



University Showcase



Department
of Transport
and Planning

Acknowledgement of Country

The Victorian Government acknowledges Victoria's First Peoples for their ongoing strength, resilience and practice of the world's oldest living cultures.

We acknowledge them as the Traditional Owners of the lands, waters and skies in Victoria and acknowledge their obligations to care for Country and maintain their deep spiritual connection to it. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, whose knowledge and wisdom have ensured the continuation of spiritual and cultural practices.

▼ Description of artwork

Aaron Duggan (Gunaikurnai) 'Movements Between the Five Clans' 2019, acrylic on canvas. 'The tracks are going between the five clans of the Gunaikurnai and the hands are the symbols of my spirit travelling around the campsites.' This artwork was created through programs provided by the Torch. The Torch provides art, cultural and arts industry support to Indigenous offenders and exoffenders in Victoria. The Torch aims to reduce the rate of reoffending by encouraging the exploration of identity and culture through art programs to define new pathways upon release.



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Contributors

Panellists: Stefan Preuss (Chair),
Elle Armstrong and Sarah Kahn.

Participating universities: Deakin University, Monash University, RMIT University, Swinburne University of Technology and the University of Melbourne.

Images and illustrations: All images and illustrations provided by the authors of the respective projects.

Cover image: The Common Space, Rebecca Mallaby, Monash University, 2023.

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Foreword

Today's architecture students will shape the built environment of tomorrow, and it is deeply encouraging to witness how students across Victoria's architecture faculties have engaged with the pressing challenges of housing in this University Showcase.

Faculties, teachers, and tutors play a vital role in this development. They guide students not only in grasping architecture in all its complexity from first principles, but also in questioning conventions, testing assumptions, and pursuing ideas that extend well beyond current practice. While design challenges such as social and sustainable housing in existing contexts may lack the glamour of museums or opera houses, they ensure that emerging architects are equipped to address real-world needs. The projects presented here stand as compelling evidence of that commitment.

Many students have gone beyond site analysis and spatial resolution, critically examining the economic and social frameworks that shape diverse housing models. At a time when the economics of housing delivery are under significant strain, such inquiry is more important than ever.

In reviewing the submissions, we encountered impressive explorations of complex problems, thoughtful translation into architectural compositions and communication with playful creativity. Particularly striking was the attention given to how people might live together over time, how they relate to both natural and built environments, and how buildings might be systematised and delivered.

All students who submitted work to this showcase should take pride in their achievements. Their projects were selected by faculty members as exemplary contributions from their respective institutions. While it is not possible to include every project or drawing, this publication presents a diverse range of students' innovative approaches and ideas.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the students and educators from the five Victorian architecture schools who have contributed to this showcase. I also wish to acknowledge my fellow members of the University Showcase Panel, Elle Armstrong and Sarah Kahn, along with the dedicated teams at the Office of the Victorian Government Architect and Strategic Planning in the Department of Transport and Planning, whose efforts made this showcase possible.



Stefan Preuss

Associate Victorian Government Architect
Chair, University Showcase Panel



Introduction

The work of Victorian universities is vitally important in challenging and equipping the design industry as we look to provide great homes, now and into the future.

In the university context, students and researchers are unbound by the industry patterns and societal perceptions of past and present, allowing for creative responses and innovation in housing. This work will help guide how we will ultimately deliver better quality homes, and more homes, for the next generation of Victorians – by exploring new ways of looking at our present challenges and opportunities.

The design principles of the Great Design Fast Track, presented in part 1 of the State Design Book, apply universally to good housing design and already underpin much of students' and researchers' recent work. To provide opportunity for the community to explore these housing projects, the Victorian Government presents the University Showcase – part 3 of the State Design Book – to highlight the great work focused on housing solutions taking place in the design schools of our universities.

The projects compiled in the University Showcase have been carefully chosen by an intergovernmental panel of design experts. The panel reviewed over 60 submissions from students and academics across the five Victorian universities with an accredited architecture course. After a highly competitive process, 24 of these projects were selected to be included in the showcase.

The universities were engaged throughout the process, ensuring the students' and academics' original intent was accurately captured, demonstrating the innovative housing proposals.

University forewords

Deakin University



Denser housing options remain limited in Victoria and form part of a broader national conversation about how and where we live.

Where should new housing be located? How much housing is needed? What types of housing are desirable, and who should shape these decisions? Architecture studios play an important role in this conversation by testing ideas and challenging prevailing assumptions about what housing could be.

The two Deakin projects included here have been produced by a third year, and a final year Master of Architecture student respectively.

Luke Shashkoff's project *Hybrid 'FOLD'* was developed in the third year design studio, *Hybridsapes*, which addresses high density, high rise housing in urban locations. The studio exposes students to expanded methods of design enquiry, with a range of productive tensions, and working through a mixed-methods design process. *Hybrid 'FOLD'* explores the conceptual operation of folding, creating new spatial and urban possibilities. Benchmarking its design against international cities, it retains Melbourne's high amenity. The project shows density need not compromise community or quality, demonstrating the importance of academic studios in testing innovative housing solutions and addressing contemporary urban challenges within architectural research.

Melissa Yap's *Project -the* was undertaken through Deakin's two-trimester Masterclass Project, in Atelier Simone Koch, with design understood as an act of care, not commodity, undertaken through a renewed sense of responsibility to place and community. Focusing on Norlane, Geelong, and guided by the 15-minute neighbourhood model, students examined how higher housing density and community initiatives can foster sustainable, vibrant suburbs. *Project -the* addressed the diverse needs of older people, whether active and independent or requiring in-home care, through a reimagining of the village. Walkable streets, a community centre, battery, aged care cottages, and public spaces formed an inclusive ecosystem, where diversity and intergenerational exchange build a neighbourhood defined by belonging and collective life.

Nick Jahnecke; Eleanor Suess; Simone Koch; Luke Shashkoff; Melissa Yap

Monash University



Good housing outcomes never occur in isolation.

Victoria's prolonged housing crisis cannot be reduced to a simple question of supply. Accordingly, the Great Design Fast Track must function as more than a planning mechanism for increased density. Its integrative design principles recognise housing provision as a complex and dynamic system, where ecological, social and technological innovations both shape – and are shaped by – the way we plan, procure, design and deliver housing.

The Monash Urban Lab engages directly with these interrelated imperatives, working with cross-sector partners to test real-world design alternatives capable of delivering social, ecological and economic value at scale. This commitment to real-world impact also underpins the pedagogy of the Department of Architecture at Monash University, where research-led studios equip students with expanded skills to address the “missing middle” housing gap.

Projects emerging from this work explore multiple pathways for housing transformation. *From Mixed Tenure Development to Mixed Tenure Neighbourhoods* advocates government leadership to coordinate infill redevelopment across publicly owned sites, providing economies of scale for integrated infrastructure upgrades while enabling tenants to relocate in place. Sophie Miles' proposal for Merri-bek leverages modern methods of construction to advance family-oriented apartment living at neighbourhood scale. Redevelopment of underutilised land along strategic bicycle routes is explored in Andrej Vodstrcil's studio *Last Mile Housing*, where Rebecca Mallaby rethinks cooperative housing models to mitigate social isolation among higher-density tenants.

Tailoring design to specific social needs can also catalyse institutional innovation. In collaboration with NMBW, BoardGrove, BLOXAS and GLAS, the Monash Urban Lab reimagined aged care through a small-household cloister model supporting dignified living. The Manu Place project demonstrates how such models can be replicated through networks of private, semi-private, and public landscapes connecting carers, residents, and the wider community.

Across these examples, ecological repair is treated as foundational – demonstrating that sustainable, affordable, equitable, and healthy housing outcomes must be pursued together rather than in isolation.

Associate Professor Lee-Anne Khor, Co-director Monash-AHURI Research Centre; Professor Erik L'Heureux, Head, Department of Architecture, Monash University

RMIT University



It is thought necessary to distinguish the architecture of a house, a home, with that of housing.

Housing today, we are told, is an industrial problem of supply and demand, while the home (dwelling) leads us to consider, being at ease, comfort, belonging, security and care, not through the lens of affordability but one of affordance. We consider the lives and relationships between house and inhabitants, how they, the inhabitants are able to gain access to housing, and the extent to which the house can be used by its inhabitants as a way to be in and affect and access the world. The basis of the projects by RMIT students submitted for this publication is that they do not make a distinction between housing and homes. If something needs to be mass produced, it may as well be belonging, security and inclusion. And if there is something that we need to care for, it should be the material we source for construction, the conditions of the workers who build the homes, how need is met, our being in a place, our being in country.

The conundrum of designing the most intimate of spaces for unknown occupants is not avoided. Who lives in a home has become far more complex, and homes must now accommodate diverse households, cultural differences, and varied ways of living.

We encourage a process that draws on tacit knowledge and speculates beyond the fundamentals of good planning as the remedy to our housing crisis. We understand the architecture of housing or homes is no more the layout of rooms than it is the availability of the land, the terms of the contract or the financial agreements made by the residents.

The result in these projects is an exploration of collective generosity, a consideration of the earth that forms the basis of our habitation, and spaces that resist the prescription of fixed functions. They seek to re-establish relationships between human and non-human systems, as well as the climatic and geographical contexts in which they sit.

Dr Peter Brew; Claire Scorpo

Swinburne University of Technology



The Architecture and Urban Design programs at the School of Design and Architecture at Swinburne University of Technology educate students to actively shape the cities of tomorrow.

Housing occupies a central position in our pedagogy. As one of the most pressing and complex domains of contemporary urban life, housing offers a salient vehicle for students' critical engagement with social, spatial, and material questions. Our teaching model integrates experimentation with real-world challenges, positioning design studios as platforms for critical inquiry across both undergraduate and postgraduate programs.

'Socio-economic Contexts' is a core housing subject in the Bachelor curriculum, undertaken by all architecture students in their second year. Design briefs invite students to respond to specific socio-economic conditions through medium-scale housing proposals, while exploring emerging forms of urban densification and modes of living. Experiments in material and form are supported by the School's ProtoLab. Here, a broad range of tools and fabrication technologies support students' testing of housing typologies, façade systems, and spatial atmospheres through the interplay of material, geometry, and light.

At the Master's level, design-research studios are structured around a curated set of focus streams – Prototypes, Tectonics, Housing, and Systems – engaging architectural questions across scales from the detail to the metropolis. Within the Housing stream, studio briefs address ambitious real-world challenges concerning *where* and *how* to accommodate a growing and diversifying population. Projects explore strategic sites of urban transformation, including activity centres, post-industrial precincts, suburbs shaped by major infrastructure projects such as the Suburban Rail Loop, and publicly owned land.

Students are encouraged to critically rethink housing as a systemic question that challenges conventional patterns of zoning and subdivision. Through design, they explore alternative spatial, social, and material configurations that aim to support greater affordability and a more inclusive city.

Markus Jung, Course Director Master of Architecture and Urban Design

University of Melbourne



Designing Future Housing

Housing, one of the most pressing contemporary design challenges, is widely addressed across the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne through both undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. Design studio teaching provides a platform for exploring innovative housing models that benefit from the Faculty's interdisciplinary and global expertise spanning architecture, landscape architecture, construction, property and planning. This approach reflects the Faculty's commitment to collaboration across disciplines, engagement with First Nations perspectives, real-world challenges, and the development of design knowledge with public impact.

The projects presented here align with the University's research vision to advance knowledge while delivering enduring social, environmental, and economic benefits through interdisciplinary collaboration and strong partnerships with government and industry. The student work showcased demonstrates how design research and teaching can contribute to these goals by testing ideas for more liveable, adaptable, resilient, and inclusive housing futures in the context of the climate crisis.

Engaging with the Victorian Government's Great Design Fast Track principles, Neighbourly, Welcoming, Landscaped, Sustainable, Healthy, Adaptable and Good Value homes, the projects explore diverse housing typologies ranging from townhouses and row houses to mid-rise apartment buildings of up to eight storeys, as well as broader precinct and masterplan proposals. Together, they illustrate how design studios within built environment schools can operate as laboratories for innovation, translating policy aspirations into spatial, social, and environmental propositions for contemporary housing.

*Djordje Stojanovic, Associate Professor
in Architectural Design*

Townhouses

Townhouses, including row and terrace houses, are an increasingly common and attractive housing typology across Victoria.

Typically featuring individual street entrances, shared walls and multi-level layouts, townhouses strike a balance between the vibrancy and connectivity of higher densities and the space and feel of a detached house. The hallmarks of a well-designed townhouse include consideration of interior amenity, such as good access to light and ventilation, with the wider development including an inviting pedestrian realm, sense of address, active street frontages and prioritisation of canopy trees and landscape areas.

Fluid Boundaries

Carmen Leyva, University of Melbourne, 2025

Fluid Boundaries responds sensitively and creatively to the project design brief, almost doubling dwelling density through the provision of nine townhouses while retaining a fine-grained and low-scale presentation amongst a heritage-rich environment in Carlton, in Melbourne's inner north.

The townhouses enhance the public realm through passive surveillance of surrounding streets and laneways. Hit-and-miss brickwork combines with strategically located balconies and small openings providing glimpses into the site, allowing moments of connection between residents and street. Within the site, a mix of open and secluded communal landscape spaces offer residents opportunities for interaction and community balanced with more private intimate spaces.

