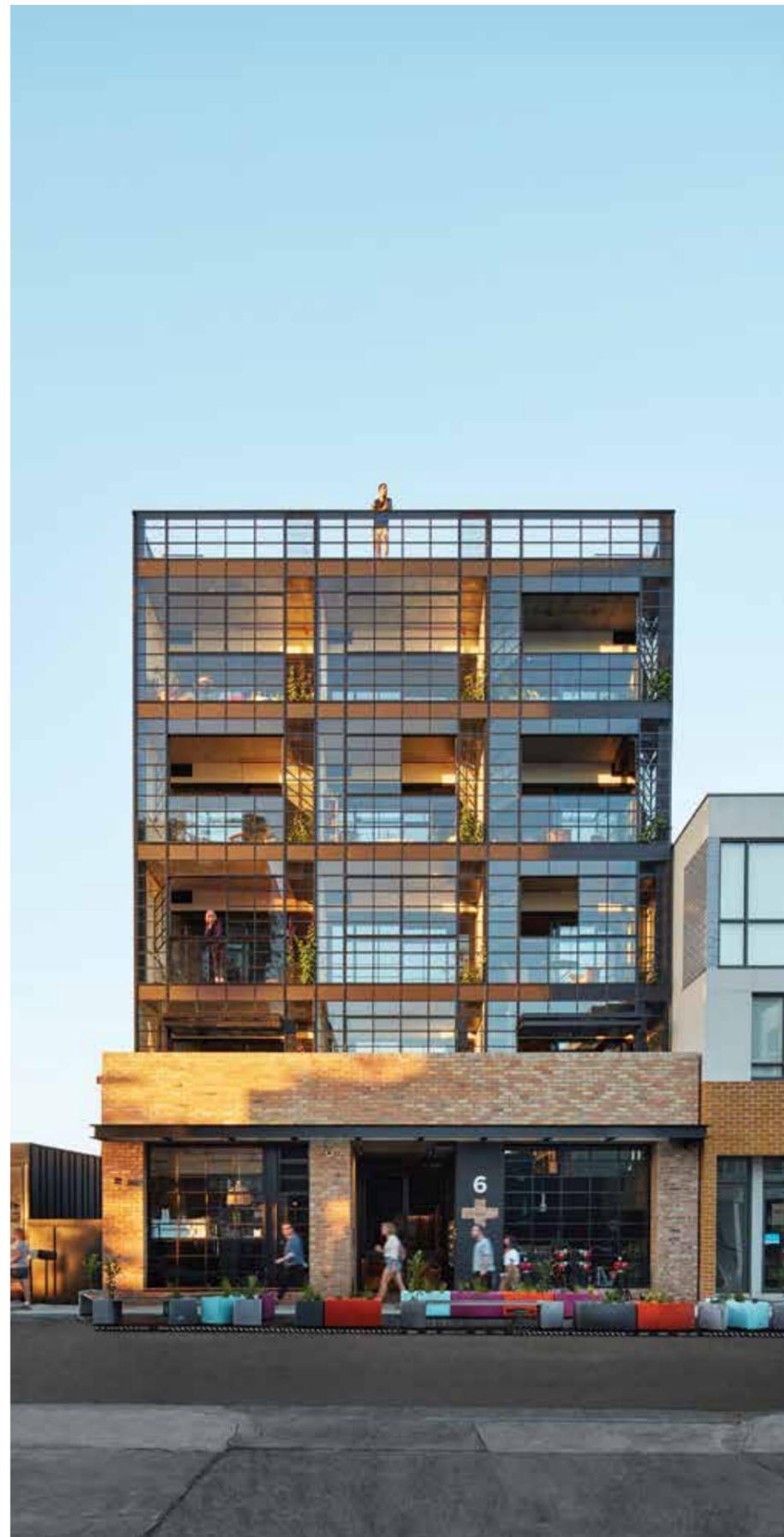




text: Georgia Thomas

# RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Identifying the ingredients to create sustainable, practical and inventive multi-residential developments.



