

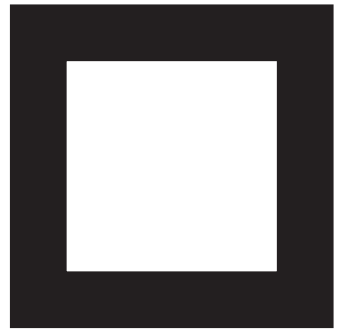
PERSPECTIVE

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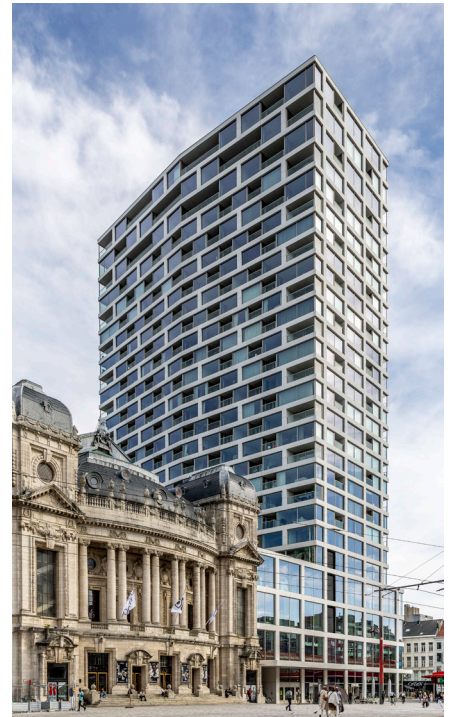
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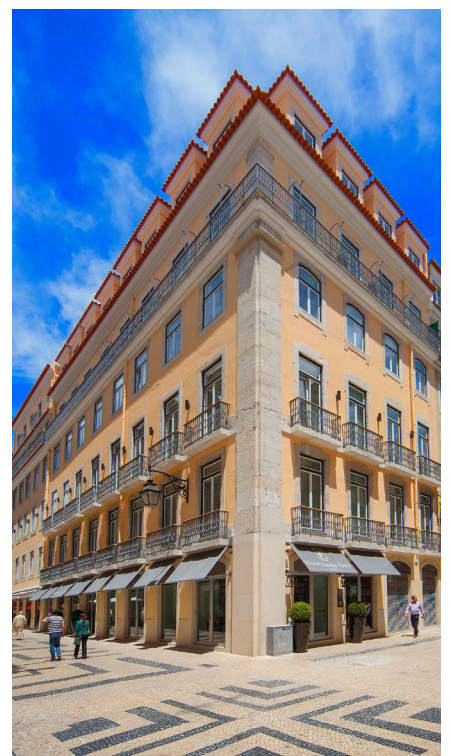
2023
WINTER



FOCUS TOPIC: CONVERSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS TO NEW FUNCTION



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FOCUS TOPIC

CHANGE OF USE IN EXISTING BUILDINGS: A NECESSARY NEW APPROACH

Throughout the history of architecture, changes in the uses of previously constructed buildings have been quite frequent. Depending on the spatial quality of the buildings, their stability and structural capacity, their location or symbolic value, they have been adapted for uses other than those assigned in the initial design. This is how important monuments conceived for the military, religious or civic purposes have survived to the present day, and whose magnificent architectural characteristics have allowed for transformation over time, adapting to new purposes required by an evolving society.

Initially, the reasons for these transformations were mainly economic, thus taking advantage of existing structures that were no longer in use for their original purpose. However, there were no criteria for heritage preservation, so at different times and places, buildings were demolished that, although architecturally important, did not enjoy the political and social recognition that would have been necessary for their preservation. At the end of the nineteenth century, the awareness of the conservation of historical heritage was awakened and with it not only the most notable architectural examples were preserved, but their conservation was also linked to new uses that justified it. The great explosion of construction techniques at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century allowed new technological achievements in construction, but also provided greater flexibility in the interventions to adapt to new uses.

The conservationist and regenerative movements that developed from these technological innovations initially focused on monumental public architecture, transforming castles or monasteries into luxury hotels (the paradores in Spain or the pousadas in Portugal). Subsequently, railway stations were transformed to house museums (the Musée d'Orsay in Paris) or large markets were restored to become cultural spaces. Conservation awareness is expanding to include neighborhoods and industrial complexes. The restoration and change of use contemplated from this perspective acts as an engine of urban regeneration in many depressed areas. Thus, the Docklands of London and the Piers of San Francisco or Boston transformed industrial neighborhoods by introducing an intelligent and attractive residential use in areas that were peripheral, and they constitute examples which are repeated all over the world. This approach to urban rehabilitation involves a change of scale in the interventions, from the individual building to the neighborhood as a whole - one of the most common forms of urban planning at the end of the 20th century, and still today. The conservation approach maintains the initial criteria, but enlarges their scale.

