



## TERRACE HOUSE

*Posted on March 15, 2024 by Gabriel Sastre*



**Categories:** [Austin Maynard Architects](#), [Australia](#), [expanding design practices](#), [High Density](#), [Melbourne](#), [Project](#), [Territory and mobility](#), [Urban Paradigms](#)

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*Terrace House* is an ethical, beautifully-designed, highly sustainable and 100% fossil fuel free building in Melbourne, comprising twenty (2 & 3 bedroom) residences, with 55 bike parks and three commercial spaces at ground level. Austin Maynard Architect's first multi-residential project as both architect and developer, *Terrace House* takes a revolutionary approach to housing and delivers quality apartments that are environmentally, socially and financially sustainable.



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*Terrace House*, is the re-imagining of a former inner-city suburban life, where rows of workers cottages generated and nurtured close community. Street parties, shared childminding, communal gardens, neighbourly lending and borrowing, conversations over the washing line and unlocked front doors - these ideals are the basis of *Terrace House*. These are not apartments, these are homes - terrace houses stacked six storeys high.



Located on Sydney Road, a busy high street in Brunswick, Melbourne, *Terrace House* is sited on a

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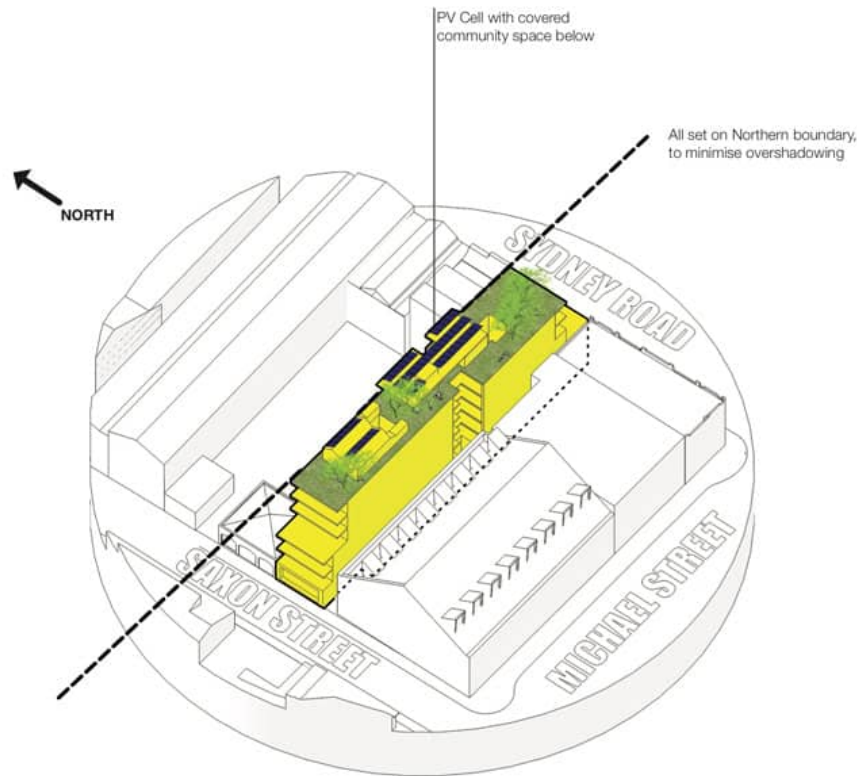
thin, long block (10m x 57m). Typical small inner-city apartment buildings cannot be arranged on a block this size without the homes facing inward, towards each other, using saddlebacks or compromising bedrooms. We believe homes should have an aspect out from the site, into the surroundings, and to the sky, not facing each other at close proximity. The response to this unique site led to generous homes and the opportunity to emulate traditional terrace house plans. Homes with big external outlooks, a front verandah, a study and a shared 'backyard' on the roof. These are highly sustainable terrace homes in an engaged community, at a relatively affordable price, with super-low running costs, and without the constant demands for maintenance and poor thermal performance of typical terrace houses.



