

DESIGN CATA- LOGUE

The title 'DESIGN CATALOGUE' is presented in a bold, black, sans-serif font, arranged in three lines. Each letter of the text is filled with a dark, almost black, background. Within these dark letters, various urban planning and infrastructure graphics are visible. The 'DESIGN' row features a network of thin, light-colored lines (green and yellow) and several small, bright orange circular nodes. The 'CATA-' row shows a similar network of lines, with a prominent horizontal orange line segment in the 'A'. The 'LOGUE' row is characterized by thick, wavy, light blue lines that flow through the letters, suggesting waterways or major transit routes. The entire composition is set against a solid, vibrant orange background.

SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES OF HIGH-DENSITY URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN EUROPE

SMALL-SCALE INFILL AND INDIVIDUAL ADD ONS

COURTYARD HOUSING AND MEWS DEVELOPMENT

HIGH DENSITY LOW-RISE HOUSING

HIGH QUALITY TOWER

LIVING WITH SHOPS

CITY BLOCK TRANSFORMATION:
RE-INVENTING THE FABRIC

SPECIAL TARGET GROUP HOUSING COMPLEX

BUILDING IN CONSTRAINED AREAS

URBAN GENERATOR

INTENSE SUBURBAN TYPES

PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND CIVIC SPACE

PARKING SOLUTIONS

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THE DESIGN CATALOGUE

SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES OF HIGH-DENSITY URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN EUROPE

Compiled for:
The 10 TEN study - Town centre Enhancement in North London

Commissioned by:
London Development Agency & Government Office for London

OCTOBER 2005 - DECEMBER 2006

INTRODUCTION

The London Development Agency (LDA) and the Government Office for London (GOL) have commissioned a study exploring ideas about how future growth could be accommodated in town centre locations in North London. The main output of the study is the report 'TEN: Town Centre Enhancement in North London'.

The study authors, Urhahn Urban Design, produced an informal design 'catalogue' of good practice from across Europe, both to support their work and as a reference for what could be achieved with imagination and careful implementation. Initially intended as a working tool for the design study itself, the catalogue was so well-received that the Boroughs involved in the study suggested its publication for a wider distribution.

'The Design Catalogue' - this publication - provides recent examples of urban enhancement and intensification. The examples range from small-scale infill to major urban redevelopment. Themes covered include public spaces and parking solutions, as well as building types and urban-mix programmes.

It is our hope that the catalogue will help persuade the reader that 'high-density' does not mean 'low-amenity'. Indeed, with good practice, high-density development is the very essence of the urban landscape.



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SMALL-SCALE INFILL AND INDIVIDUAL ADD ONS

Every city in the world at every stage in its evolution has its ‘left-over spaces’. They may be caused by economic or demographic changes leading to vacant plots, buildings or other dereliction. Such vacancies often present possibilities for redevelopment. These may arise within an existing building, on top of a building or even to replace a building.

Such small-scale interventions and additions are sometimes highly visible and iconic, but more often can go almost unnoticed. This does not diminish their value to the city. They provide a wealth of opportunities for adding homes, providing additional benefits, and maintaining the vitality of an area’s shops. They increase the intensity of urban life and help define the streetscape. Often, they give a unique chance to create important pocket parks and other small public spaces. While on their own not providing obvious transformation in an area, these small investments can help overcome dereliction and decline. The cumulative effect of such incremental actions is immense.

The infill and add-ons that we see in our cities often start with the imagination of private individuals who saw potential where everyone else just walked by. While attractive to smaller-scale investors because of their bite-sized nature, they can also be attractive for larger developers. Often, thoroughly-researched area surveys and strategies, as well as long-term encouragement and support from the public sector, lie at the heart of what seem to be spontaneous occurrences. However, no matter what their origin, such projects are always based on the crucial recognition that opportunities in the city are to be found not only in thinking big, but also in thinking small and smart.



CASTLE/WERBURGH STREET APARTMENTS, DUBLIN

De Blacam + Meagher

New housing qualities can be realised by extending existing buildings. A modest three-storey block is extended with a four to five storey addition that helps to define the street corner. The new apartments are of very high quality and add to the character of the street.



PENTHOUSE & GALLERY MEERT, BRUSSELS

Robbrecht + Daem

A penthouse is added to a warehouse that is reconverted into an art gallery. The project contributes to the vitality of the neighbourhood and potentially attracts new a new demographic to this part of the city. The addition of penthouses as an urban strategy can add variety and density without changing appearance at the street level.



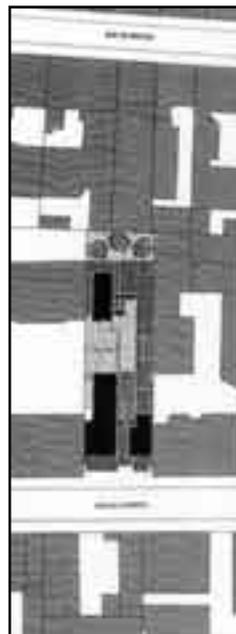


PENTHOUSE, SCHEVENINGEN

Archipelontwerpers

The three-storey main building blends in with the streetscape. To benefit from the sea view, the designers have added a two-storey penthouse - bringing variety to the area.

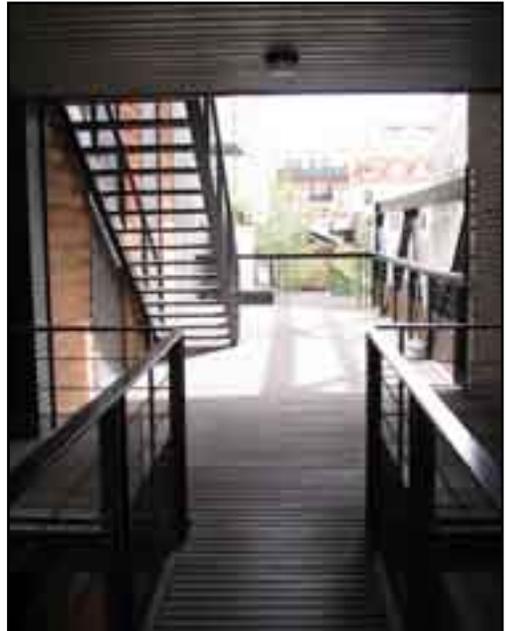




HOUSING RUE DE L'OURCQ, PARIS

Philippe Gazeau

In the urban fabric of central Paris, there are many individual sites that stretch for 40-50 metres inside the block. Such potentially difficult locations can become attractive housing. The positioning of the buildings and the application of decks and balconies create striking inner spaces and make it possible to realise attractive, light dwellings in an otherwise dense situation. On the street side, the project allows for a shop or bar, contributing to the variety of the streetscape.





