



Introduction - *Tallagandra Trees* Storyboard

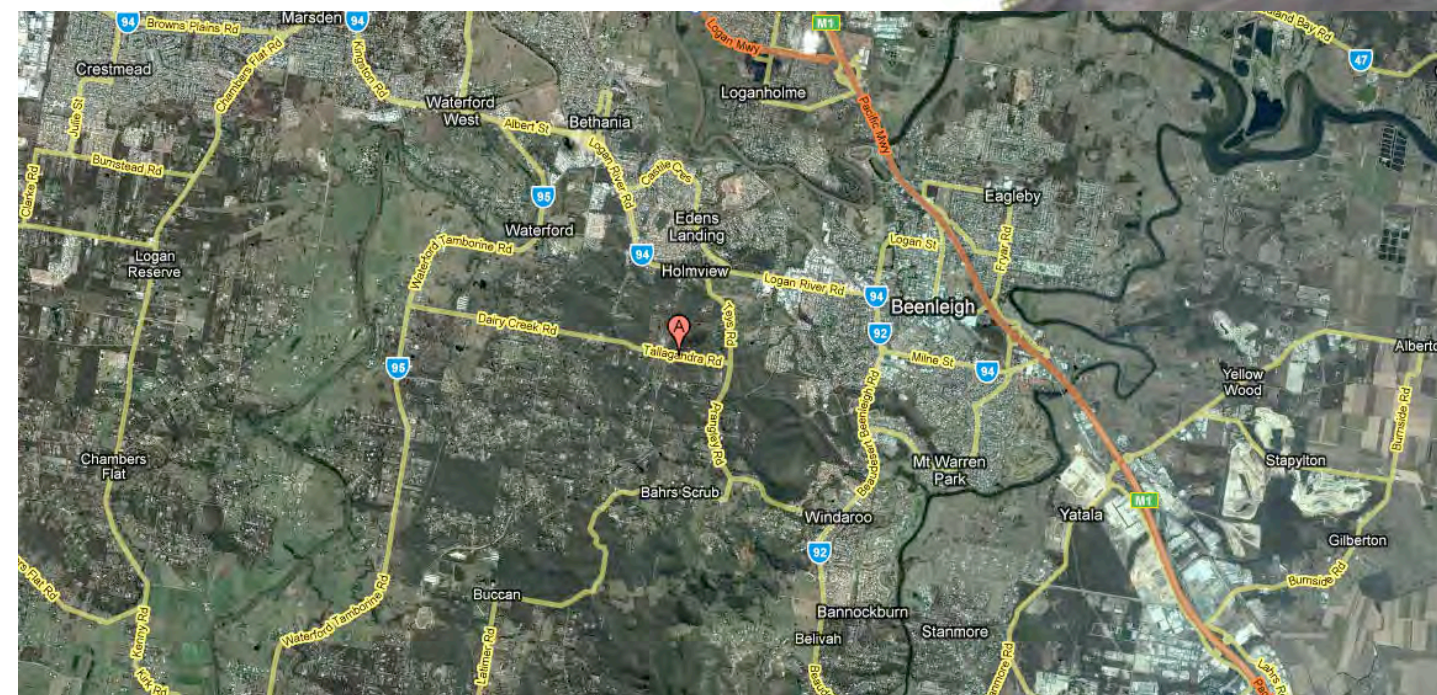
The purpose of the Story Board is to provide a transparent and comprehensive record of the process begun in 2003 to develop a property located at 258 Tallagandra Road, Holmview. The property has been the home of Helen Holmes and Joseph O'Flaherty for 36 years. It is a 20 acre bush block with two water courses crossing it.

The main focus of this storyboard will be to document the design development and decision-making processes related to this development including:

- History of development proposals between 2003 – 2009 including interactions with Gold Coast City Council
- Record of interaction between Social Habitat and their client Helen Holmes and Joseph O'Flaherty
- Negotiations with Logan City Council relating to the development application for the land;
- Record of meetings and negotiations with other consultants and other agencies;
- Development of marketing strategy.

This is an ongoing record like a newsletter or visual minutes of a process rather than a document that is changed and edited over time.

Note this development process did not begin with this document.



1. Storyboard

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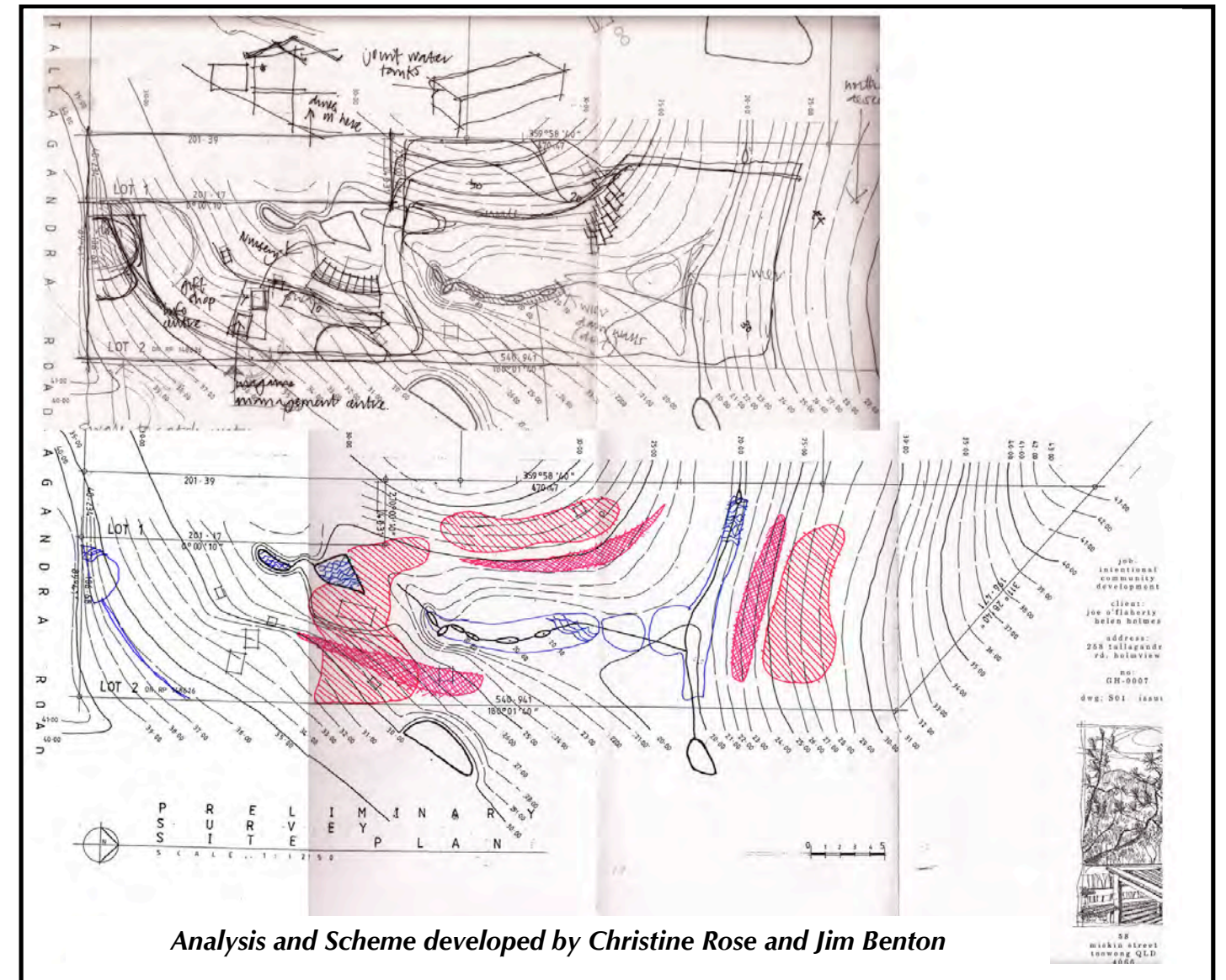
History of 258 Tallagandra Road Holmview

- The land was previously part of a grazing property; a large portion of the property was cleared.
- At some period in the past a part of the property was used as a shooting range, there are the remains of two ridges signifying this.
- Joe O'Flaherty and Helen Holmes purchased the 20 acre block at 258 Tallagandra Road Holmview for 36 years ago.
 - The property has regenerated significantly in the intervening period.
 - They have raised 10 children on the property;
 - A series of dams were constructed along the minor North-South watercourse to secure water for the property.
 - Joseph has run a Veterinary practice, on the land.
- In 2003 *The SE Queensland Regional Plan* was released and opened up the option of the land being subdivided and developed.
 - During 2003 a number of large developers ran seminars and made substantial offers for the property.
 - In late 2003 Gilbert (Helen and Joe's son) introduced Jim Benton and his then partner Chris Rose to Joe and Helen. They conducted a contour survey and with the assistance of Tim Low (a well known biologist) they conducted



an ecological survey of the property. As a result of this work they suggested a low scale Community Title development with a maximum of around 30 dwellings that largely retained the bush and could handle its own effluent disposal onsite.

➤ Although it wasn't further presented as a Development Application this plan was warmly welcomed by the GCCC as ground breaking and very timely.



