

# Reconsidering Relocated Buildings: ICOMOS, Authenticity and Mass Relocation<sup>1</sup>

Jenny Gregory

*ICOMOS charters guide global heritage conservation practices. Fundamental to most is the notion that a 'monument is inseparable from the history to which it bears witness and from the setting in which it occurs.' Yet buildings have been moved for centuries. Neither the fabric nor the size of a building, nor planning regulations, nor even heritage listing, have prevented their relocation. This article briefly examines the history of relocation, reviews attitudes to relocation in ICOMOS charters, and analyses two case studies involving the mass relocation of heritage buildings in the UK and in New Zealand to question the assumption that buildings lose their authenticity if moved.*

*Keywords:* Historical Sites; New Zealand; England; Construction; Structural Movers

Buildings have been moved for centuries. 'Portable colonial cottages' for gentlemen emigrating to new settlements were advertised in British newspapers in the early 19th century. They, and other prefabricated buildings, were regularly shipped across the globe to new world societies where there was an urgent need for shelter, thus enabling an emigrant to 'land from a ship in a new country in the morning, and sleep in his own house on shore at night'.<sup>2</sup> Such buildings had a history of movement and were often moved several times after their initial erection. In contrast, most buildings are constructed on a permanent site. But they too can be relocated from their original site to a new location and neither size, planning regulations nor, in many cases, heritage listing has prevented this.<sup>3</sup>

Occasionally there is a mass relocation of buildings. In Western Australia, for example, there have been a number of mass relocations, especially in remote regions. Onslow, a pearling town in the north-west, was moved in the 1920s, and Kurrawang

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Jenny Gregory, University of Western Australia. Correspondence to: jag@arts.uwa.edu.au

and part of Gwalia, mining towns in the eastern goldfields, were moved in 1937 and 1983, respectively.

Are such mass relocations common? Only further research will tell. There is rarely a commercial justification for the relocation of large numbers of buildings. The two mass relocations that are the subject of this paper involve heritage-listed buildings, and they were moved as a result of statutory requirements.

How do heritage practitioners regard mass relocations? This paper reviews attitudes to the relocation of heritage buildings in the ICOMOS charters and then examines two case studies involving the mass relocation of heritage buildings, identifying the ways in which heritage professionals involved in their relocation responded to the apparent dichotomy between theory and practice. The paper then discusses the vexed question of authenticity.

### **The ICOMOS View of Relocation**

Heritage conservation practices across the globe are guided by a series of international charters. The Venice Charter (1964) came into existence at the congress that also resulted in the establishment of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 1965. It is a practical document designed, through its 16 principles, to guide architects and other specialists in the conservation of buildings. Authenticity is of prime importance. Reconstruction is not permitted, the structure and authenticity of materials must be respected, and any new elements must be distinguishable from the original. Article 7 specifically bans the relocation of historic buildings:

a monument is inseparable from the history to which it bears witness and from the setting in which it occurs. The moving of all or part of a monument cannot be allowed except where the safeguarding of that monument demands it or where it is justified by national or international interest of paramount importance.<sup>4</sup>

Other ICOMOS charters echo this position. ICOMOS Australia's Burra Charter (1976) rejected relocation, asserting that the physical location of a place is part of its cultural significance, and dictating that the movement of a building of cultural heritage significance is unacceptable. ICOMOS Canada's Appleton Charter (1983) stated categorically that 'relocation and dismantling of an existing resource should be employed only as a last resort, if protection cannot be achieved by any other means'.<sup>5</sup>

Gradually, however, as a result of differing national practices and differing attitudes to relocation and, perhaps too, an increasing awareness that history is about change over time, some variations began to appear in ICOMOS charters. ICOMOS New Zealand's Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value (1992) suggested a more pragmatic approach to relocation:

The site of an historic structure is usually an integral part of its cultural heritage value. Relocation, however, can be a legitimate part of the conservation process where assessment shows that:

- i. the site is not of associated value (an exceptional circumstance); or
- ii. relocation is the only means of saving the structure; or
- iii. relocation provides continuity of cultural heritage value.

A new site should provide a setting compatible with cultural heritage value.<sup>6</sup>

Earthquake-prone New Zealand has a long history of relocation of its easily moved timber buildings.

The ICOMOS Principles for the Conservation of Timber Structures (1999) recognised the vulnerability of timber building fabric. Under this charter intervention to prevent decay is considered permissible if it follows traditional methods. Although minimum intervention is the ideal, there was now a recognition that conservation might require complete or partial dismantling of buildings and their subsequent reassembly.<sup>7</sup>

Revisions of ICOMOS Australia's Burra Charter continued to assert that buildings of cultural heritage significance could be moved only if relocation was 'the sole practical means of ensuring its survival'. But its most recent revision in 1999 provided a caveat so that buildings that have been designed to be moved or have a history of relocation can be moved provided they do not have significant links to their present location.<sup>8</sup> This was an acknowledgement of the extent of relocation in Australia, as well as a recognition of the heritage significance of prefabricated buildings in Australia.

One of the most recent ICOMOS charters, the principles for the Analysis, Conservation and Structural Restoration of Architectural Heritage (2003) accepts the possibility of relocation though specifying that the 'Dismantling and reassembly should only be undertaken as an optional measure ... when conservation by any other means is impossible or harmful.'<sup>9</sup>

In summary, today the various ICOMOS charters reject relocation except in situations of last resort where relocation is essential to safeguard, or to conserve, restore or preserve, or to comply with national or international interests. Two further caveats exist. In Australia buildings can be relocated if they were originally designed to be moved. In New Zealand buildings can also be relocated in the rare situation in which the site of a building does not have associated value and relocation to a compatible setting can provide continuity of cultural heritage.

