Harper B

Housing Is Not Enough

What Australia Can Learn from London's Next Generation of City Making

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AUSTRALASIA PROPERTY ADVISORY ASSOCIATION

Executive Summary

“The future of housing isn’t about building more homes. It’s about building better places.”

Australia’s housing challenge extends beyond supply. It is fundamentally a challenge of how we plan, finance and deliver the places that support thriving communities.

As Australia works towards delivering 1.2 million new homes, the focus has largely remained on increasing housing numbers. Yet across London, a different approach is reshaping the future of urban development. Housing is no longer viewed as a standalone outcome, it is part of an integrated strategy that combines homes with transport, employment, public space, culture and community infrastructure.

In March 2026, Harper B led a delegation of Australian leaders across development, architecture, investment and advisory to explore eleven of London’s most significant regeneration precincts. While every project differed in scale and purpose, they shared a common philosophy: successful cities are built through connected precincts, diverse housing choices and long-term public and private collaboration.

This publication distils the key insights from that experience and identifies practical lessons that can strengthen Australia’s housing agenda. It highlights the role of Build-to-Rent, adaptive reuse, mixed-use precincts, public realm investment and institutional partnerships in creating communities that are not only liveable, but economically resilient.

The opportunity for Australia is significant. By learning from mature international models while responding to our own unique context, we can move beyond delivering housing as individual projects and begin creating neighbourhoods that support productivity, sustainability and long-term prosperity.

Australia vs the UK:

Comparisons At A Glance

	Australia	United Kingdom
01	Housing delivery is largely measured by the number of dwellings approved and completed.	Success is measured by the creation of complete neighbourhoods that combine housing, jobs, transport and community infrastructure.
02	Build-to-Sell remains the dominant residential delivery model.	Build-to-Rent, co-living, affordable housing and shared ownership operate alongside traditional home ownership.
03	Infrastructure often follows residential growth, creating pressure on communities.	Transport, schools, parks and public spaces are planned and delivered alongside housing.
04	Office-to-residential conversions remain relatively limited and can face planning barriers.	Adaptive reuse is widely adopted as a practical strategy to increase housing supply while reducing embodied carbon.
05	Public space is frequently delivered as part of development obligations.	Public realm is treated as critical infrastructure that drives investment, liveability and long-term value.
06	Housing policy is primarily driven by state governments, with local councils playing a more limited role.	Local councils lead place-making, shaping housing, regeneration and community outcomes.
07	Government is often viewed as the primary driver of housing delivery.	Government establishes the vision, while private and institutional capital play a central role in delivery.
08	Capital attraction is complacent – we expect it.	A consolidated commitment to investment attraction strategies via platforms like Opportunity London.

Key Insight 01:

Density Doesn't Fail. Poor Amenity Does

"People don't choose density. They choose great places."

Australia's housing debate has largely centred on increasing supply. While more homes are essential, London's leading regeneration projects demonstrate that long-term success depends on delivering complete neighbourhoods where housing is integrated with employment, transport, public space and community infrastructure.

Elephant Park, a Lendlease development, in London's Southwark Borough, is a compelling example of this approach. Delivered on the former Heygate Estate, the precinct has transformed underutilised land into a vibrant mixed-use community where housing sits alongside parks, retail, workplaces, schools and community facilities. Sustainability has also been embedded from the outset, with a district energy network, extensive tree planting and generous public open space supporting both environmental performance and quality of life.

Elephant Park demonstrates that high-density housing succeeds when public space, retail, transport and community infrastructure are delivered alongside homes. Residents move into complete neighbourhoods rather than construction sites. This integrated approach creates stronger communities and long-term value.

Elephant Park | At A Glance

- **£2.5 billion** regeneration of the former Heygate Estate.
- Approximately **3,000 new homes**, including a commitment to affordable housing.
- **6,000 new jobs** created through retail, commercial and community investment.
- **50+ shops, cafés and restaurants** supporting a vibrant mixed-use neighbourhood.
- **2-hectare public park** at the heart of the precinct, complemented by additional landscaped public spaces.
- A destination **children's adventure playground**, designed to encourage play, social interaction and active lifestyles for families living in the precinct.
- **Blind tenure design principles**, where affordable and private homes are indistinguishable in appearance and quality, creating a more inclusive and integrated community.
- More than **1,200 trees** planted across the development, significantly increasing urban greening.
- A low-carbon **district energy network** designed to reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency.
- Walking and cycling connections integrated with **Elephant & Castle's major public transport hub**, providing access to the Underground, National Rail and bus network.
- A partnership between **Southwark Council and Lendlease**, demonstrating the value of long-term public and private collaboration.

