

The Livable City

Consider one of the local "campos" or piazzas of Venice (not San Marco). It started as the source where local people came to get water from the well. It evolved into the meeting place for that community, attracting richly diverse uses round its edges and dwellings above and behind. Its "organic" shape is defined by the beautiful but surprisingly varied buildings around it. Now that Venice's 100 island communities have been knitted together by 100 bridges each campo is still the hub of local socialisation. It is also a major spacial "event" in an intricate continuing physical web. The campo is a stage waiting for actors. Observe, at 11 am for instance, people station themselves by the coffee bar. They know that others will wander by and stay to chat. Later some boys will invent a variant on wall soccer. All those buzzwords: defensibility, responsiveness, humanity of scale are tangibly demonstrated.

For 4 days in July, 100 of us at the 5th "Making Cities Livable" conference (M.C.L.) lived this. Our coffee breaks were in such a campo; we discussed its structure in a Renaissance sala above it. For this reporter the experience of Venice and the ideas flowing in the conference coalesced. One of the rocks on which MCL is built is

that city designers have much to learn from old Europe. Why not then go to Venice to have such discussions. MCL is the creation of Dr Henry Lennard, originally a sociologist/psychiatrist and Dr. Susan Lennard, originally an architect. It is a potent blend of perspectives. The Lennards, and their various no-nonsense colleagues are committed to thinking about which built environments are most conducive to socialisation; to healthy human interaction. The analogy is drawn between bad urbanism and the "discontinuity" of a schizophrenic family; in both meaningful communication is lost.

MCL had its weaknesses of course; some papers which really weren't up to scratch, too little time for formal discussion, but it had the major plus that everyone there was determined to talk turkey about actual physical design models for the promotion of livability. The basic ground rules for the debate had already been set by the Lennards and their mates.

Oddly, your sole Australian representative, one who has been lapping up European spaces these months past and has long sought inspiration from their tight urbanity, got into a furious argument with the

Lennards about having to live with the motor car. Not that they of course were denying its place. Nor that I was denying the incompatibility of the car with the best of urban space nor its ecological threat to the city, but simply that the practising designer needs to be pragmatic. People value car-borne mobility; we must work with or around this. It is an instructive debate because it gets to the core of a conference such as this. They are at their best when someone is prepared to inspire with the certainty of well argued idealism. Only then do the pragmatists have the luxury of saying to themselves, "Now, how, without compromise, can I apply this back at the coalface?"

Various "keyword" issues, none totally new but all freshly formulated, were underlined for me at MCL:

DIVERSITY: Functional and human variety is absolutely essential in the creation of livable city space. Dockland designers please note! We heard how some European cities are successfully demanding residential components in all new central area buildings of 50%, 60% even 75%.

"VILLAGE" FORMS: I saw drawings of new community developments and building complexes which sought the diversity, tightness and urbanity of the campo.

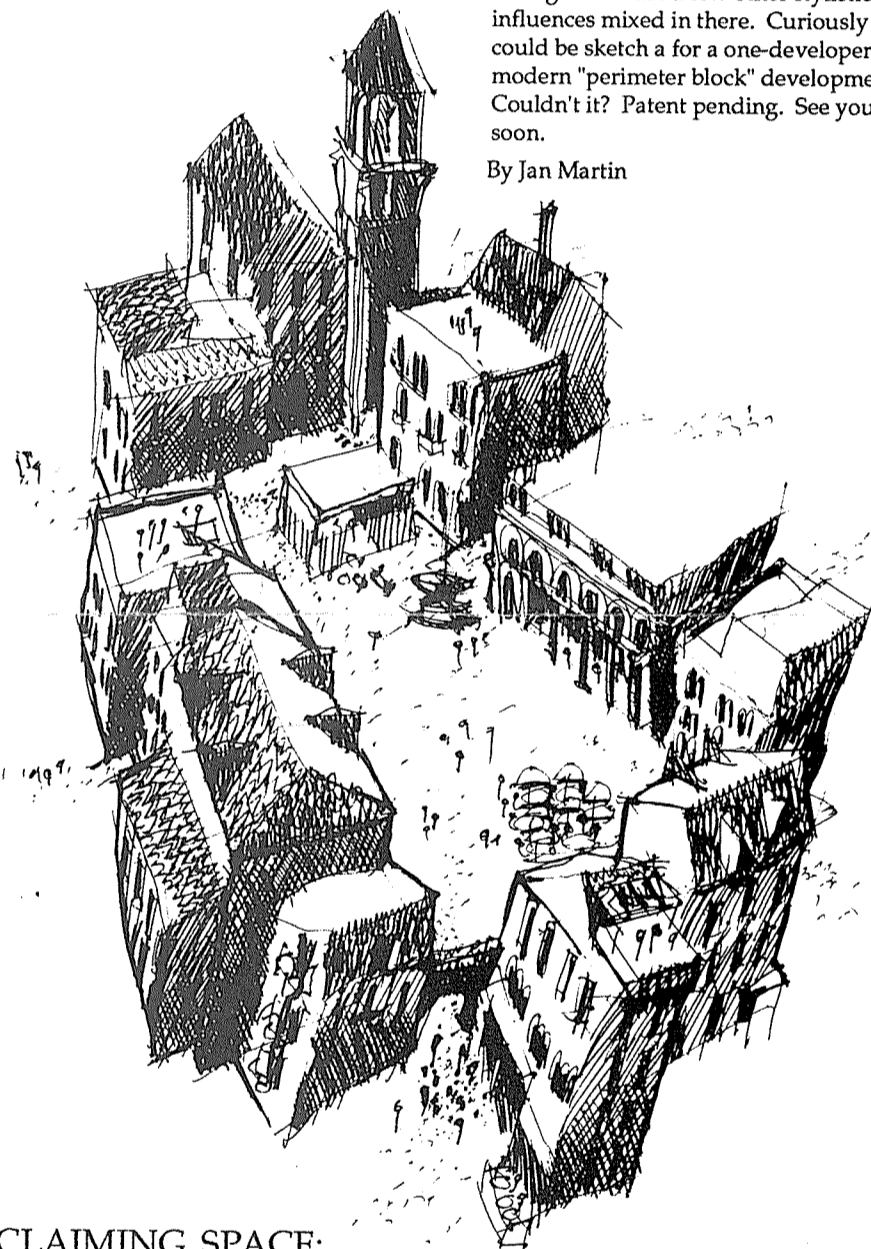
MULTIPLE HEARTS: Do cities need a pre-eminent heart or multiple focii? Both probably. (Prahran, Lygon Street, etc, are different to each other, less "central" than the centre and add to the livability of the whole fabric).