### **The Channel Tunnel Rail Link**

The impact of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) in Britain on heritage sites is an excellent example of the clash between development requirements and heritage and the use of relocation as a solution.

One of the largest construction projects in Europe, the route of the CTRL covers 109 km from the mouth of the Channel Tunnel, traversing farmland and towns and terminating at St Pancras Station in London. Construction began in 1998, following the passage of the CTRL Act (1996). Apart from the engineering challenges inherent in such a huge project, the act placed numerous conditions on the developers in response to environmental and heritage concerns.<sup>10</sup> Of the 31 heritage buildings—most Grade II listed properties—that lay in the path of the CTRL, 12 were relocated.<sup>11</sup>

Grade II listed Bridge House at Mersham, a 16th-century timber-framed house (see Figure 1), was moved in one piece. It exemplifies construction methods employed since the 16th century, having been renovated throughout the centuries using techniques typical of each period. Demolition and rebuilding was not considered appropriate



**Figure 1** CTRL UK—relocating Bridge House, 7 July 2000. Photograph courtesy of Abbey Pynford.

because that would at best have created an example of a 21st-century facsimile of older construction methods. Instead, the decision was taken to preserve the building by moving the structure intact. Weighing 450 tonnes, it was supported internally and externally by concrete beams, lifted off the ground by 15 vertical jacks and then pulled 55 m by three additional jacks, sliding on a medium of greased rubber and polished metal. The building now stands the same distance away from the CTRL as it did from the original railway.<sup>12</sup>

The Grade II Talbot House (see Figure 2), a 15th-century timber-framed clay-tiled dwelling in the village of Sellindge was dismantled and re-erected in a new location half a mile from its original location. It is one of the few surviving Wealden Hall houses, notable for its size and design and because the external wooden timbers were not stained black but were whitewashed like the plaster. Originally a single dwelling built



**Figure 2** CTRL UK—re-erecting Talbot House. Photograph courtesy of Second Nature UK Ltd.

for a wealthy family, it was acquired by South Eastern Railways in the 1840s and converted to three cottages for rail workers when the London to Folkestone railway was built in close proximity to the house. It was reinstated as a single privately owned house in the 1980s, but a decade later stood directly in the path of the link between the M20 motorway and the CTRL. The CTRL Act stipulated that it must be rebuilt within the same parish by its owner Union Railways, who had acquired the building in 1996 as part of land resumption for the CTRL.

During a seven-week period in 2000 the house was dismantled, from the roof down, every part numbered and detailed drawings made of every part of the structure. It was painstakingly re-erected over a two-year period. Dendrochronological dating revealed that a floor had been inserted over the vast space of the original hall to make a two-storey dwelling in 1570, and it was re-erected in this, its 17th-century form. It is estimated that 40% of the original 1430 timber was reused in the reconstruction. Where the condition of the original timber had deteriorated, new oak was used. Natural wool insulation was used in the floor, wall and roof. Two-thirds of the original daub was saved and reused, and the unusual 11.5 inch bricks in the main fireplace were put back in their original positions.

There was great pride in the process of re-erection. Peter Massey, the conservation carpentry expert in charge of rebuilding, said ‘It has been fascinating for me, working in the style of carpenters who produced the building six or seven hundred years ago ... They were very skilled men [and] ... I have almost had the feeling that the original builders were looking over my shoulders.’ During rebuilding several ‘discoveries’ were made. Although the house was built in about 1430, some of the beam joints showed that the wood was almost certainly reused from an earlier building. Rare mediaeval drawings etched into the decorative daub panelling in the dias screen, at the high end of the open hall, were discovered during the dismantling process. One of the panels depicted a bearded man and is now displayed at the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum near Chichester, Sussex.

Although the total cost to Union Railways of the Talbot House relocation was £650,000, the market value of a two-bedroom, two-reception room house was only £450,000, when it was advertised for sale in October 2003. By then the house had been de-listed. Although the parts had remained listed whilst the building was dismantled to prevent the materials being resold, once rebuilt it was de-listed. Peter Massey believed that the house had been blighted long before it was relocated. Its setting had changed over time, first when the railway went through in the 1840s and then when the motorway was constructed a century later. He believes that Talbot House’s new location more closely approximates its original setting.<sup>13</sup>

The relocation of seven of the buildings that made up Yonse Farm was particularly ambitious. The farm was built between 1816 and 1819 at Hothfield, Kent, by the ninth Earl of Thanet. Its significance as a group of Grade II listed buildings lay in its history as a ‘model farm’. Model farms had been developed during the Napoleonic Wars. Harvests had been poor, grain prices were high and model farms were to apply new scientific techniques to British farming methods, increase yields, and thus self-sufficiency to counter the potential impact of wartime naval blockades. Georgian architect George

Repton is thought to have designed Yonseas Farm. Although it was not completed until after the Battle of Waterloo when the threat had passed, it has been acknowledged as an important late Georgian model farm.<sup>14</sup>

