

'Without the Developer, Who Develops?'

Collaborative Self-Development Experiences in Australian Cities

JASMINE PALMER

Motivated by discontent with the quality, design, and cost of speculative multi-unit housing provision in Australia, households and professionals alike are increasingly seeking alternatives. Recent years have seen an increase in the number and diversity of households seeking to collectively self-develop multi-unit housing in our inner cities. Housing projects have formed from ground-up movements, professional provocations, and state and local government interventions. This paper first introduces the context within which project instigators propose 'developing without developers', to borrow the term coined by Christian Junge (2006) discussing German building groups. Secondly, it establishes a preliminary classification of project 'types' reflecting the current Australian experience. It then investigates how the different types of projects redistribute the tasks traditionally undertaken by developers. This is done through the thematic analysis of in-depth interviews with key professionals from housing projects currently 'developing without developers' in four major cities. Asking the question 'Without a developer, who does the ...?' the research identifies perspectives held by different professional groups. Outcomes can be used to direct future professional training programmes and increase the capacity for multi-unit self-development.

Frustrated by the lack of diversity, innovation and quality in current Australian multi-unit housing provision, community members and industry professionals are increasingly pursuing alternatives to the status quo. Inspired in part by international examples such as German *Baugruppen*, projects seeking to increase residents' capacity to influence multi-unit housing outcomes exist in numerous Australian urban centres. Most are in relatively early stages of development, with only a small number realized to date. While these projects act independently and each employ different descriptors, they collectively represent an emerging minority housing sector addressing the needs of a population segment currently unmet by the dominant, speculative structure of multi-

unit housing provision. The majority of actors seek to 'develop without developers', to borrow the term coined by Junge (2006) to describe German *Baugruppen* or building groups.

In speculative multi-unit development, all industry professionals act to meet the needs of their client, the profit-seeking property developer. In enabling residents to 'develop without developers' it is necessary to understand how professional roles and responsibilities change when their client is no longer a speculative developer, but a group of future residents. Future residents who, intrinsically, have a different view of the purpose of housing provision from speculative developers.

One of the key challenges in bringing

collective self-developed housing to reality is the effective redistribution of roles traditionally assumed by developers (Palmer, 2016). A study of alternative housing models in the UK by Jarvis *et al.* (2016) highlighted the importance of role definition and clarity when implementing housing projects outside mainstream industry practices. They assert that co-housing, as one example of an alternative model:

... could become much more widely adopted if planning, financial and institutional infrastructures were better designed to support it ... Detailed agreements and models must define the roles and responsibilities of residents and other stakeholders at the outset so as to avoid confusion later on. (Jarvis *et al.*, 2016, p. 16)

This article presents the outcomes from phase one of a longitudinal research project which aims to assist in realizing these infrastructures, agreements and models. This phase seeks to understanding the roles of residents and professionals in 'developing without developers' through the lens of the developer being the provider of entrepreneurial services and controller of resources as described by D'Arcy and Keogh (2002). It captures a moment in time in which this housing sector is emerging and in flux. At the time of data collection, a 'pipeline' of projects was in progress with many following in the footsteps of projects preceding them. Lessons learnt are being passed between professionals and residents alike and procedures modified on a project-by-project basis.

This phase of the research (*a*) sets a baseline for comparison with future interviews, to record if and how stakeholders' perceptions and skills change or develop over time, (*b*) provides sufficient insight into the pipeline of projects to propose a preliminary classification of project 'types' reflecting the current Australian experience, and (*c*) observes how actors perceive changes in their own roles, relationships, and responsibilities to, ultimately, understand how professionals can be best supported moving forward.

The following section introduces the cur-

rent multi-unit housing context in which the research is undertaken. After detailing data collection on the next section, the outcomes of the data analysis are then presented. There follows a description of the four 'types' of project identifiable in the empirical data, while the next two sections discuss the changes in professional roles experienced and frame these through the lens of entrepreneurial services and discuss risk perception among professionals before drawing conclusions.

The Current Australian Multi-Unit Housing Context

Australian homeowners tend to personalize their domestic environments through construction, remodelling, and extension, with DIY house renovation often being described as a national pastime. Provision of free-standing, single-family dwellings occurs primarily via contract-based construction commencing after the future residents/owners acquire a serviced plot. This is an entrenched system with which Australians are relatively familiar and which:

... reflects Australia's distinctive form of ownership as it carries individualism to greater lengths than in other ownership societies. (Burke and Hulse, 2010, p. 828)

Free-standing dwellings currently constitute approximately 80 per cent of existing housing stock across the nation (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). In the past decade, the number of multi-unit dwellings completed in Melbourne and Sydney has exceeded that of free-standing housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015). Outside these cities free-standing housing continues to dominate supply, posing challenges to accommodating sustainably current high rates of population growth. Most Australian metropolitan areas have adopted urban strategic plans which focus on urban consolidation and promote multi-unit housing construction within existing urban areas (Goodman *et al.*, 2013). In this context, multi-unit housing refers to a multitude of housing typologies from row houses to high-rise apartments. Across this breadth

of typologies, multi-unit housing provision in Australia is overwhelmingly supply-led. Led by speculative developers, it seldom offers the opportunity for individualization which is inherent in free-standing single-family dwellings.

The typical Australian multi-unit housing developer is a privately-owned or shareholder company. They can be small enterprises or large corporations, with company size generally related to the scale of projects undertaken. Some development companies complete all aspects of a project from the identification of suitable land, through design, construction and the sale of dwellings. However, most out-source many of these roles to other professionals and consultants. Regardless of work practices, a common attribute of all developers is that they are financially responsible for the project. This complies with D'Arcy and Keogh's description of the developer as the 'leading economic actor [who] takes on the important economic function of resource allocation, to create new space and investment interests in property' (D'Arcy and Keogh, 2002, p. 19). Through a new institutional economics perspective, they further describe the developer's role as 'essentially one of supplying a stream of entrepreneurial services to the property market through both the identification and activation of market opportunities' (*ibid.*).

