

# Birkdale Village

Auckland, New Zealand

Design: 2015  
Program: urban village of 12 house  
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Makers of Architecture and eCubed

The challenges of Auckland's rapid urban growth have pushed new development to the periphery. As the city core densified the natural environment and resources of air, water and native habitat all come under pressure. In addition there is increasing need for good quality human habitat, gardens, food, water and good quality publicly accessible green space for recreation and well-being. We need healthy, walkable, connected urban villages to enable people to live in healthy mixed use neighbourhoods.

Where once two old run down villa's stood, we have instead, imagined a spatial carpet of landscape, infrastructure and living woven into a compact new urban village.

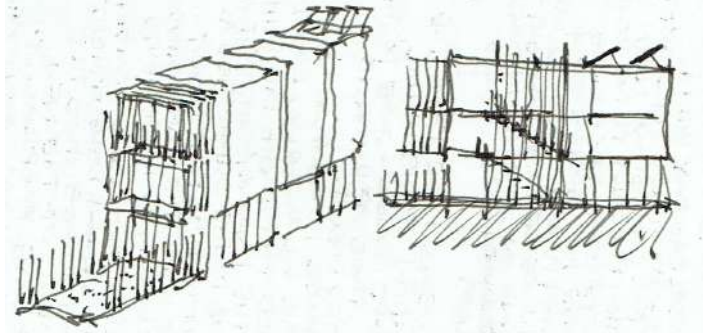
- SPATIAL CARPET of warp and weft; WARP - network of gardens, courts and green Infrastructures extend usability of private, collective and public spaces. WEFT - flexible range of housing types to achieve a diverse mix.
- LIFT maximise the full benefit of this location to provide good natural light and views north. Drive on access is off existing drive with parking below for studio/office, extended court/deck or balcony above.
- GREEN & LEAN - (more with less) Critical need to re-establish native habitat for local species, slow water run off and retain water within the site. Create a balance of green space to built form to enable a robust ecological habitat and more good quality housing in a carefully designed landscape. An efficient net to gross ratio to maximise each square metre.

Good living requires good design, so we have developed what we felt would be an ideal house type for healthy urban living.

Each house begins with a spacious garden court or balcony in the sun, that opens directly off a generous living volume with good views and sun aspect to the north. This establishes the hub or core of the house with maximum space allocated.

Everything else is arranged to support this central idea.

Bedrooms and studies are placed above front and back for light and views either side of a central stair that brings light into the centre of the house. All services are located adjacent or below such as kitchen, laundry and bathrooms. Parking for bicycles and cars, storage, workshop and supporting building services are located in a basement plinth beneath. Front door access to each dwelling is via a sequence of pocket parks and a narrow lane or walk along the southern boundary.





Site Context (aerial photo)



