

GOOD DESIGN CREATES COMMON GROUND

HOUSING HELPS
TO CHANGE LIVES

AUCKLAND
DESIGN MANUAL

TE PUKA WHAKATAIRANGA-I-A TAMAKI MAKAUARAU

BUILDINGS + SITES // HOUSING CASE STUDY

Common Ground
Sydney, Australia

OVERVIEW

A building project that demonstrates how well designed buildings can make a positive difference to well being at the most fundamental level, and when combined with effective support – can change lives.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Common Ground Sydney is based on a model of care for the chronically homeless which was successfully started in New York and is now considered best practice around the world. It adopts a 'street to home' approach providing stable, high quality permanent housing for the chronically homeless, as well as wrap around services including healthcare, education and a range of other social and support services.

The building is not recognisable as social housing or as an institutional building, but rather as a contemporary and comfortable living environment. The 104 units establish a social mix, integrating previously homeless people along with others on low incomes. A 24-hour concierge provides security and casual surveillance for residents and visitors to the building, and support services are an integral part of the model, ensuring residents' are receiving appropriate support to be able to maintain their tenancies. An extremely high standard of design was always considered fundamental to the success of the building – especially in the communal areas.

The design is the result of a detailed urban design analysis, extensive consultation with stakeholders, and workshops with a range of community service providers. The building was designed in a manner sensitive to neighbouring residential areas and required the support of the City of Sydney to amend the Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan.

The building completes the development of a larger site owned by Housing New South Wales . The new building forms an important transition in scale, height and materiality between the existing heritage listed Alexandra Dwellings and the 11-storey Johanna O'Dea tower. It presents a strong frontage to the Pyrmont Bridge Road façade with upper level setbacks that are appropriate to its context.

Common Ground Sydney is one of the largest residential developments in Australia that has 100% of its units with barrier free access to aid accessibility. The development has a 5 star Green Star rating for design and has carefully considered passive ESD principals with a central north south atrium to capture natural daylight and fresh air allowing passive natural ventilation to all apartments. This organising axis provides a communal focus with break out spaces on each floor, interconnected by stairs to encourage social interaction between residents.

The development was designed by Hassell who worked with the developer and builder Grocon, Both parties, and many of the subcontractors, provided a range of services at a pro-bono and/or cost only basis. Grocon built the project at cost and returned savings of \$1.4m to Housing NSW.



Artwork features prominently in the main entry.

KEY PROJECT INFORMATION

HOUSING TYPE
APARTMENT

DENSITY
526 DW/HA

ARCHITECT & DESIGN TEAM
HASELL Architecture, Landscape
Architecture, Planning, Interior
Design

YEAR COMPLETED
2011

OTHER CONSULTANTS

**NDY, Meinhardt, MGAC, Acoustic
Logic, Davis Langdon, Godden
Mckay Logan**

SITE AREA
2050 M²

PROJECT TYPE
SUPPORTED LIVING

CLIENT
HOUSING NEW SOUTH WALES

PRICE BAND
SUPPORTED LIVING

Homeless accommodation with
full 'wrap around' services

DEVELOPER
GROCON

Units have not been sold/ available for sale on
the open market.

104 units in a mix of studio and 1
bedroom.

PARKING
BASEMENT

Only 7 car parks, and 50
bicycle parks.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