Speculative developers naturally seek substantial profit as reward for exposure to financial and development risk during their entrepreneurial activities. Responsible for resource allocation, they hold substantial decision-making capacity, determining dwelling function, design, materials, and environmental ambitions. Building to sell for profit, developers have short-term relationships with the buildings they produce, meaning decision-making is informed by priorities and objectives misaligned with those of potential owner/occupiers. An unintended consequence of strategic urban plans promoting multi-unit development is a distancing of residents from housing provision, and increased mismatches between household desires and available dwellings

(Palmer, 2019). In pursuing infill development as the dominant form of new housing provision, Australia's strategic urban plans indirectly ask households to forego the historic privilege of housing individualization entrenched in the Australian psyche.

It is in this context that citizens and professionals who see speculative multi-unit development as failing to meet their needs, seek to disrupt the status quo. Removing profit seeking and speculation from multi-unit housing provision they propose demand-led housing models in which, ideally, future residents 'collectively self-develop' dwellings which suit their individual and collective needs.

Data Collection and Analysis

By observing current Australian efforts to 'develop without developers', this research identifies the different roles and responsibilities being assumed by professionals, with a particular focus on understanding how residents, existing and new professionals redistribute the role of the traditional developer. This longitudinal project follows the motivations, ambitions, and challenges of this emerging housing sector over time.

Taking an action research approach, multi-unit housing projects seeking to 'develop without developers' are continually and regularly identified by the researcher. These are frequently identified by an internet presence or via the snowballing of existing contacts and networks. The primary contacts for each identified project are invited to participate in the research. Initially this includes primarily those responsible for representing the project to the public. Where initial contact leads to agreement to participate in the research, more stakeholders are identified, including architects, advisors, and other professionals.

Stakeholders are interviewed periodically at key stages of project development to document the maturation of the sector and provide insights to build capacity. In addition to the purposive sampling of interviewees described above, approximately 50 per cent of all inter-

viewees to date have been contacted via referral, or snowballing. The highest response rates to requests for interview have been from (future) residents (100 per cent), local municipality staff and government representatives (100 per cent), development managers (71 per cent), and architects (62 per cent). The lowest rate of acceptance of interviews has been among consultants (32 per cent), with no participation from structural, fire, traffic or acoustic engineers to date. This may change over time as the sector matures and will be considered in further phases of the research.

In the initial phase of the research presented here, a total of fifty-two semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with fifty-five participants from twenty-nine projects in four cities between July 2017 and July 2018. Inter-

view questions are tailored to the different stakeholders, with common questions relating to motivations, barriers, accessing required knowledge and professional roles. The recordings and notes were thematically analysed. To understand changes occurring in practice, all interviewees were asked questions in relation to how their professional role is adapted or modified to achieve their (proposed) project and if/how they have access to the skills required to execute change. In addition, all interviewees were asked to make similar reflections as to the roles of other professionals and the capacity of the sector more broadly. Each interview was of approximately 60 minutes duration, audio recorded, and notes taken. Table 1 summarizes the geography and role of participants.

Table 1. Summary of interviewees.

<i>Location</i>	<i>Project Stages</i>	<i>Interview Participants' Role</i> (some interviewees hold dual roles)
Melbourne, Victoria (M)	4 completed projects (C) 9 in design or construction (D) 3 in inception phase (I) (located across multiple local municipal areas)	7 Architects (Arch) 2 Urban Planners (UP) 1 Sustainability Consultant (SC) 4 Development Managers (DM) 5 Residents/Advocates (RA) 2 Group Advisors (Adv) 2 Property Lawyers (PL) 1 Construction Contractor (CC) 1 Local Municipality Staff – Planning and Urban Design (MS)
Perth, Western Australia (P)	2 completed projects 2 in design 1 in inception phase (all located in one local municipal area)	5 Architects 2 Urban Planners 4 Development Managers 2 Group Advisors 4 Residents 2 Elected City Politicians (EP) 3 Local Municipality Staff 1 Real Estate Advisor (RE)
Sydney, New South Wales (S)	7 in inception phase	6 Architects 1 Development Manager 1 Financier 1 group advisor 3 Residents/Advocates
Adelaide, South Australia (A)	1 in inception phase	1 Architect 1 Advisor 1 Urban Planner 1 Sustainability Consultant 1 Development Manager

It is well-known that a large portion of those who intend to 'develop without developers' do not realize their housing dreams. This can occur for a variety of reasons, which are arguably under-researched. This research aims to learn equally from those who do eventually complete their collaboratively self-developed housing project and those who do not.

For the purpose of international clarity, it is necessary to explain the professional role of development manager in the study context. The Australian Property Institute states a development manager 'is responsible for the overall management of all aspects of a property development either directly or by delegation. A Development Manager may be acting in the role of a consultant or could be employed directly by a Developer or Property Owner to look after the development process on their behalf' (API, 2017, p. 6). This role is distinct from that of a project manager, who focuses predominantly on the construction phase, in that the development manager is typically engaged with all phases of development from pre-acquisition to finalization. In the projects studied, the development managers are employed on a fee basis by the project instigators or participants; some are engaged in a joint venture arrangement.

Where individual interviewees are referred to in the text, they are described by their profession, location, the stage of the most advanced project they are engaged with, and project 'type'.¹

Project 'Types' Identified

The Australian projects 'developing without developers' identified in this first phase of the research have both many similarities and many differences. In previous research the author identified different types of projects in one Australian city (Palmer, 2014; 2015); however, the sector continues to evolve and just a few short years later, those previously identified types no longer represent the full spectrum of projects in process.

Internationally, others have sought to dif-

ferentiate projects as a tool to enabling analysis. Past literature has distinguished between projects based on instigation processes (Jarvis, 2015; Parvin *et al.*, 2011; Wallace *et al.*, 2013); stages of future resident engagement in development (Bektas *et al.*, 2014); extent of collective facilities, process of construction (Brown *et al.*, 2013); ownership structure (Sudiyono, 2013); tenure and re-sale restrictions (Søvoll and Bengtsson, 2018); group decision-making processes and core values which bind residents (Gerohazi *et al.*, 2014); and the degree of assistance provided from central or local government authorities (Brunoro, 2013).

Recent literature has proffered terms such as *collaborative housing* as a means of achieving inclusivity (Lang *et al.*, 2018). Such umbrella terms are useful in recognizing the diversity of non-speculative housing provision within and across geographies, but risk diminishing the visibility of differences such as those identified above. In the interests of enabling effective comparison and analysis of the current cohort of Australian projects, they are here grouped into loose 'types'. Given the projects studied are at different stages of realization, the types established reflect processes of group formation and project initiation. They represent activity at the time of data collection and may vary again in the future as the sector matures. The four 'types' of projects 'developing without developers' at the time of data collection are introduced in turn below and compared in table 2.