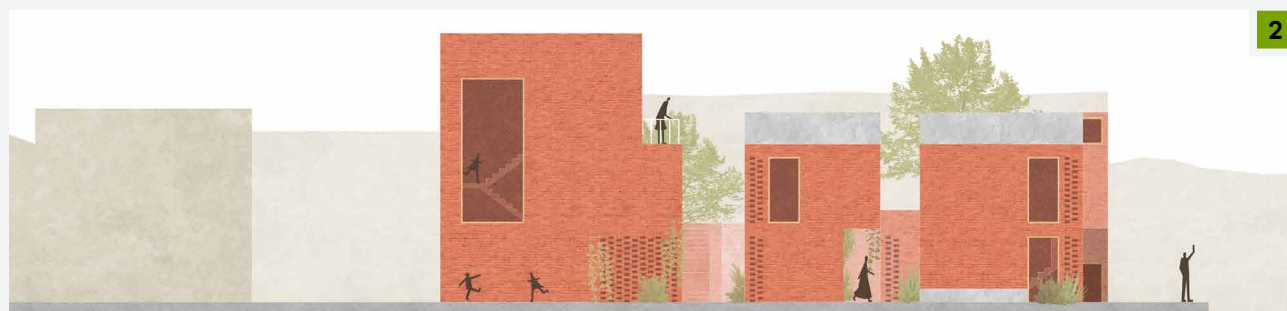
The layout of the individual townhouses offers flexibility to accommodate different living and working arrangements. Simple adaptations to the eastern building enable it to transition between a single-family house, a dual-occupancy or a home with a workspace.

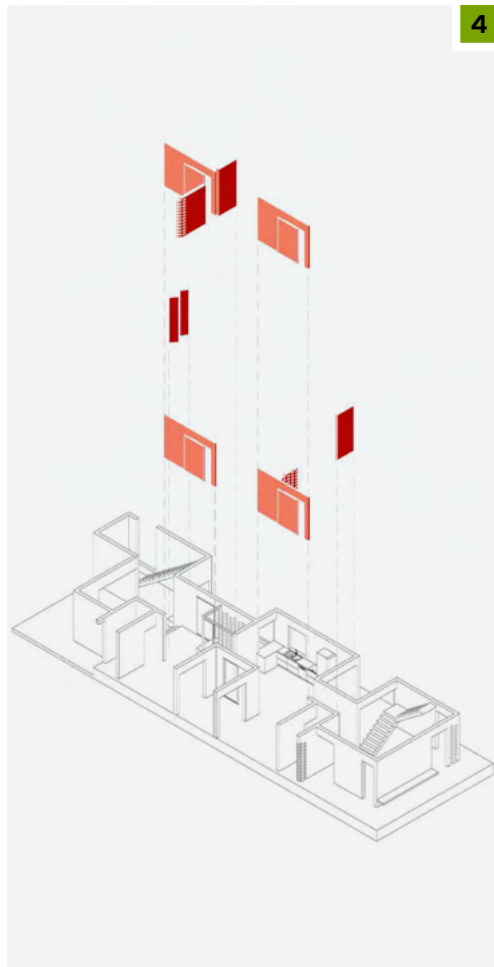
The project seamlessly integrates into the urban fabric of Carlton, replicating the scale and grain of the wider neighbourhood through its considered massing and varied roof forms. The dwellings provide high amenity and liveability for residents through clever siting that enables healthy homes through sunlight penetration and cross-ventilation.

Studio Leader: Education Fellow Francesco Stassi
Subject Coordinator: Assoc Prof Amanda Achmadi

IMAGES

1. Internal render
2. South elevation
3. East elevation
4. Internal wall adaptability diagram
5. Ground floor plan
6. Section





Green Isles

Mengting Jiang, University of Melbourne, 2022

Green Isles adds new medium-density housing in a low-rise neighbourhood of Carlton, in Melbourne's inner north, while balancing the retention of the southern façade of existing terrace houses on the site with new built fabric. This sustainable approach reduces the extent of demolition and embodied carbon costs.

The design responds to the surrounding streetscape, with angled roof forms, heights and setbacks echoing other nearby buildings. Whilst sympathetic to the existing conditions, the project proposes a new way of shared living. It provides generous shared landscape in place of individual private open space, and has communal facilities including a flexible living space, bike garage and laundry on the ground floor.

The site is bisected by a generous central communal garden and incorporates landscape throughout internal and external spaces. Planter boxes, garden beds and rooftop gardens provide all dwellings with a green outlook and enhances the local biodiversity.

Studio Leader: Julia Lehmann

Subject Coordinator: Assoc Prof Amanda Achmadi

IMAGES

1. Ground floor plan
2. South elevation
3. Section



Assembling Futures: WikiHouse Prototypes for Urban Living in Melbourne

Cassie Guo, Eathan Pearce, Poleen Khayyat, Sara Abaw, Traven Lam, Yuan Xu, Swinburne University, 2024

The Assembling Futures project proposes a suite of open-source, digitally fabricated designs using systems like WikiHouse to increase the supply of affordable housing in inner Melbourne contexts.

The designs are modular and enable self-build and community-led housing models, innovatively addressing many challenges currently facing the industry.

The townhouse design is of particular merit, with its flexible, replicable and space-efficient layout enabling its application across a wide range of sites in inner Melbourne and beyond. The physical model demonstrates its simple effectiveness and spatial consideration of its buildability.

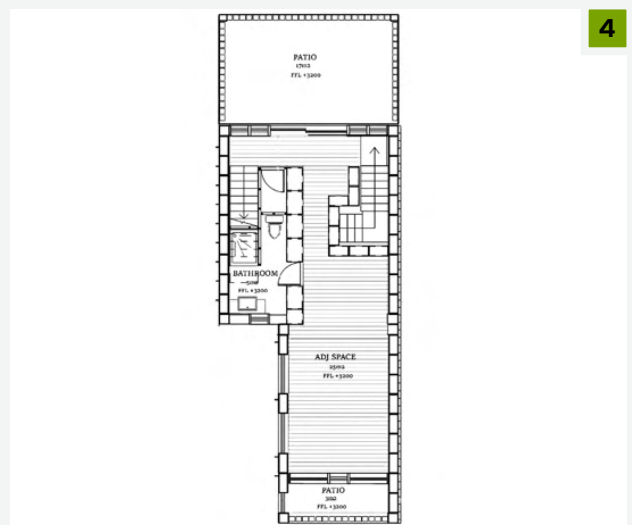
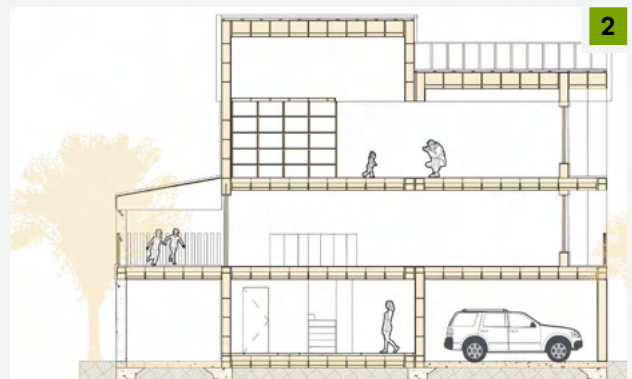
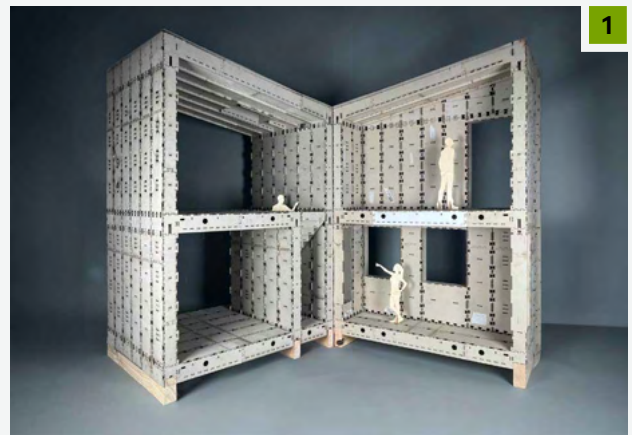
The WikiHouse model also considers sustainability through implementation of a low embodied carbon timber framing system, which reduces emissions compared with traditional building methods and acts as a carbon store. The project also integrates high levels of insulation, ensuring energy-efficient homes with reduced operational costs, contributing to reducing housing costs for occupants.

Tutor: Canhui Chen

Subject Coordinator: Canhui Chen

IMAGES

1. Physical model of townhouse
2. Townhouse section
3. External townhouse render
4. Townhouse floorplan



PANEL
COMMENT

"The buildability of this clever proposal was seriously explored in a physical model, which is commendable."

Habitat Housing

Jade Louloudakis, RMIT University, 2025

Habitat Housing embraces a unique incremental model of housing.

The project incorporates 18 row houses amongst local ecology and habitat in the suburb of Mooroolbark in Melbourne's outer east.

The project offers an alternative to the common approach of clearing existing site vegetation prior to construction. Instead, the development is built in stages and uses prefabrication, allowing construction to work around the existing landscape to preserve habitat on the site. Before the final fit-out as dwellings, the buildings are available as flexible community spaces and remain adaptable to residents' changing needs throughout their lifespan.

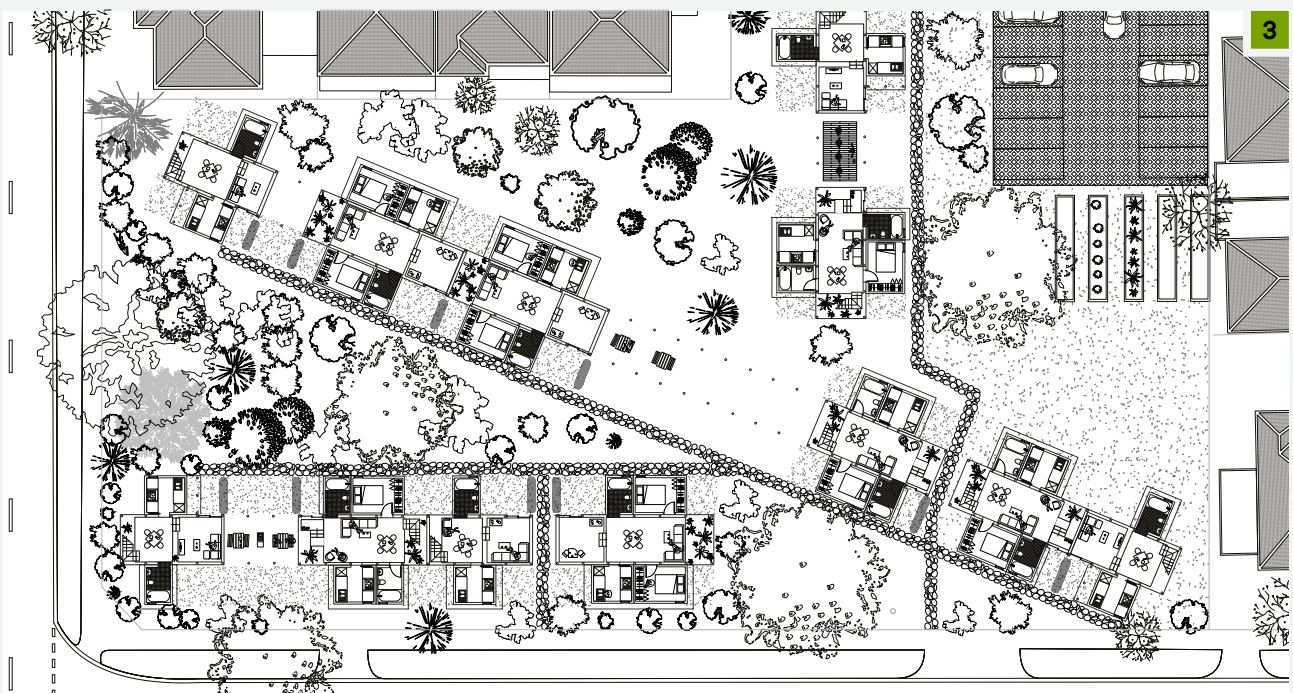
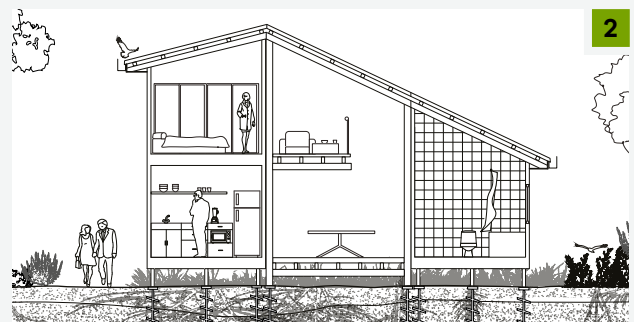
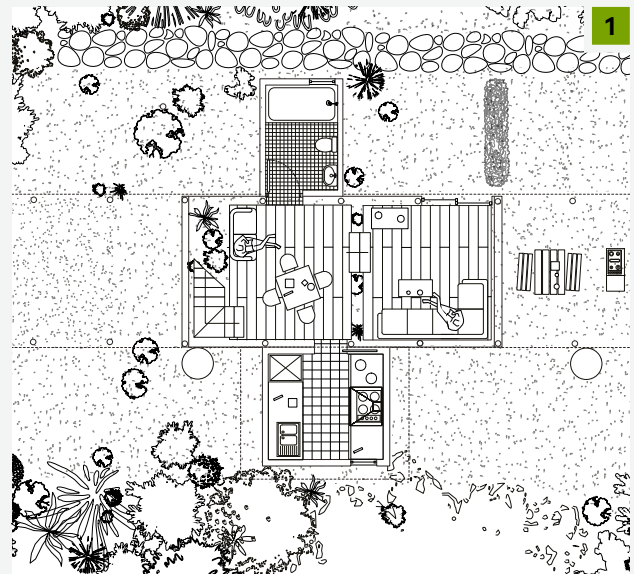
The consolidation of car parking in the corner of the site also enables the retention of existing trees and landscape while encouraging active transport and supporting incidental interactions between residents as they move through the site.

