The changing environment for multiple dwellings …

Making it a change for the better

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LGPA Breakfast Forum
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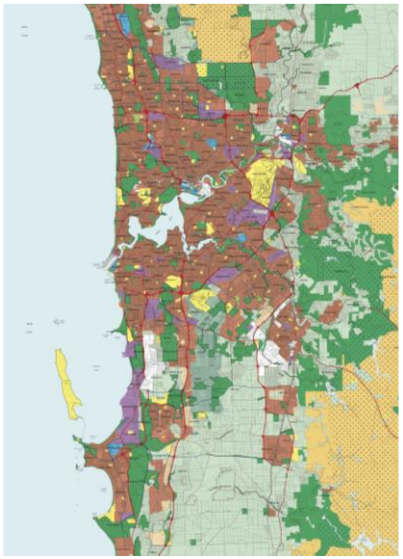
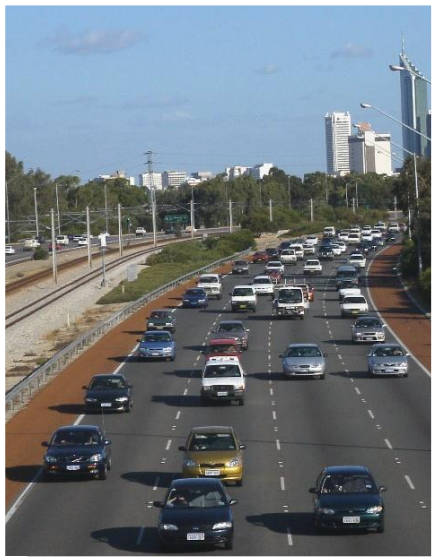
Architecture – it's what much of a city is made of

Suburban planning - the hallmark of a city with an outwards trajectory





So … what will it look like?

Vague guidelines = vague places

"Visual interest shall be achieved through articulation of the primary street elevation"

"Colours shall respond to the surrounding area"

"Buildings shall be human scaled"

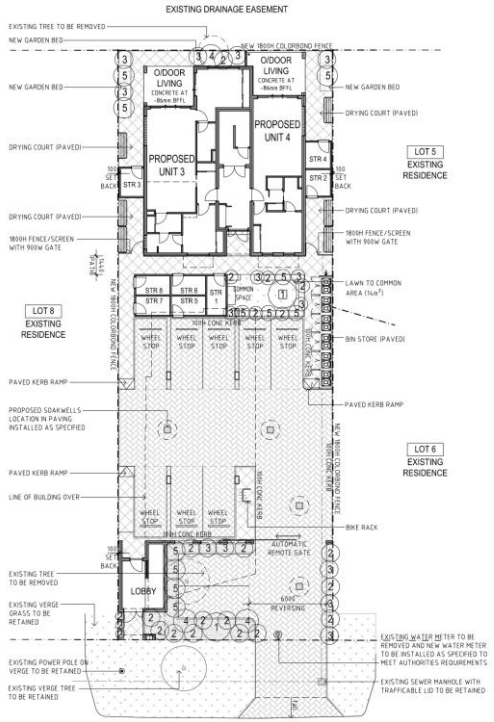
"… a landmark building"

"… an architectural element or feature window on the corner …"

"… a gateway feature"

"The built from shall contribute to an active, vibrant and sustainable community"

At the approvals coal face – an open slather …



Common design issues

- Poor streetscape – ground floor frontage composed of garages, bin stores, screen walls and fire hydrants, rather than habitable rooms.
- Buildings with no front doors.
- Visitor parking in the setback - what works in a low-density suburban context doesn't work in a higher-density urban context.
- Living areas and balconies with no outlook.
- Long, illegible dark corridors with sub-standard fire escapes access.
- Inappropriate height interfaces over the back fence.
- No cross-ventilation.
- Internal bedrooms (technically allowable but a poor outcome).
- Poorly located stores.
- Dependence on car-stackers.
- A/C condensers on balconies in full view of the street.
- A lack of understanding or appreciation of context.
- Density in places where car use is still essential.
- Try-hard architecture.

