

# Pedestrianisation

## What Next After Swanston Street?

By Bill Chandler

Central Melbourne's main thoroughfare, Swanston Street has now been successfully pedestrianised. The world didn't end because of it (as some people feared). Nor has it caused traffic chaos or retail collapse. In fact some drivers I have spoken to (including taxi drivers) feel that movement in the city has improved.

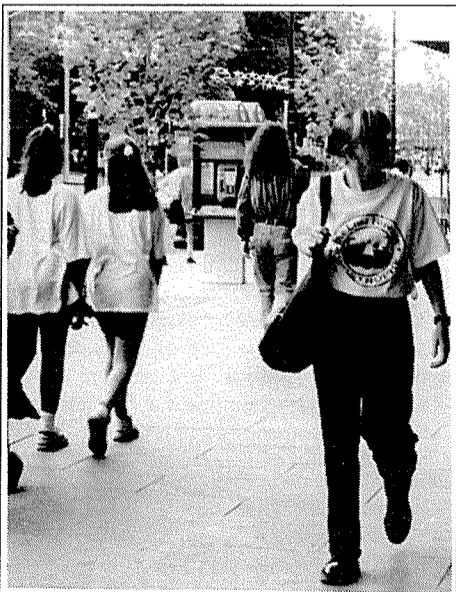
Professor Rolf Monheim has recently revisited Australia and is pleased that, at last, Melbourne has been brave enough to take its next step in improving the amenity and long term viability of its city centre. Rolf is a researcher and teacher at Bayreuth University in Germany.

At the November Melbourne Urban Design Forum lunch (held in glorious sunshine on the newly developed Southbank) Rolf traced the evolution of central area pedestrianisation in German cities.

Originally, streets were primarily for people movement, and social and commercial activity. In the twentieth century, the worry is that amidst radical technological progress has come a radical change of priority; the street is dominated by vehicles, to the detriment of pedestrians. No one is seriously suggesting that we completely rid ourselves of the car and truck. They provide us with a very valuable aid to commerce and enjoyment. But more and more people are demanding that the radical changes of recent decades be reversed; to reclaim the streets for people.

### Recent Melbourne Research

In recent research following the opening of Swanston Walk, undertaken by Professor David Yencken of Melbourne University, in conjunction with Rolf Monheim, and soon to be published, three very interesting points emerge about the pedestrianisation of Swanston Street.



Swanston Walk

These findings were that:

- \* total vehicle traffic across the Yarra did not increase, and possibly decreased;
- \* the proportion of shoppers in the Central City who used public transport was higher than expected; and
- \* the responses to attitudinal questions about public transport and the pedestrianisation were mostly positive.

### Process and Product

It is interesting to compare the Australian experience with the evolution of German city pedestrianisation. Rolf Monheim traced the stages and phases of what he described as a "natural" progression, but one which must be fought for. He said that the first step must be to change perceptions. (The "greening" of Swanston Street some years ago did just that).

Early German examples were in narrow streets, too narrow to carry the congestion of vehicles and pedestrians. But later examples were based on wider objectives for the city centre. Monheim says that "the streets were seen more as an outdoor living room, not a garage".

In European surveys, the majority in favour of more pedestrianisation is considerable, but says Rolf, "the views of the politicians do not always reflect the views of the people". He also pointed out that sometimes retailers worked against their own interests by publicly claiming that traffic and parking is a problem.

### Pedestrianisation Generates Pedestrians

Progressive developments have provided various examples of German City Centres with peripheral parking on extensive pedestrian networks. Monheim cautions against doing things by half measure, and suggests immediate pedestrianisation to areas such as Bourke Street east of Swanston Street, and Elizabeth Street. He makes the point that more pedestrianisation generates more pedestrians.

### Competing with Chadstone

To answer the question of "what next?" Rolf emphasises the need to learn from the two competing elements to central city pedestrianisation. Regional shopping centres are based on complete pedestrianisation (after you leave the car). Public transport should mimic the best attributes of the motor car, for example punctuality and concession fares for groups (more than one person travelling together, and no standing). Food for thought.

Bill Chandler is Convenor of Urban Design Forum and Director of the Loder and Bayly Consulting Group.

## What is Urban Design?

In this edition we scope across diverse roles for urban design - its role in climate control, crime and security, community participation and consensus building, and sustainable urban form. Yet we are also disappointed to report on a major project that still appears to define urban design only in terms of the 'decorative' bits - the paving, planting, seats and bins of public spaces. It just highlights the necessity of continuing to promote and explain urban design in its broadest perspective.

With this 21st edition of UDF, the editors would like to thank you all - contributors and readers - for your support over the past five years. With conservative political changes in the wind at state and national levels the need for urban design to be seen and appreciated as a 'win-win' approach to development rather than as a restrictive cost impost has never been stronger.