However Yonseas Farm lay directly in the path of the CTRL. The seven heritage-listed buildings at the Farm included a farmhouse, great barn, granary, oast house, cowshed and stables complex, byres, and a toll cottage. The cost of relocating them was estimated at £2,000,000. Hence, to assist in attracting funding, the farm buildings were given to a registered charity, the Traditional Buildings Preservation Trust, to manage the project on behalf of a steering group that included Ashford Borough Council, Union Railways, and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA).<sup>15</sup>

Funding for the project was a continuing problem. Union Railways was required by parliament to fund the dismantling and re-erection of three of the listed buildings, and provided £300,000 for that purpose. Because the buildings would be de-listed after relocation, Yonseas was not eligible for funding from the full range of heritage sources. Although technically eligible, an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £181,000 failed. Eventually the other steering group members provided funding; the borough council £60,000 and SEEDA £380,000.<sup>16</sup>

The CTRL construction schedule was fixed and inflexible, so there was less than four months at the end of 1998 to find a new site, dismantle, record and then relocate the buildings nine miles to the new site. It became a desperate race against time in wet muddy conditions with winter bearing in. The farm was surveyed, measured drawings were made, photographs taken, patterns drawn and timbers tagged. However, the limited time available made it impossible to use the highest standards in appraising the site. Sections of the walls of each building were numbered and collapsed and the bricks from each section were cleaned (approximately 500,000 bricks in total) and stacked in order on pallets, together with the slates from the same building. Alex MacLaren, project manager for the Traditional Buildings Preservation Trust, said that ‘The successful dismantling of seven historic buildings in less than four months and their planned re-erection in less than four years is a unique project.’ A foundation stone was laid at the new site adjacent to the South of England Rare Breeds Centre, Woodchurch, by a descendant of the original tenant of Yonseas Farm, in July 1999. The Trust has been given a 300-year lease on the site.<sup>17</sup>

The Yonseas Farm buildings are still in the process of reconstruction with, to date, five of the seven buildings rebuilt (see Figure 3). The material from the remaining



**Figure 3** CTRL UK—the partially reconstructed Yonseas Farm. Photograph courtesy of Alex MacLaren, Traditional Buildings Preservation Trust .

buildings—including the large Georgian farmhouse—is carefully stacked in a fenced-off compound, awaiting the funding that will enable reconstruction. In the reconstruction no use is made of modern foundation technology, and lime-based mortars and renders are used. Where possible all the original materials are being reused, although some rotten timber has had to be replaced. Georgian bricks, which were fired at a low temperature and are softer than modern bricks, are being laid using lime, putty and sand mortar which is more flexible. ‘Every inch of the site records the great care the project management insists is essential to preserve the authentic buildings.’<sup>18</sup>

Those involved in the rebuilding project take great pride in their work. The workforce was specially recruited by the Traditional Buildings Preservation Trust in order to maintain direct control over the quality of the reconstruction work. It included apprentices who attended construction training courses at the local Further Education College within a day-release programme. Whilst the college courses were in modern construction, the workforce apprentices received on-site training in the traditional crafts from their foremen. The chairman of the Trust believes that ‘the project demonstrates the effectiveness of traditional building techniques and provides an exceptional opportunity to train in the building crafts that are vital for the conservation of our rural built heritage.’<sup>19</sup>

Foreman carpenter Melvin Smith had worked on historic buildings for many years and has trained apprentices on the project. He took particular pride in his work on the oasts:

Some timber had to be replaced as the heat from the hop drying process damaged some of the original wood. In the past I have always worked on oasts that were hung with Kent Peg Tiles and this [hung with slates] has been an exceptional challenge. During restoration I have discovered that the original carpenter in charge of construction was Daniel Court and it would be fantastic to contact any of his descendants to come and see it now.<sup>20</sup>

The Yonse Farm Rebuilt Project is thought to be the largest relocation of listed buildings ever undertaken in 20th-century Britain and has attracted considerable media attention. As well as newspaper coverage, progress of the project was featured on the BBC2 television series *Restoration* in autumn 2003.

Ultimately it is intended that the rebuilt Yonse Farm will be an education and training centre, associated with the South of England Rare Breeds Centre, where visitors can ‘learn about English rural history and enjoy the architecture of Georgian times when England was the world leader in agricultural science.’<sup>21</sup> The project will be economically sustained by the educational workspace. In the first phase, the oasts are being used as an arts and crafts centre for people with disabilities.

The final building to be relocated as part of the CTRL was a former steam locomotive Waterpoint from St Pancras Station in London. The Waterpoint is the only surviving structure of seven structures located behind St Pancras Station to supply water for steam locomotives. It was built in the early 1870s and is believed to be England’s only example of an original steam locomotive watering point designed as a whole building rather than as a tank on columns or a plinth.<sup>22</sup>

Fear for the fate of the Waterpoint was raised in 1996 when Lord Cavendish of Furness (then a Commissioner of English Heritage) debated the CTRL Bill in the House of Lords.<sup>23</sup> The passage of the CTRL Act authorised its demolition and the redevelopment of the site, but English Heritage and the Heritage of London Trust Operations mounted a rescue campaign. The owners of the building, LCR, agreed to the relocation plan. In the end the project cost almost £900,000 and was funded by grants from LCR (£137,000), the Heritage Lottery Fund (£630,500), English Heritage (£71,460), and smaller amounts from the Heritage of London Trust, Camden Council, the King's Cross Partnership, the Rail Link Countryside Initiative and the Architectural Heritage Fund. Why it was eligible for funding when the Yonse Farm was not, is a question that has not yet been answered.

