

# creative block

Community consultation and architectural flair have made a youth housing project a winner, writes Julia Ross

**Congratulations** to architect Richard Kirk, whose innovative Deception Bay design won House of the Year at the recent Royal Australian Institute of Architects' regional awards.

In announcing the winner last month, the judges praised Richard's youth housing project at Deception Bay, north of Brisbane, saying it extended good architecture into the everyday lives of the public.

It and the other commended residential projects are now in the running for the state's top architectural prize, to be announced in August.

Richard and his team of Brendan Pointon, Richard Coulson and Nick Stock responded to a complex brief to

create, instead of one apartment block, four duplex houses (eight units) taking advantage of existing trees and dual street frontage.

Richard says the community-based project was the result of a successful funding application by the Deception Bay Community Youth Programs Association, recognising a need to accommodate young people in the area. Selected as project architects in 1998, the team set about meeting the brief.

Why build duplexes? "The duplex arrangement was considered an appropriate response to the scale and the density of the surrounding residential grain, and allowed the best use of the dual street frontage," Richard says.

A number of design workshops ensured that the architects considered the specific needs of young people in the area.

The judges noted that the success of the project reflected consultation with the project stakeholders — including the young residents — as an integral part of the design process.

Deliberately low maintenance, the apartments feature robust materials and detailing for practical reasons. Materials such as concrete block, fibro cement sheeting and corrugated metal will weather the elements and not require regular upkeep. Richard says the units are designed to provide privacy, a high level of security and to promote natural ventilation by catching breezes.

The state RAIAs will be held in Brisbane on 2 August. Call the RAIAs Queensland chapter office on 3846 4900.

### project details ■■

Richard Kirk Architect, Level 3, 119 Melbourne Street, South Brisbane. Phone 3255 2526.



Winning style: The duplexes designed by Richard Kirk and his team

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