CHILDREN: Much debate on how to design for kids. Consensus: if your city is really livable it will, by definition, work for kids.

PUBLIC SPACE: If the community does not "own" the space it can never be truly responsive and livable. Beware therefore the modern shopping complex. However well designed it may be, its central mall can be locked, and from it the manager can remove those whom he or she does not like.

Oh, the illustration? It's a doodle, done while listening to New York's Don Johnson saying "for the first time we are systematically building meaningless spaces," but thinking about livable venetian campos. Though there are a few other stylistic influences mixed in there. Curiously it could be sketch a for a one-developer modern "perimeter block" development. Couldn't it? Patent pending. See you all soon.

By Jan Martin



CLAIMING SPACE: GENDER AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Do today's cities take account of the needs of women? How are women managing to function in a gender structured environment? The nuclear family of mother, father and two children, is no longer the norm. Today households are heterogeneous with many more single female parents with responsibilities for children, as well as older widows, young singles and childless couples.

Women's ABODE and Constructive Women are offering a two-day seminar on 28-29 October 1989, to be held at the Centre for Continuing Education, Australian National University, Canberra. The topics of CLAIMING SPACE will cover areas such as the Gender-Structured City, New Models for the Future, The Responsibility of the Feminist Designer, Women at Work: the Office, the Building Site and The Home. Presentations on specific design projects

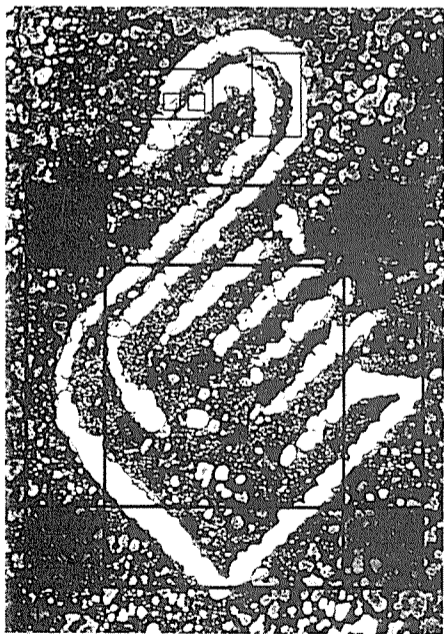
such as a women's refuge and special user groups, e.g. the disabled and mothers with small children are also planned.

A final session will discuss the role of a national women's network of designers, planners and builders. Speakers will include Pamela O'Neil, Australia's first Sex Discrimination Commissioner and the current director of the Australian Heritage Commission, Margo Huxley, feminist planner and urban theorist of RMIT; Ann Pender, a well known writer on feminist aesthetics, and Annabel Pengrum who has long experience in design education and in the needs of particular user groups.

The seminar fee is \$60. Student concessions are available. Contact: Shirley Kral c/ Centre for Continuing Education, GPO Box 4, Australian National University 2601. Telephone: 062- 49 4580.

HOW ART MEETS ARCHITECTURE IN THE CITY

Collaboration between the design professions and artists is an area full of potential and contradiction. The Perth conference in October "Art Meets Architecture in the City" will provide examples of the richness of such ventures. The conference will be combined with some examples of collaborative works. Five teams have been selected to work on installations in the central city as collaborations between visual artists, architects, craftspeople, musicians, landscapers and urban designers.



▲..Postcard by Nick Beames and Tom Hibbs

The spirit of surrendering individuality to combining ideas is in practice a powerful generative factor, as Brian Eno states in "More Dark Than Shark" (Eno and Mills 1986): "When you work with somebody else, you expose yourself to an interesting risk; the risk of being side-tracked, of being taken where you hadn't intended to go. This is the central issue of collaboration for

me. I work with people whom I believe are likely to engender a set of conditions that will create this tangent effect, that will take me into new territory."

One team, artist Nick Beames and urban designer, Tom Hibbs are working together on twelve locations around Perth in a gestural, rather than monumental manner. One of their concerns is the loss of fine-scale human detail to modern buildings and environments. Their works will pepper the city, subtly marking key threshold experiences with plaques. These "plaques" employ a limited number of motifs having cultural or historic currency to Perth. They subtly mark threshold environmental experiences in a similar way to our perception of traditional tile or terrazzo detail which helps personalise the urban environment. Hopefully these small surprises will enrich the experience of living and stimulate associations with other urban qualities and other places.

Tom and Nick are also concerned that Perth seems to be preoccupied with its future, at the expense of the past and crucially, the present. In the process of development, built fabric has been lost which invests the city with meaning and life. Changes are continually wrought to "make" Perth a better place to live - we have yet to arrive at that place in the future.

An eye to the future is essential; however this must be tempered with an appreciation of what we already have. Their work tries to bridge this gap by invoking the past, to hopefully provide an appreciation of now.

Are you interested in collaborative work between artists and design professionals? If so then the "Art Meets Architecture in the City" conference in Perth on October 4, and the Urban Thresholds exhibition from September 29 to October 14 is your bag, contact Andra Kins on (09) 325 2799.