There were strict time constraints for the relocation. Under the CTRL Act no work at St Pancras could begin until after 2 July 2001 and the Waterpoint had to be moved by 31 December 2001 or it would be demolished. The 9 m high 350 tonne Waterpoint was treated in three horizontal sections. The top two sections of the brick and stone building were moved by road in one piece (see Figure 4), but the lowest section could not be moved as it was part of boundary wall on the original site. Bricks were reclaimed from this section and used on the new site, 700 m to the north-east of the original site. Once the preparation work was complete, the lifting and transportation work was completed in three days in November 2001.<sup>24</sup>

Saved from demolition, the Waterpoint now stands on a viaduct overlooking St Pancras Yacht Basin on Regent's Canal, and is being leased to British Waterways for use as a reception and exhibition area. It was formally opened on its new site on 22 June 2005 and is once again a prominent landmark on the Camden skyline.



**Figure 4** CTRL UK—a section of the Waterpoint being lowered into its new position, November 2001. Photograph courtesy of the Architectural Heritage Fund.

### **The Wellington Inner City Bypass**

At the opposite end of the world another mass relocation was taking place. In August 2006 the last of 16 heritage-listed buildings was relocated to make way for the Wellington Inner City Bypass project (WICB) in New Zealand's capital city. The Te Aro area of the city had been earmarked for road development since 1966 and properties in the district had gradually been bought up by the NZ Ministry for Works.

Te Aro was one of the earliest parts of Wellington to be settled by Europeans. Its streets were laid out in the 1840s, and its original one acre town lots were subdivided when there was little town planning control. Hence the area was characterised by a number of small alleyways and lanes. It was a small enclave unique in Wellington for its combination of large Victorian and Edwardian houses, small workers' dwellings and two-storey shops with accommodation above. Heritage professionals argued that 'Its rambling, confined character captures the spirit of nineteenth century Wellington.'<sup>25</sup>

Local branch members of the NZ Historic Places Trust were implacably opposed to the relocation project. They were apprehensive that the relationship between buildings and between buildings and their location would be lost:

The ability of present and future generations to read this history from the street should not be compromised ... there will be a tendency to shift buildings around at will [and] disassociate groupings of buildings, and the result will fairly quickly become static and museum-like, no matter how elegant it may look on an overview plan.<sup>26</sup>

A major concern was the precedent that would be set by the mass relocation of heritage buildings to make way for a road project. It would send a strong signal that 'heritage is a secondary issue when it comes to traffic management and the building of state highways'.<sup>27</sup> Such views were of little consequence against the might of the roads planning juggernaut.

New Zealand is no stranger to relocated buildings and many have been moved in Wellington. The largest relocation project was in the late 1920s when 26 buildings in the suburb of Petone were relocated over a 12-year period for road works. So it was no surprise when in May 2002, after more than a decade of planning, negotiation and eventually court action, including an appeal to the High Court, the Historic Places Trust gave archaeological consent for the bypass to be built through Te Aro and for the heritage-listed buildings that stood in its path to be relocated.<sup>28</sup>

Public concern was not assuaged. There were two last-minute appeals to the NZ Environment Court against the Trust's consent. Two appellant groups argued that the Trust had failed to project Wellington's 'unique Victorian heritage enclaves' by supporting a 'Disneyland-style heritage precinct' to which the buildings would be relocated. The CEO of the Trust said it had not been an easy decision. The Trust had consistently opposed the project, but went down the path of mitigation because it did not have the resources to fight the long-standing designation of the area for the bypass. Relocation was not the Trust's preferred option. But by granting consent it was able to impose stringent conditions compelling the developer, Transit New Zealand, to undertake a thorough investigation of the history of the buildings and the area, restore the buildings, commission an archaeological dig with public open days and give any finds

to local museums.<sup>29</sup> The appeals failed and, although the government's record of stewardship of heritage properties was attacked in the New Zealand parliament, work on the project began in 2005.<sup>30</sup> Nineteen buildings were relocated and one reconstructed in 2005 and the final building put in place in August 2006.

The Bypass Project was officially completed in May 2007.<sup>31</sup> Early in the project Transit NZ commissioned a short history of Te Aro, loading it onto its website during 2007.<sup>32</sup> This traced the social history of the area, showing how it has 'reacted and changed in response to regional, economic and geological features' and arguing that 'the suburb has been reshaped and redefined in many ways over the course of its history'. The writer Erin Menzies, a member of the Public Relations Institute of New Zealand, quotes a 1986 study that contended that opposition to the redevelopment was led by a large minority group of owner-occupiers, professionals who were part of the gentrification of the area. By implication she suggests that their views were not relevant. Most significantly she questions the nature of heritage, asking 'how much of our past are we prepared to sacrifice for modern developments—or to what degrees is it reasonable to slow the momentum of "progress" to preserve our heritage?' Her conclusion is

If any lessons are to be learnt from its history, we must accept that while the preservation of our history and heritage are vitally important to us culturally, the preservation of heritage is pointless if it constricts community's abilities to inhabit and grow within Settlements. As the shape and functions of Te Aro change, efforts must be made to reconcile both needs.<sup>33</sup>

The relocated buildings included four wooden workers' cottages, built between the 1860s and 1880s. The oldest, a triple-gabled wooden house originally sited at 270 Cuba Street, was in a poor state of repair and, in the words of Transit New Zealand, had to be 'dismantled' (demolished). The cottage, now nearly 150 years old, is being rebuilt as a replica. It was the first home of William and Jane Tonks, assisted immigrants from Shropshire who had established a merchant dynasty in Wellington. Most of the workers' cottages in the area were very small. The wooden cottage originally sited at 1 Tonks Avenue (see Figure 5), built in the 1880s, was only one room wide.