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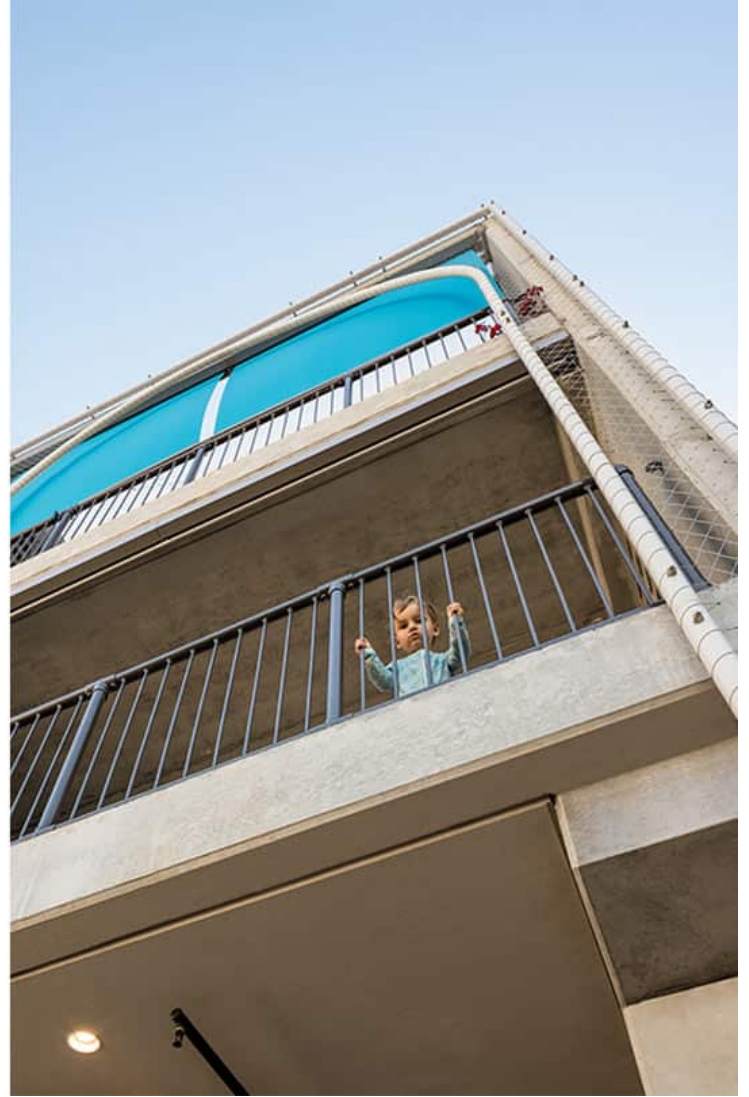
A terrace home, as a typology, is an efficient type of free-standing housing. With homes up to 130m<sup>2</sup> - *Terrace House* is large relative to other apartments, yet they are highly efficient relative to the typical Australian home. The average Australian home is 233m<sup>2</sup>, and generally inefficient in its use of space and energy, poorly designed and unsustainable. *Terrace House* fills a much needed gap in the housing market. Notably more affordable than similar sized, un-renovated, homes in the area. Large enough for families, but still with the shared resourcing and community that apartment living can bring

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*Terrace House* borrows from the plethora of unique arches of various types and epochs along Sydney Road, in a respectful and playful way. We studied these facades and have created a modern interpretation of the context, yet using light, utilitarian materials on the eastern and western facades that reflect Brunswick's industrial past. Although we are very fond of the masonry arch balconies of

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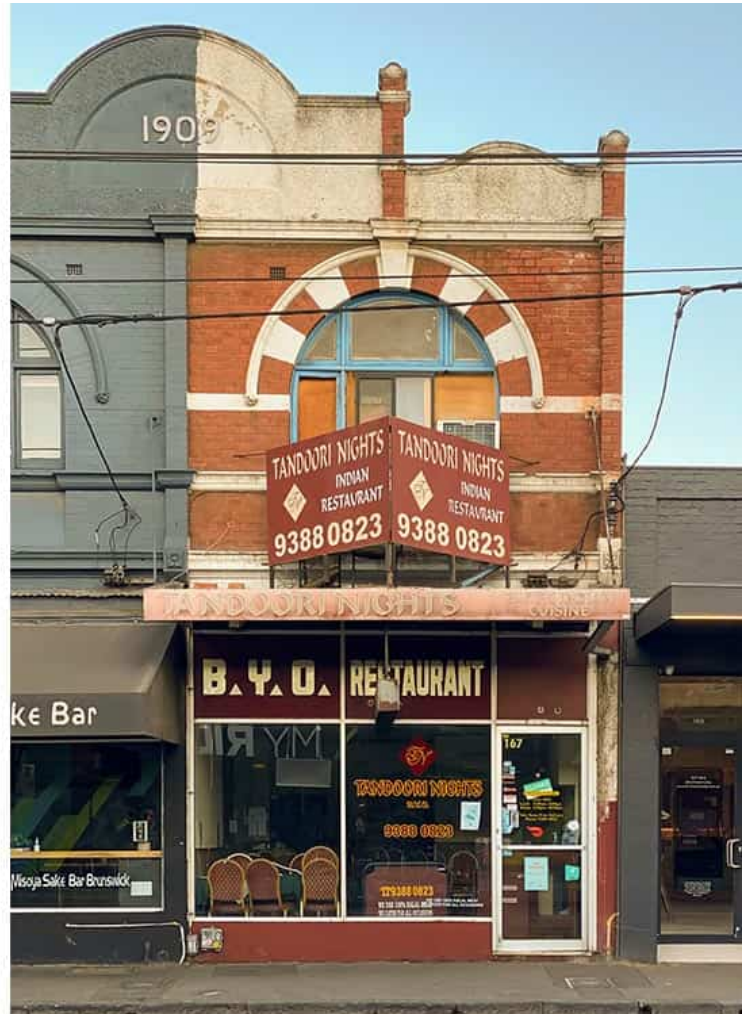


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neighbouring buildings, the lack of natural light provides poor amenity to the inhabitants, compared to the metal mesh and gardens established at *Terrace House*.



