

STOCKLAND CAMMERAY

The following assessment of Stockland Cammeray was undertaken to see whether it was an appropriate model for the Planning Proposal at Northwood Neighbourhood Centre and what aspects could be helpful in achieving the best outcome possible.

Description of the Project

Stockland Cammeray is a mixed use development at the corner of Miller Street and Amherst Street Cammeray. Miller Street runs north / south and Amherst Street runs east /west. The Warringah Freeway runs along the southern boundary parallel to Amherst Street. The site is relatively flat and is approximately 7,000 m². The area immediately surrounding the site is also relatively flat. The project has underground car parking; ground floor retail, three levels of apartments in Blocks A, B and D and three levels of commercial above the retail in Block C.

The development is designed as four separate blocks around a central courtyard. Block A faces Amherst Street; Block B which faces Miller Street; Block C which faces the Warringah Freeway and Block D North and South faces the courtyard and the side boundary to the west. These blocks all align with the streets and boundaries they face and they create a simple square courtyard in the centre of the development.

The central courtyard is surrounded by retail and is approximately 40 metres by 40 metres. Home to some outdoor eating, a sculpture and gardens it is sheltered by Block C from the noise source of the Warringah Freeway which, although at a lower level, is very noisy. Outdoor eating is also located on a small podium, sheltered by a hedge, along the Amherst Street frontage.

Apartments

The buildings are effectively four floors but there are setbacks to the fourth floor in some places. There are a total of 39 apartments. Block A has 7 apartments. Block B has 16 apartments Block D North has 8 apartments Block D South has 8 apartments.

Retail and Commercial

There is retail on the ground floor of all blocks. In Blocks A and B the retail addresses Miller and Amherst Streets as well as the courtyard. In some cases this retail space is occupied by "through" shops, in other cases the shops are back to back. In Blocks D and C the retail only faces the courtyard.

The retail mix is diverse and well related to the socio economics of the area. The anchor tenant is Harris Farm. It is located in the far south / west corner of the courtyard in Block C. It is diagonally opposite the main pedestrian entrance and adjacent to the car park pedestrian entrance. A pharmacy is located next door. This faces the courtyard and Miller Street.

As well as Harris Farm and the pharmacy there are approximately six restaurants/ cafes; upmarket delicatessen and patisserie; a butcher; a book shop; hair and nail salons and an optometrist.

A childcare is located on the two upper levels of Block C with medical and dental facilities on the first floor.

Pedestrian Entrances to Apartments and Commercial

All four apartment blocks have separate entries .The apartments in Block A are entered from the courtyard The apartments in Block B are entered from Miller Street The apartments in Block D North and Block D South are entered from the courtyard. The commercial suites in Block C are entered from the courtyard.

Pedestrian Entrances to Retail

The main pedestrian entrance is a diagonal entry at the corner of Miller Street and Amherst Street. This wide entry tapers slightly and provides direct views into the courtyard. There are two other entries, one from Miller Street and one from Amherst Street. These provide direct and highly visible access into the courtyard adjacent to Block C from Miller Street and Block D from Amherst Street. These entrance-ways are approximately 2 metres wide.

Vehicle Entrances

The entrance to the public and resident car parking is from Amherst Street along the western boundary. There is timed public car parking for 76 cars. First 2 hours free. Amherst Street has 1 hour meter car parking on both sides of the street.

"Back of house" for the development is effectively along the southern and western boundaries.

Context

Stockland Cammeray is situated at the southern end of the Cammeray shopping centre. This is a traditional Victorian high street shopping strip located along Miller Street. Cammeray shops serve the local population, a population that has a high disposable income .The shops have been upgraded over recent years as the area has become more desirable. Shop top apartments have added to the

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vitality of the centre. The surrounding areas of Cammeray and North Sydney have many medium density apartment buildings and townhouses.

The Cammeray centre is highly accessible in terms of the Sydney CBD. The access to the Warringah Freeway to and from the city and North Sydney is in Miller Street in close proximity to the Stockland Centre. The last bus stop for the express CBD busses and the first bus stop after the expressway from the city are located in Miller Street. Harris Farm has provided a "convenience shop" for workers returning home. The outdoor dining is also a strong attraction.

