



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

Ecoso exchange no. 2 : incorporating Irregular no. 52

This is the Published version of the following publication

UNSPECIFIED (1973) Ecoso exchange no. 2 : incorporating Irregular no. 52.
Ecoso exchange incorporating Irregular (2). pp. 1-8.

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Note The "Ecoso What?" footnote at the end of some items is the editor's attempt to orientate the writer, the reviewer and the reader to the 4-point "Ecoso Guidelines" of those who subscribe to the newly formulated objectives of Ecoso Exchange (See coloured page)

THIS ISSUE :-

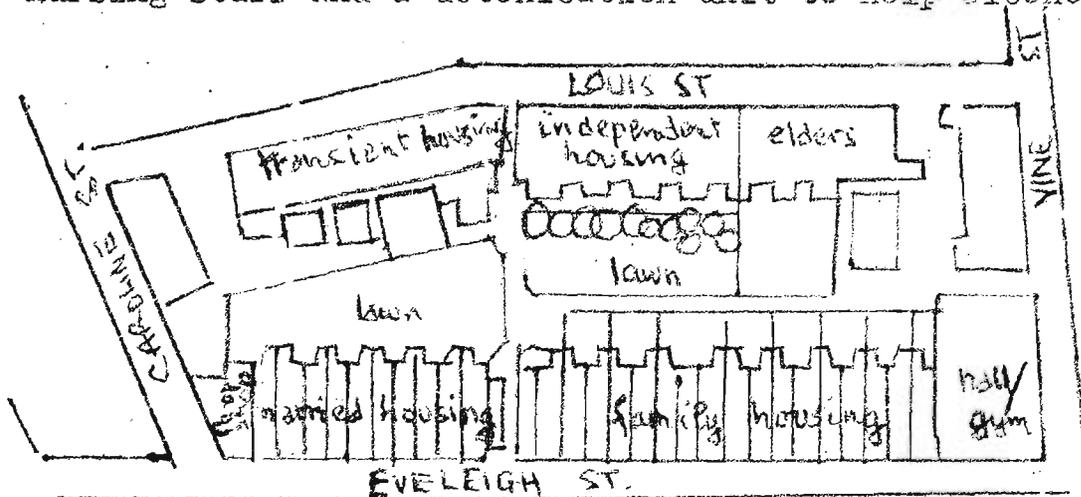
1. Aborigines Give Lead in Urban Planning.
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1. ABORIGINES GIVE LEAD IN URBAN PLANNING

"The Redfern (Sydney) Aboriginal Community Housing Scheme may well become a hallmark not only of the Black community (especially in towns and cities) but for urban planning as a whole."

"The scheme will cover 65 houses in the block bounded by Louis, Caroline, Eveleigh and Vine Streets, Redfern (See diagram)."

"The back fences of most of the houses will be pulled down and the laneway torn up to create a lawn-covered recreation area. There are two factories in the block. One will be converted into a hall-workshop-gym and cultural centre, while the other will house a pre-school which will be run by Aboriginal mothers in the community with trained help, and a medical centre, linked with the Aboriginal Medical Service, with fulltime nursing staff and a detoxication unit to help alcoholics



overcome their addiction."

"The corner store will become a co-operative shop, selling food at cheap prices."

"The whole project will be managed by an elected co-operative committee. Low rental will be charged on the accommodation provided, to repay the promised Federal Government loan (not grant).---"

(The above is a quotation from the beginning of an article by Mr Denis Freney in 'The Tribune' April 3-9, 1973, entitled "Black Housing Victory")

Freney, who had given consistent sympathetic journalistic support to the struggle which gave rise to these results, proceeds to describe the fascinating story of progression from the desperation of the aboriginal community of which many were sick, alcoholic, homeless and police-harassed, camping precariously in filthy rubbish-strewn empty houses to the above hopeful scheme. The empty houses were waiting rehabilitation into expensive "Paddington"-type affluent \$75 week town houses by a development company.

