is specifically referred to in Pevsner's architectural guide on Yorkshire. It is locally listed in recognition of its historic and social values.

However, the applicant submitted plans to demolish the Carlton and replace it with a care home facility. The plans were rejected by York Council in December 2017, and the appeal was dismissed this summer. Local business people have submitted plans set up a community hub with a restaurant on the ground floor. Watch this space for further updates.



Carlton Tavern

Former Coroner's Court, Sheffield

SAVE raised serious concerns about the application for prior notification of the proposed demolition of this handsome Edwardian building. Built in 1913 by a renowned Sheffield architect, the building is a fine example of a late Edwardian coroner's court. It has a handsome twin gabled main façade in red brick with yellow ashlar sandstone details.

This undesigned heritage asset would lend itself to a range of new uses. Soon after we submitted our



Former Coroner's Court, Sheffield (image: Cllr Douglas Johnson)

objections, the application for demolition was withdrawn. However in October, the building was severely damaged by fire after a suspected arson attack. A new planning application for a residential scheme that integrates the façade of the court building has been submitted since the fire.

Station Hotel, Ayr (Scotland/South Ayrshire)

The Station Hotel is an important grade B listed building in Ayr. It is under threat from demolition, and we are supporting the local campaign group to save the building. Opened in 1885, the Station Hotel was designed by renowned Scottish architect Andrew Galloway who was also responsible for the station building itself. Since it closed down in 2015, the hotel's condition has seriously worsened. An exclusion zone has been put in place around the building to protect passengers from falling debris and train services at Ayr Station are affected. The hotel's cellular floor plan would lend itself to a

range of uses, including flats, student residences or office accommodation. We will be working with the local council, the owners, Network Rail and local community groups to develop alternative plans for this fine building.



Station Hotel in Ayr (image: Nigel Hackett)



Courtfield House (image: John Le Brocq)

Courtfield House, Trowbridge (Wiltshire)

SAVE has been alerted by a local campaigning group about plans to build new residential units that would substantially harm the historic Courtfield House in Trowbridge. The house is a grade II* listed Georgian building in a conservation area, surrounded by a large historic orchard.

Courtfield House was built for a wealthy Trowbridge cloth manufacturer and extended over time to include workshops and outbuildings. Constructed in brick, the main façade is elegantly decorated with stone detailing.

The current planning application is for 21 new residential units, five of which would be within the historic house and sixteen in the orchard. This is a garden with ancient trees, and it is unfortunate that the proposed master plan, site layout and landscape design do little to use the potential of the site in terms of its unique quality and character.

More than 2,000 people signed a petition to save the orchard, and 100 objections by local people have been registered. SAVE has objected to the planning application. A decision is anticipated in spring 2019.

Wapping School, Bradford

SAVE has objected to a proposal for a new school building on the site of the historic Wapping School in Bradford. This grade II listed Victorian building is remarkable because it was the first school in Britain to offer pupils a swimming pool. Built in Renaissance Revival style with

stone bays of mullioned windows, arched detailing and gabled roofs across the wings of its two main buildings, the school is in a poor condition after two decades of neglect and vandalism.

The present scheme is only an outline application. It does not include a detailed proposal and provides insufficient information for the Local Planning Authority to fully assess the loss of the heritage asset. In our view, repair, retention and reuse could deliver a viable solution for the historic Wapping School, and we strongly suggested exploring alternative solutions and urged the Local Planning Authority to refuse planning approval. The proposals were rejected in November 2018.

SAVE's most recent publication *Too good to lose. Historic schools at risk* looks at the fate of historic school buildings like Wapping School in Bradford. See page 41 for details.



Wapping School (image: The Telegraph and Argus)

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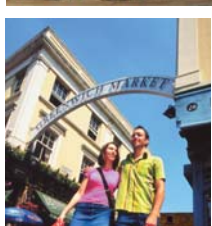
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New life for the old Sessions House, Clerkenwell

Alec Forshaw describes the restoration of the Old Sessions House in Clerkenwell, central London, an extraordinary and inspiring conservation project, which is now nearing completion. Much of the credit must go to the new owners, Ted and Oliver Grebelius of Sätilas Studios.

An Eighteenth-century Court House

Built in 1779-82 as a new magistrates' court for the County of Middlesex, and designed by the architect Thomas Rogers, the Sessions House was intended to be a prestigious and imposing structure which would provide appropriate accommodation for the judiciary and engender respect from the public. Replacing the old court of Hicks' Hall, which had stood beside Smithfield livestock market, it was located on a generous plot at the western end of Clerkenwell Green. Lying close to the slums of 'rookeries' of the Fleet valley, 90% of crimes committed in the whole of Middlesex occurred within half-a-mile. Nearby lay the notorious House of Detention and House of Correction where prisoners were held and punished with hard labour on the treadmill.

The classical Palladian-style front elevation of the new Sessions House was clad in Portland stone and adorned with sculptures by Joseph Nollekens. The internal layout was equally impressive, laid out on the Roman principle of 'open court', whereby the front entrance led into a grand central public hall beneath a high dome, with a

staircase leading up to an unenclosed court room, open for all to see and hear that justice was being done.

Within a year, the magistrates complained of noise and drafts, so Jones added a full height screen of glass in a cast-iron frame, with public galleries within the court.

Prisoners were brought from the House of Detention by cart (or according to urban myth by tunnels) into the lower ground floor cells, and then led up the narrow prisoners' stair into the dock. If acquitted, the relieved detainee was released to the public mob; if guilty, the culprit was 'sent down', returning to the cells below to be taken away for punishment.

In the mid 19th century Roger's successor as Middlesex County Architect, Frederick Pownall added a second court room accessed by a new staircase, with a replacement judges' dining room above, and when Clerkenwell Road was driven through, extended the whole building southwards to provide a dozen extra function rooms.



In the Great Hall (left) the carpets have been removed, the original stone floors exposed and repaired, and most spectacularly, the 1780s glass screen uncovered and reinstated. Following paint scrape analysis throughout the building the Great Hall and its dome (above) has been redecorated in the original colour scheme (image: Emli Bendixen).



The fine main façade of the Sessions House overlooks Clerkenwell Green. The stone and render of the external elevations have been carefully cleaned and renovated, reopening original windows, reinstating railings and gas lights (image: Emli Bendixen).

Weighing scales and Masonic Lodge

In 1889 much of Middlesex was incorporated into the new London County Council and it was decided to build larger courts elsewhere. The Clerkenwell prisons and nearby Newgate Gaol were closed, and the Sessions House was vacated before the First World War.

In 1931 the whole building was occupied by Avery Scales, manufacturers of weighing machines, who made radical internal alterations, including stripping out fireplaces and architectural decorations and inserting new floors across the courtrooms in a highly damaging manner. Further alteration occurred during the Second World War with removal of external railings and intrusive strengthening works. After the departure of Avery in 1973 the building lay empty, then to be occupied from 1979 by a Masonic Lodge, who added its own layer of unauthentic decoration, floor podiums, fire screens and often crudely inserted services. A fire in 1991 damaged part of the roof. When the Lodge left in 2012, the building was in a rather sorry state.

Right: At ground floor level, a labyrinth of modern partitions and service ducting was removed to reveal the original layout and materials of the dungeons and cells where prisoners were delivered, held before trial and taken away afterwards (image: Emli Bendixen).

New Life for the Old Sessions House

The acquisition of the building in January 2014 by Ted and Oliver Grebelius marked the beginning of a transformation. They already knew the area (having restored a beautiful neo-gothic Victorian warehouse nearby for offices) and understood the potential of Clerkenwell. They appointed an expert team of advisers. What nobody knew then was just how much historic fabric had actually survived the rigours of inappropriate alterations in the 20th century.



Work in progress restoring the former Judges' Dining Room at the top of the building to create a new public restaurant (image: Emli Bendixen).

Alec Forshaw takes up the story in conversation with Ted and Oliver....

A: What first attracted you to the Sessions House?

T: We were completing the refurbishment of 109 Farringdon Road and looking for another project. We had walked past the Sessions House many times and smelt the horrible fumes coming out of extractor ducts at pavement level, and wondered what happened inside.

O: Our agent told us that the building might be for sale. When, eventually, we were able to get in, we were blown away by the interior, and its potential.