Tutor: Claire Scorpo

Subject Coordinator: Claire Scorpo

IMAGES

1. Ground floor plan
2. Section
3. Site plan



Hawthorn Re-settling

Caleb Ming Hing Chung, University of Melbourne, 2024

Hawthorn Re-settling seeks to create affordable homes for refugees awaiting decision on their onshore protection visa applications in Australia, providing functional yet generous spaces for residents to rebuild trust and fostering a healthy and sustainable community.

Set in Hawthorn in Melbourne's inner east, the project imagines a community of approximately 50 townhouses set amongst expansive mature native vegetation, providing a dignified and safe sanctuary for its residents.

The design establishes a sense of temporality in both construction and aesthetics, allowing the project to adapt to the flexible needs of refugee populations with varying occupancy durations and household sizes. Dwellings range from one-bedroom to four-bedroom units, accommodating a range of resident cohorts.

The site layout is sensitive to residents' needs, encouraging community interaction through thoughtful shared spaces, but also enabling privacy to the individual dwellings.

Studio Leader: Education Fellow Leon Koumouris
Subject Coordinators: Education Fellow Simona Falvo and Mitchell Eaton

IMAGES

1. Site plan
2. External render
3. Site sections



Apartments

Apartment buildings include multiple homes across multiple levels, encompassing walk-up flats, residential towers and everything in between.

They add to housing density, increasing the number of people who live within walking distance of transport, services and jobs. Individual apartments can range from small studios to large, family-sized homes, making them a versatile and sustainable housing option for Victorians. Well-designed apartment buildings integrate with the surrounding built and natural environments to provide canopy trees, landscape and active frontages that enhance the public realm. They use space efficiently so that homes and shared spaces feel generous and welcoming and can adapt to the needs of residents within their smaller footprint.

601. Fern

Maxwell Tong, Swinburne University of Technology, 2025
(overall masterplan with Alex Terzakis and Turab Alvi)

601. Fern gently adds to housing density while providing a high degree of liveability to both its residents and the wider neighbourhood.

13 apartments, a café and a network of thoughtful shared spaces are imagined across three storeys and two typical residential blocks in the inner northern suburb of Brunswick.

A welcoming journey from street to home is established through well-considered external circulation spaces, including an elevated walkway at level 1. These landscaped areas bisect the site both parallel and perpendicular to the street, breaking down the building mass and creating opportunities for future through-block connections.

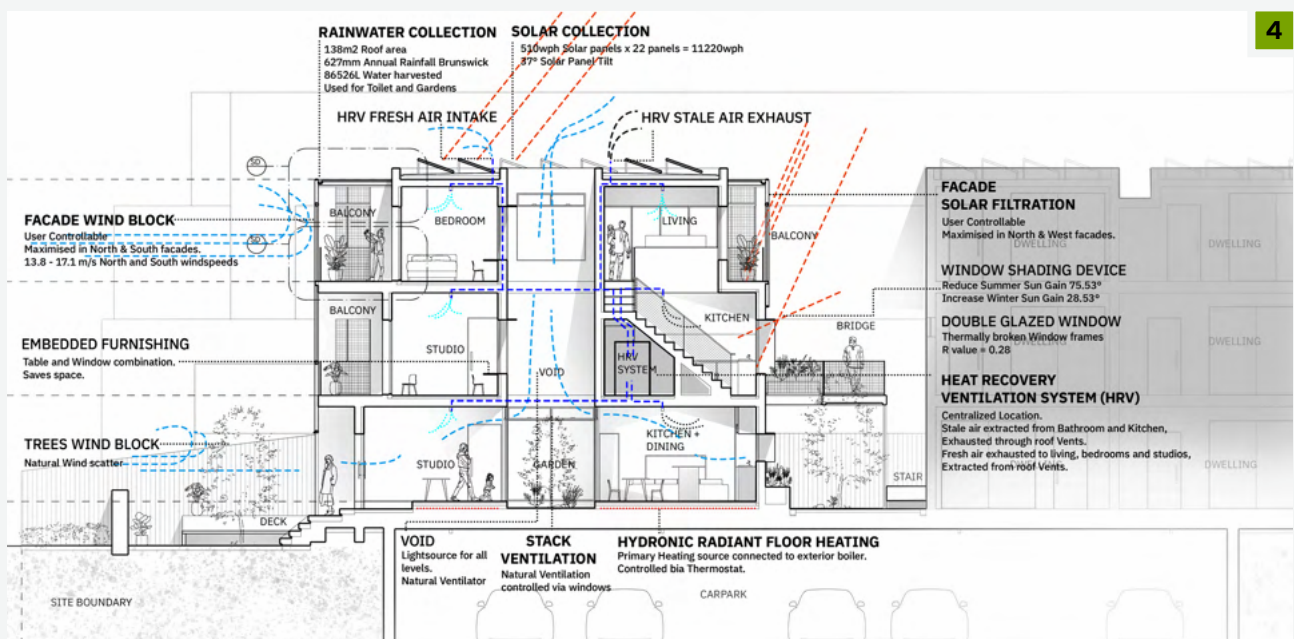
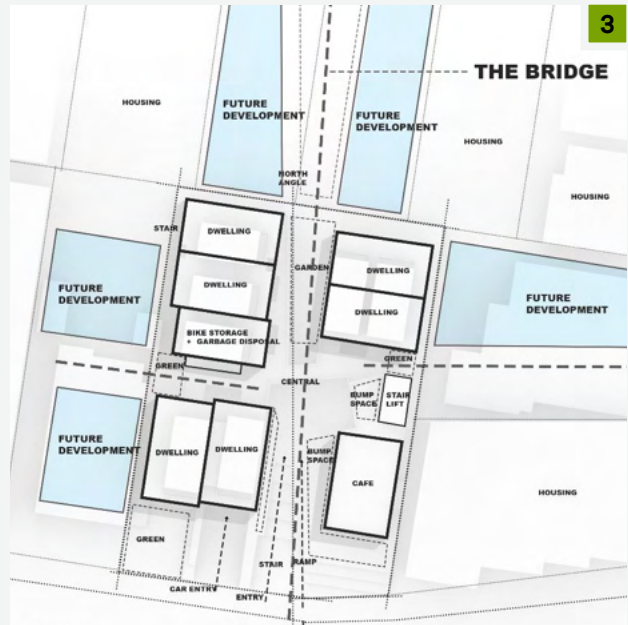
The project foregrounds sustainability, incorporating passive design principles and demonstrates consideration of sustainability through various interventions including natural and heat recovery ventilation, operable window shading and hydronic floor heating.

Tutor: Andrew Milward-Bason

Subject Coordinator: Markus Jung

IMAGES

1. Courtyard render
2. Internal render
3. Site context plan
4. Sustainability diagram



The Common Space

Rebecca Mallaby, Monash University, 2023

The Common Space reinterprets private and shared spaces to enable affordable and amenity-rich communal living for its residents while combating the loneliness epidemic through community and connection.

The project, set in Caulfield South in Melbourne's inner south-east, contemplates three different shared living models: 16 apartments with spare rooms shared between paired apartments, 24 apartments with pairs sharing kitchens, and 8 apartments with two 'master' bedrooms and the remaining spaces shared between occupants. This innovative approach not only enables an affordable entry into home ownership but also empowers residents with flexibility in living arrangements and promotes a sense of collective belonging.

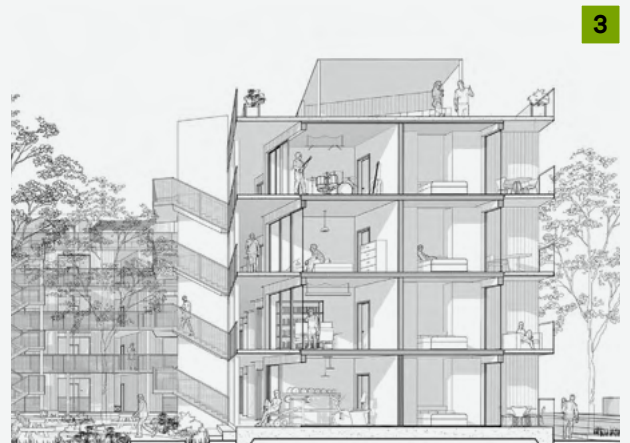
Local ecology and public benefit are well-considered in the design; a communal courtyard hosts native vegetation in abundance, and the northern edge of the site provides a new neighbourhood active transport link. A generous portion of the site is dedicated to landscape, circulation and shared spaces. The scale of the four-storey development sits well with its suburban surrounds, and the design effectively prioritises bicycle access and active transport options, to reduce reliance on cars.

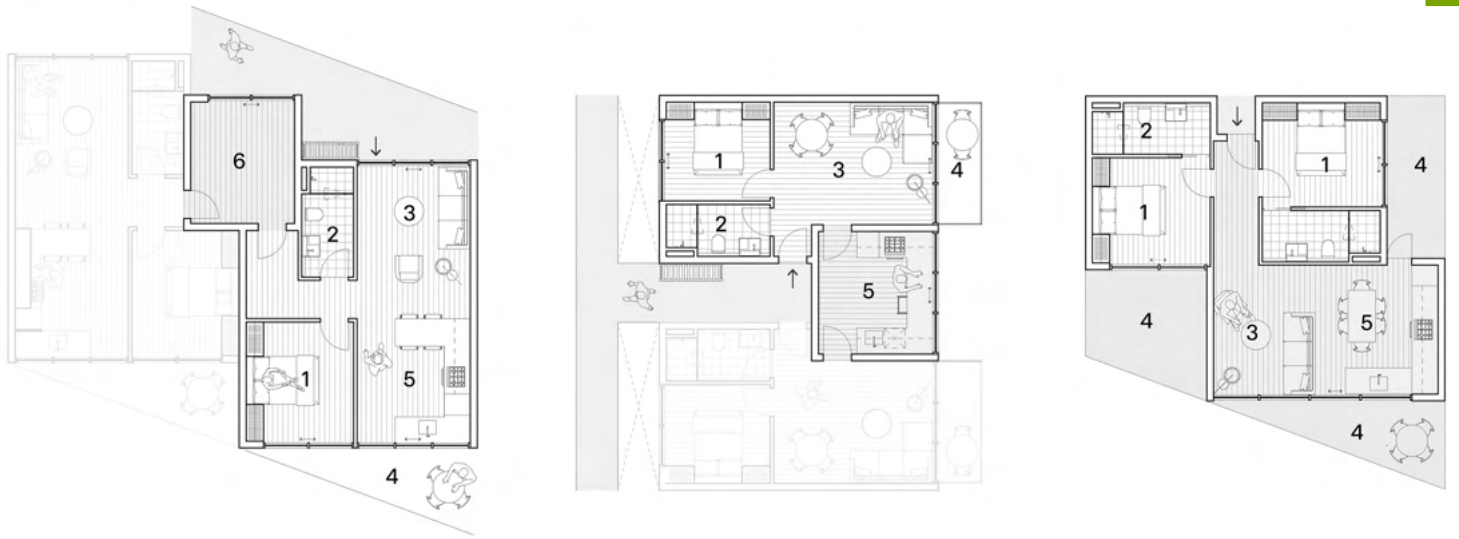
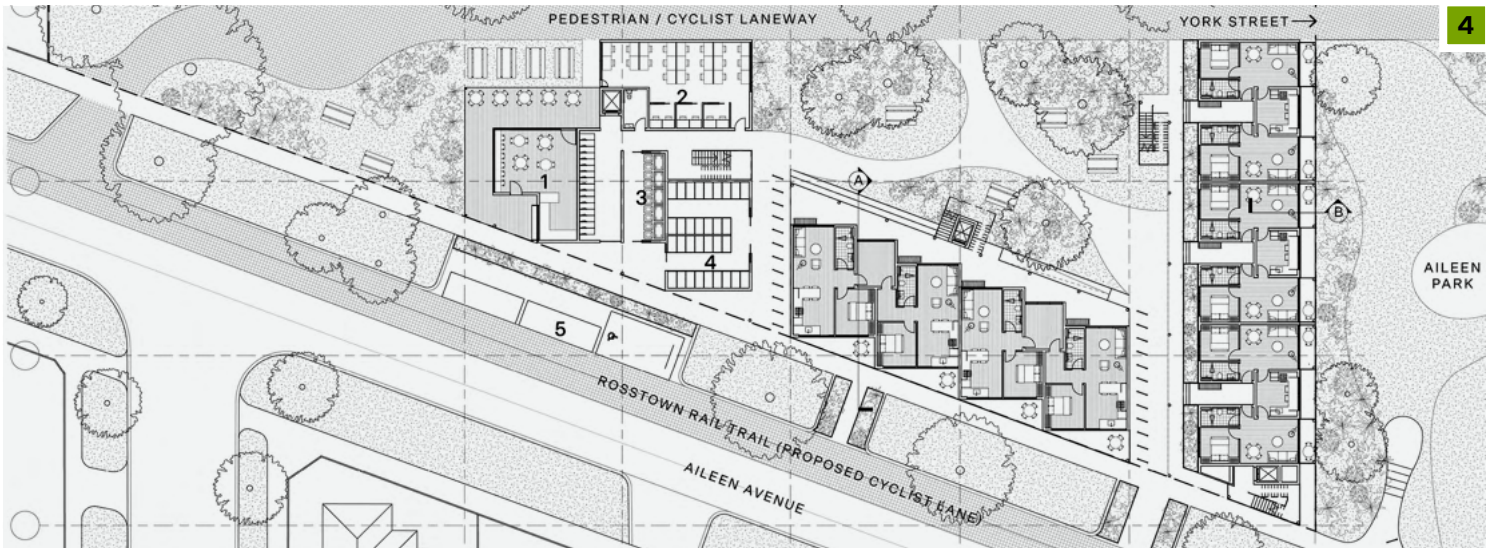
Beyond its application in this specific context, the co-living model has broad potential applications ranging from student housing to aged care.