The unique struggle was led by militant young blacks at all times, but supported by militant whites including three local Catholic priests legal aid, architectural assistance, the Builders' Labourers' Federation and the building workers who volunteered free plumbing, electrical and general labour.

The development company finally co-operated by agreeing to sell to the Aboriginal Co-operative at virtually cost price. But most of the rehabilitation is being done by the Aboriginals themselves and control will be in the hands of their own co-operative.

A week after the Tribune article, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, (Mr. Gordon Bryant) announced that the Federal Government will pay \$530,000 to enable the Aboriginal Co-operative to purchase and rehabilitate 41 of the terrace houses. We agree with his statement that "the development was an imaginative and highly desirable one, which could provide a pattern for Aborigines and non-Aborigines alike.

Opposition to the scheme from a few local, nearby white residents, and from the Labor majority of the South Sydney Council is reported to be on the retreat.

For an early variant of the Redfern scheme, generalised for adaptation to the less strongly group-orientated white community, see the Crow's concept published in February 1970 of "co-operative areas" for rehabilitated-redeveloped units with a democratic share in a Body Corporate controlling common block facilities (See Plan for Melbourne Part 2 at pp 109 .. III and for factories at p 99).

The Redfern scheme is a stronger communal form than the Crows, with a full range of basic facilities i.e. health, recreational, cultural, shopping and child care etc. catering for a whole "tribe" and the differing requirements of groups within the tribe i.e. children, elders, marrieds without children, families, invalids etc.

Surely the Redfern scheme is made to order for adaptation to the dozens of younger couples in the inner areas experimenting with various types of "communes", but in premises ill-devised for such purposes especially where children are involved? But would such white experimenters find room for elders and invalids.?

)Ecoso What? A design for living which is adapted to more co-operative or more communal life styles throws the emphasis more onto community identity and mutual respect within the group in the place of status striving keep-to-yourself consumerism and tourism as a substitute. Rehabilitation and adaptation of a whole block of buildings to this end is also energy-conserving.)

LODER AND BAYLY STATE THEIR OWN CASE

(Mr. John Bayly of the Town Planning firm of Loder and Bayly has written this comment on the article in the February 73 issue of Ecoso Exchange. He is commenting on the article entitled "Federal Labor at the Cross Roads").

"Irregular" No. 50, in its item "Federal Labor at the Urban Crossroads" distorts our attitude to freeway networks by oversimplification, omission and extension in so extensive a way that we must regard it as defamatory. The proper response to this sort of thing from so honourable a source can only be to attempt to set the record right.

First of all, we don't expect that Nick Clark, John Paterson or the highway engineers of the M.T.C., C.R.B. and M.M.B.W. would appreciate being bundled together with us in this context any more than we do. We don't speak for them, nor they for us. Nor do we think we quite fit the categories - if they are meant for us - of "Bulletin, conservatives, old-fashioned extreme right" and one of us at least was never a highway engineer.

Secondly, we object especially to being associated by implication with extreme extensions of other people's arguments. The C.B.D. is an extremely complex part of the metropolitan system; many of its functions are (not should be) dispersing, some are not. In our opinion dispersal of some functions should continue, and concentration of others should be encouraged.

Bayly in particular has consistently advocated strengthening of the cultural, recreational, governmental and administrative and specialised retail functions of the C.B.D.

The transport system is also extremely complex. "Cars-and-trucks-on-freeways" has never, so far as we know, been a seriously-advocated alternative to "trains-and-shuttle-buses". Each of these sub-systems is in our view important: together with other kinds of roads and other kinds of public transport, they serve important groups of transport needs. Loder in particular has consistently advocated more serious attention to practicable new technology in public transport and to the better design and management of roads other than freeways.

It is important for informed people to press for the more rational use of resources in our transport systems. Freeways have been badly planned, but they can be planned and built well in response to a real need. Cars and trucks have been atrociously underdesigned and oversold but there are many point-to-point journeys that nothing else can provide half as well. Public transport has been "Cinderella" for too long, but it will need more than a face lift of present apparatus to set it right: in some areas what is needed is a coach where we now have a pumpkin.