T: The masons were still there then, with the windows all covered over, beer-stained carpets and strange décor, but we could see the potential beauty of the spaces. We wanted to know more about its history. Luckily, we were able to buy the building and do just that.

A: What approach have you taken to restoring the building that is different from the 'standard' developer?

T: To begin with we simply stripped out all the modern interventions to see more clearly what we had got. We did a lot of our own research about the building and appointed experts to help interpret what we found. We took our time.

O: The project developed organically. Our original idea was just to refurbish what was there, but the dream grew as we found out more. The incredible discovery that most of the 18th century glass screen had survived inspired our decision to reinstate the original volume of the court room. We began to realise the unique importance and potential of the building.

T: Our personal interest in history and architecture drove us towards finding the best solution for the building, not just making profit for the sake of it. We spent many hours in the London Metropolitan Archive looking for old plans and drawings.

O: Indeed, our approach was like that of Disney, who 'didn't make films to make money, but made money to make films'. Some of our advisors were worried that we were taking a lot of risk, but we were determined that spread sheets and paperwork shouldn't guide the project.

T: Ultimately we were very confident that the end result would be amazing, and that potential tenants would be attracted. We really believe that people want to be in a beautiful environment, and that this model is more financially sustainable than simple floor space figures.

T & O: We also lived through the whole project – our office was on site, in the building, all the time, and still is

– so we saw everything that was going on, and we were therefore completely hands-on, completely involved.

A: How do you hope to use the building now?

T: Our vision was always that the building should become a destination, used every day of the week, open also to the evening economy and with a mixture of uses that would appeal to different people. It would be a new gathering point for Clerkenwell.

O: The middle floors are now let to the Hoxton Hotel as their office and events space. They are hosting lots of different things like fashion shoots and music shows. Having people coming in is really important.

T: The ground floor (where the prisoners were originally held) is to be a range of retail, food and relaxation activities, open to the public directly from the street. At the top is the Judges' Dining Room which will be a restaurant in a spectacularly beautiful room.

T & O: Our aim, through careful attention to lots of details like the lighting and decoration, is to create a form of escapism for visitors to the building, as if they are stepping back into another age, almost like an experience of time travel. What we think we have achieved is to capture the spirit of the building and breathe new life into it.



Ted and Oliver Grebelius at the Sessions House (image: Emli Bendixen)

Resurrection architecture – the death and life of Palmyra

Reflecting on his recent journey across Syria with photographer Don McCullin, and the subsequent BBC documentary, Dan Cruickshank tells the story of Palmyra, focusing on its destruction back in 2015 and the current proposals to reconstruct it.

The risks we were running came home with a dull but ominous thud, and a sparkle of light, during my first night in Damascus. It was early February this year and I, along with a BBC film crew and veteran photographer Don McCullin, were at the start of a somewhat uncertain journey, through the war-torn land of Syria, to the ancient city of Palmyra. Of course, we were all aware of the potential dangers of navigating through air strikes and violent clashes in a country still in the grips of a lengthy and multi-layered civil war. But I was not quite prepared for the fighting to be delivered to my bedside on my first night in the city. The bangs and flashes were incoming mortar fire from Eastern Ghouta, a suburb to the east of Damascus still, in February, in the hands of insurgency forces resisting attacks by Assad's government regime and the Russian military. The mortars were a response to the brutal shelling and airstrikes inflicted by government forces on the people within the enclave.

The night-time surprise, which had me tumbling out of my bed, was partly due to the delusional atmosphere in Damascus. When I arrived, a few hours earlier, everything seemed much as I remembered on my last visit, about ten years ago. The city streets were crowded with people and cars, the markets were in full swing, restaurants were packed and looked convivial and I could see no physical damage from the six years of insurgency. I knew that missiles fell in the eastern part of the old city, between the Roman Arch in the centre of Straight Street and the Roman Gate of the Sun and we explored the area to see what had happened. All seemed well – but as the night-time bombardment and subsequent events made only too clear, we were very wrong in our superficial assessment.

Don and I wanted to return to Palmyra for very specific reasons. First to see, for ourselves, the true extent of the damage and destruction inflicted on the ancient city and its museum during a series of outrageous attacks orchestrated by Islamic State during its two occupations from May 2015 until March 2017. This was appalling cultural terrorism, in which the prime targets were not 'idols' of ancient gods but history, architecture, beauty and memory and the intention was to shock and terrorise the world and rob Syrians of a place that had become a symbol of national pride and identity. I had been to the city once before and Don – haunted by its beauty – had

been many times but wanted to return once more to complete his photographic record, showing how a wonder of the ancient world had been tragically transformed.

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One of the notable aspects of the fighting in Syria, with its complex political, ideological, territorial and religious aspects, is that truth and objective assessment have been buried by lies, disinformation and misinformation. It's a world where propaganda has gone mad and where opposing sides in the conflict present and sustain mutually and bafflingly contradictory versions of reality. Indeed the position is so complex that even time-honoured clichés are not true. My enemy's enemy is my friend is not necessarily the case here because forces fighting the common foe of Isis – which the Syrian army with Russian aid has ultimately done most effectively – can also, simultaneously, be fighting one another.

In these extraordinary circumstances it has proved almost impossible to determine the true nature of the damage to the various monuments in Palmyra. The only way to do so, it seemed, was to go there oneself. And an accurate assessment was the essential first step in determining what could be done to salvage the two thousand year old beauty and wonder of Palmyra. How truly bad was the damage? Was it terminal or superficial? Could tumbled stones be raised again and what meaning could radically reconstructed ruins possess? Could they regain their poetry and authenticity and once again be the focus of national pride? Was the potential danger of the journey worth it? Don, I, and the BBC team decided it was. Anyone who cares about history and architecture must care about Palmyra. When first discovered by the west in the late 17th century it was an artistic sensation, and the Islamic world has venerated it for centuries. The damage inflicted recently is the worst example of cultural



Aerial view of Palmyra (image: Dan Cruickshank)

vandalism since the Second World War. Action must be taken to right this great wrong, and at the very least keep the plight that has befallen Palmyra in the public eye. If nothing else the sacrifice of the Syrians who died trying to defend Palmyra, or who were executed by IS within the ruins, demand that we take action.

The BBC was keen to document the journey, that involved meetings with archaeologists and curators in Damascus and in Palmyra, and so, in late January, in Beirut, we set out on the long – and unpredictable – road to Palmyra. Beirut was the starting place because only there could we get a visa to enter Syria and only in Damascus could we get a permit to film in Palmyra. And once the permit had been acquired the only approved route to Palmyra was via Homs – once the industrial heartland of Syria but now nearly 40 per cent of it a blasted and largely deserted ruin.

It was evident the journey was going to be tough, emotionally as well as physically.

The first major challenge came at Homs. The city had been under siege by Government forces for three years until May 2014. Well over 2,000 people had died and the centre of the city and numerous suburbs laid waste. To see a great city in ruins, gaunt and haunted, with everywhere evidence of bloody conflict, is an appalling experience. And here the misinformation started to roll in. In the west the narrative seems clear. The uprising against the despotic Assad regime started in Homs in March 2011,

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and ultimately the insurgents were besieged and bombarded in the city, with much physical damage inflicted, until peace was agreed in May 2014 and insurgents allowed to evacuate their urban strongholds. But, with the city once again under the oppressive control of the Assad regime, the story is very different and history has been re-written. I spoke to the Syrian Orthodox priest in charge of the Church of St. Mary of the Holy Belt that, it is said, dates from AD 59. Located within the besieged portion of the old city its fabric had been terribly damaged during the fighting. Standing in front of the church – now repaired – I asked the priest to tell me the story of the fighting and about the attacks upon the church. To my amazement he claimed that the church, although in the area held by insurgents, had not been damaged by government shelling and airstrikes but by ‘rebels’ and by Isis. I was baffled. This is the opposite to all accepted accounts, and Isis did not come into existence until 2014 and was not even a significant force in the city. Where does the truth lie? When an eyewitness gives an



Temple of Bel before destruction (image: Dan Cruickshank)

account that is so at odds with what is taken to be the truth then the problem of establishing objective fact becomes very clear. But of course the priest had to live in Homs, under government surveillance and so truth, a luxury of freedom, perhaps has to be honed to fit the prevailing circumstances. At Homs I also interviewed a woman – a refugee in her own country – who, surrounded by her children, told me in graphic detail how her husband – a minor government official – had been decapitated by IS executions, before her eyes, in Palmyra. Her tears and anguish were genuine and beyond dispute.