Photography: Peter Clarke

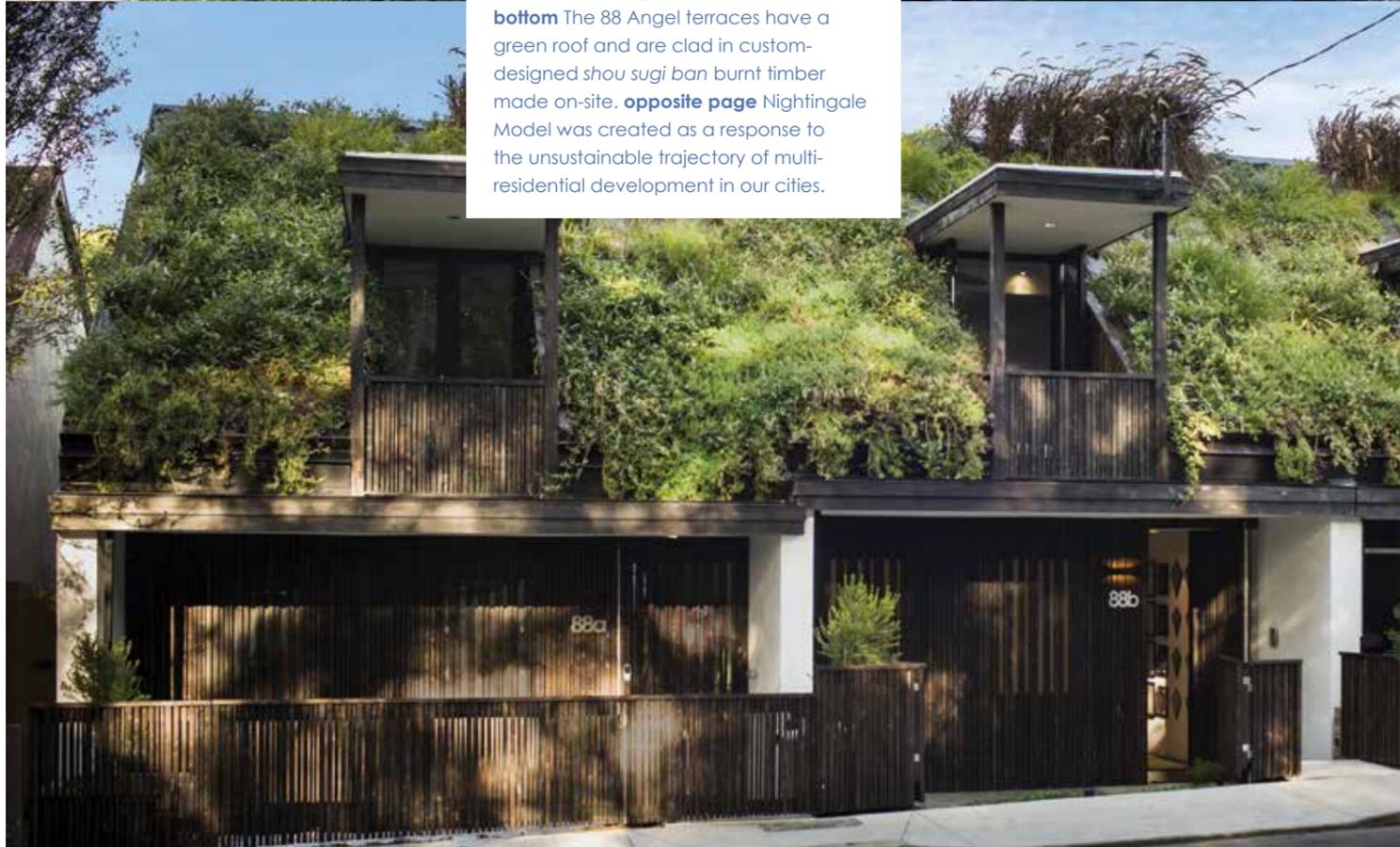
The entry to Nightingale 1 was deliberately designed to be open and inviting to engage the community with the building's front façade. **opposite page** Pared-back simplicity inside one of the Nightingale 1 apartments.