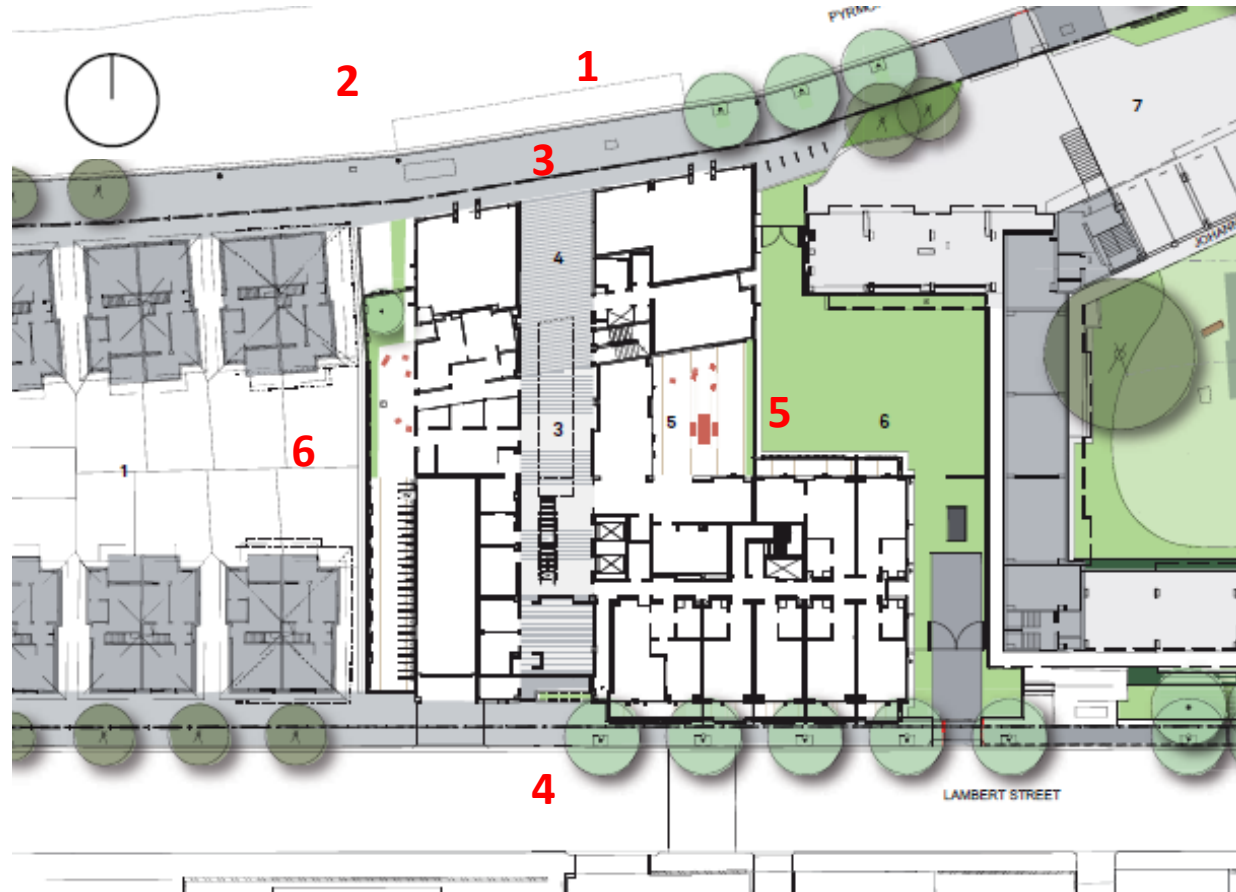
1. Camperdown is an inner city suburb of Sydney which is close to public transport and the University of Sydney. The immediate area is a mix of commercial and residential uses which increasingly being redeveloped into high density residential development
2. The public domain component resolves the complete Housing NSW site, with an upgrade to landscaping and the existing open space surrounding the Johanna O'Dea building. New tree planting to Pyrmont Bridge Road and Lambert Street will create a new tree lined street perspective.
3. The design is the result of a detailed urban design analysis, extensive consultation with stakeholders, and workshops with a range of community service providers.
4. The building completes the development of a larger site owned by Housing New South Wales . The new building forms an important transition in scale, height and materiality between the existing heritage listed Alexandra Dwellings and the 11-storey Johanna O'Dea tower. It presents a strong frontage to the Pyrmont Bridge Road façade with upper level setbacks that are appropriate to its context.



View of the front from Pyrmont Street .