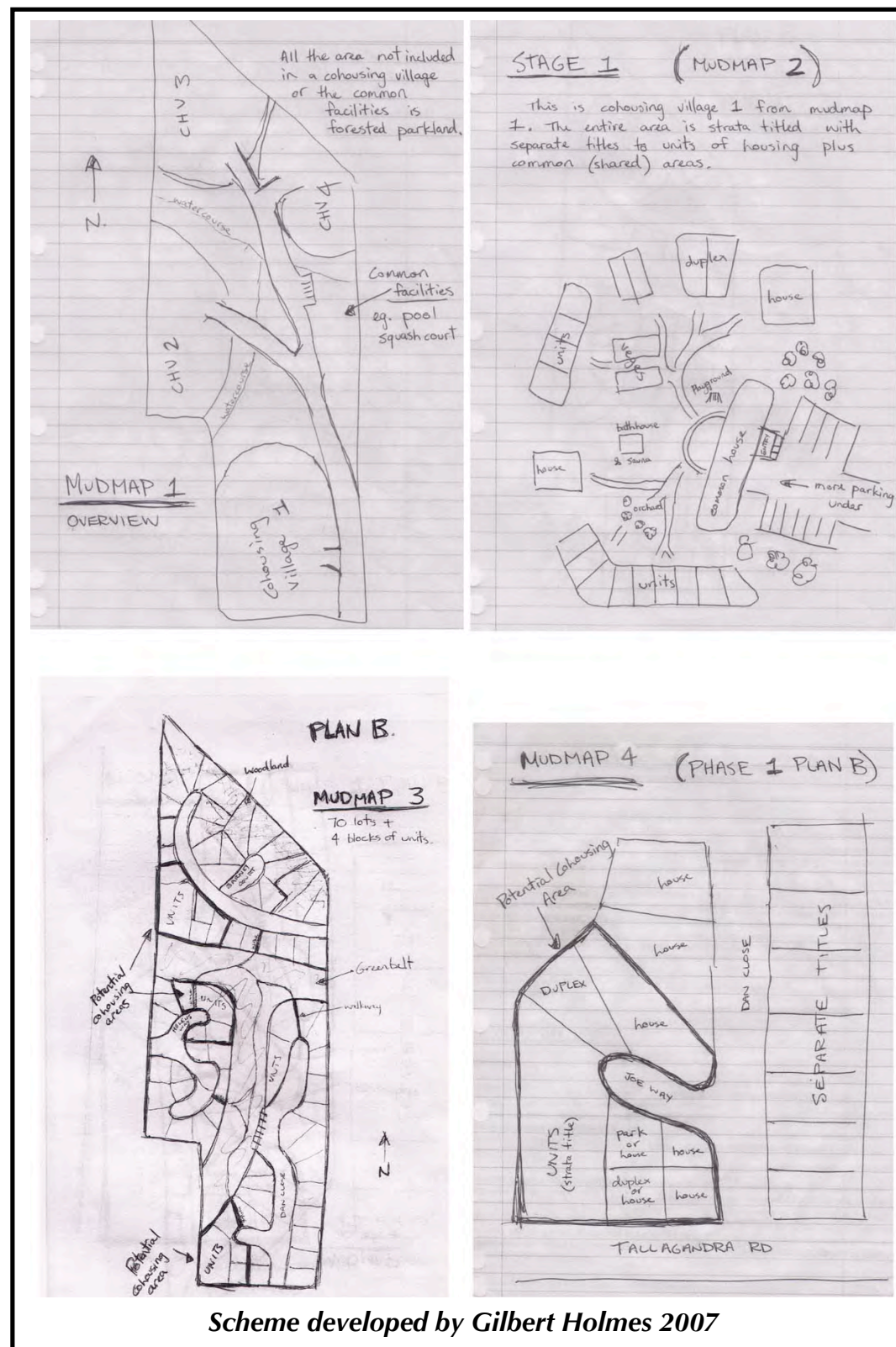
2. The Story so far ...

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- In the following years Joe and Helen with the assistance of members of their family have explored a wide range of more conscientious approaches to development including:
 - Looking seriously at Co-housing developments in Australia and abroad;
 - They have looked at the best emerging alternative modes of development in SE Queensland including Currumbin Crest and The Ridge at Binna Burra;
 - They have attended seminars with organisations such as Green Edge, when they were in Western Australia;
 - In 2007, their son Gilbert helped them to develop a new plan with a number of options including ones with co-housing clusters and more standard types of subdivision that could protect the creek system and the most important ecological features of the property.
- In the intervening period the following has happened:
 - More and more grand sums of money were dangled before Joe and Helen as they continued to investigate development.
 - In 2007 and 2008 suburbia began to loom over them, heralded by the din of heavy machinery and jackhammers in



3. The Story so far ...

- the neighbouring development of Alberi Park. (This also changed their expectations of what might happen)
- In late 2008 Jim Benton introduced Malcolm from Social Habitat to Joe and Helen. Social Habitat proposed a new Community Title option that had higher densities and included affordable housing.
- In May-August 2009 the option of developing an Affordable Housing development was explored with Mike Myers from The Queensland Affordable Housing and Chester Soltysik from Landmark Properties. The feasibility study shows that any development probably required more than 100 dwellings to be feasible.
- In early September 2009 Joe and Helen asked Social Habitat to prepare a scoping study toward preparing their own Development Application.

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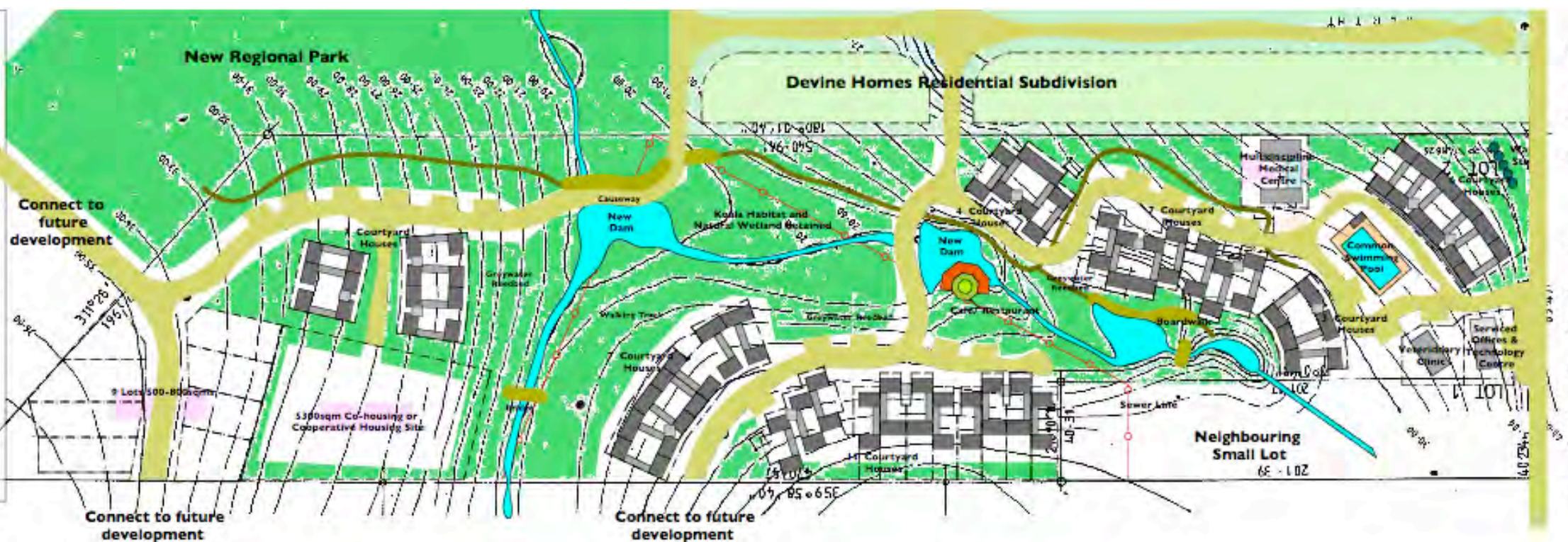
Tallagandra Trees Scheme 1
» Community Title Development:
 • 43 Courtyard Houses on individual title, a minimum of 270sqm, maximum 450sqm, each includes:
 - 2 or 3 bedroom house around private courtyard and with private access to bush at rear
 - Large home office or workshop with separate entrance and public address
 - Single bedroom "granny flat" that would be usable as separate dwelling or part of expanded house (could have separate title)
 - Single or double garage with storeroom
 Units would be serviced by towers with filtered water tank, interactive grid connection with minimum 1KW photovoltaic energy array, filtered internet and greywater recycling through toilet cistern.
 • 25m swimming pool;
 • Extensive bushland setting, retaining important Koala & riparian ecosystem;
 • Extensive walking tracks and boardwalks; and
 • Around 4 business/ community concessions that could include:
 - Serviced office centre with training room, could double as development management body corporate & connection for filtered internet service
 - Multidisciplinary medical centre;
 - Veterinary Clinic; and
 - Cafe/restaurant/ Neighbourhood Centre (this would include meeting room or arrangement to use Cafe space)
» Separate 6800sqm Community Title suitable for Co-housing or Cooperative housing development (suitable for up to 15 dwellings)
» Contribution to Regional Park

PROJECT NORTH



Tallagandra Trees Scheme 2
» Community Title Development:
 • 45 Courtyard Houses on individual title, a minimum of 270sqm, maximum 450sqm, each includes:
 - 2 or 3 bedroom house around private courtyard and with private access to bush at rear
 - Large home office or workshop with separate entrance and public address
 - Single bedroom "granny flat" that would be usable as separate dwelling or part of expanded house (could have separate title)
 - Single or double garage with storeroom
 Units would be serviced by towers with filtered water tank, interactive grid connection with minimum 1KW photovoltaic energy array, filtered internet and greywater recycling through toilet cistern.
 • 25m swimming pool;
 • Extensive bushland setting, retaining important Koala & riparian ecosystem;
 • Extensive walking tracks and boardwalks; and
 • Around 4 business/ community concessions that could include:
 - Serviced office centre with training room, could double as development management body corporate & connection for filtered internet service
 - Multidisciplinary medical centre;
 - Veterinary Clinic; and
 - Cafe/restaurant/ Neighbourhood Centre (this would include meeting room or arrangement to use Cafe space)
» 9 Suburban Lots between 500 - 800sqm
» Separate 5300sqm Community Title suitable for Co-housing or Cooperative housing development
» Contribution to Regional Park

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Two Schemes developed by Social Habitat in late 2008

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Statement of Intent for Tallagandra Trees

By Helen Holmes

Section 1

We've lived on this twenty acres of mostly bushland for thirty six years and have become attached to the place, its flora and fauna and its peculiar style of beauty. Since about five years ago, the idea of its sale and/or development has been much on our minds. In this connection we've wondered whether anything could be done differently from the conventional style of development as typified by what Devine Homes have been doing next door.

We strongly dislike that style of development, for reasons relating to area planning and house design, environmental and social concerns, all issues upon which I will touch in these pages.

Of course we must have a concern with our own future needs and those of our family. We have

not yet fully decided whether or for how long we should go on living here. One alternative is to build on our river block.

At any rate our present house has some problems – it is falling into disrepair, it does not ideally suit Barney's needs, it's not easy to maintain. On the other hand we're certainly not ready for a retirement village. I don't think moving into a rented house would be a solution – we have two shedfuls of tools, building materials etc and the notion of moving twice does not appeal. If we move, either within this property or elsewhere we need something carefully designed to suit us for the years left.

Over the last few years we have entertained a variety of dreams and plans about this property. We have spoken to many people, individuals, groups, organisations. We looked at the co-housing movement for example. While the ideals of that movement still appeal to us, we don't think at this stage of our lives we could fully commit to such an enterprise, for these reasons: forming a co-housing group is a slow process, being the land-owners initially can compromise the equality between participants, there are only a handful of



successful co-housings in Australia, and Australian attitudes to property need to gradually change At 70 and 68 we haven't got the time.

Even so, we would be very pleased if, in the development of this place, some outcome could be achieved which has regard to certain social and environmental concerns described below.

