

2.0 URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

2.1 Introduction

The Development Plan for the Corporation Area incorporates a variety of urban design principles to help guide and control future development. These urban design principles have been identified in general terms by design themes in the site design and in more specific terms through urban design guidelines which are detailed for each precinct. Where conflict occurs with urban design principles as expressed in this section and detailed design guidelines for Precinct Nine, the detailed design guidelines for Precinct Nine prevail.

2.2 Urban Design Themes

The Plan envisages a range of architectural expression for the various components within the Corporation Area. The first element which must be focused upon is the sub-tropical location of Brisbane which promotes an outdoor lifestyle. As no vehicular access will be permitted into the park, the only means of getting from place to place will be walking or cycling, and therefore ample open spaces should be provided which can be used year round to circulate, sit, converse, eat, or merely to observe.

The buildings and open spaces must therefore be designed to allow people to pursue such activities, whilst also creating a comfortable living environment. The Development Plan expects that any range of expression should be guided by urban design objectives. In addition to complying with those overall design objectives, it is critical that all buildings, structures and landscaping within the Corporation Area meet the highest standards of design and detailing.

These two main themes can be summarised as:

- (a) The Park within the Building within the Park; and
- (b) The Contemporary Interpretation of Queensland Architecture.

2.2.1 The Park within the Building within the Park

The aim of this theme is to assist in negating any dominance the buildings may exert, and to explore that area between inside and out which in traditional Queensland architecture, is the verandah. This interactive zone is an area where part of the inside is outside and part of the outside is inside. It is a strong expression of the relaxed sub-tropical South East Queensland lifestyle. It is an in-between area with shade, light, greenery, paving, water, that blurs the distinction between inside and outside. It is not just limited to the ground floor interface with street, but can occur at all building levels of the Park within the Building within the Park.

A variety of strategies are available to achieve these ends. Their incorporation is essential whenever appropriate. These may include but are not limited to:

- (a) The use of overhangs at the first level above ground, creating semi-enclosed spaces and/or arcades around the perimeter of the building. The recession of entries within the building face, allowing external space to penetrate the building volume (refer Figure 2.1);
- (b) The maximum use of recessed forms around the perimeter of the building, blurring the distinction between internal and external space. The maximum length of a straight unaffected wall line should be restricted to 45 metres (refer Figure 2.2);
- (c) The inclusion of landscaped internal open space for public use, particularly at ground level, and continuing the landscape theme within the building proper. These spaces shall include subtropical planting and appropriate water features which shall be an extension of the architectural vocabulary. The effect is enhanced when such internal spaces are at least partly visible from outside and if they are naturally lit;

- (d) The use of a variety of architectural components beyond the building face proper, creating a defined edge to the building surround which is both building and landscape. Such components would include terraces, pergolas, ramps and stairs, retaining walls, screens and gateways;
- (e) The introduction of landscaping elements around the perimeter of the building, includes elevated planting beds, water features and the incorporation of luxuriant planting, creating an area of transition between features of soft landscaping and the building proper (refer Figure 2.3);
- (f) The extensive use of landscape on the external face of the building, with its design fully integrated with the design of the building as a whole. This includes generous provision of fully integrated landscaped terraces, landscaped balconies and landscaped roof gardens, creating the opportunity for landscaping to extend beyond the ground level (refer Figure 2.4);
- (g) The use of a coordinated approach to the selection of planting is essential to the success of the development. This will provide consistency and continuity with adjacent Development Areas and the park. The planting program should recognise the theme of the park with the use of a limited number of dominant species and a strong use of planting design;
- (h) Use of an approved range of hard landscape elements (lighting, seats, rubbish bins, drinking fountains, bollards, grilles and grates, paving surfaces) that visually integrate the range of external areas within the plan; and
- (i) Use of planting to highlight focal points, views and vistas and screen undesirable views; and
- (j) The design of external spaces that are useable (places to sit with ample shade, lush planting and well lit at night). These spaces should offer a variety of experiences from small intimate seating courts to larger plaza spaces. The courts should include water features in character with the space i.e. the use of tranquil water features in small courtyards whilst larger water falls and fountain jets are introduced into larger plaza spaces.

2.2.2 Contemporary Interpretation of Queensland Architecture

The intention of this urban design theme is to promote an architectural and design approach appropriate to South-East Queensland and its climate. The pursuance of a contemporary regional architecture and design is strongly encouraged. This may be achieved through the design program, using an interpretation of the traditional approaches in Queensland vernacular architecture its scale and form and its response to the local climate.