GETTING IT RIGHT PLACING THE BUILDINGS ON THE SITE

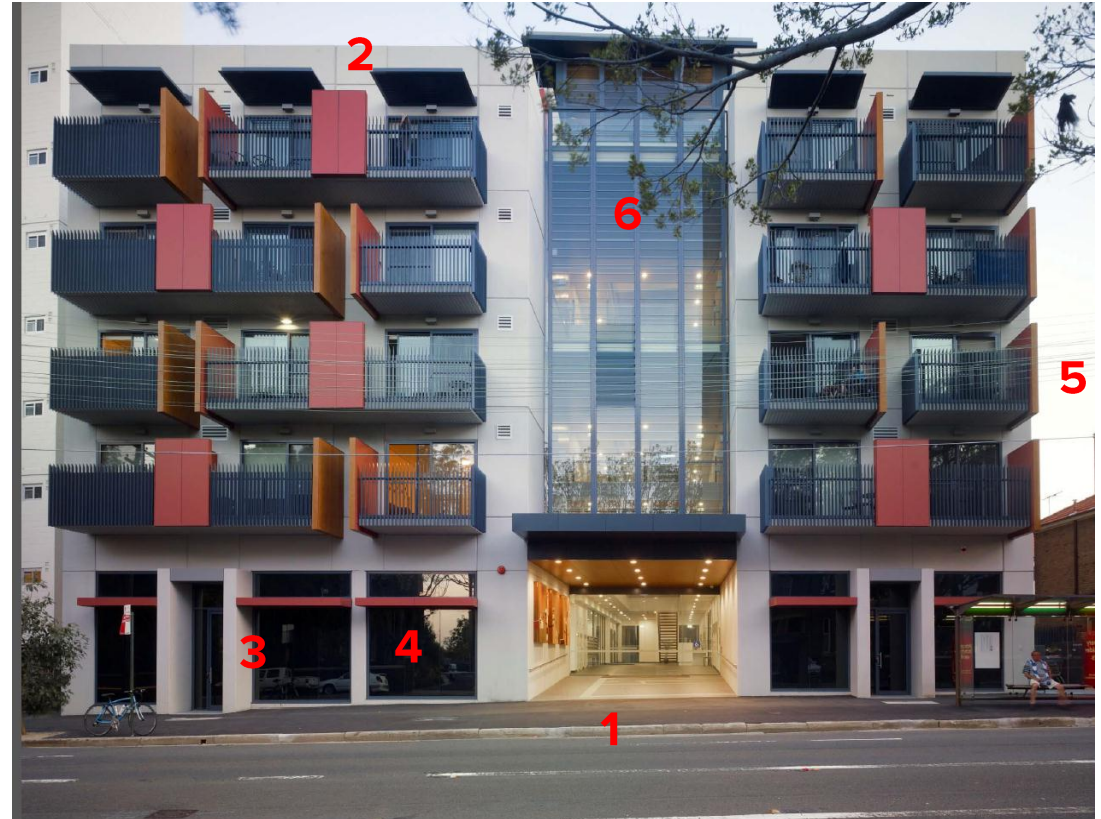
1. The development is part of a wider site owned by Housing New South Wales, and was built on an L shaped site between two existing developments. It forms a transition between the 11 storey tall Johanna O'Dea building to the east, and the two storey tall heritage listed Alexandra dwellings to the west.
2. Three significant design considerations when looking at the site – overall the site is deep, there are two road frontages, and the irregular shaped building site formed by the two existing developments.
3. The main entry to the building is off the Pyrmont Street to the north, which is the busier, more public side of the development. The Lambert Street side provides secondary access to the office, access to service areas and the ramp to the underground car park. A through site connection would not have been appropriate for this type of development which requires a high degree of security, and the ability to closely monitor who is coming in and out of the building.
4. The building has been built out to strongly define each street front, and match the building line of the existing developments - which has created a deep building. To get light into the middle of the structure the design uses a large internal glazed atrium space.
5. There is a courtyard provided on the eastern side, and the units overlook this and the open space of the block next door.
6. The units on the western side have been set back from the boundary to create an outlook space.



Site plan of the new development showing how it slots in between two existing groups of buildings.

