

UDF talks with Rolf Monheim

On his third visit to Australia, international pedestrianisation specialist, Prof. Rolf Monheim's basic question was - 'Why are you moving so slowly?' He was, of course, asking about our speed of decision making and action, not our speed of travel.

Rolf, in Melbourne recently to advise on proposals to pedestrianise Swanston Street, engaged in a conversation with UDF and his prime message was - 'your cities have so much potential, why don't you do more to improve the pedestrian environment.'

UDF: Why do we need to pedestrianise our cities?

RM: there are a number of reasons. The environmental attractiveness of cities is a well accepted factor in encouraging investment. If the urban centre has a very positive image, a place people enjoy, both national and international investors will consider it favourably. Pedestrianisation is not an end in itself. It is to achieve broader economic and social objectives.

UDF: What role should the central city play?

RM: Melbourne needs to decide whether it wishes to be a world city or just a suburban conglomeration. With the post industrial society emphasis on leisure, attractive inner city areas has become very impor-

tant. Most successful cities have improved the pedestrian environment of their inner cities.

In the 1970s, futurists were predicting that technology would enable people to work and shop at home, and not bother with the central city. But even with the fax, and computer advances, people still want to meet face to face. Retailing is an important social function as well as economic. Urban centres need to be living places, and attractive pedestrian conditions are an important factor.

The central city can't be all things to all people. It needs to specialise. It is different from district centres and suburbs, and should emphasise those differences.

UDF: How do Australian cities compare with European cities?

RM: During the 1950s and 1960s, many American cities lost their city image and became dominated by cars and suburbs. Australia has been heading in the same direction. But the renewed interest in the inner city and pedestrianisation is not nostalgia for Europe. I believe it is expressing a real need for modern urban society.

People have different levels of 'belonging' - their family and neighbourhood, their

town or suburb and the city and country.

UDF: What are the main strategies for achieving inner city revitalisation?

RM: The first is reliable accessibility and cities the size of Australia's capitals must include very good public transport. The second is to control buildings, for functional and aesthetic reasons, to create an attractive public environment. The third is to undertake urban renewal - buildings, arcades, public spaces, landscaping, the rivers. The fourth factor is to recognise that the anchor stores (Myer, Daimaru etc.) have a renewed commitment to the inner city.

UDF: Are there other important issues?

RM: Yes. Residential activity should be strongly encouraged and entertainment areas should not be pushed out to side streets. They are all important complementary functions of the city. In Germany most cities would have 10,000 people living in the central area and adjacent residential districts. The large underutilised industrial inner suburbs present an important opportunity. The Queen Victoria Hospital

site is also an opportunity in this respect.

UDF: How important are transport issues?

RM: Very important. Metropolitan public transport improvement is vital but inner city transport is also important. Walking and cycling is transport, but their importance is often neglected. Short term parking and essential traffic needs to be provided for.

I hear people asking for new ring roads to be built before pedestrianisation takes place but most existing roads in Melbourne are already than many European urban ring roads!

UDF: What do you hope to see when you come back to Melbourne?

RM: Some action! This can happen if the key parties come together make creative compromises, and consult with the people. And if major projects are used as a catalyst to achieve the wider vision of a better city, not just as monuments.

Professor Rolf Monheim is from the Institute of Geo Sciences of the University of Bayreuth in Germany

▼ Pedestrianisation European style



Dandenong District Centre

Palm Plaza Opened

McCrae Street Mall now re-named 'Palm Plaza' was opened earlier this year by the Treasurer, the Hon. Tom Roper MP after a difficult construction period of over 12 months.

This project is the successful outcome of an urban design competition held in the latter part of 1988. The competition was jointly sponsored by the State Government's Ministry for Planning and Environment, the City of Dandenong and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

It was open to all professional design teams with a minimum of one member being an architect registered in Victoria. All three prize winners were Melbourne landscape architecture practices with first prize awarded to Tract Consultants who have seen the \$4.3 million project through to completion. Tract's design was selected because the jury felt that it had a strong and consistent landscape theme and the use of palms and market imagery gave it appropriate Dandenong imagery.

The competition brief included the following statement of Aim of the Competition.

The competition's aim is to promote the highest standards for the design of public spaces in Dandenong and to find a design which is economically viable. The City of Dandenong will be relying on rental income from the Mall.

The entries are expected to explore a wide range of possibilities for the development of the Mall.

The City of Dandenong deserves a design which will help to improve the image of the City and establish a new theme for future development.

Entrants should aim to provide access for the disabled.

Most of these aims appear to have been met by the competition with the following comments and qualifications.