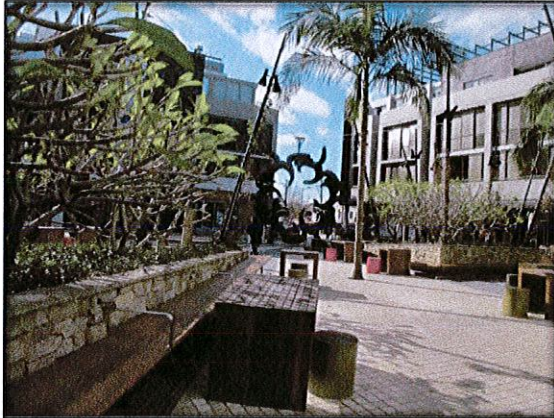


Figure 6.1: Courtyard looking to main entrance



Figure 6.2: Courtyard looking from main entrance

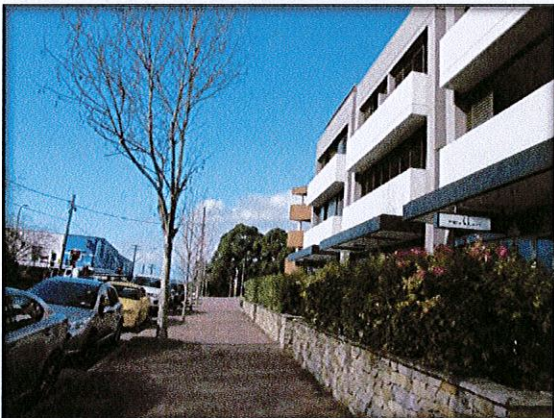


Figure 6.3: Amherst Street looking east

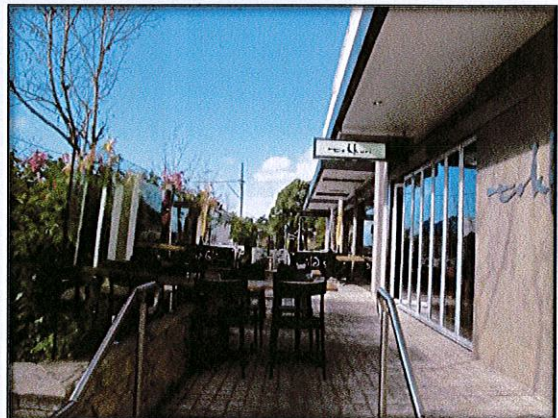


Figure 6.4: Amherst Street looking east

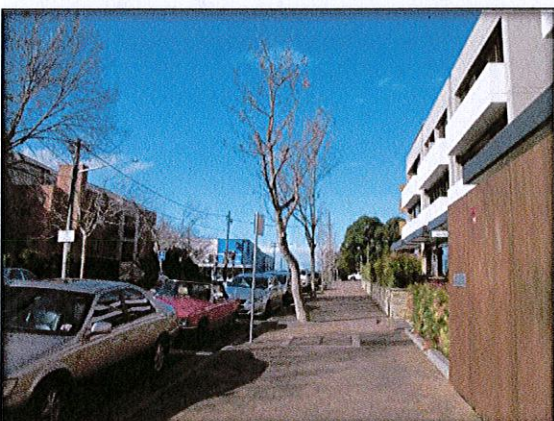


Figure 6.5: Amherst Street looking east



Figure 6.6: Corner of Amherst and Miller Streets looking west

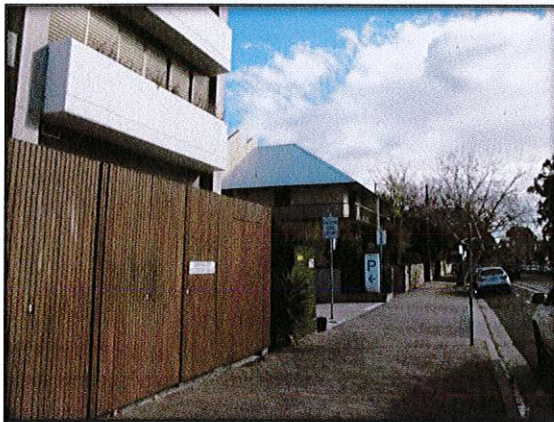


Figure 6.7: Amherst Street vehicular entrance looking west



Figure 6.8: Entrance to Apartment Block D



Figure 6.9: Courtyard looking south-west to Harris Farm

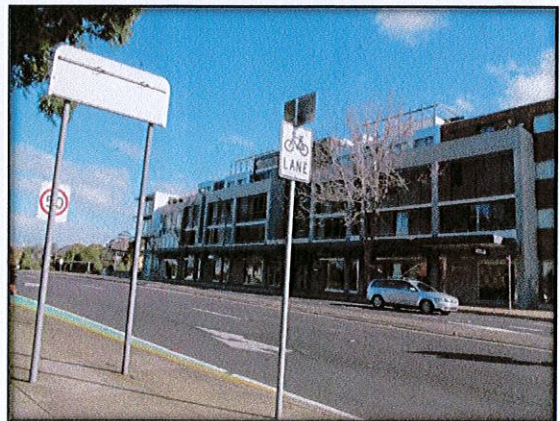


Figure 6.10: Miller Street frontage

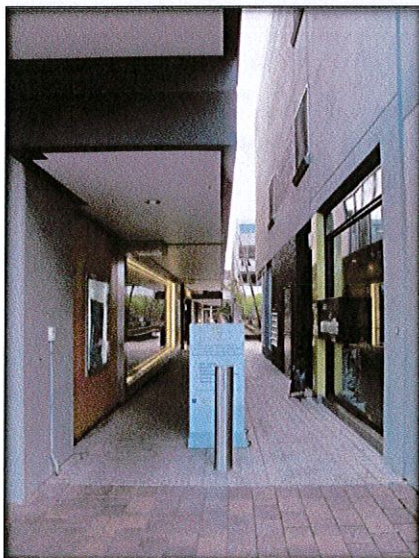


Figure 6.11: Entrance from Miller Street

Comparison with Northwood Neighbourhood Centre

The four major differences between Northwood and Cammeray are:

- The street pattern;
- The surrounding density and uses; and
- The surrounding amenity.

The Street Pattern

Miller Street is very powerful street in terms of its integration in the urban fabric. It is a "global connector" and effectively runs from McMahon's Point to Roseville and although it does pass through some hilly terrain many cross streets link into it.

Furthermore the street pattern of which Miller Street is a part consists of a strong fully linked grid around Cammeray. This ensures easy access from many nearby places. Cammeray shops and the Stockland Centre are embedded in this highly accessible network.

The combination of Northwood Road / River Road West / Longueville Roads are also strong connectors but this overall system is not as well connected as the Miller Street system. The River Road system is approximately 6 kilometres so not as long as Miller Street at 8 kilometres. Also the terrain immediately adjacent to Northwood Neighbourhood Centre has a very limited number of cross streets unlike the much more integrated street system around Cammeray. The street pattern around the Northwood Centre only has an accessible grid to the western side and the land generally is hilly and less conducive to walking.

The Surrounding Density and Uses