GETTING IT RIGHT STREET TO FRONT DOOR

1. The front access is wide, very generous and deep, forming an inviting entryway onto Pyrmont Street. The porch area is very well lit and includes artwork on one wall.
2. The building is a transitional form between the 11 storey tower on the left and the two storey building on the left.
3. The street level is further activated by the multipurpose room and social enterprise space, both of which have their own entry ways onto the street.
4. There are a wide mix of uses in the ground floor of the building, including office spaces, consulting rooms and multi-use spaces which can be used by a range of agencies – so lots of activity at street level with different people coming and going. The higher stud height (approx 4.5m) allows for a wide range of uses.
5. The building is built up to and strongly defines the street edge. Oversight of the street is provided from the balconies and large atrium space providing passive surveillance or 'eyes on the street', which makes the street feel safe.
6. The entry way and atrium provide a very clear glazed vertical element which divides the two parts of the development, there is a clearly defined ground floor and the balconies provide good articulation to the façade. The upper floor (which is not visible from this angle) is stepped back several meters from the outside walls. Overall, the building has an excellent sense of scale, proportion and use of materials and colours.



Front façade on Pyrmont Street.

GETTING IT RIGHT ACCOMODATING THE CAR

1. The access to the underground car park is off Lambert Road – which is the quieter street. The width of the access ramp has been minimised (4.5m approx) which reduces the impact on the street front. Not providing the bollards, and mounting the access pad to the wall, would have been a better option with regards to the footpath.
2. The car park entry has been designed as an integral part of the façade. Because of the central location and easy access to public transport, there are only 7 car spaces provided, and 50 bike parks.
3. While Lambert Road is a secondary road, the building has still been designed to address the street. There is access to the office, the balconies provide oversight and the glazed atrium is highly visible.



The Lambert Street frontage showing car access and balconies at the rear of the building.

GETTING IT RIGHT OUTDOOR SPACES

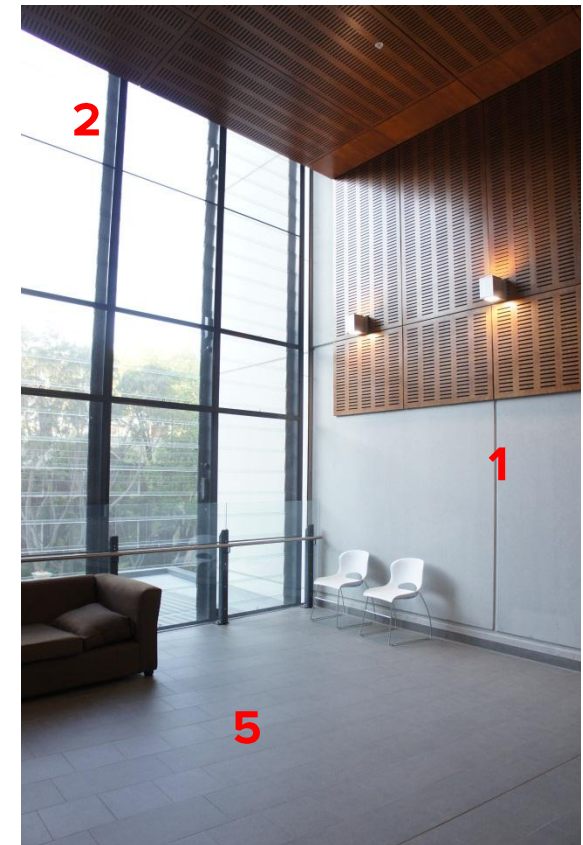
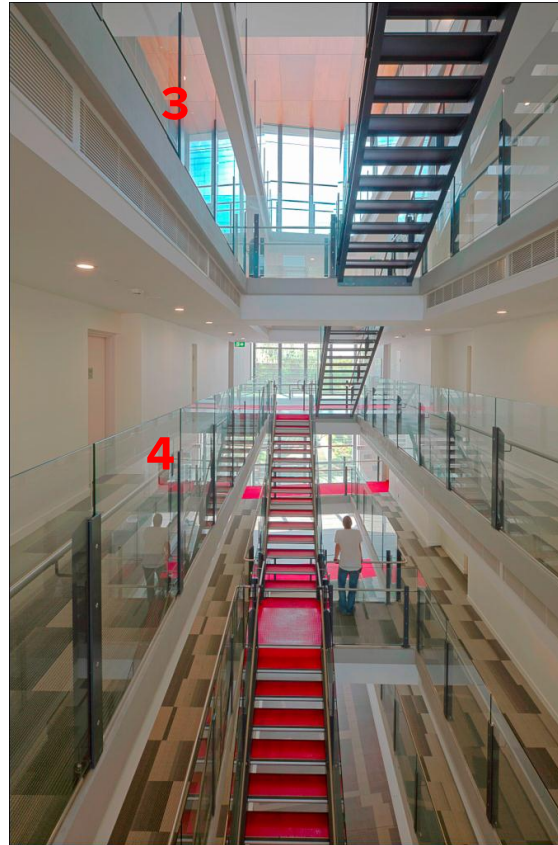
1. The top floor is setback from the outer edge of the building, which provides the space for a large (4m approx.) deck which runs around the north, west and southern sides of the building. This creates a series of communal and private spaces
2. The communal areas are on the north and south of the building and are accessed from the atrium. There are exceptional views over the inner city suburbs of Sydney.
3. Access to large, high quality and high amenity communal open space is fundamental to the success of the building and the wider programme of moving people from homelessness into long term, sustainable accommodation. This emphasizes the underlying importance and impact that well designed open spaces can have on people's wellbeing.
4. The communal gardens are part of the education and training provided to the residents of the apartments – which includes growing and cooking their own food.
5. The building requires studio apartments as part of its functional model. The generous provision of communal open space balances the limited amount of private space in the individual studios.