A high standard public open space has been created but economic viability through letting of commercial space developed in the Mall has yet to be achieved.

Buildings in the Mall have not been entirely let due to competition from adjoining new shopping areas and present hard times. Even when fully let their rental return may not be all the City Council hoped for. Perhaps in retrospect, like the commercial component of Melbourne's City Square, this was a poor briefing decision. The jury also expressed serious reservations about this brief requirement.

The City certainly got an exploration of a wide range of design possibilities with 23 entries, representing professional time to an estimated value of around \$200,000.

Tract's winning design does improve the image of the City and has perhaps established a new theme for future development. The successful outcome of this project should encourage other district and suburban centres to consider pedestrianisation and the use of the design competition model to achieve a degree of certainty and high design standards.

New Appointment: Rob Carter

Coming straight from New Zealand, Rob Carter says he has settled in well to the air of gloom in Australia, but he is optimistic about the future.

Rob has recently been appointed head of the Victorian Department of Planning and Housing. After three years away, he was impressed by two things on his return - the number of "for lease" signs on city office buildings, and the progress with innovative housing developments.

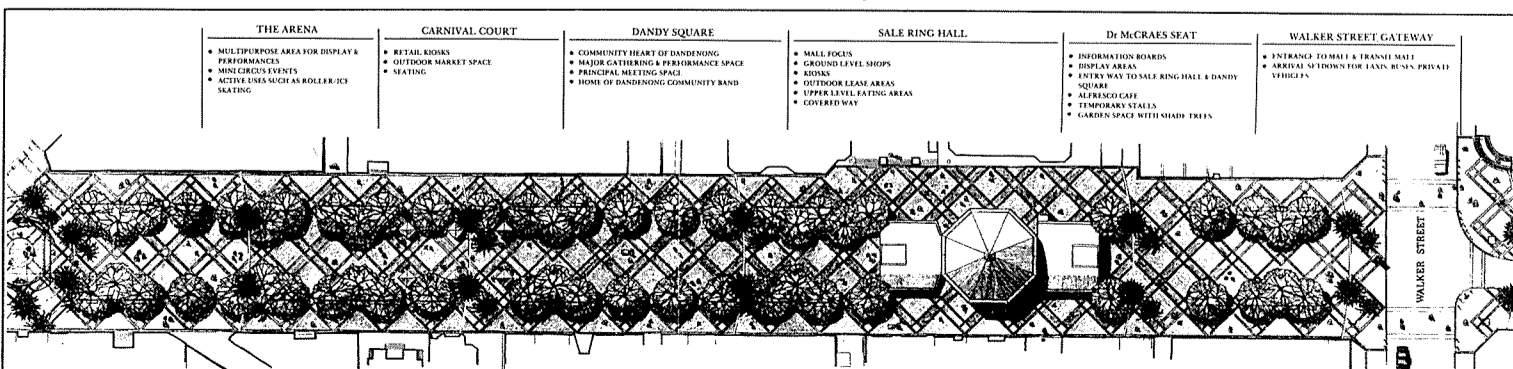
"We live in mixed economy", says Rob. Therefore it is important that a partnership develops between the government and the private sector. Where devolution can occur it should. The Department should be involved in strategic issues and leadership in innovative solutions, but leave the detail to local government and the private sector."

Rob Carter says that his department can encourage by example, facilitating and coordinating action when necessary, by producing information about successful planning and housing practice.

Under Rob's leadership, and given government financial strategies the Department will focus on its core objectives. UDF is pleased to note that urban design is considered as one of those core activities.

What are Rob Carter's visions for Melbourne and Victoria? He says 'livable and affordable environments, long term sustainable environments, more consideration for country areas with a system of cities and towns.'

Good luck Rob.



THE NATIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

building a framework for reform

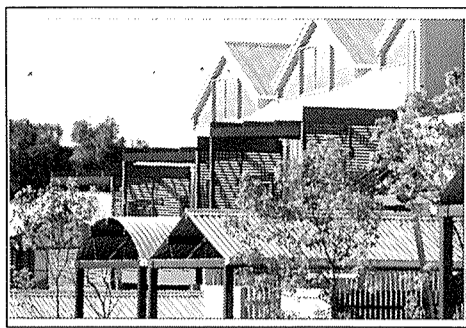
Housing is an enormously important part of the fabric of our cities, largely determining the character and quality of neighbourhoods; influencing many of our activities through its location and relation to other land uses; and contributing to the overall patterns of urban structure. Housing is also a major expenditure for most households: for some, paying for housing can consume an unacceptable proportion of income.

Last June, the Minister for Community Services and Health, Mr Howe, established the National Housing Strategy to develop new policy approaches for Australian housing over a period of two to three years.