We look forward to your continuing involvement in UDF.

Thanks - the editors.



Swanston Walk

## WHERE THE CITY MEETS THE LAKE

### A NATIONAL DESIGN SCHOOL CHARRETTE

A quest for New Urban Design Ideas - Acton Peninsula and the West Basin

Over 300 design students across Australia in various departments of architecture, landscape architecture, planning and urban design recently studied Acton Peninsula and the West Basin of Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra. They participated in a "National Design School Charrette" sponsored by the National Capital Planning Authority in co-operation with the ACT Planning Authority. The Charrette engaged the vision and creative energies of students in professional design programmes in a quest for redevelopment possibilities and urban design ideas for Acton Peninsula and the West Basin.

The site, considered a "nationally significant area" due to its high visibility from Parliament House, its unique geographic setting and its cultural heritage, falls under the planning jurisdiction of the National Capital Planning Authority. With the recent transfer of medical facilities from the Royal Canberra Hospital on Acton Peninsula to Woden Valley, there needs to be an innovative investigation of what new role this site can play in the future life of Canberra. There now exist new opportunities to create a meaningful public realm "where the City meets the Lake."

The charrette process culminated in a Community Urban Design Forum, over October 15-17, 1992. By having a diversity of concepts on display, members of the local Canberra community and the national community were able to see and

respond to a variety of physical design approaches for this important site.

During the Forum selected finalists from each participating programme presented their concepts to review panels composed of design professionals, planning officials, government administrators, visual artists concerned with the built environment and representatives from various community groups. By having actual drawings and models to which the audience and panelists can directly respond, the level of discussion and dialogue regarding issues of use, access, density, scale, the quality of landscape and public space can be heightened. Following the formal review process there was an opportunity for broader community dialogue as Forum participants questioned and commented upon the design ideas. A concluding session provided the basis for constructive involvement in future community workshops regarding the Acton site.

For Canberra, this charrette was an unprecedented opportunity to discuss and critique fresh and future-oriented urban design options from young designers across our nation within the framework of a community forum. It is hoped that participants to the Forum benefitted from an opportunity for dialogue between potentially polarized groups in a search for positive solutions and concepts. Acton Peninsula and the West Basin are a keystone piece within the Central National Area. The resolution of its use and physical design, where the City meets the Lake, is critical to the future of our nation's capital.

Anne T Pettus

# The "Charette" A New Gimmick Or Effective Collaborative Design?

A charrette? This new word in the design and planning vocabulary has spread like wildfire over the last few months with its claims of speeding up the planning process, promotion of urban design, cost savings and meaningful community input and consensus building. The charrette is an intensive, design-based, simultaneously interactive planning exercise and contrasts with conventional sequentially reactive planning processes.

The term "charrette", in today's design jargon, implies an intensive up-to-the-final-hour work effort on the part of designers to produce physical drawings, sketches and models of proposed ideas and concepts. Originally, it is a French word, meaning cart or wagon. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, architecture students at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris were required to hand in their final projects as the school's collection cart rolled through their neighborhood. Many students, yearning to add finishing touches to a drawing or illustration, would literally hop on the wagon for a last minute chance to improve their work. Today, the charrette process is being used as a way to generate a variety of design concepts, and then distill and refine them through a collaborative effort. The term was adapted by American architectural colleges in the 1970s to refer broadly to intensive student design exercises. In the mid 1980s American architects, notably Andres Duany & Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk adapted the charrette to a five-seven day format suited to planning new towns, suburb expansion or inner city sites in accord with their Traditional Neighbourhood Development approach to urban development.

A charrette involves appropriate participation by all stakeholders, and incorporates

access to relevant specialist expertise and decision-makers related to the particular project. Highly interactive in format, the charrette is very challenging to clients, designers, regulators and communities, but provides opportunities for win-win outcomes and time savings even for highly controversial projects.

There have been three charrettes this year in Australia, two in Melbourne and one in Canberra.

## Cranbourne-Lyndhurst Charette

The five-day Cranbourne-Lyndhurst Town Planning Charrette in May prepared an alternative regional plan based on traditional neighbourhood development for a major portion of Melbourne's south-eastern growth corridor. Run by Jennings with assistance from the then Department of Planning and Housing (and many others) with Chip Kaufman from Sacramento as charrette leader, this charrette focussed on issues of sustainable urban form supportive of public transport, increased self-containment, infrastructure provision and integration of existing rural residential areas into future urban fabric. The charrette outcomes are being taken into account in the ongoing strategic planning process in the Shire of Cranbourne.

This charrette was recently recognised by two awards from the Victorian planning and design profession: the RAPI award for urban planning achievement and the C J Latrobe "Design for Living" Award.

