

Urban Design in the National Capital

Jan Martin

Canberra: where planning is a front page item and design is conscious and visible. Canberra: the super suburb and the bush capital... but is it urbane and where is the chaos? Canberra: the car-based city par excellence yet the place where employment distribution policies have ensured that average trip length has not increased in 15 years. The place of civic display, clear light, space and, these days, not enough money to look after the monuments and parks inherited from the days of Menzies and Whitlam.

This edition comes at a time when growth in Canberra has faltered and the emphases are shifting. The famous 'Y plan' is being completed with the new town of Gungahlin now underway. If the Jerrabomberra Valley is developed, (hopefully along the ESD lines reported in UDF No. 27) the Y will lose its purity but a more compact urban form will result. In fact the debate has shifted more onto quality of urban space and, in particular, into changing the EXISTING fabric. Dual occupancy has been predictably controversial, and David Collett's article (page 2) is pessimistic about where things are heading, at least for while.

Exciting Opportunities

One of the most potentially exciting opportunities (watch this space) is the "Kingston Foreshores", some 32 hectares of mainly old industrial land earmarked for mixed-use redevelopment, almost certainly an international competition, and the creation of a Kingston Foreshore Authority. Yes, the phrase "Urban Village" has been mentioned. The site is close to the early worker's camps and is on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin.

In the latest suburbs too, demographics are biting. Two and three person cottages on 400 square metre blocks are the norm in many areas, with good and bad streetscape results, some brave experiments and, of course, a visual jolt for those used to pre-AMCORD street scale. Community artists and aboriginal artists have been involved in works which attempt to give expression to the spirit of place in some of the new locations.

Urban design is now on the agenda in various ways. The national central area work represents the urban-design-as-set-piece-public-space level of discussion. The grass-roots and even the chaos-seekers are also entering the debate. The ACT planning minister has a personal Urban Design Advisory Group of local private practitioners who span the design disciplines.

"CADENCE", a public art advocacy network incorporating artists, designers and others has been in existence for 3 years. As well as being a discussion group of stirrers, CADENCE is involved in demonstration projects, notably a "temporary transformation" of Civic Square in association with the annual theatre festival.

Canberra is unlike any other Australian city, yet it is in many ways a physical prototype of Australian aspirations. There are moves to achieve more urbanity, higher density and more local expression. Whether these will succeed and whether they can be achieved without threatening the existing qualities which, be assured, many Canberrans love fiercely, is a hot question for the next few years.

MAYDAY: THE WEATHER BUREAU NEEDS YOU!

A meteorologist putting together a brochure on urban design obviously has a problem - one I hope UDF readers can help with. The first draft of the brochure is printed on page 4. It needs your suggestions.

How can it be improved? Are there things that can be left out? Have I stated the obvious (or the obscure?) Are there things which are not clear? - technical terms?

What is omitted that shouldn't be? In a short brochure, it really is not possible to cover the 'how-to' part without abridging and oversimplifying drastically. Is the message so abbreviated that it doesn't make any sense?

Contact details are at the end of the draft - I would love to hear from you.

Carol Skinner

Musings From Olympic City

I was cruising with my 15 year old daughter the other night on one of our getting to know you journeys. "I've started to read the book you gave me, *Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*. It's great, he jumps all over the place, you have to keep up." She went on some time later "It's just like a City, nobody in charge and it all sort of happens by people doing a bit here and there". Well at 15 she hasn't got much to learn about town planning, has she!

My view of the world is getting more confined to inner Sydney, for which I should be severely reprimanded. I was brought to task the other day for not knowing that a bus lane is proposed on the Bathurst exit ramp to the City from the Glebe Island Bridge. This conflicts with a proposal I have been working up to change this "lower" deck of the Western Distributor so that it takes all the traffic to the Harbour Bridge and leaves the top deck so that it can be developed and earn about \$100m. It's amazing how many things are going on and how impossible it is to be on

top of it all. I'm sure I used to be better at all that, or was I just more arrogant or ignorant?

Spectacular action?

So what is the great Olympic City doing towards the great event. Well actually nothing very spectacular yet. The site is, I believe, being planned but there has been a State Election and things are still to settle down. Circular Quay has been on hold for the Local Government election.

I can tell you about the proposed tunnel under Market Street in the City. It is intended to serve a car park under the retail centre of Sydney and to act as a service road for most of the major retail centres in the City. What an extraordinary thing that a City has the right rock so we can dig down 30m and more to do all this and for a cost we can afford (so they say). That being its prime objective, the next realisation was that it would be an east-west link for through traffic.