Under its director, Dr Meredith Edwards, the Strategy has embarked on this ambitious task by addressing the issues of housing affordability, appropriateness and supply in the context of changing demographic, economic and social patterns of contemporary Australia.

The Strategy's program for housing policy reform entails:

- developing innovative mechanisms to put quality housing into the reach of Australians with low to moderate incomes;
- focusing on what is appropriate housing, giving special attention to those who are poorly housed or disadvantaged, and to people's differing needs through their lives;
- identifying mechanisms to assist the efficient supply of land and housing; and
- exploring ways to improve the link between housing, employment opportunities, transport and community services.



▲ 'Housing development Lynch's Bridge'

There can be no doubt that this comprehensive review of our system of housing provision raises fundamental issues of urban form and planning. How Australians are housed in the coming decades will be an important part of city building. How we address the issues of equity, efficiency and environmental sustainability will greatly influence the quality of life we will experience in our cities and the housing choices available to us.

As part of its task, the Strategy will examine the ways in which housing and other policies have contributed to the spreading form of our cities. This includes regulations which may promote or inhibit particular types of residential development, and mechanisms for the supply and development of land and housing (including infrastructure financing). It will also assess the ways in which patterns of urban development can disadvantage certain groups because where they live creates difficulties in gaining access to services and employment.

The Strategy seeks to promote policies which enhance the efficiency and flexibility of the housing industry, foster urban compactness and which ultimately increase the housing choices available to Australians.

Some steps to achieve these goals are already being taken: the Department of Industry, Technology and Commerce is exploring new models for residential development through Green Street demonstration projects and through studies of the cost and planning constraints on construction of higher density housing. Many local governments are actively reviewing their development codes in the light of the Australian Model Code for Residential Development. The Commonwealth Office of Local Government, through the Local Approvals Review Program, promotes more efficient and cost effective assessment of systems at the local level.

The Strategy has begun producing a series of policy oriented issue papers supported by technical background papers. It is now holding consultations on the second and third papers on housing affordability and financing. Future papers of particular interest to urban designers and planners will examine topics such as the efficient supply of affordable land and housing and the links between housing and other services. Information about the National Housing Strategy is available from the Secretariat, National Housing Strategy, GPO Box 9848, Canberra, ACT 2601.

Meredith Edwards
Director National Housing Strategy

URBAN DESIGN & LOCAL PLANNING

an interdisciplinary approach

In December 1990 a symposium was organised to address the interdisciplinary nature of urban design, seeking a co-ordinated approach in dealing with contemporary design problems. Some of the contributors from the University of New South Wales were:

Professor Hans Westerman, Professor Jon Lang, Dr. Richard Lloyd, Helen Armstrong

For further information contact: Dr. Tamas Lukovitch School of Town Planning, U.N.S.W.

CONFERENCE CALENDAR

'GOING PUBLIC'

Seminars and workshops for artists and others working or interested in art and public spaces. 7 - 13 July 1991
University of Melbourne
Sun 7th July 1991: Registration, Dinner & Official Opening & Keynote Speakers
Mon 8 to Fri 12 July 1991: Workshop & Seminar sessions
Sat 13 July: Forum

Further Information: Visual Arts Unit, Ministry for the Arts, Private bag No. 1, City Road Post Office, Vic. 3205

M E L B O U R N E

Building Back Inner City Housing

The City of Melbourne is playing a significant role in facilitating, directing and developing increased housing opportunities within the municipality.

The negative effects of population loss on the economy, social aspects and vibrancy of the city have helped to mould Council policies. Policies to encourage an increased population were mooted in the 1974 Strategy Plan and given stronger emphasis in the 1985 Strategy Plan (currently under review). Between 1974 and the late 1980s more weight was given to the argument with the publication of studies showing the increasing cost of fringe development as opposed to inner urban development. Rather than allow policy rhetoric to be the end result the Council decided to act and towards the end of 1987 approved the setting up of the Housing Unit.

By mid-1988 the Unit was operational and one of its first tasks was to produce a data base of all Council owned properties and to assess their potential for housing development. A summary of the data base is shown below.

| RESIDENTIAL POTENTIAL OF COUNCIL SITES | Dwelling Output |
|---|-----------------|
| Sites with immediate development potential: | 242 |
| Sites with mid term dwelling potential: | 281 |
| Sites with long term potential: | 210 |
| Total Dwelling Output: | 733 |

Given the low level of residential development in the municipality it was felt that if a meaningful proportion of Council's sites could be activated this would make a significant contribution to new starts in the municipality. It was recognised that some projects although small could have significant demonstration and promotional value. Notwithstanding the site identification work, Council decided to move early in carrying out demonstration projects.