Studio Lead: Andrej Vodstrcil
Course Director: Dr Laura Harper

IMAGES

1. Street render
2. Aileen Park render
3. Section
4. Site plan
5. Shared living model floor plans
6. Courtyard render





Student Housing Denmark Street

Shirin Tafazoliyazdi & Toni Pringle, Swinburne University of Technology, 2024

Student Housing Denmark Street imagines the adaptive reuse of the former VicRoads building in Kew in Melbourne's inner east for affordable student housing.

The six-storey office building is transformed into 30 apartments, with demolition and construction costs minimised through the strategic retention of 75% of the primary structure, including the existing façade.

While effectively reducing the upfront carbon costs usually associated with building new homes, the project also avoids common pitfalls of office-to-housing conversion. It works with the existing floorplate to enable cross-ventilation in the apartments, utilising leftover space for strategic internal voids to enhance this via the "stack effect".

The design is tailored to its student resident cohort, with shared amenities on the ground floor and strategically scattered elsewhere throughout the site. Each floor of the building provides different arrangements of shared living and communal facilities, supporting a range of housing options.

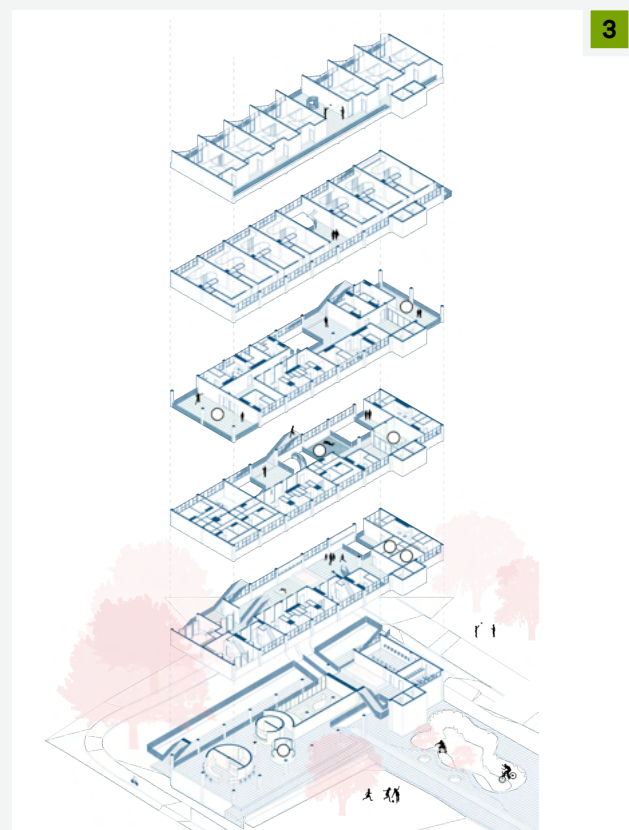
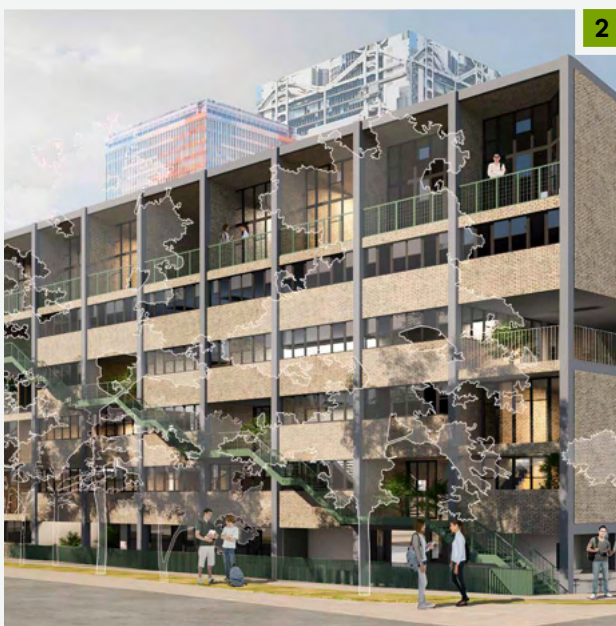
Tutor: Markus Jung

Subject Coordinator: Markus Jung



IMAGES

1. Section
2. External render
3. Axonometric diagram



Hybrid 'FOLD'

Luke Shashkoff, Deakin University, 2024

Hybrid 'FOLD' offers sustainable and liveable homes for key workers, students and the wider community in the inner suburb of North Melbourne.

13 apartments – including a five-bedroom student share-house – and multiple communal spaces are housed across the mid-rise building. A market, doggy daycare and cafe are included on the ground floor, activating and connecting with the public realm.

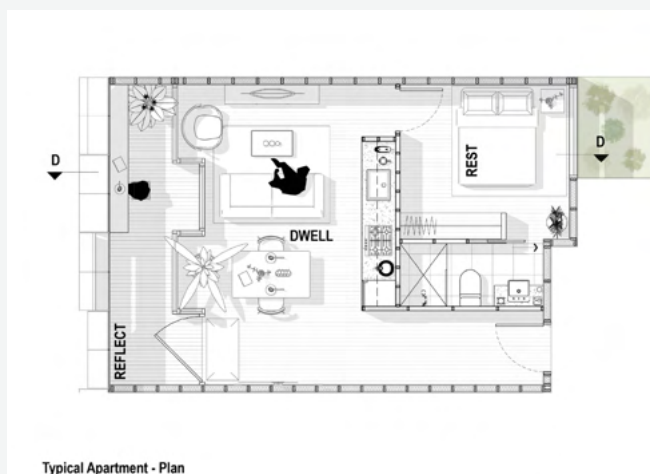
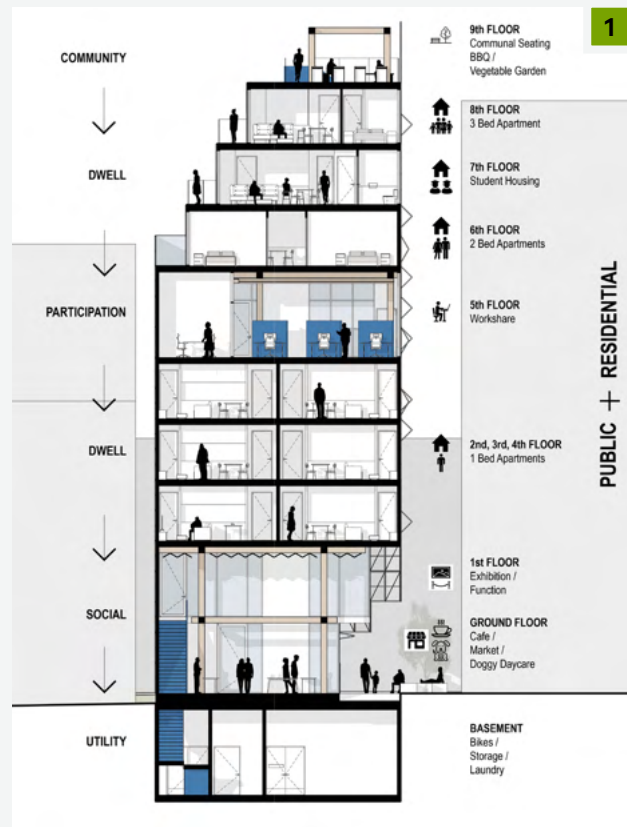
Sustainability is a key driver of the design, which includes use of materials with low embodied carbon such as green concrete alternatives and cross-laminated timber. Operational carbon emissions and energy costs are reduced through high-performance glazing systems and an adjustable façade, which also contributes to the building's architectural expression and identity.

Thoughtful floor plans make clever use of space and zoning to provide residents with a comfortable, unique and efficient space to call home.

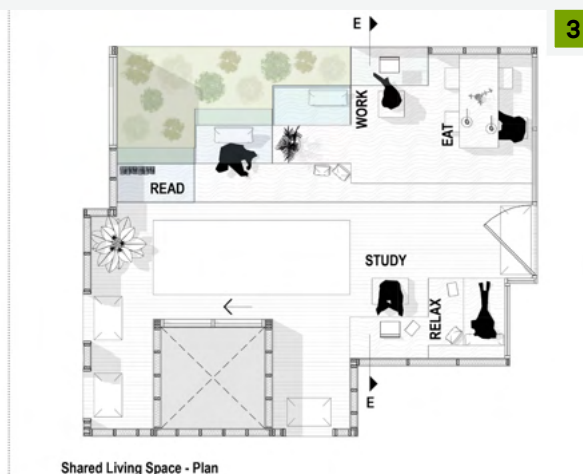
Tutor: Elsie Telford
Unit Chair: Nick Jahnecke

IMAGES

1. Section
2. Entry render
3. Apartment and shared living space floor plans



Typical Apartment - Plan



Shared Living Space - Plan

Gathering House

Daniel Noy, Swinburne University of Technology, 2022

Gathering House, named for its proximity to First Nations gathering places, sensitively incorporates increased housing density through a landscape-led approach.

At three storeys high on a constrained site in South Yarra in Melbourne's inner south, the project has a neighbourly scale. With a unique architectural expression inspired by eucalyptus leaves, green brickwork and soft edges are used to integrate with the surrounding environment.

The building is broken up into three modules which are arranged around significant trees on the site, enabling the landscape to thrive in harmony with the built environment. This provides green outlook to residents of the seven apartments and cools the local microclimate.

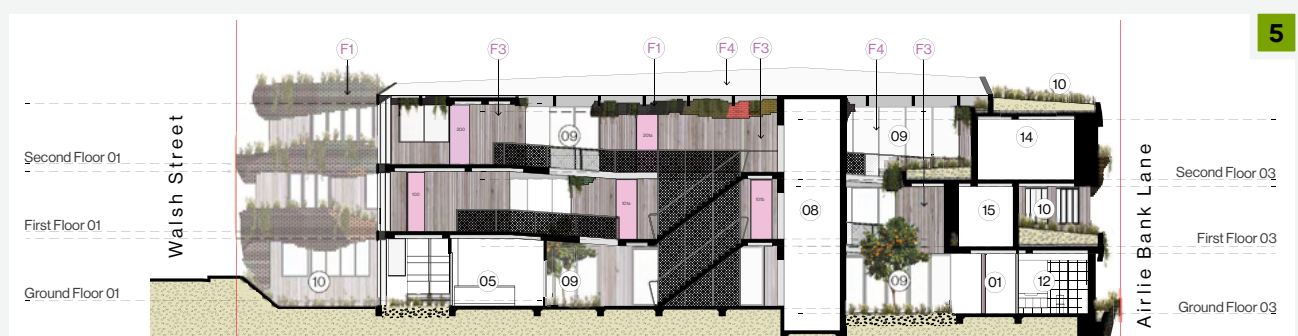
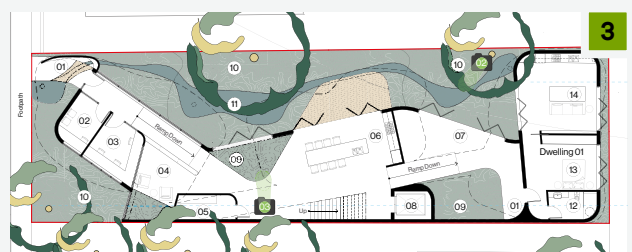
Within the individual dwellings, adaptable elements such as flexible plumbing arrangements and movable kitchen benches allow residents to customise the spaces to suit their needs.

Tutor: Debra Kunda

Subject Coordinator: Debra Kunda

IMAGES

1. External render
2. Breezeway render
3. Ground floor plan
4. First floor plan
5. East elevation



XTRA Homes Belmont Road

Lachlan Hartnett, RMIT University, 2024

XTRA Homes Belmont Road imagines the repurposing of an underutilised former school site to accommodate 80 apartments across two four-storey buildings.

The buildings are set in the outer eastern Melbourne suburb of Croydon South amongst a generous native landscape that provides a significant communal outdoor open space for residents.

The buildings are clad in charred timber panels, a thoughtful materiality that combines sustainability, cost-effectiveness and local ecology. Inside the apartments, cork flooring and exposed glulam timber columns and beams continue the focus on natural materials and sustainability, enhancing the warmth and welcome of the interiors.