Key Insight 02:

Build Communities Before Buildings

Wembley Park

One of the strongest observations from the London Study Tour was that successful neighbourhoods begin long before the final building is complete. Across London's regeneration precincts, developers use early activation to create destinations, establish identity and build community confidence while construction is still underway.

Temporary retail, food and beverage offerings, cultural events, public art, markets and community programming are not viewed as interim uses. They are strategic investments that attract visitors, generate economic activity and demonstrate the long-term vision for a precinct. This early activation encourages people to experience a place before they choose to live, work or invest there.

Australia often waits until development is complete before introducing these elements. By contrast, London's approach creates momentum from the outset, reducing investment risk and fostering stronger community connections.

Originally conceived as a "meanwhile use" project, a recognised planning approach that temporary activates sites while long-term development is under way, BOXPARK Wembley in London has become a catalyst for the wider regeneration of Wembley Park. It demonstrates how activation can transform perceptions of a precinct, attract visitors and create economic activity well before surrounding developments are complete. It also showcases how construction sites can be transformed into vibrant places, that help to de-risk future investment while fostering long-term community connection.

BOXPARK Wembley | At A Glance

- **Flexible retail and hospitality** destination built from repurposed shipping containers.
- Hosts **hundreds of community events, live performances and cultural activations** each year.
- **Supports local businesses,** independent retailers and emerging food operators.
- Creates activity throughout the day and evening, **strengthening the local economy.**
- Contributes to Wembley Park's reputation as one of London's leading **mixed-use destinations.**
- **Activates precinct** before permanent development.
- Attracts more than **16 million visitors** annually to the wider Wembley destination.
- **Builds community identity** and investor confidence.

Key Insight 03

Housing Choice Creates Housing Supply

Responding to Australia's housing challenge requires more than building more homes, it requires creating more choice.

London demonstrates how a mix of housing models can meet the needs of different people, at different stages in their lives, while increasing overall housing supply.

Rather than relying on a single model, London is embracing different development options including co-living, adaptive reuse, affordable housing and mixed-use to create more flexible and resilient communities.

Developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, **DANDI** transformed an underutilised office building into a professionally managed co-living community. Designed as an adaptive reuse pilot, it explored new ways of living that respond to hybrid work, changing lifestyles and a growing demand for flexibility. The project demonstrates how existing commercial buildings can be repurposed to deliver high-quality housing more quickly and sustainably.

Third.i Group's Graphite Square showcases a different approach. Combining homes with collaborative workspace, landscaped public spaces and strong transport connections, it demonstrates how housing, employment and community infrastructure can be planned together to create vibrant mixed-use neighbourhoods.

Together, these projects highlight that there is no single solution to the housing challenge. Expanding housing choice through innovative housing models, adaptive reuse and mixed-use communities can increase supply while creating more liveable places.

For Australia, there is an opportunity to create planning and investment settings that encourage a broader range of housing options, make better use of existing buildings and respond to changing community needs.

A COVID-era pilot demonstrating how adaptive reuse can test new housing models and respond to changing ways of living and working.

DANDI Co-Living | At A Glance

- Developed through the adaptive reuse of a commercial office building, **DANDI showcases** how existing assets can be repurposed to deliver new housing opportunities.
- **Achieved 97% occupancy**, demonstrating strong market demand.
- **Flexible lease arrangements** ranging from short stays to long-term living which supports a more mobile workforce and changing lifestyle preferences.
- **DANDI offers** co-working and wellness facilities. Residents have access to premium shared amenities including co-working spaces, **gyms, rooftop terraces, cinemas, resident lounges, gardens, libraries and wellness spaces**, depending on the location.
- Regular community events and **professionally managed resident services** foster social connection and long-term resident engagement.
- Flexible rental options ranging from short stays to long-term living, **which supports** a more mobile workforce and changing lifestyle preferences.