Seven large houses were also relocated, most built at the turn of the 20th century. One, originally sited at 278 Willis Street, was considerably older, dating from 1873, when it was built for Andrew Young, a city councillor and land developer. In 1921 it



**Figure 5** WICB NZ—1 Tonks Ave, prior to relocation on 15 August 2005. Photograph courtesy of Transit New Zealand.



**Figure 6** WICB NZ—relocation of 215 Vivian Street, 21 February 2005. Photograph courtesy of Transit New Zealand.

was converted into a maternity hospital and in 1950 taken over by the government and later leased to a social services organisation. The history of the house originally located at 215 Vivian Street (see Figure 6) tells a similar story—built for a wealthy family in 1884, changing hands, becoming a private boarding house in 1929 and bought by the government in 1980.

Eight of the relocated buildings were shops. The shop at 272 Cuba Street built in 1896, is unique in Wellington in having only one room. Part of a message of protest painted on the timber boards of the side of the shop, was recorded in a photograph of a workman stripping off the boards prior to its relocation:

The Bypass. We're making a stand!  
 We wouldn't call this a green and pleasant land  
 A conscious response is what we demand  
 Challenge the system and those in command  
 Express your opinion. It's your domain  
 If you fail to do this, you're partly to blame  
 My heart is beating. No Retreat  
 The battle is coming ...

More common were the two-storey shops, with accommodation upstairs, built towards the end of the 19th century. As well as his residence in Willis Street, Andrew Young also built a corner shop in 1893 at 286 Willis Street (see Figure 7) only a few lots away. Passing through many hands, it was chemist shop until the 1930s, then a butcher's shop until 1990, when it was turned into a trendy inner city café, bar and live performance venue.

The information provided by NZ Transit tends to emphasise the engineering feat involved in relocation. The findings of the 26 archaeologists who examined the old foundations is reported—a 7 m brick well, much domestic and industrial debris, the foundations of earlier buildings and information about Victorian construction techniques. But there are minimal details of the conservation works, although the phrase 'restored to its original splendour' or 'glory' recurs in media releases. There is little



**Figure 7** WICB NZ—relocation of 286 Willis Street, 8 June 2005. Photograph courtesy of Transit New Zealand.

information available about the precinct which will be the final resting place for most of the buildings. It is anticipated that the buildings will be used for a mix of commercial and residential purposes.

The cost of the relocation and restoration has been estimated at over \$3,500,000. Britton House Movers moved all the buildings and prepared each prior to relocation by removing the chimney and cross bracing the walls internally. New foundations have been built and the buildings are all being restored in materials sympathetic to the original in form and style externally, leaving it to the new occupier to finish the interiors.

Eleven buildings have been moved to a newly created Tonks Precinct, and others to the Kensington Precinct. White picket fences have been put up, new gardens planted and brick paving laid. Wellington City Council designers and an architectural conservator are working on the restoration, with the original orientation and access maintained where possible. Surprisingly, considering the mixed character of their original setting, buildings of similar age and style are being kept together.

### **Ensuring that Heritage is Authentic**

Underlying the heritage concerns surrounding relocation is a very real apprehension that relocation will compromise the authenticity of heritage buildings. There are various strategies that heritage professionals have developed to deal with the complexity of authenticity.

ICOMOS adopted the Nara Document on Authenticity in 1994. Essentially a plea for authenticity that built on the Venice Charter, it was also a response to the mounting forces of globalisation and homogenisation. It contended that authenticity could clarify and illuminate the ‘collective memory of humanity’ and was the first international conservation document to argue that ‘the protection and enhancement of cultural and heritage *diversity* in our world should be actively promoted as an essential aspect of human development’. Hence it was possible to contend that

It is thus not possible to base judgments of value and authenticity on fixed criteria. On the contrary, the respect due to all cultures requires that heritage properties must be considered and judged within the cultural contexts to which they belong.

The document thus declared that the conservation of cultural heritage ‘in all its forms and historical periods is rooted in the values attributed to [its particular] heritage’.<sup>34</sup>

There was some refinement of the Nara Document in the ICOMOS Declaration of San Antonio (1996), which provided a commentary on the document, refining the notion of authenticity to acknowledge ‘the dynamic nature of cultural values’ and calling for ‘static and inflexible criteria’ to be avoided. It also proposed the following five proofs as a basis for determining authenticity:

- i. Reflection of the true value. That is, whether the resource remains in the condition of its creation and reflects all its significant history.
- ii. Integrity. That is, whether the site is fragmented; how much is missing, and what are the recent additions.
- iii. Context. That is, whether the context and/or the environment correspond to the original or other periods of significance; and whether they enhance or diminish the significance.
- iv. Identity. That is, whether the local population identify themselves with the site, and whose identity the site reflects.
- v. Use and function. That is, the traditional patterns of use that have characterized the site.<sup>35</sup>