The aim, is not to promote direct historical imitations. The potential to explore this theme will vary from precinct, to precinct, and according to building use and type. However, certain characteristics which are generally applicable are outlined below:

- (a) Open framed construction is preferred to heavy mass construction, creating an architecture which is responsive to the local climate and atmosphere. This contrasts with, for example, those cold climate structures which respond to a malevolent external environment by establishing a definite and solid barrier between inside and out (refer Figure 2.5);
- (b) Deep layered facades, on occasions containing semi-outdoor spaces, which protect the building facade proper from sun and rain, and encourage open air living (refer Figure 2.6);
- (c) The provision of semi-enclosed exterior spaces such as verandahs, terraces, balconies and roof gardens, all of which are conducive to an outdoor lifestyle. The incorporation of sunshading and rain protection devices such as awnings, screens and pergolas over openings, and over and around semi-outdoor spaces (refer Figures 2.7 and 2.8); and
- (d) Undercrofts, relatively narrow building forms, breezeways, ventilated courtyards and other similar devices which allow for the ready circulation of breeze in and around building structures particularly exploiting the north easterly breeze aspect of the site.

2.3 Urban Design Guidelines

2.3.1 Built Form

2.3.1.1 Building Design

While there is a need for diversity in the design of the individual buildings, the overall building form for the Corporation Area should give the impression of architectural unity, and conformity to the broad principals discussed in Section 2.2 Urban Design Themes. The overall building forms shall be low to medium rise in character, in keeping with both the riverside and parkland setting and the desire to respect the silhouette of distant views. The built form should emphasise the horizontal rather than the vertical building mass. The overall building profile should be similar to that of a terraced hill or ridge, varying in height and scale along the length of the site. This development form should provide vistas both through the development and from a variety of levels within these structures.

The development within the Corporation Area is intended to bridge over the interstate and local railway lines by constructing the buildings in a gradual stepped form upwards from the parkland waterway and then down again to Colchester Street. In conjunction with this "stepping" terraced building form there shall be the provision of pedestrian access by internal pedestrian ramps and stairways.

The overall built form for the site promotes a gradual terracing of structures from the western side of the Grey Street Boulevard to the railway corridor, stepping down to the adjoining structures of South Brisbane. This shall be achieved through the incorporation of landscaped banks and connecting streetscapes. This terracing of structures should provide a backdrop to all activity within the site and provide the silhouette for views from some parts of the city while still respecting views of the Taylor Range to the west and north-west from other vantage points in the city centre. The scale and passivity of the river will be enhanced by keeping the structures relatively low and as far back from the river edge as possible.

Due to the scale of the Corporation Area and the mixed land uses proposed, it is intended to establish architectural expressions within broad character precincts, not necessarily but generally, following precinct boundaries defined in this Development Plan. Each precinct will have a unifying quality, be it building form and character, landscape design or a predominant land use.

2.3.1.2 Arcades and Atria

Buildings should be related by careful siting, particularly dwelling orientation, car parking provision, pedestrian movement system and open space provision. Each building cluster should have consistent rooflines, materials and colour of finishes. Windows should be orientated in a manner which maximizes privacy and quietness and limits the adverse effects of climate.

The development of sites as isolated tower blocks on open plazas is discouraged. The alternative, podium and tower type of development in the manner prescribed within the town plan are preferable. Also appropriate are developments which consist of a low rise building to the street elevation, internal courtyard or atrium and tower block behind. Both of these styles encourage the development of a consistent context, and some continuity to the street facade.

2.3.1.3 Preferred Colours and Materials

To assist in the visual integration of each development zone a list of preferred materials and guidelines for preferred colours have been prepared. Materials and colours other than those appearing in each list may only be used at the discretion of the Corporation or its appointed agent.