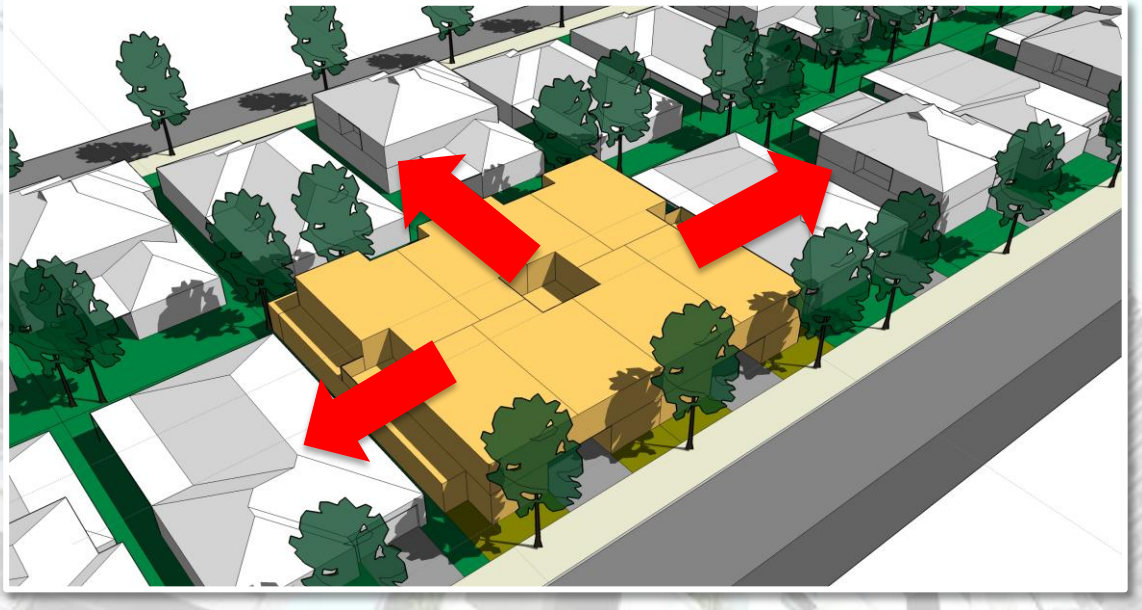
Architecture = Appearance = Opinion

Testing community reaction

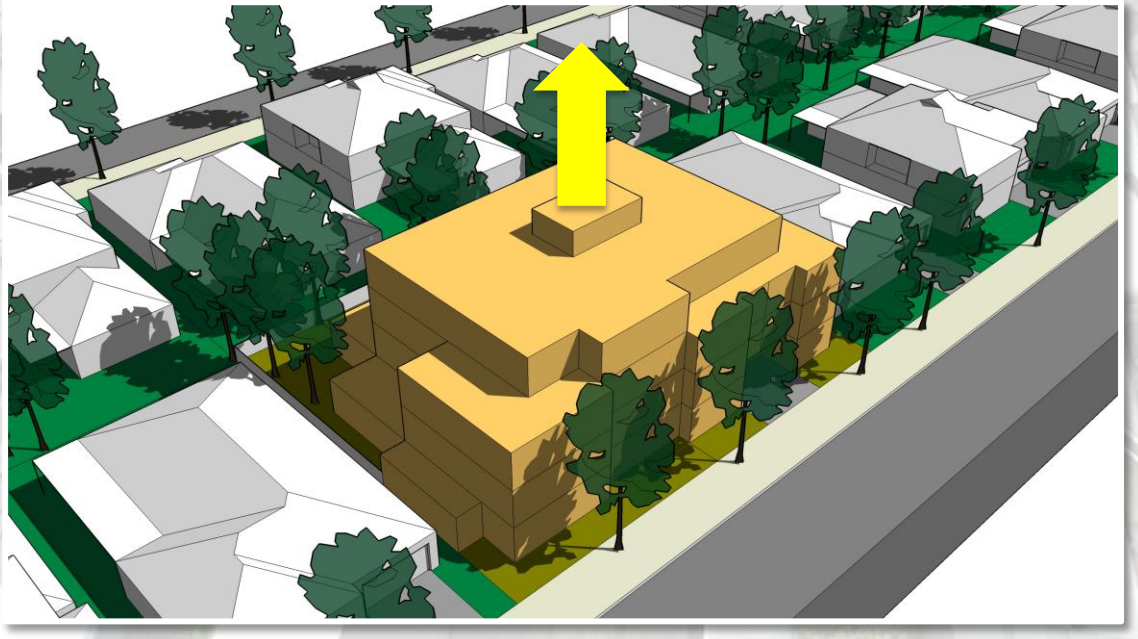
Some ways to make it better

- Make greater use of design advisors, whether through Design Advisory Committees or a ‘City Architect’ role.
- Introduce design-specific policy.
- Introduce meaningful design guidance for places with a particular character.
- In-house education for Local Government officers and elected members.
- Educational reform that provides greater integration of the teaching of planning and architecture.
- Listen to the community.
- Work with the development industry.

A fear of heights



Height restrictions forces development out to the boundaries – diminishing the amenity of residents and their neighbours.



Height (at the front of the lot) can deliver open space to the rear, create more value, and enable more architecture to contribute to the street.

Getting better architecture

Good design advice and more height is encouraging better architecture.

The next step is to encourage architecture that the community can be proud of…