The growth of cultural tourism with its dubious ‘authentic’ interpretations of the past prompted the ICOMOS International Charter on Cultural Tourism (1999). The charter engages with the differences between history and heritage, describing heritage as a broad concept that ‘records and expresses the long processes of historic development’ and as ‘a dynamic reference point and positive instrument for growth and change’. The idea of authenticity remains an essential element within its definition of cultural significance:

The retention of the authenticity of heritage places and collections is important ... Programmes should present and interpret the authenticity of places and cultural experiences to enhance the appreciation and understanding of that cultural heritage.<sup>36</sup>

More recently the UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (2005) identified key attributes by which the conditions of authenticity can be expressed, including location and setting.<sup>37</sup> The Xi’an Declaration on the Conservation of the Setting of Heritage Structures, Sites and Areas (2005)<sup>38</sup> worked off these Operational Guidelines to stress the importance of both the tangible and intangible dimensions of setting to the significance of heritage monuments, sites and areas.

Heritage professionals were becoming concerned by the complexities posed by the concept of authenticity. Authenticity is clearly a difficult concept. Heritage buildings are likely to have had a long history, marked by changing uses and changing building techniques as structures are altered to adapt to new uses. Heritage professionals

frequently have to make decisions about adaptive reuse, including which era of a building's history should be the basis for conservation and interpretation.

ICOMOS's increasing unease regarding authenticity mirrors debate within the scholarly community. Historians have been amongst those who have questioned the concept of authenticity with the most vigour.

The search for authenticity has been with us for more than a century. In 19th-century Britain the original founders of the heritage movement contrasted their own times with an 'authentic' pre-industrial past. In 1949 George Orwell wrote 'We have a hunger for something like authenticity, but are easily satisfied by an ersatz facsimile.'<sup>39</sup> That hunger has intensified over the last 20 years and, as a number of commentators have argued, the quest for authenticity has become more intense:

As a result of the acceleration in production, exchange, consumption and communication that characterises advanced capitalist society, time and space have been 'compressed' and the distinction between past, present and future has become blurred ... With this ... has come a diminished sense of place and belonging, and a corresponding increase in levels of insecurity. We have become anxious about our identity and search for historical roots and a sense of authenticity.<sup>40</sup>

Today the past is everywhere, as David Lowenthal has argued in his magisterial *The Past is a Foreign Country*.<sup>41</sup>

Historical films for the large screen and the small box are tried-and-true hits. Period props, period costumes and period settings are all used to evoke an 'authentic' past. Jane Austen's novels of early 19th-century morals and manners are regularly turned into films using the 'authentic' settings of English villages and country houses. David Lean's film of E. M. Forster's *Passage to India* used 'authentic' Indian locations and sumptuous costuming to evoke the Raj. Roman Polanski used 'authentic' farm machines to lend reality to his film of Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. The television film of Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* was carefully laced with authentic details to the extent that hens' eggs were speckled with paint to simulate the plovers' eggs described in a breakfast scene in the original novel.<sup>42</sup>

Much that is intended to replicate the past authentically bears no resemblance to the 'real' past. Real estate developers, for example, market heritage-style homes. Throughout the 1990s 'federation-style' homes were all the rage in Australia, echoing in their external aesthetic the design of homes at the turn of the 20th century, but internally with all the accoutrements of the late 20th century. Lowenthal gives the example of marketing used by a UK builder which boasted that they had turned the clock back in constructing authentic Tudor-style homes—'if Oliver Cromwell ... walked into the house he wouldn't find a brick or an oak beam out of place'—but the beams weren't oak they were Canadian Douglas fir impregnated with preservative.<sup>43</sup>

So-called heritage cities may be less authentic than is claimed. Cities like Boston, for example, which prides itself on its authenticity has become a city of 'fake authenticity'. According to Joshua Glenn:

Everything which was actually old has been made Olde instead; historical façades and interiors have been restored not to how they used to look, but to how (city planners imagine) tourists want them to look.<sup>44</sup>

Cities destroyed by war have been reconstructed. The half-timbered mediaeval buildings in Frankfurt's city square, the Romerberg, were almost all destroyed by wartime bombing in 1944. But to the casual visitor today the Romerberg appears to be an authentic mediaeval town centre. It is largely a reconstruction.

Open air museums often include buildings brought in from other places sitting alongside old houses on their original sites. Some are reconstructions, some are replicas. But visitors rarely distinguish between the authentic and the fake.

Indeed the question of authenticity has been especially troubling to museum professionals. Contemporary heritage tourism sites, like open air museums, are accused by some of providing a superficial 'landscape of nostalgia', by others of providing a 'staged authenticity' in which simulations of the past achieve a hyper-reality so that the experience of a representation becomes more important than experience of the original, and by others for their commodification of the past by the sale of 'authentic' souvenirs. The past is regularly remade to suit today's interests.<sup>45</sup>

## Conclusion

How, then, is authenticity approached in the relocation of heritage-listed buildings? What does a comparison of these two mass relocations reveal?

Both mass relocations were the result of long-term government planning for transport needs. In the New Zealand case, road planning decisions were made in the national interest, and acted upon well before current safeguards for heritage buildings existed. The government acquired properties over many years to safeguard its plans. In the UK case, rail planning decisions were also made with the national interest paramount, though by the time the CTRL Act was passed the significance of heritage was widely acknowledged and statutory protection existed. In both cases, however, although there was wide public consultation, heritage was always a secondary consideration. Despite the claims of glossy brochures and upbeat media releases, the funds available to protect heritage-listed buildings were only the crumbs from the table compared with the millions spent on the engineering aspects of these projects.