Section 2 – Environmental Aspects

What has happened next door? Wildlife and its habitat have been ruthlessly destroyed. The soil has been excessively compacted by months of heavy machinery. Huge amounts of energy have been used by such activity not to mention the noise and dust produced. The natural contours of the land have been paid no respect at all.

The Houses that are appearing may be solid, well insulated and have five star appliances, but they are no different from houses in Melbourne, say, though in a very different climate. They would

appear to have inadequate natural ventilation, no thought for passive solar heating, no shade in their yards for quite a few years, yards too small and hard-paved to offer much pleasant natural play-space with shade and shelter. No wonder the kids are staying inside and getting fat.

There are some positive values we hope might inform planning.

A serious commitment to the retention of some trees (and some smaller native plants), not stashed away in one little corner, but spread more among the areas of dwellings, to

provide those amenities that trees can give.

Some thought given to the climate in the layout of areas and the design of houses. Here in SE Qld, keeping warm is a concern for about 4 months of the year, keeping cool for longer times. Look at the work of some of the leading Sunshine Coast architects, for example.

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A concern for the wise and sustainable use of energy, water and other resources. Solar power generation, interacting with the grid would seem a reasonably do-able approach. The approach to recycling water and waste disposal etc should be thought about in the light of modern practice and (of course) in consultation with local council and relevant government departments.

We are not so naïve to think some scores of dwellings can be built without any change to the land. Of course, houses/apartments need cleared space, just not the whole area cleared within an inch of its life. Our present dams are not sustainable from safety point of view; with closer settlement the top dam especially has steep sides. Some people have suggested that instead there could be a shallower lake/water feature, with walking or cycle track. There must be access for emergency vehicles.

Section 3 – Social Aspects

There was a time when all Australians supposedly wanted to live on a quarter acre block in the suburbs. There were far fewer mothers who went out to a daily job and there were many more families who conformed to the average two parents with a relatively stable marriage and two point whatever children. Some aspects of Australian life have changed markedly: many more women in the work force, many broken and blended families, economic changes making Australian society far less egalitarian.

On the other hand some things do not change. Growing children still need exercise and outdoor play. They need a balance of protection and adventure in their lives. Adults need adult company, which may in many cases be a factor in mothers choosing to go out to work.

We think that variety is a major feature of a well functioning community: variety of ages, occupations, family styles. We do not like all older people to be tidied away into retirement villages; we do not like nappy valleys where grand-parents are hardly to be found, while young mothers struggle with isolation and loneliness. Variety of residents of course means variety in the

sizes and types of dwellings provided, and hopefully some flexibility within the community so that, for example, a granny flat could become a parents' or teenagers retreat at different stages of the life-cycle.

It would be good to have some smaller open spaces for play where parents could bore easily supervise their children close to home. (Sometimes the open spaces required by councils are very little used because of safety concerns). There is a range of amenities which could potentially be shared, even if some of them were added at a later time through co-operation between residents and council. These could include sporting facilities, office or studio space, guest accommodation, small retail eg coffee shop or nursery. We would like to see good relationships with the outside world, rather than exclusiveness.

We need to be very clear about financial ownership issues for example who owns what when, what money changes hands at what stages, who can borrow money. At this early stage we do need to have advice on our own behalf about legal and financial matters.

We know we are being idealistic, and ideals can't usually be fully realised. We don't expect to change the world on 8 hectares. Nevertheless, we believe that the physical environment, both natural and man-made, can make an important contribution to the well-being of individuals, families and communities. In so far as we can put in a little towards that contribution, in the small way available to us, we would very much like to try.



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The Values of Housing

By Helen Holmes

We pay a lot of attention, in these interesting times, to the value, the monetary value, of our houses. In this article, however, I'm more concerned with the values, of many kinds, that are expressed in the sorts of dwellings we provide for ourselves and live in. I will be suggesting that not only does this aspect of our lives have much to say about us, not only is it a significant mirror of those who live in the society, but at the same time it is a major influence on how our lives turn out, on the good and not so good things that come our way. Housing is recognised as a vitally important indicator of the state of the national economy. Perhaps it is instructive to see it fulfilling the same role in many areas of our lives.

What are the things that housing does for us? In other words, what are the deprivations we pity when we feel for the homeless? Here is a partial list - add to it if you wish. Our houses give us:

Shelter, thermal comfort, enclosure, privacy, ownership (perhaps), maintained or improved value, durability, safety for ourselves, security for our belongings.

These are indeed important considerations, but think for a moment about the items on a supplementary list:

Openness, hospitality, conviviality, connection to the world, (electronic and otherwise!) community, a launching pad, and a learning place for our children.

I suggest that the first set of values is moderately well served by the standard housing commercially available to Australians at present. What of the second set? Have aspects of our domestic lives become out of balance, have we been "sold a pup" by unimaginative builders, greedy developers and lenders, and complacent governments? If you examine the above lists it may occur to you that a number of factors need to be held in a creative tension for good housing design to occur. Perhaps you enjoy looking at house magazines, (one of my mob). The purpose of this, I hasten to say, is not purely to perv on the lifestyles of the you-know-who, (or should it be you-know-whom?) It's rather to glean a few good ideas for our own use. One example of a pair of values that must be held in balance is that of security versus openness. You may find that the houses you like best provide for both of these in a satisfying manner. We don't want to live in either a fortress or a glasshouse. There are physical characteristics of domestic design that perhaps relate more to the second set of values than the first - matters such as shading, ventilation, versatility, and cool green outdoor spaces.

Armed with these criteria, let's take an imaginary walk along a street (avenue, court, circuit, close, boulevard for Heaven's or Hollywood's sake.) in one of the housing developments that have been built and sold with such fanfare in the past twenty or so years. You may notice first of all that there's nobody visible. They've all raced off to work in their cars so as to afford the mortgage. No women are committing that so derided activity of chatting over the back fence. You wouldn't feel like approaching any of the houses - it's all looking more than slightly forbidding. (It's meant to. That is what developers mean by the word "community".) Feeling a bit hot, you're looking around for a shady tree. Don't be silly. Criminals hide under trees so they've had to send them all up in smoke. And do they really need all those acres of hard, hot surfaces - concrete, red and orange tiles, and hot-coloured pavers everywhere? Oh, excuse my ignorance; are those meant to be Mediterranean? You wonder naively about that dirty (perish the thought!) great duplicated structure that takes up half of the frontage. Is this indeed a place for human beings to live or is it a double garage with a few rooms round the back? I

suppose motor-car deities have to be worshipped in their temples - you can't after all buy a loaf of bread or get a child to school without one.

I'm wondering how much longer the fashion for "Tuscan" trimmings can continue. And trimmings are all it is - the "posh," if abbreviated, front porch with pillars either side, the aforementioned hot colours, perhaps a different profile in the roof tiles. Before that it was the little bitty "Dutch gables", probably a cheap and easy way to relieve the dreadful boredom of the triple fronted hip-roofed brick veneerals with which vast square miles of Sydney and Melbourne are infested. I've got news for you. Australia, particularly Queensland, is no more the Netherlands than the Mediterranean, with the greatest respect to those places and their inhabitants. Compare our climate with the Mediterranean. They have cool, wettish winters; we have mostly mild and dry ones. They have dry, warm to hot summers; ours are hot, humid and often downright wet. The only thing in common is summer heat, and we all know that dry heat and humid heat are very different and require a different response.

So how do our "Tuscan" beauties measure up? Inside of course no Tuscany is visible. They are usually just the mixture as before - the series of boxes within a box. They are often woefully short of roof overhangs and sheltered outdoor spaces.

Ventilation is usually inadequate, mainly because the bottom of the windows is too high above the ground to let air flow. There seems to be very little attention paid to the orientation of houses, or the rooms within them. The idea of making best use of winter sunlight and summer breezes, by understanding the climate, has been a commonplace of design for decades, possibly centuries. You would swear that the usual run of land developers in this country have never heard of it. After all, you can always buy clothes dryers and air-conditioning if you don't mind wasting more energy and helping to trash the environment. And yet, and yet, we have had in this state a tradition of housing which had plenty to offer in comfort and sensible ways to live in the sub-tropics. Where have the Queenslanders gone? Are they now confined to the leafy older suburbs of Brisbane, where they fetch lots and lots of money? Of course there are reasons for the changes - some real ones and some that have much more to do with snobbery, thoughtlessness and cultural cringing. The cringe is nothing new. Even when I was a child in the forties and fifties, when most people I knew lived in timber houses with verandas and "under the house", we thought brick houses were what rich and successful people got. Way to go, we thought, while enjoying, in our "ordinary" houses, great ventilation, plenty of playing space, somewhere to dry the washing on wet days, high ceilings, beautiful timber detailing.



7. The Story so far ...

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These houses were not perfect. Large ones could be a bit dark in the middle; the timber needed maintenance and termite protection, they often lacked the comfort of insulation and could be difficult to heat in the winter. Probably one of the major crunch factors in bringing change was the increase in the relative cost of timber. After all, however, the argument is not basically about materials as such. A well-made brick or tile is an excellent thing, and is not to blame for human mistakes. What matters is how materials are used, how they are combined, to produce a desirable result.

The question is now and always was: how well does the housing available provide for the needs of the people – the real needs of the real people, not some fantasy foisted on us by commercial interests. These fantasies have a number of features both positive and negative. On the positive side, we are supposed to believe that everybody lives in intact two-parent families with a tidy couple of children and a reasonable income. All those eccentrics that don't fit this model are unworthy of consideration. Everything within this family thing is rosy; everyone is safe, happy and successful. The flip side of this is that what is outside is full of doubts and dangers.

Even close neighbours are automatically under suspicion – on no account must they see what you are doing in your backyard. The street is dangerous – walking to school is very iffy, anybody wandering out there and not in a car must be a ne'er-do-well and up to no good.

It's time for a reality check. A large fraction of Australian households now contain one or two people; many marriages and relationships break down; a good number of people will never marry or will never have children; some have their children with them only occasionally. Whether you approve of this situation doesn't matter, how it came about is not the business of home-builders. Nevertheless, single people, poor people, old people, different people all need somewhere to live, and it is better for everyone if they live in the community rather than tidied away in a series of ghettos. Their needs are quite variable – vive la difference, I say. Homogeneity is a straitjacket that excludes humanity. It is ridiculous to suppose that these people can all be supplied with four-bedroom, two-bathroom homes, and foolish to believe that's what they all want.