URBAN DESIGN FORUM

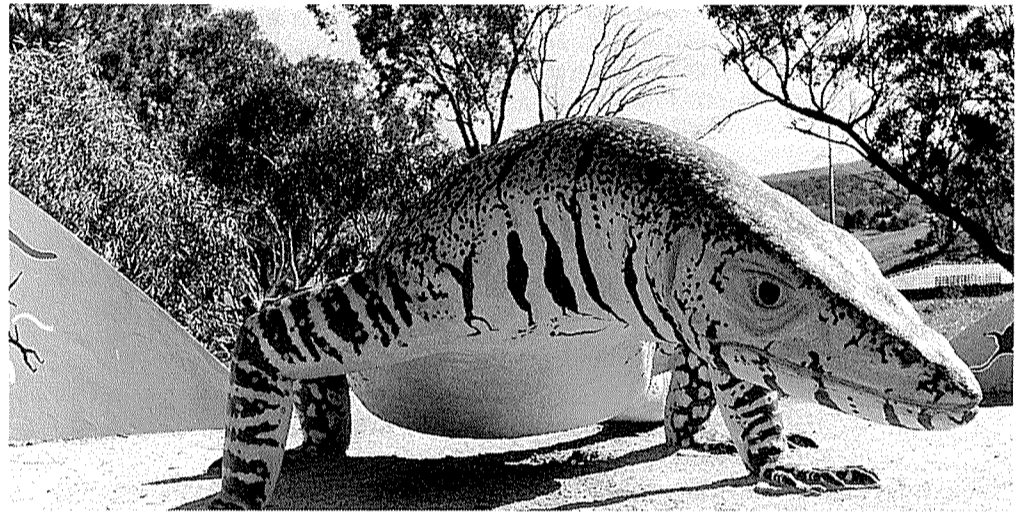
ISSUE No.31 September 1995

Canberra

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

This edition of UDF focuses on Canberra: an overview on this page, and various voices inside; progress on the design of the latest town centre; reassessment of the central area is still underway. There is news of a recent conference which put designers and environmentalists into dialogue. A new approach to managing public space is reviewed. A local

practitioner uses local investment in public buildings as a trigger to respond to a recent UDF article on Urban Villages. The issue of change and reaction is explored in an article which traces the vexed history of planning control and community involvement in relation to redevelopment in the days of self-government.



▲ Public art in Canberra



▲ In our highly urbanised country, designing with the climate in mind is an opportunity too good to miss.

Lessons from the past

There are a few lessons from the past. An earlier scheme for a similar tunnel under Park Street, which is not directly at the retail core, did not win favour: it was not in the correct position for the main wheeler dealers. But it was a neat engineering solution, the best they say, but not a winner.

There is another story at the eastern end. Extending the tunnel from the current proposal to end at Boomerang Street, near Hyde Park, to the Eastern Distributor would help through traffic and provide the opportunity for some of the construction to be built from the Western Distributor under the Eastern Distributor and onto the Kings Cross Tunnel which would remove all through traffic from William Street. An urban designer's dream!

There is an opportunity to develop the end of William Street at the Cross and more chance to pick up a toll and get finance for the main event. What a fantastic opportunity. Meanwhile back at the ranch I hear the RTA is thinking of trying to introduce 24 hour

clearways again. And all so some people can get to the airport more quickly when they should have left ten minutes earlier. Tut tut. Great urban improvement though, with the buses and traffic swishing along the footpath in Military Road and Parramatta Road. Be proud of such debate of the masses. Or have we moved on so to speak.

Whilst on the topic of masses I see that St Mary's Cathedral has a plan for a large plaza across Boomerang Road and linking all the small parks in the area. Great, Anything to do with Market Street Tunnel? Or as FS himself said "Space for the next visit by the Pope".

Circular Quay - watch this space!

The task is getting those bits together here and there - and a lot of people are helping. It's very exciting. Lets hope we can keep going towards 2000. Thanks daughter Suzie, for your insights.

Chris Stapleton



▲ Canberra: The central national area as Walter Burley Griffin conceived it but never saw it. The National Capital Planning Authority has published one report this year on urban design investigations for the future of this area. A final report is due in November.

Managing Public Spaces

Lynn Walsh

City Operations, a branch of City Services in the ACT Department of Urban Services, manages public places in Canberra - those public places that urban designers and planners create. Our work includes management of parks, urban open space, cleaning shopping centres and public toilets, conserving and maintaining fountains and memorials, and licensing outdoor cafes, hawkers and other activities occurring in public spaces.

In recognition of the need for a more coordinated and participatory approach to managing public places, a Precinct Management Strategy was initiated in 1994. Included in the Strategy objective is the need to better reflect the different needs and priorities of communities for their public places. The Strategy: identifies community expectations for the management of public places; provides more efficient and effective delivery of municipal services; and helps to determine priorities for capital works in public places.

