

Institution: University of East London
Unit of Assessment: 16
Title of case study: 'New Conservation': concrete strategies for linking the philosophy, education and practice of Conservation with a public awareness of the value of the historic environment.
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Alan Chandler's 'New Conservation' research into the integration of conservation philosophy, practice and pedagogy has informed the development of architectural conservation policy and practice nationally and internationally. By shaping a new Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) education initiative, Chandler has defined and demonstrated the means of establishing continuity between professional architectural education and exemplary conservation practice. By articulating the relationship between cultural, technical and philosophical aspects of Conservation, the research communicates to a new generation of Professionals ideas about the management of change within historic monuments in the UK and in Chile.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>'New Conservation' research is founded on an integrated understanding of use, place, history and material technology within conservation practice. 'New Conservation' underpins a series of initiatives with two aims: to address the lack of general professional awareness of the relevance and integrated nature of Conservation-based practice, and to 'de-specialise' conservation architecture itself, away from museum-based methodologies and towards a socially orientated practice.</p> <p>Work by Alan Chandler (Senior Lecturer; joined UEL in 2001) on the philosophy of conservation, drawing particularly on William Morris's understanding of the relationship of craft to cultural meaning, evolved through a series of high profile conservation projects, notably saving from demolition and the subsequent acclaimed restoration of the 'York and Albany' in Regents Park, one of only two surviving commercial buildings by Sir John Nash. This project demonstrated the social relevance of conservation for the community through Chandler's engagement with Camden community groups opposed to the Crown Estate's plans for extensive demolition. Chandler's research-generated proposal achieved Listed Building consent with a sensitive re-use strategy and conservation-based design which Chandler delivered on site in 2007-8. The building is now a renowned Gordon Ramsay flagship boutique hotel [1].</p> <p>Research on the conceptual link between the post-war architectural critique of the Smithsons 'As Found' to the ideas of Morris and the origins of Conservation practice developed strategies for how material and 'originality' actively inform the design process. The research, and its place within the practical restoration of the Wealden Hall House [1], was presented in 2009 to the public through onsite tours and lectures (23.10.09 and 06.11.09), and as formal CPD for planners and conservation professionals. Research themes were expanded through a paper on Stirling Prize-winning Astley Castle (WWM Architects 2012) also published by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings [2]. Chandler's written research on philosophy and practice culminated in international success with the Palacio Pereira competition in Chile (2013) [5].</p> <p>The effectiveness of Chandler's research lies in its recognition of the importance of changing underlying attitudes towards and within Conservation practice, using the significance of materiality and technique to communicate the importance of 'place' and its use – thereby determining what and why one 'Conserves' in an architectural project. Research into the integration of material and social practice originated in 2005 in knowledge exchange workshops with UEL Diploma students and community stakeholders, creating an ongoing programme of public realm interventions for Design for London, Camden, Newham, Haringey and Westminster Councils, NGOs, health providers, architecture practices, and schools, documented in numerous conference papers and</p>

publications [3].

In April 2012, the RIBA commissioned Chandler [4] to examine the potential for conservation teaching development within RIBA/ARB approved criteria. Chandler's follow up paper (July 2012) recommended the development of a material-based teaching programme to engage design teaching with conservation philosophy. Reporting directly to the RIBA Director of Education, Chandler developed the RIBA Conservation Lecture Programme in 2012-13, combining his extensive experience in directing live projects together with his selection of challenging case studies. The Programme communicates the importance of critical conservation thinking within a socially sensitive and place-based architectural education.

3. References to the research

Peer-Reviewed publications supplied on request

[1] SPAB Peer reviewed Journal Article: Chandler A., 'How the Local Heroes can win', SPAB Journal 2004, vol.25, number 3: pp. 10 -11

[2] SPAB Peer reviewed Journal Article: Chandler A., 'The art of negotiation', SPAB Journal, Winter 2012, pp. 56 - 61

[3] Chandler A., Queens University Belfast Live Projects 2011 symposium, paper published in 2013 - So Why Do a Live Project? *Journal for Education in the Built Environment*. DOI: 10.11120/jebe.2013.00005.

[4] Chandler A., 'Education/Conservation' paper presented to the RIBA Conservation Register Committee, April 2012, developed into the 'Conservation, Education, Consolidation' paper presented to the RIBA Conservation Committee July 2012, Ratified as the Conservation Lecture Series for 2014 in May 2013. Available on request.

[5] Palacio Pereira: competition winning project exhibited at the Centro Patrimonial Recoleta Dominica, 10th - 21st December 2012.

http://www.concursopalaciopereira.cl/docs/resultados/Primer_premio2.pdf

<http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2012/12/10/primer-lugar-concurso-recuperacion-y-puesta-en-valor-del-monumento-historico-palacio-pereira-cecilia-puga-paula-velasco-y-alberto-moletto/>

<http://www.prensapresidencia.cl/default.aspx?codigo=11387>

Submitted to REF2 - the film can be found in the Porfolio 01 supporting folders (cd).