But these real and serious imperfections do not mean that cars and freeways should be scrapped, or buses burned or trains abandoned. All of them need to be made better and used more wisely and helped by new and different means of movement. Sudden withdrawal or penalising of present modes will cause real hardship: in particular, it is important to recognise that road traffic that doesn't get freeways will not cease to grow overnight - and the absence of freeways to absorb the growth will threaten a degradation of the environment (by traffic) which will be less dramatic than the impact of a crudely-planned freeway, but probably more permanent and pervasive.

To rewrite the five point freeway lobby apologia in a form to which we could subscribe:

1. The C.B.D. generates a small and declining proportion of all metropolitan journeys.
2. Some traditional C.B.D. functions are better served by suburban dispersal, and those left behind would benefit.
3. Random trips generated by many classes of user are well served by freeways which take traffic out of congested (and therefore increasingly uninhabitable) local roads.
4. In these circumstances an existing metropolitan city gets best value for its public transport dollar by using a variety of modes. Therefore the underground loop as a poor investment alternative to other solutions is a surprising choice and will encourage changes in the pattern of C.B.D. uses that will be very difficult to manage.

As for Irregular's alternative solution, we agree essentially with points 1 and 2. Point 3 seeks a one-direction, one corridor location for all Melbourne's future growth: we would warn of the danger of acceptance of the social imbalance in present pockets of poverty or privilege, and the threat of pressure upon sensitive recreational open space. The bus-and-train emphasis in points 4 and 5 is a programme for the forties, not for the seventies and eighties.

There is much beauty in a public-transport oriented policy and there is a desperate need for energy-conserving transportation systems and life-styles based upon non-parasitic personal fulfillment. In our opinion there is little beauty in a past-oriented policy, and no need whatever to discard the most liberating features of our present environment. The tyranny that threatens us does not run exclusively on rubber tyres or rails: it is the product of mismanagement and prostitution of our creative faculties.

The fact that organisations are being developed against freeways in many parts of the world is not surprising. The first crude trains and cars aroused similar (not unjustified but over-emotional) responses and probably had a lot to do with improving the innovations as an alternative to prohibiting them.

Some organisations that are being created around such key urban issues

as freeways are in danger of falling into the trap of some of their opponents who focus only within a narrow field. You can't save a prisoner by setting alight to the jail.

FREEWAY PROTESTS

1. Meeting at Geelong (Some extracts from a speech by Mr. Robert McAlpine at a public meeting in Geelong West Town Hall).

"... many of the Geelong work force are employed at the Geelong Ford Motor Company at Norlane... It is contended that the motor car is here to stay. More informed people know that it is the lobbies .. the motor vehicle manufacturers, the petrol and oil, the rubber and concrete mix and specifically the hire purchase and credit companies that are the ones who really want to be "here to stay". No criticism of these organisations is inferred for their tactics are part of accepted practice in business and commerce.

When questioned persistently last year about the increasing car problem and its high cost in terms of life and money, even Mr. Hawke told me that full employment must be maintained within the motor vehicle industry and we should not do anything which could upset that industry.

The problem, thus, is wider than just good or bad urban planning. So many people now depend on various facets of this industry for their continued livelihood ..."

Later Mr. McAlpine said "Increasing numbers of overseas cities are saying 'No' to freeways."

"One momentous decision taken early in June 1971 the Ontario Government stopped building the Toronto \$237 million Spadina Expressway and has abandoned its Urban Motorways Plans.

"By taking this step Toronto has demonstrated to the world that it does not want to be another North American city divided by rivers of concrete when the option of choosing modern Public Transport does exist."

2. Demonstration in Yarra Park

Tree planting in the mud of the Eastern freeway on Sunday, April 15 was a protest organised by the United Melbourne Freeway Action Group.

3. Demonstration at Debney's Park

Recorded noises of the Tullamarine Freeway played from the route of the extension of the freeway resulted in over one thousand people signing petition against the construction of this extension (F.14). The freeway is already being designed. It is expected that it will be routed to within a stone's throw from the Debney's Park Housing Commission flats. Most of the 1000 signatures were obtained from tenants of these homes.