Four Ingredients

Four critical ingredients work together to deliver the Strategy. They are:

1. the definition of public places as precincts according to agreed criteria;
2. an inter-agency committee called the Public Place Co-ordination Committee which is successfully facilitating a co-ordinated practical approach to planning, design and management of public places. (In addition to this, future urban design and management options are being determined and improved inter-agency communication and consultation is occurring);
3. Precinct Community Groups, elected by local communities; and
4. service delivery by discrete, multi-skilled Area Operations teams.

From July to December 1994, three local Precinct Groups (with capital works commitments of \$700,000) were established at O'Connor, Hughes and Narrabundah. By July 1995, draft master plans had been developed by all three groups.

Precinct Community Groups

The Precinct Community groups identify what makes their precinct special. City Operations provides the groups with information to help them determine priorities for their public places. This



▲ Members of the Narrabundah community meet with the Precinct Community Group one Saturday morning to discuss their options and priorities.

includes data collected from household surveys in their community and contact lists for City Operations officers who assist them with referrals to other government agencies.

As the work of the Public Place Co-ordination Committee continues,

additional resources will be provided to community groups to help them make decisions about particular issues in their precinct. These include street furniture 'menus' based on design needs for particular types of public place, guidelines for waste management and recycling, and cost information to help them assess priorities.

The Precinct Management Strategy has proved an effective method of involving people in the real decision-making about public place work programs and management. Local communities have enthusiastically grasped the opportunity to identify particular qualities of their precincts and have developed practical and innovative plans which incorporate community art and other unique identifiers.

The Strategy will continue in 1995-96 with work in Canberra's Civic Centre, involving commercial and community groups in the development of public place management plans.

Lynn Walsh is Public Place Manager, City Operations Branch, ACT Government

Urban Redevelopment

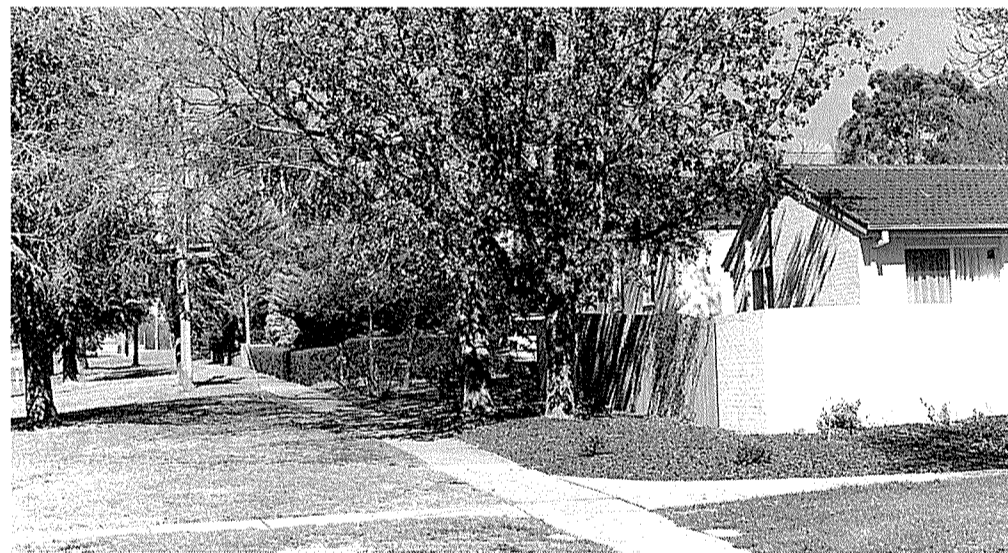
The Canberra Experience

David Collett

In 1989 the ACT changed to a system of self government. The National Capital Development Commission was abolished and Territory planning became the responsibility of the ACT Planning Authority. Soon after, a Territory Plan was promulgated, replacing the provisions of NCDC planning instruments. Prepared in the context of Federal and State initiatives, in the area of residential regulatory reform and intensification the Plan made very considerable changes to control of residential redevelopment.

Previously, dual occupancy redevelopment had been permitted, but without provision for subdivision or unit titling. Broader-scale redevelopment was only possible with a change of land use policy by the NCDC and was effectively confined to undeveloped parcels and to specifically designated areas such as the suburb of Kingston.

The new Territory Plan permitted both dual occupancy and redevelopment in all areas of Canberra with no plot ratio or site cover restrictions, liberal minimum block size requirements and setbacks, and access and parking provisions generally consistent with AMCORD. It was matched by the provision for separately titling dual occupancy units and coincided with a Labor Government objective of achieving 50% of residential growth within existing suburbs. It also coincided with a counter-



▲ Intrusion or essential revitalisation? A new dual-occupancy, on a corner is typical, replaces a "traditional" government cottage on yet another leafy inner-Canberra street.

cyclical boom in residential investment in the ACT fuelled by very low vacancy rates in rental accommodation and very slow markets in Sydney and Melbourne.