## Bayside Open Planning Forum

The second charrette was held in Port Melbourne in August, to prepare a new

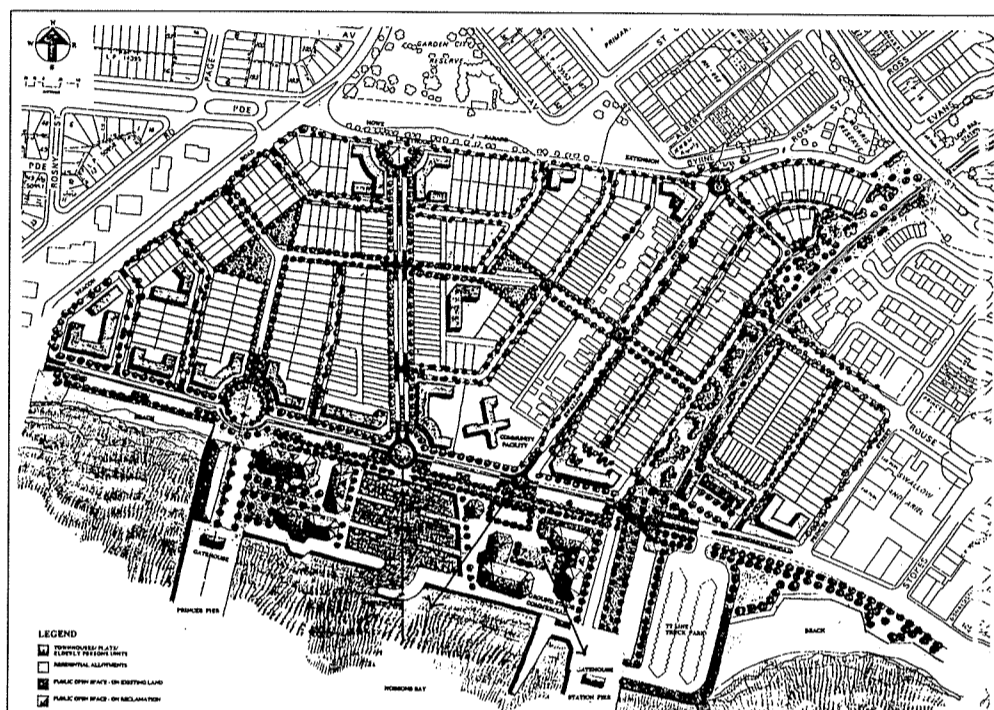
development strategy for the controversial 26ha Bayside development site. The five day forum was hosted by the Victorian Government Major Projects Unit supported by the Port Melbourne City Council. It involved over seven hundred members of the local community, developers, government agencies and other interested parties interacting with a core team of designers, planners, technical experts and facilitators, to arrive at a number of concept plans and a series of principles and guidelines to govern the form of future development.

Despite the site's history of antagonism the Forum produced a high level of consensus and, under the guidance of an ongoing Bayside Working Group, expressions of interest were invited from developers only a month after the Forum.

## Canberra - Where The City Meets The Lake

The third charrette was based around a site in Canberra, in October, and was quite different in approach and objectives to those in Melbourne. Its preliminary phase involved students in design studios around Australia preparing concepts for a controversial key site in the national capital. This approach was taken as a way of generating a national perspective. The student outcomes formed the basis of an interactive locally-based community workshop which began to develop principles for the area. (See separate article on page 1)

Wendy Morris



One of the development concepts produced at the Bayside Open Planning Forum, as an illustration of the agreed planning principles for future development.

However charrettes are not suited to every project. Already some key charrette pre-conditions can be identified:

- the project must have an inherent legitimacy;
- the process must be open and involve all major stakeholders in shaping the outcome;
- the client, budget and the outcome required needs to be clearly specified;
- the timing needs to be appropriate, taking into account preparation and follow-up;
- the site data needs to be available in an accessible form;
- there needs to be a coherent urban design philosophy;
- there needs to be a high level of commitment by the client and other participants to support the outcomes;
- the team needs to have appropriate design, facilitation and relevant technical skills;
- the process needs to be run by people largely independent from previous involvement with the site.

For further information contact: Cranbourne/Lyndhurst (Mark Tomkinson, 03 566 8888); Bayside (John Shields 03 651 7450); Canberra (Anne T Pettus 06 248 0473) or myself on 03 628 5469.

Wendy Morris

Wendy Morris is an urban designer with the Victorian Department of Planning and Development. She was involved in both the Cranbourne and Bayside charrettes.



Lyndhurst Town Plan

## Urban Design And Crime

The Urban Design Unit of the Department of Planning and Development in Melbourne is undertaking research into the role of urban design in relation to community safety and prevention of crime. Over the past few years this field of study has been undergoing rapid transformation, with an increasing recognition of the role of the whole community in working towards safer communities.