Rooftop communal open space – which includes vegetable gardens

GETTING IT RIGHT THE BUILDING

1. The design aims for maximum sustainability regarding solar access, energy conservation, water conservation, noise attenuation and waste reduction.
2. There is assisted natural ventilation to all units, with air-conditioning limited to the ground floor offices. The central atrium space draws fresh air through the whole building. All units are provided with ceiling fans.
3. The large central atrium space and stairway allow natural light to enter the middle of the building. The large communal lobbies around the stairs allow views of the outside from all parts of the building.
4. The development has been awarded a 5 star Green Star Multi Unit Residential Design Rating, and the majority of units are above 6 star natHERS. The building includes rainwater collection for landscape irrigation, solar hot water and photo voltaic systems, positioning balconies and awnings to limit summer solar heat gain and rooftop gardens
5. The whole building is an accessible, barrier free environment that complies with Housing NSW Universal Design Guidelines. Not only is level access provided throughout, all units are designed to be used by people with limited mobility, and some are specifically designed for people in wheelchairs.

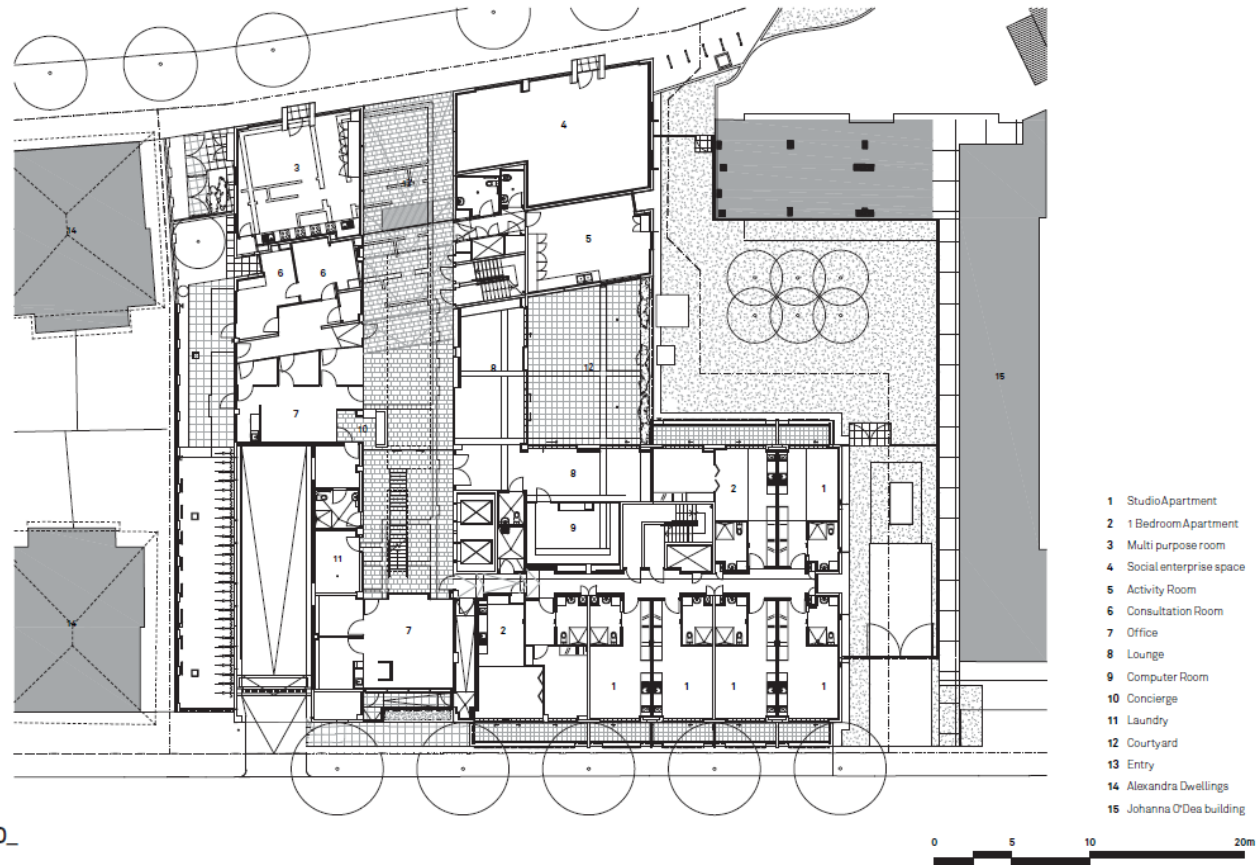


Internal staircase and atrium.

GETTING IT RIGHT SITE PLAN

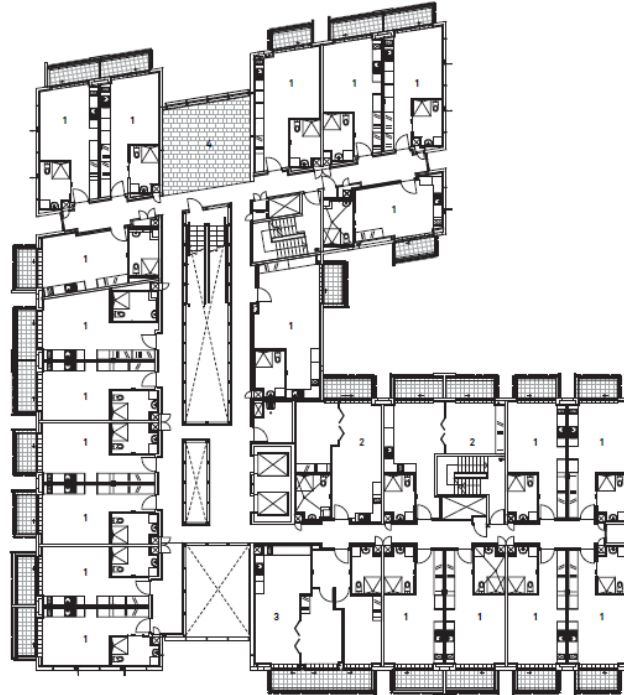


GETTING IT RIGHT GROUND FLOOR



HASSELL

GETTING IT RIGHT UPPER FLOORS



- 1 Studio Apartment
- 2 1 Bedroom Apartment
- 3 2 Bedroom Apartment
- 4 Communal breakout space