We need to attend to how spaces function. A family room can be a great idea, but what is the point of having both a family room and a lounge if there's no difference except the style of the chairs in which people sit, eat and watch television? Why build a "study" for someone who hardly owns a book? Or "guest rooms" where guests are never seen? (A sad situation in itself perhaps). The point is that we need to make our spaces work more flexibly so that the changes that come to all our lives can be accommodated, and not be seduced by what "looks good" on developers' advertisements. We can dispense with those silly real estate adjectives "executive" and "exclusive". (I was recently a little sad and puzzled to see "exclusive" retirement units advertised in the Catholic Leader)

There is another reality that claims our attention. The media have got us convinced that we must now surround ourselves with all sorts of security, that we can be cosy and safe in a tight little family circle which excludes all threats. Sadly,

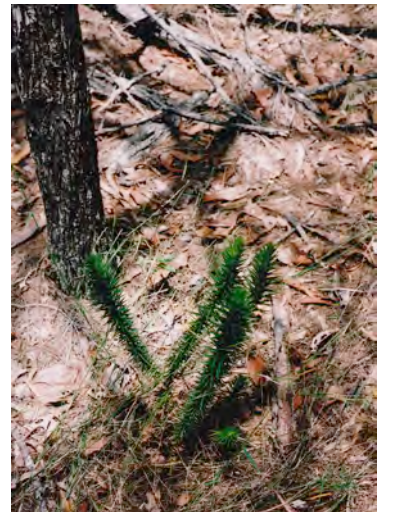
This is a delusion. A significant proportion of child abuse occurs within the family, and domestic violence is in epidemic proportions. Our best protection against these and other crimes is to live among properly brought up, law-abiding, dare I say loving people. Deadlocks and guard dogs will not make peace in our lives, any more than guns and bombs will make peace on a larger scale. A climate of paranoia, moreover, is a dismal failure as a milieu for bringing up good citizens. An extreme example of what can happen when privacy is over-valued at the expense of community occurred not far from

here a few years ago. A young woman went into labour suddenly and gave birth in her home without having any help at hand. Things went very wrong and she bled to death. By the time her terrified pre-school-age son was able to attract a neighbour's attention it was too late. Everybody went "ooo-ah, what's the world coming to?" but whether the incident led to any changes is fairly doubtful.

A look at aspects of Australian social history can throw some light on what Australians want and why they want it. People coming from parts of the world where poverty, over-crowding and ill health went hand in hand were impressed by what seemed the limitless space of this land. Here was a place, surely, where each family could aspire to own a house on its own land and relish the freedom and independence.

With growing industrialisation and no modern transport, it was seen as necessary to build homes, usually terrace houses, in inner suburbs so that people could walk to work in the factories and offices of the cities. Then came the motor-car. If you were lucky enough to have one of these you found it possible to have a house and a larger piece of land further out. The terrace houses went gradually downhill until many were little better than slums - again there were poverty, over-crowding and health problems, all of them exacerbated by the economic disaster of the Depression. World War Two, of course, put paid to the unemployment, (what a peculiar way to solve a social problem!), but it brought its own difficulties. After several years of manpower shortage, housing was in unprecedented crisis for some time after the War. Exactly when accommodation was needed for returning soldiers, their wives and the babies that quickly arrived, it was very hard to obtain. Many lived with relatives in arrangements that fell quite short in the provision of comfort, space and privacy. Was it any wonder that the increasing prosperity of the nineteen fifties brought another headlong rush to the suburbs, and the beginning of the suburban sprawl now deplored by planning authorities. Efforts to supply a different kind of housing in inner suburbs, the public blocks of high-rise flats, turned out disastrously because too many human and social needs were not catered for – it didn't take many years for these new buildings to become slums and spawn the problems which should have been expected.

In recent decades we have found it necessary to begin to face the limitations of space and resources. The explosion of traffic has made us think again; some of us have realised what Europeans already knew: that there is excitement to be had from living close to central city areas, that those terrace houses and workers' cottages lend themselves to trendy renovation for people whose family structures have radically changed. Many are less willing to spend hours in stressful commuting to work. In the midst of all this, the yearning for the quarter-acre block is still strong



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in us. But how that quarter acre has shrunk! And isn't it odd that smaller families need twice as much room? By the time you provide those four bedrooms, two bathrooms, two living areas for every house on its own mean allotment, you're lucky if there's more than the width of a few large "Tuscan" pavers surrounding the building. Too bad about the backyard mangoes – there 's never been a brisker trade in dwarf plants! Might we not be better off to learn at last to share a few things?

What if we were to modify our expectations about those "yards of our own" a little? The trade-off might be that we could share an area of un-bulldozed bush, complete with its wildlife. Between us we might be able to keep a little of our topsoil, rather than having it scraped away, carried off, and then sold back to us, (the cheek of that!) How would you like it if little kids, up to seven or eight, say, could walk out their back gate and across a little park to school or kindy, no roads to cross and friendly neighbours and grannies (not in retirement ghettos) to watch out for them. And suppose parents could access small neighbourhood childcare facilities

Without adding to the burden of driving here, there and everywhere. I think it's something of an obscenity that childcare has become a highly profitable money-spinner. There are a few things that should be undertaken by communities, not for profit, and the care of the vulnerable is surely one of them. Of course, if the much vaunted idea of working from home could become more of a reality, in homes and neighbourhoods where boredom and loneliness were not endemic, the demand for outside child-care might shrink, to everyone's benefit.

At the moment there are almost two Australias. One lot have nowhere decent to live at all; at the other extreme those who've "made it" spread out their demi-palaces, each with swimming pool, each with a full range of tools, entertainment options, and a superbly equipped kitchen even if they eat out three-quarters of the time. Is this the egalitarian society we once valued so much? This injustice – let's call it what it is – has consequences for all of us. The environment in which we all must live is suffering from our greed, waste and expansiveness. Our young people are either seduced by the materialism, noise and titillation of it all, or turn their backs on the bland, boring, safe lifestyle acquired for them at such cost, and take off in directions that Mummy and Daddy never envisaged. Sometimes these are good directions; too often, alas, they are destructive and ultimately tragic. The essential developments of adolescence, the see-sawing between dependence and finding oneself, can occur without tearing the

society apart if it is not exploited unmercifully by commercial interests.

The mainstream development and building industries are somewhat like their bulldozers. They push through their agenda, pretending to offer us lots of choices, while effectively saying that their way is the only way and we should just be grateful for it. Nonsense! These people should be not only questioned, but also sturdily resisted by citizens and governments. For one thing, the squandering of resources: land, soil, water, energy, materials, simply cannot continue indefinitely. We cannot continue to destroy wildlife habitat without impoverishing future generations, and we can no longer put off examining the consequences of housing people in a series of Paranoia Parks, where they can hop in their cars without ever being seen, and never exchange a neighbourly word with those who live nearby.

In this entire situation there are important opportunities for us. It could be that some avenues for mitigating our environmental depredations are the very same measures that will alleviate some of our social problems. In a number of countries, and in a few places in Australia, people are exploring ways of designing communities of dwellings where a better balance could be found between personal and social needs. Perhaps a number of families could share some outdoor spaces, or a few of the expensive facilities that we now demand in every home. Perhaps they could share a swimming pool, a minibus for taking children to school, a caring or nursing service so that the elderly or disabled might stay in their homes and enrich our selfish lives with variety and compassion. Another thing that might be shared is a community kitchen and eating space where some meals could be taken together. As Eucharistic people, we Catholics can surely find rich meaning in the sharing of food. Please note that we are not talking "hippies" or "dropouts" here. People who live in such communities, notably in Scandinavia, work and relate to the outside society in the usual ways. It is perfectly possible to provide individuals, couples and families with a necessary level of privacy and autonomy while encouraging a move away from the trappings of yuppiedom. In order to make a difference to this suffering world, we can only begin with those areas where we have some say. Some modifications to the ways we house ourselves and the ways we live in our beautiful land may yield lessons in tolerance and generosity, and should certainly help to make us less lonely, less neurotic and less dangerous to our children.



9. The Story so far ...

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Location: 258 Tallagandra Road, Holmview, 4207

- Less than 1km to Logan River Road
- Less than 3km to closest railway stations
- Just over 4km to the centre of Beenleigh
- Less than 5km to Motorway
- It is on the edge of the Greater Brisbane Urban footprint
- It is at the Northern end of a bushland corridor leading from down from Mount Tamborine

Total Area: 8.1 Ha (20 acres)

General Description: The block is gently sloping from the highest points towards the intermittent water courses. It is proposed that residences be placed on the slopes where the vegetation is sparser so protecting the areas surrounding and including the water courses where the vegetation is more prolific.

Soil Type

Raised sections of the block have a thin layer of soil over clay overshale/ slate rock that is typically no more than 0.5 metres deep. Sedimentary deposits occur along water courses where the rock layer is substantially deeper. This land was partly cleared many years ago for grazing purposes and the larger trees removed for timber. There has been no contamination by industrial chemicals at any time in the past. Two mounds are present, remnants of an old firing range.

Flora

With minor exceptions vegetation has been allowed to grow for the last 30 years. Trees are largest and more numerous along the waterways. Vegetation is thinner, growing slower on the slopes where rock is close to the surface.

Native eucalypt trees include grey gum, spotted gum, Sydney blue gum, bloodwood, ironbark, stringy-bark and carbeen. Non-eucalypt trees include trystania, angophora and Black wattles are prevalent on open ground. Numerous paper bark trees of two varieties occur on lower parts. Trees introduced to the property near the residence include a lemon-scented gum, cadaghi, a Flunkett mallee, jacarandas, fiddle wood and a reasonably large Moreton Bay fig. Also some silver wattles, silky oak trees

Fauna

Over the years a wide variety of wild-life has been seen both above and below the soil surface. For example worms 30 cms long were seen down on the pure clay level when soil was moved to form a swale. Various lizards and snakes have been seen, and none have been killed though no carpet snakes or yellow faced whip snakes were seen last summer for the first time. Frogs seem to survive here well enough.

Larger wild animals include koalas, wallabies, bandicoots and echidna though none in abundance, but then they are not easily seen at night. Possums are common and glider possums leave many marks on the grey gums. Many species of birds, both large and small, visit at different times of the year, and there are birds that reside permanently.

There has been no attempt to clear the lower story below the canopy so encouraging habitat for native animals. Some old car bodies seem to be well used by animals as safe homes. Nesting boxes have been made and hung in trees for animals and birds to use, but with limited success. Boxes have also been provided for insect bats prevalent in the area.