Self-Forming Groups

The notion of collaborating with like-minded households to 'develop without developers' is appealing to a segment of Australian households, as it is elsewhere. Self-formed groups are identified in all Australian states, frequently coalescing around a common value or lifestyle. A small collection of ecovillages and cohousing communities has been established in rural and suburban environments, each negotiating a unique path to realization. Urban projects face more complex legal and financial

barriers (Sharam *et al.*, 2015) and have experienced less success. Without an established professional sector to provide necessary support, self-forming groups frequently flounder along the development path, struggling to access and coordinate knowledge and to leverage resources (Palmer, 2016). Self-forming groups realizing housing in urban areas of Australia to date have two common attributes: they typically comprise a small number of dwellings (3–8) and include industry professionals among their household members.

Professional-Led Projects

Australian architects are embracing the opportunity to engage directly with future residents and deliver dwellings which prioritize functionality and liveability over profit seeking. Architects housing themselves through collaboration with others have realized multiple small-scale projects (Sharam, 2019). Such actions typically produce an outcome which meets the specific occupants' dwelling needs on a one-off basis, but seldom transfer knowledge to other projects or provide lessons-learned to assist in sectoral maturation.

One exception, Nightingale Housing, was initiated in 2014 by a group of Melbourne architects intending to generate a replicable process for 'developing without developers'. Interest in this *architect-led* model expanded rapidly. With two projects completed at the time of writing; architects based in other cities are aiming to replicate the Melbourne successes. In this model, an architect partners with a development manager, seeks a feasible project opportunity, and proposes a building design. Initial designs are guided by Nightingale Housing's intention to produce more sustainable and community focused developments which contribute positively to their urban context. Land purchase and construction is funded by a project-specific company loaning funds against equity provided by third party investors. Investors hold no decision-making capacity in relation to project design. Future residents have opportunity to influ-

ence collective design decisions and purchase their home via a relatively standard pre-sale contract.

To demonstrate the viability of architect-led projects, one *government-supported* project is being delivered in a suburban renewal area of Perth known as White Gum Valley (WGV). Instigated by an influential industry leader, the project is being led by a team of highly experienced professionals including architects, government and private development managers, a sustainability consultant, and a real estate advisor. Located on land currently owned by the state government land authority, this project draws directly from the German building-group (*Baugruppe*) process with some local modifications. WGV represents a step towards establishing a process for professional-led projects in the future and, hence, is a unique example within this identified project type. The proposal for WGV is a highly flexible architectural solution which residents can individualize and is, at the time of writing, recruiting households into the development trust. Government support includes delayed land settlement, public promotion, and funding for initial costs, including creation of the unique legal agreements required. The industry team guiding the project are doing so pro bono, with the expectation of standard consultancy fees to be paid in later stages. (Further details of this project are provided in the accompanying case studies.)

Self-Formed Groups Teamed with Professionals/Advisors

Self-formed groups, including those with internal professional skills, inevitably seek specialist industry services. This project 'type' includes those who establish a relationship with professionals/advisors which extends beyond standard fee-based professional services. This research has identified two distinct kinds of specialists supporting self-formed groups. Firstly, advisors who assist their clients to navigate a path through the institutional environment of development and access traditional

professional skills as appropriate to their project. Advisors identified in Australia have previously been involved with small self-formed projects, as described above, and now aid other groups on an advisory basis. Notably, they do not identify with traditional professional roles or have industry specific training. This aligns with Tummers and Fernandez's (this issue) observation that in parallel with professionals providing services directly to households seeking to self-develop, cohousing specialists or advisors tend to emerge as sectors mature, acting from a unique position between activist and expert.

The second kind of specialists supporting self-formed groups are traditional professionals seeking to modify existing practises 'from the inside'. For example, a self-formed group of twenty-nine households which struggled for more than 8 years to establish a viable development process engaged the services of experienced architects and development managers to develop on their collective behalf following the Nightingale Housing model. This unique teaming of actors has required a modification of the architect-led process described above in relation to design briefing, legal structures, and financial processes. With land secured and the design being finalized at the time of writing, the 'Urban Coup Near and Tall' project will be the first cohousing apartment building in Australia when completed in 2021. (Further details of this project are provided in the accompanying case studies.)

Advisor-Led Projects

In addition to assisting self-formed groups, advisors, as described above, are also known to instigate projects. By doing so, advisors propose a legal and financial structure to 'developing without developers' which they have the skills to deliver. They then recruit households and manage the project from instigation to occupation. For example, one advisor has established a collaborative development process in Melbourne known as 'Property

Collectives'. With a background in marketing, this advisor gained experience through building multi-unit housing with others. A specific legal and financial model is offered to participants; in this case land purchase and development are funded collectively by the future dwelling owners to produce privately-owned dualistic (or strata) titled buildings (Lujanen, 2010). This model has completed two projects at the time of writing, with seven more in progress. (Further details of this model are provided in the accompanying case studies.)

These four project 'types' are compared in table 2 through the use of examples. There they are further identified by the process of community formation, be they either Community-Instigated Projects or Project-Instigated Communities (Palmer, 2016). Community-instigated projects engage owner-occupiers in establishing a project vision and determine a development model which suits the unique project circumstances. In project-instigated communities, professionals and/or advisors invite interested parties to participate in a pre-established development model. Each of the project-instigated communities shown in table 2 offers very different opportunities for residents to influence design, ranging from minimal input via an on-line survey post building design, to collective decision-making throughout the entire design process. The degree of decision-making held by residents in all cases relates to who 'controls resources' – one of the key entrepreneurial services of development (D'Arcy and Keogh, 2002).

Each project 'type' offers both opportunities and challenges and redistributes the role of the speculative developer in different configurations, which are further demonstrated in the following sections.

Changing Professional Roles

The founder of Nightingale Housing suggests architect-led projects:

take particular money makers out of the housing

Table 2. Identified characteristics of Australian alternative multi-unit housing project 'types'.