The Unit is keen to know of others working in this field. If you have any relevant projects, or you would like further information, contact Stephen Axford on (03) 628 5470 or Amanda Millis on (03) 628 5817.

## A Typical Five Day Charrette Program Involves:

### Day 1

- Design team assembles at studio
- Team tour of site with technical experts
- Preliminary design/issues session
- Evening public meeting, for team to be introduced to community and to present and discuss issues

### Day 2

- Focussed meetings with relevant government agencies
- Meetings with landowners, developers, local interest groups etc.
- Second public meeting focussing on key concerns and issues
- Ongoing design development

### Day 3

- Design sessions
- Public access to studio
- Preliminary presentation of outcomes for response.

### Day 4

- Design refinement and formulation of principles, guidelines or controls.

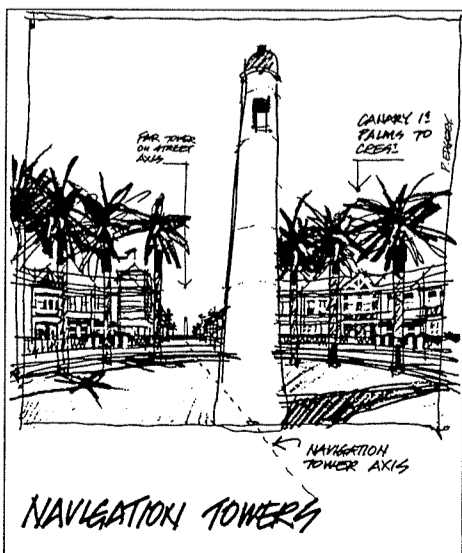
### Day 5

- Complete preparation of final plans, sketches and principles
- Photographing of graphics
- Final presentation to evening public meeting.

## The Charette's Potential

Having been closely involved in the two Melbourne charrettes I see there is great potential in the simultaneously interactive design-based approach for producing better quality planning outcomes with much higher levels of community understanding and concurrence. The design-based approach is critical, as it very quickly highlights real interface issues that are hidden, ignored or badly explained in conventional planning consultations, but which often generate subsequent community concerns with major delays to projects. It also provides opportunities to better satisfy the needs of various infrastructure agencies.

The event receives all the attention, however a charrette is much more than this. The pre- and post-charrette activity is extensive and critical to the success of the event and may last several months.

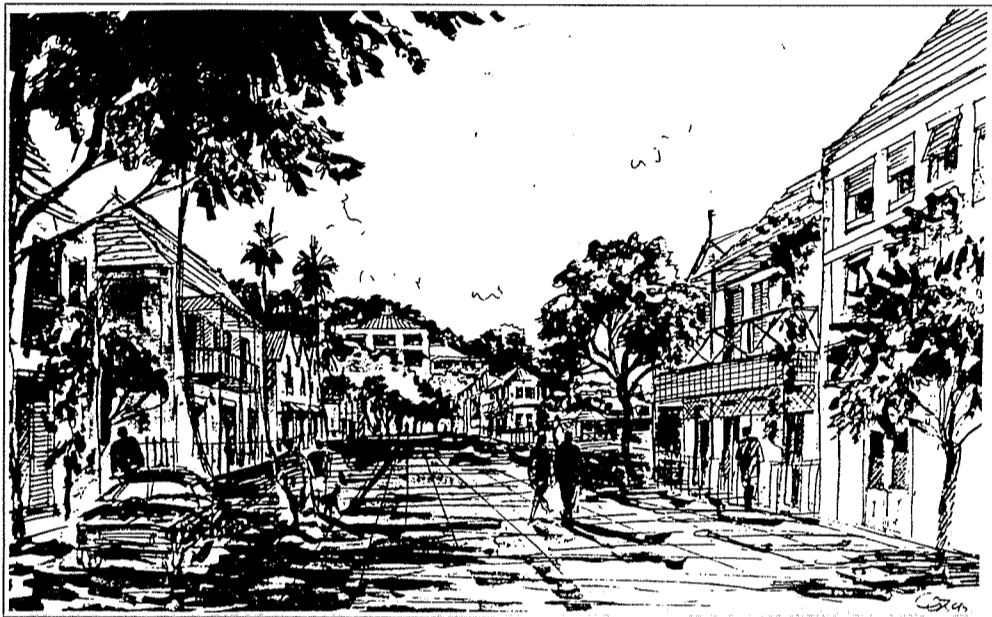


The Leading Lights - Bayside

Brisbane now has its own major urban renewal project on the river - the Newstead/Teneriffe area. (Southbank, the ex-EXPO site, is not quite "urban renewal" - it is all new and not yet very urban!) The area was the focus of the wool and sugar trades in Brisbane. Most of the deep water related industry has left leaving vast tracts of underused land and wharfage. An Urban Renewal Task Force was appointed in 1991.