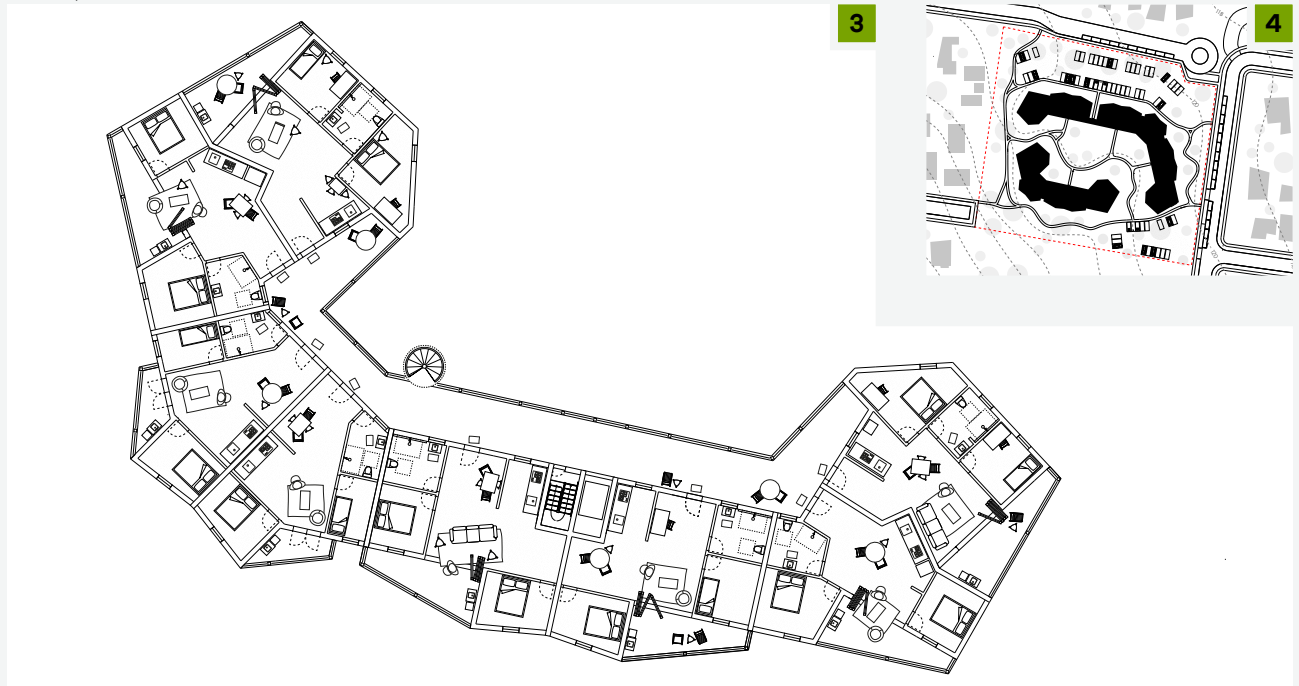
This project represents a substantial addition to the housing supply of the area and a significant increase in density compared to its surrounds, providing predominantly three-bedroom apartments to suit the area's demographics.

Tutor: Dr Peter Brew

Subject Coordinator: Dr Peter Brew

IMAGES

1. External render
2. Internal render
3. Typical floor plan
4. Site plan



The BrickHaus

Nam Bui, Swinburne University of Technology, 2025 (overall masterplan with Borapha Niph, Steven Conelly and Anes Abdou)

The BrickHaus applies the Baugruppe development model to conceive a three-storey apartment building in the inner Melbourne suburb of Brunswick.

A communal space for rent and a flexible workshop accompany 15 well-designed dwellings to replace two existing detached houses on the site.

The uplift in density is achieved through a thoughtful design response, with curved façade elements and a consistent use of brick providing warmth and texture to the building expression.

The floor plans are efficient, maximise sense of space and are attentive to the needs of the residents described in the project brief. This includes two 'co-apartments', in which shared kitchens and operable walls enable flexibility to engage with community or create privacy when desired. This consolidation of facilities also reduces floor area and, subsequently, build cost per apartment, making them more affordable.

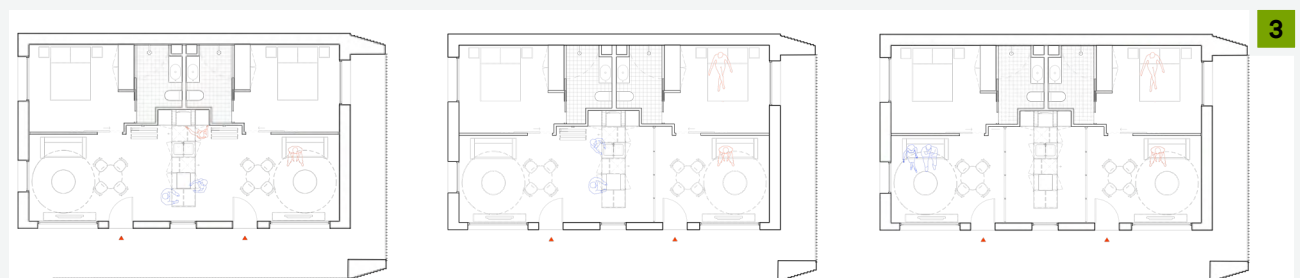
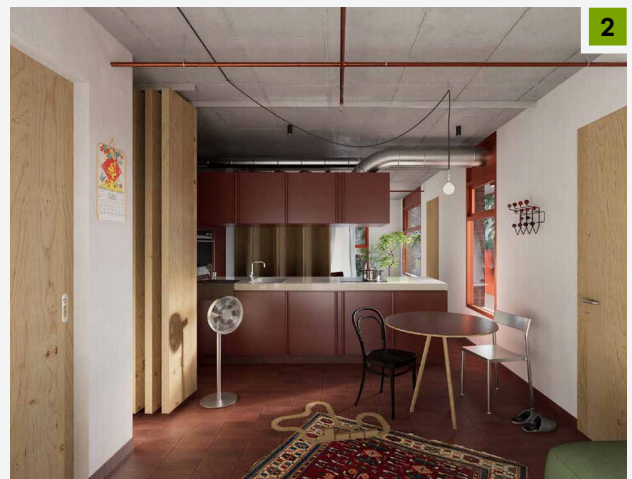
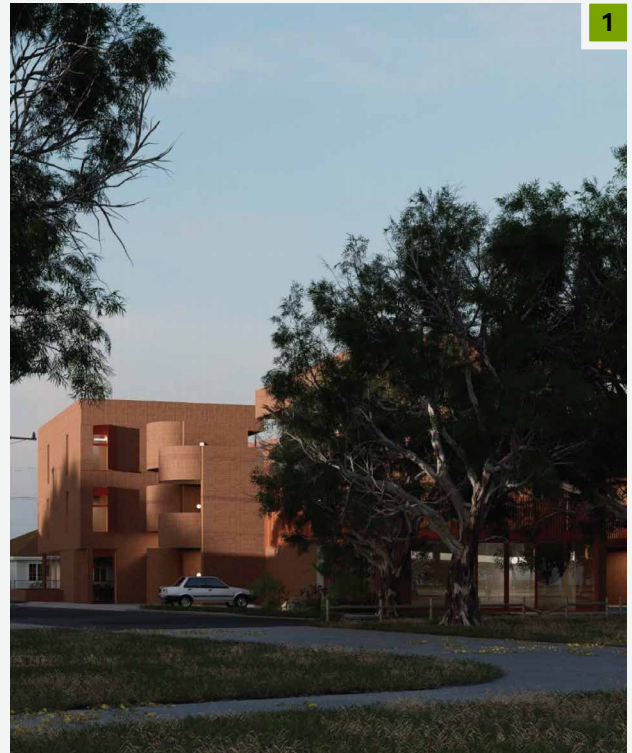
External circulation provides a sense of openness to the site while allowing for cross-ventilation to all dwellings. Privacy and outlook are optimised through well-considered placement of curved walls and landscape. The ground plane is well-utilised for tree planting, enabled by the massing of built form and minimal footprint dedicated to car parking. Two spaces are allocated for car-sharing, with extensive protected bicycle parking encouraging sustainable transport through convenience and security.

Tutor: Andrew Milward-Bason

Subject Coordinator: Markus Jung

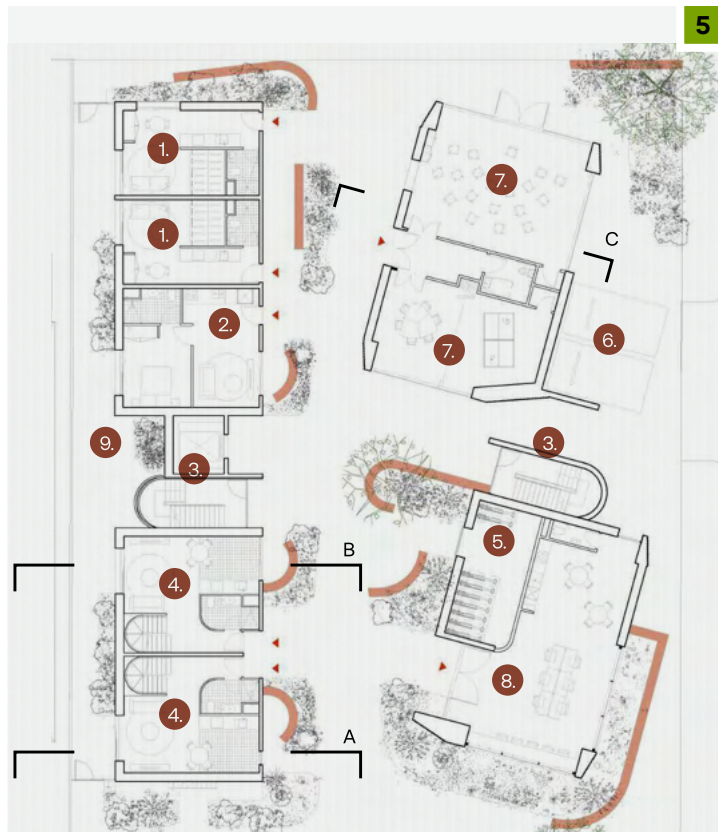
IMAGES

1. External render
2. Internal co-apartment render
3. Co-apartment floorplans
4. External render
5. Ground floor plan
6. Second floor plan





5



LEGEND

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Studio apartment | 6. Car share parking |
| 2. Accessible apartment | 7. Communal space (for rent) |
| 3. Lift and stairs | 8. Workshop space/maker space |
| 4. Duplex apartment | 9. Resident private walkway |
| 5. Bike store | |

6



LEGEND

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Communal garden terrace | 6. 2 bed apartment |
| 2. Clothes hanging space | 7. Co-apartment |
| 3. Communal laundry | 8. 1 bed apartment |
| 4. Accessible communal bathroom | 9. Resident walkway |
| 5. Lift and stairs | 10. Breakout space |

PANEL
COMMENT

"The intricate outdoor areas are laudable, created through careful arrangement of simple buildings and shared generosity complementing efficient private spaces."

The Covenant of Care Culture

Adelina Holil and Tomas Ackerley, Monash University, 2024

The Covenant of Care Culture imagines the transformation of vacant land adjacent the historic Abbotsford Convent in inner-eastern Melbourne to host 144 dwellings including women's protective housing, social and market housing, and aged care and retirement housing.

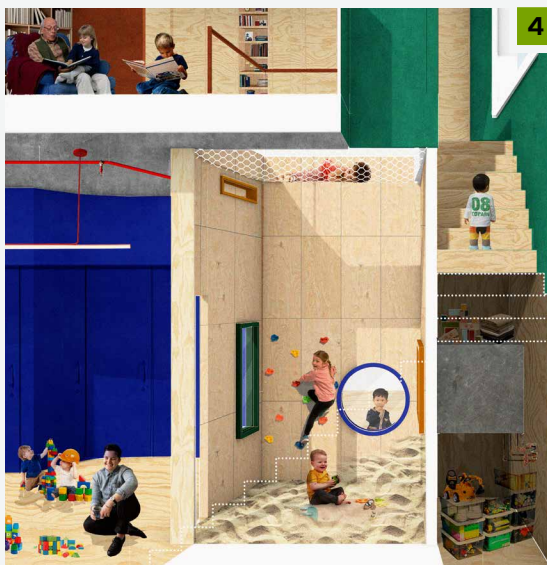
Each of these cohorts is afforded highly dignified living catered to their needs through the careful curation of shared spaces and amenities. The design considers perceptions of safety and comfort throughout the scheme, including the arrangement of circulation spaces within the women's protective housing, which supports welcoming homes by maintaining sightlines through the building.

The buildings sit amongst a landscape of "urban wilderness", with the built form responding thoughtfully to the Birrarung (Yarra River) to the north-east. The orientation and massing of the buildings maximise connection with nature, with both interior spaces and communal outdoor areas afforded views and outlook to the river.

Studio Lead: Kendra Reid
Course Director: Dr Laura Harper

IMAGES

1. Site plan
2. Section
3. External render
4. Internal shared space render
5. Breezeway render



Light-Frame

Weng Chong (Kevin) Lam, University of Melbourne, 2023

Light-Frame is designed to provide a highly liveable and sustainable apartment building in the Melbourne suburb of Preston.

Three floors of apartments are complemented by a communal ground floor, a significant shared space for residents to meet, dwell and connect.

The modular apartments consider a variety of users – typologies range from one to three bedrooms and are designed with flexibility and adaptability to suit a range of households including students, families and ageing in place.

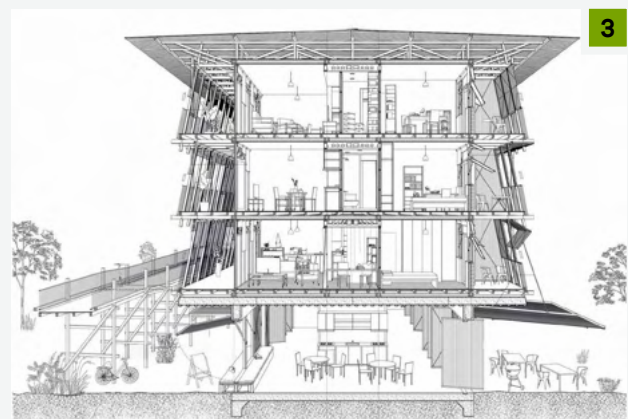
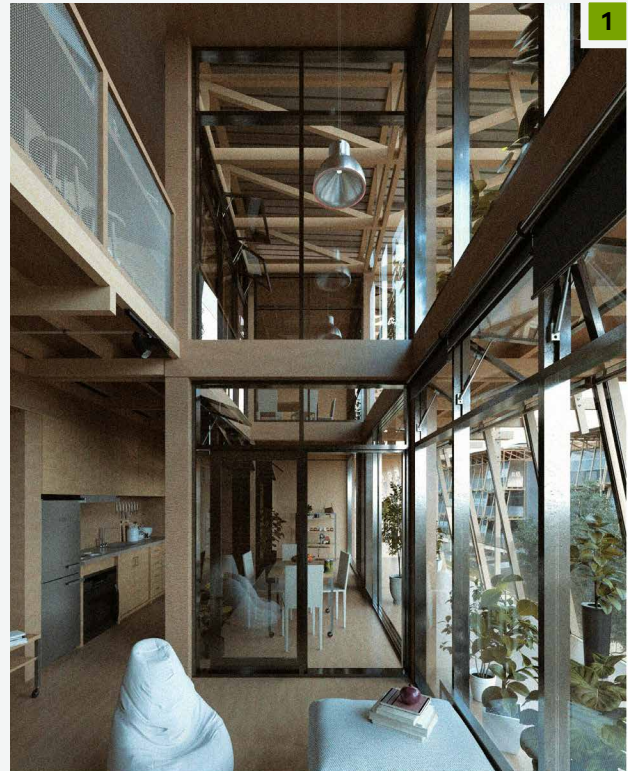
Apartments are nestled amongst the natural landscape, with large windows maximising access to natural light and enabling cross-ventilation beneath a wide timber canopy that moderates solar load. Along with the use of reclaimed local materials, these features embed sustainability as a priority in design, construction and long-term operation.