Surrounds

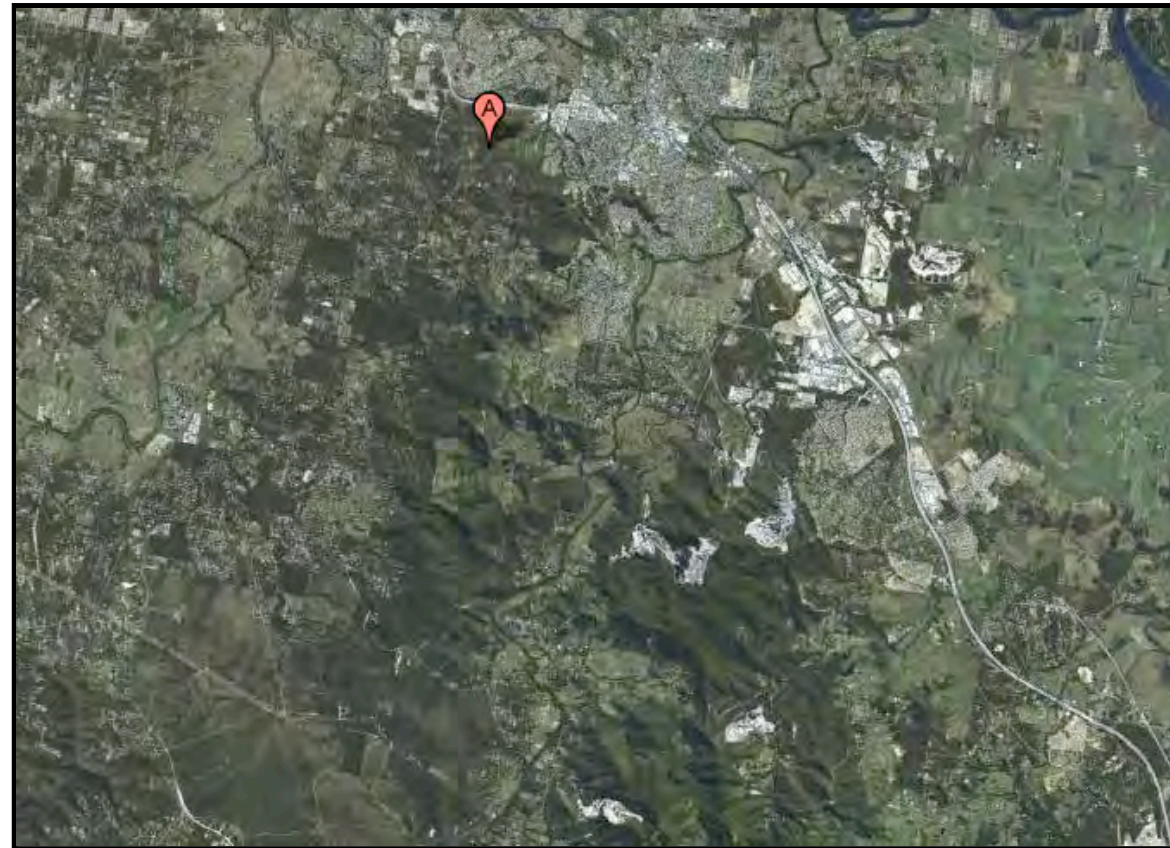
It is the middle of a significant growth corridor. Surrounding land has been zoned residential and will generally be developed into small house blocks. (See attached plans) There are three different developments that are direct neighbours, each development is at a different stage.

- Alberi Park – Devine Homes – About 250 lots

This development to the East is about three quarters complete (October 2009). This development has had a significant effect on our site. Along the common boundary, around 500m, there is now an artificial vertical

differential of between 2 and 4m including 2 roads that sit unfinished on the boundary. Additionally as a result of this development a portion of Tallagandra Road has been closed for over 12 months now.

- Green Valley – North– About 150 residential lots (Development Application currently being accessed)
- The Ridge - Intrapac – West About 520 residential lots (Development Application currently being accessed)
- Woodlands – Delfin – West about 1360 residential lots (Half completed)



10. Site Analysis

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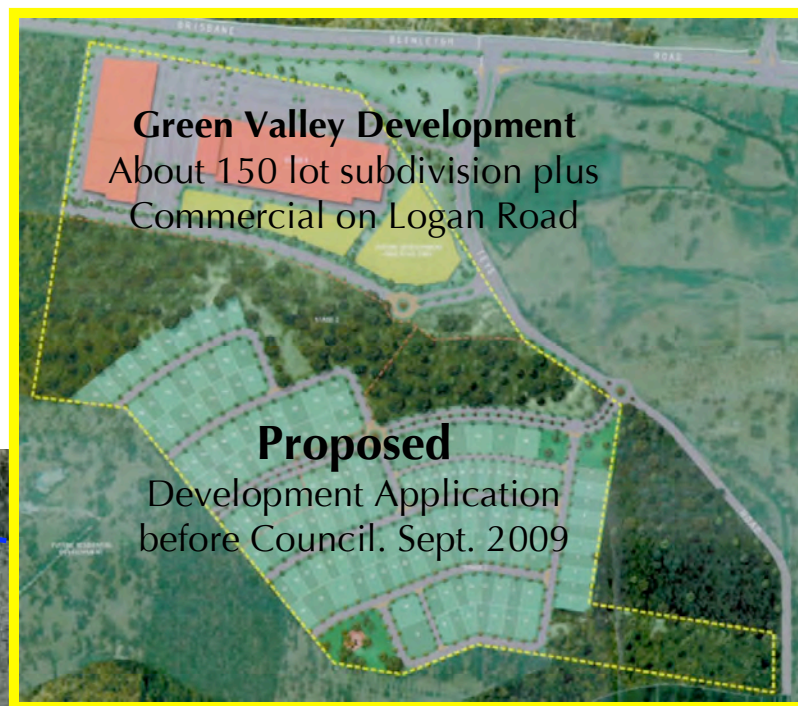
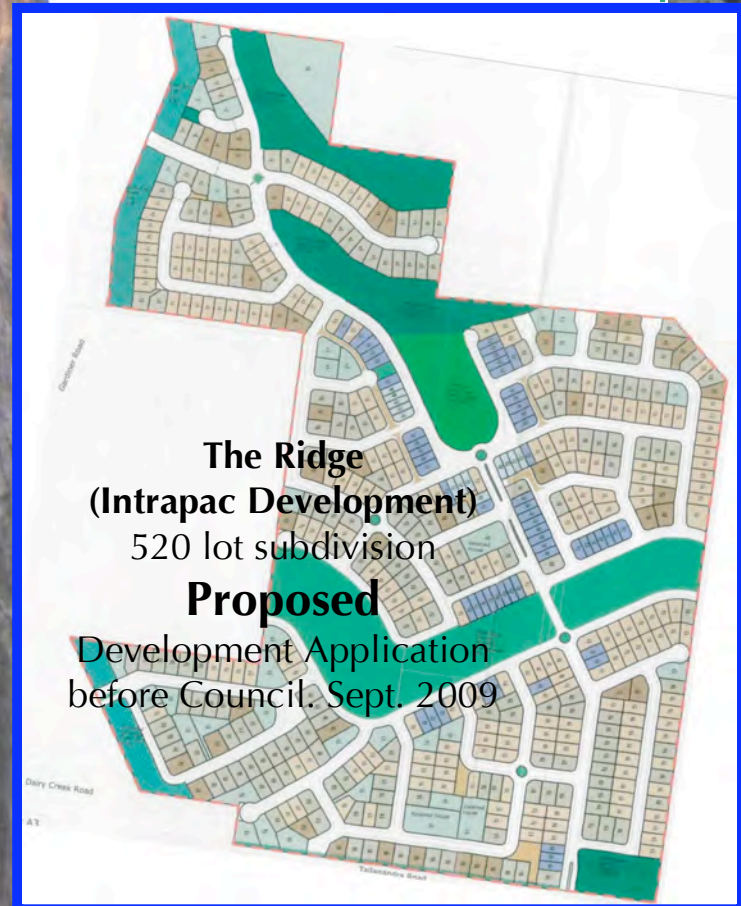
**Woodlands
(Delfin Development)**
1360 lot subdivision
Approved
In Construction

Green Valley Development
About 150 lot subdivision plus
Commercial on Logan Road

Proposed
Development Application
before Council. Sept. 2009

**The Ridge
(Intrapac Development)**
520 lot subdivision
Proposed
Development Application
before Council. Sept. 2009

**Alberi Park
(Devine Homes)**
About 250 lot
subdivision
Approved
In Construction



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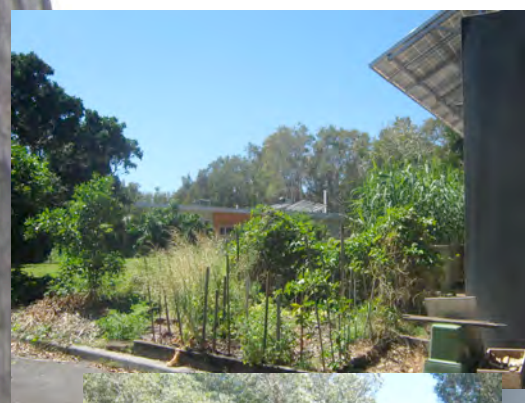


Earthsong Co-housing Auckland NZ
Commercially successful New Zealand Co-housing development including:
Common house; Shared Workshop; 32 Households;
Dedicated onsite space for future work spaces
On 1.29 hectares



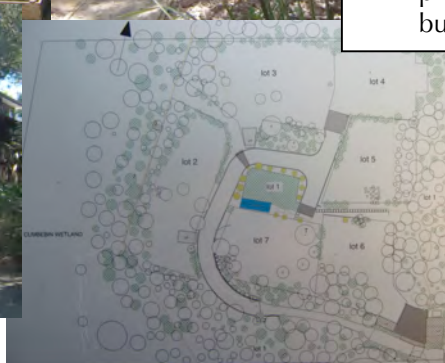
Sienna Court, Byron Bay

- Strata Title Development - 20 x 3 bedroom dwellings on a 1 hectare site (High Density)
- Many existing dwellings have home based businesses
- Has a history of businesses starting here and outgrowing space and later moving to commercial space.



6 Keats Street, Byron Bay

- Small lot community title subdivision integrated into a very sensitive natural environment
- Includes community food garden
- Has a history of many professional home based businesses.



Couran Cove Resort

- 140 eco-cabins and 3 wilderness lodges integrated into the a natural bush setting on South Stradbroke Island
- The wilderness lodges include meeting and training rooms.