The preferred external colours to use in the development will be pale earthen tones and white. Other colours may be permitted in limited use for detailing purposes. All selected colours must be approved by the Corporation. Highly reflective material and metallic colours, including bare metal, will be discouraged. The following is a list of preferred materials to be used externally in the development:

- (a) Painted, rendered or coloured concrete or cement;
- (b) Rendered masonry;
- (c) Rendered blockwork (except in concealed service areas where painted blockwork may be acceptable);
- (d) Timber (especially close to water);
- (e) Powdercoated or anodized (except natural anodized) aluminum;
- (f) Powdercoated or painted steel or sheet metal;
- (g) Natural stone (except granulated stone or resin bonded stone);
- (h) Terra-cotta; and
- (i) Glass (except reflective glass curtain wall systems)

2.3.2 Landscape Design Elements

2.3.2.1 Introduction

Within the Corporation Area there should exist a strong integration between the landscape treatment and architectural design in order to prevent an ad hoc combination of garden beds, pergolas, window boxes and other landscape elements. The landscape treatment should form part of the building's overall functioning and be designed as an integral part of its total fabric.

The inclusion of various natural landscape elements, trees, shrubs and water within the building developments is stressed. This natural landscape will help emphasise the sub-tropical climate and outdoor lifestyle via ever-present greenery, shaded surroundings, and luxuriant plant species.

2.3.2.2 Landscape Character

The landscaping of the Corporation Area will be one of the most effective ways of establishing a special identity within the site. A unique landscape character will distinguish this development from present and future projects within the region, country and indeed the world.

There are very few projects which have emphasised the landscape as a primary element within the design. It is intended that the landscape of the Corporation Area be a primary element, providing a "People's Park" as a landmark to the region. The Park will have an international sense of place, reflecting the relaxed atmosphere of the Queensland outdoor lifestyle. Such uniqueness can only be achieved through attention to the total site and its present and future interaction with the surrounding land uses.

In this project the landscape is perceived as part of an overall open space system. A continuous pedestrian/cycle network will link South Bank, the Central Business District, the Botanical Gardens, Kangaroo Point and South Brisbane.

In this city wide context, the Park can be seen as a major recreational component within Brisbane's open space. Within the Park a network of pedestrian systems should link a series of urban and landscape spaces. It is intended that each of these landscape spaces should have its own distinct character, creating interest and a range of opportunities for activities both internally and in conjunction with the river.

Special attention should be given to the compatibility of each of the landscape activities. Active settings such as major tourist attractions in the Park should be sited in a manner that allows sensitive interaction with more passive settings such as picnicking. It will therefore be possible to provide for a range of activities within the Park, whilst ensuring that each freely interacts with the other.

Certain landscape spaces will be principally circulation spaces and others, places to stop and sit. Some will relate directly to the street and its activities, others will offer relief from the street and a degree of peace and quiet. Still others will act as a link between the building and the street, and others as perhaps a combination of the above. It is envisaged that much of the landscape activity will change with time as the People's Park evolves and is refined. It has therefore been important to provide spaces within the landscape that have the flexibility to provide for such changes.

2.3.2.3 Landscape Philosophy

The overall landscape philosophy for the Development Area can be explained by the following aims:

- (a) To create a unifying theme within the landscape which will not only complement the project architecture but bring into existence a total site environment;
- (b) To provide a harmonized structure for the landscape as it relates to existing and proposed land uses and develop identifiable precincts of particular landscape character;
- (c) To determine quality control guidelines for landscape elements (e.g. furnishings and signage) ensuring a consistency of design; and
- (d) To initiate site and maintenance controls for the project, on a short term and long term basis.

2.3.2.4 General Design Criteria

The pre-eminence of the landscape is the principal avenue through which the entire project image is established and an interrelationship of events and activities maintained. The landscape therefore should be bold and simple and not overstated. Furthermore, it should be in harmony with its activities and architecture. To ensure a high level of landscape design a number of fundamental design elements have been adhered to. These elements include:

- (a) Establishing appropriate settings for the various activities;
- (b) Developing contrasts between concentrated activity areas and passive recreational settings;
- (c) Establishing the relationship of building masses to the scale of the landscape; and
- (d) Creating, directing and framing views.

In addition to these fundamental elements, the following design criteria have been established in response to the total site and to ensure that the design concept is achieved:

- (a) Creating a uniquely Queensland character, with the majority of activities focused on the element of water and recreational amenities and encouraging pedestrian movement and water based transportation networks throughout the site, with interrelated nodal activity precincts. Heavy pedestrian movement will be encouraged on the paved areas to limit the degradation of grassed areas;
- (b) Visually and physically linking the development to peripheral open spaces such as Musgrave Park and Davies Park, through an integrated streetscape network and by creating a sympathetic river edge alignment and section which maximises the passive interaction of the park with the river;