Context: Site Plan

**SOLAR PANELS  
SKY LIGHTS &  
LIVING ROOFS**

**GARDEN COURTS  
& VEGE GARDENS**

**POCKET PARKS &  
ORCHARD TREES**

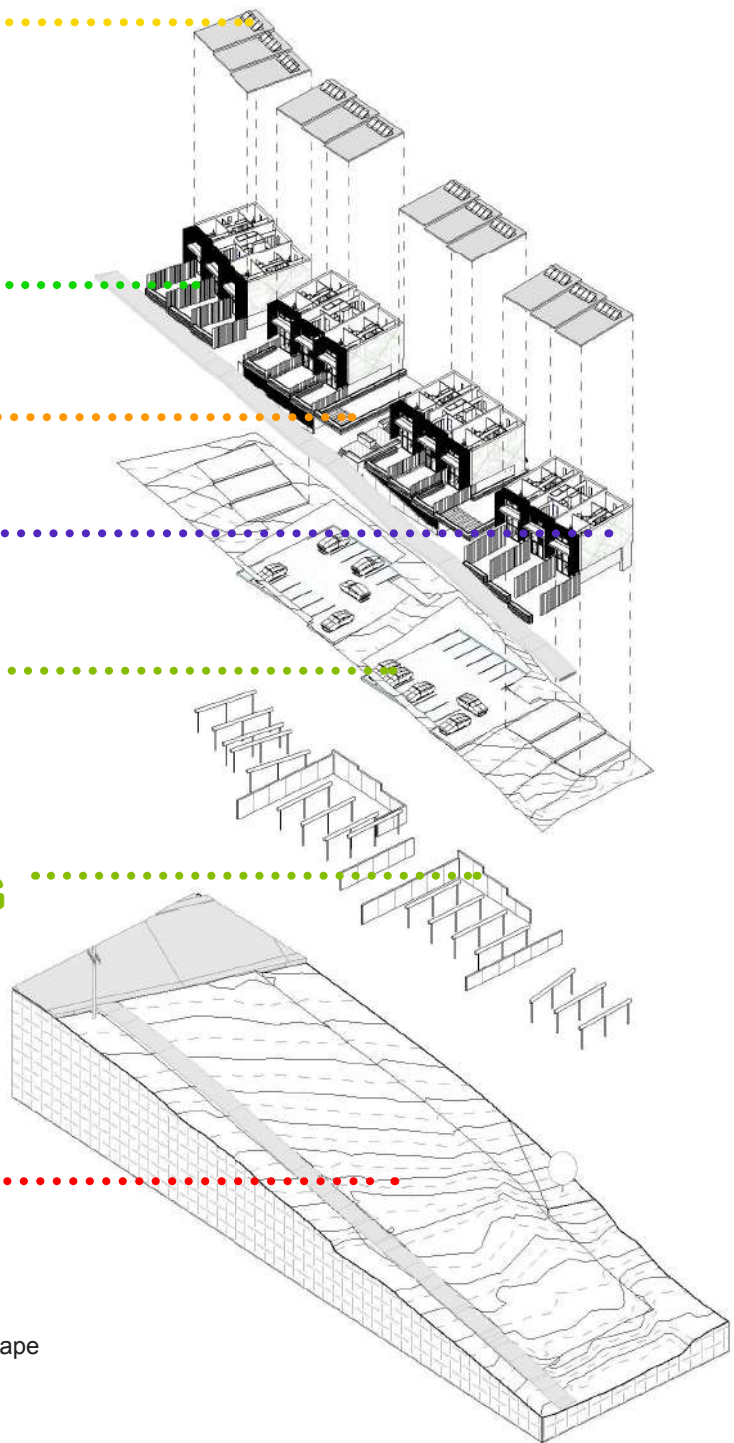
**GREEN WALLS**

**RAIN GARDENS**

**NATIVE FLAX /  
CABBAGE TREE  
DRIVEWAY EDGE**

**PLANTED RETAINING  
WALL TO BASEMENT**

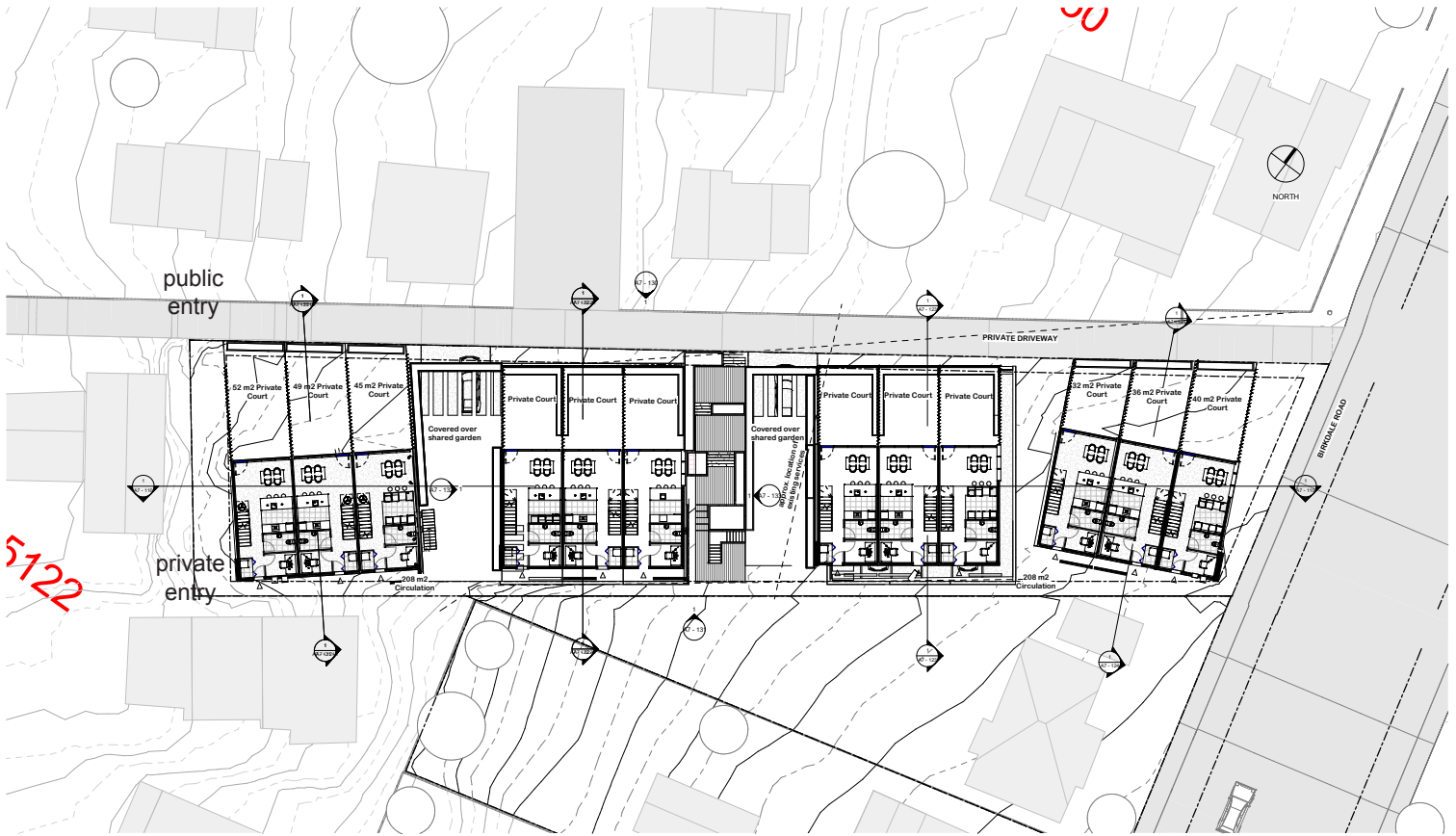
**TOPOGRAPHY  
& WATER TABLE**