In bleak mood, and in a constant state of alert, we pressed on to the heart of darkness, heading east from Homs, through the flat desert, towards Palmyra. This land had been under brutal IS control less than a year earlier and, in February 2018, they were reported to be only 50 km to the east. The terrain was hostile indeed, and we feared a sudden IS raid, so we kept a weary watch for hurtling pick-up trucks bristling with weapons and armed men. Luckily, we were spared this demonic vision. But what we did see, as we got nearer to Palmyra, were outposts of government troops and steely eyed and generally doleful Russian soldiers, looking very professional and armed with what were evidently sophisticated small arms, fitted with night-sites and

silencers. These, I assumed, were special forces – *Spetsnaz* – and this was chilling because such troops are located only where serious fighting has recently taken place – or is expected.

We were able to stay three nights in Palmyra, dossing in a bomb-blasted and bullet-riddled wreck of an apartment block in the destroyed and generally deserted town of Tadmor, that adjoins Palmyra. The streets here had run with blood during the IS occupation and its troops, we were assured, had only months earlier occupied the rooms that were our temporary home.

During our hurried time in Palmyra, we were obliged to dodge supposed minefields and navigate around occupying forces – that include elements of Hezbollah as well as *Spetsnaz* – but managed to inspect the damaged monuments, meet Syrian experts, Don took his photographs and we made the BBC documentary.

In brief, things were in some cases better, and in a few cases worse, than I expected. In broad terms Palmyra survives – its powerful atmosphere is intact, its sustained colonnades still prance beguilingly through the sands, offering the perfection of classical architecture set within the wildness of the desert landscape. More than 50 per cent of the site has been untouched by IS – but they did, in their successful bid to horrify the world, attack all the key

individual monuments in the city. The damage inflicted varies from monument to monument. The most important structure, the Temple of Bel, dating from around AD 32 and set in its own walled and colonnaded precinct, received the most vicious and shocking treatment. All the monuments were attacked using explosives, but evidently in this case the amounts used were huge and placed to cause maximum damage. Many of its stones – including those beautifully carved with classical details and with images of the gods and the zodiac – have been shattered, some utterly obliterated. Only the temple's once majestic colonnade survives, but its stones tumbled and severely damaged. It is very hard to see how this ruin can be rebuilt and retain a sense of authenticity. Too many stones would have to be new. But, I was told on site by a government museum official, that this is exactly what is to happen, presumably to mark – in triumphal manner – the defeat of IS and the survival of Assad's regime.

Palmyra has not been destroyed, far from it, but its key monuments have been grievously damaged. Much can be done – but time is of the essence.

The Monumental Arch and the Temple of Baal Shamin – both dating from the second century AD – were far less damaged by IS. Although largely levelled, the stones are tumbled rather than destroyed and rebuilding is possible. The Roman theatre and the Tetracylon – a monument marking a cross roads in the centre of the city – were also badly damaged, but they had been reconstructed in the 1960s and 1970s and can be reconstructed again, probably better than before. The fate that befell Palmyra's tomb towers – characterful monuments in the Valley of the

Dead to the west of the city centre – is far more gloomy. The best six were blasted by IS and are now just piles of rubble. Russian forces kept us away from the valley so detailed exploration was not possible, but effective reconstruction seems unlikely.

The museum was, of course, ransacked by IS, and is still littered with vandalised artefacts. But I was assured that over 850 items had been whisked away – evidently in a hasty manner and at great personal risk to curators – just before IS arrived for the first time. I saw a sample of the saved collection in the museum in Damascus, along with many crates of damaged objects from the Palmyra museum. I suppose, judging by what IS did to the museum in Mosul, things could have been far worse.

Palmyra has not been destroyed, far from it, but its key monuments have been grievously damaged. Much can be done – but time is of the essence. Every day the tumbled stones remain open to the elements and unprotected the chances of effective reconstruction are reduced. Stones that survived IS now lie vulnerable to wilful or casual damage. Fragments can be displaced – even looted – and all becomes more confused making the task of reconstruction greater. If these monuments – individually among the greatest of their kind in the world and collectively forming the heart of the greatest ruined city from antiquity – are to live again action must be taken now. This means that political difference must be resolved or put aside and the international community must act together, with a sense of urgency, to help Syria heal its broken heart.

Dan Cruickshank gave the SAVE annual lecture on Palmyra in St Mary Abechurch in the City of London in October 2018.



Temple of Bel after destruction (image: Dan Cruickshank)

Events

EVENTS REVIEW

Clerkenwell Tour, London Festival of Architecture, June 2018

By Thomas Bender

SAVE took part in the London Festival of Architecture for the first time in June this year. We hosted a tour of Clerkenwell in the London Borough of Islington, led by Alec Forshaw. The tour explored the evolving identity of Clerkenwell – first an industrial and commercial urban quarter, then characterised by neglect and decline and finally the fashionable district populated by architects and designers.

The first stop was Cowcross Street where SAVE's offices are based. Like most of Clerkenwell, many of the shops, firms, manufacturers and work places in the street had some links to Smithfield Market nearby. Some new buildings have been integrated more or less successfully into the urban fabric of Clerkenwell. We looked at some recent schemes which offer new public spaces.

From a heritage perspective, the Goldsmith Centre was particularly interesting. The project by architects Lyall, Bills and Young includes an existing Grade II listed London Board School. The historic building was refurbished and extended to create state-of-the-art workshops, sympathetic, professional training and education space and conference and exhibition facilities.

Opposite stands one of Clerkenwell's youngest listed buildings, 44 Britton Street, designed for television presenter Janet Street-Porter in 1988 by CZWG. We wandered through the alleyways on either side of St John Street, past the impressive 18th century Clerkenwell Sessions House – you can read more about this building on page 29 – onto Clerkenwell Green which has kept much of its historic identity and charm. The special character of Clerkenwell has been recognised by designating the neighbourhood as a conservation area in 1968. The Clerkenwell Green Conservation Area is the oldest in Islington and its fiftieth anniversary is indeed a good reason to celebrate.

The walk concluded at the Finsbury Health Centre, built in 1935–38 and designed by Berthold Lubetkin and the Tecton architecture practice. Listed at grade I, it is another important building in the borough, albeit in a seemingly deplorable condition.



Clerkenwell Tour (image: SAVE)

Greenwich Saviour Event, June 2018

By Diana B. Tyson

On a lovely sunny afternoon, the group led by Marcus Binney and Henrietta Billings visited Greenwich Hospital, most of them having traveled to Greenwich pier by boat from Westminster. The tour was conducted by William Palin, Secretary of SAVE from 2008 to 2012 and now Director of Conservation at the Old Royal Naval College, as the building is now known. Originally a home for retired sailors from 1692 to 1869, the complex subsequently became the Royal Naval College. It is now the home of the University of Greenwich, and also part of Trinity College of Music.

Designed by Christopher Wren with Nicholas Hawksmoor (who also built the nearby church of St Alfege) as his assistant, the building was completed by John Vanbrugh following Wren's plans. We admired the Courts in the four Blocks, their balanced proportions, their well-preserved sculptures, their ravishing brick-

work, the wonderful Hawksmoor elevations which always manage to combine elements of very different styles into a harmonious whole, and the spacious vistas between the buildings, northward down to the river and southward up through the colonnades to the Queen's House and to the Greenwich Observatory on the top of the hill.

We also visited the famous baroque Painted Hall, and finished with the Chapel, designed by Wren, ravaged by fire in 1779, and superbly restored by James 'Athenian' Stuart in the neoclassical style.

A rolling conservation programme is in place to preserve all this glory for future generations.

It was wonderful to have Will there with his expert knowledge, and there was much animated discussion. The visit ended with drinks in the Webb Room in the Admiral's House, with views of the river. It was an enjoyable and congenial event in a unique location.