CURBING THE CUL DE SAC

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN WORKSHOP CHALLENGES CONTEMPORARY SUBDIVISION LAYOUTS

The Federal push for more affordable housing and the Victorian Government's commitment to urban consolidation were behind a recent workshop held in the Plenty Valley. Modelled on similar S.A. workshops at Gawler and Wirrina, participants worked in lively syndicates to produce a layout for a 45 hectare site on Melbourne's fringe.

The workshop began by addressing broad scale urban design issues in new residential areas. Paul Murrain from Oxford Polytechnic's Joint Centre for Urban Design focussed on the relationships between society's values and the physical form of our cities. He expressed strong concern about the increasing trends towards an isolationist environment, backing off from social interaction. Much of this is achieved under the guise of traffic management but

at great cost to the social fabric of the community.

Paul outlined the design qualities of Permeability, Variety and Legibility which can achieve a democratic physical form, affording choice in the public realm whilst maintaining a satisfactory level of privacy. The cul de sac based road hierarchy was challenged and the choice laden grid re-examined. This was done with the aid of urban "tissues" of traditional residential areas to provide comparative material and debate on scale, density and variety of use and form.

Paul praised some of the high quality older suburban areas of Melbourne and postulated that most of those present lived in, enjoyed and valued these traditional parts of the city. Why then as designers had we been imposing a new and inflexible social order on another section of our community, (a sector often least able to express their needs).

If cul de sacs are necessary as a temporary traffic management measure, the tradi-

tional grid is also perfectly capable of such adaptations (clearly demonstrated in traditional Melbourne).

Paul suggested that, had the present outer suburban layouts been used in Melbourne since the 1880's then we would have no city, just a series of defensible encampments.

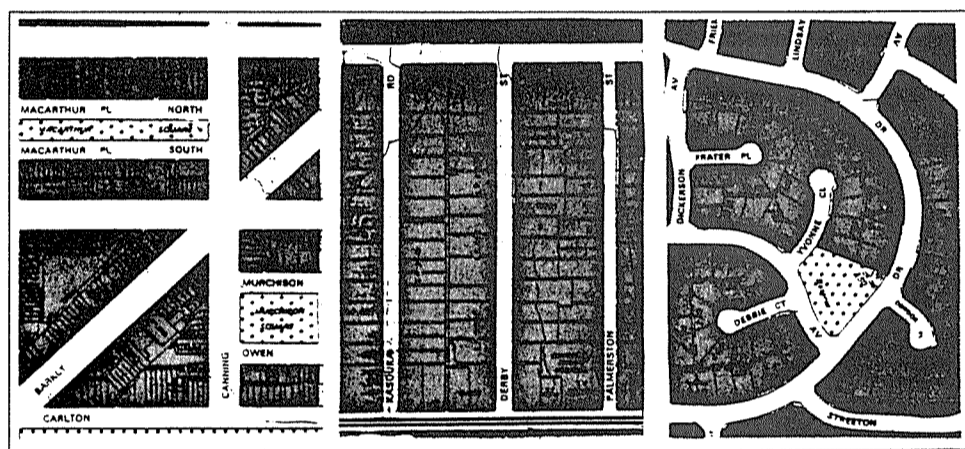
The eight plans, produced by mixed syndicate groups of developers, planners, designers and community representatives took up the challenge; and produced some well resolved pieces of town. The inter-connecting grid was explored together with appropriate traffic management measures. Several groups had difficulty however providing connectivity and successful interfaces with surrounding areas. There was also limited appreciation of the role of topography and vistas to create interest in a road network, rather than creating a pretty pattern on a plan.

The concept of the "value-added" approach to open space provision - where houses overlook urban greens - was explored. Higher priced lots help pay for the space, giving increased social mix, and often more than the 5% open space minimum. Opportunities to combine open space with drainage and space around the dramatically gnarled old redgums on the site were explored, although 'ecological' approaches to subdivision layout, widely promoted in the 1970's, were limited.

Whilst much progress was made over a very long day, ably facilitated by Wendy Sarkissian, the format did not allow for the extensive debate and financial feasibility assessment which were a highlight of the two-day Wirrina Workshop.

Wendy Morris

Wendy Morris is at the Urban Design Unit of MPE and was a workshop organiser. A report is being prepared on the workshop.



▲..Residential urban "tissues"

Rumours & Snippets

Aldo Rossi approach

Mauro Baracco, a partner of Mario Botta in Europe, will be conducting a special studio project with RMIT Urban Design students from 14-29 September. The project will be the CUB site at the top of Swanston Street and will concentrate on the Aldo Rossi approach to urban design.

Canberra's Own UDF ?

People in Canberra are considering setting up a local Urban Design Forum group. More details Helen Renkethman (062) 46 8417.

A.I.U.S. 1990 National Conference

The AIUS 1990 national conference will be held in Melbourne on Saturday and Sunday 14th and 15th of October immediately prior to the Metropolis '90 conference. The AIUS theme will be "Sustainable Cities" which is intended to contrast with The Metropolis in Ascendance theme of the other conference. It is hoped that the keynote speaker at the AIUS conference will John F.C. Turner from the Architectural Association in London. John is the author of "Housing by People" and co-author of "Freedom to Build". He has spent much of his career involved in Latin America.

For more details, Gordon Rushman on (03) 660-2821.

Tall Buildings

A conference on Tall Buildings and City Development will be held at the Brisbane Hilton 16th-18th October. Key speaker from the USA, joined by our own Harry Seidler. More details (07) 831 4188.

For Melbourne readers only

The local Liberals have supported the Melbourne City Council in opposing city sky-bridges. Shadow spokesman Birrell has been reported as saying that Minister Tom Roper has overstepped the mark this time by overruling the MCC on this one.