4. Details of the impact

'New Conservation' has been used to structure Chandler's development in 2012/13 of the RIBA's first education programme for Conservation architecture, engaging with up to 50 Diploma students at each of 10 schools of Architecture across the UK, linking the experience of materials and technique through 'hands-on' construction workshops, social history, strategy and philosophy as integrated aspects of Conservation practice [a]. The **'New Conservation'** education programme connects Conservation architects on the RIBA Conservation Register, chosen by Chandler, to participating schools of architecture, giving contributing practitioners RIBA continuous professional development credits and promoting the benefits of entering the Conservation Register (Registrant level) to graduating students.

Chandler's research publications led to an invitation in 2011 to sit on the RIBA Conservation Group (CG). His subsequent CG-commissioned research (April 2012) [4] explored the potential requirement for Conservation teaching within RIBA-validated professional programmes. In concluding that a formal requirement was inappropriate, Chandler recommended the development of a RIBA-led teaching programme to engage design teaching with Conservation philosophy

through case studies and construction material workshops. Approval was granted by the RIBA Director of Education in January 2013, and at the RIBA Practice and Profession Committee in February 2013 [b]. In approving the **'New Conservation'** education programme, Chandler was asked to act as education adviser to the Conservation Group and to be the RIBA link to COTAC (Conference on Training in Architectural Conservation), the Edinburgh Group (the UK forum for Professional Conservation Registers), and the SPAB.

Chandler's **'New Conservation'** research, and his standing within the RIBA, led to an invitation (October 2012) to collaborate with a team of Chilean architects led by Cecilia Puga. Together they went on to win the International 'Recuperacion y Puesta en Valor del Monumento Historico Palacio Pereira' competition (December 2012). The competition, established by Chilean President Manuel Pinera, was a national project to celebrate the Bicentenary of Chile, providing a national, public centre for the Directorate of Libraries, Archives, Museums and National Monuments. Key to the competition for the 5,700sq.m redevelopment was the requirement for the winning scheme to articulate not only a new vision for the restoration of the ruined Palacio, but to establish priorities for the wider practice of conservation in Chile. The Heritage Directorate recognised limitations with conservation practice to date in Chile, and sought to use this prestigious competition to articulate a new direction.

Lead architect on the competition, Cecilia Puga, summarised Chandler's strategic contribution in a letter in which she states: *"our success in this competition was due to a genuine response combination of design and philosophy, and was recognised by the Government in its praise of the strategy and the sensitivity we as a team had shown"* [c]. The National Monuments Council of Chile organised a strategy development workshop in Santiago to expand the ideas that underpinned the Palacio success - *"the Workshop, held with the key members of the Government and the design team really came together around the ideas you put forward and the analysis you presented on international exemplary projects, locating our project within a new attitude towards conservation that our Government is embracing"* [c].

Linking material understanding to conservation philosophy, Chandler's 'Conservation Strategy' (translated as the text for the competition entry) presented new correlations of ideas within a South American context, elaborated through his ongoing project involvement and site documentation. In March 2013 Chandler presented a paper on new relationships between conservation philosophy and practice to the Chilean Authorities in Santiago, and led a workshop with leading Conservation professionals looking at the implications of his strategy for wider conservation policy [d, e]. These activities generated high profile Chilean media coverage, including in 'El Mercurio', the country's paper-of-record and part of a network of 19 regional dailies and 32 national radio stations, with a circulation of over 200,000, and numerous web platforms [f, g], and a documentary film of the site based strategy workshops, made by the Governments National Archive.

Policy change is ongoing, engaging professionals, academics and decision makers in the issues of **'New Conservation'** addresses the lack of Conservation design debate within Chilean architectural education as part of a broader strategy to renew government policy on historic building management. As a result of the contribution to critical debate in Chile on the practice of conservation, Chandler will be a keynote speaker at the 'Dialogues on heritage 2013' conference in Santiago run by the National Monuments Council, in conversation on stage with its Executive Secretary, Emilio De la Cerda on the 6th November.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[a] RIBA Conservation Register/Conservation Committee Minutes: (ongoing). The minutes record the approval for the development of the first RIBA Conservation Education initiative – hard copy available on request.

[b] Letter from Director of Education at the RIBA on the 'New Conservation' initiative – hard copy available on request.

Impact case study (REF3b)

[c] Letter from Cecilia Puga/the winning team on the importance of Chandler's contribution to the project, and its significance within the Chilean context – hard copy available on request.

[d] Letter from Emilio De la Cerda, Executive secretary of the National Council of Monuments, Chile noting Chandler's contribution to institutional thinking on the restoration of National monuments – hard copy available on request.

[e] Letter from Fernando Perez-Oyarzun, Head of the Doctorate in Architecture and Urban Studies, Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile on Chandler's contribution to the discussion on Patrimony within Santiago – hard copy available on request.

[f] Article: El Mercurio – Chilean Newspaper of Record 09.12.12 'Artes y Letras'- "Proyecto Pereira: renovacion y conservacion" reporting on the Palacio result and its significance in the distinction between renovation and conservation. Refer to Output 01 Portfolio.

[g] Article: El Mercurio – Chilean Newspaper of Record 19.03.123 'Cultura' – "Pensando el Palacio Pereira" reporting on the Palacio workshops with Government, academics and professionals, debate led by Chandler (pictured). Refer to Output 01 Portfolio.