Types	Community-Instigated Projects			Project-Instigated Communities	
	Self-formed groups	Advisor Assisted	Architect-led Partnership	Architect-led projects	Professional-led projects
Locations	Melbourne Sydney Perth*	Perth Melbourne Sydney*	Melbourne	Melbourne Sydney Perth Adelaide	Perth Melbourne Perth
Example Project	Multiple	Multiple	Urban Coup Near and Tall Cohousing Melbourne #	Nightingale Housing Multiple projects Multiple cities	WGV Baugruppe, Perth, # Property Collectives Melbourne, #
Progress at time of interviews	Conceptual stages. Defining vision. Ongoing recruitment from location specific community.	Early formation	Land negotiations complete. Future resident households engaged in design revisions prior to submission for statutory approvals.	Initial project occupied. One nearing completion. Seven in design stage. Residents not yet engaged.	Preliminary Design in place. Promoting proposition to recruit participants. Legal documents nearing completion. Land acquisition facilitated by state government authority.
Instigation	Self-motivated civil society group. Focus on ageing well.	Civil Society Groups being advised by advisor with skills developed from previous projects.	Civil Society Group under the guidance of skilled professionals.	Architect-led development following procedures previously established by others. Future residents to be engaged in design development.	Project resulting from advocacy by influential parties. Led by an advisory group of industry professionals. Encouraged by State Authority as land owner.
Funding	To be determined	Various, dependent on group needs	Equity contribution required to leverage construction funds. Investors receive a pre-negotiated maximum ROI. Future residents purchase 'off-the-plan'.	Development company to leverage loan from financial institution against equity funds provided by third-party investors. Investors receive a pre-negotiated maximum ROI. Future residents purchase 'off-the-plan'.	Unit Trust, comprised of future residents, accesses funds from financial institution. 30% equity required from participants.
Resident involvement in design intended	Maximum involvement and collective decision making	Collective decision making throughout entire design process.	Collective decision-making throughout entire design process. Final decisions made by architects with input from residents.	Pool of potential residents surveyed to inform design.	Collective decision making throughout entire design process, with capacity to veto.
Legal entity	To be determined	Various, dependent on group needs	Unit Trust controlled by residents and Project specific development company directed by Architect, Development Manager and Trustee representing residents.	Project specific company directed by Architect, Development Manager and other professional.	Trust Company Structure
Proposed ownership structure	Collective ownership, legal structure to be determined	Predominately Strata-titled units. Some groups proposing cooperative ownership.	Strata-titled units, Re-sales defer first to waiting list. Sale price limited to initial cost plus local appreciation for 20 years.	Strata-titled units. Re-sales defer first to a waiting list. Sale prices limited to initial cost plus average local appreciation for 20 years.	Strata-titled units. No re-sale restriction

Notes:
 * groups of this type have been identified by the researcher in other cities also but did not form part of this data collection cycle.
 # further details of this project are provided in the accompanying case studies.

food chain. Marketing people and real estate agents and property developers who used to sit at the top of the food chain managing profits. It takes them out... The intention [is] not to replace the developer, it [is] to empower the architect ... as conductor to curate the housing project' (Arch,M,C,Arch-led)

Similar views regarding the shifting of power and decision-making are held by instigators of other project types, with most aiming to increase the influence of future residents. As seen in speculative development, power and decision-making typically rest with those parties providing entrepreneurial services (D'Arcy and Keogh, 2002): this remains the case when 'developing without developers'. All project types identified in this research disrupt the status quo and require actors to assume roles and responsibilities outside their usual remit, and to redefine their relationships and risk. This section draws directly on the interviews conducted, presenting the key findings regarding changing professional roles from stakeholders' experience.

In summary, analysis of the interview data relative to stakeholders' views of changing professional roles showed:

- ◆ Architects and development managers both identify the shift in client requires a change in their professional roles and necessitates the deployment of alternative communication skills.
- ◆ Development managers self-identify the greatest need for change as occurring within their own role; a view supported by other stakeholders.
- ◆ Architects self-identify substantial changes in their own roles although this is not consistently supported by others.
- ◆ Consultants experience the least change in their formal professional roles, but observe changes in the duration and nature of their engagement.
- ◆ The emerging role of 'advisor' can not only assist self-developing groups but also prompt other professionals to interrogate their own practices.

The section expands on these points in turn before discussing their relationship to the redistribution of entrepreneurial services when 'developing without developers'.

Changing Clients

When 'developing without developers' the client is both changed and diversified. For architects and advisors, the client becomes the future residents, 'the people that we are housing' (Arch,M,C,Arch-L). For development managers the client can be either the architect and/or the residents depending on the project type. The change in client requires an increased degree of partnership, cooperation, and collaboration. One architect commented that it is more rewarding than working for a developer client and 'very similar to doing an individual house, more like doing a home' (Arch,M,D,Arch-L). Another stated the key benefit is that when clients and professionals share a vision and act in partnership it is not necessary to devote time to convincing the client of the value of decisions based on sustainable or ethical considerations (Arch, S,I,Arch-L).

Architects and development managers both identify the change in client requires a change in their professional practises and necessitates deployment of alternative communication skills. Differences in this regard can be seen between the project types. Self-formed groups frequently employ non-hierarchical structures, requiring skills in group facilitation, decision-making, and negotiation. Architects contracted by one self-formed group appreciated that the group had well established communication processes and decision-making practises which had been refined over time and provided the framework for design workshops and discussions to occur (Arch,M,D,SF+P). Where these are not in place, such as in project instigated communities, greater pressure is placed on professionals and advisors to lead the processes. In these project types, a more hierarchical structure of decision-making often emerges. One architect initiating a project stated:

we need to establish what we [architects] make decisions on and what we give them options on. We go with the 90%. It is not consensus. If someone is not happy with a decision, we can sell to someone else' (Arch,S,I,Arch-L).

This statement alludes to a lingering market-based mindset in some professional-led projects which continues to see the 'people we are housing' as individually dispensable.

The change from having a developer as client to having a collective of households is seen as requiring reconceptualization of the values to be applied in design decision-making, with one architect describing the challenge as 'designing in backwards land' in comparison to speculative projects (Arch,P,D,Arch-L).