Studio Leader: Claudio Torres

Subject Coordinator: Assoc Prof Djordje Stojanovic

IMAGES

1. Internal render
2. External render
3. Section
4. Site plan



Merri-bek Neighbourhood Renewal

Sophie Miles, Monash University, 2025

Merri-bek Neighbourhood Renewal embeds sustainable and affordable design and construction approaches to provide intentional community for young families and single, new and expecting parents.

Including 27 highly liveable social housing apartments in Glenroy in Melbourne's northern suburbs, the project enhances its suburban garden setting by providing sensitively scaled medium-density community living and increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Homes are arranged around a central courtyard that provides a safe, communal play and gathering place for families and children, set amongst a productive garden landscape. Shared laundries and communal study/play areas further promote neighbourly interaction and create opportunities for social connection.

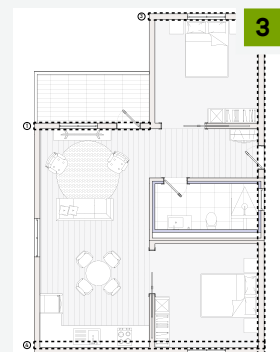
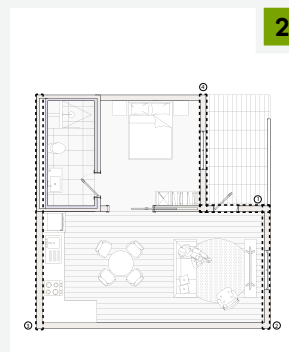
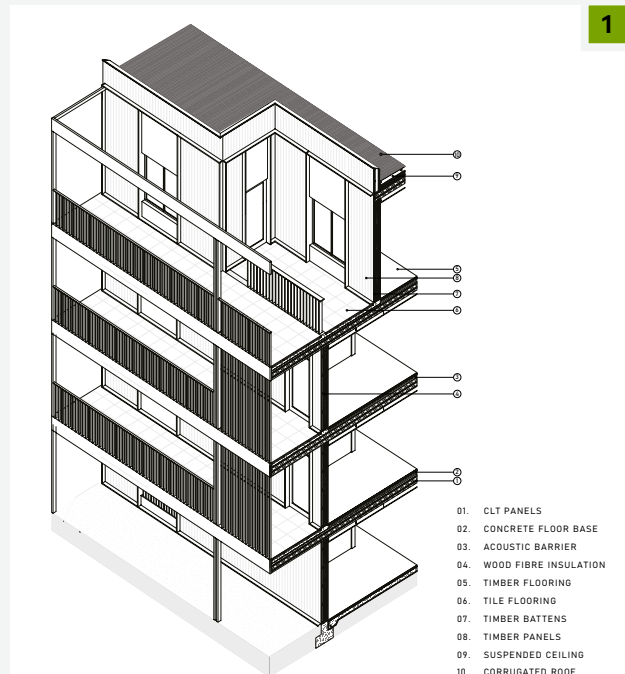
Environmental sustainability is embedded through material selection, with cross-laminated timber used as a core structural material to reduce embodied carbon and enable faster, cleaner construction with minimal waste. Apartments are oriented to optimise passive heating and cooling, natural daylight and cross ventilation, to reduce energy costs and enhance comfort for residents.

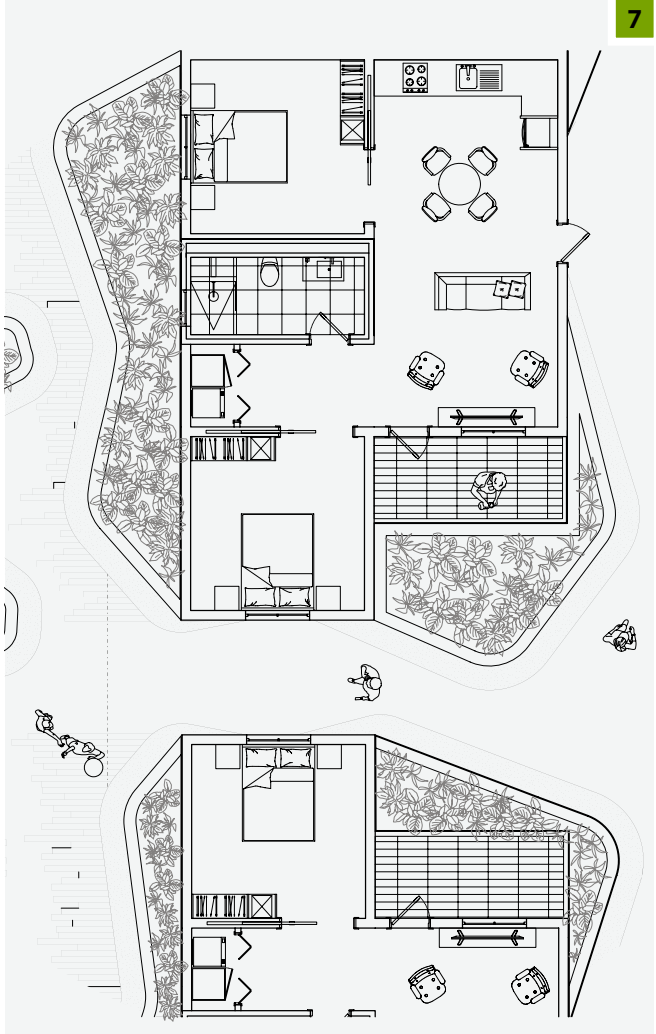
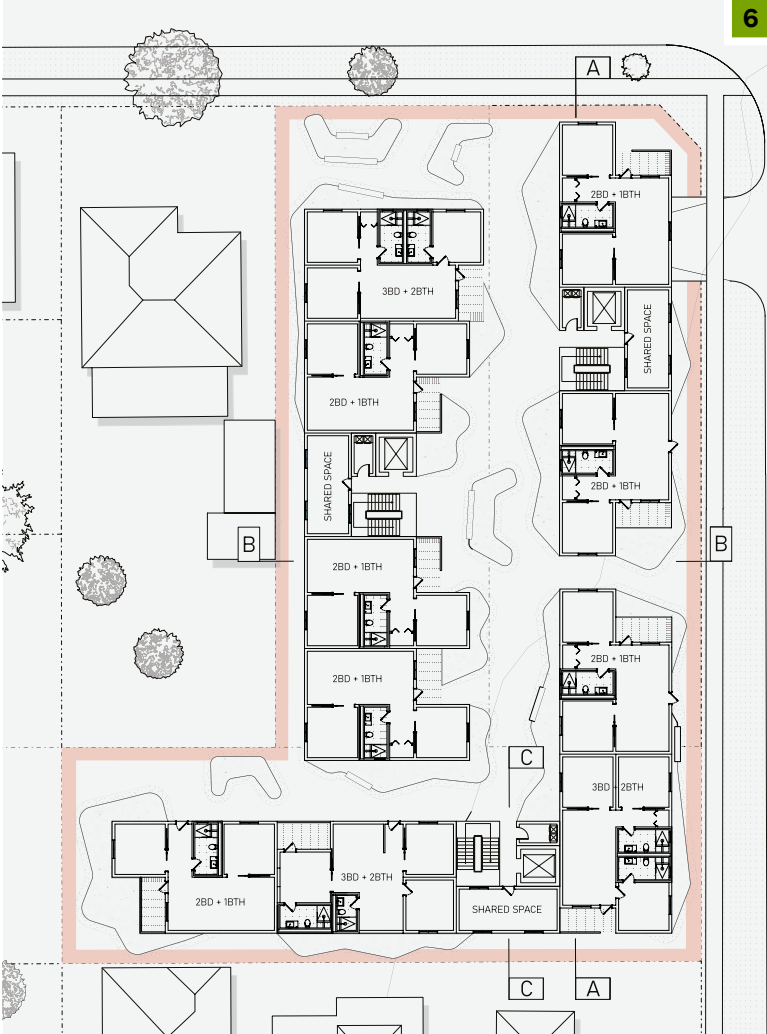
Modular construction plays a key role in the delivery model, incorporating prefabricated bathroom pods and typical wall panels that can be adapted to different site conditions. This replicable system streamlines construction while maintaining build quality to provide good value homes. The modular construction approach supports faster delivery of liveable, affordable housing with reduced material waste and shorter build timeframes.

Studio Lead: Assoc Prof Lee-Anne Khor and Prof Shane Murray
Course Director: Dr Laura Harper

IMAGES

1. Axonometric diagram with materials
2. 1-bedroom floor plan with location of wall modules
3. 2-bedroom floor plan with location of wall modules
4. Courtyard render
5. Street render
6. Site plan
7. 2-bedroom floor plan in ground floor context





Precincts

A precinct is an area where multiple buildings or clusters of buildings are developed according to an overarching plan, varying in scale from a single large site to a series of sites across a suburb.

Precincts play a significant role in adding to Victoria's housing supply, providing opportunities for large-scale urban renewal and residential growth at the desired density in coordination with transport, employment and retail hubs. Well-designed precincts consider local identity, the appropriate urban grain to enable walkability, and the integration of transport links, green spaces and climate-responsive infrastructure. They also often provide increased opportunities for innovation, where good design can encompass new delivery models or construction methods.

Reimagining Where We Live – ‘Manu Place’

Nigel Bertram, Maryam Gusheh, Mel Dodd and Catherine Murphy
(The Monash Urban Lab) with NMBW BoardGrove, BLOXAS and GLAS, 2024

Reimagining Where We Live – ‘Manu Place’ reinterprets aged care living in a regional Victorian context, utilising design to empower and connect residents.

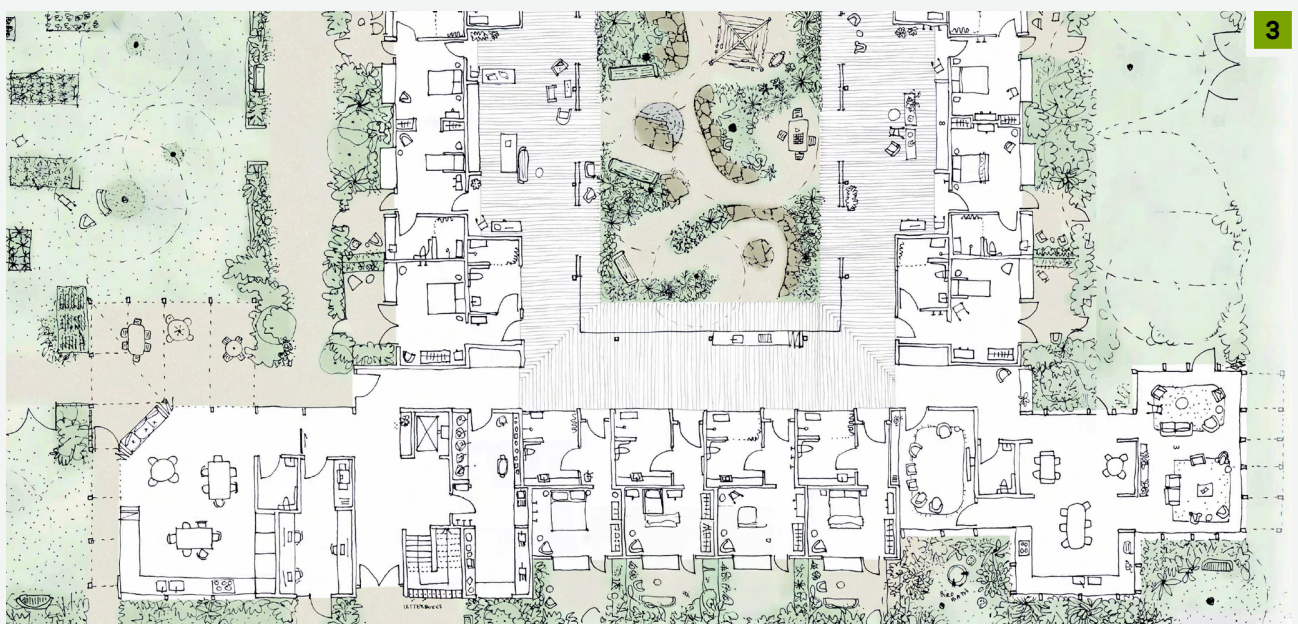
The project provides 64 residences geometrically arranged to form a series of cloisters and courtyards that support activity and outlook. The design deftly handles the intimate individual scale and the communal precinct scale to provide welcoming, healthy homes for older residents.

The large site balances connection to landscape with the needs of an aged care setting. Cloisters with operable walls ensure that residents interact with the outdoors by design, enhancing physical and mental health and fostering social connection in shared spaces.

Activation of the broader precinct, including the co-location of a kindergarten, enlivens the development, breaking down social barriers, promoting social cohesion and building wider support networks. Organisation of care across two floor levels allows a smooth transition from autonomous living to a high care environment, supporting residents’ needs and independence in a dignified manner through design.