63-65 Hardware Street in the CAD was an underutilized warehouse space on in a four storey building that contains an electricity sub-station at levels 1 & 2. The conversion of the two upper levels was completed in October 1989 at a cost of \$110,000 and the project produced an internal rate of return of 14.5%. The dwelling which comprises about 140 m² was immediately rented to three people sharing at just under \$100 per week each. (fig. 2)

60-62 Errol Street was the next scheme Council commenced. These hundred year old buildings were originally mixed use buildings with retail at ground floor level and residential and sometimes workshop use at 1st floor. Over the years the residential use had fallen away and Council was able to simply revert the buildings to their original use. The project cost was approximately \$230,000 and the rental for each shop top of 120m² and 140m² is \$165 or \$180 per week respectively. The internal rate of return is 13.25%. The project was completed in October 1990 and each shop top was let to the existing shop keeper on a residential lease.

In addition to conversions or reversions for residential use of its own buildings the Council has been pro-active in infill site development. It is currently developing three infill sites for largely residential use. Railway place is one such site.

Council purchased the 1000m² site in 1989 and gained a permit for a 3.5 storey development of 13 units (12 x 2-bed and 1 x 1-bed) with on site parking. The scheme is currently out for expressions of interest for a suitable development proposal on the basis of contract of sale or joint venture. The site is a mixed area in West Melbourne close to the CAD and has been a car park for many years.

The second site at Cobden Street is an exciting project located opposite the Victoria Market. This site at 1400m² will produce 23 units over one - three storeys. Because of on-street parking the scheme produces a density of 164 units/hectare which is higher than the Ministry of Housing stock built during its high rise days in the early 1970's.

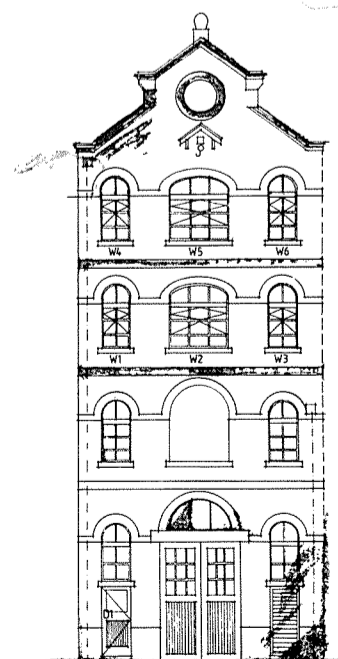
Tyne and Little Elgin Street Carlton has had a longer gestation period but no less relevance to the Council's medium density housing push. The development provides for 24 residential units over a two level car park with 217 commercial spaces and 49 private spaces. The development is currently out for expressions of interest.

Opportunities for residential development in the municipality fall into three categories dictated by site format: conversion and recycling, infill sites, and green field sites. For an inner city municipality Melbourne is unusual in having an abundance of green field sites mostly to the west (Docklands) & the north west corridor.

The Council is currently advocating residential use of underutilised office space. A major seminar was organised by the Unit in Dec 1990 in conjunction with RAlA. The follow on from this seminar has resulted in steady enquiries from potential developers rather than an avalanche of central city schemes and the Council itself is proceeding with a further two schemes.

The progress of the City residential push will be closely monitored by Council and no doubt by the development community because it is one of the few ways that offers a real possibility of a resurgence in construction and flow-on of economic benefits for the city in the short term.

For further information contact Carolyn Snell of the Housing Unit on (03)658 8683



63 HARDWARE STREET, MELBOURNE

Is Werribee To Become A Utopia ?