Action and Reaction

The effect was immediate and dramatic. First dual occupancy, then larger scale redevelopment and finally single block redevelopment applications flooded into the Authority. The effect of the plan was to allow the development of up to six one-and two-bedroom apartments on a single (large) residential block. There followed, very quickly, public objection in the form of letters to the press, public protests and street meetings and appeals to the Land and Planning Appeals Board. Newspapers and television coverage led to political concern.

Bill Wood Minister for Environment Land and Planning announced a review by Robert Lansdown (a former Commissioner

of the NCDC) with a moratorium on development approvals until its completion. Terms of references included the extent of residential development activity and its impact on the amenity of neighbourhoods and the city's living areas.

Mr Lansdown presented his report to the Minister in November 1994. It included nine major recommendations supported by discussion and arguments raised by the public and professional agencies.

The Recommendations for immediate consideration included:

- * No dual occupancy or infill in new areas for 15 years;
- * Increased restrictions on block size, plot ratio and height for dual occupancy developments and no subdivision or unit title;
- * Increased restrictions on block size, plot ratio and height for medium density infill in existing areas;

- * Betterment levies be introduced,
- * Consultation and appeals processes be improved and simplified;
- * Housing Trust to introduce 5 year plans in consultation with residents;
- * Additional resources and priorities be applied to residential change with local-area designations and integrated strategic planning.

The detailed restrictions on dual occupancy and redevelopment are particularly regressive, in aggregate reducing the development potential of sites below the pre-existing potential for single residences.

The plot ratio of 35% is the same as it is for single residential use. The minimum block sizes give a lower density than current new land subdivisions and two storey development is very difficult to justify. More onerous requirements for consultation, documentation and Statements of Environmental Effect combined with the removal of provisions for separate title to dual occupancies, are proving a substantial deterrent.

As a final outcome of the Review, a series of Local Area Committees has been established to review planning applications and to make non-binding recommendations to the ACT Planning Authority. With the current slump in the residential market, a lack of interest by developers and design professionals and a strong interest by anti-development residents, it is hard to imagine these committees taking an influential role in improving the design quality of realistic, economically sustainable urban redevelopment. The impetus for reform seems, for the moment, to have been lost.

David Collett is an architect in private practice

The Urban Village & Civic Investment

Colin Stewart responds to Nathan Alexander

Nathan Alexander's outline of the Urban Villages Project (UDF No. 30 June 1995) sounds promising and worthwhile, but it also raises a number of questions. One question concerns what exactly are the essential ingredients of a sustainable urban village?

It is interesting to see the illustration that Nathan Alexander uses in his article to epitomise the notion of an urban village:

- (i) Public Transport
- (ii) mix of land use; and
- (iii) range of ages and lifestyles, all admirable features of the urban village.

What about the public realm?

But is this the end of the list and are they the key ingredients? What about, for example, the public realm and the public buildings?

If we look to historic precedents we usually find that the public realm, including the public buildings, is the heart and focus of the village or town. Traditionally the public buildings form the key meeting places within the community while the shops, the housing and industry make up the fabric.

What I believe we need to be addressing is the magnitude of real investment in the public realm in public buildings and places.

What is enough? What is not enough?

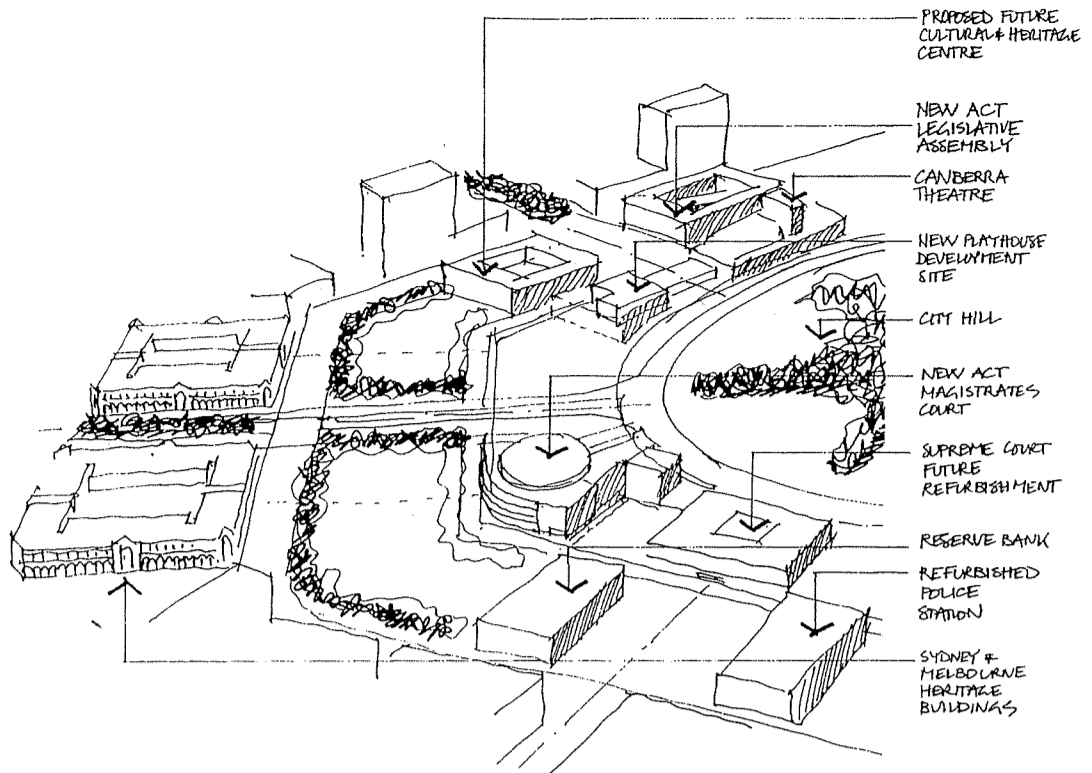
In Canberra the community, through the ACT Government, is investing a significant proportion of the public purse in renewing, refurbishing and building its civic buildings and places. On the agenda or underway or indeed complete are the ACT Assembly building, the refurbished police station, new law courts, new and refurbished theatre and playhouse, new cultural centre and heritage and art centre. This works program is accompanied by a development plan for this public investment.