(Ecoso What? Hat's off to the many people who are putting such creative efforts into continually finding ways of alerting the people to the freeway danger. See also statement by Sir Bernard Evans in this issue of Ecoso Exchange.... "Build Road Around City : M.C.C.)

REVERSING THE TREND

Three Parks for the People

Three parks were handed over to the people by the Government during the three weeks before the Victorian State Elections. These were: The Kalorama Park in the Dandenongs, the Westerfold Estate in the Yarra Valley and the Railway land park at North Carlton.

Reversing the trend from private development to public ownership was the direct result in each instance of campaigns by local organisations which also involved other organisations from a wide strata of the population.

The campaign for the Kalorama Park started eleven years ago when the property of the Jeeves family came onto the market. Plans were made for subdivision of the mountain side, but actions of the Save the Dandenongs League resulted in the land being purchased with the help of Government finance. (See Irregular February, 1970 for full story up to that date) The park was opened on Sunday, May 29th by the Chief Secretary Mr. Meagher and the Minister for Lands, Mr. Borthwick.

The campaign for the Westerfold Estate to be public property was spear-headed by the Yarra Valley Conservation League which opposed plans made by Jennings Estates and Finance Pty. Ltd. subdividing rural land for houses. Jennings eventually won the right to subdivide, but in May this year Premier Hamer announced that the Westerfold Estate was to be bought from Jennings by the government, and used as a public park.

Carlton Railway Land

In Carlton was a campaign which reached its conclusion within a couple of years. An extract from one of the daily papers which is re-published in this "Ecoso Exchange" gives some background to this new park

(Ecoso What? In all three examples the campaign for the parks were sparked off as rear-guard actions. To stop subdivisions in the first two and to stop inappropriate use of storing in the third. Success was achieved in each instance by the local organisations reaching out to the general community. The opportunity of parks for the people through advance-action rather than rear-guard action is at present urgently on the agenda. See article this issue of "Ecoso Exchange" .. "Students Urged to Stake Claim for Future".

DID YOU MISS IT IN THE DAILIES?

NOTE: The title of each quote is the head line of the article quoted.

Students Urged to Stake Claim for Future (Age 26.4.73)

Melbourne conservationist Mr. Alan Reid has an urgent message for Victorian Schools. He wants them to make submissions to the Victorian Land Conservation Council to set aside Crown Lands for recreational and educational purposes ... before they miss their chance.

Mr. Reid, who is Education Officer for the Conservation Foundation explained yesterday that the Land Conservation Council was set up to make recommendations to the State Government on the future use of public land in the State

"The Council has now published reports on three areas, but they have not received a single submission from the Education Department individual schools or youth groups", he said.

"They have received a lot of submissions from people who want to establish industries .. such as saw mills and quarries ..

Mr. Reid said schools could ask for land to be set aside for any purpose at all.. and he threw out suggestions such as camp sites, school plantations, nurseries, rock climbing or canoeing areas, ... there should be special sites for schools to share in for example by the sea or in alpine areas ... at the moment no more than one student in twenty has the chance to go to a seaside camp. Mr. Reid said schools or community groups wanting to make submissions could obtain information about the areas from the Land Conservation Council or from the Australian Conservation Foundation.

(Ecoso What? Do it now, before it is too late!)

Jennings Rides the Housing Boom (Age 17.4.73)

A.V. Jennings Industries signed a record number of housing contracts in the first quarter of the current year ... Altogether the company signed \$53.6 million worth of contracts in the quarter compared with \$32.6 million previously. In the quarter Jennings bought the 20 percent minority interest in Trimview Polymarble and Fibreglass Pty. Ltd. now a wholly owned subsidiary.

(Ecoso What? Watch the doughnut, not the hole. Watch the rate of profit on prefabricated building materials as well as the profit rate on Jennings Homes.)

Build Road Round City; M.C.C. (Age 14/5/73)

"The Melbourne City Council wants the State Government to build a ring road round the city.