**As our population steadily grows, the task befalls designers and developers to house city dwellers in increasing multitudes. The solution to rising demand lies in multi-residential developments, but these projects tend to prioritise profit over other concerns. We spoke with a number of architects who are proving that this doesn't have to be the case.**

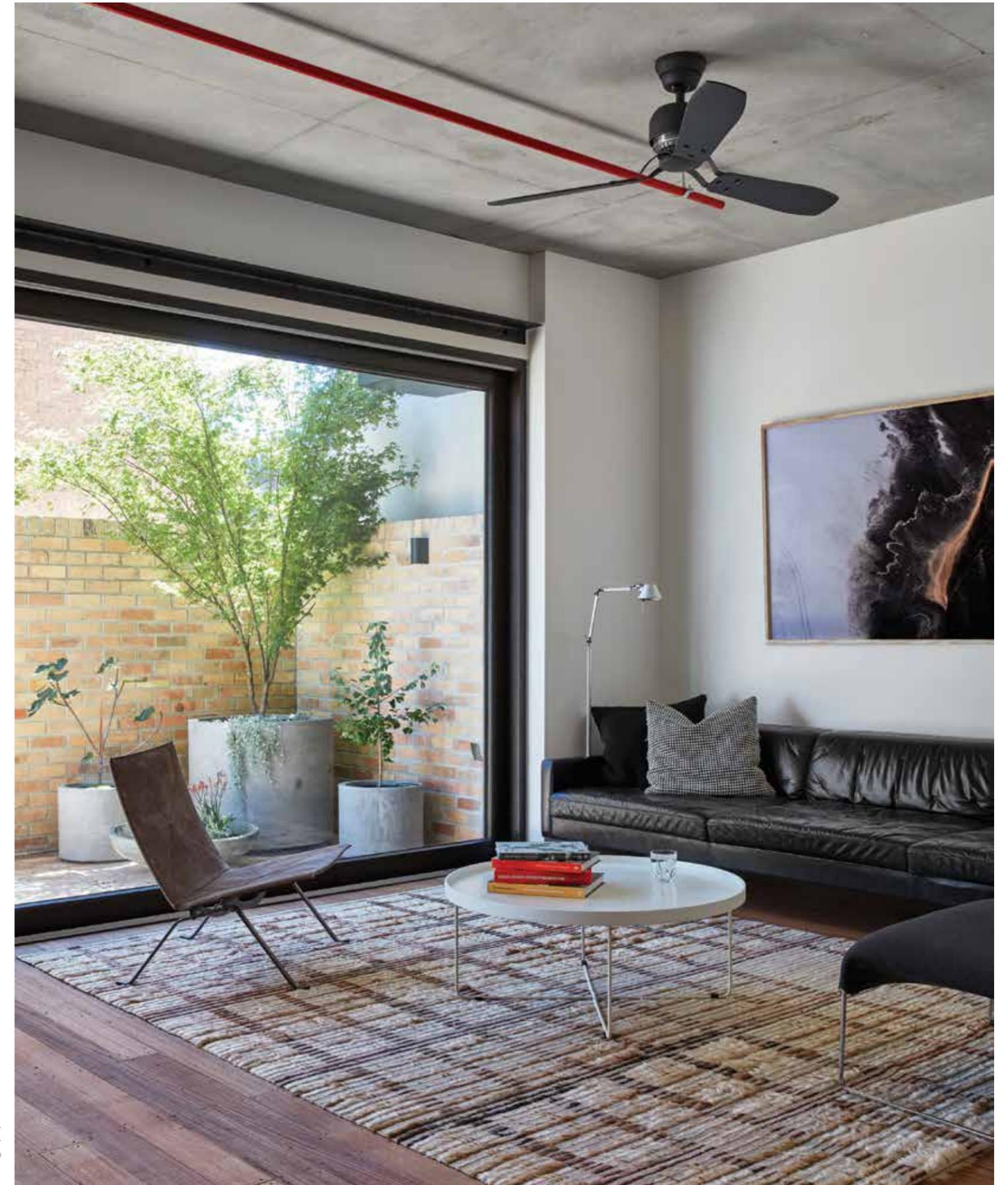
Breathe Architecture's Jeremy McLeod doesn't refrain from casting aspersions on the standard of multi-residential housing in Australia. "... Largely, it has been delivered with one goal in sight – which has been around profit," he explains. "That's not how you build great cities. That's not how you build great housing." McLeod is the mind behind the Nightingale Model, a game-changing architectural movement that has revolutionised multi-residential development in Melbourne. McLeod and Breathe Architecture certainly walk the walk. Their latest addition to the Nightingale family is Nightingale 1, a 20-apartment development in Brunswick. The rooftop combines style with uncompromising functionality; it includes seating, a protected dining area, a communal laundry and, of course, planters from which residents can harvest fruits and vegetables. One of the ground floor tenancies is a not-for-profit social enterprise café called home, one that employs and trains homeless youth. With palpable finesse, Nightingale 1 shows how multi-residential developments can be so much more than just places to live. WOWOWA has teamed with Breathe Architecture and five other architects in what will be Nightingale's greatest project yet: a seven-site precinct by the name of Nightingale Village. "Instead of building multi-residential projects for profit, we build them for people and the environment," shares Monique Woodward, WOWOWA director. "Melbourne needs more homes ... we want to focus on not just supply, but quality and interconnectivity of urban design and development." →



