

## INTRODUCTION

King's Cross Central will be the largest development of a single central London site for 160 years and will include at least 60 architectural commissions. In a bid to identify new talent the site's developer, Argent, teamed up with the AJ to hold a one-day design charette as part of the London Architecture Biennale. The event took place on Friday 16 June at the German Gymnasium in King's Cross. Twenty young practices were invited to produce sketch proposals for a high-density housing project which would encourage families to live in the inner city. The practices were given the brief in the morning and asked to present their projects to fellow contestants and a visiting jury at the end of the day.

The proposals, which are shown on the following pages, can also be seen at the New London Architecture Gallery, The Building Centre, Store Street, London WC1 from 4 August to 2 September.

## THE JURY

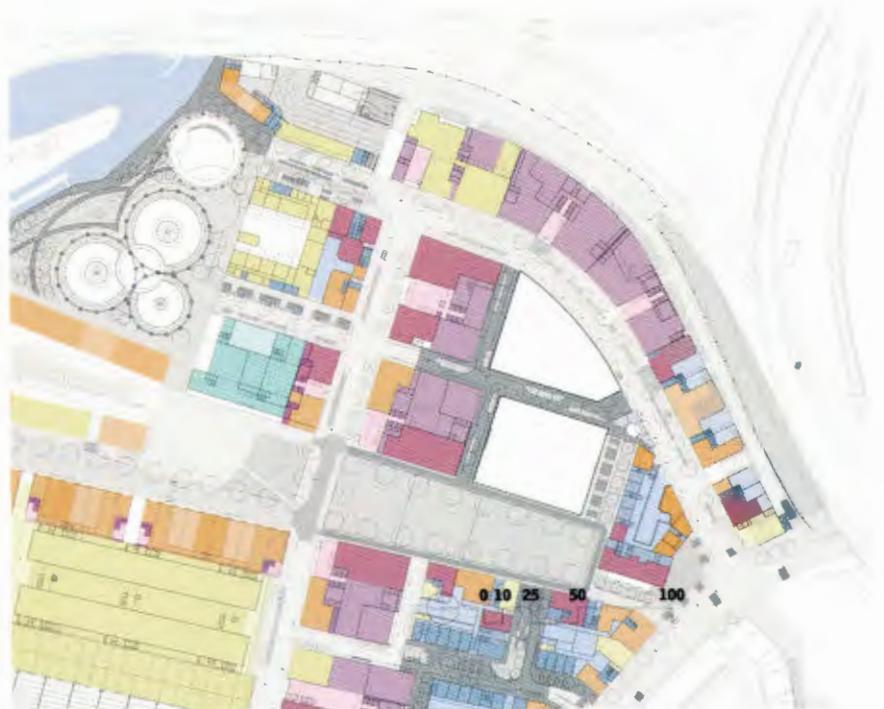
Roger Madelin, Argent  
David Partridge, Argent  
Isabel Allen, AJ  
Paul Finch, AR  
Pankaj Patel, Patel Taylor Architects  
Hugh Pearman, the Sunday Times

*Photography by Guy Drayton*

## THE BRIEF

The brief was based on two adjacent building plots within the masterplan developed by Allies and Morrison and Demetri Porphyrios. It called for 350 units across the two sites with 29 per cent social housing for rent and a further 15 per cent intermediate. The mix and approximate size of the units is set out below.

|               | Social for rent            | Intermediate             | Market                    |
|---------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Studios       |                            | 34% (25 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 10% (37 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 1 bed         | 21% (48 m <sup>2</sup> )   | 40% (42 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 20% (49 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 2 bed (small) | 19.5% (61 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 13% (51 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 20% (65 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 2 bed (large) | 19.5% (68 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 13% (61 m <sup>2</sup> ) | 15% (77 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 3 bed         | 30% (84 m <sup>2</sup> )   |                          | 20% (86 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 3 bed (large) |                            |                          | 5% (102 m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| 4 bed         | 10% (93 m <sup>2</sup> )   |                          | 10% (145 m <sup>2</sup> ) |



Portion of the King's Cross masterplan showing the historic gasometers and the two adjacent plots selected for the charette



Judging: from left to right: Roger Madelin, Hugh Pearman, Isabel Allen, Paul Finch and David Partridge



# DESIGNS ON KING'S CROSS

## SANEI HOPKINS ARCHITECTS

Amir Sanei, Abigail Hopkins

### UNITE'D FRONT

We want to create family dwellings;  
Without the social shortcomings.

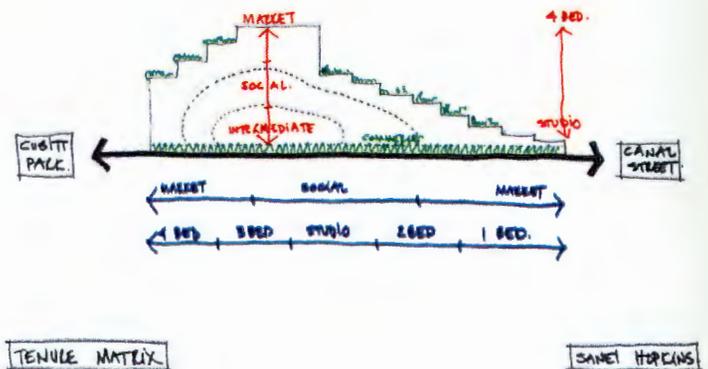
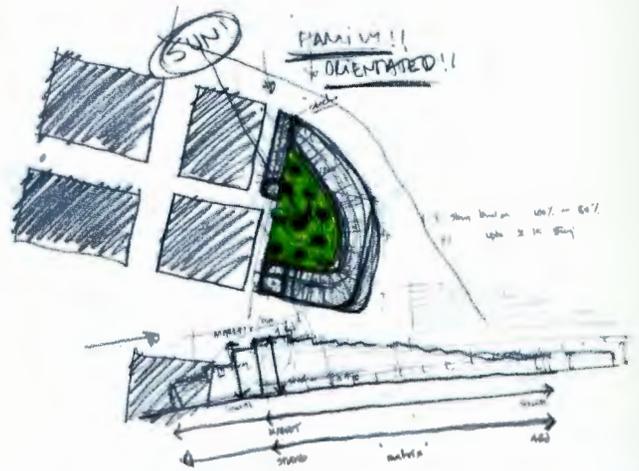
The model seemed dark and dense;  
More green and sun made sense.

A communal garden à la Notting Hill;  
Will attract families straight in from Lille.

With problems in the UK and France caused by cultural segregation;  
The model for this site should surely be that of social integration?

A complex matrix will be designed to allocate the apartments;  
The variables of which some will be dictated by Argent.

Some would fault the pioneering masters, Jeanneret and Smithson;  
We celebrate the 'Unite', but with hindsight let's get it right (on)!





*'This is Byker Wall revisited. A very attractive proposition – a nice presentation'*

Paul Finch

