

Vision: Walker



Consortium: Walker Architecture and Design and Ceres NZ Development.

Our design is conceived as an inner city village arranged around four community courts and two intersecting laneways reflecting the quintessentially Christchurch vernacular of quadrangles and grids set in a garden context.

Each court showcases a different sustainable living focus to complement a sustainable community.

Situated on the prominent corner of Gloucester and Madras Streets opposite Latimer Square one court is a public market space; one is a semi-public bbq/garden interaction area, one is a playground for the exclusive use of residents and one is a communal vegetable garden.

The laneways are shared pedestrian and vehicle spaces. There are a number of garages proposed but the location and the nature of the development does not rely solely on cars for transport.

There are two ecology towers providing a wood chip boiler and solar water installation for circulated space and hot water heating. Organic household waste is recycled as compost for the community garden. A network of stormwater gardens (swales) manages and recycles surface water run-off.

The proposal allows a socially and environmentally successful village to flourish. This diverse income and occupation model demonstrates successful integration of a mixed housing community supplemented with small commercial activities such as a café, hairdressing, dry cleaners and dairy.

The architects have a long history of innovative residential design within New Zealand and have a good understanding of both local vernacular design and local housing needs. Our scheme builds on the tradition of the individualised ‘kiwi’ house within this key site on the Christchurch City fringe.

We believe the local appetite amongst potential purchasers wishing to move from traditional suburbia into a better land-use context will respond more

“This builds on the best Christchurch traditions to provide a new community-focused model for living within the central city fringe.”

positively to a project that looks like a housing development rather than a block of apartments.

Visual privacy, liveability and the choice of community interaction is provided with the matrix. All houses have either private outdoor courts or generous roof decks, as well as balconies, to sustain barbeques and potted gardens.

A variety of household types, sizes, private outdoor space and views over the city and its environs will attract a wide range of purchasers or tenants, such as single adults, single parents, students, young professionals, retired folk and multigenerational families. Accessible houses are provided at ground level, with all houses observing 'Lifemark' principles enabling the houses to adapt to changing needs over time.

The houses are designed to be prefabricated off site as modules for cost management, controlled quality of construction and material efficiency reasons. Each house is clad and roofed in low maintenance materials with 140mm thick engineered timber walls and roofs packed with insulation. The lightweight nature of the completed structure mitigates against seismic events better than heavier concrete structures.

The pride fostered by its residents will enable this development to become a national (and potentially international) example of desirable living in an environmentally sustainable response to the growing need to densify our cities.

JUDGE'S COMMENTS

“Quite a ‘cartoonish’ feel but many **people will love that.**”

“This could almost be seen as the **residential equivalent** of Christchurch’s restart project.”

“The Walker proposal was particularly **strong on the sustainability theme** giving good consideration of energy efficient design, stormwater management, biodiversity and productive gardens.”