William Palin welcomes the group at Greenwich (image: SAVE)

SAVE Liverpool tour

Peter Elson looks back at SAVE's long involvement in Liverpool, memories triggered by our tour in June 2018.

Probably the only church stained glass window dedicated to an architectural preservation group was pointed out during a SAVE Britain's Heritage tour of Liverpool, under the expert guidance of the group's Northern Caseworker Jonathan 'JB' Brown.

The summer 'mystery' tour (yes, at times almost magical) for SAVE members by charabanc loosely followed a route linking key buildings in which SAVE played a vital role in reclaiming from the bulldozer and wrecking-ball, those long-cherished instruments of destruction by a feckless Liverpool City Council, its phalanx of reckless developers and fellow travellers.

A prime example is St Francis Xavier (SFX), Everton, 1845–49, grade II* listed, by John Joseph Scoles, a spectacular neo-gothic Roman Catholic parish church of a cathedralic scale with a parish of 13,000 souls, many of whom were refugees from the 1840s Irish famine. These residents in turn disappeared in the 1960–70s civic clearances with SFX then seen as an out-dated symbol of pre-Vatican II Catholicism.

There is no doubt that Liverpool and its citizens owe a huge debt to SAVE, its staff and volunteers as crucial landmark buildings would have disappeared in these unsparing clearances from the 1950s onwards and the regular ill-advised assaults on the cityscape.

Such was the part SAVE played (including serving a writ on the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool in 1981) with the congregation, that the charity's name is commemorated in a window illustrating a sheaf of newspaper headlines.

There is no doubt that Liverpool and its citizens owe a huge debt to SAVE, its staff and volunteers as crucial landmark buildings would have disappeared in these unsparing clearances from the 1950s onwards and the regular ill-advised assaults on the cityscape. These 'SAVE-d' buildings range from the exquisite 1802 Lyceum, grade II* listed by Thomas Harrison of Chester (seriously threatened by British Rail in 1978 and now at risk again), to the gargantuan Tobacco Warehouse and Stanley Dock complex, grade II listed, 1848 and 1901, Jesse Hartley and AG Lyster, after 40 years of neglect is finally being converted to new uses.

What better place to start the tour than the historic Liverpool Lime Street station, one of the world's first intercity railway stations, whose huge neo-gothic redundant North Western Hotel, 1871, by Alfred Waterhouse also survived thanks to a campaign backed by SAVE in the 1970s. A prime example of the charity's emphasis on re-purposing old buildings, it now thrives as student accommodation, with planning permission recently granted for its return as a hotel. This industrial-age chateau overlooks the contrasting neo-classicism of Liverpool's 'Roman Forum', centrepiece of the UNESCO World Heritage Site and dominated by St George's Hall, grade I listed, by Harvey Lonsdale Elmes, 1840, described by Richard Norman Shaw as "one of the great edifices of the world".

Along with the city's tapestry of grand set-pieces, JB wove in some of its fascinating hidden architectural gems. Although boasting a greater variety of architecture than any other Northern city, Liverpool seems to have an almost equally wilful desire to squander this irreplaceable legacy. Lime Street itself shows the city at its best and worst – the splendidly renewed station, library and world class museums scarred by the municipal vandalism of St John's Market and the demolition of the Futurist Cinema (Britain's third oldest purpose-built picture house), the latter unforgivable for being recently championed by the present Mayor, Joe Anderson.

What other city would plot the destruction of the birthplace of a member of the world's most famous pop and rock group? Yet, but for the diligent long-term work of JB and SAVE, the home of Ringo Starr would have been wiped out, in what The Times newspaper called "the planning battle of the century". Ringo's Victorian terrace home in Madryn Street was part of the Welsh Streets area with a close-knit community whose 400 houses the council deemed to be ripe for redevelopment. The idea of refurbishment was never seriously considered. However, SAVE's bravura action in buying the last occupied Madryn Street house led to a public enquiry forcing the Mayor in 2015 into a total policy U-turn with the Welsh Street's terraces being restored – an incredible and almost undreamt of outcome. Sadly, this victory was too late for most of the area's original residents to return.

Simultaneously, SAVE's wider campaigning with residents and partner charities such as Empty Homes also helped force a national policy change in housing regeneration. Plans to demolish the last four streets of



Liverpool's Three Graces (image: Wikipedia)

the Granby Triangle were abandoned and instead a renovation-focussed Community Land Trust was funded by SAVE supporter Xanthe Hamilton. This led to Granby's triumph in the 2015 Turner Prize, and in 2018 Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn visited to anoint the Trust as 'a blueprint for what Britain could look like under a Labour Government.' An interesting view as the streets were nearly destroyed by the last Labour government.

Also tucked among Liverpool's sturdy Victorian terraces, is the unobtrusive sandstone, terracotta and stock brick exterior of the Gregson Institute, 1894, by AP Fry, which hides faience tiled and mosaic floored galleries and a theatre, crowned with an astonishing Minton peacock frieze. Now a thriving community arts centre and cafe, it could not be recreated today and is a monument to the city's lost mercantile wealth and benevolence. It survived destruction and replacement with a student block of deathly banality thanks to JB's 11th hour spot-listing, backed by SAVE and the Architectural Tile Society, on the very day the City Council Planning Committee was set to authorise demolition.

Nearby another successful spot-listing by Jonathan and SAVE prevented the delightful Memorial Church of the Protestant Martyrs, 1902 by Thomas HW Walker, from a similarly desperate fate, although its condition remains dire. Jonathan showed us two further inner-city churches whose conversions has proved preferable to clearance, St. Cyprians, grade II listed, 1879, by Henry

Sumners, now student flats, and unlisted St. John's Fairfield, into apartments. In both cases SAVE worked with JB to shame intervention from another meddlesome Bishop, this time the Anglican James Jones.

We also paused to admire the inexplicably unlisted art deco Littlewoods building, 1933, by Gerald de Courcey Fraser – empty since 1994, but which was billed to return as a 'Pinewood of the North' film studio following SAVE's 2012 campaign opposing demolition. Less than two months after our tour, this huge building, whose silhouette subtly mirrors that of Liverpool Cathedral on the horizon, mysteriously 'went on fire' at the end of this summer, so listing is urgently needed.

After this three-hour *tour de force*, our finale was the incomparable Philharmonic Hotel & Dining Rooms, grade II* listed, 1898, by Walter Thomas, the ultimate Victorian gin palace, rendered in a riot of *fin de siècle* art nouveau mahogany, marble and mosaic for welcome liquid renovation. The toast was to SAVE and its dedicated staff and supporters in holding the line for this most mercurial, frustrating and exhilarating of English cities. After all, can you imagine how visually impoverished Liverpool would look now had it not been for SAVE's many interventions?

Lost Walbrook walk, August 2018

By Tom Bolton

The route of the buried Walbrook has been lost for more than 600 years, but the Walbrook still runs beneath ground through the heart of the City of London. In early August a group of SAVE supporters set out to track it down. The river was the centre of the Roman city, which developed around two hills, Ludhill and Cornhill, clustered around the valley of the Walbrook in between. We began our walk in the lanes off Shoreditch High Street, once the grounds of the Holywell Priory and the location of the titular well, a possible source for the Walbrook's waters. The river's course under the modern streetscape runs from the Shoreditch city fringes to the Thames itself, via back alleys, office developments and obscure streets.

We followed the course of the river through the modern streetscape as it slipped unnoticed in a storm sewer directly beneath some of the best known parts of the City, alongside

Liverpool Street Station, under the new Bloomberg development and the restored Temple of Mithras, and even under the Bank of England itself. By Cannon Street station it was low tide, and we descended to the Thames foreshore where the Walbrook once discharged. Its outfall can still be spotted in the embankment wall, next to the refuse barges at Walbrook Wharf.

In places, the City streets are thirty feet above the level occupied when the Walbrook last ran on the surface, but the river still flows through its own storm sewer where it was redirected. It may be hard to spot, but the Walbrook remains London's river, as important to an understanding of its history as the Thames itself. Our walk along its obscured route provided a new perspective on the layers of London that lie between us and it.



