

### **3<sup>rd</sup> International Architecture Competition for Sustainable Housing Extreme Housing for Russia Report of the Jury**

The following Jury met on 28th June 2007 to judge the 12 entries to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Living Steel Architectural Competition for Sustainable Housing:

- Kimmo Lintula, K2S Architects Ltd., Finland,
- Mark Middleton, Grimshaw Architects, UK
- Glenn Murcutt, Australia
- Patricia Patkau, Patkau Architects, Canada
- Sergey Skuratov, Sergey Skuratov Architects, Russia
- Alexei Venediktov, SeverStal, Russia

Glenn Murcutt was duly elected as the Chairman of the Jury by his fellow jurors.

Following a detailed review of all entries, the Jury unanimously identified three schemes as potential winning concepts of the competition. Further deliberation and discussion brought a clear winner to the surface, selected by a vote of 5 to 1 over the other schemes. It was decided that the other two schemes deserved special recognition and consequently are given Honourable Mention. The winning and honourable mention architect teams are as follows:

- Winner: Peter Stutchbury Architecture, Australia
- Honourable Mention: Bligh Voller Nield, Australia
- Honourable Mention: RVTR, Canada

The decisions were difficult, with this competition realising exceptional thinking, imagination and considerable value to residential design incorporating steel. The Jury agreed the finalists worked very hard and represented continued growth in the quality of the Living Steel competitions. Each of the competitors must be congratulated.

The Jury recommends that, in future Living Steel competitions, the community master planning become a part of the sustainability considerations in the project brief. The developer's master plan ideas should be made available to the finalists in order to test their ideas against those already considered. This is not to say that a rigid assessment be made, but that it could be indicative of what is possible and considered as part of a larger, sustainable community.

The Jury commends the organizers for the 3<sup>rd</sup> competitions format, with the interactivity between the Jury and finalists, the openness of the presentations, and the fostering of shared ideas, kinship and beneficial conversations. It represents a departure from traditional formats for competitions, and one that really achieves the very dialogue that Living Steel wishes to generate among the world's architects.

## JURY COMMENTS ON THE ENTRY AWARDED THE JURY PRIZE

### **Peter Stutchbury Architecture, Australia**

The Jury gave the following comments on the winning entry for the project in Cherepovets, Russia submitted by Peter Stutchbury Architecture, Australia

Peter Stutchbury Architecture's scheme represents the kind of thinking the Living Steel competition is meant to inspire, offering a more considered, thoughtful and larger trajectory to the project brief requirements. It is the most memorable of all of the schemes offered in the competition and the Jury made a 5 to 1 decision to select it as the winning scheme for the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Architecture Competition for Sustainable Housing. It is radically different and has a very imaginative understanding of the landscape theme, and the suggested neighbourhood plan provides an incredible play field for children and park-like setting for the community having regard for minor modifications for safety.

The scheme is very thoughtful about fundamental and low technology environmental issues and strategies, in particular the solid thermal wall incorporating all the heat services, serving as the spine of the home. These issues have been fully integrated in the design.

It proposes clear and inventive use of well known and available steel technologies such as cost effective sheet piles.

It is an earth-backed and sheltered structure that opens to the sun. The house can be interpreted from one direction as landscape, not interrupting the view of other houses. From the other side, it appears as normative housing and community. It connects the occupants with the site.

The simple and elegant planning strategy suggests an easy transformation into different housing types. It implies affordable and rapid construction.

The design provides for future adaptability of the space within the overall enclosure and offers variable, generous and affordable volume.

In taking forward this winning design, the Jury recommends some design refinements:

- provide more light into the north side corridor,
- extend sheet piling into the carport, courtyard and landscape with clear protection and isolation of materials inside and outside, offering the opportunity to enrich the exterior environment.
- development of alternative floor plans, such as an L shaped, U shaped or courtyard plans, and
- some further thought is required to consider cross ventilation.

The Jury looks forward to development of the scheme with recognition of the incorporation of a more thorough understanding of the Russian lifestyle.

## **JURY COMMENTS ON ENTRIES AWARDED HONOURABLE MENTION**

### **Bligh Voller Nield, Australia**

BVN gave an excellent all around presentation with good balance between a modern and a vernacular language. The Jury could easily envision an attractive community of 500 homes in the different variants. The scheme provides an essential factor of permanence and is well supported technically. BVN recognized the importance of having smaller windows, and there is an intelligent use of steel. The several typologies created feature very compact floor plans, yet have open and livable qualities. The Jury thought that this scheme would be a good step forward to modern urban living for the people of Cherepovets without being too radical. While it is a good, solid, well thought out scheme, the Jury felt it could have been more inventive. Nevertheless, the Jury believed that it is a worthy solution and have given it Honourable Mention.