#### Revitalisation Strategy

The Task Force's strategy for revitalisation is to achieve significant population growth while rationalising traffic movement, and creating vibrant mixed use precincts. In April 1992, the Task Force commissioned the Philip Cox Richardson Taylor and Partners/Planning Workshop team to prepare a strategy for the Newstead-Teneriffe riverfront and to co-ordinate the strategy with other studies to create a Master Plan for the inner North Eastern Suburbs.



A street in the proposed Brisbane's Woolstores Waterfront

## Sullivan's Cove

### Yet another Strategy

Sullivan's Cove is the birthplace of Tasmania and of Australia's second oldest state capital, Hobart. Its natural setting is even more stunning than that of Sydney Cove, with Mt Wellington looming large only a few kilometres behind. It also has more historic buildings about its edge than Sydney Cove, including Tasmania's Parliament House (a colonial Customs House). Yet it remains a working port with cargo vessels, passenger liners, ferries and fishing boats. The Cove is a remarkable place.

As a result, it is one of the most studied places in the land with three major and countless minor studies in just twelve years. The latest report, The Sullivan's Cove Planning Review 1992, was required to update and resolve conflicts between previous studies and to give clear guidelines for developers (private and public alike) for the next several years.

The 188-page A3-format report, released earlier this year, is well illustrated and contains colour reproductions of many panels which went on public display as part of the Review process.

#### Design-based Approach

It is intended as a model for an urban design-based planning approach which gives priority to spatial form and heritage conservation. Desirable spatial structure and form is the context for recommendations on Building Form (height, bulk and orientation) and for those on Urban Detail. Sections on Amenity, Land Use and Movement follow.

# Brisbane's Woolstores Waterfront Underway At Last

by JURIS GRESTE

The project team is to be commended for the way the project has been advanced. It is indeed a benchmark and standard - setting enterprise for Brisbane and beyond.

The strategy plan, which was recently placed on exhibition, has breadth and clarity of vision. The land use strategy seems solidly based. Implementation strategies show an understanding of reality and thus hold much promise. The local community needs and considerations appear to have been recognised. However, there are aspects which give rise to doubt and considerable concern.

#### Design Philosophy

In any urban arrangement there are two fundamental approaches. One is to see a part of town as forms, networks and patterns of public space and access. The other is an arrangement of solid objects - buildings in space. Central to both approaches is the arrangement and distribution of uses, activities, services and amenities. This scheme is made up very much of buildings. However for a part of the city which is likely to metamorphose gradually, a more flexible and responsive approach would be an "urban layout" rather than a distribution of individual building units. While this distinction may not appear major, it does have important implications.

It is inevitable that the method of communication leads to conclusions as to the design approach. Regrettably the plan seems grafted on to the area rather than woven into it. One must question the approach to the maintenance of the sense of continuity. The Master Plan does not identify any existing streets by name. Similarly, within the scheme, which are new streets and which existing is not indicated. So do we assume that the area is intimately known to everyone? Or are most of the existing streets not considered of sufficient consequence? Most of the plan boundary is drawn down the centre of a street - a typical planning approach, even though the design integrity of a street depends on considering the two sides.

The mixed use objective is frequently referred to. Yet among the documents on

display is a zoning plan which distinguishes between business zone, employment zone and mixed use. Within an overall mixed use concept it is difficult to see why these distinctions should be drawn and what in fact they are.