From the 21st century onwards, other parameters began to emerge that transformed the understanding of conservation, introducing new criteria to be taken into account and nuanced or surpassing the concepts of the conservationism of the 19th and 20th centuries. The first change has occurred in recent decades with the awareness of the serious problem of the carbonization of the atmosphere. To a large extent, it is a consequence of the construction process, both in its industrial origin and in its operating and consumption needs. For the first time, buildings are considered as highly polluting elements and, therefore, it is assumed that it is a problem that must be corrected. Thus, new criteria are being introduced to assess the approaches to architectural and urban interventions. Buildings have the value of their own existence, and they have already consumed the energy necessary for their construction, so we must take advantage of them and not expand their previous contribution of carbon as energy already consumed. It is preferable to repurpose a building than to reconstruct it.

On the other hand, in recent years there have been important changes in our way of life and consequently in the use of buildings. The unstoppable evolution of communication technologies has enabled a highly digitized world, which, together with the unexpected outcome of the covid pandemic, have produced a paradigm shift in the type of housing, and the built environment, that society requires.



Photos: I. Handelsbeurs, Antwerp, Belgium II. Green Cube, Milan, Italy III. Haukilahti Water Tower, Finland

Housing must respond to different needs and adapt to the new situation. Sufficient and flexible spaces are required to allow more time to be spent in them and work remotely, since after the hard test of confinement, teleworking has been imposed in a large part of the workplace. At the same time, the number of face-to-face workers in offices and workplaces has decreased, so there are important areas in disuse. In addition, there is a social evolution towards families with fewer members, but more sensitive to common leisure. In this scenario, there is an opportunity to promote the reuse of offices or workshops for other uses, particularly residential, thus providing housing in urban and business centers in cities. In general, these are buildings that, due to their structure, spaces and volume, are compatible with the implementation of advanced technical and energy elements. This makes it possible to offer solutions that respond positively to several issues: contributing to the decarbonisation of the city, self-sufficiency and by urban regeneration centralizing residential areas. This participation in a circular economy process, by reusing and recycling abandoned spaces for new purposes, aims not only to achieve environmental sustainability but also creating a more inclusive, diverse and vibrant communities that directly improve the well-being and satisfaction of their inhabitants.

While architects, urban planners and engineers will address the technical element of this transition, implementing these actions and achieving ambitious decarbonisation goals inevitably requires political and business will. From the point of view of legislation, it is essential to have regulations that support urban planning and development by making the uses of buildings and neighbourhoods more flexible. A beneficial tax scheme would encourage investors and open up avenues for business and public collaboration. These are complex and multilateral issues that are both a challenge and an opportunity and that, if solved creatively and with a vision of the future, will have a beneficial impact on society as a whole.



IV.



V.



VI.

REUSING EXISTING BUILDINGS FOR BOUTIQUE HOTELS

PERSPECTIVE Spain has been very active in the refurbishment of old buildings since its very beginning. Most projects focused on the transformation of old residential buildings into new homes without a proper change of use, but rather an update of old bourgeois residences into modern apartments with new architectural and technical improvements. Nevertheless, various important projects did involve a genuine change-of-use of the affected buildings into boutique hotels. Historic aristocratic palaces, such as Palacio de Solecio in Málaga or Palacio de Godoy in Cáceres, have been transformed into high-class hotels. The projects built on the amazing preexisting architecture and decorations to breathe new life into near-ruin structures.

Other projects intervened in inner city buildings used as bourgeois residences for more than a hundred years to save them from abandonment and transform them into luxury points of reference in their own right. The Orfila Hotel and the Heritage Hotel in Madrid, and the soon-to-open Cristine Bedfor Hotel in Malaga are good examples. This specific change-of-use requires a delicate approach to the existing building, seeking to preserve its original values and bringing to live again spaces and old systems that are not used anymore.

VII.



VIII.

Photos: IV. Hotel Santa Justa, Lisbon, Portugal V. Thor Park, Genk, Belgium VI. Jakala Offices, Milan, Italy VII. Hotel Heritage, Madrid, Spain VIII. Hotel Palacio De Solecio, Málaga, Spain

ELLIS COURT RESTORATION

Dublin, Ireland

Designed by: PERSPECTIVE Ireland

Client: Tuath Housing Association

Function: 21 Housing units

Status: Completed in 2022



Ellis Court is a social housing development, delivered by PERSPECTIVE Ireland, for Tuath Housing Association in Dublin City. This restoration project won the “Placemaking Initiative of the Year” award at The National Property Awards 2023.