The City Square saga continues. It is understood that Chase cannot continue and a search for a new developer is underway. Meanwhile, a letter to the "Age" calls for a rethink on the proposed design. Maybe we'll keep the existing Square, with its dramatic water features, for a while longer yet.

The Arts Centre spire may be extended from its present stumpy version to something more elegant. Something to do with being higher than the new office precinct on Southbank.

UDF

For contributions to the December issue, send articles by November 10 to convenor Bill Chandler c/o Loder and Bayly, 79 Power Street Hawthorn, Victoria, 3122 Ph. 03-819 1144 Fax. 03-819 1665

HIGHLIGHTS OF SYDNEY'S WINTER FORUM

By Jim Connor

The Faculty of Architecture at Sydney University recently staged an "Urban Design Forum" from 31st July to 16th August with a galaxy of overseas guest speakers and a diverse range of events.

Highlight of the speaker program was Professor Peter Rowe of Harvard, who had not been back to Australia for 17 years. He treated us to a splendidly illustrated overview of modern spatial developments in US cities, especially those which challenge traditional practices and concepts. He convincingly sketched in their geographic evolution since the 1920's and showed how their development had conformed to cultural mores and in so doing had evolved some new building typologies.

This analysis enabled him to suggest some design strategies including the continuous use and rehabilitation of buildings; seeking fine-grained mixed use buildings and spaces; multiple use of space; making connections between buildings to provide additions to the public realm; the creation of new building types and the re-examination of the interface between the public and private realms.

The other highlight was the great Urban Design Debate. Attended by more than 300 people, two teams debated a paper prepared by John de Monchaux (M.I.T.) entitled "Cities Should Be Messy." The two teams embraced the movers and shakers of our urban environment making entertaining cases about urban design concepts.

The success of the winter Forum indicates the need for more such events to be held.

Jim Conner is co-ordinator of the Urban Design course at Sydney University.

Multifunction Polis- City Of The Future?

The Multifunction Polis concept arose from a Japanese proposal in 1987 to build a 'city of the future' based on the themes of 'humanity, technology and environment' - intergrating 'work, living and leisure' in one place. What was really meant however was a new town in a greenfields site, a city state, a designer's dream.

Australia is more interested in the advantages from developing high technology and information intensive industries and gaining a competitive edge in international markets.

The Governments of Australia and Japan have agreed to undertake a feasibility study to develop the concept.

The study is to be completed in December 1989. It includes concept development; determining the spatial form and infrastructure requirements; identification of site options; and assessing the economic, social and political impacts of alternatives.

The target industries include information technology and 'lifestyle' activities (leisure, tourism, education, health..).

The options selected for further analysis are:

- a single site within a major metropolitan area
- multiple sites in a single major metropolitan region
- single sites in two or three major metropolitan regions.

The project has clearly moved away from the original 'Utopian' concept of a single purpose-built city on a greenfields site. The form of MFP is to be "soundly based on economic rationality; its aspirations and vision can gain expression in its design and implementation."

The MFP concept was outlined at a July seminar on MFP organised by AIUS in order to shed some light on what had until recently been a thickly veiled project. May questions and criticisms were raised. Who is to benefit? and how? Why were the Australian people not included in the consultations?

There is a preoccupation with industry. Things 'social' are rarely mentioned. There is little evidence of input from urban designers (or of women, sociologists or environmentalists for that matter).

The proponents stress that MFP provides an opportunity to assess our future directions. Could not our aims be achieved without the MFP with its inherent dangers?

There is a strong element of the 'cargo cult' about it all, the glamour and excitement sweeping all before it. It will be an intrepid individual who dares question that all may not be what it seems.

Patricia Whately

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STUDENT PROJECTS

RICHMOND ABATTOIRS PROJECT SEMESTER 1, 1989 SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING, UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Urban Design in the School of Environmental Planning at Melbourne University forms part of the core of the Master of Landscape Architecture programme and an option for Master of Urban Planning students.

The 1989 session consisted of a series of 7 inter-linked projects focussed on the development of the Richmond Abattoirs precinct, a site under development pressure from both the private and the public sectors. The selection of the Richmond Abattoirs site was critical in that it was to become the vehicle for staff and students to demonstrate and examine a wide range of urban design issues and techniques.

A feature of this project was the collaboration with the Ministry for Planning and Environment's Urban Design Unit and Richmond City Council, while the generous support of the Ministry and Nubrik Clay Products enabled Paul Murrain, Senior Lecturer in Urban Design at the Joint Centre for Urban Design, Oxford Polytechnic, to visit the school for five weeks and make an important contribution. Students were expected to evaluate the urban and landscape design opportunities of the site and, on the basis of cumulative project stages, to formulate design proposals.