While this investment in the public realm should and is being applauded, is it enough and what is the appropriate investment in such buildings in these urban villages we keep hearing about?

In times gone by, the village church would be the major public investment. What is appropriate today and for the future?

In other words, when is an urban village truly an village and not just a piece of suburbia? What are the essential ingredients of a sustainable village? Is a park, a school and a couple of shops enough to make an urban village?

Colin Stewart is a Canberra urban designer and architect in private practice. With ACT Architects he is designer of the new Magistrates Court.



▲ Mainly public buildings around Canberra's City Hill. The ingredients for an urban village?

Trading On the Eco-Exchange



Mads Gaardboe reports on a recent Canberra conference which, with its sub-title "Redesigning The Built Environment", helped designers engage with environmental issues.

They flew in from the UK, from the east coast of America and from Hong Kong as well as all corners of Australia.

Canberra welcomed them with cold drizzle, instead of the usual clear, crisp winter sky which would have been the ideal setting for conference on ecological issues. But the atmosphere at the University of Canberra was warm. The coffee breaks were crowded and noisy, the sessions ever changing.

The papers were grouped around themes like eco philosophy, engineering change, living with the land, professions and ethics, sustainable settlements, eco costs of materials, design and social change, and timber sources.

Dr. Janis Birkeland who conceived and, with a band of volunteer students from the Faculty of Environmental Design, planned the conference, had cast a wide net and succeeded in creating a marketplace where every angle of ecology with relation to the built environment could be offered for debate. Those who did not find a paper precisely extending their special interest, would discover different angles from which to view a common goal.

Among the plenary speakers Clive Hamilton, the Australian Institute, asked: "what does economic growth measure if a 3% growth rate of GDP means more congestion and loss of natural habitat?" and challenged our attitude to accepting changing lifestyles to suit an economically fast growing Asia, in order to achieve another 1% growth of GDP. Hamilton questioned our traditionally accepted commercially driven value system, and set the scene for the big issues concerning not only where but how we live, and he clearly found himself among sympathisers.

Unique Australian Design

Social and cultural issues were highly visible. Suzanne O'Neil from the University of Canberra's Ngunnawal Centre reminded us of the white man's urge to change the landscape to suit him, while the aboriginal change themselves to suit the land and, if in an urban situation, need to "go bush". The relevance of such diverse papers is an indication of the Australian condition, where multiculturalism and advanced technologies should be able to be reflected in unique urban design.

Together with the keynote speaker Hunter Lovins from the Rocky Mountain Institute, the subtitle of the conference: "Rethinking the Built Environment" indicates that sustainable principles require a profound change of practices. The significance of CATALYST '95, at a time when the dust has yet to settle, seems to be however, that this event created a forum for redefinition rather than rethinking of the built environment.

Mads Gaardboe is the senior urban design lecturer at the University of Canberra.

Gungahlin Town Centre:

Back to The Future

Jan Martin

Canberra has four major town centres. The community is now embarking on a fifth, in Gungahlin, the northern growth area. This will be, it is avowed, different to its predecessors, neither enclosed nor car-dominated. It will be more like older places; (Canberra's own model is Manuka) diverse, with smaller variable shops along a bustling main street and with a finer grain of pedestrian movement.

