

# **DENSITY AND IDENTITY: THE PLACE OF SHARING AND PRIVACY IN SUSTAINABLE HOUSING**

SASHA MAHER & JACQUELINE MCINTOSH

*School of Architecture and Design, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand*

The methods used to achieve sustainability in buildings can vary widely according to the interpretation of the concept of sustainability. This paper examines the relationship between sharing practices and models of sustainable domestic architecture. It highlights the importance of sharing as an added method of sustainability and argues that it be given a place in sustainable discussions alongside other alternative solutions. The paper firstly outlines the definition of sharing and relates this to the New Zealand context. It argues that sharing can be seen as a sustainable practice because it reduces total housing cost (and total construction), provides opportunities for collective use of space, and increases overall quality of life by enhancing chances for social interaction. In this way, sharing can fulfil the three principles of social, economic and environmental sustainability as outlined in Agenda 21. In the third section, the paper provides examples of shared housing drawn from the authors' current research on conjoined housing in New Zealand and concludes by suggesting that modifications be made to the single-family house so to accommodate changing household structures and facilitate sharing practices.