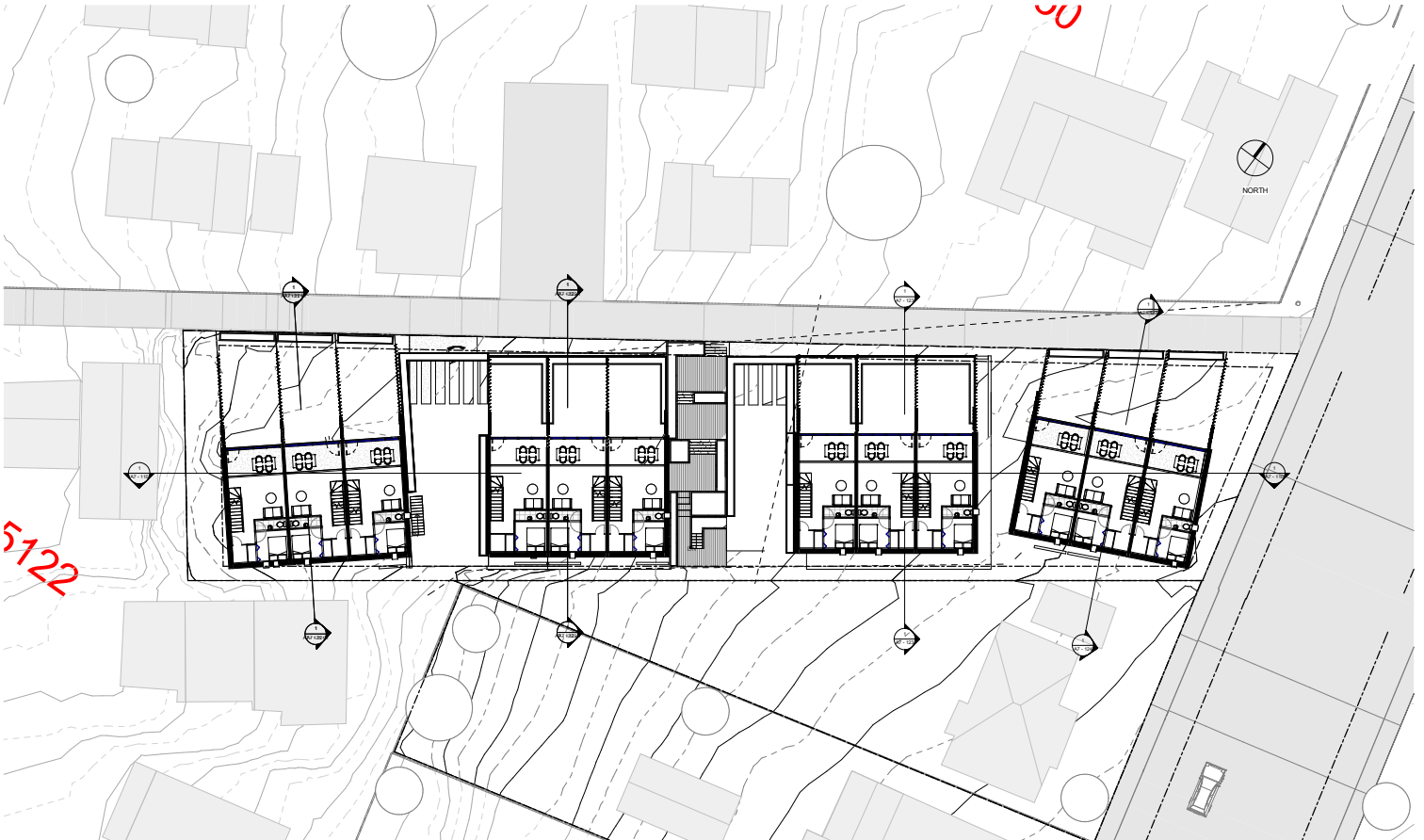
sustainable landscape

Green spaces need not be large - just intense if they are to absorb and nurture people. Incorporating kids play will be important and this can be linked to water harvesting. Each element explores themes differently, the main area could be the location for a community pavilion. eg rain gardens create a moat along the drive (prevent car parking), neighbouring dwellings have windows onto pocket parks for passive surveillance.

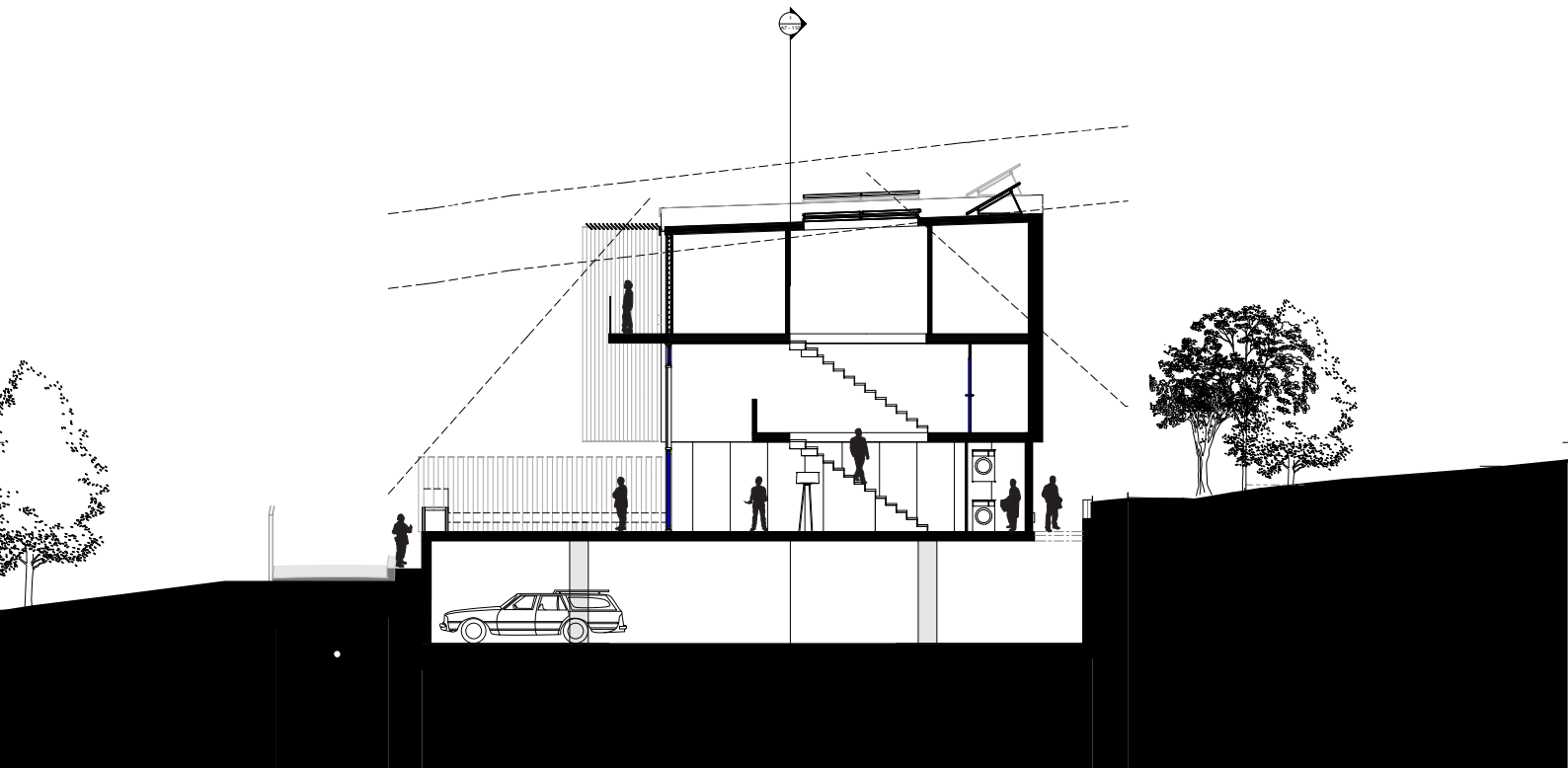
- Rainwater harvesting
- On site renewable energy - PV and or solar hot water
- Social spaces - community owned and managed
- Parent sitting / meeting - tables and benches; Communal BBQ/Pizza oven
- Micro inventive play - water, sand, dens
- Communal refuse point; Porous front driveway
- Rain garden buffer to the Lane - interlinked down the hill
- Passive surveillance of Lane and Communal spaces
- Level front garden 'sociable porch' facing north; Lateral screening with neighbours
- Balcony micro gardens - could be linked to rain down pipe overflow
- summer cooling air in take through planting; Vegetated end walls