Where the Walbrook meets the Thames, the group at Walbrook Wharf (image: SAVE)

West End Cinema tour, October 2018

By Leigh Stanford

It was a very wet day in October when Richard Gray, Chair of Casework for the Cinema Theatres Association, led us on a tour of London's West End Cinemas. We began in the beautiful interior of the Regent Street Cinema (grade II listed) where the Lumière brothers came with their Cinematographe projector in 1896 and had their first commercial screening in the UK.

Next the Empire Cinema on Haymarket, which was still under threat from demolition at the time. We were able to see the fine details in the foyer and were allowed a brief viewing of the threatened auditorium. This 1927 beauty was a definite highlight and the original features were exquisite.

Burberry in Regent Street seemed an unlikely next stop. We entered the cream carpeted building which had

originally been called the New Gallery Cinema. It had opened in 1913 with 800 seats. Still visible but well-hidden were the Wurlitzer organ and friezes along the walls and ceilings. The building although altered still retains the glamour of the old cinema which eventually closed in 1953.

Finally, we walked to Leicester Square which once boasted six cinemas, however, only three remain. The Empire, now the Cineworld Leicester Square, remains but The Leicester Square theatre is now being rebuilt as a hotel. The Odeon built in 1936 was also going through a transformation and its black tiling had been removed.

Despite the rain it was a pleasure to see these beautiful spaces and hear Richard speak of their remarkable histories.

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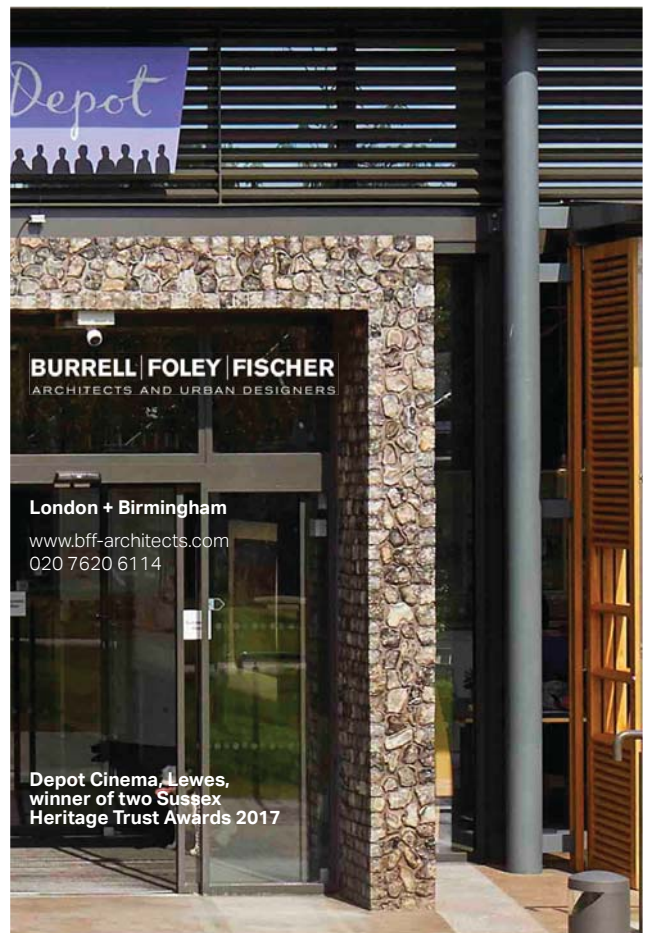


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FUTURE EVENTS

9 January 2019

SAVE tour of Chiswick House

Friends and Saviours only

With Claire O'Brian, Director of Chiswick House & Gardens Trust

Join us on a special tour of Chiswick House, opened up exclusively for our visit. It is a domed and porticoed pavilion created by Lord Burlington and his protégé William Kent as an imitation of Palladio's Villa Rotonda near Vicenza. One of the most influential works in British architecture and landscape, it helped to establish the Palladian style in England.

Tickets: £15, tea/coffee included

2 February 2019

Oxford City walking tour

With Nick Worledge of Worledge Associates, former Head of the Heritage team at Oxford City Council.

The ancient centre of this university city has seen a huge number of new building projects.

Nick will take us on a tour of some of the fascinating new architecture, looking at how successfully the new has been integrated with the old. The tour will take in the Blavatnik School of Government, St John's College and the Andrew Wiles Mathematic Institute and many more.

Tickets: £10 Friends/Saviours of SAVE,
£12 members of the public

23 February 2019

Walking tour of Mayfair

With Robert Ayton, Head of Design and Conservation at Westminster City Council

Home of embassies, luxurious hotels and high-end shops, Mayfair is one of London's most prestigious neighbourhoods – and has been so for more than 300 years. Robert Ayton will explore the history and conservation of this fascinating part of the capital and share his knowledge of Mayfair's most beautiful squares and streets and some of the notable residents.

Tickets: £12 Friends/Saviours of SAVE,
£15 members of the public



Victoria Law Courts, Birmingham (image: Elliott Brown)

9 March 2019

Victorian Birmingham walking tour

With Mike Fox, Conservation Officer at London Borough of Waltham Forest and former deputy director of SAVE

Never a stranger to radically reshaping its built environment, Birmingham was extensively rebuilt during the second-half of the 19th century under the aegis of Joseph Chamberlain. Its surviving legacy is one of stately civic buildings and grand commercial architecture; a political ideology in built form. Join Mike Fox as he looks at the city's showpiece Victorian development – Corporation Street. The walk will also look at how the city has developed since, with much subsequent demolition and rebuilding.

Tickets: £10 Friends/Saviours of SAVE,
£12 members of the public

6 April 2019

Woolwich walking tour

With Thomas Bender, Conservation Adviser at SAVE

Woolwich is one of southeast London's most fascinating town centres – boasting the Royal Arsenal and many other imposing historic buildings. Right next to the river and extremely well connected to London, Woolwich also stands for the development pressures, that many parts of London are exposed to. The walk will explore the challenges Woolwich and its heritage is facing.

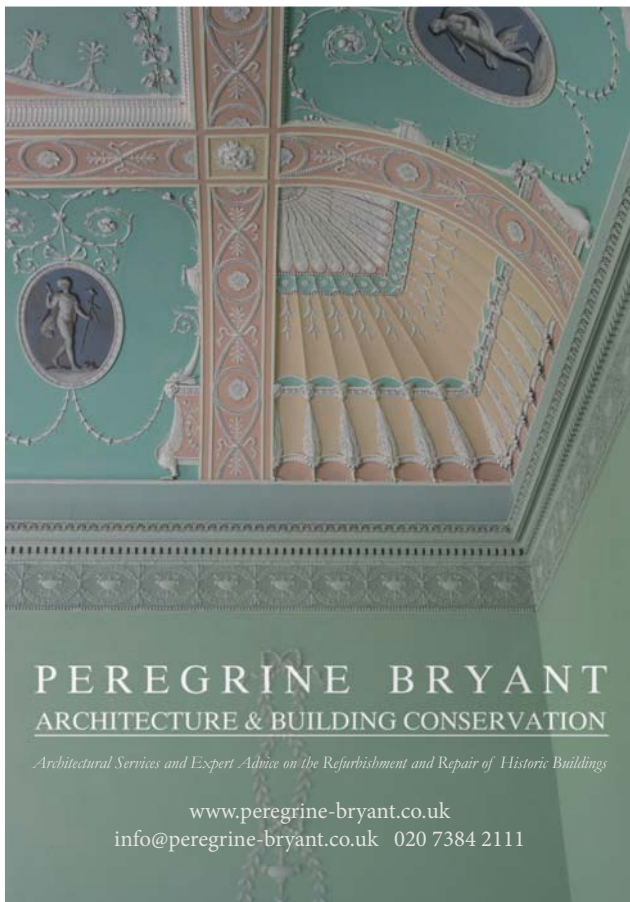
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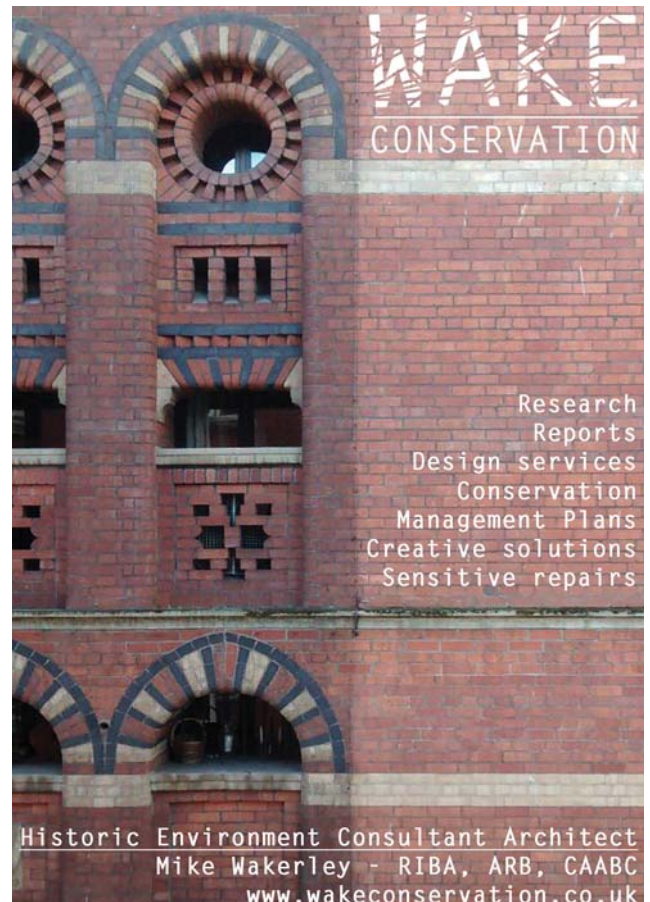
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SAVE publications