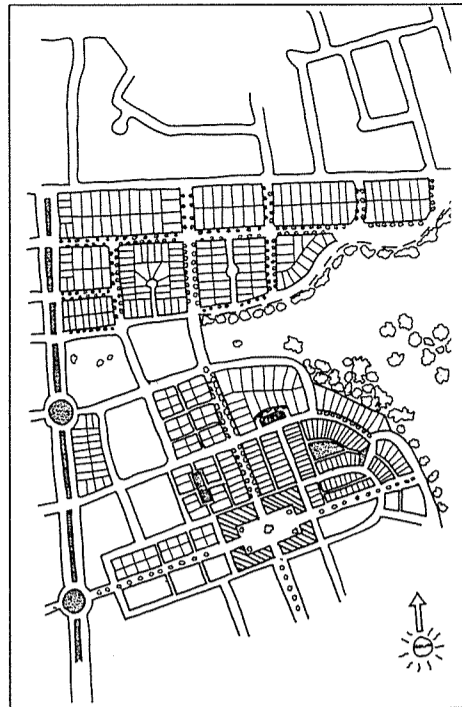
Gatis Gregors

A recent Werribee residential design workshop attempted to answer this question by reviewing the planning principles that have determined the form of Melbourne's suburbs. Utopia? Certainly not, according to guest speakers, Paul Murrain and Chip Kaufman, if the sinuous arterial and sub-arterial road and associated standardised block planning principles of the last thirty years are adopted. The question of whether the 'Utopian' suburb consists of the quarter acre lot, double car garage and nearby feeder road was raised by Murrain, who has been involved in other residential design workshops. He questioned whether these suburbs were permeable (allowing choice of movement), varied or legible; design features which have been identified as critical for amenable suburbs and cities. Chip Kaufman also questioned the often noted planning essence of the common new suburb: its efficiency.

Both these guest speakers concluded that the new suburb that we see so often being constructed in Melbourne is far from efficient and amenable in a comparative sense. Rather, the design of these suburbs exacerbates the problems they are supposed to solve.

Transport studies in the United States of America have noted that permeable, legible and varied planned suburbs that were built in the 1940's were twice as efficient in distributing traffic as their modern suburban counterparts. This has come as a revelation to many who have sought solutions to the problems associated with car-based cities such as Los Angeles.

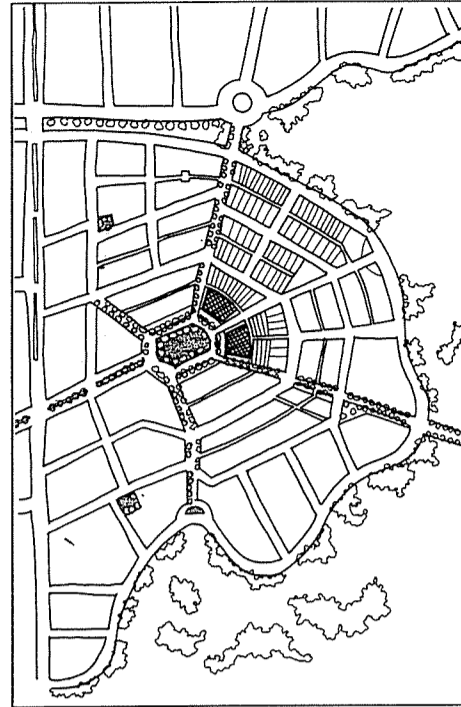
Is Melbourne to become another Los



▲ 'Perfume Park Village' - the layout produced by the White group at the Werribee workshop

Angeles? Seemingly the convenors of the Werribee Residential Design Workshop think not; and for that reason groups of participants were initially exposed to examples of permeable, legible and varied suburban planning and then asked to produce a design for a new Werribee suburb. As expected debate ensued between planners, architects, engineers, landscape architects, urban designers, developers and others on the merits of various solutions to overcome the problems that had been highlighted.

Groups of participants inspected the proposed suburb site and spent six hours developing schemes to enhance the amenity and efficiency of a new suburb. Some groups referred to traditional perme-



able planning precedents that exist in Melbourne: Williamstown, South Melbourne and other suburbs were examined as suitable models. Others chose to examine garden city principles.

The resulting forms generated further discussion and debate which was one of the primary aims of the workshop. Not all of the participants agreed with the principles being discussed and proposed, but the exposure to new urban design and planning concepts will allow alternate philosophies to be more freely discussed.

Gatis Gregors is the City Architect/Urban Designer for the City of South Melbourne

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - ARE WE SERIOUS?

This edition of Urban Design Forum comes at a time when there is much discussion about sustainable development and urban consolidation. At a recent meeting in Melbourne to discuss the subject representatives from all states presented papers covering the progress made in their own state towards this end.

I couldn't help feeling as I sat and listened to the many papers, that we are in fact not serious about this issue. Sydney talked about urban consolidation and referred to increasing its densities from 8 to 10 dwellings per hectare. The point was made that on current projections, Australia will not even meet the 20% reduction of CFC's set as a world target by the year 2005.

There are many issues in this debate, but it is obvious that until we are prepared to take seriously our need to move away from sprawling cities as we know them today, any hope of meeting the aims of overall reduction in pollutants is highly improbable.

There are those, such as Russell Prescott in Adelaide, who have gone considerably further than Sydney in looking at increased densities. Much of his work using Torrens title allotments has produced densities of between 35 and 50 dwellings per hectare, but even this in many ways is a form of 'squashed suburbia'. Is it possible that Australian's are so fixed in their particular lifestyle that they will accept nothing less than a house on its own piece of land? Are we ever going to be able to convince ourselves of the necessity to go to other models of housing and get away from the increasing desire just to squash up existing built form patterns?