12. Examples of Good Practice

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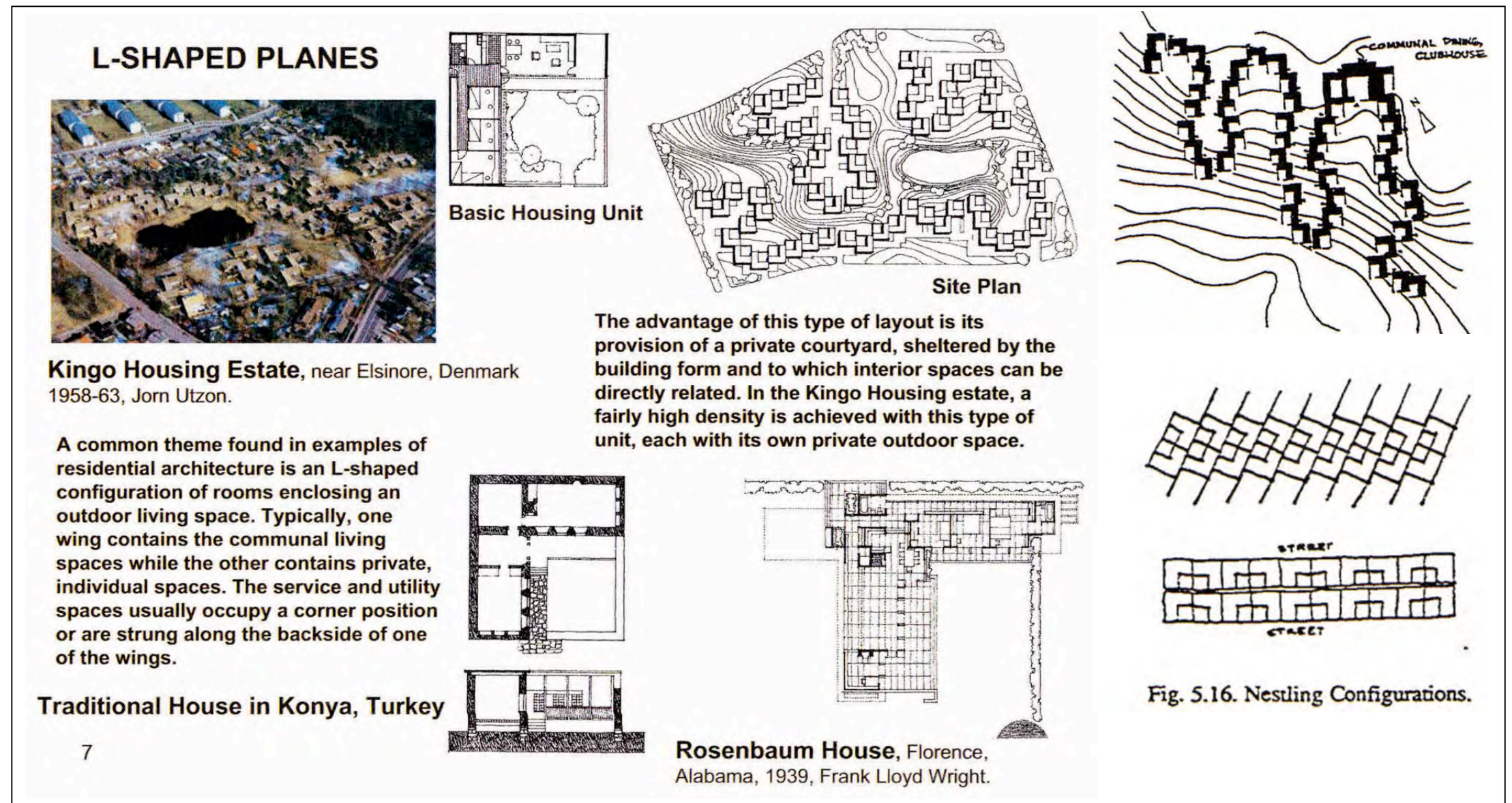
Planning Day

Planning day at Mullumbimby Neighbourhood Centre to investigate design and planning solutions.

Present: David Brown, Toni Appleton, Malcolm and Jim.

Significant issues raised:

- Discussion of Micro-Enterprise Village and the best ways to incorporate home based business.
- Suggestion was to develop 3 or 4 simple messages to use when discussing development with external stakeholders like council.
- Malcolm and Jim pointed out while we intended to provide a number of best practice environmental initiatives we would not be selling it as a "green development" because this tended to create obstacles in the marketplace and with councils.
- Malcolm presented some of his early cluster designs.
- David made a strong case for the use of single L shaped houses with courtyard as a basic housing form for the development. (See the above design ideas in particular Kingo Housing Estate in Denmark)
- Jim proposed the use of one way roads that would follow the contours. The road profile would be smaller and therefore the need for fill would



be reduced. There would have to be special provision made for emergency services. Jim pointed out there are development around Mount Cootha he has seen that achieve this.

13. Examples of Good Practice

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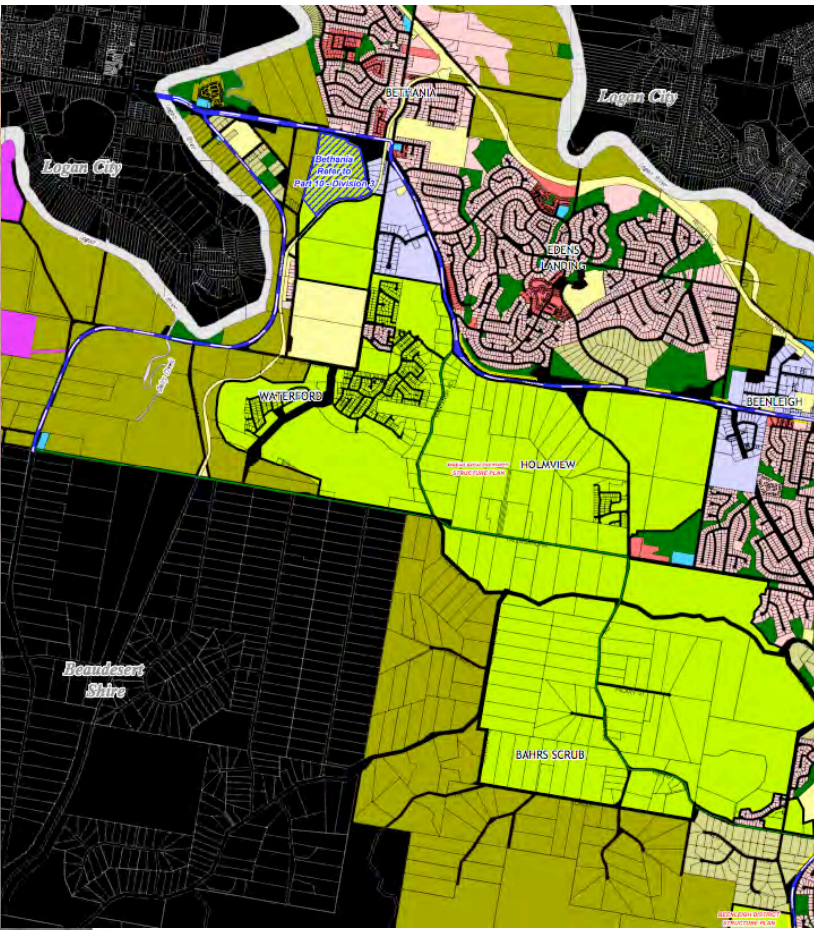


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The Site is zoned - Community Investigation
(Attached information taken from regional plan and GCCC planning scheme)

“7.4.4 Residential Purpose

To guide the orderly economic and ecologically sustainable development of Beenleigh district by ensuring that residential development does not exceed the land capability, that the population is able to be adequately serviced, that development utilises best practice environmental and urban design principles, and that development provides suitable amenity for residents.



The servicing of Greenfield urban land will include community facilities, retail areas and active open space. All buildings will be designed to fit into their site environment, particularly where they are located in elevated or steep topography. It is intended to encourage visually distinct urban communities set within a natural environment. Land within the urban residential major land use area will be developed predominantly for residential purposes. Urban parklands, local community facilities, including corner stores and other ancillary uses to residential development, may also be established within this land use identification. “

SEQ Regional Plan

A new South East Queensland Regional Plan was released in September 2009 it has a number of new constraints relevant to this project:

- The Greater Brisbane Urban Footprint was extended further South as indicated on plan below.
- All new development should try to meet a density of 15 dwellings per hectare.

14.Planning Considerations

Meeting - October 13th

Bruce James Strategic Planner at Logan City Council
Attending Bruce James and Malcolm
Bruce was supportive of our ideas in the proposed scheme and agreed to arrange a meeting with other key LCC planning and assessment staff.

Table Below sets types assessment suitable for types of development in the zoning for 258 Tallagandra Road

3.0 Table of Development

Note: This table must be read in conjunction with the explanation provided in Part 5, Division 1, Chapter 2 – Using Domains.

A: Material Change of Use

Exempt	Self Assessable	Code Assessable	Impact Assessable
Conservation (natural area management) Family Day Care Home Home Office Low-Impact Telecommunications Facility Minor Change in the scale or intensity of an existing lawful use Open Sports Ground Park Private Recreation n.e.i. Public Utility Special Accommodation	Agriculture Animal Husbandry Detached Dwelling Display Home Home Occupation Private Recreation where lighting is proposed Stall Temporary Use	Any use consistent with Varsity Lakes Concept Plan No. 5 dated April 2003 Any use consistent with and ancillary to the existing abattoir and meat works located on Lot 123 WD 441 Bed and Breakfast Caretaker's Residence Family Accommodation Farm Forestry Farm Stay Telecommunications Facility n.e.i.	Aged Persons Accommodation Amusement Parlour Apartment Building Attached Dwellings and Medium Density Detached Dwellings Bulk Garden Supplies Cafe Caravan Park Child Care Centre Community Care Centre Convenience Shop Ecotourism Facility Educational Establishment Fast Food Premises Hostel Accommodation Kennel Market Medical Centre Minor Tourist Facility Place of Worship Relocatable Home Park Restaurant Retail Plant Nursery Service Station Take-Away Food Premises Tavern



Malcolm and Bruce James (LCC Strategic Planner) at October 13th Meeting.

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Environmental

1. The developmental should pay respect to the natural contours of the land.
2. There should be a serious commitment to retention of trees and ecological systems (including smaller native plants), and not in a token way on one portion of the site but as an integrated landscape approach.
3. Dwellings should relate in both their ecological design principles and stylistically to a South East Queensland sub-tropical bush environment. Specifically design should aim to keep dwellings warm for roughly one third of the year and cool for two thirds.
4. Dwellings should be solar passively designed, including:
 - Good orientation;
 - Good natural ventilation;
 - Use of an appropriate mix of insulative and thermal massive materials; and
 - Appropriate use of shade.
5. The technical systems that relate to energy use, water use and waste management should provide good practice. Specifically:
 - Investigate energy generation on site, in particular photovoltaic green-grid systems;
 - Use lighting, hot water systems, active heating and cooling systems and appliances that minimise power consumption;
 - Storage and use of potable water on site;
 - Investigate possibility of onsite effluent disposal; if not possible then
 - Investigate recycling of greywater in toilet cisterns to reduce hydraulic load; and
 - Provide logical onsite composting options for food waste and green waste;

Tallagandra Trees is a **beacon** development which will enhance and enrich surrounding residential estates.