- (c) Defining a hierarchy of spaces from intense public to passive recreation through the design and detail of the hardscape. Hardscape elements such as paving and retaining walls are to complement the project architecture and landscape character. A general design theme and continuity of materials, form and elements are to be developed. Large pavement expanses are to be broken up with appropriate banding and planting;
- (d) Creating a landscape continuity which permeates the development and is not dissected by roads or buildings and developing transitional spaces between building and landscape components such that the landscape flows into the architecture, creating the Park within the Building within the Park concept; and
- (e) Developing a planting scheme which will set the mood of the park and unify its components. The choice and arrangement of plants must be made with respect to the species ultimate form, colour, texture, growth rate and seasonal changes and using a mix of exotic and indigenous plant material to give a lush sub-tropical character throughout the parkland and built environment.

2.3.3 Site Elements

2.3.3.1 General Criteria

Street furniture is a term used to describe all the peripheral functional objects that are required throughout pedestrian areas. Street furniture has traditionally played a secondary role to the functions of open space or building, and as such tended to be chosen in an ad hoc manner.

2.3.3.2 Outdoor Facilities

The urban design guidelines suggest possibilities for the inclusion of street furniture within open spaces with the aim of ensuring their occupation and use, thus promoting an outdoor lifestyle. The design of these elements will be governed by simplicity of form and detail, ease of maintenance, cost, durability, finish, ergonomics and resistance to vandalism. Some items will be governed by statutory or technical requirements as to their size and location. Individual elements should combine to provide the right scale in any given situation. It is important that there is a strong design continuity between the design of individual items. The integrated furniture should look as though it belongs within the park rather than thrust upon it.

Outdoor fittings and furniture included within the park will be of the highest quality, materials and design. They include seats, tables, barbecues, rubbish bins, shelters, drinking fountains, tree protectors, telephone booths, flag poles, banners, signs, information boards, bollards, lighting, paving surfaces, bicycle racks, sculptures, pergolas and awnings.

All elements of street furniture should co-ordinate with the general "sub-tropical" notion and should be made to blend with other similar objects and their surroundings. In addition, selective works of art, including static penetrable, interactive, kinetic and recreational, shall be placed in strategic locations throughout the park and development areas.

The materials used are also important in relation to location. An off-path, secluded environment would demand softer and more tactile materials such as timber. At a building edge, a serviceable material like masonry would be more suitable.

2.3.3.3 Seating

The provision and design of places to sit is especially important to the successful landscaping of open space. Seating not only includes benches or seats but also low walls, steps or the edges of planter beds, especially in places where seats would seem intrusive. The arrangement of seats should vary to cater for different sized groups. Shading of seating areas is very desirable and can be accomplished via trees, pergolas, canopies and gazebos.

2.3.3.4 Paving

Paving is defined as any hard natural or artificial material placed on the ground plan of the landscape to produce a durable surface that may accommodate constant, intense use. Pavement is able to define edges, shapes and forms on the ground plane and satisfy various elements of design. Paving influences scale and the texture of the material.

The size of paving modules and the size and spacing of paving patterns all influence the perceived scale of a paved area. Changes in paving can identify differences between sitting, rest, movement and gathering. If a definite break in paving is required this should be well marked, for example by plants.

The apparent random conjunction of paving materials or plant species should be avoided. The visual and spatial quality of pavement is an important factor in determining the fascination with a landscape design from the ground plan. The paving can be used to signify varying uses and functions on the ground plane and by altering the paving material or pattern, a separation of uses and activities can be implied from one space to another.

2.3.3.5 Lighting

All open spaces within the Corporation Area should be well lit at night, not only for reasons of public safety, but to encourage evening use and to avoid "dead spots in the nightscape. A pedestrian crossing an open space within the park at night should be provided with sufficient lighting to allow them to see the opposite side of the open space. The design of external lighting should facilitate the appreciation of landscaped areas at night, as well as to define spaces and identify centres of primary, secondary and tertiary activity. External lighting will also provide safety and security.

2.3.3.6 Water Elements

The use of water throughout the park is strongly suggested by the many inherent qualities that this landscape element possesses that satisfy the functional, aesthetic and psychological needs of the user. Water is one of the most magnetising and compelling of all design elements and few people can ignore or fail to react to its presence in the landscape. People are lured emotionally towards it for its audiovisual and recreational uses and it may take on such diverse characteristics as being still and in repose, or falling with animation and fervour. Fountains, waterfalls and pools exhibit qualities of light, colour, sound and movement which all assist in reinforcing the sub-tropical atmosphere and add interest to open spaces, complementing the "park" theme.