Rob Adams

IN A NUTSHELL: THE PLANNING REVIEW

STEPHEN HAMNETT

About a year ago the Premier of South Australia announced the establishment of a major review of Adelaide's planning. Earlier this week the Planning Review's second report was released under the title '2020 Vision: Ideas for Metropolitan Adelaide'. This sets out the findings of the Review to date and offers for discussion a 'vision' of what Adelaide's future development could be like, together with a detailed explanation of the strategies necessary to achieve it.

This brief article describes some of that report's urban design proposals. Central to these is an emphasis on the suburb and the neighbourhood. The design of our new suburbs has been dominated in recent years by the demands of the private car. While the car will be with us for some time yet, we shall need to place more emphasis in future on designing neighbourhoods which make it easier to get around on foot or by bicycle. We need, in particular, to recognise that the design of neighbourhoods and the location of facilities have major impacts on the lives of those people who use them most - typically women, children and the elderly. The process of developing new residential areas involves more than 'subdivision design'. It is about creating localities with their own sense of place.

A recurring theme in the Review's report is the desire to involve the community to a far greater extent than at present in the process of urban design. This can be achieved by relaxing restrictions which prevent local groups from shaping their own surrounding and by assisting them to

carry out their own design projects. More community involvement in the identification of items of heritage value is also advocated. The current 'professional' notion of heritage seems narrow and does not seem to correspond to broadly held community views about the value of individual buildings, areas, suburbs and landscapes.

The Review's consultation process has revealed a widespread feeling amongst the people of metropolitan Adelaide that this city is a special place. It is more attractive as a place to live and to visit by virtue of its setting, its scale, its heritage and its relative lack of congestion. While the description of Adelaide as 'the twenty minute city' is increasingly hard to sustain, it is easier to move around Adelaide than other Australian cities. One task for urban design from now on is to protect and enhance Adelaide's accessibility by limiting its sprawl as much as possible and by encouraging the redevelopment of its middle suburbs with appropriate medium density development for those growing

groups in the community who may want it. Over time Adelaide should aspire to be even more of a model of a livable, accessible, safe, diverse and sustainable city than it is at present. This will be important for all sorts of reasons and not the least of these is the economic benefit which might flow to a city which retains its attraction to 'cultural tourists'.

Restrictive standards are seldom useful in promoting good design and should be dispensed with in favour of performance criteria wherever possible. But there are some specific things that governments can do to encourage better urban design. Urban design studies of selected parts of the metropolitan area can be commissioned, especially where redevelopment pressures are evident. There could be more design competitions and more commissions for public art and sculpture and the design of public spaces. Better urban design advice is needed at both state and local government levels, preferably 'in-house', but also drawing

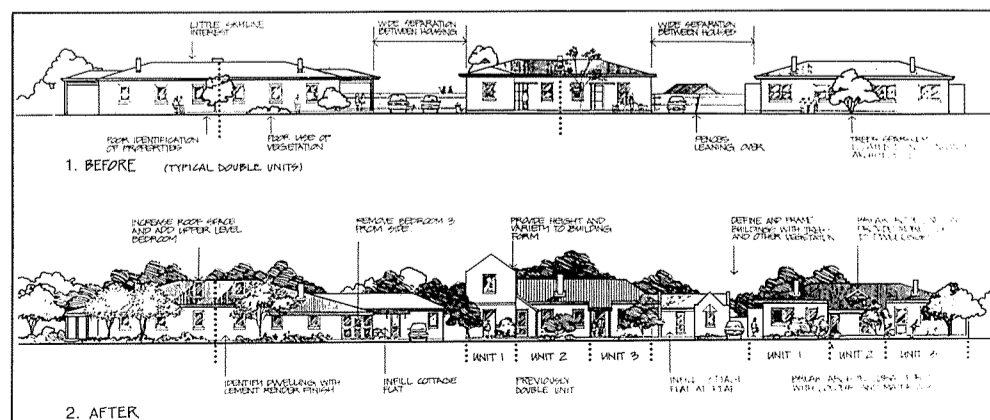
upon the expertise of urban design panels where appropriate. Urban design guidelines will continue to have an important role. It is often difficult to strike a balance between consistency, community views and the desire not to restrict the scope for creative expression, but we have seen considerable progress in this area in the past few years and we should build upon this. Lastly, and perhaps of most importance in the longer term, there should be more opportunities for education in urban design, not only for professionals but for the wider community. It is not too fanciful to see Adelaide as a centre of urban design excellence. We have better raw material to work with than some other cities. We also have a good deal still to accomplish.