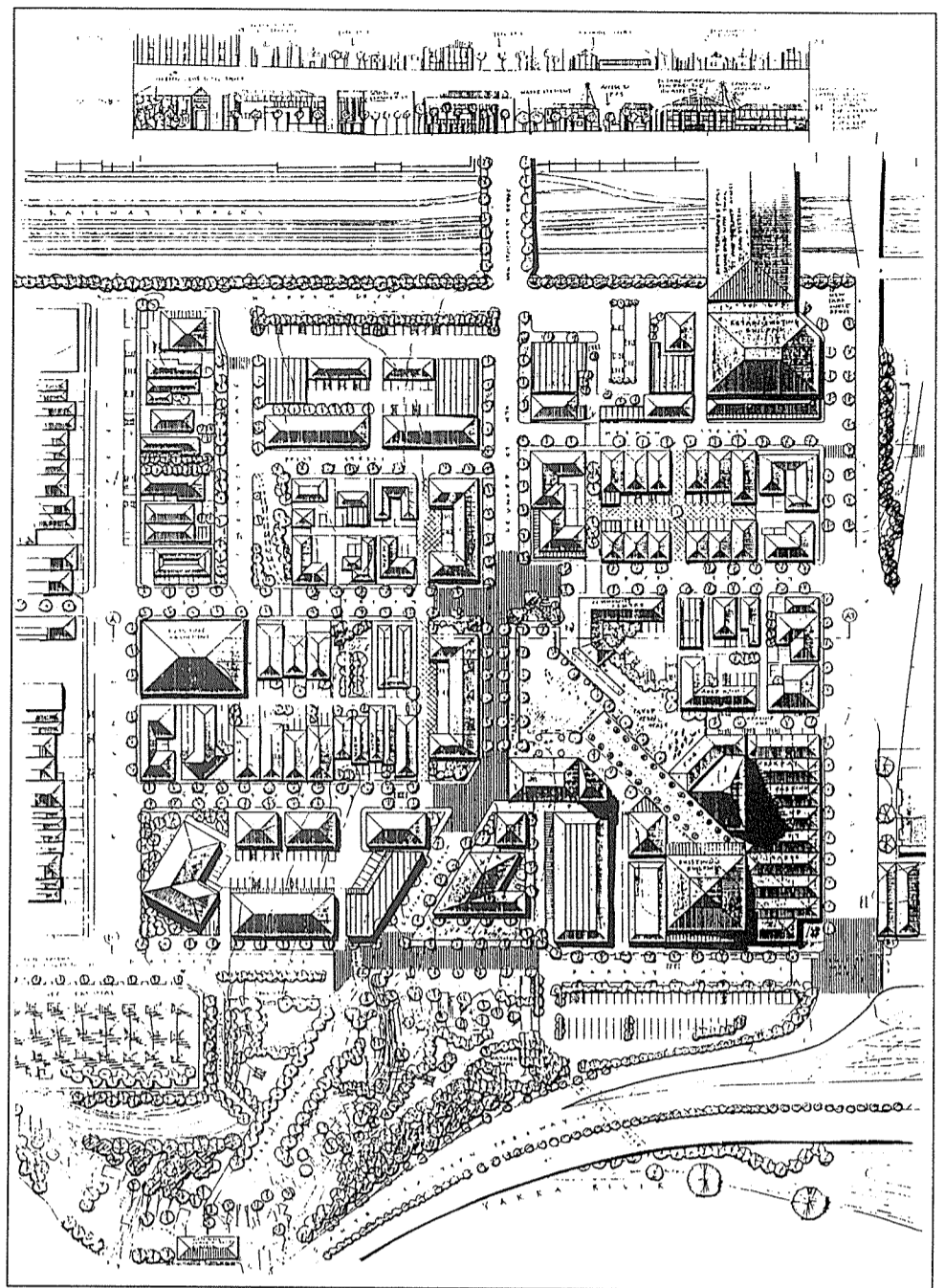
In the first stage, students were given minimal information, left alone for a week, and told to produce an initial scheme for

the site. This was a shock for many and the products tended to reflect it. However, these schemes became vital working hypotheses which had to be tested for the remainder of the semester. The thorough study begun with the site and problem analysis, followed by a synthesis of the vast amount of information assembled.

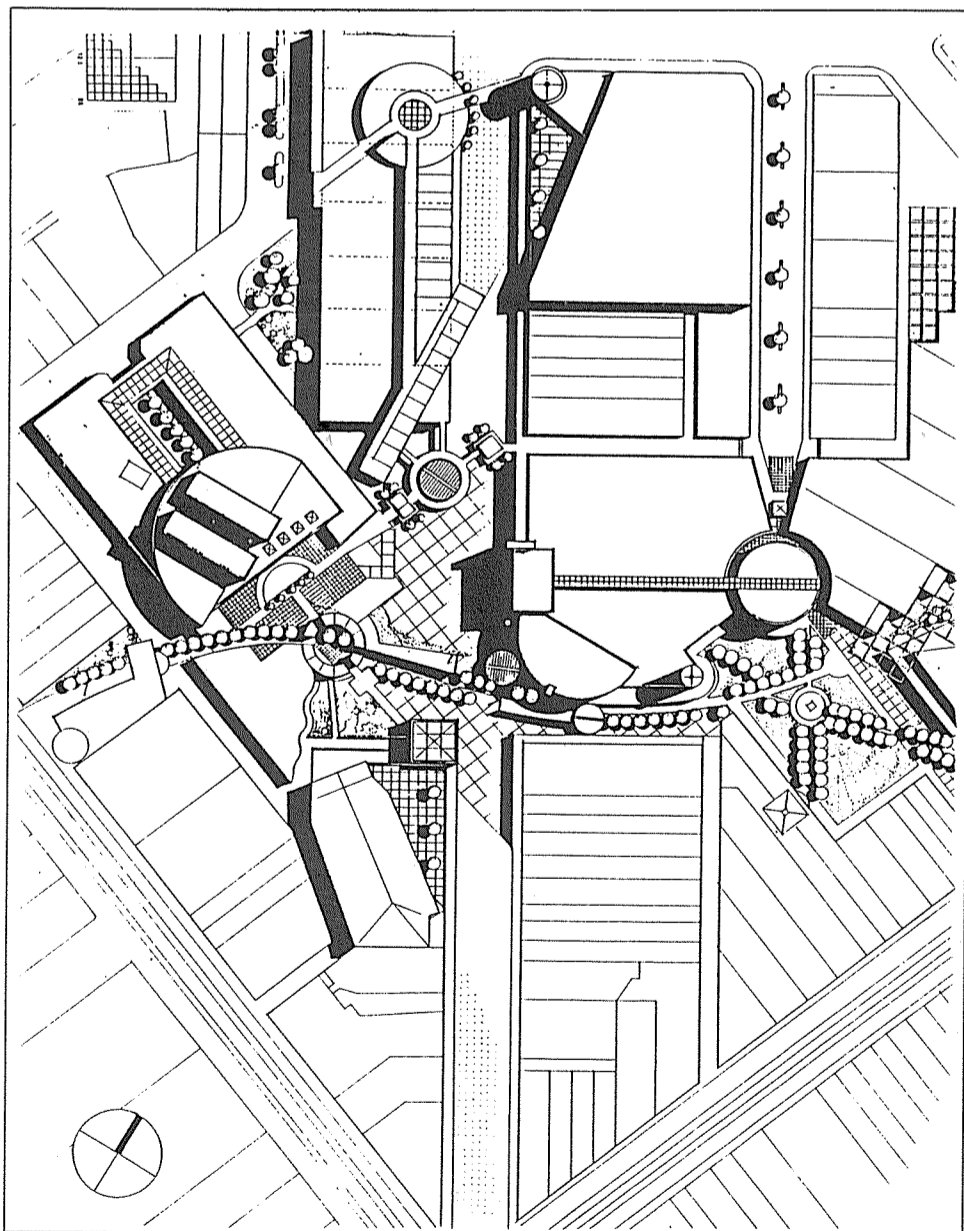
The next two stages were devoted to the search for design objectives, students being introduced to the "Responsive Environments" approach so successfully employed at Oxford Poly.