TEMPLE BAR RESIDENTIAL TOWER, DUBLIN

De Blacam + Meagher

Complement or contrast in a complex, inner city environment? A carefully-crafted infill adds its own architectural expression and, while the density is very high, attractive housing can be added in a way that enriches the streetscape.





ONE CENTAUR STREET, LONDON

De Rijke Marsh Morgan

This block of four spacious apartments was constructed in a difficult location next to a major train viaduct. With its strong, concrete architecture the building stands out from its brick environment - and provides a secluded communal garden as well. The project has won several prizes, including the RIBA London Building of the Year Award, the Building for Life Award, and the AJ First Building Award.





JAN LUIJKEN ROOF EXTENSION, AMSTERDAM

Vissekoop Etalage & Projecten

Pre-fabrication can allow rooftop apartments without the usual burden of a lengthy construction process. The apartment arrived in two parts that were lifted on the existing roof within half a day. Subsequent finishing only required small-scale transport and construction services. The nuisance to the surrounding residents and businesses was thus minimised.





COURTYARD HOUSING AND MEWS DEVELOPMENT

We tend to appreciate courtyards and mews in other countries, while not recognising that they are an established and attractive option here. Both for conversions of existing buildings and for new developments, courtyards offer quiet, secluded environments for living in the middle of the busy city. The relation of a courtyard street frontage to the world inside is key. Many developments are invisible from the street. So the courtyard provides surprise and delight, as well as a highly-functional access strategy for the dwellings behind the street facade.

There are many different varieties of courtyards, with the character and configuration of the space dictated by surrounding buildings and plots. While the courtyard can provide interesting pedestrian short-cuts through the larger city block, the space tends to be more private - particularly in cul-de-sac mews. What all have in common, however, is the way in which large numbers of housing types can be added on very limited sites while maximising residential amenity. In traffic-dominated or otherwise unwelcoming urban areas, they provide the opportunity to create oases of good-living.

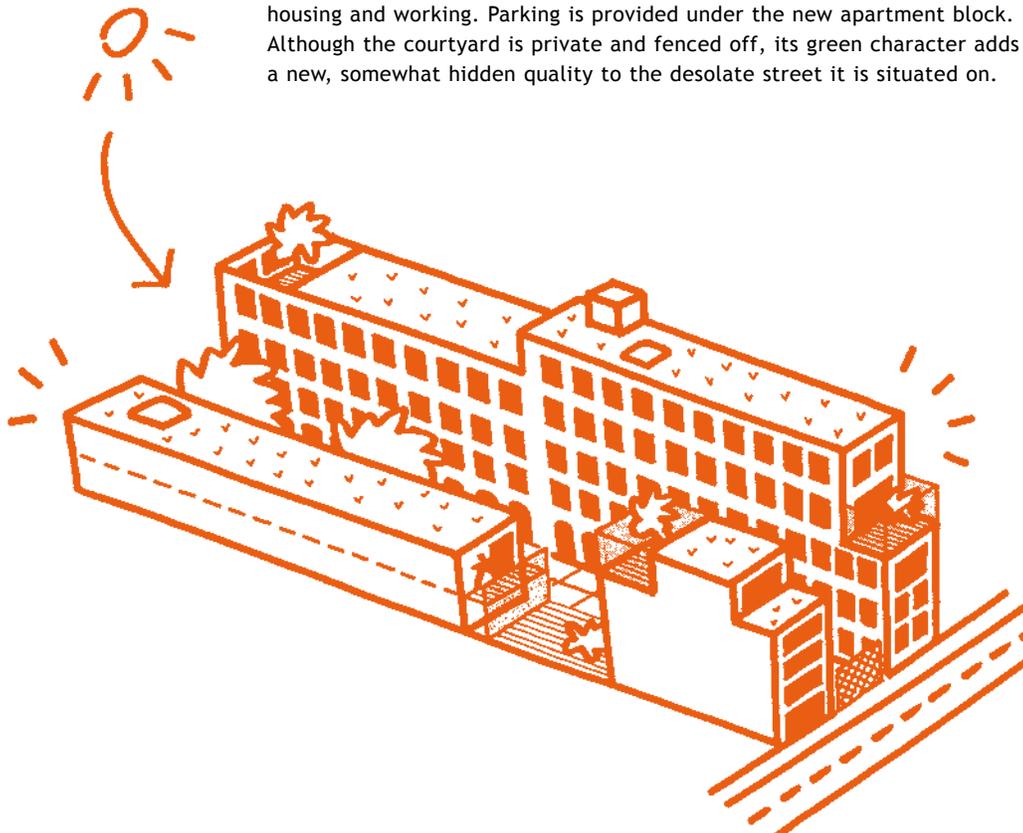
Courtyards and mews also often enable solutions to issues such as car parking, waste management or additional services to the residents.



ANYPLACE, ANTWERP

B-Architects

This redevelopment in one of the inner city quarters of Antwerp includes the conversion of two diamond factory buildings and the construction of a new apartment block on the street. The site measures around 80x25 metres. The existing factory buildings are reconverted into loft spaces for housing and working. Parking is provided under the new apartment block. Although the courtyard is private and fenced off, its green character adds a new, somewhat hidden quality to the desolate street it is situated on.