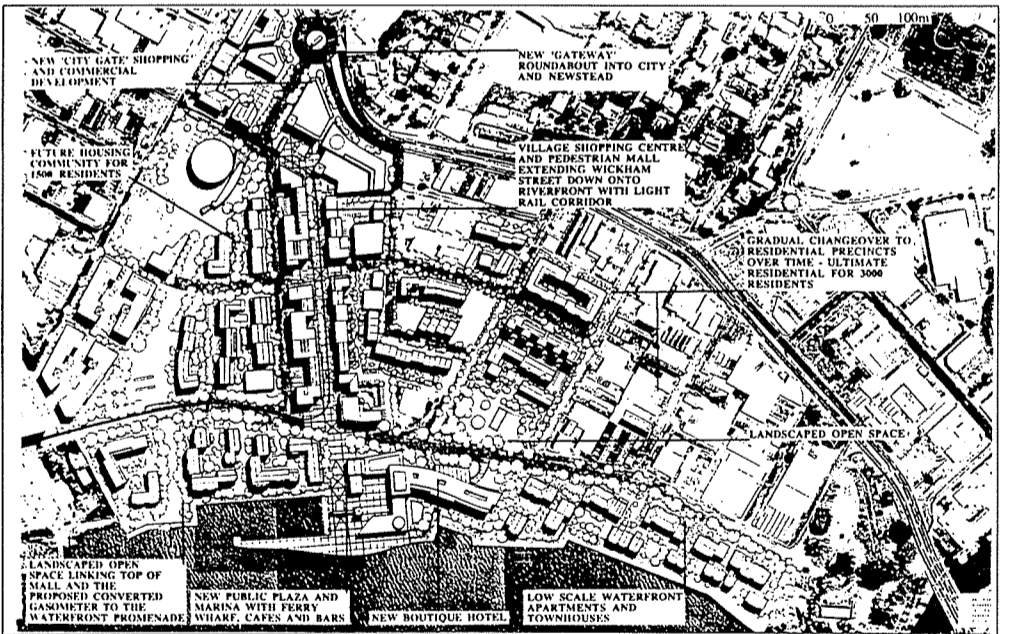
#### Public Space Quality

The urban vitality of an area depends very much on a fine grained pattern of access and permeability and the quality of the edges of public spaces. While the experienced reader might be able to interpret the networks of public access and movement, it would be welcome to have had it clearly expressed. Except for parts of the established streets in the Teneriffe Precinct and the mall, the edge quality of most other public spaces is highly questionable. Most of the spine route through the area - Newstead Terrace/Macquarie Street/Vernon Terrace - appears to lack active and interesting edges. Regrettably one of the documents relegates urban design to pavings, signage, lighting, outdoor furniture, artworks and landscaping!

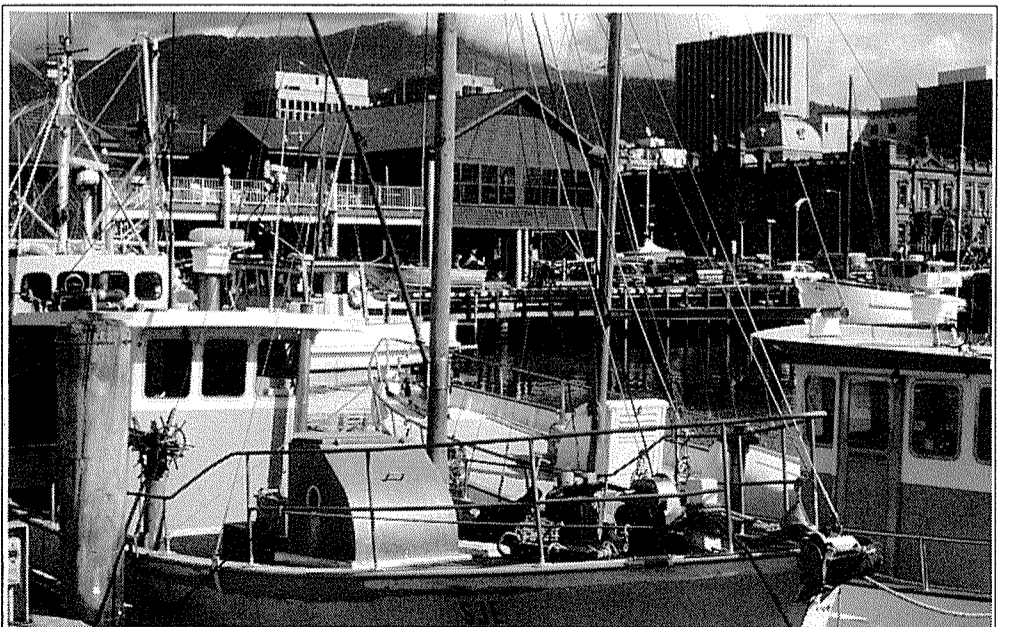
A scheme of this size and nature (as with any urban project) must finally be evaluated on the basis of how it works, feels, looks and generally comes together at pedestrian level from the public domain. This aspect has been under-communicated.

Despite the visionary overall qualities of the scheme, the ultimate question must be - will it make a good (not merely new) part of town, or at least as good as some of the present parts of the peninsula? The present documentation is not convincing that Brisbane will have a vibrant, vital, colourful and dynamic riverside and parts adjacent. It is hoped that the development control documents will be more reassuring and illuminating.

Juris Greste is a Brisbane - based urban designer and architect.



Concept plan for the Newstead Precinct on Brisbane's waterfront



Sullivan's Cove, with Hobart and Mt Wellington behind

# urban design and climate

What can good urban design do to improve the climate within a city? How can city siting, building colour choice, street layout and urban tree planting provide a more thermally comfortable city? Passive solar house design is well known, but urban design to improve the local climate is a new idea to most of us.

A good city plan from a climate management perspective should aim to:

- . maximise potential for solar energy use;
- . provide optimal thermal comfort;
- . minimise exposure of inhabitants to pollutants;
- . enable natural ventilation of buildings; and
- . minimise exposure to natural hazards.

