

A NOTE

The Citizen Centre, Shenzhen, People's Republic of China: a new civic design (1994+)

The Citizen Centre complex in Shenzhen is in the process of construction. It has followed a very different process of design than the capital complexes at Chandigarh designed by Le Corbusier and Brasília designed by Oscar Niemeyer. As a complex it will be an all-of-a-piece urban design. Following a typical procedure used in China the design results from a process of consultation/competition. This system is used to generate interesting potential solutions but it can also result in eye-catching designs with short-run futures. In 1995, a number of architects were asked to submit designs for the Citizen Centre. The best of them was deemed to be that by John M. Lee/Michael Timchula Associates based in the United States. It remains to be seen how the Citizen Centre complex turns out as design decisions are still being finalized (Figure 8.9).

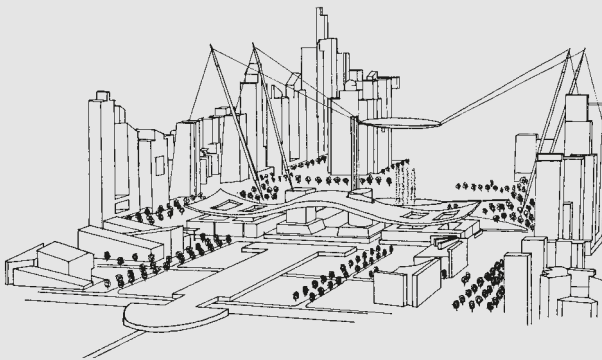
The new heart of Shenzhen is organized along the central green zone of the city

designed largely to a plan by Kisho Kurokawa of Japan. The site is 1.9 kilometres wide and 2.2 north-to-south with Lotus Hill to the north. It is laid out in a grid bisected by the east-to-west Shennan Avenue. The commercial area lies to the south of the Avenue, and the government and cultural zone (a 180-hectare site) to the north.

The landmark building of the government complex is the City Hall designed by John Lee. Its roof has an eye-catching form like the wings of a roc. It is equipped with solar voltaic panels as part of the effort to reduce energy consumption and costs. Below the roof the building is divided into two almost symmetrical parts containing the various administrative functions of the city. In front of the building is the 'Crystal Island', a transparent steel and glass structure, and a green zone that extends to Lotus Hill.

The green zone is flanked by a number of buildings that will be built by a number of

Drawing adapted from various sources by
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(a)



(b)

Figure 8.9 The Citizen Centre complex, Shenzhen. (a) The conceptual site in its proposed context and (b) the Citizen Centre.