People's involvement with these various water features should be encouraged. For example paddling, feeling the water, changing the flow of a fountain. Any water elements should always be clean and well maintained.

2.3.3.7 Walls and Fences

Walls are vitally important within the landscape, for they define space, separate functions, modify climate and provide visual and sitting elements. Walls may be categorised into four main types;

- (a) Walls higher than eye level, used to form a complete physical and visual barrier;
- (b) Walls for partial enclosure, below eye level in height but still providing physical and visual obstruction;
- (c) Retaining walls used to form changes in level as an alternative to land shaping; and
- (d) Dwarf walls, where a strong horizontal element is required, in association with paved areas.

Long and/or expansive walls are generally undesirable within the Corporation Area. Where they are necessary, they should be presented in such a way that they do not create a harsh or monotonous facade.

Careful detailing and creative construction methods will improve their appearance. Fences would be preferred over walls because they allow some visual penetration of view and are less obtrusive.

2.3.3.8 Graphics and Advertising

The impact of graphics is substantial and a poorly placed sign of ill-considered design and intrusive colours can contribute dramatically to the degradation of an environment. Signage and graphics should be simple to read, distinctive, and reflect the parkland's character. This Signage System must be of uniform quality and style and provide pertinent information at the appropriate locations.

No private commercial advertising which is intended to be, or could be readily seen from the Corporation Area, Brisbane River or South East Freeway shall be permitted except at the discretion of the Corporation. All external graphics and advertising within the limits of the Corporation Area will need to be designed in accordance with the standards set by the Corporation.

2.3.4 General Site Design

The following objectives are intended to promote an architectural and design approach that is applicable over the whole site in order to retain a high standard of urban design within the Corporation Area. These objectives are as follows:

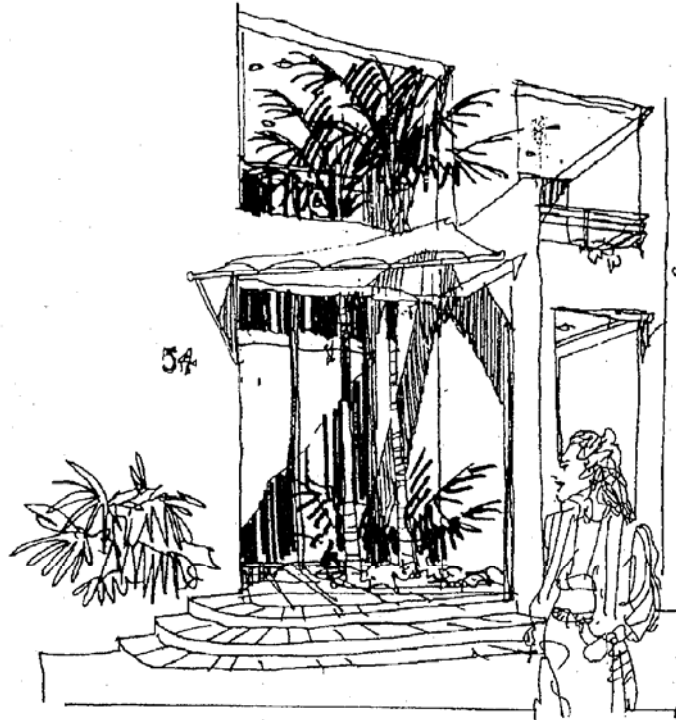
- (a) The emphasis in design is on the horizontal, compared to the vertical emphasis evident in the CBD;
- (b) Stand alone architectural statements are discouraged. Visual and functional integration between each design solution is required, i.e. "Diversity within Unity";
- (c) The urban morphology of the Corporation Area is to be respected in the design through maintaining selective urban markers defining previously existing street alignments;
- (d) The use of analysis and intuition in reaching design solutions is encouraged;
- (e) The creation of an interdisciplinary dialogue between architecture and art is encouraged in order to more richly express context and culture,
- (f) All public areas are to be designed to be secure day and night;
- (g) Disabled access is to be maintained throughout the site;
- (h) Car parks are not to be treated on a purely functional basis. The design program for these facilities calls for a dialogue between architecture, art and landscape to be used as a humanising element. This objective overrides the need to fit as many cars as possible on the site. A creative dialogue needs to be achieved between architects, engineers, artists and relevant authorities to this end;
- (i) Connections between various Development Packages are to be concealed in an approved manner so that the finished development will read as one; and
- (j) Lift Motor Rooms, Plant Rooms and the like are to be treated as an integral part of the building form in order to create a coherent roofscape.