REVIVE AND SURVIVE

SAVE Britain's Heritage's latest Buildings at Risk Catalogue, *Revive and Survive*, features over 100 empty and neglected buildings gathered from across the country which need a fresh start to give them renewed life and to ensure their survival.

These forgotten buildings include courthouses, theatres, shipyard offices, churches, barracks, a shopping arcade, a tiny welsh toll cottage, a house inhabited by George Eliot, several large country houses, pubs, town halls, factories and allotment huts.

The catalogue is full of photographs of unknown or overlooked historic gems. All have stories to tell and are waiting for sympathetic restoration and reuse.



System update and new nominations

Do you know of any historic buildings standing empty and decaying that should be added to our Buildings at Risk register? Have you spotted a building on our register that is now in a different condition than we describe?

We are continuing our annual search for buildings at risk for 2019–2020 and we would like to hear from you. We are also conducting an update of the register and would welcome any news on existing entries.

We are principally looking for grade II and unlisted historic buildings which are at risk, vacant and in need of a new use.

For new entries to join the selection process for next year's catalogue, please send details and a high resolution photo to Liz Fuller, SAVE's Buildings at Risk Officer, by the end of January 2019:

liz.fuller@savebritainsheritage.org or 020 7253 3500

Buy *Revive and Survive* for £12 (Friends and Saviours) and £15 (regular price). Order your copy here:

<https://www.savebritainsheritage.org/publications>

TOO GOOD TO LOSE: HISTORIC SCHOOLS AT RISK

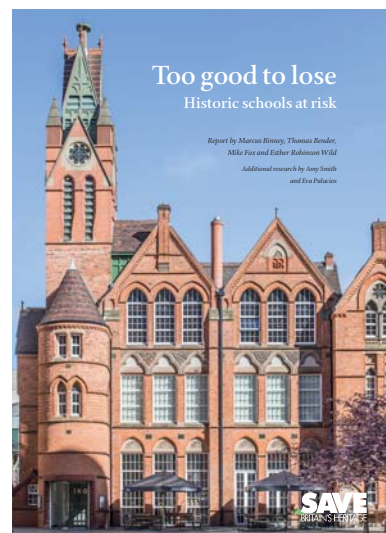
Our report *Too good to lose. Historic schools at risk*, published in November 2018, is prompted by national concern about the loss of historic school buildings and illustrates examples of fine buildings standing empty and deteriorating and others handsomely refurbished for new uses.

In the foreword to the report, the Prince of Wales commends efforts to rescue endangered Victorian and Edwardian school buildings. He writes: "It is vital that we act now to preserve this essential part of our heritage."

The report presents more than 50 historic schools across Britain. Our gazetteer contains a wide variety of schools, from a tiny school houses in rural Yorkshire to an opulent Edwardian palace-like school in Birmingham. The report looks at fine, unlisted buildings as much as listed schools such as the King Edward's School in Bath which is grade II*.

The report is available for £15 (Friends and Saviours) and £20 (regular price). Order your copy here:

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Book Reviews

The Old Rectory: The Story of the English Parsonage

Anthony Jennings

Sacristy Press, Second (Revised) Edition, 2018

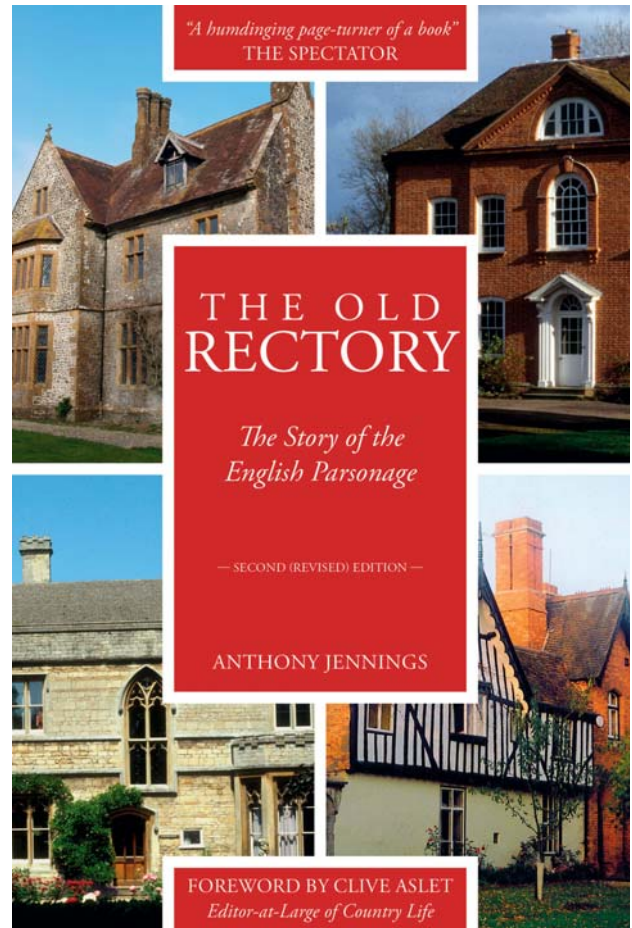
Anthony Jennings, is the director of Save Our Parsonages, a campaign group that fights against the sale by the Church of England of its rectories and vicarages. More than 8,000 historic parsonages have been sold already.

First published in 2009, Jennings's book provides a comprehensive overview of this specific building typology. He describes with much passion and detail the evolution of the parsonage from the Saxons and Normans through history to the Georgians and Victorians.

Jennings describes how the 20th century is the period when the Church of England began to sell off their old parsonages, because they were too big, too uncomfortable or too challenging to maintain. The author makes the case why this was a wrong, short-sighted decision.

The properties have gone up in price since the big sell-off and the Church had to deal with cheap, unsatisfying replacement buildings. As a consequence, many parishes lost their heart. Parsonages used to be the place where parishioners could find an open door, have a cup of tea and celebrate the village fete. For the author, they are a quintessential English institution, full of charm and character, combining an air of civilisation with traditional values. More than 60 photographs illustrate this rich heritage.

The book takes the reader on a journey through time which is interesting and includes fascinating facts about the life of vicars and priests, construction methods and church policies over more than 1000 years. However, the gazetteer of parsonages across England and a list of architects who built parsonages at the heart of the book, is rather indigestible and would have perhaps been more accessible as part of the annex. Compared to the wealth of knowledge in the book, the 'definitions' in the annex of the book are surprisingly sparse, and some of the special architectural words, used many times throughout the book, could perhaps have been added here.



It would be interesting to explore the challenges the Church of England is facing in the 21st century and whether there are alternative options for running and managing the parsonages in an increasingly secular country with shrinking church attendance and a smaller clergy. Perhaps this could be the focus of a future edition.