"A resilient housing market offers choice, not just supply."

Graphite Square | At A Glance

- **£185 million** mixed-use regeneration project in Vauxhall, one of London's fastest-growing regeneration precincts.
- **160 new homes**, comprising **110 private residences** and **50 affordable homes**, creating a genuinely mixed-tenure community.
- More than **7,400m² (80,000 sq ft)** of flexible co-working space, accommodating over **1,000 workers** and supporting the growing hybrid workforce.
- **Over £43 million in sales** achieved within months of launch, making it one of the **fastest-selling residential projects in the UK** at the time.
- Landscaped communal gardens and new public spaces designed to **connect residents, workers and the surrounding neighbourhood.**
- Located within walking distance of **Vauxhall Station**, providing direct Underground, National Rail and bus connections into central London.
- Delivered in partnership with **Paragon Asra Housing**, integrating affordable housing into a high-quality mixed-use development.

Key Insight 04

Reuse Before Rebuilding

“The buildings of yesterday can become the neighbourhoods of tomorrow, if planning systems are designed to unlock their potential”

The fastest path to increasing housing supply is not always through new construction. London’s approach to adaptive reuse demonstrates how existing commercial buildings can be transformed into high-quality residential communities while reducing embodied carbon, construction waste and delivery time.

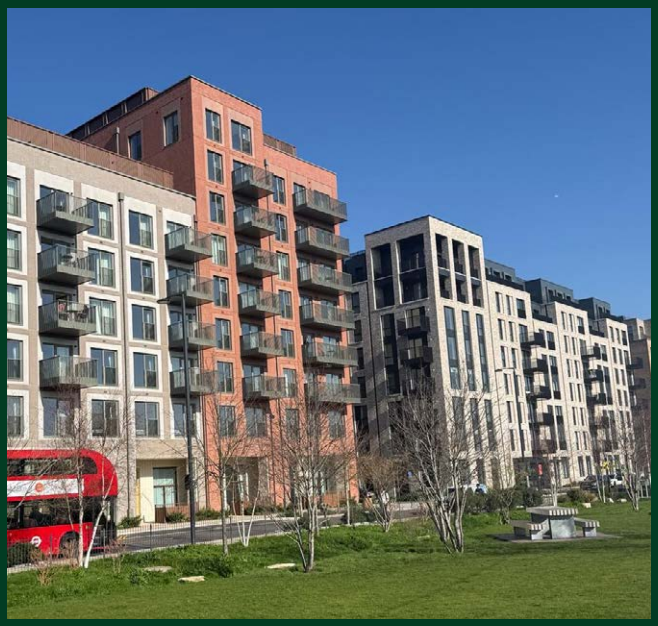
HUB Living’s conversion of a former office building into professionally managed co-living accommodation highlights how policy support, investor confidence and planning flexibility can unlock underutilised assets. As Australian CBDs continue to evolve, adaptive reuse presents one of the country’s greatest opportunities to accelerate housing delivery while supporting more sustainable urban development.

HUB Living Cornerstone | At a Glance

- **174 purpose-built co-living homes** created through the conversion and extension of a **1950s office building** on the edge of the Barbican Estate.
- **Approximately 90% of the existing substructure and 66% of the superstructure retained**, significantly reducing demolition waste and embodied carbon compared with a complete rebuild.
- Supported by a **£78.1 million development loan**, demonstrating institutional confidence in adaptive reuse as a scalable housing solution.
- Designed by **Stirling Prize-winning architects AHMM**, showing that retrofit can deliver design excellence alongside sustainability.
- Delivers **shared resident amenities**, flexible living spaces, improved public realm and new pedestrian connections, creating a community rather than simply converting office floors into apartments.
- Located within walking distance of major employment, transport and cultural destinations, reducing reliance on private vehicles and supporting a more **connected, low-carbon lifestyle.**

Key Insight 05

Public Space Drives Long-Term Value



Public space is often viewed as an additional cost within development. London's regeneration projects demonstrate the opposite. High-quality public realm creates stronger communities, increases property values, supports local businesses and improves long-term investment performance.