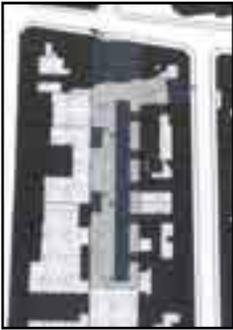
BREWERY SQUARE, LONDON

Hamilton Associates

This project consists of a number of interlocking inner squares around which - in total - about 200 apartments are situated. The ground floor is used for public functions and underground parking is provided. The expressive character of the architecture adds to the quality of the project, which also includes the refurbishment of some existing buildings.







RUE DES SUISSES, PARIS

Herzog & De Meuron

This project is an example of a deep, typically Parisian building block. Between two apartment buildings facing the street is a small passage leading into a courtyard, where a three storey strip of apartments has been built plus two individual homes. The contrast between the inner world and outside Paris is dramatised, creating a hidden second layer. Such a typology provides a template for realising increased density within the urban block.





HACKESCHE HÖFE, BERLIN

Berndt & Endell

This dense, urban block with a series of courtyards was revitalised and now houses bars, restaurants, cinemas, dwellings and workspaces. Its mix of uses contributes to the vitality of the surrounding area and has attracted new groups of visitors and residents. Initially, it was a low-cost area, but the success has raised prices and forced some of the pioneering artists and businesses to relocate.





RUE DE MEAUX, PARIS

Renzo Piano

A classical approach. The dwellings are situated around (and rely on) an inner courtyard. The green character of the courtyard reflects the quality of the housing. Its visibility from the main street enriches the streetscape, although access is restricted.





HIGH DENSITY LOW-RISE HOUSING

Low-rise does not mean low-density. Many recent projects have shown that the benefits of low-rise housing - individuality of the dwelling, clear ownership structures and optimal privacy - can also be achieved in very high densities.

Often used for larger urban extensions or comprehensive block redevelopment, high-density/low-rise housing gives opportunities for personalising each dwelling. In some cases, single plots can be purchased that allow each building to be designed and developed quite independently. Elsewhere, personal idiosyncrasies contribute to the diversity of the streetscape.

Private gardens or other types of outdoor space, an aspiration of many dwellers no matter how urban their lifestyle, are central to this and can still be provided at very high densities. Good design which achieves a degree of privacy and an enjoyable microclimate is crucial to create usable private outdoor space which truly adds value to the dwelling. But public open space is important too. The relation of each dwelling to the public space has to be determined, and a careful layout has to ensure balance between the shared urban environment and the individual home.



BORNEO-SPORENBURG, AMSTERDAM

West 8 & various architects

A former docklands area in the eastern harbour of Amsterdam has been redeveloped into a high-density, low-rise residential area to a masterplan by West 8/Adriaan Geuze. The area includes 2,500 housing units in three-storey back-to-back rows - carefully designed by a number of different architects - and three large landmark buildings or 'Meteors'.





GEUZENTUINEN, AMSTERDAM

FARO Architects

The post-war Western Garden Cities of Amsterdam are undergoing a process of restructuring. Geuzentuinen is one of the many redevelopments designed to meet the housing needs of today. Three blocks are organised around communal courtyards, with the units arranged to allow for optimal sunlight. This project combines a tower with the low rise apartment blocks, and reaches the high density of 138 dwellings on a site of 0.8 hectares.

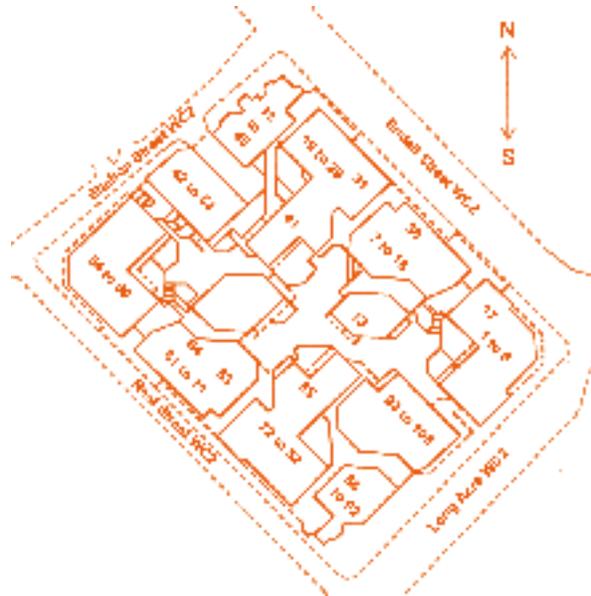




ODHAM'S WALK, LONDON

GLC Architects Department

Located in Covent Garden, 102 housing units sit above two levels of office and retail space. A series of interlocking courtyards link the quieter internal spaces surrounded by the apartments. The private spaces of balconies and terraces maximise privacy.





HIGH QUALITY TOWER

In many cities across the world, the extreme scarcity of space has made living in towers essential for central city locations. The high-rise apartment has become both inevitable and convenient. Elsewhere, the residential tower is actually experiencing a resurgence after having been associated with failed-mass housing strategies and bad design. Whether out of necessity or out of choice, many residents of towers enjoy their advantages. These inherent benefits need to be reconsidered and maximised if tower living is to become popular for a broader audience.

While the individual front door to the street has to be sacrificed, this is compensated by other characteristics. Not only can striking design provide a source of identity, but the individual apartment can be laid out in an imaginative manner and be made surprisingly generous. Further, the sheer number of dwellings within a single tower often provides the critical mass for services that many people aspire to have in the immediate vicinity of their home, but which are not readily available in lower-density layouts. Facilities such as a crèche or fitness centre can be provided on site, while more upmarket towers often include swimming pools and specialised concierge arrangements. Targeting a development to one specific audience with similar service demands may further increase this benefit.

Towers can be a positive addition to the wider urban environment. If carefully inserted into the built fabric, or complemented by a plinth that provides a visual and functional transition from tower to street, towers can become distinctive and popular landmarks that improve the identity of an area. In a well-integrated neighbourhood they add to the viability of local shops and services and thus become an asset for the local economy. Towers have much to offer - not only to their residents, but also to their surrounding communities.