The Urban Village Image

Urban village, mixed-use, incremental, pedestrian-dominated, permeable...these are concepts familiar to UDF readers. In Canberra they are visions which, beyond argument, came from the broader community during a very open consultative phase run by the ACT Planning Authority (This successful dialogue stands as a tribute to the Authority's Alison Burton who died suddenly last month). Back in 1992, it was local development-entrepreneur Bob Winnel who proposed a privately funded tram-based 600 hectare urban village for the site. He promoted the idea with such flair that some of you may think it is already built. Not so.

As UDF goes to press the Planning Authority is releasing, for further scrutiny, a multi-disciplinary study of the central eight square kilometres. In the interim, large tracts of native grassland, in and around the site, have been reserved to protect threatened species. It is by no means clear whether the tram will actually be a bus or when it will be built. Gungahlin won't have the dubious benefit of being primed with major Federal offices. But, by crikey, this is a report which puts flesh on the urban village image.

The key elements:

* Mixed uses throughout. Over the central retail elements for example, developers are offered a 'bonus' opportunity to build two or three levels of apartments.

* Central blocks crossed with lanes and walkable connections, with mandatory building lines, active frontages and frequent small urban spaces.

* Acknowledgment of the significance of the site for the traditional Ngunnawal people and of the role of public art in the achievement of unique public spaces.

* A spine of mixed-use along the major boulevards and the major public transport line, organised around nodes or '5 minute urban villages'. The boulevards culminate in tight urban (21 metre wide) 'main streets'. There is indeed a new sort of street hierarchy all with active frontage.

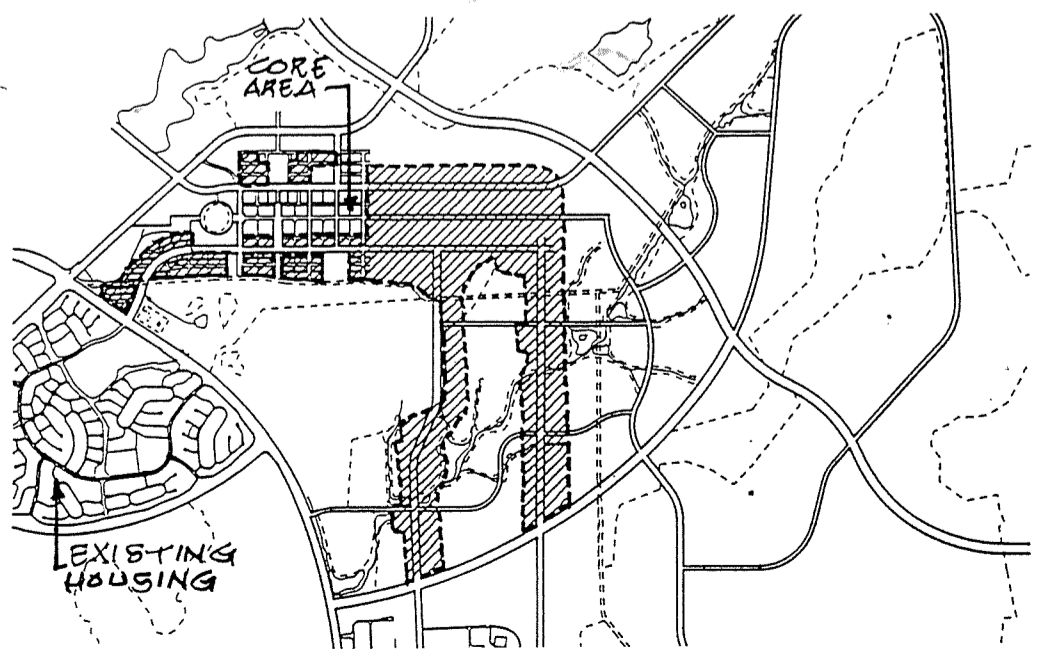
* A positively prescriptive (but not proscriptive) design code targeting the way buildings define the public realm. There is a colour-palette based on found-colours in Gungahlin's natural environment and a mandatory 30 degree roof pitch which relates to winter sun angles

* A formal grid structure transected by an informal (Olmsted style) watercourse and parkland system. (For more information on the report contact Ian Wood-Bradley, urban designer at the ACT Planning Authority on (06)207 1747)

Gungahlin Urban Village (for we might as well call it that) will grow more organically than its predecessors and will not have their one-off structures and oceanic carparks. Yet eventually it may in a sense be larger, for residential densities of up to 80 dw/ha and ground level active uses will be achievable around the core in a large 'hinterland'.

The report acknowledges that new urban form require new ways and means. Accordingly it recommends and details a Gungahlin Development Authority. If this all gets through, being the GDA's first urban designer could be a fun job!

Jan Martin is an urban designer and planner in private practice.



▲ Gungahlin town centre with hatching showing mixed-use areas.