COMMON GROUND_
SYDNEY

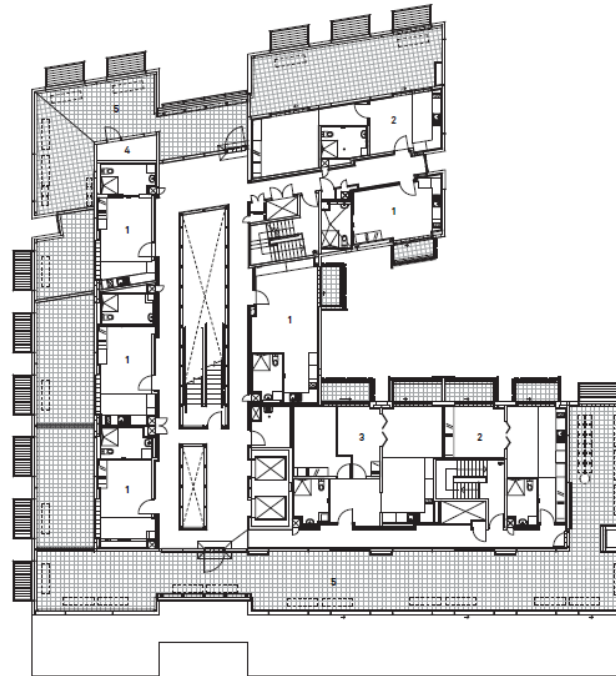
Drawing
Typical Floor Plan



HASELL

0 5 10 20m

GETTING IT RIGHT TOP FLOOR AND ROOF DECKS



- 1 Studio Apartment
- 2 1 Bedroom Apartment
- 3 2 Bedroom Apartment
- 4 Gardening Store
- 5 Communal Roof Terrace