**top left** Sydney's 88 Angel by Steele Associates puts the environment first. The structure is designed to maximise internal thermal mass and has double-glazed, thermally-broken windows. **right** Solar panels atop 88 Angel. Each terrace has a solar energy capacity of 4.25 kW. **bottom** The 88 Angel terraces have a green roof and are clad in custom-designed *shou sugi ban* burnt timber made on-site. **opposite page** Nightingale Model was created as a response to the unsustainable trajectory of multi-residential development in our cities.



Photography: Anna Zhu



Photography: Peter Clarke



Photography: Robert Frith

Communal areas emerge in pockets around Gen Y Demonstration Housing project. Amidst these shared spaces are private areas which afford residents moments of seclusion. **opposite page** Areas along the street verge of the Gen Y Demonstration Housing project are planted with vegetation and include bike racks and seating.

Designing a multi-residential development is a balancing act. Architects must understand how space can serve individual and collective needs simultaneously – all while adhering to budget and collaborating with builders and developers. This is no easy task, but David Barr Architects' Gen Y Demonstration Housing hits the nail on the head. "Our challenge was to facilitate community interaction while balancing the privacy of each resident," shares David Barr. Envisioned as "a tiny apartment complex concealed within the suburbs," this development includes three single-bedroom apartments on a 250-square-metre block in Western Australia. "The project attempts to re-conceptualise what is achievable when community, sustainability and cost are prioritised equally," Barr explains.