Ellis Court was originally constructed as part of a wider social housing development by Dublin Corporation in 1887. While the buildings are not registered as protected structures, they are rated by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) using the current criteria, as being of ‘Regional’ importance by virtue of the buildings being representative of late nineteenth century public housing, and so retain social significance due to architectural, historic and social values.

It continued to serve as social housing until the buildings were vacated in 2005, due to the severe deterioration of the building fabric and the inadequacy of the units to serve as dwellings to an acceptable modern standard. The site was acquired by Tuath Housing Association in 2015 who sought to redevelop and reinstate the existing structures as modern social housing units. The design challenge sought to strike a balance between best conservation practice, sustainable energy efficiency and selective modern interventions. On completion, the regeneration has provided a total of 19 apartments and 3 terraced houses fit for modern living.

The design solution sought to retain the building’s features of significance, while upgrading the layouts and fabric of the dwellings to comply with current housing standards. The original sliding sash windows, timber shop front, granite window cills and cast-iron railings were retained and restored to ensure the character of the structure remained inherent. Sand cement pointing was replaced with lime-based pointing throughout to promote breathability of the existing solid masonry construction. Modern interventions, such as the steel framed balconies offer private open space to the apartment units, while creating a clear and distinct contrast between the old and new.

“This is a really significant project for Tuath and shows our innovation, trying to regenerate inner city centres. It follows the Housing For All strategy of making greener construction by using the buildings that are in place to restore where possible. It was built in the 1880s as part of the first social housing projects in the country so it was important to retain that history”

- Marie McNamara, Development Manager, Tuath Housing



TURATI 29 Milan, Italy

Designed by: PERSPECTIVE Italy
Client: Kryalos SGR S.p.A.
Area: 4 000 m² of office space
Status: During construction

Regeneration of a 60's office building

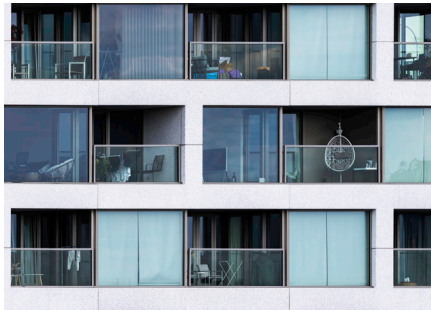
PERSPECTIVE Milan is carrying out the renovation and redevelopment of the building in via Turati, 29 in the heart of Milan near the Central Station.

Belonging to the "Artemide" fund managed by Kryalos SGR, Turati 29, built in 1960, is a sky-earth building with 6 floors above ground and 2 underground floors, for a total gross area of over 4,058 square meters. It has been originally designed as one of the two "younger brothers" of the two towers of Piazza Repubblica as entrance gates to Milan business district.

The project has been developed by PERSPECTIVE Milan- D2U together with ESA Engineering for structural and MEP design and involves the complete strip out of the existing building finishes, the brought up to fire fighting standard of the central staircase and lifts core for adequate emergency exit and a better use of internal space, full renovation of the façade and high standard interior spaces in a single tenant perspective.

The project provided also the creation of an additional top floor for office and support use on the roof; the replacement of all M&E systems in line with the highest quality and energy efficiency standards; the creation of usable terraces and the installation of a photovoltaic system. At the end of the works, scheduled by the end of 2024, the building will be certified LEED Platinum and BREEAM Very Good.





ANTWERP TOWER

Antwerp, Belgium

Designed by: PERSPECTIVE Belgium in cooperation with Wiel Arets Architects

Client: Matexi Projects

Area: ca. 60 000 m² of mixed use area with 241 apartments

Status: Completed in 2021

Antwerp Tower is the transformation of an old office tower from the '70s into an urban mixed-use residential tower on the Keyserlei in the heart of Antwerp near the central station. The original tower building has been completely stripped and transformed into a residential tower with 241 apartments, commercial functions and co-working offices in the building's base. In the redesign, the footprint of the tower on top of the plinth extends beyond its original dimensions and raising the tower to 100m. The tower's extended floorplan allowed for the creation of loggias in every apartment. In order to create living units that are largely columns-free, the original construction has been partially replaced by an alternating structural system of load-bearing walls and columns.

The façade design is open on all four sides and all facades have been given an identical character. The building's façade is finished with custom produced, polished white concrete components. The same material extends into the building's entrance hall and the interior walls and ceilings of each loggia.

PERSPECTIVE Belgium (eld) and Wiel Arets Architects cooperated as architect team.