Development Managers

Development managers self-identify the greatest changes as occurring within their own role, with a need to be 'more open minded', to:

go in with a wider perspective of what people want and expect and what is important to them ... now I have a person in front of me, not a prediction based on demographics. Now I need to understand what those people need. (DM,P,I,Adv-L)

Development managers indicated their roles in the early stages of the projects differed from their normal practices to a greater degree than anticipated and that they have experienced a steeper learning curve than expected, particularly regarding increased involvement with debt providers. Multiple development managers indicated they have expanded their knowledge of energy, affordability, and design issues. While this is not knowledge necessary to perform their role, it increases understanding of decision-making processes of others. They expressed a common view that the projects were not requiring new skills, but they were required to customize and apply existing management skills in a different way and that process was to date 'enjoyable but hard' (DM,M,D,Arch-L):

Ultimately, it [requires] the same skill sets, just in a different context and talking to different people in the process. (DM,P,D,Arch-L)

Other professional stakeholders agree the development manager's role in self-developed housing projects varies significantly from the status quo, with one architect stating the 'manager becomes really important. I hope to hide under their skirts to some degree' (A,P,D,Ind-L)

Architects

Architects also identify their professional role as altering significantly. Designing for multiple clients and balancing wishes of all parties was of great concern for many architects and something which all had consciously engaged with. All architects identified a need for increased skills in managing the collective client through group and individual decision-making processes, including skills in people management, mediation, communication, public speaking, and decision-making processes. The architect is a newly instigated project stated, 'I know additional skills are needed in that area, but I don't know what they are yet' (Arch,P,I,Adv-L). Some indicated a willingness to engage specialist mediators or facilitators if necessary. The changes identified in the architects' role are positively embraced as an opportunity for innovation, but also acknowledged as increasing uncertainty in the project.

I am not so much design leader, but design facilitator... I have got to learn how to design for a client with 30 heads... I see that as an opportunity, not a threat... Architects need to put their ego aside. My job is to express the vision of the people making it possible. The actual provision of architectural services [is] not different, but ... this is about architecture in service of the vision of others ... need new skills in facilitation. Skills in how to get people together, that is a very specific skill set. (Arch,P,I,Adv-L)

All architects acknowledged increased engagement with financial aspects of development required additional skills in their organizations and described the process as involving greater collaboration with other professionals. Mid- to late-career architects see opportunity for positive built outcomes to emerge from their changed professional roles. Most frequently

raised was the capacity to be engaged with value management. While doing so requires an increased understanding of costs and risks, it enables architects to be confident others will not make cost saving decisions which compromise the shared project vision:

that's the real carrot for us, greater involvement, with our skills used to a greater capacity within our terms of reference. (Arch,S,I,Arch-L)

Different views exist among architects regarding the ideal scope of their role. Some architects leading projects assert they assume the role of architect-developer:

Still architect, yep. Still the designer, just wear an additional hat that traditionally the developer would wear. (Arch,S,I,Arch-L)

while those engaged by self-formed groups are more likely to emphasize that it is not ideal to attempt to be both architect and developer as the dual role can involve conflicts of interest and does not best use the individual's skill set:

... stick to our own skill set. We are designers, not engineers, and not developers. (Arch,S,I,SF)

Undertaking responsibilities for which they are not specifically trained has prompted many architects interviewed to pursue self-education on topics from development finance and legal structures to codesign and community development. Some architect-led projects are structured in a way that requires the architect and development manager to assume company directorship responsibilities which lie outside of normal architectural practice and have implications for insurance and liability. Despite architects self-identifying the need for substantial changes in their professional roles this view is not shared by other stakeholders. At one extreme, local government staff all stated there is no change at all to architects' roles. Development managers acknowledge the architects' role changes as they directly engage with residents and 'ultimately, they are the decision-maker in what's being delivered' (DM,M,C,Arch-L); but some also suggest that in architect-led projects the role of the archi-

tect is often overstated (DM,M,D,Arch-L; DM,S,I,Arch-L).

Consultants

Consultants' maintain a relatively standard role, producing materials for building documentation and approval as part of the design team. They note, however, changes to how that role is actioned and how their contribution is valued. For example, sustainable design consultants consistently experienced a substantial shift from the position of advocating for improved building sustainability in the face of tight value management by developers, to one where the highest possible sustainability outcomes are sought within a feasible financial constraint.

I don't have to convince developers of the benefits of integrating sustainable design. Here, it is true sustainable design work, trying to improve the standard of buildings. (SD,M,D,Arch-L)

All consultants tend to be engaged earlier in the development process. Consultant planners view this as advantageous as they become 'far more involved initially in the feasibility and due diligence phase to ... ensure feasibility, to quantify or qualify planning risk' (UP,M,C,Arch-L). Furthermore, one planning consultant engaged by architect-led projects identified feeling a part of the core project team from inception rather than being a service provider (UP,M,D,Arch-L). Consultants generally see this early engagement as enabling innovation and avoiding the often-adversarial nature of their advisory roles. However, they acknowledge preliminary work to date has been unremunerated, and this is not viable long-term (UP,M,C,Arch-L).

Like all stakeholders, consultants initially engaging in projects 'developing without developers' face a 'big learning curve' (Arch,M,C,Arch-L). An architect leading multiple projects in Melbourne noted it would be ideal to engage the same consultants repeatedly to re-use acquired knowledge, but that consultants often pitch their fees too low in order to secure contracts, as is industry norm, and

are subsequently limited in the time they are able to contribute. 'Hence, we don't want them back and the cycle continues' (Arch,M,C, Arch-L). This view is contrary to experiences of the consultants themselves who, eager to contribute to the innovative projects led by the aforementioned architect, were initially unsuccessful in tendering for projects. One consultant subsequently reduced their fees significantly to secure a contract, leaving themselves able to dedicate less (billable) time than originally estimated to be necessary and ultimately working, in part, unremunerated. This situation suggests that despite the intention of these architect-led projects to pay all professionals fairly for their time and deliver housing at cost, the industry tendency to push consultancy fees to the minimum persists to the detriment of ongoing sectoral feasibility.

Advisors

Members of self-formed groups are aware they require assistance from skilled professionals to realize their collective housing vision. Their instinct is to reach out to an architect, and they have confidence architects have appropriate skills in working with clients and delivering built outcomes. They are less confident about how to access specific legal and financial advice.

Maybe we can't find everything we need in one company, but can bring together everyone we need – with the amount of interest in this area, I'd be surprised if we can't find the people we need. (RA,M,I,SF)

This comment is typical of self-forming groups at inception, many of whom hold the view that they can contract professionals to deliver distinct, siloed, services. Groups lacking internal industry experience do not comprehend the challenging process of coordinating consultants. It is this role of coordination which is the core of services offered by advisors. The advisors interviewed have little or no industry specific training or qualifications, having developed skills through previous self-

development. They see advantage in not being embedded in existing development practices as it allows them to be more open-minded in questioning the status quo.

