This is a repository copy of The Principles of Green Urbanism: Transforming the City for Sustainability.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:
http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/92777/

Version: Accepted Version

Article:

https://doi.org/10.1080/02673037.2013.878102

Reuse
Unless indicated otherwise, fulltext items are protected by copyright with all rights reserved. The copyright exception in section 29 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 allows the making of a single copy solely for the purpose of non-commercial research or private study within the limits of fair dealing. The publisher or other rights-holder may allow further reproduction and re-use of this version - refer to the White Rose Research Online record for this item. Where records identify the publisher as the copyright holder, users can verify any specific terms of use on the publisher's website.

Takedown
If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing eprints@whiterose.ac.uk including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.
Aimed at architecture and urban design students, this huge book is densely packed with colour images, making it a pleasure to leaf through. Each chapter is written as an introductory ‘module’ to point the reader towards further research, rather than as a definitive text. The intention is to present a series of inspirational ideas using urban renewal strategies and the conceptual model of Green Urbanism. There is ample material for scholars wishing to understand the role of housing within place-making.

Alongside the conceptual model, the student outputs of several of the author’s taught design studios are also presented. These design studios focus on a single ‘archetypal post-industrial city’ - Newcastle in New South Wales, Australia. Newcastle is used throughout the book as a test bed for the ‘revitalization of typical post-industrial urban landscapes’. Lehmann states that although many of the Green Urbanism strategies are generic and transferable, ‘no single formula will work everywhere’.

The first chapter describes why Lehmann believes Newcastle represents the ‘archetypical post-industrial city’, and presents his research on Green Urbanism, including a reflection on utopian ideas of early modernism, such as Howard’s Garden City; Garnier’s Functional zoning; Corbusier’s Ville Radieuse; Lloyd Wright’s Broadacre City; the mixed use compact city; and Tokyo’s Metabolist group.

Chapter two sets out the 15 principles of Green Urbanism in the form of a ‘step-by-step’ manual, though Lehmann stresses the principles must be used in combination rather than in isolation. Chapter three then demonstrates how the 15 principles can be applied strategically in four different sites within Newcastle. This is achieved using three case studies from the author’s design studios and one real case study. The student case studies are visually impressive, and show how the various challenges were tackled by particular design teams.

The final chapter focuses on the urbanisation of India and China to identify the next steps and research required to underpin a low or zero-carbon future for these rapidly expanding nations.

Apart from Chapter three, each lengthy chapter includes a final ‘scrapbook’ section to stimulate further research into the topics discussed. Much of this information is relevant and interesting, though it is a sometimes a little disjointed
and lacking in context - rather like rifling through someone else’s PowerPoint slides.

Lehmann states that modern Cities now compete to be seen as attractive, creative places; representing secure investments with a green vision. He coins the phrase ‘Post-Industrial condition’, which he says is the need to redefine the city centre’s identity and adapt its role to remain competitive. He states that this book is about optimism and hope, providing ‘emancipatory solutions’ for citizens and governments to rethink the city, moving away from purely functional and aesthetic design criteria to grasp opportunities to ‘turn entire districts into near zero carbon neighbourhoods’ supported by urban agriculture. These laudable aims are supported by some international exemplars, most notably Berlin’s ‘Energy Savings Partnership’ model, and Seoul’s Cheonggyecheon urban stream regeneration.

The 15 principles themselves have much in common with Bioregional’s ‘One Planet Principles’: in fact 10 of them appear to map across directly. What is more explicit here though is the focus on climate and site context; densification and intensification of existing districts; urban governance; education and training; and strategies specifically for developing countries.

However, one could question how useful the design studios are at demonstrating real-world deployment of the 15 principles. Each design studio gets between 75 and 100 pages each devoted to it, while the only real project to be presented - potentially the most interesting - gets just 9 pages. This imbalance highlights a slight tendency towards too much abstraction. Further credible real-world examples of how and why an urban design had evolved to deal with the multiple challenges of the city would have been valuable.

Some assertions about city suburbs do not perhaps quite ring true. Lehmann declares the ‘death knell to the inefficient sprawling suburb’ has been rung, that ‘...the suburban dream of the ‘big house in the green’ is vanishing’, and that ‘as the desire to live in these isolated places diminishes, suburbs will be vacated [giving us] the chance to gradually recycle them or eliminate them’. Suburbs are undoubtedly inefficient in land use and transport energy terms, but evidence of sustainability gains through urban intensification is still unclear, and solutions are more often about new technologies and changing behaviours than the built form. Though it may be desirable to ‘eliminate’ suburbs on grounds of inefficiency, I think this is currently unrealistic given the poor amenities of many city centres, particularly for families with young children, many of whom will still be dreaming about a spacious house with private gardens. The trick for green urbanism to pull off is providing the same quality of life with less private space, and though there are some excellent international examples of this being achieved (e.g. Vauban), I think the masses are yet to be convinced and the suburban exodus is currently on hold.
Finally, one might question how transferable Newcastle’s lessons really are. It is a small waterfront city (population 150,000), that ‘enjoys a Mediterranean climate’ with double the solar radiation of London or Berlin, and an average minimum temperature of 4.7 °C. This means the challenges Newcastle faces are quite different from many more temperate post-industrial cities. Perhaps a range of case studies would have broadened the resonance, and lessened the occasional impression of reading a commissioned report for the city of Newcastle rather than a general urban design book.

This ambitious book covers a lot of ground in an accessible style, and there is much to like. However, the structure of the book can feel cluttered at times, and there is a lack of the ‘wayfinding’ so beloved of urban designers that would allow the casual reader to navigate with ease.

_Nick Taylor Buck, Urban Institute, University of Sheffield, UK._

996 words.
Principles of urbanism. The principles of urbanism can be applied increasingly to projects at the full range of scales from a single building to an entire community. 1. Walkability. -Most things within a 10-minute walk of home and work -Pedestrian friendly street design (buildings close to street; porches, windows & doors; tree-lined streets; on street parking; hidden parking lots; garages in rear lane; narrow, slow speed streets) -Pedestrian streets free of cars in special cases. -A network of high-quality trains connecting cities, towns, and neighborhoods together -Pedestrian-friendly design that encourages a greater use of bicycles, rollerblades, scooters, and walking as daily transportation. 9. Sustainability. Green Urbanism is a conceptual model for zero-emission and zero-waste urban design, which arose in the 1990s, promoting compact energy-efficient urban development, seeking to transform and re-engineer existing city districts and regenerate the post-industrial city centre. It promotes the development of socially and environmentally sustainable city districts. One finds emerging Green Urbanism theory for the 21st Century, which aims to transform existing cities from fragmentation to compaction. Eco-city theory focuses on adjusting the relationship between city and nature.