

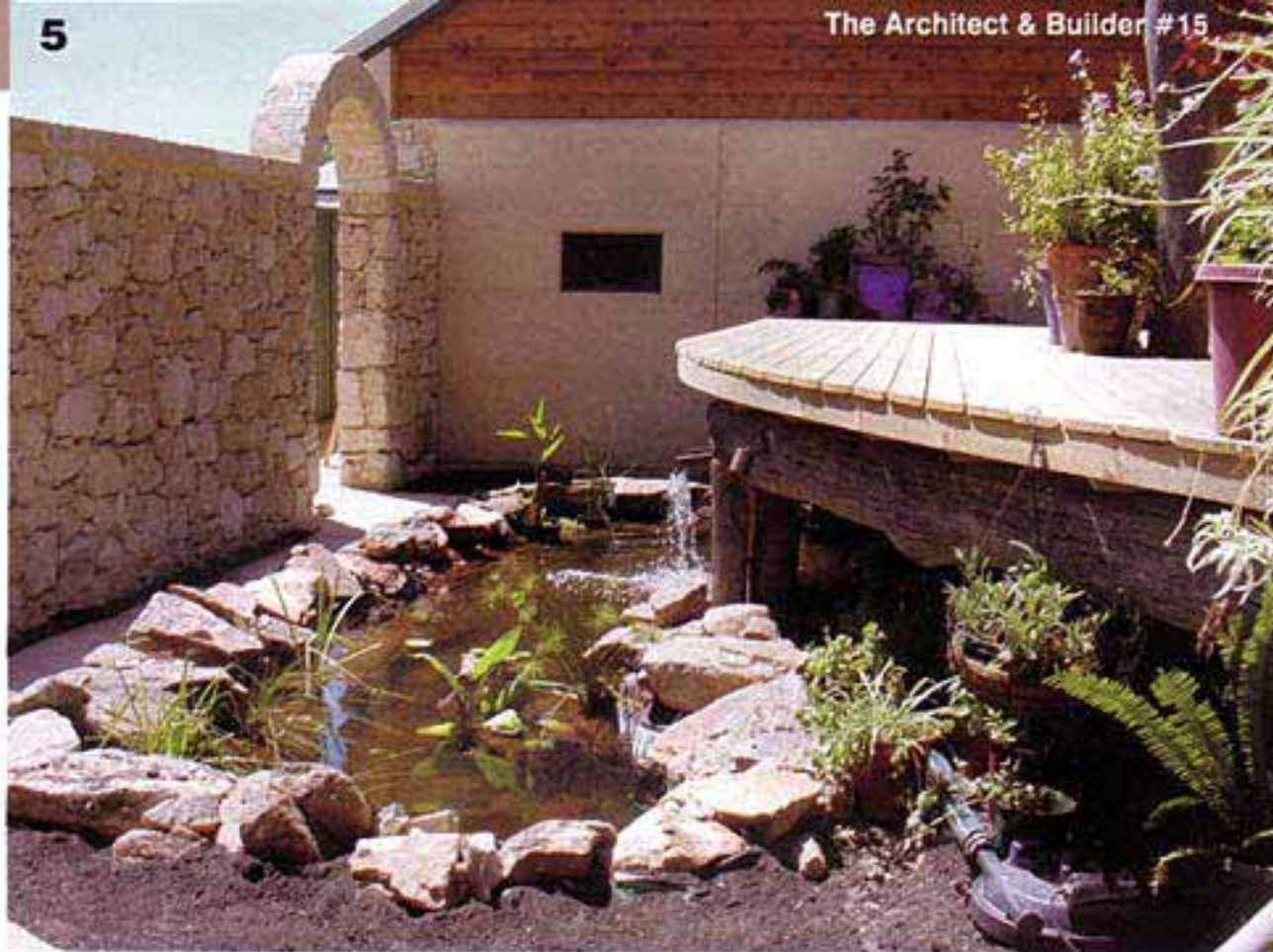
approach, underpinned by new 'sustainable economics'. Much has been written about materials, ecology and the environment, and a number of rating schemes have been developed."

These are the real issues according to Garry Baverstock, program manager: built environment at the Research Institute for Sustainable Energy at Murdoch University. Garry has been in the built environment industry for 30 years and is well known for looking forward and promoting a different view of the way we live.

"First of all, I don't see much difference in building materials, although there are sound sustainable and economic factors for choosing one against another, but that boils down to personal opinion. It's a side issue in my opinion. The problem with building in WA is at a fundamental level. The government, the industry and the lack of education and awareness in the population at large are all factors that create the highly unsustainable city that is Perth, and many other regional centres. I understand that 'sustainability' has become a buzz word, but what is the reality? We live in houses that are double the size of their 1950s counterpart, with half the amount of people in them. This means that a huge amount of land is required for less people to live. The houses are designed in a way that air conditioning is considered vital, increasing the demand on power supplies.

"Some 50 years ago, the peak demand was in winter for heating homes, now the peak is double that of the 1950s and it's in summer for cooling. That is down to incorrect design. High ceilings, proper passive solar orientation, verandahs or awnings over windows all make big differences to the energy consumption of homes. But, why does this matter? Why do I believe in sustainability, the action and not the words? Because I believe, along with a great many scientists, that if we carry on living the way we do, we will make this planet uninhabitable in 150 years," Garry said.

Garry Baverstock's vehement attack on the institutions and the process that regulate the way we develop our built



environment comes from 30 years of dealing with all the different industry sectors that include the planning, regulation, design, building and marketing areas of the building industry. He would like to see the construction industry work with architects to create social sustainability: to create homes that have value to the owners, have 100 year or more life spans, as is normal in Europe and are not 'disposable' in just 30 years.

"Furthermore, planning authorities must ensure that subdivisions are designed to maximise passive solar orientation of the blocks, which can minimise heating and cooling costs, even eliminating them altogether," Garry said.

He believes the reason the Year of the Built Environment didn't succeed in its aims and he believes this is due to the built environment industry's lack of consideration of society as a whole and a government seemingly powerless to regulate urgently needed change in our approach to building houses.

5. The Eco-compound uses a variety of building materials that enhance the external and internal aspects of the building

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Important contacts

For further information and details about working with timber framed construction, please contact:

The Timber and Building Materials Association

PO BOX 107, NSW 2010

Tel: 02 9360 3088, Fax: 02 9360 3464

Email: info@tabma.com.au, Web: <http://www.tabma.com.au>

For further information on using steel framed construction and other steel components in building please contact:

National Association of Steel Framed Housing

PO Box 1085, Hartwell, VIC 3124

Tel: 61 3 9809 1333, Fax: 61 3 9809 1399,

Freecall within Australia 1800 656 986

Email: info@nash.asn.au

For information regarding the use of brick, in both veneer and reversed veneer applications please contact:

Clay Brick Manufacturers Association of WA

28 Walters Drive, Osbourne Park WA 6017

Tel: 08 9244 5551

For information on rammed earth and mud brick, please contact:

Solar Dwellings

23 Bishop Street, Jolimont WA 6014

Tel: (08) 9383 9493, Fax: (08) 9383 9470

Web: www.Solardwellings.com.au