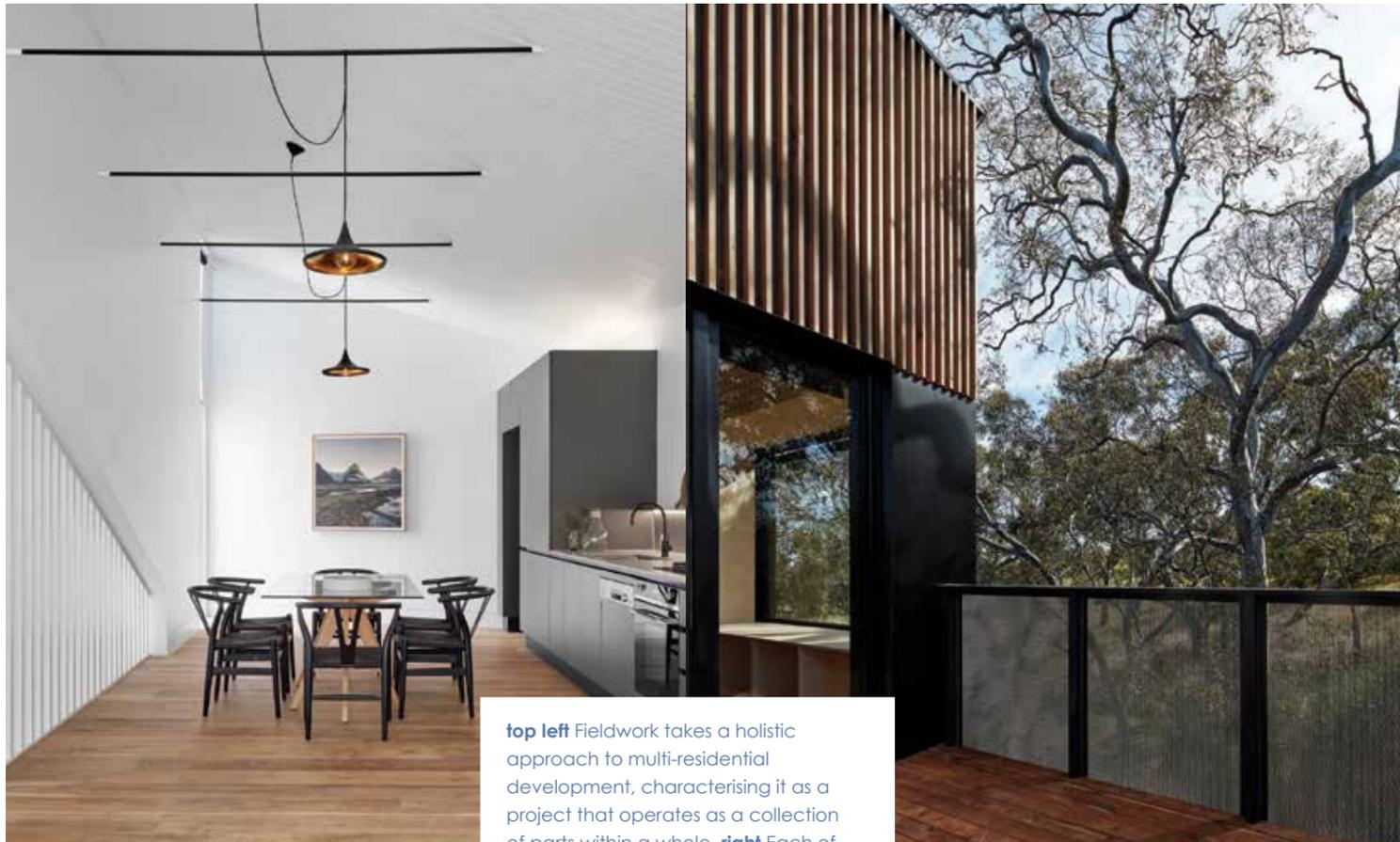
This project also proves that multi-residential developments offer unique technological opportunities. Gen Y Demonstration Housing was the first in Australia to trial a strata battery storage system for residents to share their solar energy. "Communal living is about more than just physical spaces," muses Barr.

When it came to designing Parkville Townhouses in Melbourne, Fieldwork ranked sustainability at the top of its agenda. The project's contoured form embodies the natural assets of the site – a neighbouring collection of mature river red gum trees.