These objectives are complemented by the objectives contained within Section 14.0. Where this is any conflict, the provisions of Section 14.0 prevail.



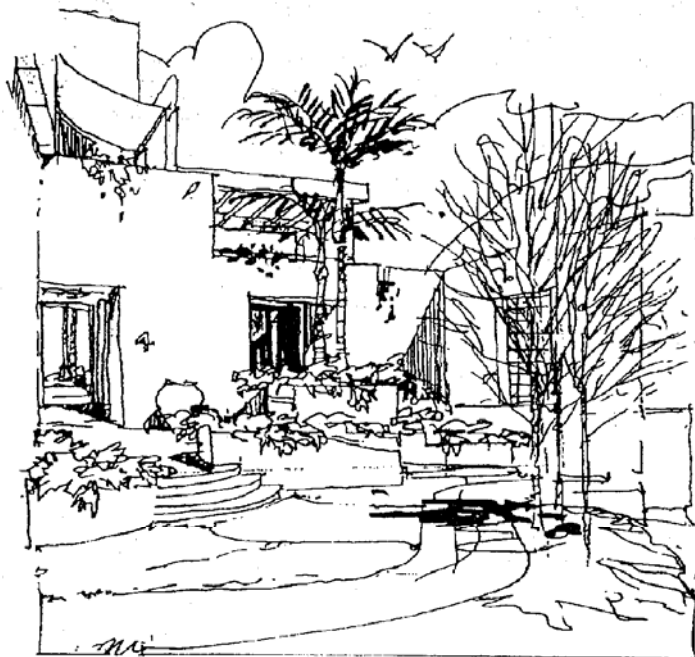
Semi Enclosed Spaces

Figure 2.1



