

STANDING TALL BACK TO BACK

REINVENTING THE TOWNHOUSE

AUCKLAND
DESIGN MANUAL
TE PUKA WHAKATAIRANGA | A TĀMAKI MAKĀURAU

BUILDINGS + SITES // HOUSING CASE STUDY

The Altair
Newtown, Auckland

OVERVIEW

High density terrace housing development in a central city environment that creates an excellent edge to the street while accommodating the car via rear lane access.

PROJECT SUMMARY

This development was on a brown-field site previously adjacent to what was Wellington's icon Athletic Park. Rintoul Street is an important north-south street that runs along the flanks of the Newtown valley. Rintoul Street is on the bus route to the central city.

The site is just less than one hectare – a relatively large site for Newtown. The development comprises of 70 three bedroom terrace units in nine blocks.

The whole site has been master-planned with each block separated by a variety of spaces; some for vehicle access, some private courtyards and there are three common spaces which provide a level of amenity to the development, to counter the smaller individual open spaces for each unit.

Eight of these blocks are parallel to Rintoul Street, with one rear block set at right angles due to the shape of the corner. The three storey blocks are a contemporary version of terrace housing. The units within each block are staggered which helps break down the form and overall building scale of the development.



The terrace housing development presents an excellent edge to Rintoul Street.

KEY PROJECT INFORMATION

HOUSING TYPE TERRACES	DENSITY 69 DW/HA	ARCHITECT & DESIGN TEAM ARCHITECTURE PLUS	YEAR COMPLETED 2013
SITE AREA 9964 M²	PROJECT TYPE ROW STYLE TERRACED HOUSES	CLIENT/DEVELOPER STRATUM MANAGEMENT LTD	PRICE BAND MID-RANGE
The site is just less than one hectare – a relatively large site for Newtown	Three and Four level row style terrace houses with integral garages		A mid-range project would typically have a current build cost of \$2000 - \$3000 per m ² , exclusive of land costs, professional services and regulatory fees
The whole site has been masterplanned with each block separated by a variety of spaces; some for vehicle access, some private courtyards and there are three common spaces	The development comprises of 70 x three bedroom terrace units in nine blocks Development is clustered around a variety of shared open spaces		
The site is relatively flat in topography	Accommodation ranges between 130m ² and 180m ²		
PARKING REAR LANE ACCESS			
Single internal garage per dwelling (54 dwellings)			
Double internal garage per dwelling (15 dwellings)			
9 visitor car parking spaces			

UNDERSTANDING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

1. The neighbourhood is primarily a 19th century development and has no character preservation.
2. The traditional houses are often two storey detached homes on narrow sites, which rely on street parking.
3. The site has been master-planned with the spaces between each parallel terrace block alternating between access ways, communal spaces and private courtyards.



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GETTING IT RIGHT STREET TO THE FRONT DOOR

1. The two blocks facing Rintoul Street have different conditions. One has private courtyards and direct pedestrian access from Rintoul Street with parking and vehicle access from a rear lane.
2. The second block has separate vehicle access for each unit directly off Rintoul Street, with private courtyards to the rear.
3. A new street runs perpendicular to Rintoul Street and provides vehicle and pedestrian access to the remainder of the site.



Looking towards the main entrance to the Altair complex from Rintoul Street.

GETTING IT RIGHT STREET TO THE FRONT DOOR

1. The differently used outdoor spaces are clearly delineated by the buildings, garden walls and fences.
2. The shared surfaces provide for access – both pedestrian and vehicle access across the site.
3. Three landscaped communal spaces provide larger spaces for residents as an alternative to the smaller private courtyards.
4. A private courtyard for each unit is augmented with a first floor balcony adjacent to living areas providing for an alternative outdoor space.



Looking towards the rear end of the terrace housing block – one of three communal open spaces are located towards the foreground.

GETTING IT RIGHT THE BUILDING

1. Each terrace block is three stories with seven to eight units. These blocks are contemporary versions of terrace housing that subtly step in and out to help break down the solid visual effect and provide a greater degree of privacy between the units.
2. Materials include different types of timber products; weatherboard and/or Shadowclad plywood, with aluminium glazing joinery. The bases of the buildings are either brick or painted concrete block.
3. Each unit is three bedrooms, with the ground floor containing a single garage, a service area, a small habitable bedroom/study and stair access to the floors above.
4. Windows and balconies provide for passive surveillance over both Rintoul Street and communal spaces within the development.



Looking closer at the western elevation of the front terrace block – view from internal communal open space.

GETTING IT RIGHT THE BUILDING

5. Eight of the nine blocks are set up parallel to Rintoul Street, with the blocks fronting and providing a strong edge to the street.
6. As the area might change, this development sets a precedent for how new building can support and enhance the street environment in the future.



The terrace housing development presents an excellent edge to Rintoul Street.

GETTING IT RIGHT ACCOMMODATING THE CAR

1. Vehicles are cleverly managed so that they are integrated into the development without dominating the outdoor spaces.
2. Each unit has its own single garage that is accessed off a shared space.



Looking into one of many rear access lanes.

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The Auckland Design Manual provides practical advice, best practice processes and detailed design guidance to enable us to design and build the world's most liveable city. The manual will enable us all to make informed choices, to build houses and develop our streets and neighbourhoods to not only look good but to ensure they are built to last, sustainable and give the best return on investment.

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