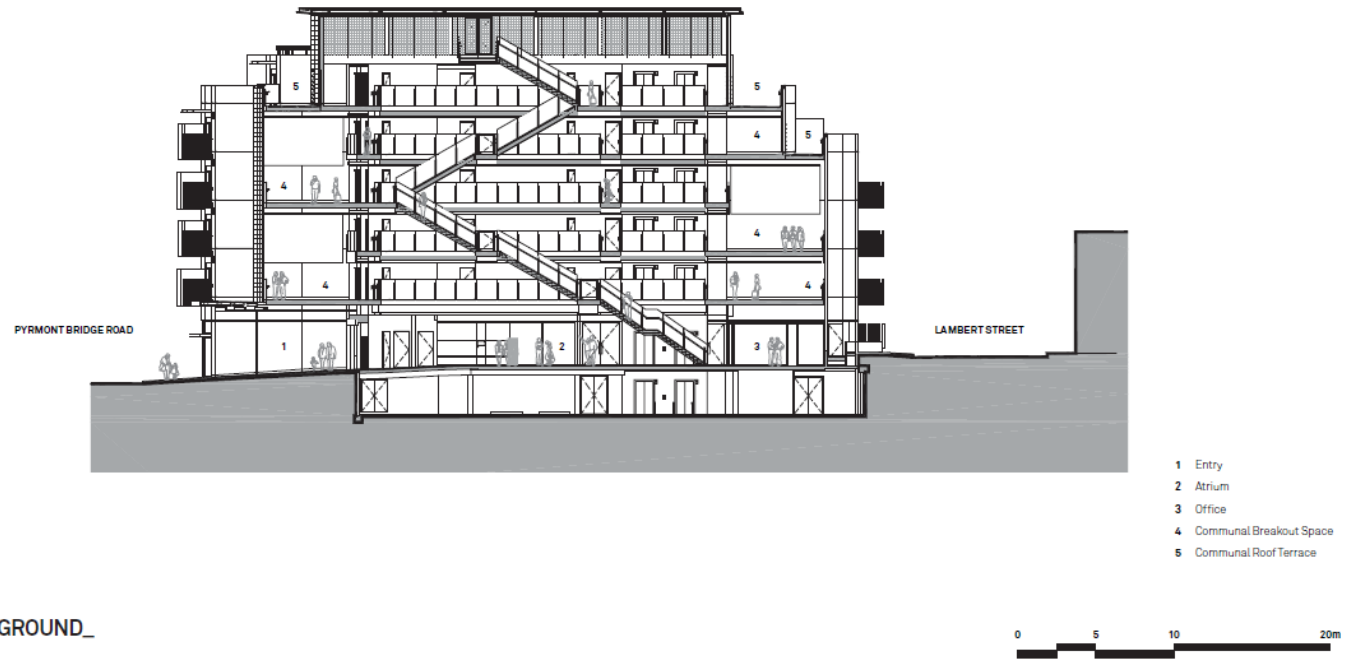
COMMON GROUND_
SYDNEY

Drawing
Top level Floor Plan



HASSELL

GETTING IT RIGHT SECTION

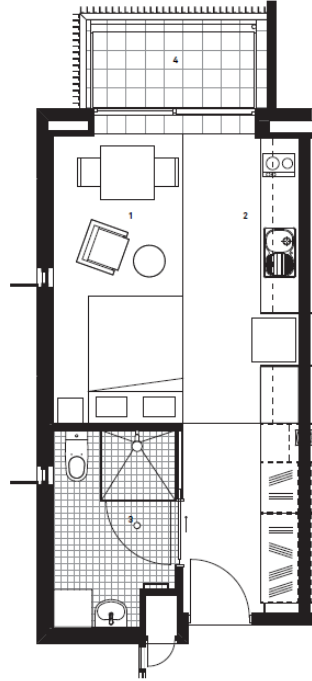


COMMON GROUND_
SYDNEY

Drawing
Longitudinal Section

HASSELL

GETTING IT RIGHT STUDIO FLOOR PLAN



COMMON GROUND_
SYDNEY

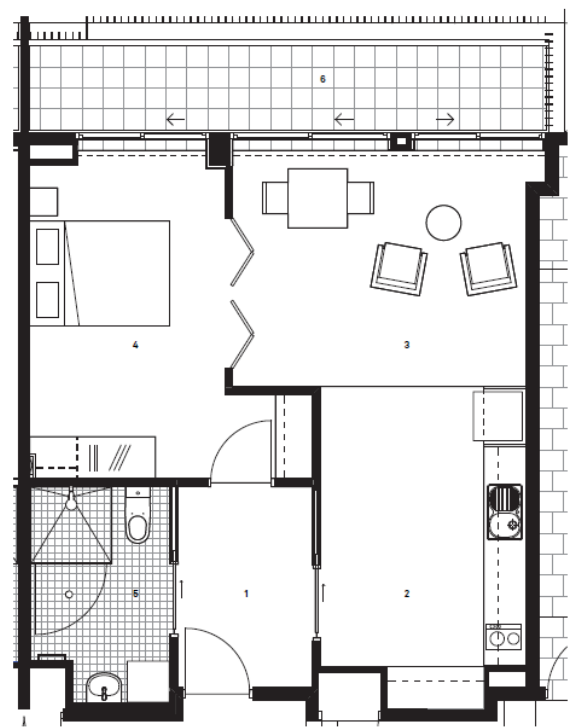
Drawing
Typical Studio Apartment Plan

HASELL

- 1 Bedroom/ Living
- 2 Kitchen
- 3 Bathroom
- 4 Balcony



GETTING IT RIGHT ONE BED UNIT FLOOR PLAN

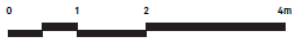


COMMON GROUND_
SYDNEY

Drawing
Typical 1 Bedroom Apartment Plan

HASSELL

- 1 Foyer
- 2 Kitchen
- 3 Living/ Dining
- 4 Bedroom
- 5 Bathroom
- 6 Balcony



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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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