HOGE HEREN, ROTTERDAM

Wiel Arets

These two towers, 'The Tall Men', occupy a key location in the centre of Rotterdam. They offer residents panoramic views of the river Maas. The 210 residents have luxurious amenities at their disposal, including a swimming pool, gym, sauna, work spaces, guestrooms, a stylish communal lounge, roof garden and a garage. Also, the apartments are equipped with an 'E-butler' - a computer to order services such as dry-cleaning and meals, and to do the shopping.





CÉRAMIQUE APARTMENS & OFFICES, MAASTRICHT

Alvaro Siza

A tower of 17 floors at the new Céramique site in Maastricht, the splitting of the tower into two slender cores creates an attractive landmark within the new city district. Each floor has three large apartments. One luxury penthouse occupies the top floor.





Image: Ole Jais

Image: Ole Jais



TURNING TORSO, MALMO

Santiago Calatrava

Turning Torso is - at 190m - the tallest building in Scandinavia, with 147 high service apartments and office spaces spread across 54 floors. A landmark not only locally but, on a clear day, visible across the Oresund from Copenhagen, residents have access to a shared function room, sauna, 24-hour service desk and their own wine cellar in the basement.



Image: Erland Andersson



LIVING WITH SHOPS

Living above the shop has always been a basic urban way of life. However, many flats above shops currently stand vacant because of inconvenient access arrangements, problematic outdoor space provision, nuisance issues and a generally negative perception. The model seems to have lost its appeal. However, recent projects have shown that, both in refurbished buildings and in new configurations, retail and dwelling space can successfully be reintegrated. This is true for both small-scale infill and larger urban projects. The crucial factor for success is to guarantee residential amenity within the dwelling.

For many, living in the midst of a vibrant urban centre has a strong appeal, and living in a mixed-use block above a central square undoubtedly makes the most of such a quality. A central location and the accessibility and immediate vicinity of other amenities are positives. Where issues of noise or smells from the activities below need to be resolved, the larger scale of these developments allows for comprehensive solutions.



SHOPPING CENTRE STADSHART, AMSTELVEEN

Atelier Quadrat and various architects

Amstelveen is a town south of Amsterdam, with mainly low density, residential neighbourhoods in a green and quiet setting. By building a mixed-use centre with shops, offices, cultural facilities and apartments, a new quality ('City Heart') was added to the city. The central space of the new centre connects the civic and commercial activities, while apartments and townhouses are provided above the shops.





MARIËNBURG, NIJMEGEN

Soeters Van Eldonk Ponec

Using the natural gradient allows for the creation of a double-level main street in the new centre of Nijmegen, doubling the effective shopping space. Housing is situated above the shops. A new library and cinema also form part of the development.





CIBOGA, GRONINGEN

s333

Two carefully-sculpted blocks with an open pedestrian space between them include 145 apartments. Shops and public services are situated on the ground floor and parking for 300 cars is located beneath.





MARKENHOVEN (VARA-STRIP), AMSTERDAM

Atelier Pro and various architects

A high-density development in the centre of Amsterdam comprises four blocks above public parking. Shops, galleries, restaurants and other public amenities occupy the ground floor at street level, while housing is situated from levels two to seven.





SHOPPING CENTRE GOOISCHE BRINK, HILVERSUM

Hans Ruijssenaars

This development combines a number of housing types above a shopping complex lit by a large atrium. The dwellings include some with a small business space, some with their own drive-in parking, and some with a garden. The housing is arranged so all units gain maximum benefit from the available sunlight.





CITY BLOCK TRANSFORMATION: RE-INVENTING THE FABRIC

Urban blocks are defined by more than just their perimeters. Their facades may help determine the essence of an area, but their characters may also be effected by what happens within. Recent transformations of entire city blocks show that interventions on the inside can in fact reinvent the urban fabric as a whole: strategies such as turning the block inside out and carving public walkways through the perimeter can create new environments for living, working and spending time in industrial or otherwise formerly inaccessible spaces. Entirely new spaces and routes are offered to the city, over time becoming part of everyday life.

The residential qualities can be courtyard-like with dwelling types ranging from lofts and apartments to high-density low-rise units with small urban gardens. Inner block public space provides the much sought-after urban oasis for residents and visitors alike, although care must be taken not to compromise residential security. Very high densities of dwellings and workspaces can be accommodated, often within a framework that goes beyond urban design and includes management agreements for the newly created space.

Such an imaginative transformation of a city block is often the outcome of a comprehensive renewal strategy, and requires a long-term outlook and commitment. Various partners, including different landowners, have to come together and agree to create a project that gives the city more than just a number of separate elements.



Image: Uniform



Image: BCA



Image: BCA Landscape

CAMPBELL SQUARE, LIVERPOOL

Brock Carmichael Architects / BCA Landscape

This mixed use regeneration project of 14 buildings produces 133 apartments ranging from loft conversions to luxury penthouses. A new public square acts as the centre of the scheme and becomes the focal point for new residents and visitors.





MARIAPLAATS, UTRECHT

Bob van Reeth

A block filled with a variety of housing types including patio dwellings, townhouses and apartments. A quiet interior world is created, accessed from the street via three small entrances. The internal spaces are reminiscent of the original layout of the neighbourhood.

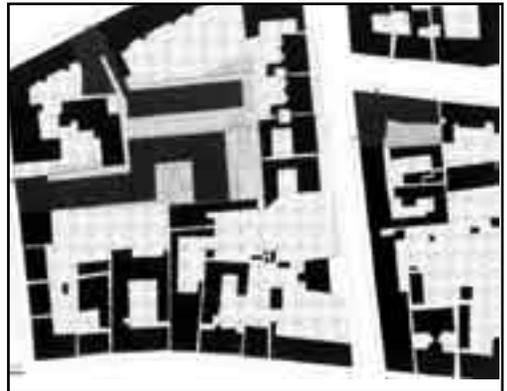




SARGFABRIK, VIENNA

BKK2

On the former site of a coffin factory, the complex offers a rich variety of services and living types. Facilities include a swimming pool, café, restaurant, 24hr crèche, small office spaces and a doctor's practice. They are open to the residents and to the surrounding community. The living spaces are varied - flat sharing for teenagers, flexi-boxes, and temporary accommodation for students - creating a rich and varied complex within a compact city block.