The responsive design characteristics and qualities of permeability, legibility, variety, visual appropriateness and financial feasibility were explored under Paul's guidance and, subsequently, applied to the reworking of the initial designs, culminating in the final design proposals at the end of the semester. Before doing so, however, students reconsidered and assessed the insights gained in Paul's work by studying the social, economic and political context of urban design and exploring the relevance of critical social theory to the urban design process.

Mario Gutjahr
Senior Lecturer



▲..Richmond Abattoirs Site - mixed use development proposed by Craig Czarny.



▲..Camberwell junction west side, proposed by Rod Elphinstone and Ross Carpenter.

RMIT PROJECTS

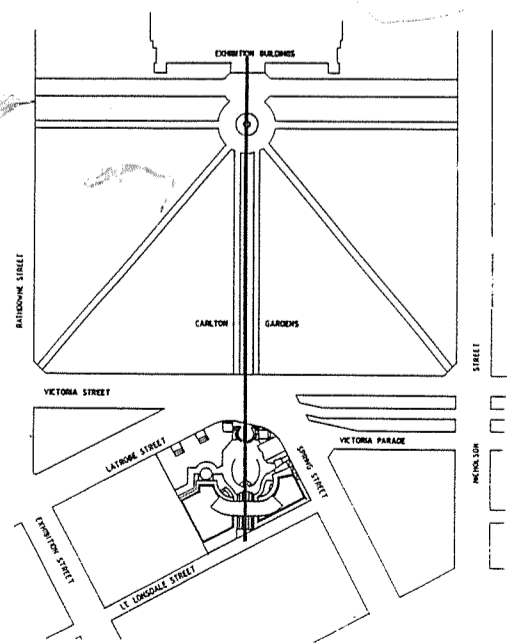
The scheme illustrated by Ross Carpenter and Rod Elphinstone for redevelopment of the west (Hawthorn) side of Camberwell Junction is from the masters degree course in urban design. The other, by Steven Georgalas, for the old Commonwealth Building site at the corner of Latrobe and Spring Streets is from the undergraduate architecture course.

The Hawthorn side of Camberwell Junction has so far been neglected. Here it is subjected to radical restructuring with a new civic space between the Rivoli cinema and the tram sheds which now become a covered market with trams relocated off Riversdale Road. To achieve this the existing D & J Evans hardware and building supplies store is completely redeveloped. New large shops are located in the carpark area at the rear of the Burke Road shops while the cars go underground. Drastic revision of the present pattern of development gives the area a very strong series of forms. Like much urban design work it is highly interventionist, with the landscaping contributing as much to the form and sense of place as the buildings. Anything less could hardly turn this rather uncohesive urban area into a positive set of places.

Steven Georgalas' project for Spring Street addresses the problem of the formal axis through the Carlton Gardens from the Exhibition Building, and which was ignored by the 'Green Latrine' building which, happily is now being demolished. This proposal illustrates both the potential for addressing the axis in redevelopment of the site and the limitations of a piece of urban design applied over a single development site. The plot ratio imperative

forces the new building up to about 30 storeys while the smaller scale street frontages reflect the existing scale of the streetscapes in Latrobe and Spring Streets. The main question, however, is what becomes of the axis as it penetrates the old city centre grid. The design implies that it should go on to a terminating feature across Little Lonsdale Street where the new Commonwealth offices are to be built. But the developer of the student scheme, limited to the single site, would be unable to ensure that the new Commonwealth offices would also address the axis by terminating the vista or, alternatively, allowing the axis to continue through to some other termination in the city centre.

Gordon Rushman



▲..Commonwealth Building site proposal by Steven Georgalas

Docklands Urban Design Workshop Report

by Bruce Echberg

The Victorian Chapter of the RAlA have adopted a "pro-active" role in development of Olympics urban design proposals. As part of the Chapter's contribution its Urban Issues Committee ran a design ideas workshop to contribute to the evolution of the urban design of the docklands site (which will become the Olympic athletes' village).

Several architect led teams of designers worked in the wharries' cafeteria over a May weekend developing proposals for the site using the latest available briefing material. The seven proposals were developed to a surprising level of resolution and a number of potentially viable urban design concepts for the site emerged. The designers presented their proposals to the assembled throng and invited guests including the Minister for Planning, Tom Roper, the Lord Mayor Winsome McCaughy and key people from the Melbourne Olympic Committee.