Reviewed by Thomas Bender

A Building History of Delapré Abbey, Northampton

Frances Maria Peacock
FMP Publications, 2017

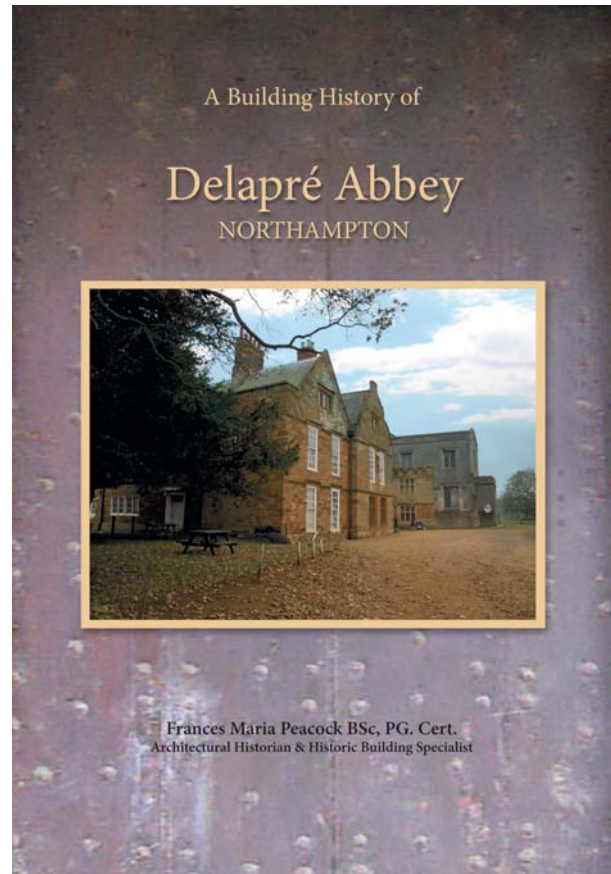
Delapré Abbey near Northampton is a former monastic complex which was transformed into a country house and then adapted to fit the function and facilities expected of country house life over a period of two hundred years. This highly readable building history charts the transformations of the house, its garden and its many ancillary buildings. It also tells the story of how the house was saved not once but twice.

Delapré Abbey, originally the Abbey of St Mary de la Pré, dates from the 13th century. The Abbey provided one of the stopping places for the body of Eleanor of Castile and there is one of only three remaining Eleanor Crosses nearby, erected at the end of the 13th century by Edward I, in memory of his queen and her final journey.

Largely destroyed and sold into private hands at the reformation, a new house rose on the site built by the new owners, the Tates. Two hundred years later, the house passed into the hands of a local landowner, Edward Bouverie. The final Bouverie died in 1943. Over this period, additions and changes were made to the house, leading to the idiosyncratic mix of styles and materials that is seen today.

This is a many-layered site, which has been rescued twice in the last 70 years: first by single-minded individual, Jean Wake (Chair of Northamptonshire Record Society), who was determined to save the buildings after the death of the last private owner and who succeeded in relocating the County Record Office there in 1956; second in 2013, by the Delapré Abbey Preservation Trust. Working with the Friends of Delapré Abbey and the local authority, they succeeded in obtaining funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to make the necessary repairs to bring the buildings into use as a visitor destination. It opened for the first time in 2018. More work is needed which will be funded by visitor revenues.

Following the route of the tours which can now be taken around the abbey buildings, this book analyses the exterior of each section and tracks its building history. Materials and building methods are dealt with in detail. The Abbey has various interesting outbuildings, including the unusual



thatched game larder and the glass houses, which are given equal attention as the main house.

This account is amply illustrated with photographs, archive material and drawings. Scale drawings produced by the author of certain parts of the building, including the now lost entertainment hall designed by Robert Taylor in the 1760s, add much to the overall understanding of the buildings.

The author, Frances Maria Peacock, is an architect and historic building specialist who is a volunteer guide at Delapré Abbey. She is also a Friend of SAVE and a volunteer who has worked on the Buildings at Risk Register.

Reviewed by Liz Fuller

Tributes

By Marcus Binney

Colin Amery (1944–2018)

Colin Amery who died on 11 August 2018, was one of the founder trustees of SAVE. We were a group of architectural historians, writers and critics – Colin and Peter Burman, Dan Cruickshank, Simon Jenkins, David Pearce, Margaret Richardson and myself. David Pearce was an architect and editor too and Timothy Cantell a planner.

Colin worked for the Architectural Review, Dan for the Architects' Journal. They worked in wonderful premises at 9 Queen Anne's Gate, famous for its Betjemanesque basement pub, The Bride of Denmark. In 1975, the year SAVE was founded, Colin and Dan published *The Rape of Britain*. Their research on endangered buildings was to be the bedrock for SAVE's first hard-hitting 35 page annual report, published in a double issue of the Architects' Journal in December 1975.

Colin fulfilled many important architectural roles. He was a key advisor to the Prince of Wales over many years and had a long stint as architectural correspondent of the Financial Times. He was one of the founders of the Spitalfields Trust, which rescued and revived more than 60 18th century terrace houses in the East End. The trust was founded in the SAVE office at 3 Park Square West. The owner of the house, Patrick Trevor Roper, was a key supporter of both our organisations. Colin, features famously on the cover of the History of the Spitalfields Trust, standing sternly behind the padlocked gates of Saint Botolph's Hall in Spital Square. The sit-in saved the building.

Colin went on to become director of the World Monument Fund in London playing a major role in raising funds for numerous international projects from the restoration of Hawksmoor's St George's Bloomsbury and Stowe House to Strawberry Hill in Twickenham and St Katherine's Palace in St Petersburg.

Colin was adviser to the National Gallery on the Sainsbury Wing and assisted The Prince of Wales with the establishment of his Institute of Architecture until 2002 and served on the Duchy of Cornwall Property Committee from 1990 to 1998. Colin was the chairman

of the Fabric Advisory Committee of St Edmundsbury Cathedral since 2001 and in 2012 was appointed chairman of the Fabric Advisory Committee of St George's Chapel, Windsor.

More recently, Colin was key advisor to Lord Rothschild for his new developments at Waddesdon – Windmill Hill, by Stephen Marshall Architects, and the Flint House by Charlotte Skene Catling of Skene Catling de la Peña – a testament to Colin's ability to understand a client brief as Flint House won the RIBA House of the Year award in 2015.

Colin succumbed to a long illness and was cared for by his husband, the architectural designer, Robin Ballance. At his funeral in Holy Trinity Sloane Street his coffin was movingly sung out by Diva Opera to the strains of the barcarolle from *The Tales of Hoffmann*.



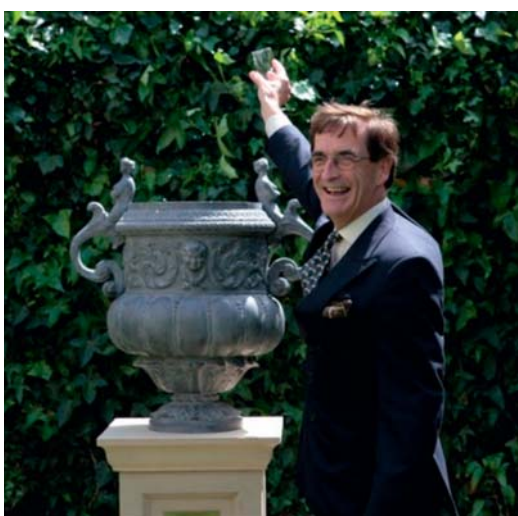
David Watkin (1941–2018)

David Watkin, the renowned architectural historian, played a little-known role in the early days of SAVE. I had followed David in studying the History of Art at Cambridge and David, having joined the History of Art Faculty, invited me to become a tutor on a new course on English Baroque Architecture. This I did in 1969 and 1970 and two of my pupils were Matthew Saunders, followed by Sophie Andreae. Matthew became the second Secretary of SAVE in 1976, following Sarah Seymour. Sophie followed Matthew in 1977 serving at SAVE for 11 years until she left to run the London Division of English Heritage.