Brent Cross Town exemplifies this approach. Delivered by Related Argent in partnership with Barnet Council, the vision for the precinct extends well beyond housing.

Conceived as a new "park town", the development places wellbeing, accessibility and community connection at the centre of its masterplan. Housing, employment, education and retail are all organised around an extensive network of green spaces and public places designed to encourage people to walk, meet, exercise and spend time outdoors.

This investment in public realm is not simply about creating attractive neighbourhoods. It supports healthier lifestyles, attracts long-term investment, strengthens local businesses and enhances property values. By embedding public space from the earliest stages of planning, Brent Cross Town demonstrates how amenity becomes a catalyst for economic growth and community wellbeing.

For Australia, the lesson is clear. Public space should not be delivered once housing is complete. It should be planned as critical infrastructure that shapes the identity, resilience and long-term success of every new precinct.

Brent Cross Town | At a Glance

- **6,700 new homes** within a masterplanned mixed-use neighbourhood.
- **50 acres of parks and playing fields**, making green space the defining feature of the precinct.
- More than **25,000 jobs** supported through **3 million sq ft of commercial workspace.**
- **50+ shops, cafés and restaurants** integrated into a vibrant town centre.
- **12-minute rail connection to St Pancras International** via the new Brent Cross West station, supporting a true transit-oriented community.
- A new **knowledge and innovation hub**, including Sheffield Hallam University's first satellite campus outside Sheffield.
- Designed as a **net zero neighbourhood**, supported by a low-carbon district heating network and one of London's largest fully electric energy centres.
- Jointly delivered by **Barnet Council and Related Argent**, demonstrating the value of long-term public-private partnerships.

"Parks and public spaces are not amenities; they are the foundations of thriving communities."

Key Insight 06

Housing Is An Economic Development Strategy

The most successful regeneration projects in London demonstrate that housing is not simply residential infrastructure. It is an economic catalyst that attracts investment, supports employment and creates innovation ecosystems.

King's Cross has evolved into one of Europe's leading knowledge precincts, bringing together global technology companies, life sciences, education and residential communities within a single master planned destination. Delivered by Argent through a long-term partnership with the public sector and now informing the work of Related Argent the precinct has transformed 67 acres of former railway land into a globally recognised destination.

Likewise, Olympia by Yoo Capital, is redefining mixed-use regeneration by integrating culture, entertainment, workplaces and hospitality. These projects reinforce that housing delivers its greatest value when planned alongside employment, culture and economic opportunity.

Australia has an opportunity to adopt this integrated approach to strengthen both housing outcomes and national productivity.

Kings Cross | At A Glance

- **67-acre regeneration precinct** transformed from former railway land into one of London's most successful mixed-use neighbourhoods.
- Carbon neutral precinct powered by **renewable energy.**
- **More than 2,000 new homes**, creating a vibrant residential community alongside employment and cultural destinations.
- **18,000 jobs** supported across the estate, with capacity for continued employment growth.
- Home to **more than 120 businesses**, including global organisations such as Google, Meta, Universal Music and AstraZeneca, alongside start-ups and creative enterprises.
- **2.7 million sq ft** of office, retail, hospitality and leisure space delivered as part of a mixed-use masterplan.
- Anchored by **Central Saint Martins** and located within London's **Knowledge Quarter**, one of the world's most concentrated clusters of universities, research institutions, cultural organisations and life sciences companies.
- **Granary Square**, with its iconic **1,100 interactive fountains**, has welcomed more than **41 million visits** since opening, demonstrating the value of investing in high-quality public spaces.
- Built around one of Europe's best-connected transport hubs, with direct access to national rail, the London Underground and Eurostar, reinforcing King's Cross as a globally connected destination.

"The strongest housing markets are built around jobs, innovation and opportunity."

Olympia | At A Glance

- **£1.3 billion** investment transforming Olympia into one of London's largest cultural and business destinations.
- Forecast to inject **more than £600 million annually** into the UK economy through tourism, business events and visitor spending.
- Expected to support approximately **7,000 direct jobs**, with a further **2,000 jobs** generated through supply chains and wider economic activity.
- Forecast to attract **3.5 million visitors** annually to its event venues, hotels and entertainment facilities, with **around 10 million annual visits** across the wider destination.
- Delivers **550,000 sq ft of premium office space**, creating a hub for creative industries, innovation and business.
- Includes a **4,000-capacity live music venue**, a **1,575-seat theatre** (the largest purpose-built theatre in London in more than 50 years), **two international hotels**, more than **30 restaurants and bars**, and **2.5 acres of new public space.**
- Designed to operate as a **365-day destination**, extending activity well beyond exhibitions and creating a vibrant mixed-use precinct.