I actively look for people with knowledge and expertise to find new and alternative solution ... professionals are reluctant to push boundaries, they just accept things and think 'you can't do that' ... what I bring is, I seriously push their boundaries ... I ask why, why, why? (Adv,P,C, SF)

Among the interviewees, two distinct types of group advisors are emerging: those who integrate the role of development management within their remit, and those who focus primarily on supporting groups to navigate the complexities of development and consultant coordination.

I take the role of dealing with purchasers and keeping them involved and engaged. It doesn't change the standard role of the development manager. They are two different skill sets. Not everyone is good at both. I am personally steering toward a [group] management role, a new role. (Adv,M,C,Adv-L)

Advisors assuming this support and coordination role state it can be challenging to convey the value of their services, with many self-forming groups 'see[ing] it as an extra cost layer and think they can do without it' (Adv, S,I,SF) despite experiences suggesting the contrary in Sweden (Bloomberg and Karnekull, this issue) and Germany (Landenberger and Gütschow, this issue).

Having presenting stakeholders' experiences regarding changing professional roles in the different types of Australian projects 'developing without developers', the next section considers how the types each redistribute the entrepreneurial services of property development and considers who is 'empowered' by taking out the speculative developer.

Discussion

'Without a Developer, Who Develops?'

Returning to Darcey and Keogh's description of the developer's role as 'supplying a stream

of entrepreneurial services to the property market through both the identification and activation of market opportunities' (D'Arcy and Keogh, 2002, p. 19), it is clear that while the speculative developer (individual or company) may not be active in these projects, the entrepreneurial services of development continue to be necessary for projects to be realized. In the project types identified these necessary services are redistributed among remaining stakeholders in different ways. While these differences most often reflect the ambitions of the project instigators, they are shown not to be divided along the distinction between community-instigated projects and project-instigated communities as might be expected (see table 3).

Self-formed groups aiming to self-develop intend to assume the entirety of the roles previously held by the speculative developer as a collective. Founding members of one self-formed group acknowledge that 'doing anything different has an element of risk to it' (RA,S,I,SF) and expressed an appetite for the innovative opportunities self-development can enable. Table 3 represents this ideal; however, it currently remains a hypothetical process as the projects studied are in initial stages and yet to implement the legal and financial development processes for realization. As noted earlier, previously completed projects following such a model are small in number and size, and tend to involve future residents with industry expertise (see also Sharam, 2019).

In contrast, the architect-led projects by Nightingale Housing retain all entrepreneurial services of development in the hands of existing industry professionals. This corresponds with the intent to 'empower the architect ... as conductor to curate the housing project' (Arch,M,C,Arch-led). Unlike German *Baugruppen* which, in part, inspired the architect-led Nightingale model (Arch,M,C,Arch-led), future Nightingale residents do not participate in the provision of entrepreneurial services. By purchasing at fixed prices via pre-sale contracts their role in development

remains unchanged in comparison with typical speculative development.

The remaining types (shown in table 3) sit on a spectrum between these two extremes, sharing the developer role between the future residents and contracted professionals/advisors. Across these types, the more residents collectively engage in entrepreneurial services of development, the closer they come to being self-developers and realizing the financial and decision-making benefits that can produce (Hamiduddin and Gallent, 2015; Ring, 2013). In these types the residents participate in the allocation of resources and in some cases are members of a development company or trust which directly controls and allocates financial resources (see legal entities in table 2).

Extending resident participation in development furthest are the projects engaging advisors, be they self-formed groups teaming with an advisor or advisor-led. In the projects studied residents are involved in the activation of identified development opportunities and, in some cases, also in the identification of opportunities. They are involved earlier and more consistently in the project design and realization. They inform the vision of their project, determine required function, and collectively have final decision-making responsibility throughout. Advisor projects, regardless of the mode of instigation place the residents in the leading development role. 'I am a promoter, a facilitator. The partners [future residents], it is their project' (Adv,M,C,Adv-led).

The WGV demonstration project engages future residents later in the development process. Residents form a legal trust to fund development, placing them theoretically collectively in control of financial resources. With the professionals having identified and activated the development opportunity prior to resident involvement, the residents assume a secondary development role. WGV initiators intended to offer residents the capacity to individualize multi-unit dwellings to meet their needs, as is typical in free-standing housing. The particular redistribution of development services among stakeholders implemented has allowed

Table 3. Distribution of entrepreneurial services in Australian multi-unit housing projects ‘developing without developers’. The final row concludes by indicating which actors undertake the majority of entrepreneurial services associated with property development, in order of influence where more than one is identified. Shading of cells highlights level of resident involvement in the entrepreneurial services of development.

	Community Instigated Projects		Project Instigated Communities		Advisor-led projects
	Self-formed groups	Self-formed group teamed with professionals/advisors	Professional-led projects	Government-supported, Industry-led demonstration project	
Example Project	Multiple	Multiple Advisor Assisted	Architect-led Partnership	Architect-led projects	Property Collectives Melbourne. #
Entrepreneurial Services of Development (D’Arcy and Keogh, 2012)	Multiple	Multiple	Urban Coup Near and Tall Cohousing, Melbourne. #	Nightingale Housing Multiple projects Multiple cities	WGV Baugruppe, Perth. #
Identification of opportunity	Residents	Residents Advisor	Architect Development Manager	Architect Development Manager	Industry Professionals Government Agency
Activation of identified opportunity	Residents	Residents Advisor	Architect Development Manager	Architect Development Manager	Industry Professionals Government Agency
Control and allocation of resources	Residents	Residents	Architect Development Manager Residents	Architect Development Manager	Industry Professionals Residents Government Agency
‘Without the developer, who develops?’	1. Residents	1. Residents 2. Advisor	1. Architect 2. Development Manager 3. Residents	1. Architect 2. Development Manager 3. Government Agency	1. Industry Professionals 2. Residents 1. Residents 2. Advisor

Note
further details of this project are provided in the accompanying case studies

this to occur within the context of the highly flexible design proposed by industry-instigators.