Some months ago the Planning Review decided to mount a public exhibition entitled 'Design Ideas for Adelaide' as a way of encouraging debate about urban design issues. The illustration at left is taken from submissions to the Design Ideas exhibition. The exhibition opens on 3rd May in the Marble Hall, adjacent to the Adelaide Casino.

Copies of '2020 Vision: Ideas for Metropolitan Adelaide' are available from:

The Planning Review
5th Floor Reserve Bank Building
Victoria Square
Adelaide 5000 Telephone (08) 226 3567

Stephen Hamnett is Professor of Planning at the University of South Australia and a member of the Steering Committee of the Planning Review.



the Street the City & the Bridge

Charles Sowerwine

When Richard Hoddle laid out the grid for central Melbourne in 1837, he was, fortunately for us, applying what was then the current idiom of urbanism: wide, straight streets laid out in a grid. This approach transformed cities from the close, squalid warrens of narrow lanes we know from Dickens' descriptions of London into bright, open cities of great vistas. On faith alone (Melbourne could have remained a mere village for all he knew) he gave us the broad streets of the Melbourne we know.

Melbourne thus began with a great head start. Its wide streets and grid gave it its essential character; they made it one of the great Victorian cities of the world and they remain the key to its charm. They give us wide footpaths to encourage strollers and shoppers and vistas to lift the eye and the spirit. The pedestrian walks into smaller streets with pleasure and security. When re-emerging into broad streets, the pedestrian finds wide, open space for reassurance a clean, straight view to re-orient him on the grid, and an enticing perspective encouraging her to walk further.

Pedestrian bridges destroy all this. They lift people off the footpath and isolate them in hotel lobbies and department stores. As the number of potential customers on the street falls, each new development depends increasingly on capturing people at the first floor level. This creates a vicious circle. Shops and restaurants find less trade coming off the footpath and die off while new developments construct blank walls at street level.

Each bridge closes off a vista and creates an underground street. The stroller and the shopper find themselves looking down, intimidated by the weight of building before them or above them. They hurry on instead of lingering to look at store windows or stopping for a cup of tea and the street loses more and more life. In Atlanta, pedestrian bridges have developed so extensively that at a meeting of historians there I once went for three days without going out to the street. The street, when I did go, had become the dumping place for the garbage of the malls, a dark, enclosed, often frightening space, used only to hurry furtively in taxis to and from the airport.

On Sunday, 21st April 1991, the developers of 'Melbourne Central' and Myer erected a pedestrian bridge over Lonsdale Street linking Myer and the proposed Daimaru department store. The bridge is in the valley near Elizabeth Street. It falls just at eye level when one looks from Queen Street toward Spring Street. It blocks the vista of Lonsdale Street and ruins the Lonsdale Street facade of Myer, a fine Art Deco statement of Myer's pre-eminent role in the City.

But the bridge is more than a blot on the landscape. It is a frontal attack on the basic fabric of Melbourne. Mr. McCutcheon, the present Minister for Planning, states (*The Age* 25/4/91) that it 'will not set a precedent', new regulations will prohibit the construction of more bridges. Let's hope so. Let's also remember that the new regulations were proposed by the opposition and accepted by the government out of shame. Indeed, to allow one bridge and prohibit future bridges is like saying 'we've been so naughty we promise never to do it again'. Mr. Roper, the previous minister, overrode the City Council in allowing this bridge. Another minister can override new regulations. What Mr. McCutcheon calls popular misunderstanding may be justified cynicism about politicians' promises.



▲ The bridge under construction

The pressure from other developers to have the same advantages will be hard to resist. Many have the same reasons for wanting direct link-ups at first floor level to the heart of city retailing on Bourke Street. From Daimaru to the proposed development over Flinders Street Station there are developers who can legitimately demand the same treatment.

Moreover, the Ministry has a record of failing to protect the vistas of Melbourne from attack by other forces. Insensitive development planned for the CUB site at the north end of Swanston Street, on hold thanks to the recession, would block the vista up Swanston Street, the civic spine of the City. The arches on St. Kilda Parade block the greatest vista of all, to the Shrine. (That they were built with funds meant to extend the Arts Centre spire to its intended height is another scandal. To re-construct

the spire according to Sir Roy Grounds' original plans would provide Melbourne with its landmark. The arches, like the Gas & Fuel Building, only ruin the entrance to the city.)