Undertaking yet another thoughtless, boxy development is exactly what Brunswick does not need. Neither does it call for a direct copy of heritage structures. Instead we have designed a green lung that borrows the forms and rhythms of the area. The utilitarian concrete and metal mesh provide the backdrop for substantial gardens on the east and west facade, and elegant, simple graphics of the

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North and South facades. The balustrading is simple vertical posts, which ensure that the balconies are not scalable by youngsters whilst providing abundant light to the inhabitants.



As determined by the transport plan, increased car usage on the street at the rear of *Terrace House* (Saxon Street) should be discouraged. A relatively narrow, 'no-through' road with a pedestrian park at the end, meant it could not effectively tolerate car usage. In fact, increased car activity would not only be an ineffective transport outcome, it would be to the detriment of the area. Saxon Street is an

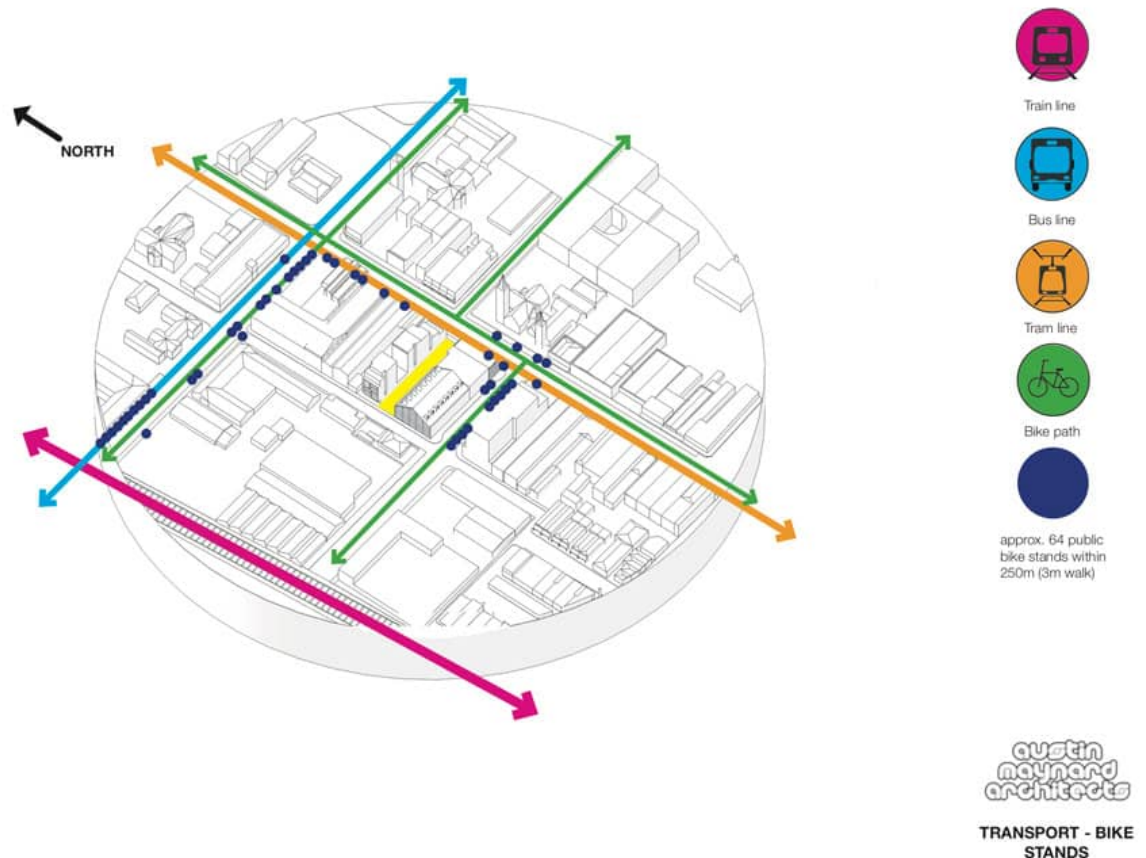


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important public space and artery to public infrastructure, such as the school, the swimming baths, the train station, bike path, library, council building and other services, all tightly packed in this unique public realm. Furthermore the purchasers of *Terrace House* articulated a commitment to sustainable transport options and most have a history of non-car usage. With a reliable public transport system, car sharing on their doorstep, and with 55 secure bike-parks inside, the by design "no car no garage" urban response to transit and parking is the ideal solution for the residents of *Terrace House*, and importantly for the broader community.