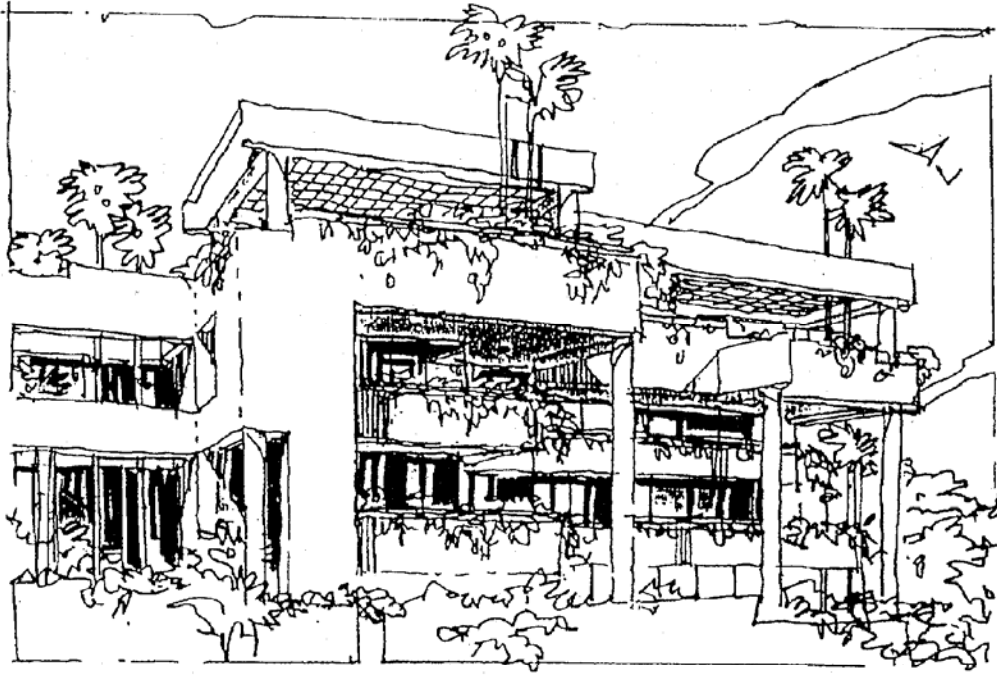
Recessed Entry Ways

Figure 2.2



Introduction of Semi-Hard Landscaping

Figure 2.3



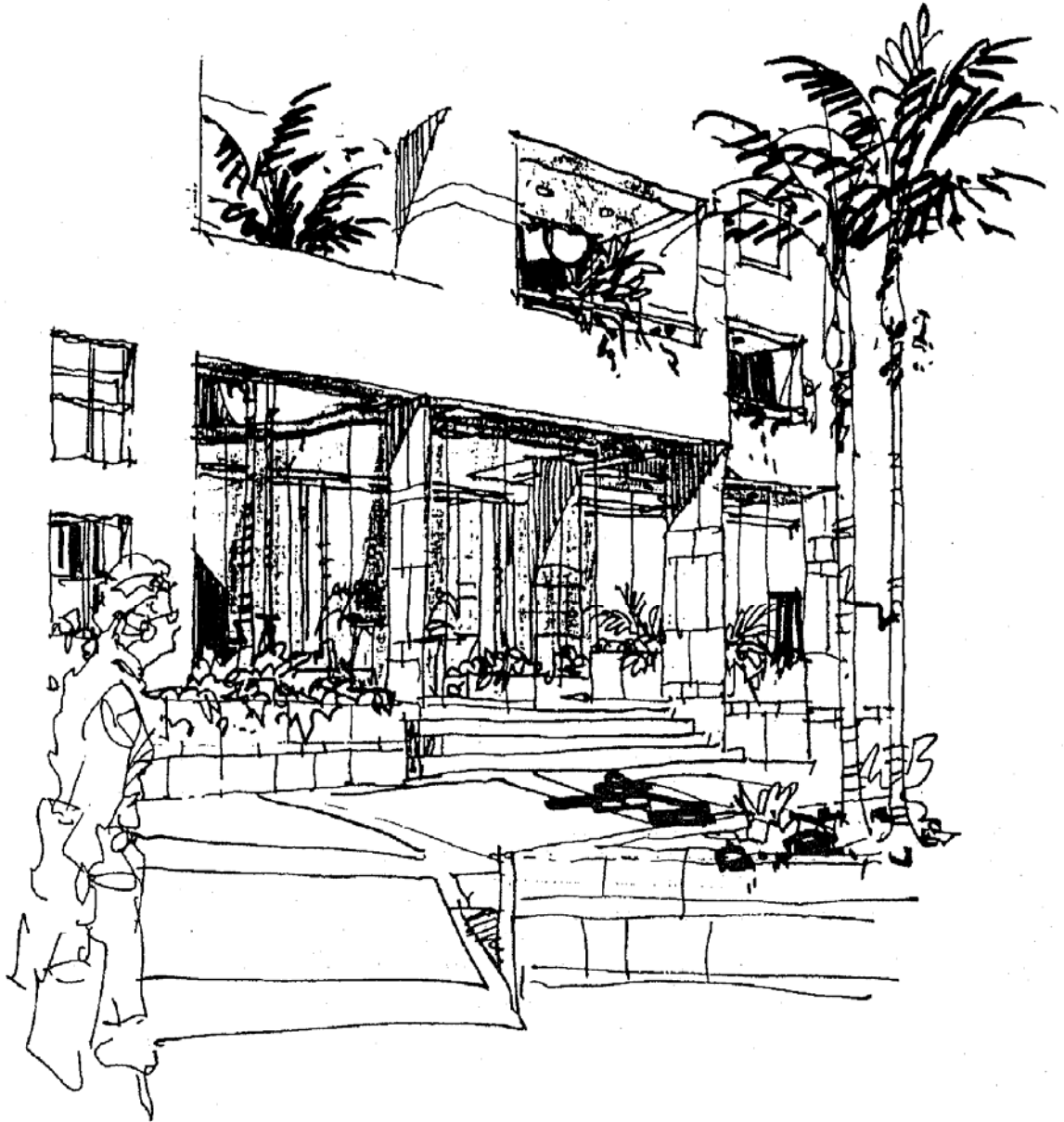
Landscaping beyond Ground Level

Figure 2.4