The age and the built fabric of these buildings made a marked difference to the timescale for relocation, the mode of relocation and the use to which the buildings were ultimately put. In the NZ case, relocation was achieved fairly quickly over a 12-month period, aided by the fact that all the buildings were timber. In the UK case, the buildings were generally much older and were made of stone or brick, thus, in all but one case, necessitating dismantling and rebuilding. Stone and brick buildings can only be relocated without dismantling over a short distance. Hence there was more emphasis on the rebuilding process in the UK—that it provided a unique means of learning about past construction techniques and keeping alive traditional methods through training. There was great pride in following traditional methods 'to preserve the authentic buildings', to the extent that some tradesmen felt a connection with the past: 'I have almost had the feeling that the original builders were looking over my shoulder', 'I discovered the original carpenter in charge of construction ... it would be fantastic to contact his descendants.' The process of rebuilding using traditional methods

brought the past into the present. There was also at least one attempt to recreate the past—a traditional ‘topping out’ ceremony accompanied by Morris dancers celebrated the completion of a barn. Satisfaction was also gained from knowing that ‘agricultural inheritances’ could still have a rural purpose and from developing an education centre to teach people about the rural past.

The choice of a new site was particularly significant, bearing in mind the ICOMOS emphasis on setting. In the UK case, there was a concerted attempt to relocate buildings to a site like the original; either in its relation to the district as a whole, or within the boundary of the same parish, or to be the same distance from the CTRL as the original railway line, or to restore an earlier ‘original’ setting, or to be a landmark once again. This was not so strong in New Zealand, perhaps because the buildings were re-erected only a street or so away. There were also some worrying tendencies. Although the original orientation is being maintained where possible, there seems to have been no attempt to replicate the setting or the original relationship of buildings to one another. Most buildings have been grouped together in precincts according to age and style, and there is justifiable concern that with a fresh coat of paint, white picket fences and no doubt roses around the porch, they will become Disneyland precincts.

The use to which these buildings are to be put is also significant. Usually municipalities insist that, despite their age and heritage listing, relocated buildings must comply with modern building regulations. Modern foundation technology, requirements for insulation, fire prevention, electricity, disability access, for example, all compromise authenticity. Such regulations also make it difficult, if not impossible, to achieve economic sustainability in the conservation of heritage buildings, and this must always be recognised in the development of funding models for their adaptive reuse. In the UK there can be some relaxation of building regulations if heritage buildings are to be used in an open air museum. In the New Zealand case, as it was anticipated that the buildings would be sold for commercial or residential purposes, it was essential that they complied with modern building regulations.

It is clear that in the case of the heritage buildings relocated during the CTRL project in the UK, the drive for authenticity was strong. However, during the Wellington Inner City Bypass project in New Zealand there was little real concern for authenticity. Time will tell whether fears of a ‘Disneyland’ pastiche are justified, although some recent commentators have observed that ‘the buildings look lobotomised: brain-dead amnesiac shells of their former selves’. It’s ‘going to look like toy town for quite some time to come’.<sup>46</sup>

Does the movement of a building of cultural heritage significance from its original setting destroy its authenticity, as the ICOMOS Charters suggest? The significance of a building is not always linked inescapably to its setting. It is rarely acknowledged that the setting of a heritage building left *in situ* is also subject to change. Neighbouring buildings may have been altered or even demolished. Power and telephone lines have been erected. Cars have replaced horse-drawn transport. Change is all around us and any purist notion of authenticity is flawed. The dilemma for heritage professionals is that to accept relocation as an acceptable response to development pressure is to set a

precedent that may tear apart the fragile network of regulations protecting our heritage for the future.