Key Insight 07

Partnerships Deliver Better Cities

"The best cities aren't built by one organisation. They're built through partnerships with a shared vision."

No successful precinct visited during the Harper B London Study Tour was delivered by government or the private sector alone. Every project reflected long-term collaboration between councils, developers, institutional investors and local communities, supported by a shared vision and clear delivery framework.

Rather than viewing planning as a transactional approval process, London's most successful regeneration projects are built on enduring partnerships that align public objectives with private investment. This collaborative approach has enabled the delivery of housing, transport, public realm, schools, community infrastructure and employment opportunities at a scale that would be difficult for any one organisation to achieve independently.

Australia has an opportunity to strengthen housing delivery by fostering earlier collaboration, providing greater planning certainty and creating investment environments that encourage long-term partnerships. Building better cities will require more than ambitious housing targets, it will require governments, industry and investors working towards a shared vision for the future.

Elephant Park

Partnership: Lendlease + Southwark Council

- → £2.5 billion regeneration
- → Approximately 3,000 new homes
- → Minimum 25% affordable housing
- → More than 6,000 jobs created
- → Climate-positive district energy network
- → Extensive parks, retail and community facilities delivered alongside housing

Refer to Page 4 for further details on Elephant Park.

Milton Keynes

Partnership: Milton Keynes City Council + Berkeley Group

- → Multi-billion pound masterplanned expansion featuring affordable housing allocations and high-density accessible neighbourhood layouts
- → Delivery of approximately 4,000 new homes
- → Creation of around 5000 new jobs across local commercial, logistics and employment hubs
- → Designed around a 15-minute neighbourhood framework and green grid network with walking and cycling and nature recovery initiatives
- → Extensive delivery of dedicated public realm, local health and community hubs and schools including a mass rapid transit integration