Kv Berget 2 Stockholm, Sweden

Designed by: PERSPECTIVE Sweden
Client: Balder / Viktor Hansson
Area: ca. 8 400 m²
Status: Completed in 2021

Recovery of a stately residential building

This estate called Kv Berget 2 in the very central of Stockholm, was built in 1886-88 as a stately apartment building but has a long history of reconstruction. Among other things, there was a sewing factory here during the 1920s. Most recently, the building functioned as a toiled and run-down hotel and the task was to transform the building into exclusive condominiums. The Stockholm City Museum is the antiquarian supervisory authority, and the façade is highly rated by them. Therefore, it has been restored to its original condition.

Some older details remained, but the interiors were generally very distorted over the years. Only one apartment was found in original condition and became the inspiration for the restoration. The stairwell was also restored to its original appearance after carefully scraping out the old colors and murals. A small courtyard house which had been a storage and laundry room, was converted into a private residence. In total, the project resulted in twenty-one exclusive condominiums with modern features and original qualities recreated.



PLAC WOLNOSCI 6 Poznan, Poland

Designed by: PERSPECTIVE Poznan
Client: Inwestycje Wielkopolski
Area: ca. 11 800 m²
Status: Planned for completion in 2024

At the commission of Inwestycje Wielkopolski, PERSPECTIVE Poland has developed a multi-discipline design - from the concept to execution phase - of an apartment building located within the dense historic urban tissue of Poznan's Old Town.

In addition to supplementing the inner yard of the quarter with new buildings, the project includes the restoration of the historic front tenement house to a new function - commercial and service on the ground floor and first floor, and apartments on the upper floors, overlooking the Old Town Square, crucial for Poznan's identity. In addition to making the building functionally adequate to modern standards, the representative appearance of the facade will be restored, which had been degraded and lost its aesthetic value over the years preceding the current reconstruction.

In total, the building will contain approximately 250 residential units. Parts of the building located in the interior of the quarter have been finished and are already in use, while the completion of works on the reconstruction of the tenement house is planned for 2024. The immediate surroundings of the building is part of the city center spaces covered by the municipal revitalization project that has been ongoing for several years and is now coming close to an end.



WYNDHAM RESIDENCE

Alvor, Portugal

Designed by: PERSPECTIVE Portugal

Client: Monarque Funds

Function: 149 hotel and apartment units with amenities

Status: Completed in 2023

Under appointment by Monarque Funds, and to be managed by PG, Hotels & Resorts, PERSPECTIVE Portugal developed the design for the complete renovation of Wyndham Residences at Alvor Beach, with 40 years of combined experience and using the most recent technology for project efficiency. The combined effort seamlessly blended our architectural and interior design expertise, reflecting our commitment to sustainable and innovative design.

On the other hand, a close cost control, has allowed to develop the works within budget limits. The existing building was stripped out and fully renovated, including MEP, finishings and FF&E. A new look for the façade and external terraces, including the swimming pool, was implemented.

The project features 149 units: being 48 Hotel rooms, 99 studio apartments and two suites, accompanied by bar, working areas, restaurant, terrace and swimming pool.



BELGIUM ELD NV

Ilka Broeckaert

belgium@perspective-architecturalgroup.com

T: (32) 3 242 94 00

FINLAND VIRKKUNEN & CO ARCHITECTS

Nina Rusanen

finland@perspective-architecturalgroup.com

T: (358) 9 5860 770

FRANCE LPA ARCHITECTES

Charles Bourguignon

france@perspective-architecturalgroup.com

T: (33) 1 45 00 63 81

IRELAND COADY ARCHITECTS

Mark McCann

ireland@perspective-architecturalgroup.com

T: (353) 1 497 6766

ITALY D2U | DESIGN TO USERS

Corrado Caruso

italy@perspective-architecturalgroup.com

T: (39) 02 4398 1021

POLAND ELD POLAND

Waldemar Wisniewski

poland@perspective-architecturalgroup.com

T: (48) 61 852 4633

PORTUGAL NLA | NUNO LEÓNIDAS ARQUITECTOS LDA

Nuno Leónidas

portugal@perspective-architecturalgroup.com

T: (351) 21 454 44 30

SPAIN B/SV | BERNAR SAINZ DE VICUÑA

Ignacio Sainz de Vicuña

spain@perspective-architecturalgroup.com

T: (34) 91 435 34 33

SWEDEN AHLQVIST & ALMQVIST ARKITEKTER

Britt Almqvist

sweden@perspective-architecturalgroup.com

T: (46) 8 55 696 880

STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

CAPE VERDE
CROATIA
CZECH REPUBLIC
EAST TIMOR
HONGKONG
MEXICO
OMAN
PHILIPPINES
SAN FRANCISCO
SINGAPORE
SWITZERLAND
UNITED KINGDOM



PERSPECTIVE

ADMINISTRATOR@PERSPECTIVE-ARCHITECTURALGROUP.COM