In those years David supported two of SAVE’s major campaigns, his erudition and eloquence playing a key part in saving two great neo-classical buildings. The first was Thomas Harrison’s Lyceum in Liverpool. Amazingly, permission had been given to demolish this great building. I took up the fight at an ICOMOS conference in Moscow in 1978 recruiting 160 signatures to a telegram to the Prime Minister demanding a reprieve. We published a SAVE lightning leaflet which, after a long hard fight, persuaded the Secretary of State Peter Shore to revoke the planning permission. David Watkin’s ringing words were printed on the first page: “Thomas Harrison, though he scarcely left Cheshire and Lancashire, is an architect of

international stature who was commissioned to produce designs for buildings as far afield as Rome and the Ukraine. His Chester Castle is one of the great monuments of neoclassical Europe.”

A general election was called just before Peter Shore issued the revocation and the new Secretary of State Michael Heseltine immediately put the case under review. But he too received a large postbag supporting preservation and agreed to pay £300,000 compensation saving the Lyceum. By this time SAVE was involved in an equally fierce fight over another neoclassical masterpiece, the Grange in Hampshire. Once again David Watkin’s golden words, with those of John Harris, J M Crook and Mark Girouard carried the day. This commanding Greek Doric temple set in its lovely Hampshire landscape is in some ways the most impressive witness to the two cultural movements which 18th century England gave to the rest of Europe: the Greek Revival and the Picturesque. Inspired in its details by two major Athenian monuments, the Temple of Theseus and the (now demolished) Choragic Monument of Thrasylus, Grange Park is a work of programmatic significance demonstrating that by the end of the 18th century the Georgian man of taste had so completely identified himself with the ideals of classical civilisation as to be prepared to live in a temple.



Front covers of key SAVE campaign reports, written by David

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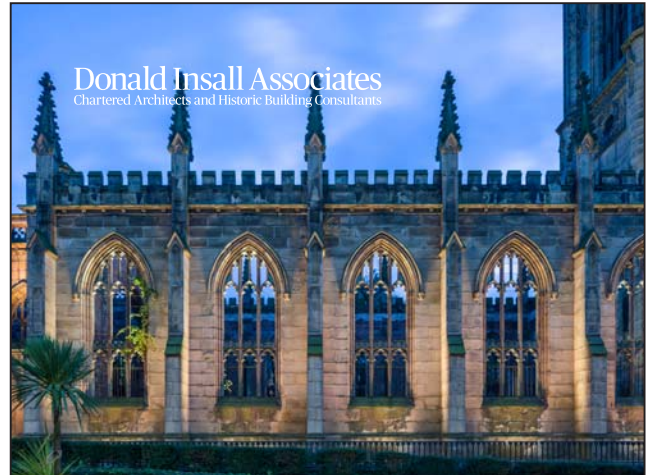
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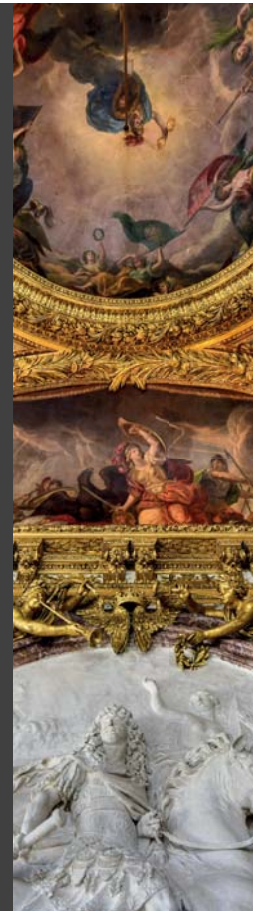
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The SAVE Trust – miniature castle in Bridgwater emerges after 20 years of rescue battle

The scaffolding has come down! SAVE Britain's Heritage is delighted to announce that the final stage of structural repairs and restoration of the façade of Castle House in Bridgwater, Somerset, has now completed.

SAVE set up the SAVE Trust as a special building preservation trust in 1999 to restore Castle House which, gutted by fire had stood vacant for many years. The SAVE Trust operates as a separate charity. The house attracted interest from a succession of potential partners. The structure had to be protected against water ingress and the building disappeared under scaffolding. Works started in 2012 with the rear range, and over the following years the house has been repaired, including the roofs, ceilings and the concrete façade. This was only possible thanks to major grants by Historic England and

EDF Energy together with our partners, architect Chris Balme from Ferguson Mann Architects, and Corbel Conservation, the contractor. Thanks is also due to Sedgemoor District Council for supporting this project.

Castle House is one of the earliest surviving examples of the use of prefabricated concrete and constructional post-tensioning in the world and an important monument of Victorian inventiveness and ambition.



The restoration of the façade of Castle House in Bridgwater in Somerset is now complete showing decorative concrete details including gargoyles (image: Eveleigh Photography)

The SAVE Trust is now looking for a development partner to complete the interiors. Planning permission was granted in 2017 to convert the house into three flats. Castle House would be a fascinating place to live, full of history and remarkable Victorian features.

Built in 1851, the house demonstrated the versatility and potential of concrete. Castle House is one of the earliest surviving examples of the use of prefabricated concrete and constructional post-tensioning in the world and an important monument of Victorian inventiveness and ambition. It was built as a family home – and ‘show house’ – for John Board, a pioneer of concrete construction. John Board founded his firm Board & Co in 1844. He was at the forefront of concrete manufacturing, and Castle House was where he trialled and tested new construction techniques.

The gothic window frames together with pre-cast architectural detailing give the house a very special charm; the top floor has concrete vaults supporting the roof. It is easy to imagine how the interiors, currently still in an unfinished condition, could be turned into three handsome apartments.

For more information, please contact Thomas Bender by email thomas.bender@savebritainsheritage.org or telephone 020 7253 3500.

SAVE Europe's Heritage – saving 500 years of history

SAVE Europe's Heritage has been involved in a renovation project in Germany since 2016. In summer 2018, the project made a huge leap forward. The Hessischer Hof is a remarkable, 500 year old timber framed building in the small town of Treffurt in Thuringia, eastern Germany. After decades of decay, the building has been under threat from imminent demolition.

Built in the 16th century, the house served as court building for the Landgrave of Hesse who together with the Archbishop-Elector of Mainz and the Prince-Elector of Saxony ruled the town of Treffurt. Treffurt is unique in Germany because of this rare joint governance arrangement. All three courthouses still exist – one of them is Hessischer Hof.

We have developed a new use concept for the Hessischer Hof in close collaboration with the mayor and local conservation experts. The building stands next to the Mainzer Hof, the former courthouse of the Bishop of Mainz, and would lend itself to accommodate facilities and guest rooms for a training centre along the lines of Dumfries House in East Ayrshire, Scotland.

The campaign to save the building gained great momentum after a meeting in London in May when a delegation from Germany visited us. The group included the Mayor of Treffurt, his councillors and a historic building expert. During the meeting, the idea of a training centre for traditional building crafts was explored further, and the group agreed to establish a research network with universities in Germany and the UK. A number of institutions in both countries have already signalled their interest in the project.

As part of the visit, SAVE Europe's Heritage organised a programme for the guests from Germany. The programme included a guided tour of the recently renovated residence of the German Embassy at Belgrave Square and of the Palace of Westminster. On the next day, the group visited the Clerkenwell Sessions House, an 18th century courthouse in London, which has just undergone a complete restoration programme to reinstate the original splendour (see page 25).

The Mayor of Treffurt and the Minister-President of the Federal State of Thuringia have now pledged to take the project forward. Led by the Thuringian heritage department, a building expert has been commissioned to produce a comprehensively historic survey of the building. This survey will help define the schedule of works necessary to repair the Hessischer Hof. In parallel, talks are taking place with the Minister-President of



The Hessischer Hof is an imposing timber structure in the town of Treffurt in Germany (image: Stadt Treffurt)

Hesse to explore the idea of a Thuringia-Hesse training centre. In November 2018, news reached us that the Hessischer Hof project has won a prestigious heritage award in Germany.

The Thuringian delegation undertook a visit in Scotland in early November, following an invitation of the Prince's Foundation to Dumfries House. In 2019, a symposium will be organised by our German partners in Treffurt to present the research results from Hessischer Hof and to raise awareness about the project and celebrate the great success story.

SAVE Europe's Heritage was established by SAVE Britain's Heritage in 1995, and acts as a separate charity.

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