### **RVTR, Canada**

The Jury credits RVTR for widening the interest of their project to the garden usage and street scapes. The design exemplifies accomplished architecture and a very clear planning strategy. The Jury recognises the excellent approach to the outdoor space as a lifestyle that is very well articulated.

There were concerns about the structural adequacy of the flat roof and the extent of glazing in the Russian climate. Certain travel paths would need further consideration, such as from the garage to the house. The plans are to be commended for their beautiful simplicity and economy of space. However the scheme predetermines the feel and function of the space, with the cabinetry compromising the occupant's ability for customisation as many surfaces are doors.

Though it was not selected in the end as the winner, the Jury wishes to recognise this scheme through an Honourable Mention.

## **JURY COMMENTS ON ENTRIES SUBMITTED BY OTHER FINALISTS**

(in order of presentations to the Jury)

### **Nitsche Arquitetos, Brazil**

This scheme is a basic, yet elegant scheme with a superior plan that can be a very economical solution. However, the Jury believes that it is not an appropriate solution for Russia with large areas of exposed steel surfaces, extensive glazing and moveable screens on the exteriors. As well, the moveable screens, unless mechanised, would most likely be undesirable to occupants who would have to go outside in order to make use of them for internal climate control. There was an inappropriate use of an exposed steel frame in an extreme climate. While the scheme is a good one that could be modified to work in warmer climates, it does not provide the basis for permanent housing that can withstand harsh winters.

### **Hugh Broughton Architects, United Kingdom**

The Hugh Broughton scheme portrays a very powerful image and was strongly presented to the Jury. A lot of good research for modularisation and prefabrication has been done in designing the scheme. It is lacking a sense of permanence, a factor that is extremely important to the Russian way of thinking. The Jury felt it was an introverted house, lacking adaptability, which was more suited to the longer-term winter environments like those of the arctic region for which it was originally intended.

### **LCA, Russia**

The Jury appreciated the investigation of typologies and different external surface treatments. The plans did not provide clarity and innovation. The large amount of external wall surface area would be both economically and thermally unfeasible. The scheme was not explicit in explaining the value of the second layer space.

### **ECD Architects, United Kingdom**

The ECD scheme represented a technically thorough analysis from the perspective of sustainability, with a tremendous amount of detail in these aspects. However, the Jury felt that it was not a strong concept for an urban context or a multiple unit community. The curved forms of the roof did not demonstrate a connection to the inside space.

### **H-L-P Architects, Finland**

The Jury thought this was an interesting concept verging on the poetic. The scheme did not make a good case for the radical lozenge design and the loss of the corners as an absolute solution. The lack of corners forces the resident to occupy the space in a predetermined way, leaving no flexibility for more traditional living. The Jury felt that it would require a great deal of modification to work.

### **ATHENASTUDIO + modostudio, Italy**

This scheme and the presentation demonstrated a lot of research. The community planning showed good thought and effort to enrich the diversity of plot patterns. The Jury was not convinced that the large filter area with its extensive glazing would be thermally efficient in hot or cold weather. The glazed atriums exceed the area limitations that would result in a higher cost than mandated. The scheme could have been realised with a much simpler solution.

### **ARCHITECTURE PARADIGM, India**

The initial massing ideas were clear. A more thorough investigation of the first concept may have allowed the positive attributes of the scheme to be more fully explored. The relationship of the garage through the connection of the entrance foyer provided for multi-functional use of the garage through the seasons. The multiple options undermined the understanding of the scheme's potential.

**FGMF Arquitetos, Brazil**

The Jury appreciated FGMF's completely different approach to the project brief that provides an interesting way for living in communication with nature. The presentation of the scheme was engaging. The scheme exudes warmth suitable for a less extreme climate. The Jury did not, however, consider it a good solution for a location with harsh winter weather, and believes it would present a serious problem in controlling interior winter temperatures.

**Moxon, United Kingdom**

The Jury thought this concept was better than presented. The potential of the scheme's simplicity was made to be much more complicated than needed. More benefit could be achieved from the secondary skin. The current scheme has a temporary, transient feeling and would gain much by exploring the possibilities of being joined together. The Jury felt this scheme has not reached its potential.

Signed for and on behalf of the Jury on 29 June 2008 in Helsinki, Finland by:

Glenn Murcutt

Patricia Patkau

Mark Middleton

Sergey Skuratov

Kimmo Lintula

Alexei Venediktov