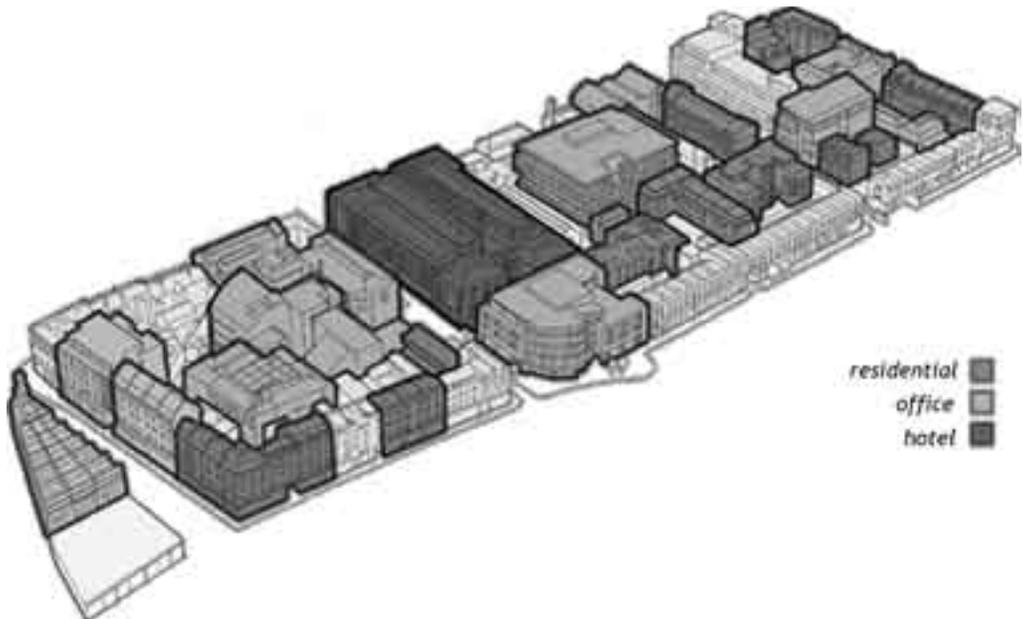




REGENT QUARTER, LONDON

P&O Development

A sympathetic use of an existing urban development maintains and re-uses much of the previous structure. The new facilities include an hotel, supermarket, work spaces, meeting places and apartments.





WG AREA, AMSTERDAM

Rataplan architects

A former hospital, designed originally as a small complex of buildings that could adapt to changing needs, has now become a living/working complex containing a café, school, various shops and an art gallery. Recent additions complete the area and add a variety of living types to the area, including housing for the elderly, studios and apartments with roof gardens.





OLD HAYMARKET, LIVERPOOL

Architect: Arkheoin, Developer: Urban Splash and Maritime HA.

The redevelopment of Old Haymarket - a previously run-down area in the heart of Liverpool - consisted of the upgrading and conservation of a Victorian city block. New homes and commercial uses are brought together in a sensitive mix of new build and conversion. Twelve retail units occupy the ground floor with 27 dwellings above accessed from a raised, secluded residential courtyard.





SPECIAL TARGET GROUP HOUSING COMPLEX

Different people have different housing needs and, while many needs can be accommodated within the regular housing stock, sometimes it makes sense to accommodate particular needs separately in a more specialist arrangement. For example, within a complex for senior citizens or others with special needs, independent or collective housing units can be efficiently provided with personal care or medical facilities.

Less a building style than a management and facility arrangement, these buildings or building complexes can take many forms and be located in different environments. They can be integrated in the everyday urban fabric, or form an entity of their own in a location with special qualities. Temporary accommodation and other unconventional solutions can sometimes be feasible, such as reconvertng a passenger ship for student housing units. Such solutions can be ideal for locations that would not be suitable for other groups.



CENTRUMPLAN BLIXEMBOSCH, EINDHOVEN

de Architectengroep

A new suburban neighbourhood outside Eindhoven has community functions and shops surrounding a civic square. Located above the supermarket is a special complex with housing for elderly people. Organised around a semi-enclosed winter garden, the sheltered space provides access to the apartments and also to the communal function room with a bar and games tables. This meeting point for special occasions overlooks the public square below.





WOZOCO EMERALD, PIJNACKER

Kees Christinaanse Architects & Planners (KCAP)

In this complex for elderly people, the housing is grouped around a central covered atrium: gallery access to the apartments also acts as balconies for the residents. The covered atrium allows a variety of plants to be grown and the space becomes the central meeting point for the residents.





GOLF HOUSING, HAVERLEIJ, DEN BOSCH

Soeters Van Eldonk Pone / Donald Steel

Spread over 90 hectares, this development consists of nine modern 'castles', each containing 60-70 homes. The rest of the development is given over to a golf course and a forest. It is a mixture of dense housing clusters spread across the green of the landscape.





STUDENT CONTAINER HOUSING, AMSTERDAM

JMW Architecten

Responding to the student accommodation shortage, the Amsterdam authorities made a number of sites available to developers on a temporary five to ten-year basis. In this development in the harbour of Amsterdam, accommodation is within specially-adapted shipping containers and in a reconverted passenger ship. Units for one person contain a shower, toilet, kitchen, a workspace and broadband Internet.





BUILDING IN CONSTRAINED AREAS

Sometimes the complexity of a situation necessitates a more comprehensive approach. In particular, corridors of road and rail infrastructure blight their surroundings - not only by the noise, pollution and feelings of insecurity associated with them, but also because development projects that could ameliorate their impact require a scale and scope of investment that is not always available. However, successful projects in various contexts show what can be achieved if the vision and commitment of different partners can be harnessed.