Climate and the City

CASH, COMFORT, ENERGY AND GREENHOUSE

Carol Skinner, Bureau of Meteorology

Australia is one of the most urbanised countries in the world - over 85% of us live in towns or cities. This mass urbanisation, combined with our environmental concerns, has led to keen interest in sustainable urban design. We worry about climate change and scientists' prediction of global temperature rises. Yet local climate changes of similar sizes have already occurred in big cities, because of the effect of landscape modification. For liveable, sustainable towns and cities, we need to think about climate. If we don't, we will miss out on achievable gains in terms of money saved, comfort improved, energy conserved and greenhouse gases reduced.

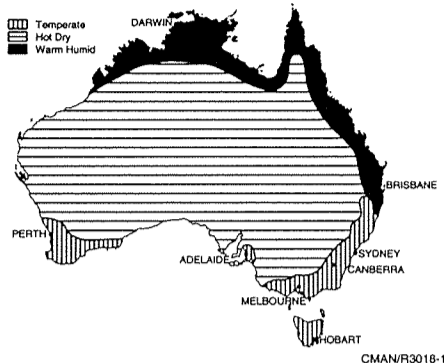
What has climate got to do with urban design?

Indoor comfort can be gained at the expense of copious amounts of energy used for heating and cooling. Out of doors, the only way to improve pedestrian comfort is through climate-sensitive city design: judicious combinations of ventilation and wind sheltering, sun shading and sun reflection can make life in the big city much happier!

Why is the Bureau of Meteorology interested in urban design?

Our climate data bank and our climate expertise are national assets which are funded by the taxpayer. The Bureau has a

responsibility to make sure these resources can be used effectively to provide value to society. We want people to know what information we have and how it can be used to improve the quality of life of everyone in the community.



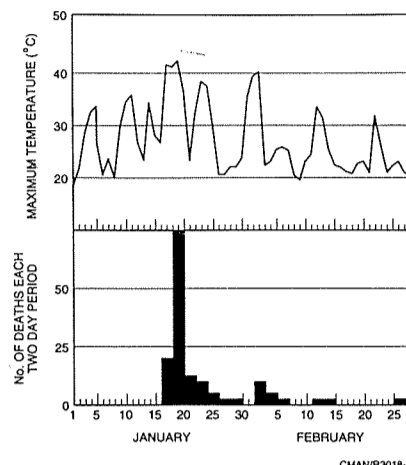
▲ Australia's main climatic zones

What cities do to climate

When a surface of soil and plants is replaced by one of bricks and concrete, the scenery is not the only thing that changes. Night-time temperature increases (the urban heat island effect). Average wind speed drops, because the rough surface formed by city buildings exerts a frictional drag on moving air. In the polluted city atmosphere, there are more fogs and less sunshine. Runoff from rainfall peaks higher and faster in urban areas, because of the city's paved surfaces. As the city grows, the climate changes intensify.

What climates do to people

In most Australian climates, the urban warming effect is not good news. During heatwaves, the city's warmer nights can prevent overnight recovery from heat stress. As a result, death rates in cities show a peak during heatwaves. There is evidence from other countries (mainly USA) that aggressive behaviour in cities (street offences, riots) increases during hot weather. Urban warming affects the city's energy use, reducing the demand for winter space-heating, but increasing the energy needed for cooling. At times, flash floods may be life-threatening and can cause big financial losses.



CLIMATE AND URBAN DESIGN - THE REWARDS!

When climate is part of the urban design team's skills, real rewards become evident. In the climatically optimum city, the thermal comfort and even the health of city dwellers improves. Less energy is needed for indoor temperature control. As a result, we save money, we burn less fossil fuel and greenhouse gas emissions decrease. Peak power demand is reduced and stormwater drainage systems are optimally sized, giving savings on the cost of city infrastructure.

Designing with climate

A quick look at some of the things to do:

- In a hot dry climate, sun protection is

essential (we need shade, and pale surfaces to reflect the sun's radiation). Glare and reflected heat from these pale surfaces can be reduced by shading from eaves, ledges and vegetation. Trees are Nature's own evaporative coolers - perfect for the dry climate, if water supply permits. Trees will also filter blowing dust from the air.

- In a warm humid climate, we need air movement to keep us comfortable. Streets and buildings need to be oriented to catch the breezes. A mix of building heights promotes ventilation. Vegetation must not impede air movement: trees with branches far from the ground, such as palms, would be ideal. In a rainy climate, more permeable surfaces are needed, to reduce urban stormwater runoff.