## Notes

- [1] An earlier version of this paper was given at the International Planning History Society Conference, held in New Delhi, 11–14 December 2006. The paper is part of an ongoing international study on relocated buildings.
- [2] Herbert, *Pioneers of Prefabrication*, 4.
- [3] The extent of building relocation today is indicated by the existence of an International Association of Structural Movers; see their official homepage at [www.iasm.org](http://www.iasm.org) [accessed 10 August 2006].
- [4] ICOMOS (1964), Venice Charter, Article 7.
- [5] ICOMOS Australia (1976) Burra Charter; ICOMOS Canada (1983), Appleton Charter for the Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment.
- [6] ICOMOS New Zealand (1992), Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value, Article 8.
- [7] ICOMOS Principles for the Conservation of Timber Structures, 1999, Section 6.
- [8] ICOMOS Australia (1999), Burra Charter, Article 9.
- [9] ICOMOS (2003), Principles for the Analysis, Conservation and Structural Restoration of Architectural Heritage.
- [10] George Lambrick, Jill Hind et al., 'Planarch 2: Review of Cultural Heritage Coverage in Environmental Impact Assessments', Oxford Archaeology (part funded by English Heritage, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, and Interreg IIIB), May 2005, 8.6.13, p. 76; Bechtel, 'The Need for Speed: Laying the Groundwork for Britain's First High-speed Rail Line', *Ingenia*, Royal Academy of Engineering 17 (October–December 2003); CTRL, *Delivering Environmental Excellence*, Report, September 2003.
- [11] Channel Tunnel Rail Link Act (1996), Schedule 7.
- [12] Channel Tunnel Rail Link, 'A Totally New Way of Moving House: Bridge House is Set to Slide', press release, 7 July 2000.
- [13] Second Nature UK Ltd, 'A New Concept to "Moving House": Talbot House, Sellindge, Kent', news release, March 2003; 'Moving On from the Middle Ages', *Telegraph*, 25 October 2003; Catherine Moye, 'The House that Moved Home', *Mail on Sunday*, 25 September 2005.
- [14] This statement is attributed to John Martin Robinson. For a discussion of model farms, see Robinson, *Georgian Model Farms*.
- [15] Channel Tunnel Rail Link, information sheet, 23 June 2000.
- [16] This and other details relating to the relocation and re-erection of Yonseas Farm were provided by Alex MacLaren, project manager, Traditional Buildings Preservation Trust, in an interview with the author, 30 March 2006. Thanks, too, for his comments on a draft of this paper.
- [17] 'Historic Farm is Uprooted to Avoid Rail Link', *Daily Telegraph*, 31 July 1999; Kent Protection Society, *Watch on the Weald*, no. 126 (2006).
- [18] 'Brick by Brick Craftsmen Rebuild a Piece of History', *Kentish Express*, 28 June 2001.
- [19] South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), 'Historic Georgian "Model Farm" Creates New Tourism Attraction and Rural Jobs for Kent', press release, 23 June 2000.
- [20] *Ibid.*
- [21] Official Home Page of Yonseas Farm, 2006 [accessed 10 September 2006], available from <http://www.yonseasfarm.org.uk/yonseas.htm>
- [22] Official Home Page of English Heritage, 2006, 'Icon of the Industrial Age Rescued' [accessed 10 September 2006], available from <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.5280>
- [23] UK House of Lords, *Hansard*, 21 May 1996.

- [24] Official homepage of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation [accessed 10 September 2006], available from [www.ihbc.org.uk/context\\_archive/74/stpancras/stpancras.html](http://www.ihbc.org.uk/context_archive/74/stpancras/stpancras.html)
- [25] Official website of Transit New Zealand, Heritage Work [accessed 20 September 2006], available from <http://www.transit.govt.nz/projects/innercitybypass/heritage.htm#relocate>. This website has since been moved to <http://www.transit.govt.nz/projects/wicb/> [accessed 19 September 2007], and the quotation deleted.
- [26] NZ Environment Court, closing submissions of Campaign for a Better City Inc. in the matter of the Resource Management Act 1991 and appeals under sections 120 and 174 of the Act, 2 September 1998.
- [27] Ibid.
- [28] Official website of Transit New Zealand, Wellington Inner City Bypass, Heritage [accessed 19 September 2007], available from <http://www.transit.govt.nz/projects/wicb/heritage/>
- [29] Jane Phare, 'Road Block: Driving Straight through History', *Heritage New Zealand Magazine*, Spring 2002.
- [30] NZ House of Representatives, *Hansard*, 11 May 2004.
- [31] Wellington Inner City Bypass, *Construction Newsletter*, no. 15, June 2007 [accessed 19 September 2007], available from <http://www.transit.govt.nz/projects/wicb/resources/pdf/Newsletter-200706.pdf>
- [32] Erin Menzies, "'Progress' v 'Preservation': A History of Te Aro", Wellington, p. 9 [accessed 19 September 2007], available from <http://www.transit.govt.nz/projects/wicb/heritage/te-aro.jsp>. This was commissioned by Transit NZ early in the project and it appears that Erin Menzies is a member of the Public Relations Institute of New Zealand.
- [33] Ibid.
- [34] Rhyne, 'The First International Document for Diverse Cultural Values in Conservation'.
- [35] ICOMOS (1996), Declaration of San Antonio.
- [36] ICOMOS (1999), International Charter on Cultural Tourism, Article 2.4.
- [37] UNESCO (2005), Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, Article IIE, paras. 78–95.
- [38] For further details of the ICOMOS (2005), Xi'an (China) Declaration on the Conservation of the Setting of Heritage Structures, Sites and Areas, see [http://www.nisos.gr/icomos/en/a/news\\_more.asp?id=13](http://www.nisos.gr/icomos/en/a/news_more.asp?id=13) [accessed 5 September 2006].
- [39] George Orwell, c. 1949, quoted by Glenn 'Fake Authenticity', 1.
- [40] Lyth, 'Selling History in an Age of Industrial Decline,'.
- [41] Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, xv.
- [42] Davis, "'Any Resemblance to Persons Living or Dead'"; Lowenthal, 231.
- [43] Lowenthal, 329.
- [44] Glenn, 'Fake Authenticity' [accessed 1 September 2006], available from <http://www.hermeneut.com/a5.shtml>. Authenticity has been a preoccupation of many writers in a variety of disciplines from Adorno to Golomb's *In Search of Authenticity* to Bendix's *In Search of Authenticity*.
- [45] There is an extensive literature on authenticity in museums. See, for example, Halewood and Hannam, 'Viking Heritage Tourism'; Waitt 'Consuming Heritage'; Wright, *On Living in an Old Country*; Hewison, *The Heritage Industry*; MacCannell, 'Staged Authenticity'; Watson and Kopachevsky, 'Interpretations of Tourism as Commodity'.
- [46] See Tom Beard's website <http://wellurban.blogspot.com/2006/12/car-o-drive.html>, comments posted 19 December 2006 and 10 June 2007.

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