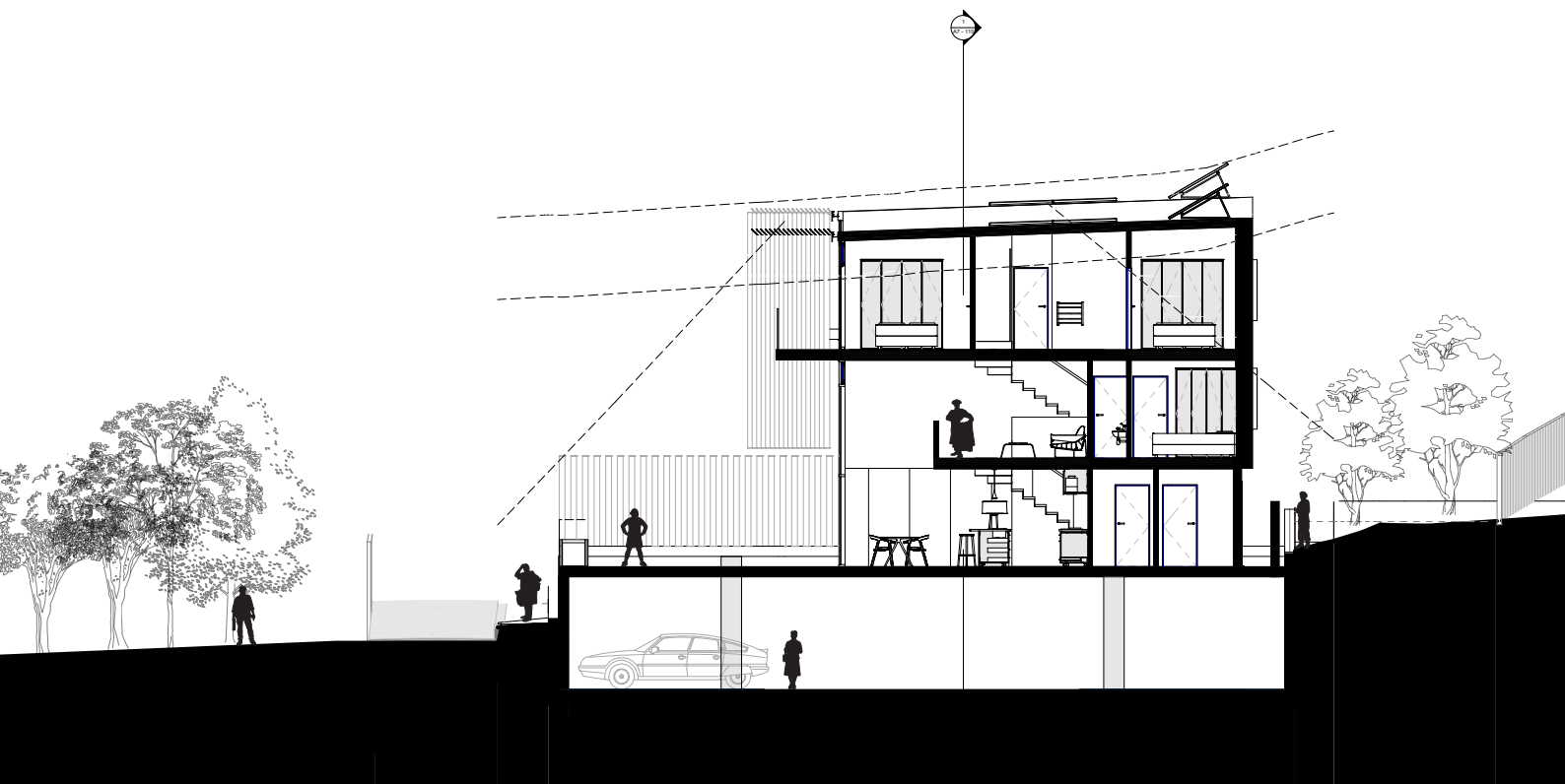
ground floor plan



first floor plan



cross-section 1

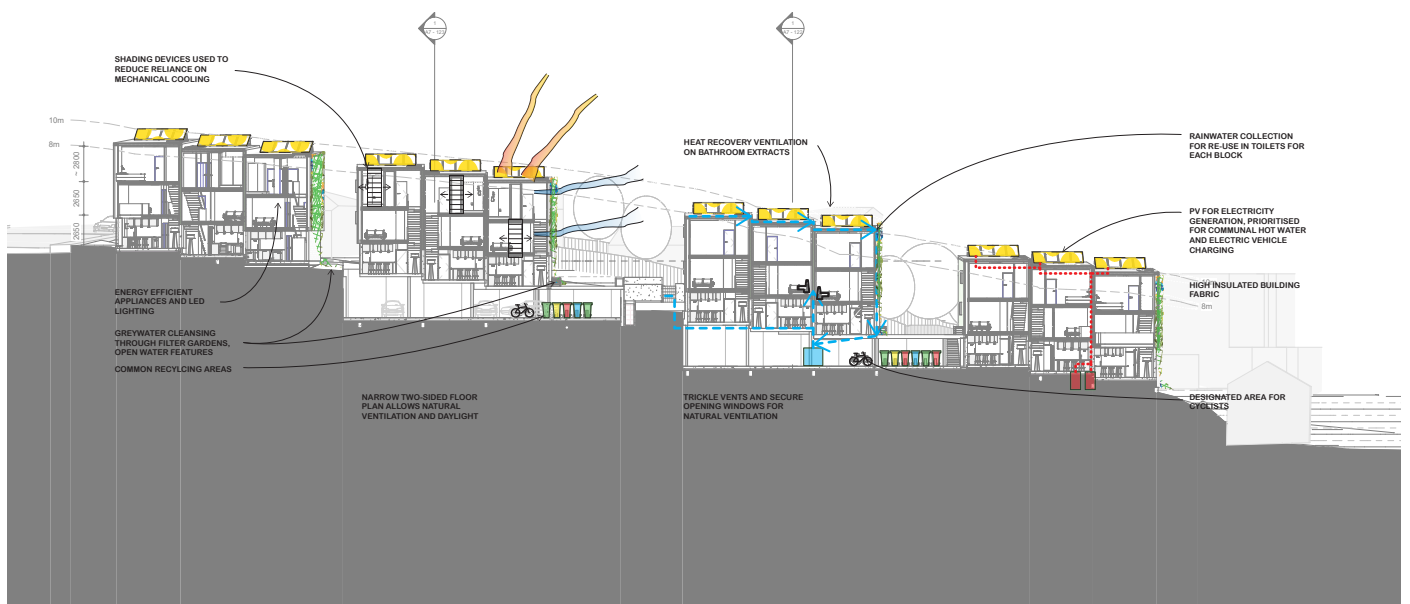


cross-section 2



4 Main House East Elevation  
2A.30 1 : 200

east elevation



long-section



1 | A-7 - Elevation