The final project type sitting on the spectrum between full self-development and professionally-led development is the Urban Coup case in which a self-formed group has partnered with Nightingale Housing. The collective of known residents informed the design brief and have input into decision-making during project design. The residents control a portion, but not all, of the project resources and hence while a building is being designed specifically to their needs, they assume only a fragment of the entrepreneurial services associated with property development. This project represents an evolution in the sector, not an ideal end point, with the project architects suggesting that a more ideal model would be one 'where we [architects] are not the ones providing financial support ... this is a bridging condition we are in at the moment. This is what the existing system allows us to do' (Arch, M, D, Arch-led).

The understanding of entrepreneurial services provided by Darcey and Keogh (2002) assists in unpacking the differences between project types: identifying the reallocation of power and decision-making capacity usually associated with the role of the speculative developer. However, while it locates responsibility, it does not go so far as to assign specific tasks. The need to understand better the outcomes of different approaches to task (and risk) assignment will inform the ongoing research.

Risk and Value

All alternative multi-unit housing projects 'developing without developers' have been shown to redistribute the roles and activities of the developer through the lens of entrepreneurial services. In professional-led and advisor-led projects, the instigating professionals take responsibility for the pre-acquisition phase (API, 2017) of development – identifying market opportunities. Advisors leading projects indicated that a significant part of their role

in the pre-acquisition and design phases of development involves ensuring project participants understand the risks (Adv,M,C,Adv-L). The industry-led, government-supported demonstration project stands alone in that it engaged a leading real estate agent to recruit future residents as project partners. The agent observed that the process has been longer than expected and that it is entirely different from selling a house as 'I am selling understanding of risk' (RE,P,D,Ind-L).

In the architect-led projects, the architects and development managers are involved in recruiting equity investors and future residents. One architect leading a project described feeling exposed in this process as it required them to 'provide advice on financials and legals without the developer as a buffer' (Arch, M,C, Arch-L): a task they felt unqualified to perform. This emphasizes the importance of the relationship between the architect and the development manager, with the development managers interviewed expressing a higher level of comfort with this process as they 'understand complexity and risk very well' (DM,M,D,Arch-L).

Architects leading projects universally agreed they are exposed to more forms of risk when 'developing without developers':

in our usual role as architect [we] hold planning risk, but [this model] also adds financial risk and development risk., compounded to what we are used to as architects. (Arch,S,I,Arch-led)

... we end up being directors of a development group, and there are risks in that and there is no remuneration for that. Definitely more work and more risk [that] we are not paid for. (Arch, M,D,Arch-L)

While concerned about increased risk exposure, architects identify that by taking on more risk they 'have greater ability to provide more relevant housing' (Arch,S,I,Arch-L) than when working for speculative developers.

A speculative developer seeks financial reward for risk exposure incurred in the provision of entrepreneurial services. Having identified the redistribution of these services, it is necessary to consider how they are valued. All interviewees identified the need

for professions across the sector to adopt one fundamental change: the need for a sectoral mind shift away from working for maximum profit, towards delivering homes for residents. To achieve this 'every person has to think laterally ... to adapt their own process' (MS,P,I,SF); to be flexible (Arch,P,D,Ind-L), dynamic (Adv,M,C,Adv-L), responsive (DM,M,C,Arch-L); and think beyond capital cost (Arch,M,C,Arch-L):

... the philosophy is so different. It's a change from how to make bigger profits to what do we want our communities to be like. (Arch,P,D, Arch-L)

Speculative development aims to keep costs low and sell at high prices to maximize profit. Self-development aims to keep profit down and achieve high-quality outcomes, 'so the reverse pressures apply' (DM,S,I,Arch-L). The greatest reluctance to shift away from profit as a measure of success comes not from industry professionals, but financiers: 'it looks bad on paper ...[and] there is a lack of creativity and vision on part of the banks, they have enough business so don't need to spend time on this' (F,S,D,Arch-L).

The common intention of professionals across project types is for all consultants and service providers to be remunerated with a fair fee for service. This approach is contrary to industry practises in which 'it is a race to the bottom for fees' (Arch,S,I,Arch-L) as developer clients seek to minimize costs. Most professionals engaged in their first project 'developing without developers' indicated they have not altered their fee structure but acknowledge these projects are being subsidized within their practices by conventional projects.

[It is] a passion project for our office ... we enjoy working with the people involved. And, secondly, it grows our networks, bringing opportunity ... fundamentally I enjoy working with people and getting great outcomes. (DM,M,C,Arch-L)

Similarly, one sustainable design consultant stated 'the reward is being able to work on the job' (SD,M,D,Arch-L). Employed by a large commercial consultancy firm, this con-

sultant acknowledged the company is losing money on this project, but that the directors are supportive as the project is highly visible, with potential for positive marketing and publicity outcomes. One architect leading multiple projects stated that their business lost a significant amount of money on their first project, but they 'also got a project to be proud of and IP [intellectual property] under our belt. That empowers us to do the next easier and smarter'.

Thinking forward, a development manager focused on expanding the sector asserts architects and consultants should be paid more as fees are a small component of costs. 'If you pay more, you get better outcomes and the potential to reduce risks and costs of construction' (DM,S,I,Arch-L). The Australian architect who has to date been engaged with the greatest number of projects suggests architects' fees should be higher as it:

leads to other savings and ensures architects have the time required to do their best possible work. It allows for innovation and research to find better outcomes for residents. In the end, residents pay less and the architect is paid more than in business as usual. (Arch,M,C,Arch-L)

This research will continue to examine the relationship between entrepreneurial services, risk and reward over time as the sector evolves.

Conclusion

Stakeholders currently 'developing without developers' have provided insights into the unique multi-unit provision processes they are currently executing. Their experiences demonstrate that the redistribution of the property developer's role among professionals, advisors and future residents varies substantially between project types and that the roles and responsibilities of professional and non-professional participants remain somewhat fluid at the current stage of sector maturation.

The most significant consequence of the changes in professional roles described here relates to risk location, with little clarity or

agreement among professionals about who carries the various forms of risk typically assigned to the speculative property developer. This is a particular challenge in the context of a notoriously risk-averse industry where 'risk shifting' is common place. In this regard, the emerging Australian sector has significant progress to make and can draw lessons from experiences in other jurisdictions.

An important observation from the research to date is the need for professionals adapting their practices to re-examine not just how multi-unit housing is developed, but why it is developed. Asking why, and for who, reinforces that collective self-developed housing is not a minor variation on the status quo but an opportunity to implement significant systemic change.