What Every Precinct Had In Common

Public/private partnerships

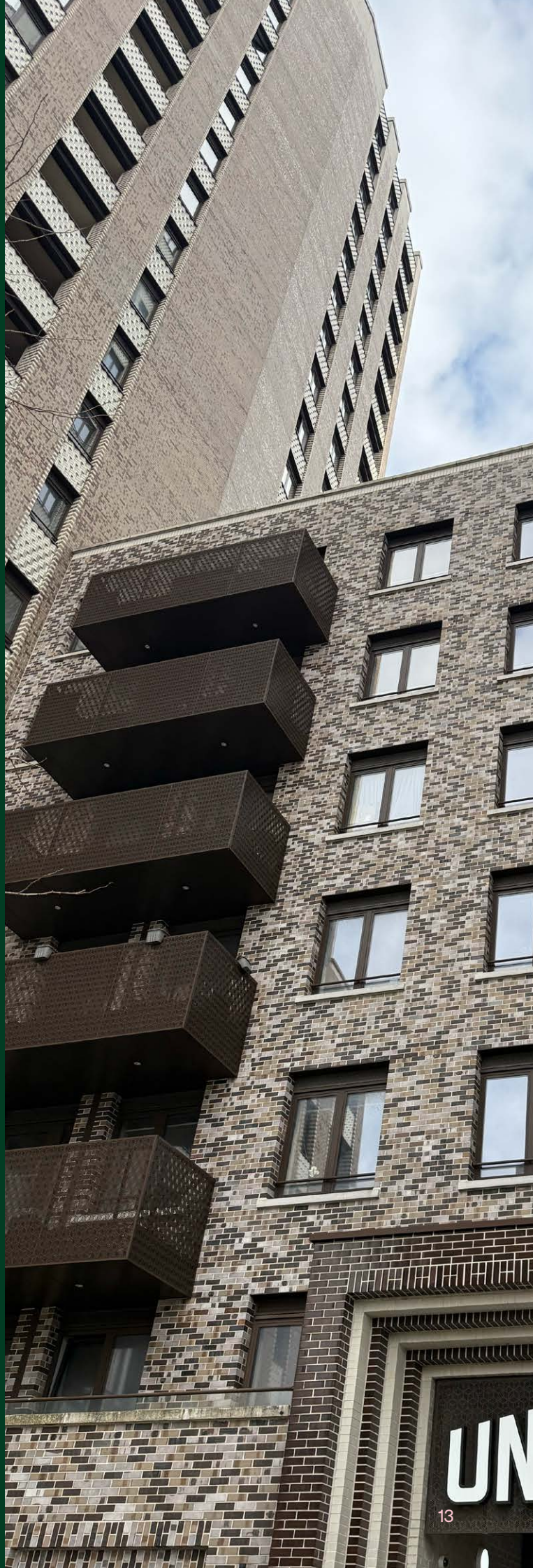
Mixed-use development

Housing diversity

Public realm

Long-term stewardship

Local councils leading place-making



Perspectives From The Delegation

Eleven leaders: one shared ambition, to build better cities for Australia.

What did the delegation take away from the tour?

From a consultant's perspective, the Harper B London Study Tour reinforced that housing delivery is rarely limited by technical capability alone.

The engineering expertise, materials and construction methods already exist; the greater challenge is creating the planning certainty, infrastructure coordination and decision-making alignment needed to deliver at scale.

What stood out in London was the early collaboration between government, planners, infrastructure agencies, and the private sector. Precincts such as Elephant Park and Wembley showed how better outcomes are achieved when transport, utilities, public realm, construction systems, and housing delivery are considered together from the outset.

For Australia, the opportunity is to align planning, infrastructure, design, and construction earlier, so projects can move from concept to completion with greater certainty, efficiency and affordability.

Chandan Bains
Managing Director

INNOVIS
Agile Outcomes

The most important lesson I took from the London Study Tour facilitated by Harper B was that great city-making is driven by coordinated, long-term precinct governance.

The most successful precincts were those with clear stewardship, planning certainty and a vision that extended well beyond initial development. Australia should prioritise planning certainty and integrated precinct governance to accelerate housing delivery while creating precincts and communities that endure. Equally important is building flexibility into governance frameworks so neighbourhoods can evolve over time in response to changing population, housing, employment and lifestyle needs.

Our visit to Wembley highlighted the importance of addressing the "boundary effect". While the precinct itself was highly liveable and well invested, there was a noticeable contrast with neighbouring areas. It raised an important question for Australia: how do we ensure precinct investment uplifts surrounding communities rather than creating islands of privilege? This requires stronger coordination across council boundaries and a broader view of precinct outcomes.

Elephant & Castle demonstrated the challenges of delivering affordable housing in ways that create an equitable living experience. As we increase housing supply, Australia should prioritise genuinely integrated communities where access to amenity, services and quality public spaces is shared by all.

Brent Cross Town provided the strongest example of long-term stewardship. Its ongoing management and activation created a connected neighbourhood while allowing the precinct to adapt as community needs change over time. It highlights an opportunity for Australia to move beyond the traditional developer-to-council handover model and establish enduring governance structures that support communities long after development is complete.

The London precincts showed that successful cities are never truly finished. Australia should focus on governance models that provide both the certainty to deliver housing today and the flexibility to respond to the needs of tomorrow

Megan Hondromatidis
General Manager – Marketing & Communications

LOCAL:

"As we increase housing supply, Australia should prioritise genuinely integrated communities where access to amenity, services and quality public spaces is shared by all."

Housing is a fundamental human right, yet too often it is reduced to a conversation about supply, cost and delivery targets.

Through the Harper B Housing Tour, as designers we were reminded that housing is far more than a building. It is the foundation of community, wellbeing and belonging, and one of the most powerful tools we have for creating vibrant and resilient places.

Experiencing the UK's more mature housing market firsthand with Belinda, it provided valuable insights into how housing can be delivered as part of a broader vision for place-making. We explored projects that combined diverse housing tenures, innovative development models, volumetric modular construction and integrated precinct planning.