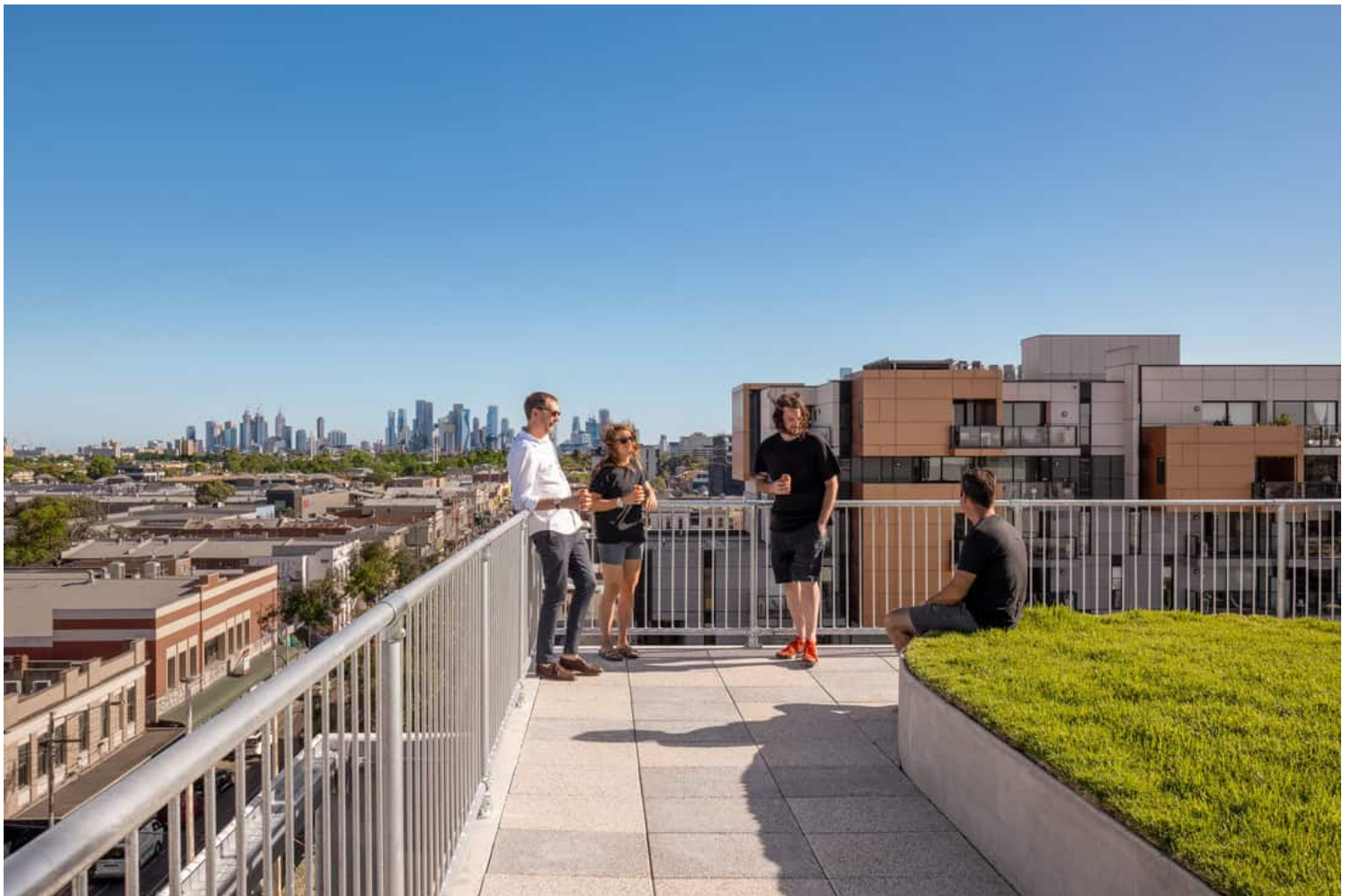
Terrace House exhibits a striking and contemporary attitude towards the integration of landscape

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and architecture, with green open spaces. The proposition was for a rambunctious garden that creates a moment of green dissonance in the urban environment, across private, communal, integrated and external 'street scape' garden. The facade is a metal mesh is intended to be taken over by the landscape adding further solar protection and a green outlook in an inner-city environment. Internal communal garden on the ground floor offers seating and access to sunlight, whilst providing shade and wind protection. The roof, with expansive views of the city and distant hills, is a place for individual and communal use. Much like any typical Brunswick backyard, it has a clothes line, a productive garden and a lawn area, with a tree for shade.



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