Large-scale buildings provide both the physical mass to bridge, shield or wrap around infrastructures, and the critical development mass to make such schemes financially viable. They create real places in what would otherwise be 'junk-space', dominated by traffic flows and lost to the city.

Often, the challenge becomes an opportunity as these places, dilapidated when empty or underused, become landmarks where users are willing to pay a premium for optimal visibility and the innovative and daring image that such buildings rightly carry.



HET FUNEN, AMSTERDAM

Architecten Cie

Situated between a railway line and a canal in the eastern inner city of Amsterdam, two large complexes ranging from five to eight floors shelter a quieter inner area from the rail and road. The inner world or the 'Funenpark' contains 16 different apartment buildings. The development has 565 dwellings with a number of office and workspaces opening onto the street.





A10 OFFICES, AMSTERDAM

PPKS architects

As part of a wider regeneration of post-war housing, these two office buildings span the A10 ring road around Amsterdam. The buildings reconnect the neighbourhood that had become separated by the motorway: they also provide the occupiers with an iconic building along one of the busiest roads in the Netherlands.





URBAN GENERATOR

The separation of dwelling, workspace and retail units is central to conventional present-day planning, but it has become increasingly accepted that these separations are often rather blurred in life itself. The notion of the live-work unit is a relevant example, but there are more. The generation and dissemination of the creative ideas that crucially underpin contemporary urban economies need physical proximity to others with similar ideas. 'Urban generators' act as incubator spaces where entrepreneurial energy - whether for cultural, social or for economic ends - can be captured, accommodated, concentrated and cross-fertilised.

What matters for such places is physical form as much as management and facility arrangements. The inhabitants of such spaces often want the freedom to combine living, working, socialising and the exchange of ideas in flexible and concentrated spaces. Moreover, they might want to share certain facilities, even basic ones such as kitchens or a washing machine, since ideas are often explored on a tight budget. Specialist business advice and a guarantee of affordable rents could also be part of such an arrangement. The urban generator provides all this within a very small space and is inherently dense. As such, it is a microcosm of the city itself.



CONTAINER CITY 2, LONDON

Urban Space Management

Built in 2002 at Trinity Buoy Wharf adjacent to Container City 1, with inter-connecting bridges, this part of the development has a lift and full disabled access. Container City 2 is now home to a creative community of artists, photographers, designers and many others, occupying 22 studios over five floors.







STADSWERF NIEUWENDAM, AMSTERDAM

BOA constructie

In the redevelopment of a boatyard in the north of Amsterdam, the existing buildings have been renovated into live-work units. In each a split-level space is created without any interior decoration. The shell is left to the future inhabitants to organise as they wish. The project is now home to a number of small businesses becoming a creative enclave in the city.





PLANTAGE DOKLAAN, AMSTERDAM

Broedplaats Amsterdam

This is a pilot project in Amsterdam to create 'breeding places' for ideas and creativity. It is situated in a former squat where working and living together in a creative community forms the main theme. Residents have their own studio live-work space and share a large central hall and roof garden. Events organised by residents are held on a weekly basis and are open to the public.





EUROTWIN BUSINESS UNITS PAPAVERWEG AMSTERDAM

Claus en Kaan

Two identical buildings, each with room for seven office units and ten business units, form a base for start-up companies. The office and business units are separated. The offices occupy two small towers with a shared entrance lobby, while the business units along the ground are accessible by vans. The buildings clad in treated Canadian timber are distinct from the surrounding warehouses, giving the occupiers a smart image for their starter business.





DESIGNCENTER DE WINKELHAAK, ANTWERP

Manders & Pittillon

A local council initiative to stimulate growth in a deprived neighbourhood, the new building provides workspaces for start-up companies. The centre provides shared services such as a porter's desk and exhibition spaces and the companies also get a shop window to display their work.





INTENSE SUBURBAN TYPES

Suburban environments can take many forms. The assumption that density decreases with distance from the urban core or nearby town centre is not necessarily true. Indeed, suburban locations can accommodate a richness in forms and dwelling types - campuses of high-rise buildings surrounded by parkland, or compact multi-unit urban villas in a green setting, for example. Along some main roads and if public transport access allows for it, apartment buildings can achieve the same fabric and density as in town centres, while retaining a distinctly suburban sense of spaciousness and quiet, characterised as they usually are by a more residential pattern of use.

The diversification of the suburban fabric can happen through area redevelopment as well as through selective building on the edges of suburban parks, which are sometimes underused. This will achieve, apart from increased densities, a more varied aesthetic which will arouse the interest of dwellers and visitors, and which can give suburban areas a stronger identity.



CHASSÉ AREA, BREDA

OMA

A campus model is applied to the organisation of a unique part of the city. City functions are located along the edge towards the city centre; the housing consists of a number of different complexes in a relaxed green setting close to the water. Each building was designed by a different architect, creating a variety of living types and building forms.





MALCHOWER WEG, BERLIN

Hans Kollhoff & Elga Timmermann

Two city blocks contain 16 urban villas each housing eight apartments. The villas surround a central collective courtyard with a playground and sitting areas. The buildings create a unique image in an otherwise bland 1980s neighbourhood.





IL GIRASOLE, ROME

Luigi Moretti

The 'Palazzina' responded to the need for high-quality apartments in Rome in the early 1900s. Moretti's Girasole comprised three buildings each organised around a central staircase, with four apartment per floor. Over the years the luxury apartments have been taken over as offices and workspaces, an example of a flexible use that can accommodate various urban conditions.





PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND CIVIC SPACE

If town centres and other urban areas are to be enhanced rather than just made denser, a high quality of public buildings and space is a necessary counterpart to increased numbers of dwellings. We all need spaces for relaxation and contemplation, to watch others, to create opportunities for informal meetings of friends and strangers, and as attractive routes for everyday pedestrian and cycle movement. Equally important is the ability to stage the public, cultural and political events that form a break with the everyday, and that give meaning to life in the city.