For us as architects, the tour was both inspiring and deeply educational. Learning directly from developers, housing providers, councils, precinct makers and design leaders offered a practical understanding of how successful places are delivered through collaboration, long-term thinking and a shared commitment to quality outcomes.

The key lesson from the Harper B Housing Tour was clear: **housing should not be viewed as an isolated development outcome, but as essential social infrastructure.**

When housing sits at the heart of precinct planning, it has the power to shape stronger communities, foster social connection and create places where people can genuinely thrive for generations to come.

Ramin Jahromi
Director

Patrick Ness
Director

COX

Residents don't experience a "tenure type," they experience a place, and precincts that deliberately mix life stages perform better because of it, not despite it.

Brentwood's multi-generational framing (embedding later living within community rather than isolating it) and its 32% family cohort with longer tenancies prove the point. The Kings Cross precinct reinforces it: Granary Square's fountains were designed for toddlers to play in, not to look good in a render, and that single decision created a genuinely multi-age public realm from toddlers to retirees.

The change Australia should prioritise: stop designing precincts around tenure silos (BTR here, seniors there, students somewhere else) and start designing around life-stage coexistence and experience, with something like Brentwood's Flourishing Index to prove it, not just claim it.

Anouk Darling
Chief Executive Officer

THE LIVING CO.

The most significant insight I took away from the London Study Tour was that the UK isn't necessarily facing fewer housing challenges than Australia—it isn't.

Like Australia, it is dealing with housing shortages, labour constraints, rising construction costs and productivity pressures. The difference is that the UK has developed a more mature and collaborative approach to delivering housing, with government, local councils, developers and institutional investors working towards a common objective. That collaboration has also enabled greater acceptance and delivery of diverse housing products such as Build-to-Rent, co-living and adaptive reuse, allowing housing supply to respond to different life stages and market needs rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all model.

Equally important was the simplicity and repeatability of many of the housing products, which enables faster, more efficient delivery at scale. This was particularly evident at Wembley Park, where the partnership between Brent Council and private developers has created a collaborative model focused on accelerating housing delivery and creating new communities and culture.

If Australia is to improve housing delivery, our priority should be on creating alignment across all levels of government and the private sector around a shared housing delivery agenda. Planning reform alone won't solve the challenge. We need policy certainty, coordinated investment/partnerships (Govt/Private), and a broader acceptance of new housing typologies that unlock private capital and accelerate delivery.

The UK has shown that when governments and the property market work towards a common objective, housing can be delivered faster, at greater scale and with better long-term outcomes. Australia should look towards the UK on models and policies we can adopt as we shape the next generation of major precincts, including Bays West, Bradfield, Fishermans Bend, and the Brisbane 2032 Olympic precincts.

Colin Townsend
Director

ngnu

"The London precincts showed that successful cities are never truly finished."

Returning to the UK for the single purpose of My return to the UK was for the single purpose of looking at what can be learnt from London and how to address a similar set of challenges faced by many advanced economies. Including post COVID recovery, housing affordability / housing supply, rising government debt and inflationary challenges.

The greatest learning was that private investment has generated some outcomes which are having a positive impact to assist in addressing some of the challenges AND we can learn from these.

Particularly, when precinct and city making is delivered with private capital it, by necessity can happen faster be more commercially viable, the outcome of which can deliver greater amenity for the entire community.

The single thing which left the greatest impression was Olympia – London's home of entertainment and events. While the location has been an entertainment precinct for around 140 years, the redevelopment which is being completed this year (2026) creates an offering of dining, theatre, exhibitions across 14 acres with two acres of public space which has undergone a 1.3 billion pound revival by Yoo Capital. As private investors, they have focused on delivering a new creative district which can be commercially viable and deliver a new level of sophistication and technology to drive visitation to assets which have previously been considered commercially draining. This shows that with a mix of uses and clever commercial thinking amazing precincts can be delivered.

Nicole Scurrah
Executive Chair

Create Advisory

Six Actions For Australia

The London Study Tour demonstrated that solving Australia's housing challenge requires more than accelerating construction. It requires a fundamental shift in how housing is planned, financed and delivered. While Australia's planning system differs from the UK's planning system, the principles behind successful city-making are highly transferable.

Harper B believes these six actions will have the greatest impact on improving housing outcomes over the next decade.