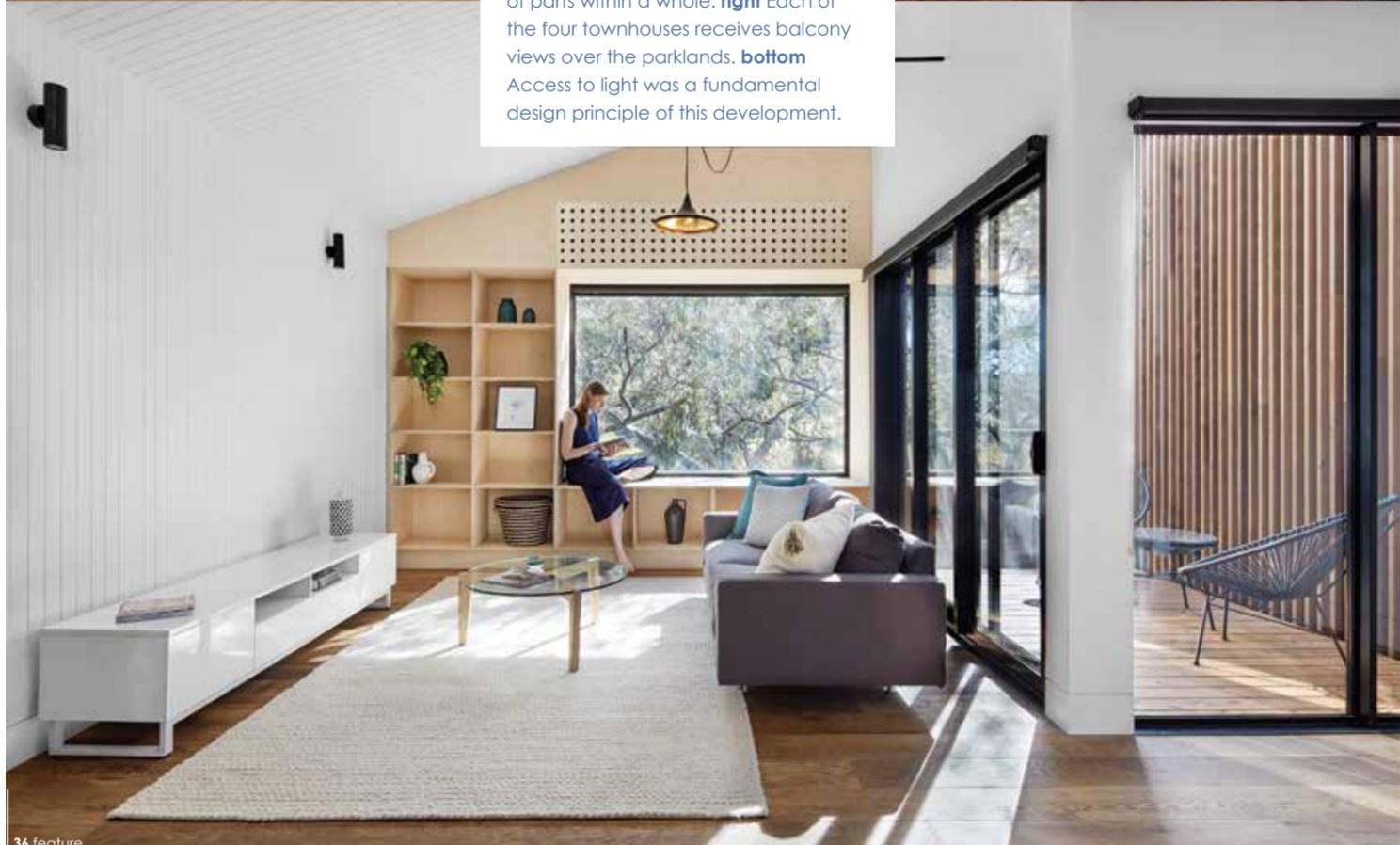
"This proximity to nature is reflected in both the formal aspects of the design and the focus on sustainability," explain Briony Massie, lead architect on the project, and Michael Lopes-Vieira.