IMAGES

1. Axonometric site render
2. Section
3. Portion of site plan



The Village

Mathew Bantegui, University of Melbourne, 2024

The Village puts forward an alternative approach to greenfield development on Melbourne's north-western fringe, establishing a large precinct with considerations of Country, local ecology, diversity and community at its centre.

Providing 2000 dwellings at Redstone Hill, near Sunbury, the project demonstrates a values-driven way to deliver a Precinct Structure Plan, with protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage prioritised to inform the location and scale of homes across the precinct.

The precinct is planned to enable thriving landscapes, including the rewilding of the site with indigenous plants alongside consolidated areas of diverse housing. This approach enhances local ecology and community connection and avoids environmental degradation and social isolation.

The diversity and adaptability of housing caters to residents of all life stages, creating a neighbourhood that supports ageing in place and where families can grow. The balance of private and public open spaces allows communities to connect, overcoming the social isolation often experienced in new communities on the urban fringe. Modular methods of construction enable faster delivery, contributing to more sustainable and affordable homes.

Studio Leader: Education Fellow Dr Delia Teschendorff

Subject Coordinator: Professor Janet McGaw

IMAGES

1. Precinct plan
2. Section
3. Terrace and townhouse sections and plans
4. Hero render
5. Housing cluster site plan





Groundworks

Harinish Balavijayan, University of Melbourne, 2024

Groundworks envisions greenfield development that prioritises cultural sensitivity and reinterprets urban sprawl.

The design response is defined by landscape, topography and medium density housing. It considers a different approach to delivering 2000 dwellings in the Redstone Hill Precinct Structure Plan near Sunbury, primarily adopting a courtyard apartment typology to enhance outer-suburban liveability, sustainability and housing diversity.

Aboriginal cultural heritage underpins the precinct, with significant sites preserved and celebrated. This goes hand-in-hand with the regeneration of local ecology, which is enabled through sensitive siting and denser housing typologies which reduce the developed footprint.

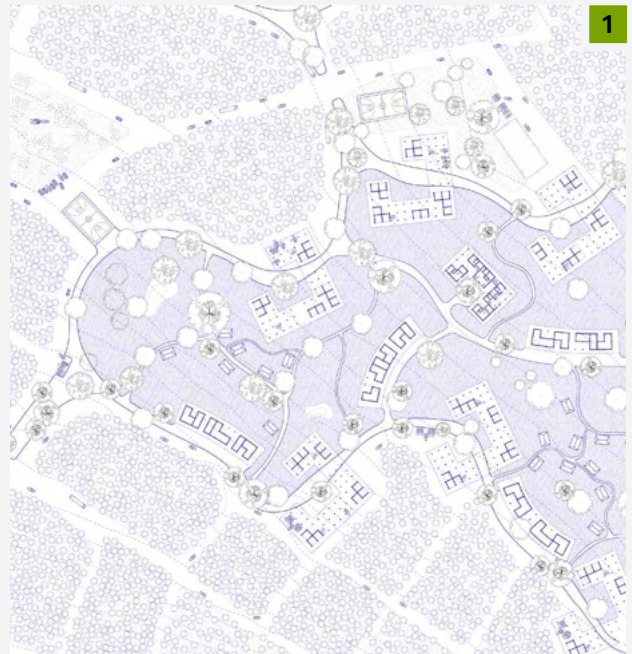
Courtyard arrangements provide communal space for social interaction and play. Generous and adaptable apartment layouts cater to diverse and changing needs, giving residents choice, flexibility and a welcoming sense of home.

Studio Leader: Education Fellow Dr Delia Teschendorff

Subject Coordinator: Associate Professor Rory Hyde

IMAGES

1. Precinct plan
2. Ground floor plan
3. External render
4. Section



Project *-the*

Melissa Yap, Deakin University, 2025

Project *-the* brings vitality, community connection and housing diversity to a local neighbourhood centre in Norlane, located in Geelong's northern suburbs.

Combining residential aged care, shopping and community uses alongside existing residential areas, the precinct better supports ageing in place and improves amenity for existing residents through the rejuvenation of the commercial strip.

The project is intentional about integrating older residents – whether living independently or in supported accommodation – into the surrounding urban fabric and community. The mixed-use nature and close walkable connections of the precinct enable neighbourly interactions and promote healthy and active lifestyles that reduces car-dependence.

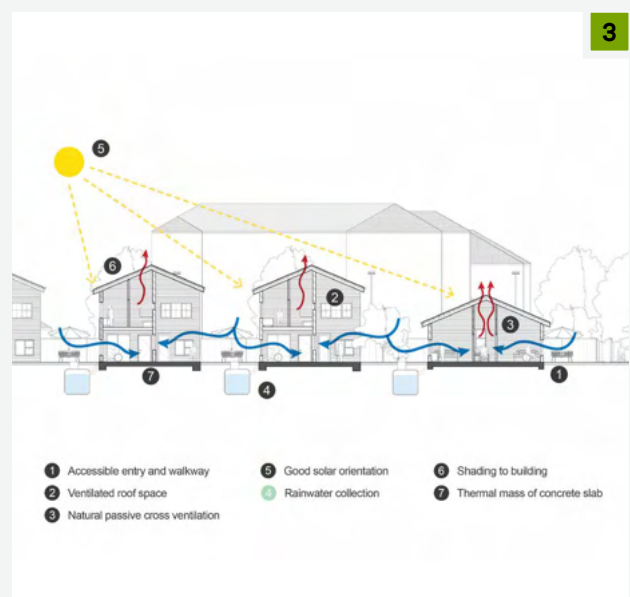
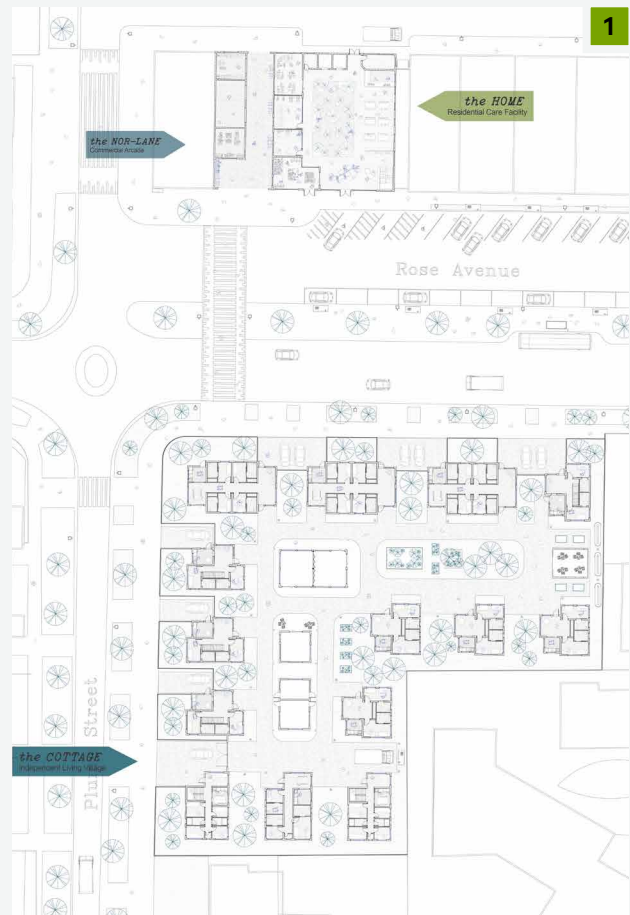
Solar energy and a shared on-site neighbourhood battery contribute to the precinct's sustainability. Passive design also optimises ventilation and manages solar load throughout the development.

Tutor: Simone Koch

Unit Chair: Prof Eleanor Suess

IMAGES

1. Precinct plan
2. External render
3. Sustainability diagram



PANEL COMMENT

"The strategic thinking of the proposal is commendable, from social integration over time to energy systems and landscape integration on a precinct scale."

Living Layers: rethinking suburbia in Melbourne

Nader Burjawi, Swinburne University, 2024

Living Layers imagines a “new normal” for living, connecting, and belonging in a denser suburban environment.

Set in Glen Waverley, a Suburban Rail Loop precinct in Melbourne’s south-east, the project consolidates neighbouring suburban lots to support a precinct of over 614 homes with vertical front and back yards, an increase of 458% over the current condition and dwelling yield.

A new urban rhythm is presented in which car-centric suburban ideals are challenged and re-interpreted to create denser living environments while also increasing green, shaded and porous urban habitats for all. Instead of a backyard enclosed by fences, the city becomes a backyard’s outlook.

An entire floor can function as a single home, or multiple homes, blurring the line between private and collective space. The homes are healthy and adaptable, with dual aspect living supporting layout efficiency, possibilities for adaptation over time, cross ventilation, natural light and access to outdoor spaces.

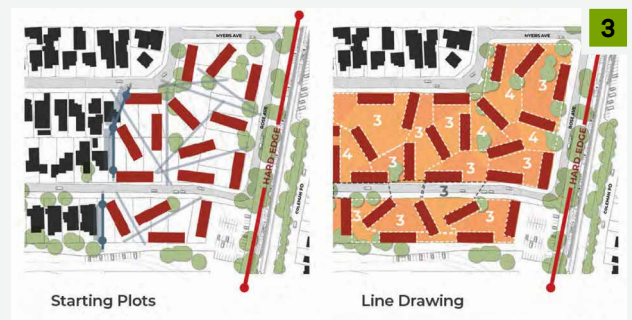
A physical model demonstrates the buildings’ standardised structure, using cross-laminated timber and allowing for prefabricated modular construction systems. Separate structures are conceived to consolidate car parking at site access points, creating a welcoming and active pedestrianised public realm.

Tutor: Rutger Pasman

Subject Coordinator: Markus Jung

IMAGES

1. Internal render
2. Internal render
3. Urban rhythm
4. Physical model
5. Hero render
6. Site plan
7. Urban section





5



6



7

Village by Creek

Yiwen (Eva) Huang, University of Melbourne, 2025

Village by Creek establishes a landscaped precinct of well-designed social housing near Gardiners Creek in Hawthorn, in Melbourne's inner east.

Approximately 100 prefabricated dwellings – including a mix of family townhouses, studio apartments and elderly living units – are clustered amongst a thriving natural landscape, providing a secure haven for residents and supporting biodiversity.

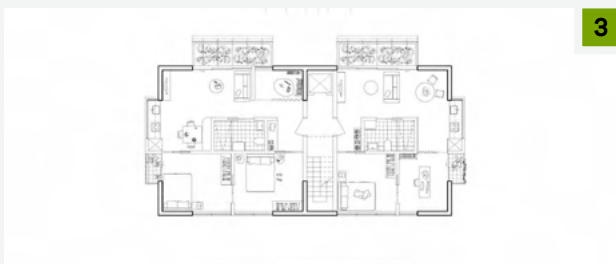
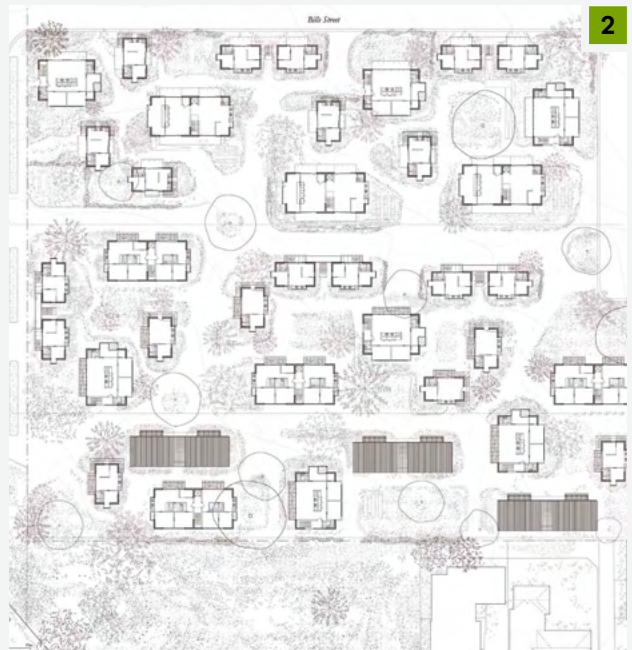
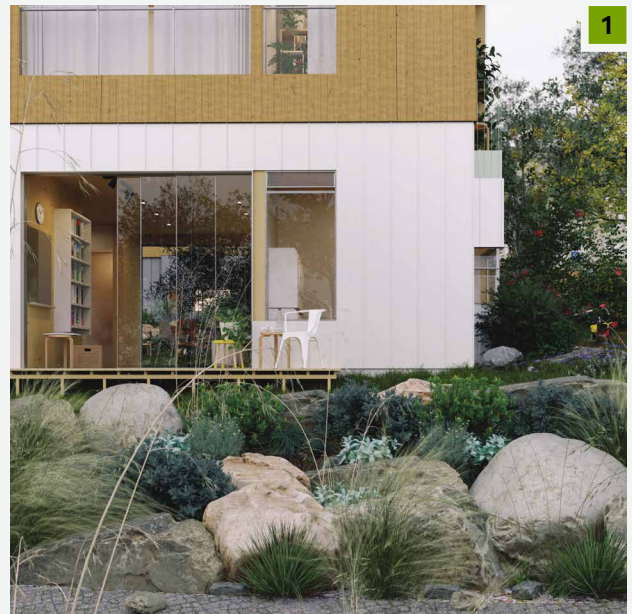
Construction of the dwellings incorporates prefabricated wall anchor modules, enabling build efficiency and good value homes. Opportunities for personalisation are provided in the spaces between modules, which can be configured as indoor or outdoor spaces such as kitchens, private gardens, small balconies, or simply extensions of interior rooms, adapting to occupant preferences.