This is part of the council's attack on traffic congestion in the central business district.

"Senior Councillors were confident that a ring road would be built around the city.

They Predicted that the decision to scrap plans would be considered after the elections".

(Ecoso What? The few limbs Hamer has "axed" from the freeway plan could easily sprout again. The proposed dropping of the ring freeway has

not ring-barked the freeway plan?)

Collingwood Stirred up over Centre "Age" 10.5.73

"Parents, teachers, and residents in the Collingwood area are afraid they will be "sold out" on the proposed Collingwood Education Centres.. "The centre was first promised in 1967 but there have been several delays in the starting time."

(Ecoso What? Is the Collingwood Education Centre "a raisin in the sun"? .. for more about the high hopes held for this educational venture see "Irregulars" May, 68, October 68 and September 70.)

Houseboats busy on Murray "Age" April 17

"This eight-berth houseboat is fitted with two way radio so you can call "room service.." fast courtesy boats which bring out fresh food, liquor and other essentials"...

"Weekly hire charges range from \$85-00 for a five berth job to around \$200 for the larger houseboats sleeping eight or more."

(Ecoso What? Will there be any places left where we can "get away from it all?")

Trees and Clean Air "Age" 5.5.73

"Since the Burwood Highway has been extended through to Ferntree Gully the fringe areas of the Dandenong Ranges have seen as much development as any district of the State."

"With the easy run into Melbourne ... the first ten miles as a 70 m.p.h. double highway ... the Dandenongs has become one of the few areas around Melbourne with easy access, natural surroundings and pollution free environment."

"In the past 12 months, houses and land in the area have seen boom conditions with investors and speculators grabbing every large piece of property they could find."

(Ecoso What? This article on the property page of the "Age" omits to state that the subdivisions 70 m.p.h. roads are rapidly destroying the peace and quite of this natural recreation area that is only about twenty miles from the city. See also article this issue of Ecoso Exchange on Kalorama Park)

Worth Jail he says "Herald" 11.5.73

Unionists Mr. Norman Gallagher looked at the overgrown patch of land in North Carlton today and said "Going to jail for 14 days was worth it when you see the happy faces of these children."

Mr. Gallagher was at Lang Street when the Education Minister handed over 1¼ acres of land to a playground committee. The Trades Hall put a black ban on the site in 1971 after a man who leased the site said he wanted to build a warehouse on it. During the scuffles between demonstrators, workmen and unionists Mr. Gallagher was arrested for alleged assault. He was later jailed for 14 days.

(Ecoso What? Socially valuable land should be used by people, this site within a couple of miles of the centre of the city is socially valuable.)

Byrne Predicts Tourist Boom for Country Areas "Age" 24.4.73

"The Victorian Minister for Tourism (Mr. Byrne) yesterday predicted a great tourist boom in Victoria during the next 18 months."

"It is worth more than \$135 million a year. With the advent of large numbers of overseas visitors it was now the eighth most important industry he said"

(Ecoso What? Is it ecologically desirable to attract large numbers of overseas tourists to Australia?)

So You're Going to Pay Off a Block "Melbourne Times 9.5.73

"By encouraging growth in all directions, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works only makes provision for services such as roads and water even more complex and chaotic, which in turn makes the plan enormously expensive, the Board favours having seven corridors as it means that all the council representatives that constitute the Board each get a little bit of growth in their own particular municipality....."

"As was said earlier in this article the future of Melbourne's Growth is no longer in the hands of the Government and planning authorities

but in the hands of a tiny minority of large companies that monopolise the bulk of the capital of this country".

(This full page feature article advocated a Gippsland corridor instead of the proposed finger growth for Melbourne

THE PRINCE PRANCES SIDEWAYS

Prince Philip lost a wonderful opportunity to imbue the conservation movement with an enthusiastic response around a positive ecological-sociological program when he received top billing on Thursday 23rd March on T.V. as President of the Australian Conservation Foundation.