The density of development around Cammeray is higher than at Northwood / Longueville. Many more apartments have been developed and much of the older housing stock consists of terraces and small lot housing.

Cammeray has the added advantage of being co-located with an adjoining existing shopping centre. Both developments can support each other.

The Surrounding Amenity

While Cammeray has high urban accessibility and amenity Northwood has in the Eastern Precinct a very beautiful outlook over the Lane Cove Country Club and in the Western Precinct a very beautiful outlook over Central Park. It also has accessibility to Lane Cove River via bush tracks and yet is so

close to the CBD. The long frontage to the Lane Cove Country Club provides a wonderful amenity for residential that is accessible but not conflicted with noise.

Lessons from Stockland Cammeray

There is no doubt that Stockland Cammeray is an excellent example of infill mixed use development and it would add so much to Northwood and its environs if something similar could be established in Northwood Neighbourhood Centre.

Stockland Cammeray is well designed. The entrances into the centre are clear and legible. The buildings are not dominant and they define a very attractive spatial system that is clearly public. There is an excellent mix of uses and sufficient retail to make the centre a destination. It has the added advantage of being embedded in a strong street network. This makes it easier to make the retail / commercial work.

Stockland Cammeray shows:

- the importance of:
 - the alignment of buildings within their context.
 - clearly defining public and semi public (restaurant outdoor eating) and private spaces.
 - creating a clear roofline against the sky (easier on a flat site than a sloping site).
 - buildings addressing the streets and / or public spaces that they face.
- that:
 - entrances to the residential and commercial uses can work very well from a public space that is not a street.
 - the amount of and mix of retail as well as the right anchor tenant are critical.
 - the combination of upmarket residential and retail can work very well.
 - some retail " dual sided " retail can work effectively.