Public buildings such as libraries, theatres and town halls should be considered an integral part of this public domain. These buildings do not simply accommodate their function, but also act as extensions of the street and the square, to which they offer an aesthetic frontage. It has been shown that public buildings can be corner stones for urban change, providing points of identification for residents and opening the way to an improved environment. The image of an area changes and aspirations for future development are raised if a new or improved public building or open space gives the right signals. They put areas 'on the map' and catch the imagination of new groups of potential residents.

At the same time, public spaces and buildings need a density of residents in their immediate surroundings to be successful: as islands by themselves, insufficiently embedded in everyday use of space and activity patterns, they will fail. In other words, public life and private living are mutually dependent. Therefore, when showing examples of successful residential projects, the importance of complementing them with equally imaginative and unorthodox public buildings and spaces cannot be overstated.



PECKHAM LIBRARY, LONDON

Will Alsop

Winner of the Stirling Prize, this bright and playful building brings a welcome splash of colour to the streetscape. The building houses a community library, adult education services and a media centre. The location of the building away from the street creates a new public space, providing a new focal point within Peckham.



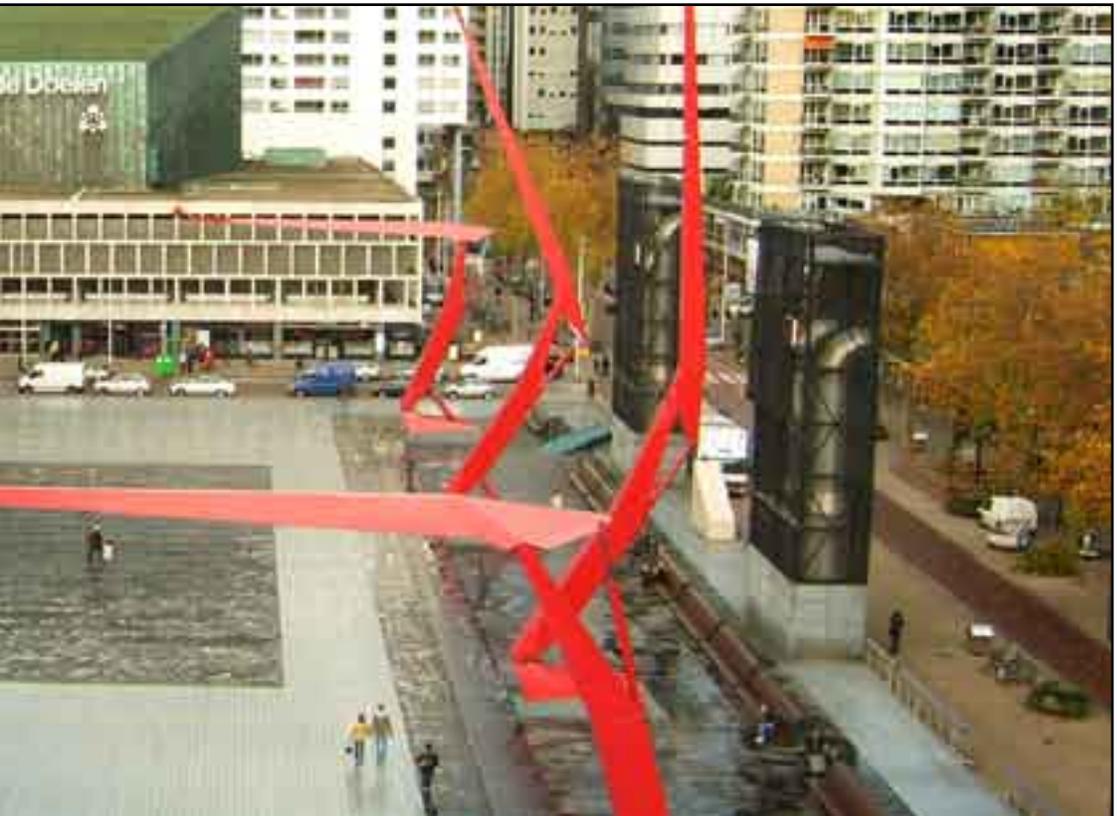




SCHOUWBURGPLEIN, ROTTERDAM

West 8

A new civic space in the centre of Rotterdam, Schouwburgplein is host to many different events and festivals throughout the year. The square, integrated with a cinema complex, contains parking beneath and carefully-detailed seating around its edges. Four adjustable red metal lights, which can be controlled by visitors and users of the space, give the public the opportunity to interact with the city.





MEETINGHOUSE SQUARE, DUBLIN

Group 91 Architects: consortium of 8 architectural practices

Group 91 Architects, a consortium of 8 architectural practices, submitted a collective proposal to rebuild the Temple Bar area in the centre of Dublin. Meeting House Square is located in the area. It forms one of the many meeting places throughout Temple Bar. It is an intimate place that can become an outdoor cinema, theatre, gallery or a food market.





LIBRARY CENTRE CERAMIQUE, MAASTRICHT

Jo Coenen

A modern cultural centre and meeting place housing a library, exhibition spaces, lecture halls and cafés: this is the cultural keystone of the development of this new city quarter in Maastricht. The library sits on the edge of a new public square. Its large glass façade displays its inner activity to the public passing by.

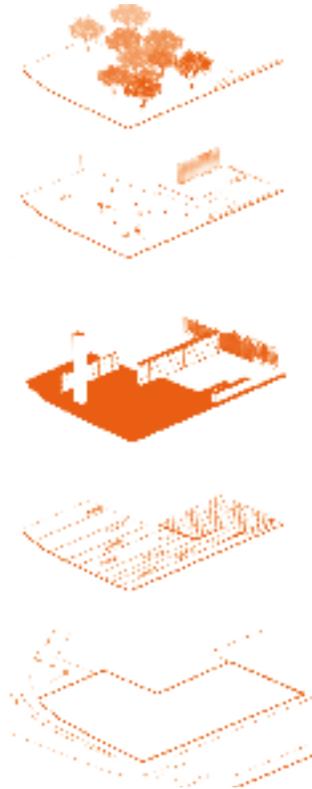




WHITEINCH CROSS, GLASGOW

Gross Max

A carefully detailed square defined by two walls, a steel frame and a 12m tower of light. The materials of cor-ten steel reflect Glasgow's shipbuilding heritage. A number of chairs are scattered around informally under existing trees. The square was commissioned as part of Glasgow being the city of architecture and design in 1999.