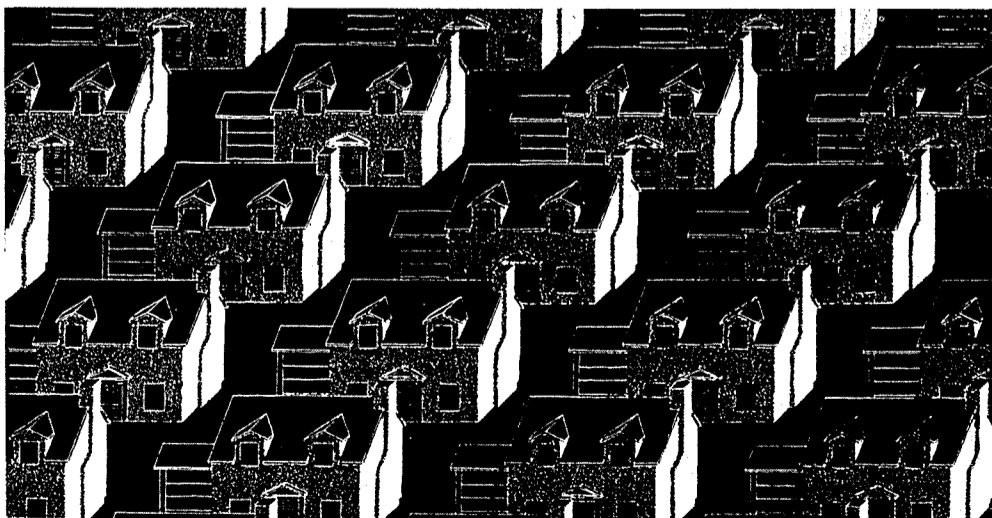
We know that the climate of a place changes whenever a city or even a small town is built. The wind speed decreases, there are more showers, more hail and thunderstorms; flash flooding is more likely and nights are warmer. For example, in a city the size of Adelaide, the overnight temperature in the city centre can be as much as 10°C higher than in the surrounding countryside. The heat island effect increases with density of urban settlement: as the structures rise higher and the proportion of the surface covered with buildings increases, the nights get warmer.

In the warmer parts of Australia, this urban warming effect is not welcome. For the unfortunate city dweller, it means greater thermal discomfort, a peak in the deathrate during heatwaves and increased energy consumption. In American cities, hot weather has been associated with a rise in riots and street offences.

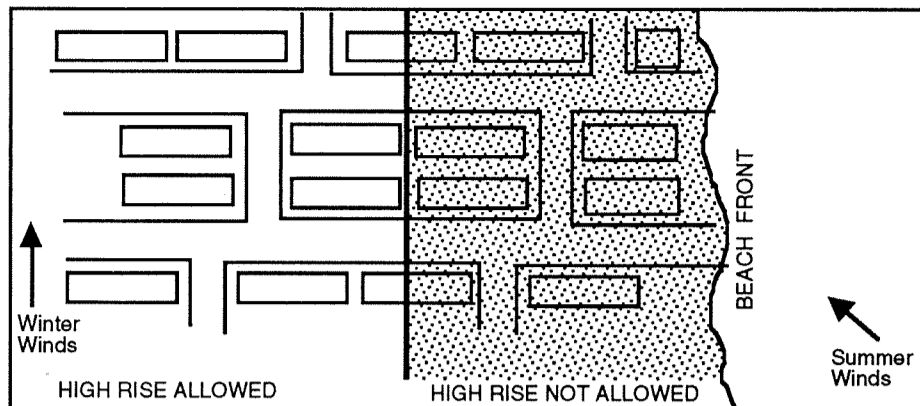
## "Goodbye To Apple Pie"

Bill Kelly Reports on  
FAMILY VALUES AND  
THE PLANNING AREA

My own interest in the areas of visual arts and urban planning grow out of a belief that humanism and social responsiveness can be integral to individual expression. In September this year I visited the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln Massachusetts to see a show which dealt with the way we treat each other as human beings...in this instance within the family unit.



"Ghost Town" by Patricia Reiter by permission



A possible layout for Coolangatta to optimise climate management

Urban warming is not good news as far as greenhouse gas emissions are concerned, either. In hot weather, as the city temperature rises, the power consumed goes up with it. We can use natural gas for winter heating, but electricity is almost the only option for cooling. In Australia, most electrical power comes from coal-fired stations and it adds considerably to carbon dioxide emissions.

**In a hot dry climate:** Priorities for this climate are to maximise reflection of solar radiation, to provide shade, protection from glare and from duststorms. This climate is the most favourable to solar energy use: the city should be planned to make the most of this advantage. All buildings and ground surfaces should be pale colours to increase solar reflectivity. Glare can be reduced by shading (vines, window overhangs) and by trees. Trees are natural evaporative coolers. Urban tree plantings around buildings can reduce energy use for air-conditioning by up to 50%. It has been estimated that one city tree can save as much carbon dioxide as 15 rural trees.

