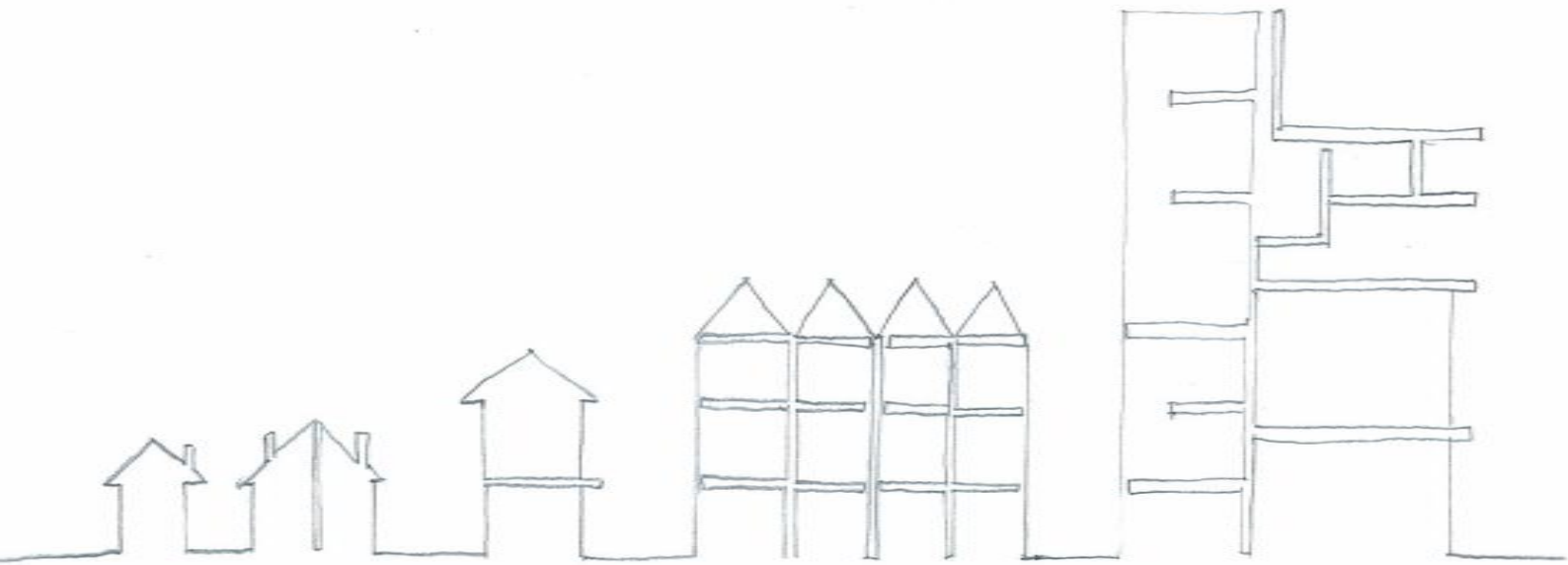


Consolidating the Australian Dream: Reconfiguring the Multi-Unit Housing Network



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Thesis Abstract

In promoting urban consolidation, Australia's strategic urban plans have the unintended consequence of reducing, if not eliminating, an individual household's capacity to directly engage with new dwelling production. Contrasts exist between the production processes of a free-standing home, typically constructed to contract, and that of a multi-unit building, typically speculatively designed and sold off-the-plan; with the latter removing the capacity for future occupants to directly influence dwelling function or design.

Hence, in providing a vision of higher-density urban communities, Australia's strategic urban plans arguably contribute to a disjunction between the function of higher-density dwellings and the individual households who seek to call them home. In response, a small number of Australian households and industry professionals have proposed alternative production processes to realise multi-unit housing suited to future occupants' collective needs.

This thesis examines the relational network of social and technical actors in existing multi-unit housing development. Structures of housing provision are visualised through an actor-network lens, and network relations are analysed to identify which (or what) network actors (or actants) influence design decisions, particularly regarding dwelling function and cost. The existing actor-network is compared with those of four alternative Australian cases. Employing both network analysis and primary interview data, impediments to collective self-organised housing in Australia are identified. Comparison of the actor-networks of the alternative cases recognises different types of network change in each case, reflecting participants' motivations and resources, with associated variation in outcomes. Means of addressing the impediments identified in the Australian cases are drawn from two international cases, building groups in Berlin, Germany and collective custom build in the United Kingdom.

The thesis argues successful consolidation of the Australian Dream advocated by contemporary urban planning policies requires that future residents be provided with greater capacity to influence design decision-making within the multi-unit structure of housing provision. Drawing lessons from the alternative cases, it proposes reconfiguring the actor-network of multi-unit housing to enable this to occur. The comparison of Australian and international case studies builds knowledge applicable to the development of policies and programs promoting collective self-organised housing in Australia, with relevance also to other dwelling densities.

The actor-network visualisations developed to represent the structures of housing provision under examination in this thesis provide unique insights in these cases and, with further development, may prove equally useful to other research examining the complex web of social and technical actors in housing systems.

Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide.

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Jasmine S. Palmer

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List of Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ANT	Actor-Network Theory
APRA	Australian Prudential Regulation Authority
ASIC	Australian Securities and Investment Commission
BG	Building Group/s
CCB	Collective Custom Build
CHCA	Commonwealth Housing Commission Authority (Australia)
CSO	Collective Self-Organised (Housing)
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government (UK)
DTPLI	Department of Transport Planning and Local Infrastructure (Victoria, Australia)
du/ha	Dwelling units per Hectare
ETHA	East Thames Housing Association (UK)
GbR	Gesellschaft des bürgerlichen Rechts/Civil Law Association or Partnership (Germany)
GFC	Global Financial Crisis
GLA	Greater London Authority
GmbH	Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung/Company with Limited Liability (Germany)
GSW	Gemeinnützige Siedlungs-und Wohnungsbaugesellschaft/Former City of Berlin housing company
HA	Housing Association
HCA	Homes and Communities Agency (UK)
IPD	Integrated Property Developer
IFD	Industrial Flexible Demountable (Housing Construction Programme, The Netherlands)
IS	Information Systems
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau/Reconstruction Loan Company (Germany)
LVR	Loan-to-Value Ratio
MDH	Medium-Density Housing
NaCSBA	National Custom and Self Build Association (UK-formerly NaSBA)
NaSBA	National Self Build Association (UK)
NBBA	Netzwerk Berliner Baugruppen Architekten/Berlin Network of Baugruppen Architects
NCDC	National Capital Development Commission (Australia)
NGW	Netzwerkagentur GenerationenWohnen/Network Agency for Generational Living (Berlin)
ODASA	Office for Design and Architecture South Australia
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPP	Obligatory Passage Point
ROI	Return-on-Investment
SGA	State Government Architect
SNA	Social Network Analysis
SoP	Structure of Provision
STG	Socio-Technical Graphs
TPD	Traditional Property Developer
UK	United Kingdom
UKCH	The United Kingdom Cohousing Network
UTATUT	Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology
VAT	Value Added Tax
WEG	Wohnungseigentumsgesetz/Condominium Act (Germany)
WPI	Women's Property Initiative (Australia)