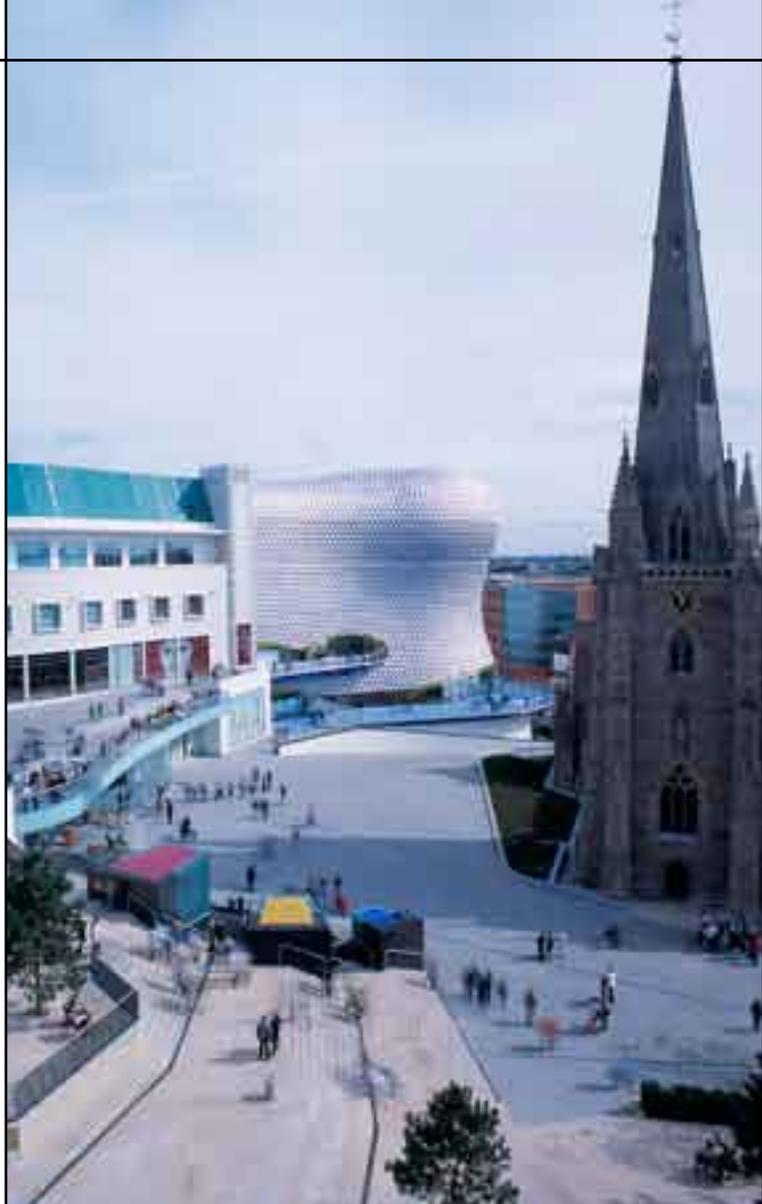


MUSEUMPLEIN, AMSTERDAM

Sven-Ingvar Andersson

The Museumplein is a large green space sitting between the old centre and the early twentieth century urban extensions. The vast space is surrounded by museums and cultural buildings, and accommodates many large events through the year. It has a large car park and supermarket underneath.





BULLRING, BIRMINGHAM

Gross Max

As part of a large redevelopment of the centre of Birmingham, this project brings a much-needed revitalisation to the historic quarter. The public spaces create places for meeting, gathering, performance and rest. A number of commissioned artworks enliven the spaces. Strong contemporary architecture gives this once-maligned area a new and positive outlook for the future.





PARKING SOLUTIONS

Current suburban housing in North London sees the car occupying most of the space in front of dwellings, with many gardens now paved over. This leads to many previously-green suburban housing areas transformed into ugly concrete and car-dominated landscapes. One of the most important aspects of contemporary urban design is how to accommodate the car without letting it take over our public spaces.

The solutions shown here are not the only ones included in the Design Catalogue. Many of the other projects throughout the catalogue offer the innovative provision of car parking.



VONDELPARC, UTRECHT

Mecanoo

An urban design for new housing in Utrecht, the design places the cars in a half-sunken garage with a wooden deck above. The housing is accessed by means of a raised deck. This becomes the main collective space for the residents - the timber deck with a number of openings for trees brings a special quality to the scheme.





HUNNERSTAETE, NIJMEGEN

Mastenbroek & Van Gameren

Another approach is to park cars on the roof of the apartment complex. The car park is accessed by a lift. The parking deck is suspended above the roof of the building so as to minimise noise to the residents. This solution proved to be cheaper than underground parking and freed space on the ground to create a small public park.





MERCATORPLEIN, AMSTERDAM

Kuiper Compagnons

The redevelopment of a square in the west of Amsterdam creates new parking spaces underneath the open area. The south-western edge of the square is tilted to allow vehicle access.





PARKING GARAGE OSSENMARKT, GRONINGEN

Bureau Noorderbos

The Q-Park underneath the public square of Ossenmarkt in Groningen has a spiral form. Customers enter via an outer downward spiral and exit via a central upward spiral, passing all the available spaces on the way. The Q-park has won awards for its efficiency.



SMALL-SCALE INFILL AND INDIVIDUAL ADD ONS

COURTYARD HOUSING AND MEWS DEVELOPMENT

HIGH DENSITY LOW-RISE HOUSING

HIGH QUALITY TOWER

LIVING WITH SHOPS

CITY BLOCK TRANSFORMATION: RE-INVENTING THE FABRIC

SPECIAL TARGET GROUP HOUSING COMPLEX

BUILDING IN CONSTRAINED AREAS

URBAN GENERATOR

INTENSE SUBURBAN TYPES

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