

OPPORTUNISTIC URBAN DESIGN - 2012

The 5th International Urban Design Conference will be held at the Hilton on the Park in Melbourne from Monday the 10th to Wednesday 12th of September 2012.

Confirmed Keynote Speakers

Alexandros Washburn

Director of Urban Design, Department of City Planning, New York City

Chris Bailey

Head of Partnerships & Innovation, Westway Development Trust, London

Dorte Ekelund

Executive Director, Major Cities Unit, Department of Infrastructure and Transport

Andrew Tongue

Departmental Secretary, Department of Planning and Community Development, Victorian Government

Marcus Westbury

founder Renew Australia, a new national social enterprise designed to catalyse community renewal, economic development, the arts and creative industries across Australia

Professor Rob Adams

Director of Design and Culture at the City of Melbourne

Giovanni Cirillo

Executive Director, Urban Renewal & Major Sites, Department of Planning and Infrastructure NSW

The Conference attracts delegates from a wide range of backgrounds including:

Policy makers
Politicians
Senior public servants
City Governance personnel
Development Industry
Infrastructure Fund Managers

Social planners
Architects
Landscape Architects
Engineers
Academics
Economic Commentators

Town Planners
Urban Designers
Consultants
Demographers
Researchers

Conference Streams

1. Political Strategies 2. Design Approaches 3. **Initiators & Entrepreneurs** 4. Finance & Funding

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About the Conference

If the act of planning is to legitimise 'what should be done', opportunistic design thinking seeks to action 'what can be done'. Indeed, the focus of planning may enable it to be read as one form of catalyst for thinking opportunistically. That is, a process of creative thinking leading to more flexible, more inventive and more contextually responsive strategies of intervention into the urban environment.

City leaders in Australia and internationally are, to varying degrees, endeavouring to respond to the aftermath of the GFC, effects of climate change, dramatic population movements, peak oil speculation, emerging social media and the influences on how we socialise and connect with each other, and a search for meaning.

Growth, flux, and decay are inherent aspects of urban systems. As changing financial, political, environmental, technical and social conditions influence urban life, it is apparent that urban design will have to become increasingly opportunistic and creative in approach, formulation and delivery.

This trend is manifesting itself across a broad range of disciplines, scales and intents. It is most popularly evident in innovative place-making projects and strategies such as the High Line in NYC, tactical urbanism, a multiplicity of fluid uses of public spaces.

The conference will focus on ideas and projects that are visionary despite, or maybe because of, the current context.

Richard Reid's presentation has been made possible through the generous sponsorship of **Heart of the City** (www.hotcity.co.nz) and **Hotel DeBrett** (www.hoteldebrett.com).



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RICHARD REID **The Whole Business of What Can and Should be Done**

Our practice has prepared alternative designs for six nationally important infrastructure projects in New Zealand, worth a total value of NZ\$1.5 billion. Three of these alternative designs have been implemented, two will likely be in the medium term and the sixth is under initial consideration. In each case, our projects' conceptual thinking and environmental outcomes have differed fundamentally from the proposed developments, yet we have been able to convince relevant authorities, clients and affected communities of their soundness, affordability and achievability.

All these projects are sited within complex urban environments which include significant heritage buildings, city precincts and cultural landscapes. Each design is unique in respect of its contextual fit. Our solutions are deceptively simple and create space where none was perceived to exist. The designs also satisfy as well as extend planning objectives identified for each project. In effect, we have been able to draw out the potential implied in the planning legislation, and at the same time produce a surplus of social, environmental and economic opportunities, inspiring possible new directions for the sustainable evolution of the city.

We believe our success with these projects and their long time-line vision will interest the conference. Richard Reid will discuss and illustrate the core spatial techniques and skills, and key strategic and tactical moves, needed to deliver them. The projects required a trans-disciplinary approach to infrastructure, architecture and landscape, and through their whole of environment approach to citymaking, overturn the received place and conventional modes of engineering. Richard will conclude with discussion on the business and funding issues the practice faces working in an entrepreneurial way.

Bio

Richard Reid is an architect, landscape architect and urban designer, and director of Richard Reid & Associates. Over the past ten years his practice has focused on large-scale urban and landscape projects in New Zealand, with an increasing involvement with the design of infrastructure and its integration with local communities and urban/natural environments.

Richard has been recognised for his entrepreneurial approach to design with the award of a creative entrepreneurial scholarship in 2007. He has worked with Neville Gruzman in Sydney (1990-93) and Sir Colin St. John Wilson in London (1995-96), both of whom were architects of great spatial perception and invention.

www.richardreid.co.nz