This modular approach forms the basis of each of the three housing typologies, aligning to the needs of singles, families and the elderly. Distribution of these typologies throughout the site helps to foster an interconnected, multi-generational community.

Studio Leader: Education Fellow Dayne Trower
Subject Coordinators: Assoc Prof Djordje Stojanovic and Education Fellow Simona Falvo

IMAGES

1. External render
2. Site plan
3. Elderly living unit floorplan
4. Section



Built into a Line

Mirai Tanabe, University of Melbourne, 2025

Built into a Line explores a modular courtyard apartment model to provide highly liveable social housing across a small precinct in Hawthorn, in Melbourne's inner east.

Comprising three main rectangular ring forms connected via continuous courtyard-facing walkways, approximately 100 apartments are delivered in a low-rise arrangement. These circulation spaces act as conduits for community and connection between households.

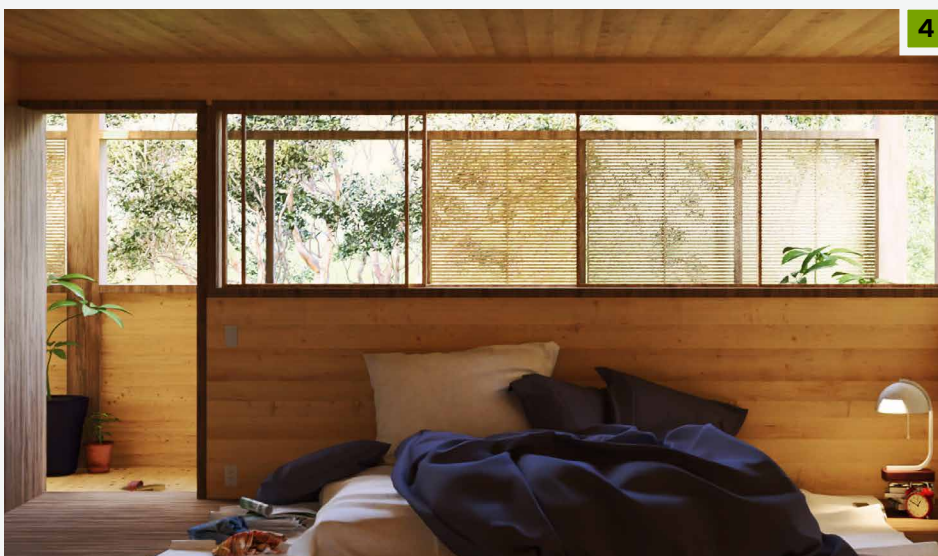
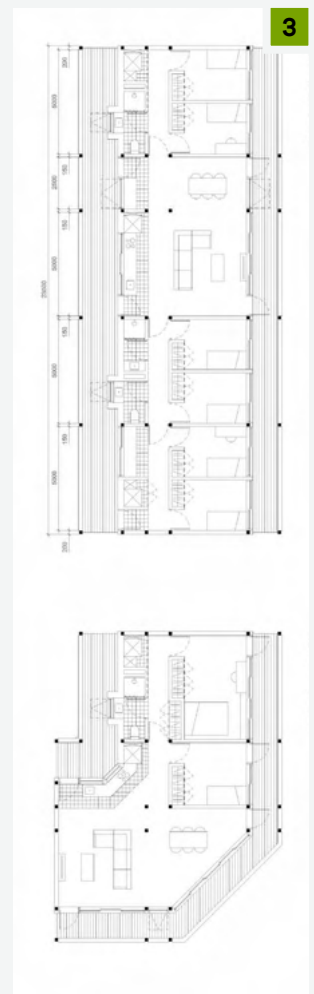
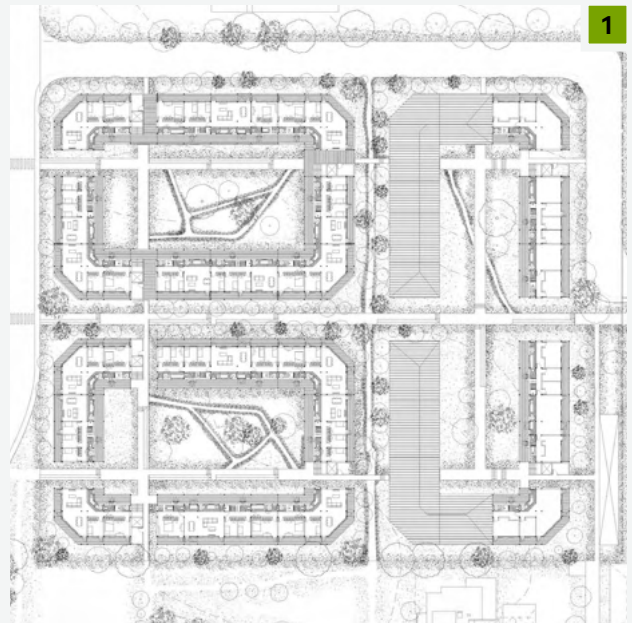
Apartments are laid out with an intentional transition from functionality interfacing the courtyard and walkway, promoting incidental engagement and passive surveillance, to spaces of relaxation and retreat facing outwards, including balconies that provide a private sanctuary surrounded by nature.

This synergises with the ambition for an efficient modular build, with a 'bar of amenities' providing a replicable spine of services and consolidating wet areas to simplify construction. This model establishes a uniform elegance that is dignifying for occupants while improving affordability.

Studio Leader: Education Fellow Mark Ng
Subject Coordinators: Assoc Prof Djordje Stojanovic and Education Fellow Simona Falvo

IMAGES

1. Site plan
2. External render
3. Sharehouse unit and corner unit floorplans
4. Internal render



Re:Frame Housing

Jazmyn Scharl, RMIT University, 2025

Re:Frame Housing imagines a framework for adaptable and economically responsive homes in Mooroolbark, a suburb in Melbourne's outer east.

Within the low-rise precinct, each apartment is anchored by a permanent service block that houses the dwelling's core functions. Beyond this service block, a replicable grid allows residents to adapt flexible spaces with the addition and removal of pods constructed from lightweight, recycled materials. Residents can release underutilised spaces back to the community land trust to be occupied through community and commercial micro-tenancies.

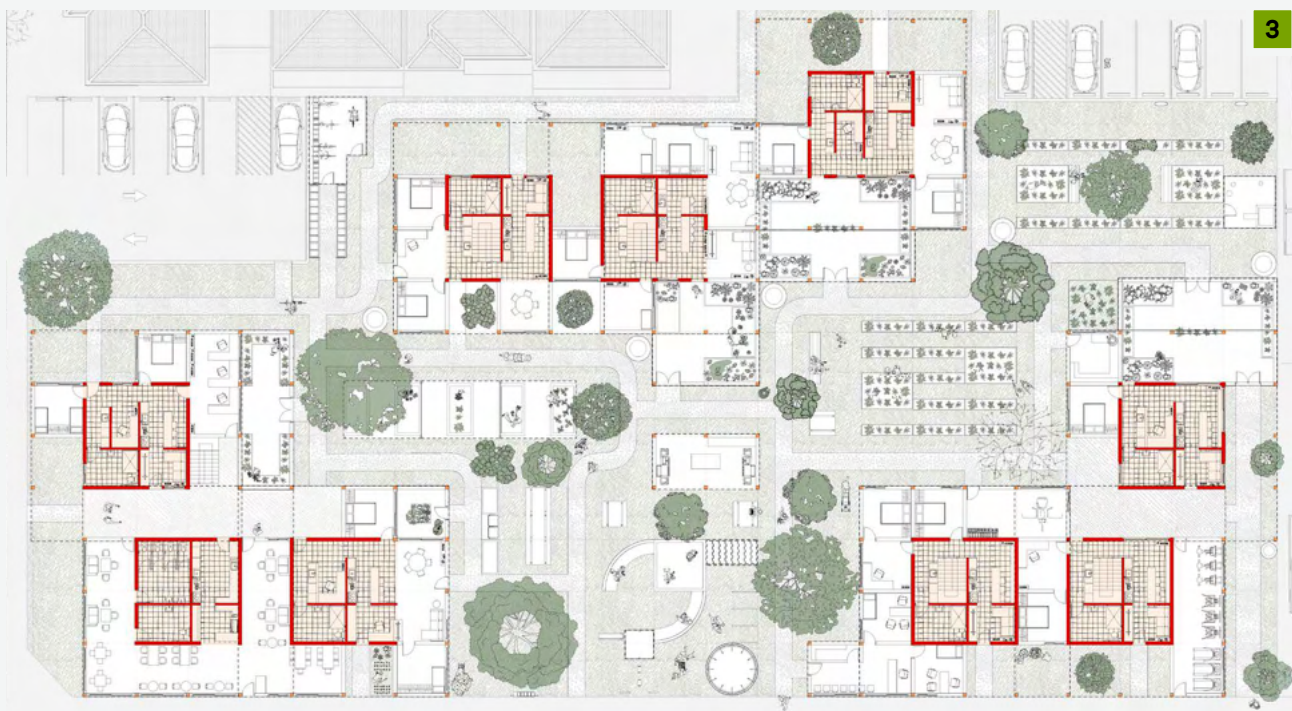
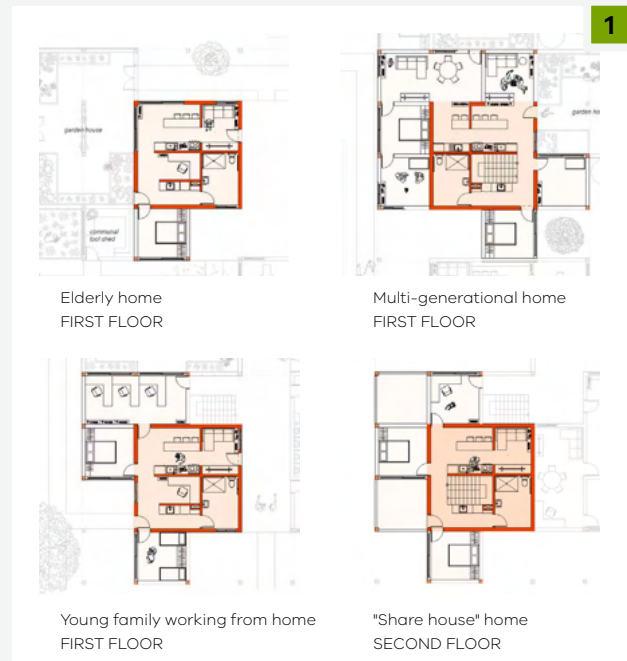
The precinct enables resilient small-scale economies to thrive while also establishing shared amenity for residents and the wider community. This is supported by the siting strategy, which enables generous productive gardens and integrates private spaces with the public realm, centred around a network of paths to facilitate connections across the site.

Tutor: Claire Scorpo

Subject Coordinator: Claire Scorpo

IMAGES

1. Floorplans for various occupant cohorts
2. Section
3. Site plan



From mixed-tenure developments to mixed-tenure neighbourhoods

Assoc Prof Lee-Anne Khor, Dr Liz Taylor, Dr Stefan Siebel, Daniela Tinios, Rashed Azizi, Monash University; Dr Stephen Glackin, Swinburne University; Prof Steven Rowley, Curtin University, 2023

The proposal, from mixed-tenure developments to mixed-tenure neighbourhoods, envisages a new approach to medium-density social housing in suburban contexts.

Acknowledging the challenges of lot-by-lot redevelopment, the project considers a broader social housing delivery strategy at a neighbourhood scale in Melbourne's north.

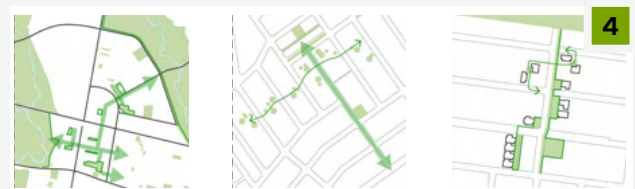
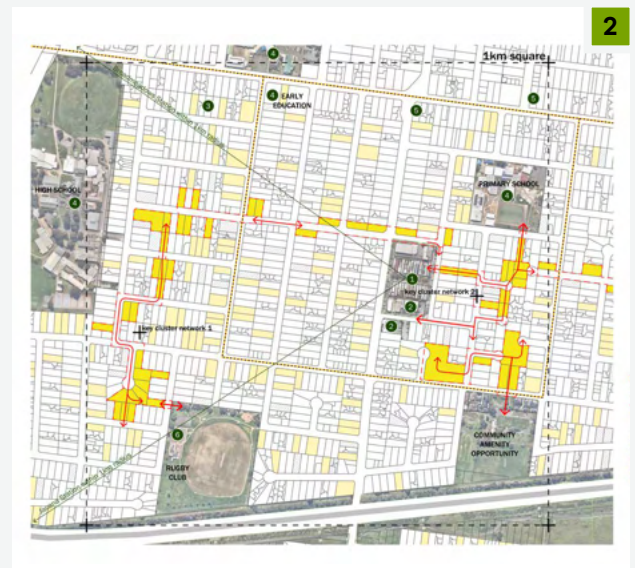
Mixed tenure neighbourhoods provide a replicable and flexible model for increasing the quality and supply of social housing, while enabling improved liveability outcomes for all residents. Broader community benefits include enhanced walkability through new pedestrian links, urban greening and increased housing diversity and density to catalyse investment in local retail areas.

Working at the precinct scale also enables the decoupling of car parking and homes to better utilise constrained sites and offer greater opportunities for land assembly, currently a key barrier to delivering healthy and neighbourly medium-density housing.

Funding organisation: Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited

IMAGES

1. Axonometric diagram of sub-precinct
2. Precinct context map
3. Detailed sub-precinct map
4. Ecological repair, open space and amenity networks





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