The homes within this four-townhouse development are made up of three levels, each programmed with an emphasis on internal amenity, privacy, cross ventilation and access to light.

Fieldwork has also collaborated with HIP V. HYPE to design Ruskin Elwood, a four-residence development which is yet to be built in bayside Melbourne. This project is characterised by a similarly forward-thinking and environmentally-conscious ethos. "[Our] 'Low Impact Living' approach to building design, construction and use creates homes that are more comfortable, have cleaner, fresher air, cost less to operate, use resources more responsibly and are easier to use," Liam Wallis, founder and director of HIP V. HYPE elaborates. →



**top left** Fieldwork takes a holistic approach to multi-residential development, characterising it as a project that operates as a collection of parts within a whole. **right** Each of the four townhouses receives balcony views over the parklands. **bottom** Access to light was a fundamental design principle of this development.



The pitched forms of Parkville Townhouses are comprised of alternating charred and natural cedar cladding which will grey over time and mimic the appearance of neighbouring gum trees.

Milieu's Hertford Street project is made up of five townhouses in Fitzroy with an emphasis on sustainable design.

This philosophy is evident in the details of Ruskin Elwood, ranging from its flexible layout to adapt to evolving living arrangements, an airtight insulated building skin for internal temperature regulation and 4 kW roof solar panel system with Tesla Powerwall battery storage for each residence. Steele Associates designed and built 88 Angel in Sydney to not only prove that the environment can still be of the utmost importance in multi-residential projects, but that residents want it that way. The three terraces hold three bedrooms (excluding a garage that can be converted into an extra bedroom), have a green roof and a solar energy capacity of 4.25 kW per terrace. Each of the 88 Angel terraces belongs to owner-occupiers. "It's like a game of Tetris, designing multi-residential," notes Oliver Steele. "...Sustainability is generally the first thing to drop off the table. So that's why I made the decision to be [the] architect, builder and developer." It's a misconception that, due to their size, conventional multi-residential developments must employ a one-size-fits-all approach, says director of Milieu Michael McCormack. "Developing a close relationship with occupants allows us to design with intent," he elaborates. Milieu conducts surveys in the design stage to empower purchasers in the realisation of their future homes. "It's pivotal that developers immerse themselves in their target markets and work with local architects and designers with sensitivity to the 'milieu' that they're designing for," McCormack shares. Milieu's new venture, Milieu Hospitality, is a foray into initiating community formation. They operate a wine bar called Congress at Peel by Milieu in Collingwood that McCormack hopes locals will view as "an extension of [locals'] homes and act as a community gathering point."

[nightingalehousing.org](http://nightingalehousing.org)  
[breathe.com.au](http://breathe.com.au)  
[wowowa.com.au](http://wowowa.com.au)  
[davidbarrarchitects.com.au](http://davidbarrarchitects.com.au)  
[fieldworkprojects.com.au](http://fieldworkprojects.com.au)  
[hipvhype.com](http://hipvhype.com)  
[steeleassociates.com.au](http://steeleassociates.com.au)  
[milieuproperty.com.au](http://milieuproperty.com.au)



Photography: Dan Hocking

## Breese Street by Milieu

## Very Good Apartments



Designed by DKO and Breathe Architecture, Breese Street in Brunswick advocates sustainable, community focused living.

Take the Breese Street Liveability Survey and register for the Design Presentations in April 2018, visit [milieuproperty.com.au](http://milieuproperty.com.au).

- Minimum 7.5 star NatHERs rating
- Fossil fuel free and carbon neutral
- Over 30 kilowatts of solar panels
- Productive rooftop and entertaining areas
- Recycled timber flooring
- External shading to the living areas

**Milieu**  
Spaces of Influence®