

Campsie, 2194.

Do not demolish, reuse instead.

We are here to talk about Campsie: how not to demolish it, but to reuse it; how to improve and densify Sydney's south-western suburbs while preserving their qualities: a project we developed between USyd and UTS with the support of the Alastair Swain Foundation.

We would like to acknowledge the Gaijin People of the Eora Nation. The Bundawong people of the Bundawong Nation, the Wiradjuri people and the Gadigal people were the original custodians of the land on which the University of Sydney stands. We would like to pay respect to Elders past and present, acknowledging them as the traditional custodians of the land on which the University of Sydney stands. © 2019 USyd and UTS. All rights reserved.

A University of Sydney and UTS collaboration with the Swain Foundation, the Bundawong people of the Bundawong Nation, the Wiradjuri people and the Gadigal people were the original custodians of the land on which the University of Sydney stands. We would like to pay respect to Elders past and present, acknowledging them as the traditional custodians of the land on which the University of Sydney stands. © 2019 USyd and UTS. All rights reserved.

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But first, a little bit about us. My name is Guillermo Fernández-Abascal. I am an architect, a Practice Fellow at the USyd and partner of the offices GFA2 and GFA. This project is a collaboration with Urtzi Grau, academic at UTS and partner at Fake Industries and GFA, our shared practice.

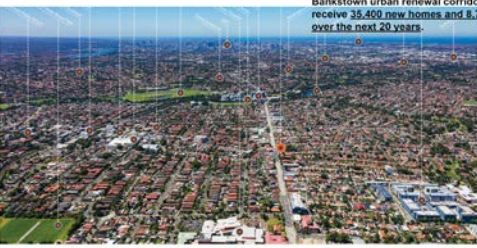


Swain Foundation, Guillermo Fernández-Abascal (GFA), 2017

© Fake Industries, Urtzi Grau (Fake Industries), 2018

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Campsie: 11 km south-west of Sydney's CBD and one of the NSW government's strategic growth hubs. It is part of the Sydenham to Bankstown urban renewal corridor that will receive 35,400 new homes and 8,700 jobs over the next 20 years.



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Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor, NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Development, 2017

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Hundreds of generic red-brick apartment buildings define Campsie. Developed in the 1960s and 1970s, they are close to reaching the end of their functional lives. Following exclusively financial logics, their demolition and replacement seems imminent.



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Campsie, two generic red-brick apartment buildings, 2022, unknown

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Imagine an alternative that:

- Repurposes instead of demolishes.
- Saves millions of dollars for homeowners and developers.
- Reinvigorates the neighbourhood socially, ecologically, and economically.
- Reduces Campsie's carbon footprint dramatically.




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Campsie 2194, reimagined red-brick apartment buildings, unknown

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Imagine a project that challenges the accepted idea that suburban densification can only be achieved through top-down rezoning and new masterplans at the scale of the neighbourhood.



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Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor, NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Development, 2017

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The project will preserve what exists. It will extend the buildings' functional life through repair and maintenance. It will increase each apartment's usable area. It will change legal and financial models. It will be tailored for the community's needs.



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Campsie 2194, reimagined red-brick apartment building, living room, interior view

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This bottom-up strategy will engage homeowners and protect the qualities that the neighbourhood is known for: its friendly scale, its multicultural and intergenerational population, and its rich natural habitat including the Cooks' River ecosystem.



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Left: Project feedback from Cl Khalid Abbas, Mayor, City of Sydney, 2021

Right: Campsie, existing red-brick apartment buildings, 2021

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How? Instead of looking at isolated red-brick apartment buildings, we group them in fours. In this way, we reach a scale of intervention, half-way between the single block and the masterplan, that provides a mix of housing sizes to suit the neighbourhood's needs.




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Campsie 2194, reimagined red-brick apartment buildings, view of a four buildings cluster

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These clusters of buildings offer a medium-density alternative to Sydney's south-western suburbs that reimagines the well-known red-brick housing blocks.




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Campsie 2194, reimagining of the existing urban plan of four red-brick buildings into a community plan

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The urban strategy is straightforward: Eliminate the fences between four red-brick apartment buildings and join them together with a shared timber structure. The new pavilion will house the building's collective life, while, the underneath, will host a half-sunken car park.



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Campsie 2194, corner of four renovated red-brick apartment buildings, axonometric view

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Washing, exercising, reading, gardening, hobbing, bathing, cooking, and even day-dreaming. These are the kinds of common activities that will occupy the amenities pavilion.



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Campsie 2194, renovated red-brick apartment building, shared timber pavilion, interior view

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The architectural strategy follows: A new light steel core shared between two blocks improves the circulation. Balconies and winter gardens add open-air spaces to the buildings' main facades.



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Campsie 2194, renovated red-brick apartment building, new space in main facade, exterior view

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Two new homes on top of each apartment building combine generous living spaces and sustainable materials, increasing the neighbourhood's density while making the refurbishment of the four buildings financially viable.



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Campsie 2194, renovated red-brick apartment building, new rooftop apartment, interior view

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Summing up in five steps:
1. A timber pavilion joins four red-brick blocks. It is a common infrastructure for the building's collective life that includes parking, laundry rooms, gyms and greenhouses. It liberates the streets from parking, increasing the neighbourhood's public spaces and green areas.



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Campsie 2194, renovated red-brick apartment buildings, timber pavilion, exterior view showing the parking underneath

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2. Two new circulation cores bring the buildings up to code. They ensure that all the homes are accessible, preserving Campsie's diverse and intergenerational demographics.

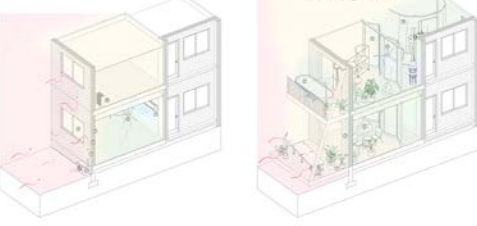


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Campsie 2194, renovated red-brick apartment buildings, view of the shared timber pavilion from a new circulation core

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3. The improvements on the blocks' thermal envelopes decrease Campsie's overall carbon footprint. The refurbishments provide a variety of climatic spaces for each apartment such as winter gardens, verandahs, greenhouses, cozy rooms and rooftop gardens.



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LVI: Campsie, climatic performance of generic red-brick apartment buildings, 2022, axonometric section
Right: Campsie 2194, climatic strategies for a renovated red-brick apartment building, main facade, axonometric section

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4. New terraces, balconies and porches fulfil the SEPP65 requirements for outdoor space. They also take advantage of Sydney's mild climate, covering Campsie's red-brick streetscape with new pot plants and vertical gardens to reduce the heat-island effect.




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Campsie 2194, renovated red-brick apartment building, view of the semi-outdoor spaces

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5. Two new apartments on each red-brick building's rooftop ensure the viability of the renovation. They densify the neighbourhood yet barely alter Campsie's friendly scale.



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Campsie 2194, renovated red-brick apartment building, new rooftop apartments, axonometric view

Thank you!

Campsie_2194 imagines how Campsie's 350 red-brick housing blocks could accommodate more than 700 hundred new homes. The project is also a model that can eventually transform and preserve neighbouring suburbs like Belmore, Punchbowl, Earlwood and, eventually, Sydney's south-west.



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