He demonstrated considerable personal capacity, a polished style of debate and commendable verve and spirit. But it was as if he were mounted on a fractious highly bred filly, full of fire and promise but with all its training, intent on prancing sideways and never able to break into a direct forward gallop. He tended to get stuck within the rigid tactics pronounced by him in his Annual Report (See Irregular 49 p. 2. "The Prince and the Ecological Angels")

His theme is "wild life must be saved first". He reckoned that man can look after himself, but wild life cannot. He sounded as if he was going to show form when he said "we have more in common with a mouse than a motor car". But he wouldn't have a bar of the suggestion that industrial growth would need to be slowed down for conservation purposes, nor with the suggestion of Mr. Phillip Sutton (of I.N.S.P.E.C.T.) that our life styles needed to be changed to accommodate the new ecological understanding.

The abiding impression he left was that reserves for wild life were the key issue. True at one stage he agreed that population reduction was desirable. But the general impression he left was that we, herein Australia did not have too much to worry about. He discounted, without any attempt at disproving Prof. Meadow's (Club of Rome) material. Industrialists, we were told by the Prince, were rational sensible fellows who would adopt new technology needed to reduce pollution once they understood what was expected of them. Governments and the established conservation bodies were doing the hard work necessary.

The trouble is that Philip did not say that men and mouse depend on the same air and water and soil and life support systems and are part on an intricate system which is being threatened by five areas of exponential growth (1) population (2) industrial capital (3) agricultural capital (4) pollution and (5) exhaustion of non-renewable resources. So, it is not a question of "wild life comes first" or "man comes first". It is a question of getting at the cause of the threat to all.

To any "ordinary bloke" (like the Prince says he is) it seems suspiciously as if the Prince is trying to shape the conservation movement to accommodate a "business as usual" line, especially when his ready repartee singled out for emphasis the most vulnerable difficulty of all facing all genuine ecologists .. how to provide the deprived with a more reasonably dignified and comfortable life if growth is to be retarded.

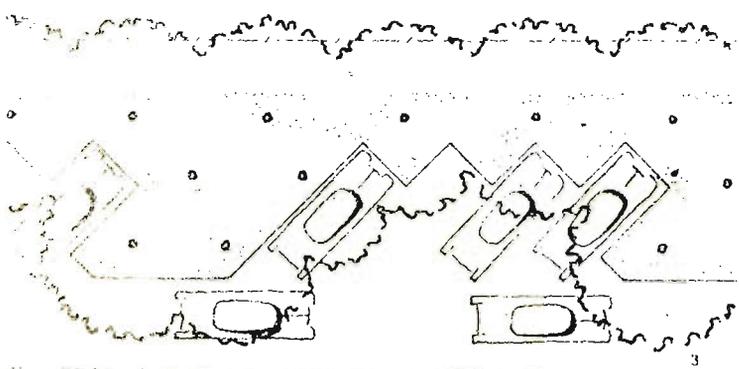
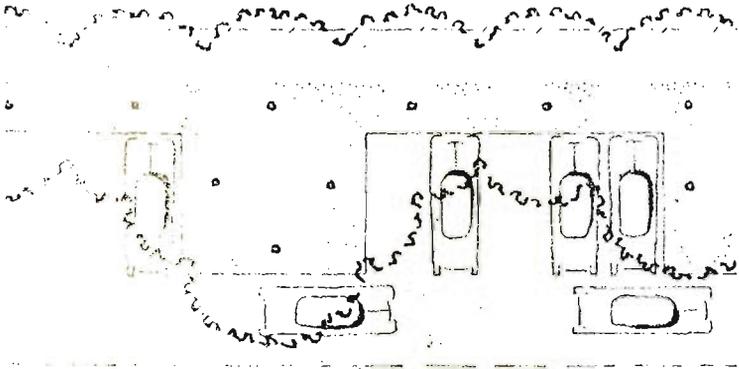
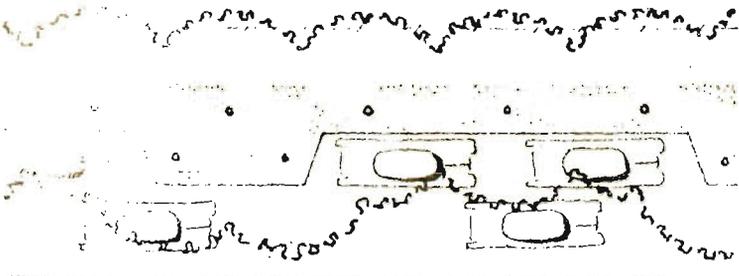
That was unfair Prince! To be worthy of leadership of conservationists you must try to find solutions for the difficulties, rather than use them to taunt those who are courageous enough to at least face up to the ecological challenge.