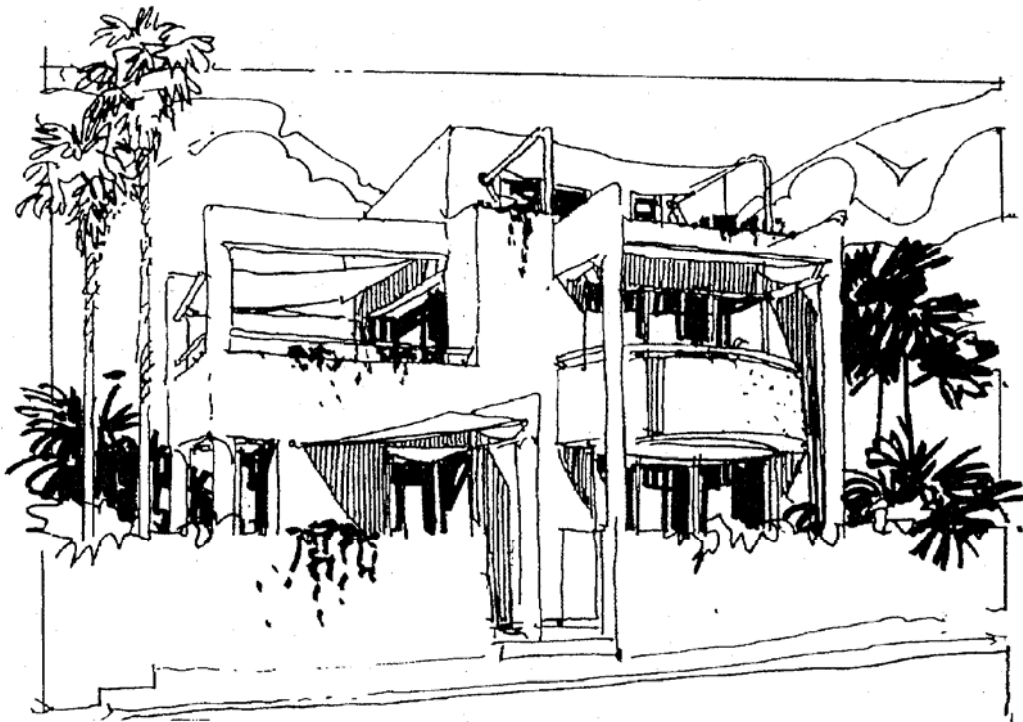
Open Framed Construction

Figure 2.5



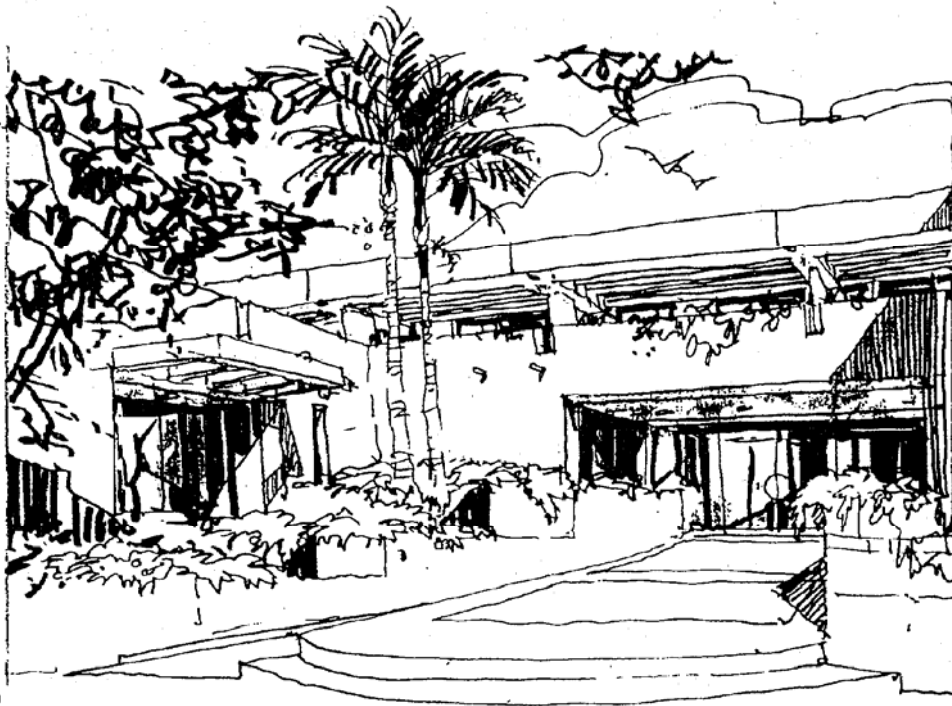
Deep Layered Facades

Figure 2.6



Semi-Enclosed Exterior Spaces

Figure 2.7



Semi-Outdoor Spaces

Figure 2.8