The development is based on four principles:

1. Sensitive Development

It sensitively integrates dwellings into natural and historical features of its site.

2. Micro Enterprise Village

The creation of a socially networked home based enterprise model that acts as a generator for new cottage industries in Logan City Council area.

3. Social Habitat

Development of a social habitat that successfully integrates the residential, work and recreational needs of a socially diverse village like community into a natural environment.

4. Social Diversity

Development of a mix of dwelling types and sizes, allowing for a good social mix

Social

1. The development will provide the setting for a well functioning village like community with a variety, age, occupations and family style. It will cater for a cross section of demographics and social groupings, and be designed in such way that they can harmoniously live together. Specifically it will provide dwellings for:
 - Older singles and couples including a portion of dwellings that meet Australian standards for handicapped and elderly housing;
 - Families;
 - Working and professional couples, in this case provision of viable work from home options; and
 - Expanded families, including large and multi-generation families.
2. Housing will be clustered in ways that promotes positive social interaction.
3. Housing will integrate home based work space in a way that encourages enterprise and enhances sustainability of the home based business ventures.
4. Other shared facilities that should be investigated include:
 - Small retail eg coffee shop or nursery;
 - Medical clinic; and
 - Shared office resource and training facilities;
5. The development should cater for outside play of children that is safe, interesting and provides stimulus for physical exercise. This would include for younger children open spaces for play where parents can easily supervise their children close to home. While for older the children the chance of adventure and to interact directly with nature.

15. Design Principles

Meeting August 4th - Logan Biz

Attending: Pauline Critcher, Jim Benton, Malcolm Price
Logan Biz is the economic development section of Logan City Council, Pauline gave the impression that they could be of great assistance in expanded the home based business aspects of the development.

September 14th Meeting with Brendan Gleason from Griffith University. Attending Joe, Helen, Malcolm and Jim. Brendan was particularly supportive of the ideas proposed in development scheme. He suggested we contact Bruce James the strategic planner at Logan City Council and Professor Tony Hall at Griffith University.

Presentation September 28th - Logan Biz about Micro Enterprise Village
Attending: Nick McGuire, Pauline Critcher, Tom Cass and Tracy Finlay with Jim and Malcolm
While the Logan Biz staff were supportive however they could offer little in the way of practical help.

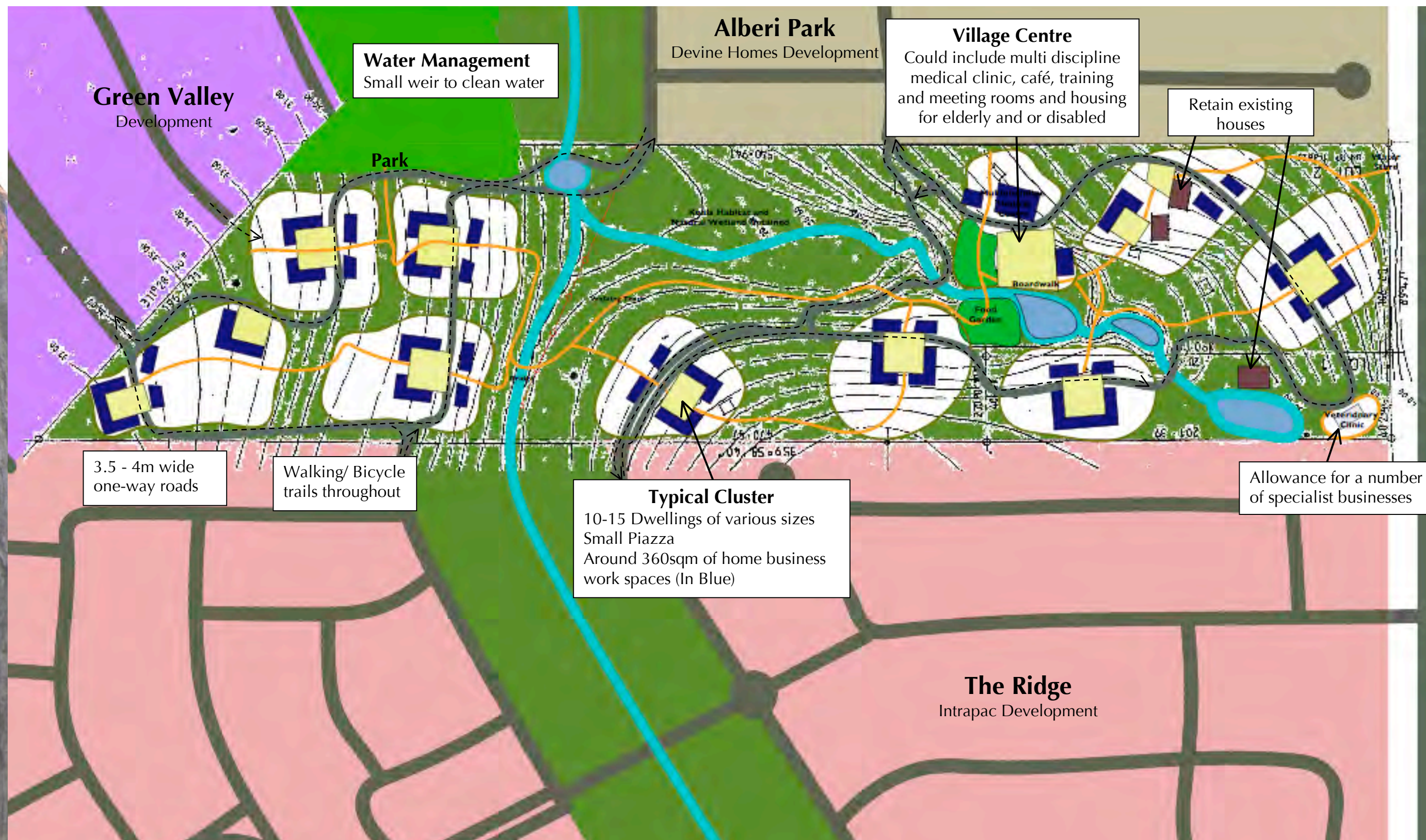
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16. Design Scheme 2

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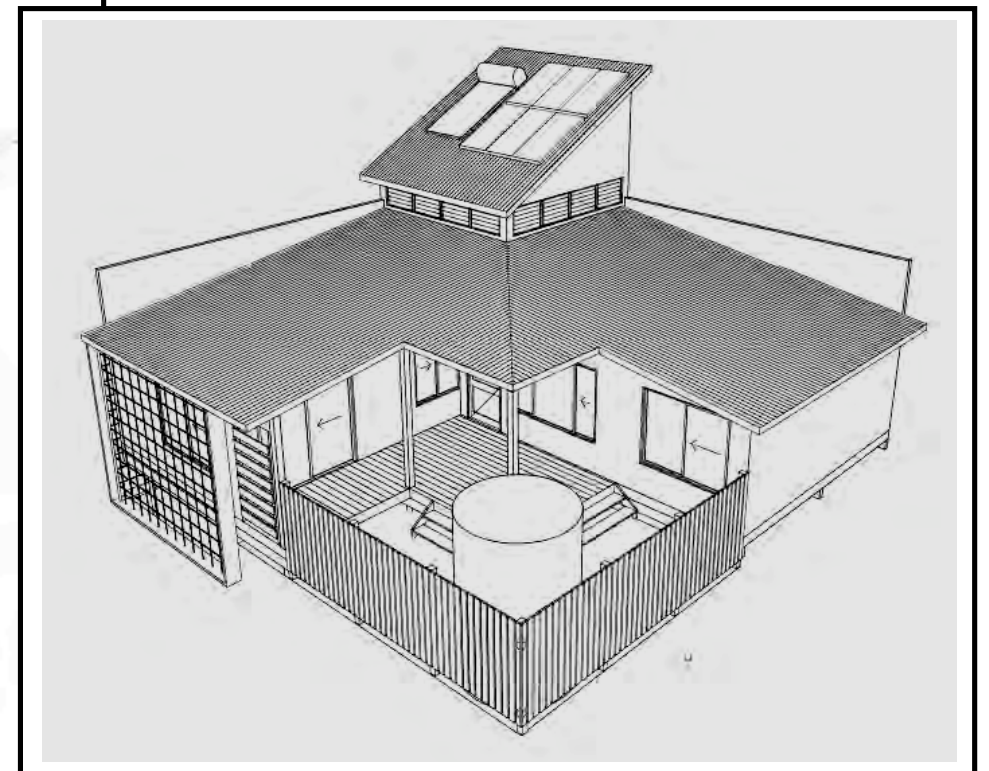
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Artist Impression of a typical Cluster



Possible Housing Unit

17. Design Scheme 2

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Land at 258 Tallagandra Road, Beenleigh

I have prepared the attached layout as a means of assessing the potential of the site. I have worked on the assumption that the entire development would be on the basis a community title and, in fact, I can see no other way that all the goals could be achieved.

Although a range of architecture is possible, I have taken the neo-vernacular designs produced as part of my research as a general rule of thumb in order to provide an initial layout fairly quickly. I showed you drawings, and supplied copies, on your visit. I can provide further details on request.

The base map does not show the location of contours and water features for the SW corner of the site. I have therefore had to make assumptions and have revised my original, rather minimal, ideas for this corner following advice from Jim. Although the whole layout represents ideas for discussion, this corner is more provisional than the rest pending more detailed survey information.

I have shown the layout privately, and in confidence, to my former student who now works for Logan City Planning. He could not see, personally, any *prima facie* basis for objection from the Council on grounds of current planning policy. One reason for optimism at present is that planning policy at Logan is currently being re-thought, and is somewhat in a state of flux, as a result of both the local government amalgamations and the appointment of new staff.

If you like my proposals, then I would see the next step as obtaining informal views from Logan development assessment officers followed by the more formal Pre-lodgement Meeting. If this was successful, then I would be willing to use my contacts and good offices to seek sympathetic sustainable builders with a view to financial collaboration on a formal development application. (I have been part of the way down this road before and I know whom I would approach.)