The workshop revealed that the briefing parties (including the Ministry for Planning, MCC and Port of Melbourne Authority) had many preconceived and firmly held ideas about the boundaries of the site and the form that development should take. These ideas were in some instances contradictory and lacked substantiation. This is one of the problems of moving so quickly on such a major change to the form of the city centre.

The main issues which alternative designs explored included the following:

— Should the vast area between the docklands and the western end of the city grid, be developed as an extension of the city grid or should alternative development forms be explored?

— If the choice is expansion of the grid (which was the approach promoted by the MCC and MPE) then what refinements, if any, should occur to this model?

— How is the problem of the linkage between the docklands village site and the city dealt with in the short term because full development of the area to city centre densities will take at least fifty years?

— To what degree should economics be allowed to determine the form of the

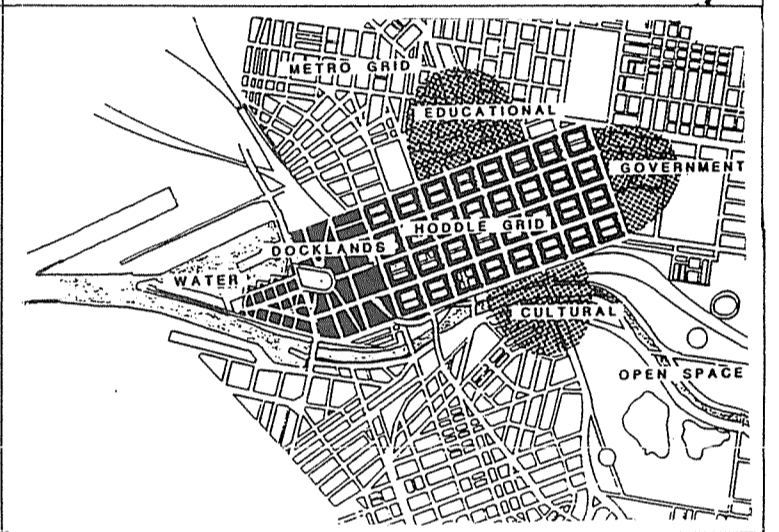
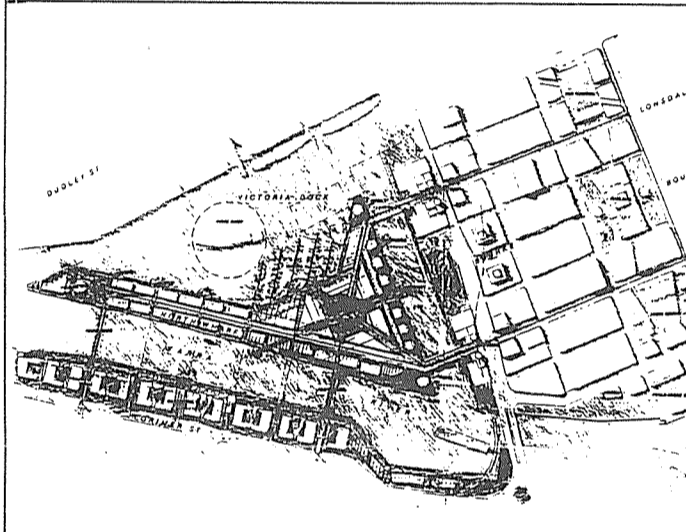
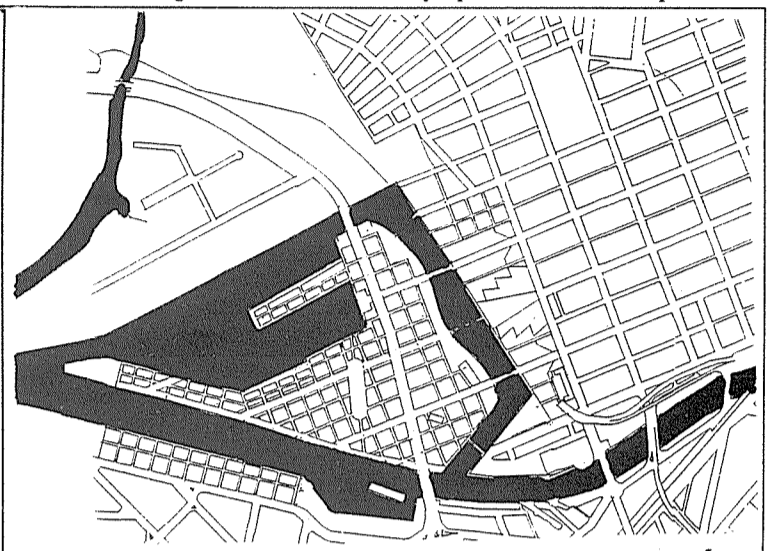
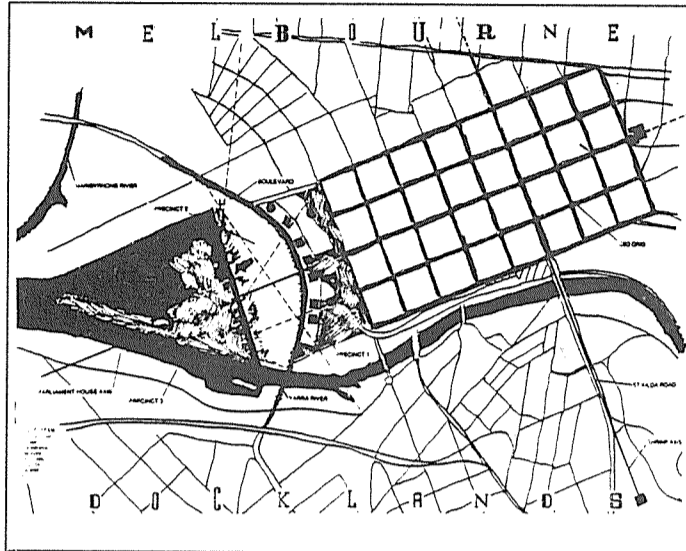
proposal? An example of this dilemma is the building economists concept that extension of Melbourne's most exclusive commercial street, Collins Street, should occur because it generates higher land values.