The arches are temporary and can be torn down and the CUB development has not yet taken place. Although the bridge is in place, the hole has not been cut. But if the bridge is completed, Melbourne Central and Myer will have struck the first irreparable blow against Hoddle's wide streets. Is it too much to ask of the people behind Myer, if not Melbourne Central, to think again of the City which made them?

Dr. Sowerwine is a Reader in History at the University of Melbourne

THE RESURGENCE OF PHYSICAL DESIGN IN THE CITY OF SYDNEY

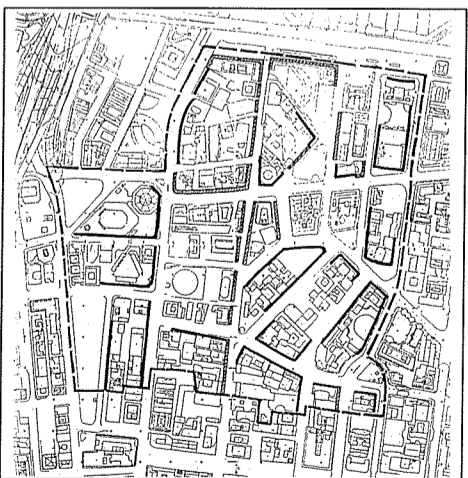
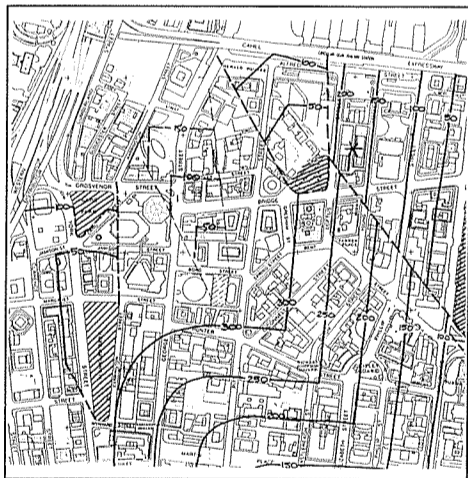
INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES IN DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

During the second half of 1990, the Council of the City of Sydney commissioned a number of firms to prepare 11 Development Control Plans (DCPs) for the various precincts of Central Sydney. The Central Business District (CBD) of Sydney is characterised by a preponderance of office towers (up to 60 storeys high) and a large but contracting retail core. Working to a series of related study briefs, the consultants had first to analyse the characteristics of their given precinct and then to chart the desired planning future.

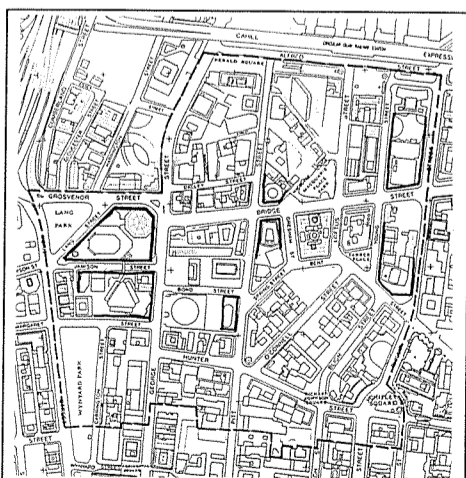
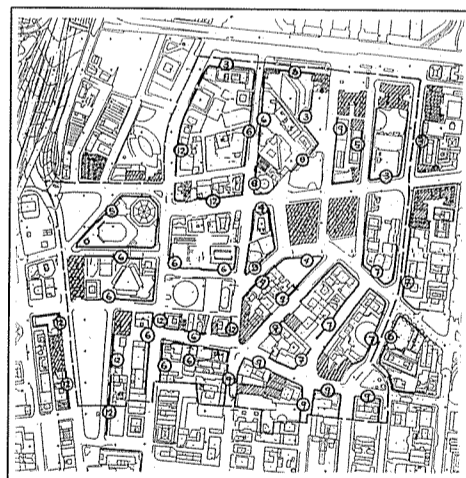
Armed with a close understanding of their precincts, the consultants prepared draft DCPs in consultation with Council's Planning Department. In the course of this preparation, many approaches to common issues were formulated, discussed, discarded and/or adopted. By this process, it was possible to have the benefits of a large number of viewpoints from which it is possible to suggest urban design controls appropriate to major city CBDs.

It is important to note that the Council of the City of Sydney has yet to consider the drafts in detail.

Michael Neustein is an architect and urban planner, Director of Neustein & Associates



Michael Neustein



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Fax (03) 819,1665

(Please send contributions in either original hardcopy form or on Macintosh disk; 700-800 words max. Please include Photos or diagrams if applicable)

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