The Planning Proposal for the Eastern Precinct has many of the attributes that are evident in Cammeray. It too is well designed, has clear legible entries, clear skyline and is well aligned to streets and public spaces. It has, with Harris Farm, the beginning of a good retail mix.

At the moment it lacks a defined space edged by retail at ground level on Northwood Road. An internal plaza similar to Cammeray is one option but it maybe that given the qualities of the Northwood site a linear "belvedere" plaza overlooking the bushland could provide a wonderful public

space. This would also reflect the beautiful topography, introduce a point of difference in terms of the retail opportunities and add to the enjoyment of the residents and the community. It would also provide a different response to more conventional shopping centres. This possibility needs to be tested by design, drawings / models etc.

The development will require:

- sufficient retail to ensure that it is a destination as it will probably rely on this more than Cammeray and
- the maximum amount of residential that can be achieved while still complying with the design principles because it does not have the level of nearby density that supports Cammeray.

For Northwood Neighbourhood Centre to be more attractive and offer a more accessible life style increased residential density around the centre would be helpful. This needs to be targeted and discrete. There are opportunities in close proximity but there may be conflicts between feasibility, urban form and existing land prices in Lane Cove.

CONCLUSIONS

The Methodology

As stated previously: *In its role as a neighbourhood centre, Council envisages that Northwood will undergo a change in building form, use and density. The principles discussed in this report are based on the assumption that:*

- *this part of Lane Cove is moving to a mixed use centre with a denser housing form and a more diverse retail offering.*
- *every urban area should be designed to establish the Desired Future Character in terms of the three-dimensional built form and spatial structure prior to setting the planning controls. not every precinct with a similar zoning will be able to accommodate a similar amount or form of development.*
- *not every site with a similar amount or form of development will be equally feasible.*

The above assumptions are valid not just in Northwood but in all urban areas undergoing change. This is particularly true when precincts move from a lower density to a higher density; different building typologies and to new and different uses. To ensure that the Desired Future Character is capable of being developed it is necessary to:

- state the Desired Future Character.
- establish, using a design process, the three-dimensional built form and spatial structure.
- test the three-dimensional built form and spatial structure to ensure that it meets amenity, social ,environmental objectives and establish the feasibility over time.
- if satisfactory set the planning controls.

This process is the established methodology in most western countries. It was used in Pymont Point, Hurstville CBD, Beverly Hills DCP and Auburn Town House DCP.

The NSW planning method of allocating a FSR and height across a zone regardless of the proposed uses (non specific), ownership, subdivision pattern, topography, natural features and building typology is only appropriate for suburban dwellings. It is not appropriate for urban environments. All the above factors can have major impacts on whether a good urban form is achievable and / or feasible and all these factors vary across a zone. Site area alone is not a good starting point for determining FSR.

There may be a conflict between feasibility and the desired outcome. Many sites in Sydney are not able to be developed because it is not feasible and may not ever be feasible. As an example, a

- other sites in the precinct have already been developed (the apartment blocks) or if not developed are not adversely impacted by the Planning Proposal (The Riverview Animal Hospital and Veterinary Clinic).
- the Planning Proposal:
 - is a scheme of architectural quality prepared by leading NSW architects and an excellent example of mixed use urban infill.
 - opens up the views of the bushland and Lane Cove Country Club for the enjoyment of all.
 - provides high quality housing in a discrete manner.
 - is built on land that has been previously developed.
- the Planning Proposal requires modification to:
 - is built on land that has been previously developed.
 - reduce the height of the rear building to ensure that it is only one storey above the height of the building facing Northwood Road.
 - provide sufficient retail to ensure that the proposed complex becomes a destination.
- the FSR should be derived from the final agreed form.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NORTHWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

Street and Block Pattern

To ensure that the history of the development of the area and the topographical features can be read and to improve legibility:

- retain and enhance the existing street grid.
- introduce a new pedestrian connection between Northwood Road and the Conservation Zone.
- introduce a new street / pedestrian connection between Northwood Road and Kenneth Street to the Western Precinct to create a finer grain.

