

the framing of the physical hub that could still be patterned on different familiar models. Is this a market? A bazaar? A convention center? A precinct-in-a-building? A courtyard village? Or could it be a website, and remain virtual after all? In this discussion, there was a clear sense that the chosen metaphor should support strong and explicit place-making: a high-profile and desirable locality that makes it worthwhile for people to visit by providing easy access to the services of the local center—from child care, dry cleaning, and groceries to a gym, a selection of bars/cafés/restaurants, business support services, etc.

The key message for now is that the outcome of an opportunity-driven frame creation session is likely to initially be a process, rather than a specific frame. We will come back to this point later. At the opposite end of the spectrum, we encounter problem situations that are so incredibly closed and overdetermined that the problem owner really can't move forward. In these cases, the frame creation process can still be helpful, but now the starting point focuses on the “field” and “themes” steps of the process rather than looking at the archaeology. And the outcome of the frame creation exercise will again most likely be a process, rather than a definite frame and solution direction.

CASE 15

The weight of the world: On identity and social housing

1 ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE PROBLEM SITUATION

The context for this project is an area in Sydney where the population tends to have low education level, low income, and a high unemployment rate. It displays a concentration of different kinds of disadvantage—people with problems in society gravitate here because, within a very expensive city, this is the very cheapest place to live. To visitors, the neighborhood looks closed, with lots of fences and walls. The few public spaces look shabby but nothing is really broken—they have just been abandoned. Nothing is spectacularly wrong, but there is an overwhelming atmosphere of boredom and despondency. The sense of helplessness comes from the realization that many people here have been overwhelmed by their various problems and forms of disadvantage; this culture focuses on day-to-day survival, and is passed on from generation to