**In a warm, rainy and humid climate:** In this climate, good ventilation is a priority. Streets aligned at about 30 degrees to the prevailing wind will give maximum

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The exhibition "Goodbye to Apple Pie: Contemporary Artists view the Family in Crisis" dealt with the difficult issues of stress, violence, consumerism and abuse in a powerful and often compassionate way. As well the curator, Nicholas Capasso, took a brave and important step in looking not just at the notion of inter-personal relations but those on corporate and political agendas as well.

One piece in particular has international currency as regards the built environment. "Ghost Town" by Judy Haberl is an installation - a large room, the floor occupied by a "model" like set of suburban tract housing. In cycles, the lights go down in the room slowly, lights go on in the houses, in a number of the houses tiny TV monitors start to flicker. As darkness sets

airflow through buildings and along streets. In a high density area, streets containing a variation of building heights help promote ventilation, as do high narrow buildings with wide spaces between them.

**In a composite climate:** What can be done if the summer is too hot and winter is too cold? A street layout which maximises summer air circulation but gives protection from cold winter winds is needed. Because the prevailing summer wind direction will be different from the winter wind direction, this is not as difficult as it sounds.

As an example, an optimal street layout for Coolangatta, Queensland is shown. During the humid summer weather, maximum ventilation through streets and buildings would be achieved by aligning main streets at an angle of 30 degrees to the prevailing wind. By aligning main streets perpendicular to the cool winter winds, winds would pass over the rooftops and pedestrians would be sheltered.

Designing cities with climate in mind can bring health benefits, conserve energy and in reduce burning of fossil fuels.

Carol Skinner is with the Bureau of Meteorology in Melbourne

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in, the houses begin to glow. The eerie notion of irradiation takes hold on the viewer and one realises that the televisions in the houses are all showing the same programme, a documentary "Dark Circle" about the effects of plutonium contamination on a town in Colorado.

While the project grew out of an experience within Haberl's youth which she is able to make very real for us in the artistic sense, we are reminded of the social implications and responsibilities by Nicholas Cappasso when he writes that it "... points to the ubiquity of contaminants in the domestic environment, and to the ignorance and corruption which lead to the denial and suppression of such information." As well, there is the wonderful graphic of it by Patricia Reiter (illustrated) which takes us a further step to remind us also of the remorseless suburban monotony to which many are condemned in the name of planning.

William Kelly

## We Were Wrong

In our last issue (UDF20) we were incorrect with some details of the team responsible for receiving an honourable mention in the Warsaw Central Square competition. Krzysztof Bieda is not a professor of architecture at Cracow, but is indeed a senior lecturer at the Department of Architecture, University of Tasmania. Andras Kelly is also part of the same Department. Our apologies. Ed.

## CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

Well it looks like everyone is conferenced out after 1992! However here's a few from near and far, for now or later .....

**Architecture and Planning Summer School**  
University of Melbourne, Jan-Feb 1993

Short courses (1-10 sessions) on topics including Urban Design, Great Cities in History, Environmentally-friendly Transport Planning, Personal Security in Public Places, Business on Traditional Shopping Streets and more .... For the Summer School Brochure contact Co-ordinator on ph (03) 344 6430 or Fax (03) 347 2514.

"Streets and Spaces for People"  
7th International Malls Conference,  
Melbourne, 21-24 September 1993

This conference will focus on the value of public spaces, especially streets, as venues for a range of activities and experiences. Ideas on how traditional shopping centres can gain lost ground to regional complexes will be presented, taking an integrated perspective on management, marketing, maintenance and monitoring. See Swanston Walk, Southbank riverfront and the re-furbished Bourke Street Mall with hosts from the Melbourne City Council.

Contact: The Meeting Planners, 108 Church Street, Hawthorn 3122 Vic ph (03) 819 3700, Fax (03) 819 5978.

**The Great Oxford Twenty Year Celebration/Conference**  
Oxford, UK. mid-late September 1993

A must for all Oxford Polytechnic's Joint Centre for Urban Design graduates, visiting lecturers etc. A conference (and much more...) to celebrate twenty years of JCUD. Contact Wendy Morris (03) 628 5469.

"A Sense of Place .... A Place for People"

Royal Australian Planning Institute  
Biennial Conference, 6-10 March 1994.

This conference using the wonderful natural and built environment of Hobart as a setting, will explore planning and design as both process and product ..... the purpose of planning and the means of achievement through design.

Contact: Penelope Archer, Conference Design Pty Ltd, G P O Box 844J, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001 Ph (002) 313223, Fax (002) 313224.

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