View Corridors

- Provide a view corridor from Warraroon Reserve through Central Park and the Centre to the Lane Cove Country Club and Lane Cove Bushland Park up and over Northwood Road. The view corridor could be via a street or a combination of streets and pedestrian connections.
- Provide a view corridor from Northwood Road to the Lane Cove Country Club and Lane Cove Bushland Park through the development on the Eastern Precinct. The view corridor could be via an arcade or a pedestrian connection.

View Cones

- Retain the expansive view from the corner of Woodford Street and Kenneth Street.
- Introduce expansive views from the rear of all developments in the Eastern Precinct to the Lane Cove Country Club and Lane Cove Bushland Park.

Siting, Arrangement and Form of Buildings

The buildings are to be organised with "build to" lines, footprints, setbacks, alignments and height which define the street and open space system, both public and private:

Alignments

Western Precinct

Align all buildings:

- to continuously follow the street pattern along Northwood Road and / or Kenneth Street. Depending on uses in the development at the upper levels it may not be possible to follow the street frontages continuously in Kenneth Street as well as Northwood Road.
- to continuously face and address the open space systems of Central Park and the Longueville Sporting Club.
- to create positive spaces internally within the sites between the buildings in the private and / or public areas.

Eastern Precinct

Align all buildings:

- to continuously follow the street pattern along Northwood Road.
- to follow the open space systems of the Conservation Zone Lane Cove Country Club and Lane Cove Bushland Park.
- to create positive spaces internally within the sites between the buildings in both the private and public areas.

Fronts and Backs

Western Precinct

Locate:

- fronts of buildings to face the streets and public spaces. This applies to Northwood Road, Kenneth Street, Central Park and the Longueville Sporting Club.
- backs of buildings to face backs of buildings.
- dual frontage buildings where required to address two frontages.

- backs or sides of buildings adjacent to the southern boundary.

Eastern Precinct

Locate:

- fronts of buildings to face the streets and public spaces. This applies to Northwood Road and the Lane Cove Country Club and Lane Cove Bushland.
- backs of buildings to face back of buildings.
- dual frontage buildings where required to address two frontages.
- sides of buildings adjacent to the southern boundaries.

Set Backs

Building setbacks should respond to the future uses, street hierarchy, street proportions including building height and desired future character.

Western Precinct

- Set buildings with retail at the ground level on street frontage.
- Provide building set backs from the southern boundary.
- Site the building at the intersection of Kenneth Street and Northwood Road with no setback for the height of the building so that it reinforces the corner.
- Site the opposing building at the intersection of West River Road and Longueville Road in the Northern Precinct with no setback so that it reinforces the corner. Ideally the building on this site should be four or six storeys.

Eastern Precinct

- Provide a setback of six metres from the northern boundary.
- Provide a setback of ten metres from the eastern boundary.

Ground Plane

The interface between the ground plane and the ground floor of a building should be carefully considered in relation to both human scale and levels.

Western Precinct

- Design the ground-floor levels of buildings to respond to differences in site levels through considered detail design.

Eastern Precinct

- Terrace the precinct into a series of podium levels to enable the buildings to sit appropriately and reflect the topography and historic development of the Planning Proposal site.

Density

Density should be optimised relative to the desired future character and the site conditions.

Western Precinct

- Determine an optimum FSR related to building envelopes and spatial structure / uses etc related to the site conditions / ownership. Option examples tested in this report estimate the FSR of 2.2:1 to 2.29:1.

Eastern Precinct

- Determine an optimum FSR related to building envelopes and spatial structure / uses etc. related to the site conditions and ownership patterns. An FSR of 2.5:1 is feasible for development on the Northwood Road site for which the Planning Proposal applies.
- The Riverview Animal Hospital and Veterinary Clinic site may not achieve this FSR. This site has not been tested.

Height

The height should relate to and be a balance between the street width and public and private spaces, views within and outside the precinct, the organisation of the buildings one to another the heritage precinct, the topography.

Western Precinct

- Ensure that the building on the corner of Northwood Road and Kenneth Street is the tallest building in the Northwood Neighbourhood Centre. Tested Options suggest six storeys. This is also related to a residential use and a viable footprint.
- Generally locate four storey buildings along Northwood Road and Kenneth Street.
- Ensure that the buildings further south on this site are of a slightly lower height than the corner building. The Options tested suggest four storeys however this testing was based on residential uses and considered issues of amenity, overlooking commercial uses may be able to successfully work at five storeys depending on the southern boundary set back. Design and test whether an additional one storey height on the rest of the site is appropriate. This will depend on uses, building footprint and any adjacent development.