Tony Hall
November 2009

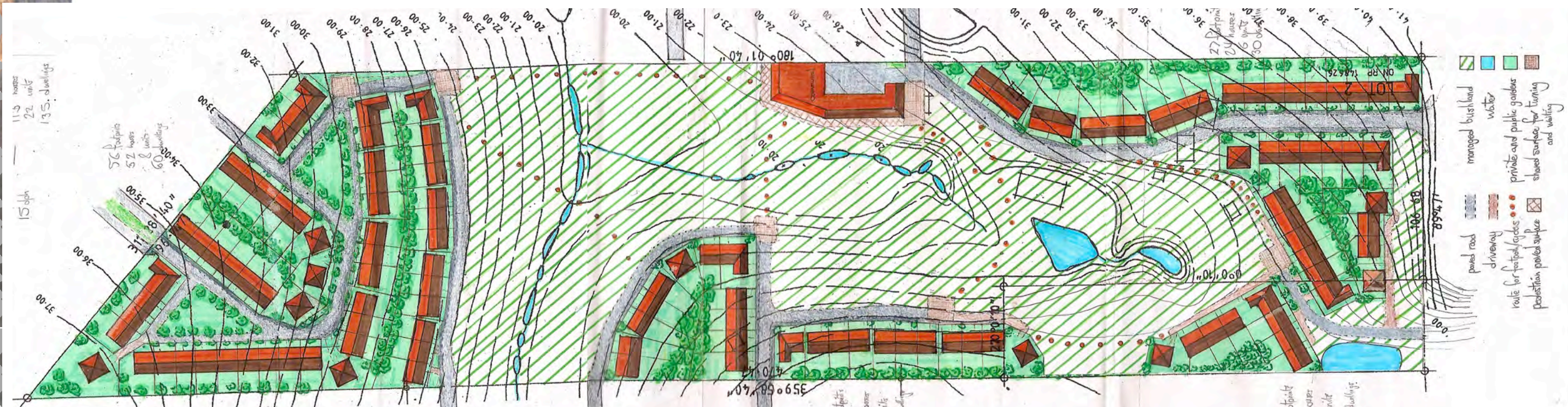
Schematic layout no. 1 - Rationale

Dwelling Design

Although a range of architecture is possible, I have taken the neo-vernacular designs produced as part of my research as a general rule of thumb to provide an initial layout fairly quickly. A 100m² footprint covers a shallow-plan room layout with natural, light and ventilation and verandas to the front and back. By sitting on posts, the buildings would adapt to the terrain. Whereas most would be terraced, there would also be a limited number of detached and corner types. Living would be primarily on the upper level with the lower level facilitating car storage, business use or additional living space, as required. A modular approach would facilitate a range of dwelling sizes. There would be a limited number of upper and lower units for small households where car storage would be in the backyard (not, as yet, shown on the plan). As a rule of thumb, I have assumed a minimum backyard area of 100m² and a front yard of 40m².

Number of Dwellings

The Southeast Queensland Regional Plan requires a minimum density of 15 dph. I have heard different opinions advanced about exactly how this figure should be interpreted, but if the density for the site overall meets this figure, then it will be immune from challenge. By my measurements, the site is 9ha and so this gives a minimum number of dwellings of 135. I would also judge that a figure at least this size would be needed to generate funds for community facilities and infrastructure. The plan shows 124 footprints. To achieve a total of 135, at least two of the footprints would need to represent two units, giving 113 houses and 22 units. The actual breakdown of dwelling sizes would be a matter for further study. The purpose here is to demonstrate that the minimum number is feasible.



18. Contribution of Prof. Tony Hall

Meeting October 13th with Prof. Tony Hall at his flat in the city. Present Joe, Helen, Jim and Malcolm Price Tony talked about his ideas of urban planning and the problems of modern Australian suburbia.

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Layout

Perimeter blocks are used throughout, public front to public front and private back to private back. Where possible, alignment follows the contour lines with blocks E-W (i.e. houses N-S) for solar orientation. However, the narrow N-S orientation of the site make this very difficult in practice and it cannot be achieved overall.

Dwellings are in 5 groupings, around short streets or greens, within 3 physically separate locations.

There is a network of footpath-cycleways, shown diagrammatically on the plan, which, in combination with the roads, links all parts of the site. Paved roads for motor vehicles are minimised. There are no through routes for motor vehicles across the site although there are loop roads to minimise use of cul-de-sacs. I have assumed a carriageway width of 4.8m with an extra 1.8m for pedestrians where appropriate. (This is taken from the Essex Guide although I have seen unadopted access roads in Australia of similar width.) Small groups of houses are accessed by semi-permeable driveways.



The layout incorporates a series of viewpoints, and short streets or greens where appropriate, to maximise legibility (i.e. finding your way) and perception of community. It is important that there is a variety of urban spaces within the site and a distinct sense of place at different locations. The short streets or greens facilitate visual contact between neighbours and passers-by. The pedestrian and cycle circulation throughout the site and along the streets is an essential feature. Although motor vehicle access is restricted, there is complete permeability by foot and cycle. For people in the houses to see people passing by and for the passers-by to see activity in and around the houses is very important.

The layout incorporates a series of viewpoints, and short streets or greens where appropriate, to maximise legibility (i.e. finding your way) and perception of community. It is important that there is a variety of urban spaces within the site and a distinct sense of place at different locations. The short streets or greens facilitate visual contact between neighbours and passers-by. The pedestrian and cycle circulation throughout the site and along the streets is an essential feature. Although motor vehicle access is restricted, there is complete permeability by foot and cycle. For people in the houses to see people passing by and for the passers-by to see activity in and around the houses is very important.

Managed Bushland

A very substantial portion of the site, including all the water features, is retained as managed bushland. Apart from a small section in the SW corner, it is wide and contiguous. Connection is made with adjacent public open space on an E-W axis. It provides opportunity for both recreation and sustainable drainage. Surveillance is provided from dwellings around the edge for both pleasure and security. The SW corner will need to be connected to the rest by swales along the side of the short road length. The footpath-cycleway network is shown only diagrammatically and a variety of detailed designs, for both the paths and other paved areas with the bushland, is possible.

Community development

Amongst the problems with current suburban form is that there is a limited range of house types and access is practical only by car. For proper community development, a full range of house sizes will be necessary from the start. Each of the 5 groupings would have a complete range of house types and sizes.

Backyard fences should be low and, ideally, see-through. (This would aid natural breezes as well sociability.) The layout would thus facilitate views of other properties, and their residents, side-to-side and back-to-back. Visual contact at the front with people passing through the site has already been referred to.

Community facilities are located to the centre of the site with motor vehicle access. The drawing here is purely diagrammatic and should be taken as a proposed design. It does not preclude communal facilities in other locations but at least one facility with motor vehicle access and a full range of services will be necessary. Ideally, its use would evolve over time.

The central location of the bushland within the site will play a community role, especially for children.

Tony Hall
November 2009



Initial Meeting with Prof. Tony Hall with Joe, Helen, Jim and Malcolm

Feedback

Joseph and Helen decided that they would not progress with Tony Hall's idea because of its poor relationship with the natural features of the site.

- **Housing was generally not oriented for good solar passive design.**
- **It separated housing from the bush and assumed separate management**
- **It had a poor relationship with the natural contours of the site.**
- **It made no attempt to relate to wider social and economic principles that Joe and Helen had articulated and which earlier schemes by family and Social Habitat had tried to engender.**

It was extremely useful in setting forward new information and ideas, in particular:

- **It proposed a minimum of 135 dwellings on site which is in line with densities proposed in the SE Queensland Regional Plan;**
- **It suggested a minimum setback for housing.**
- **It proposed using a vernacular housing style.**
- **It was efficient in its land usage; and**
- **It used neighbouring roads effectively.**

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19. Contribution of Prof. Tony Hall

Site Walk October 19th Jim showed Tony Hall Joe and Helen's land at Holmview and talked about the ecological issues related to the site.

November 18th -Meeting with Logan City Council Planners

Attending Bruce James (Strategic Planner) and Bruce Macnee (Chief Planner, Beenleigh Area), Joe, Helen, Jim and Malcolm

	Points made to Council	Response
1	Micro Enterprise Village Home Based Business Model - Councils view on an expanded view of clustered home based businesses. In terms of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the size of allowable space allocated to home based business under IPA and LCC regulations, is it 50sqm, 60sqm or can it be larger. Does home based business space need to be contiguous with the residential aspect of a dwelling? Within the context of building clusters of dwellings can home based business space be pooled? (Anecdote about shared club in beer add) Could a successful business convert their embryonic business space into independent space of an aged relative, effectively a secondary dwelling on title? 	They were open to this, however as with all other subsequent points they could see that most aspects of the development should be viewed as impact assessable so as long as we worked with the council planners and made a good case they would have no objections.
2	Building in Riparian Zone -Council's view on body corporate actively managing the riparian corridor and having parts of the development built in this zone. By which we mean building in the nominal buffer zone but in a way that lives with and enhances the natural system. Note: The nature of the type of cluster development we are proposing as part of this scheme provides public access to the riparian zone between clusters.	This would require the attention of council environment officers to assess.
3	Bush fires - Our property is viewed as medium to high fire hazard by the mapping systems largely because it has regenerated native bush more successfully than surrounding properties. Once surrounding development is completed all the proposed and existing development will effectively create a buffer or asset protection zone right around our property because their disregard for retention of natural systems. Our intended fire protection strategy would be based on a whole of site regime that incorporates ongoing management of ground fuel and weeds with the community title. What would council's view and suggestions relating to bushfire management?	They could see that the new housing estates around this development would inevitably lessen the fire risk. However this development may be viewed as a fire source. Either way it would be impact assessable and need to be negotiated.
4	Development Controls - Within the context of this being a community title development, to what degree can we suspend normal Logan City Council development controls, specifically regarding setbacks and height limits. Our intention for commercial reasons is to limit the height of development to two stories, however we would like to know what council's view is to this or a similar development building in a way whereby we built as high as are able within the canopy of the surrounding forest/ bushland, thus giving an insensitive to keep the bush. This theoretically would allow a building 8-15 stories within an old growth forest pre European settlement.	At this point they made the clear point that we should work with council planners in a series of informal meetings. They were broadly supportive of our approach.
5	Roads - Council view on minimal low impact road systems that follow contours, specifically one way traffic flows. Note this would include provisions including boom-gates at either ends of roads to deal with emergencies as has happened with a number of development around Mount Cootha and elsewhere.	On this point they showed the most caution and thought that council engineers may have issues, but like other points they were open to being convinced.
6	Onsite Parking Requirements - Given it is a community title development can we apply all possible parking requirements across the whole or will there likely be requirements related to proximity of particular uses? Can the management and service agency for the site make assessments of parking requirements on site within council guidelines	As with other points.

- At the end of the meeting both Bruce's showed clear support for our proposal and Bruce Macnee proposed that he was willing to organise a series of informal meetings with relevant planning staff to work through all aspects of the development proposal.
- They recommended that we get the support of the local councillor as his or her support was crucial for an impact assessable development.

20. Meeting with LCC Planners

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This document is a page in a set of visual minutes of the processes, key events, development of ideas and decision making related to the development of the 258 tallagandra Road Holmview. Its aim is to be an accurate reflection of the history of the project. (The document is recorded by Social Habitat)