The outcomes of this paper and ongoing research will inform professional development in support of collaborative self-developed multi-unit housing in Australia. They are relevant also to other locations with comparable housing contexts.

NOTE

1. Interviewee coding. (Profession, Location, Stage of most advanced project, project type):

Professions: Architect (Arch), Urban Planner (UP), Sustainability Consultant (SC), Development Manager (DM), Advisor (Adv), Property Lawyer (PL), Construction Contractor (CC), Local Municipality Staff (MS), Financier (F), Elected City Politician (EP), Real Estate Advisor (RE), Resident/Advocate (RA).

Locations: Melbourne (M), Perth (P), Sydney (S), Adelaide (A).

Project Stages: Completed (C), in Design or construction (D), in Inception phase (I)

Project Types: Self-forming groups (SF), Architect-led (Arch-L), Self-formed group with professional (SF+P), Advisor-led (Adv-L), Industry-led, government-supported demonstration project (Ind-L)

REFERENCES

API (Australian Property Institute) (2017) *Technical Information Paper – Development Management*.

Deakin, ACT: API. Available at: https://www.api.org.au/sites/default/files/uploaded-content/website-content/20170607_anzrptip_4_development_management_reformat.pdf.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2015) *Cat. No. 8731.0 Building Approvals, Australia*. Canberra: ABS.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016) *Census of Population and Housing*. Canberra: ABS.

Bektas, E., Brouwer, J., Di Giulio, R., Bennicelli Pasqualis, M. and Quentin, C. (2014) A Sustainable Design Methodology for Collective-Self-Organized Housing Projects to Build Sustainable Districts, in Serra, J. (ed.) *Proceedings of The 14th World Sustainable Building Congress*. Barcelona: Green Building Council Espana.

Brunoro, S. (2013) The Collective Self-Organized Housing Approach: Improving the Quality of Life Towards Nearly Zero Energy Strategies. Paper presented at the Sustainable Building 13 Conference, Guimaraes, Portugal.

Brown, S., Cerulli, C. and Stevenson, F. (2013) *Motivating Collective Custom Build Report*. Sheffield: University of Sheffield.

Burke, T. and Hulse, K. (2010) The institutional structure of housing and the sub-prime crisis: an Australian Case Study. *Housing Studies*, 25(6), pp. 821–838.

D'Arcy, E. and Keogh, G. (2002) The Market Context of Property Development Activity, in Guy, S. and Henneberry, J. (eds.) *Development and Developers: Perspectives on Property*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 19–34.

Gerohazi, E., Hegedius, J. and Szemzo, H. (2014) *Cso Housing Market Study*. Budapest: Metropolitan Research Institute.

Goodman, R., Maginn, P.J., Gurrán, N. and Ruming, K. (2013) Simpler, faster, cheaper: Australia's urban aspirations and the planning reform agenda, in Ruming, K., Randolph, B. and Gurrán, N. (eds.) *State of Australian Cities Conference*. Sydney: State of Australian Cities Research Network.

Hamiduddin, I. and Gallent, N. (2015) Self-build communities: the rationale and experiences of group-build (Baugruppen) housing development in Germany. *Housing Studies*. DOI: 10.1080/02673037.2015.1091920.

Jarvis, H. (2015) Community-led housing and 'slow' opposition to corporate development: citizen participation as common ground? *Geography Compass*, 9(4), pp. 202–213.

Jarvis, H., Scanlon, K. and Arrigoitia, M.F. (2016) *Co-Housing: Shared Futures*. Newcastle upon Tyne: ESRC.

Junge, C. (2006) *Developing without Developers*:

- Practice and Potential of Building Cooperatives in Urban Development – the German Case. Master Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science.
- Lang, R., Carriou, C. and Czischke, D. (2018) Collaborative housing research (1990–2017): a systematic review and thematic analysis of the field. *Housing, Theory and Society*. DOI: 10.1080/14036096.2018.1536077.
- Lujanen, M. (2010) Legal challenges in ensuring regular maintenance and repairs of owner-occupied apartment blocks. *International Journal of Law in the Built Environment*, 2(2), pp. 178–197.
- Palmer, J. (2014) *(Actor-) Network Mapping of Housing Systems Employing Social Network Analysis Tools: The Case of Medium-Density Dwelling Design in Australia*. Oslo: The Oslo School of Architecture and Design.
- Palmer, J. (2016) Consolidating the Australian Dream: Reconfiguring the Multi-Unit Housing Network. PhD thesis, University of Adelaide.
- Palmer, J. (2019) Collective self-organised housing, an opportunity for consolidating the Australian dream. *Australian Planner*. DOI:10.1080/07293682.2019.1595690.
- Parvin, A., Saxby, D., Cerulli, C. and Schneider, T. (2011) *A Right to Build: The Next Mass-Housebuilding Industry*. Sheffield: University of Sheffield School of Architecture.
- Ring, K. (2013) *Self Made City*. Berlin: Jovis.
- Sharam, A. (2019) ‘Deliberative development’: Australia’s Baugruppen movement and the challenge of greater social inclusion. *Housing Studies*. DOI: 10.1080/02673037.2019.1594712.
- Sharam, A., Bryant, L. and Alves, T. (2015) De-risking development of medium density housing to improve housing affordability and boost supply. *Australian Planner*, 52(3), pp. 210–218.
- Sørvoll, J. and Bengtsson, B. (2018) The pyrrhic victory of civil society housing? Co-operative housing in Sweden and Norway. *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 18(1), pp. 124–142.
- Sudiyono, G. (2013) Learning from the Management and Development of Current Self-Organized and Community-Oriented Cohousing Projects in Berlin: Making Recommendations for the IBA Berlin 2020. Master of Urban Management, Berlin University of Technology.
- Wallace, A., Ford, J. and Quilgars, D. (2013) *Build-It-Yourself? Understanding the Changing Landscape of the UK Self-Build Market*. York: The University of York.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was assisted by funding from the University of South Australia URIPA research programme 2017–2018. Preliminary findings from a pilot study conducted in one city were presented at the State of Australian Cities Conference in 2017. Thank you to Andrea Sharam and Lidewij Tummers for feedback on earlier versions of this article.

Key words: collective self-development; multi-unit housing; entrepreneurial services; housing consolidation; Australia