01

Plan Precincts, Not Projects

Housing should no longer be considered in isolation. Every new development should form part of a broader precinct strategy that integrates transport, employment, education, healthcare, public space and community infrastructure.

Masterplanned precincts provide greater certainty for investors, improve community outcomes and create places that remain successful long after construction is complete. Australia's planning system must shift from assessing individual developments to shaping complete neighbourhoods.

02

Expand Housing Choice

No single housing model will solve Australia's housing shortage. A resilient housing market requires a diverse mix of tenure, ownership and living models that respond to changing demographics, workforce mobility and affordability pressures.

Greater support for Build-to-Rent, co-living, adaptive reuse, key worker housing and later living will broaden supply while offering Australians greater flexibility throughout different stages of life.

Expanding housing choice is one of the fastest ways to improve housing accessibility without relying solely on traditional apartment or detached housing delivery.

03

Invest in Place Before Population

Successful communities are built around quality public spaces, not simply housing density. Parks, walking connections, schools, retail, cultural facilities and community infrastructure create the conditions for neighbourhoods to flourish.

London consistently demonstrated that investment in public realm encourages private investment, attracts residents and strengthens long-term economic performance.

Australia has an opportunity to prioritise place-making from the outset rather than delivering amenity after communities have already been established.

04 Unlock Private Capital Through Partnership

Meeting Australia's housing ambitions will require significantly greater collaboration between governments, institutional investors and the private sector.

Long-term planning certainty, streamlined approval pathways and clearly defined public-private partnerships will improve investor confidence while accelerating housing delivery.

However, attracting capital requires more than good policy. It demands a proactive approach to investment attraction. Across London, governments and local authorities actively compete for domestic and international capital, engaging investors early to understand their priorities and create conditions that encourage long-term investment. They position themselves not simply as regulators, but as strategic partners in delivering growth.

Australia has an opportunity to adopt a similar mindset. Capital should not be viewed as something that arrives organically, it must be actively pursued. Governments at every level should market their cities, precincts and development opportunities with the same discipline used to attract major employers, events and international investment.

05 Measure Success by Community Outcomes

Australia's housing performance has traditionally been measured by approvals, commencements and completed dwellings. While these metrics remain important, they do not reflect the long-term success of communities.

Future housing policy should also measure accessibility, affordability, sustainability, employment, public transport, public realm, community wellbeing and economic productivity.

The cities that succeed over the coming decades will not be those that build the most homes. They will be those that create places where people choose to stay, businesses choose to invest and communities choose to grow.

06 Empower Local Leadership

Enable local councils to play a greater role in shaping housing, regeneration and investment outcomes. Empowering the level of government closest to communities can strengthen partnerships, improve place-based decision-making and deliver growth that better reflects local needs.

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The support and partnerships we have built across Australia and the UK has been incredible, and it's exciting to see what we can achieve together to create better outcomes for the way people live, work and connect."

Belinda Coates / Harper B

Looking Ahead

Australia stands at a defining moment in its urban evolution. Population growth, housing affordability, infrastructure investment and economic transformation are converging to reshape the cities we leave for future generations.

The opportunity extends far beyond delivering new homes. It is an opportunity to create neighbourhoods that support healthier communities, attract investment, strengthen productivity and improve quality of life.

The projects explored throughout the Harper B London Study Tour demonstrate that this transformation is possible. Their success was not built on a single policy or planning reform, but on a long-term commitment to integrated thinking, strong partnerships and a shared vision for the future.

Australia already has many of the ingredients required to achieve similar outcomes: world-class designers, innovative developers, engaged communities and growing institutional investment. The next step is bringing these elements together through a more coordinated approach to city-making.

As governments and industry work towards ambitious housing targets, success will increasingly depend on the quality of the places created rather than the quantity of homes delivered.

The decisions made over the next decade will shape Australia's cities for generations. By embracing integrated planning, housing diversity, public-private collaboration and investment in place, Australia has an opportunity not only to address housing demand, but to create more connected, resilient and prosperous communities.

> "The next generation of Australian cities won't be defined by the skylines we build, but by the communities we create."

Harper B will continue working alongside governments, investors, developers and industry leaders to explore global best practice and translate international thinking into practical outcomes for Australian cities.

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