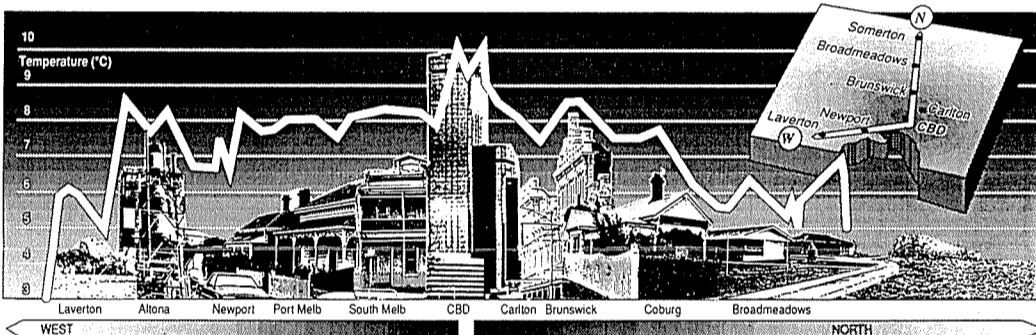
- What to do when summer is too hot and winter is too cold? In a temperate climate, the wind direction usually changes with the season. It may be possible to choose a street layout which will block the winter wind, yet allow cooling summer breezes through the city.

- In cooler parts of the temperate zone, provide maximum wind protection (windbreaks, closely spaced buildings, main streets perpendicular to prevailing wind). Darker road and building surfaces will absorb more heat.

More about climate and design

This is just an introduction to the topic. Talk to us - the climate applications people at the Bureau's National Climate Centre. We can give you examples of how these ideas could be used in real world situations. We can send you a reprint of a short non-technical paper on the subject and/or provide advice on your project. The Bureau's specialist library is open to the public - we can recommend books you might find useful.

You can reach us by telephone on (03) 9669 4589, by fax on (03) 9669 4515, by mail at Bureau of Meteorology, GPO Box 1289K, Melbourne, 3001, Attention: SRSC, or by email to climate.appl@bom.gov.au.



▲ Measurements made across Melbourne on 25/8/92, showing the urban heat island. (courtesy 'The Age')

Australia Foundation for Culture & the Humanities

The Australia Foundation for Culture and the Humanities was launched in Melbourne in August 1995. The Foundation aims to 'extend Australians' understanding of their own country and its future' (Federal Government Creative Nation statement 1994).

Through its activities, the Foundation encourages an awareness of the importance to Australia of being, and being seen to be, a creative society. In particular, the Foundation works:

- * to educate Australians about the importance of creativity and intellectual activity to Australia's development;
- * to increase private sector support for culture and the humanities;
- * to support exemplary work in the humanities, and to ensure its accessibility to all Australians;
- * to support the parallel education system (eg. museums, galleries, public libraries) in finding new ways to present its work to a wider audience.

The Foundation works with a range of organisations and individuals including cultural and educational institutions, other government agencies (either Federal, State or Local) and community groups.

The Foundation may help organisations by acting as a partnership broker, project developer, investor and/or fund raiser for their activities.

Foundation Program

A range of programs is currently being developed, including *The Australian Experience*. Under this program the foundation calls for project proposals from organisations working in the broad area of culture and humanities that wish to develop projects in partnership with the Foundation.

Projects might explore areas such as Australia's political heritage, changes to Australia's social, physical or cultural landscape or issues critical to Australia's future such as the impact of new technologies.

They could include, for example, a collaboration between a film maker and a historian; a travelling exhibition; a school resource kit; a new magazine or a video game.

More detailed information can be obtained by contacting the Foundation at:

33-39 Little Lonsdale Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
Australia
Telephone (03) 9207 7020
Facsimile (03) 9639 4505
Toll Free 1800 064 201

Urban Design Course at Melbourne

From 1996 the University of Melbourne will be offering a Postgraduate Diploma and a Masters degree in the Urban Design area. The one year Master of Planning and Design (Urban Design) is tailored specifically to architects, urban planners and landscape architects who wish to specialise in the field.

Candidates can commence in either semester (March or July). Fifty percent of the program comprises studio/project subjects, running throughout the course, beginning with the analysis and reassessment of existing developments and continuing to the urban planning and design of new projects. The development of specific skills in urban design is encompassed in these subjects. The remainder of the course includes a subject in urban design theory and research, an investigation program (the student is encouraged to link with one of the studio/projects), and two elective subjects. These can be chosen to build on the student's interests and extended into new intellectual fields.

For candidates coming from a non-design background but wanting to acquire skills in urban design and the management of public open space projects (eg in local government), or for those who might not qualify to enter a Masters program because they lack a four-year undergraduate qualification or its equivalent, there is a one year Postgraduate Diploma in Planning and Urban Design (Urban Design). This will normally be tailored to the specific

requirements of the individual candidate. Finally, candidates who wish to take only 50 points of individual subjects (equivalent to one semesters work) may be enrolled for a graduate certificate.

All of these options can be taken part-time: the Masters of the Postgraduate Diploma over two years part-time rather one full-time, a graduate certificate over one year part-time. All are available on subsidised (HECS) basis in 1996. For more details phone: Christine Deppeler (03) 9344 6439

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