— How should the end of the present or extended city grid be finished? Should it have an edge defined by parkland or lower scale development or should it finish in other less precise ways?

— How much should the existing

infrastructure of roads, bridges and existing waterways determine the size and shape of the docklands village site? Alternatives were put for relocating roads and bridges and modifying the waterway which were argued to improve the docklands development interface with the CBD.

Urban design ideas produced at this workshop and work on this topic by students is to be exhibited by the Melbourne Olympic Committee in September.



Docklands - Victoria Harbour? Whatever Happened To The Docks?

By Chris McConville

In 1841 "Timothy Pushman" the Port Philip correspondent for the Sydney Herald described Melbourne as built "chiefly on the sides of a valley" with wide streets cutting each other at right angles. To the west land fell away across a swamp. For the next 100 years the chequerboard street grid, the domes of state offices, the spires of churches topping a hill and marshy river flatlands characterised the western approach to Melbourne. Only since 1950 have container dumps, high-rise office towers and the move of shipping down river redrawn popular images of the western end of the city.

Before then the jumble of ropes, cranes, bundles of baggage and lines of passengers brought the chaos and excitement of waterfront life to the western end of Flinders Street. Waterfront pubs, cafes, ships chandlers and shipping agents crowded along Flinders Street. In the lanes running north, stood the three and four story basalt warehouses through which Melbourne shop keepers ordered Manchester linen and Sheffield crockery and graziers sent out hides and wool. Today's railway viaduct was only completed in the 1890's and until then Queen Street, Market Street and William Street ran directly into the bustle of Melbourne's inner docks. The city Fish Markets with their bright towers and bay shipping in the Little Dock all formed part of this maritime precinct. Sailors, waterfront con-men, confused passengers from Adelaide, Geelong or North Queensland, wharf labourers, watchful police and officious customs

agents made up the street crowds of Western Melbourne.

Most of this urban locale has vanished, Only a few pubs, a tattooist and distant cranes remind casual visitors of waterfront history. We can no longer look across an empty marsh and see the spires, domes, few cottages rising up a hill. Still the base elements survive:- the right angled street intersections, the flat expanse to the west, the steep rise of the western end of the city centre. A revived docklands might not bring back the colour of maritime Melbourne. It might though, build on the essential elements of what until recently made up a lively waterfront locale.

Recent sketches of the proposed Dockland Project, newspaper comment and discussions by prospective developers indicate little concern for any historical waterfront. The timetable for development would allow for a detailed heritage study of remaining port structures, especially of small items, bollards, crane footings etc. The Victorian Government seems to have shelved any scheme for burying the railway viaduct. Yet that is the one encircling barrier between city and water. Vaulting the railway yards again appears to have been abandoned.

The old port was a jumble of people and activities. Underlining present thinking is a desire to separate functional zones. A recently published artist's mock-up has distinct Financial, Residential and Retail zones running out from the CBD. Port functions were to be shifted further west.

1. Peter Elliot's team proposed relocation of Footscray Road to form a new curved end to the city grid on the natural edge of the flood plain. A large park would separate the docklands village from the city.

2. The Styant-Brown team proposed a Venice end to the existing city with a new waterway close to Spencer Street. The resulting enlarged Docklands would be mixed use within a finer grained lower density framework than the existing city grid.

3. The Bates Smart McCutcheon team proposed extension of the city grid and highrise residential development along the south bank of the Yarra.

4. The group led by Andrew Olszewski proposed a modified city grid extension with a focal open space oriented to provide views from the city to the water and a smaller scale docklands village.

Residential buildings were to be at a different scale to the commercial and financial structures. Surely the waterfront cannot be brought back to life without some central maritime industries remaining in the Docklands area. And without a deliberate mixing of people and functions much needed vitality and excitement will

be lost. Underlining much of the thinking seems to be a desire to create a precinct which sits uncomfortably between city and suburb, rather than harking back to a time when the docks had a special flavour of action and heterogeneity, the very opposite of segregated Living, Recreational and Working Zones.

Designing Out Crime by Susan Geason & Paul R. Wilson

(Australian Institute of Criminology, 58 p, \$10.00) Review by William Kelly

This booklet, subtitled "Crime prevention through environment design", gives a brief background to the issue and refers to earlier texts such as Jane Jacob's "The Death and Life of Great American Cities" (1961) and Elizabeth Wood's "Social Aspects of Housing and Urban Development" (1967). The authors state that "Jacob's book was the first influential work to suggest that active streetlife could cut down opportunities for crime".

And, while acknowledging that there are arguments about the relative merits of "alleviating the social problems" that may lead to crime, this book follows Jacob's point about the reduction of opportunities through design consciousness. When the "community is dominant" - there is a street life/sense of presence; "informal social control" plays an important role; "when streets are dominant - as they now are in

Australia - crime control is largely carried out by hit-and-miss public policing".

To this end, the book addresses design issues for architects, builders and planners. It uses examples of successful programmes and gives further examples of problem designs. While doing this it acknowledges the challenge of melding good design with the environmental concerns at issue. The optimistic view on this is that every design problem provides another design opportunity. The book is worth reading. It would be interesting for students of the relevant disciplines as well, in that the points it makes, some of which are normally covered in courses, are important to consider and worth discussing in greater depth. To this end there is also a 5 page bibliography included.

Maybe the gentlest and most interesting phrasing, and one which brings us back to first principles sometimes overlooked in the midst of the "big picture" is related to the idea of architecture which "responds to people and the design of which welcomes and reflects the presence of human beings".