(Ecoso What? Philip demonstrates the type of "partial linear one-level ecological remedy" all too common. He would not yet pass for membership of Ecoso ... see guideline Number 4)

TREES IN THE STREETS

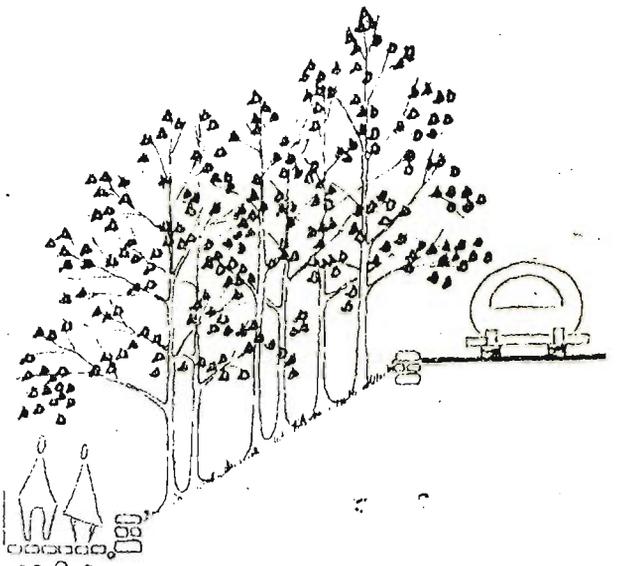
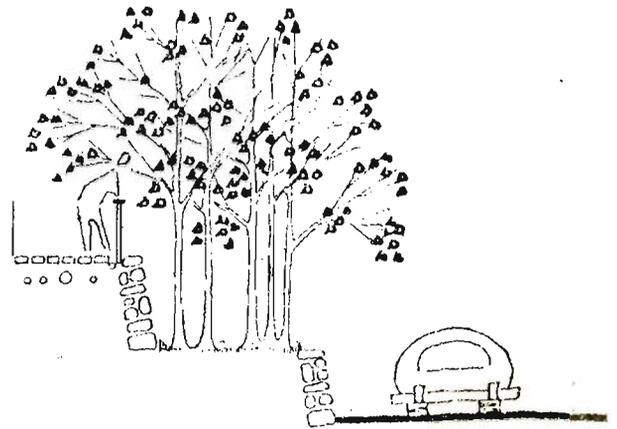
THE illustrations on the coloured page (on other side from the Ecoso Guidelines) are taken from an article by Allan Corry in the October 1972 issue of "Architecture in Australia". In his introduction he writes - "If street trees can be used more imaginatively by local authorities in future our towns will be more attractive to live in. "Planting should be an integral part of any town planning, and not, as it is at present, merely applied decoration .. something to be considered after all other aspects have been incorporated."

Editors Note Due to space problems the 4 ecoso guidelines "on coloured page" are not included in this issue; but see last two issues. In future, when spare space offers they will be occasionally be published



Three examples of parking bays which could be used in place of the usual kerbside parking.

Dense planting associated with a system of one-way streets and street closures can link existing open spaces and form an effective "green web" throughout a neighbourhood.



Where footpath and road pavement are on different levels really dense planting is both possible and desirable.

Where an area is being redeveloped the Local Authority should insist on a comprehensive development plan which eliminates through traffic, segregates pedestrians and vehicles, and provides an integrated overall planting design.