Eastern Precinct

- Locate four storey buildings along Northwood Road.
- Locate buildings at the rear of this site so that they are not visible from Northwood Road and there is a clear skyline. Buildings which are one storey higher than the Northwood Road buildings in terms of the RL, will achieve this.
- Locate buildings at the rear of this site so that buildings in Northwood Road are not visible from the Lane Cove Country Club and there is a clear skyline. Buildings which are one-storey higher than the Northwood Road buildings in terms of the RL, will achieve this.

Access

Western Precinct

- Agree access points from Northwood Road with the RMS and Council.

Eastern Precinct

- Agree access points from Northwood Road with the RMS and Council.

Safety and Surveillance

Western Precinct / Eastern Precinct

- Design buildings to follow the principles for siting, arrangement and architectural resolution, which will minimise any potential for crime.
- Provide additional detail in the design to address lighting; paving, security access to car parks and buildings, including the design and use of stairs and balustrades in public areas.

Landscaping

- Select and organise vegetation as to define and complement:
 - the public and private realms.
 - the scale of the spatial structure and proposed building typologies.
 - climate and maintenance regimes.

APPENDIX: AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Jan McCredie

This report has been prepared by me Jan McCredie for EG Property Group. I hold Masters Degrees in Architecture and Urban Design and a Diploma in Town and Country Planning. I have held senior positions in the private sector, and directorships in Local and State Government in Australia and New Zealand. My specific expertise is urban design and the relationship between urban design, planning and architecture. I am a passionate advocate of the role of design as a basis for planning and have detailed technical knowledge of the implications of planning controls on design and development outcomes. I have had extensive experience in stakeholder liaison and community involvement in the planning process. I am an experienced public speaker and presenter.

Key Achievements

I was responsible for the Pymont Point Master Plan. This Master Plan was the first design based Master Plan in Australia and won 1997 "Urban Design in Australia" awarded by Australia Council of Building Design Professionals.

My position as Director Urban Design Advisory Service (UDAS) Dept of Planning NSW provided me with the opportunity of implementing the Premiers Design Excellence Programme and developing SEPP 65 and the Residential Design Flat Code (RFDC) regarded highly across Australia.

In Manukau, New Zealand the challenge for my role as Group Manager of the Urban Design Group at Manukau City Council was to establish the planning framework from a strategic structure to the detail of the public domain in order to transform a "mall" city to an "urban" place. The Manukau City Centre Built Form, Spatial Structure Plan and Public Domain Manual provided a way that the city could capitalise on its location and the arrival of a train service by being connected back into the urban fabric.

As City Strategy and Urban Design Manager at Wellington City Council in 2010, I initiated The Wellington City Spatial Structure Plan (SSP) 2040 and Framework based on a city wide consultation strategy. This work used design at the scale of the city inclusive of transport, community facilities, environment and built form through to the public domain. The Wellington 2040 SSP was received by the community and Council with enormous support and is available on line www.wellington2040.co.nz/making-it.../central-city-framework.

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Memberships

I was made a Life Fellow Australian Institute of Architects in 2011 and I am a Member of the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA).

Awards

I received The Marion Mahoney Griffin Award (2010) by the Australian Institute of Architects for "her lifetime commitment to urban design, her passion as an educator, and her integrity and vision".

I have received numerous awards for projects including 2005 PIA-Strategic Urban Design National Award, "Coastal Design Guidelines". 2006-Australian Institute of Landscape Architects-Auburn Public Domain Framework 2001 RAPI-Planning Scholarship Research or Teaching -Mixed Use and Residential Subdivision Publications, 2001 RAPI-Presidents Award-"Safer by Design, 2000 Australian Property Industry (API) Award: Public Practice 2000 RAPI-Gold Medal Award for best conference presentation for "Can You Legislate for Good Urban Outcomes?", 1998 IMM The Sydney Morning Herald Management Excellence Awards Team Management "Focussing on Customer Service".

Publications

I had carriage of the following UDAS publications: The Residential Flat Pattern Book; The Residential Flat Design Code; Mixed Use Development; Residential Subdivision Design Guidelines; The NSW Coastal Design Guidelines and worked with Prof. Peter Droege on "The Design Dividend".