



A special advertising report

DEVELOPMENT DESIGN CONCEPT

SOME shopping enthusiasts call their local mall their second home. This can be taken quite literally at the Village at Balgowlah, which features apartments and town houses built around a commercial precinct.

The development, which is due for completion late next year, will include 239 apartments, 25 town houses and over 60 specialty shops.

Winner of this year's HIA GreenSmart Development Design Concept award, the project proves there's a natural synergy between residential and commercial develop-

ments from more than just a shopaholics' perspective.

"Combining the two uses creates sustainability opportunities that wouldn't otherwise be possible," says Stockland residential sustainability manager, Matthew Brennan. "It has made some innovative aspects commercially possible."

One of these is a system which re-uses heat discharged from the shopping centre's air-conditioner to heat water for the residential properties. It will also be used to heat the outdoor pool during the cooler months.

Translating this waste product into a

Not just a mall, but really home sweet home

commodity is expected to reduce household energy consumption by about 30 per cent. Water bills will also be cut, with a water harvesting system designed to collect run-off from the roof tops and paved areas. The 6.6 megalitres of water estimated to be collected each year will be used in washing machines, toilet flushing and to irrigate the development's extensive gardens.

While perpetual shadows are a fact of life for many residents in apartment complexes, every effort has been made to ensure residences in The Village are exposed to natural sunlight.

To achieve this, building heights have been limited to low and medium-rise and the roof levels vary between the seven residential complexes.

The tallest buildings have been placed along the northern and eastern sides of the site which naturally slope downwards.

They're divided by open-air plazas, gardens and tree-lined walkways which provide corridors for natural light to filter through.

The apartments are also designed to capture the sea breezes, further reducing the need for airconditioning.

A greater emphasis on natural light and ventilation in the commercial areas should provide a much more inviting shopping and leisure experience than the dated Totem Shopping Centre which previously occupied the site.

"Gone are the days of the big boxes," says Stockland retail sustainability manager, Justin Travlos. "Experiencing a shopping centre with natural light and fresh air is always more pleasant than a big cold box that's hermetically sealed. It's something people have come

to expect."

Being green and profitable have traditionally been contradicting aspirations, but Mr Brennan says a healthy balance has become easier to achieve in recent years:

"In some cases, it's now more expensive to buy less efficient products such as water fixtures," he says. "Now, low VOC paints cost the same as standard paint. This trend is set to increase with the market."

Located 12km away from Sydney's CBD and 2km away from Manly, The Village is an example of how high-density infill developments (on existing suburban sites) can include just as many sustainable features as master planned communities on greenfield sites (land which hasn't been developed previously).

Building sustainable developments in the former scenario has its additional challenges, including the limited options associated with having to work with existing infrastructure. Also, sites are more spatially constrained and there's the need to consider potential disruptions to the existing community and neighbours during the construction process.

"It's a good model given that infill developments will become increasingly important as greenfield sites become harder to come by," Mr Brennan says. "There are a whole range of benefits associated with making use of infill sites such as the fact that they're closely situated to existing amenities and infrastructure, as it takes a long time for those new areas to develop character and amenity."

There's also the obvious advantage of reducing urban sprawl and cutting down the travel time required to reach employment, recreational and retail hubs.



Australian
04/07/2008
Page: 4
Advertising feature
Region: National
Circulation: 133000
Type: National
Size: 489.64 sq.cms
MTWTF



Mr Travlos says mixed-use developments in infill sites are becoming more popular.

In Melbourne's eastern suburbs, Stockland is currently working on the \$500 million mixed-used development of Tooronga Village.

Stockland's Eagle Street Pier in Brisbane

which combines commercial, retail, residential and hotel space is another recent example.

The popularity of The Village is already apparent, with 42 of the 77 recently released first stage apartments selling off the plan within two weeks.

