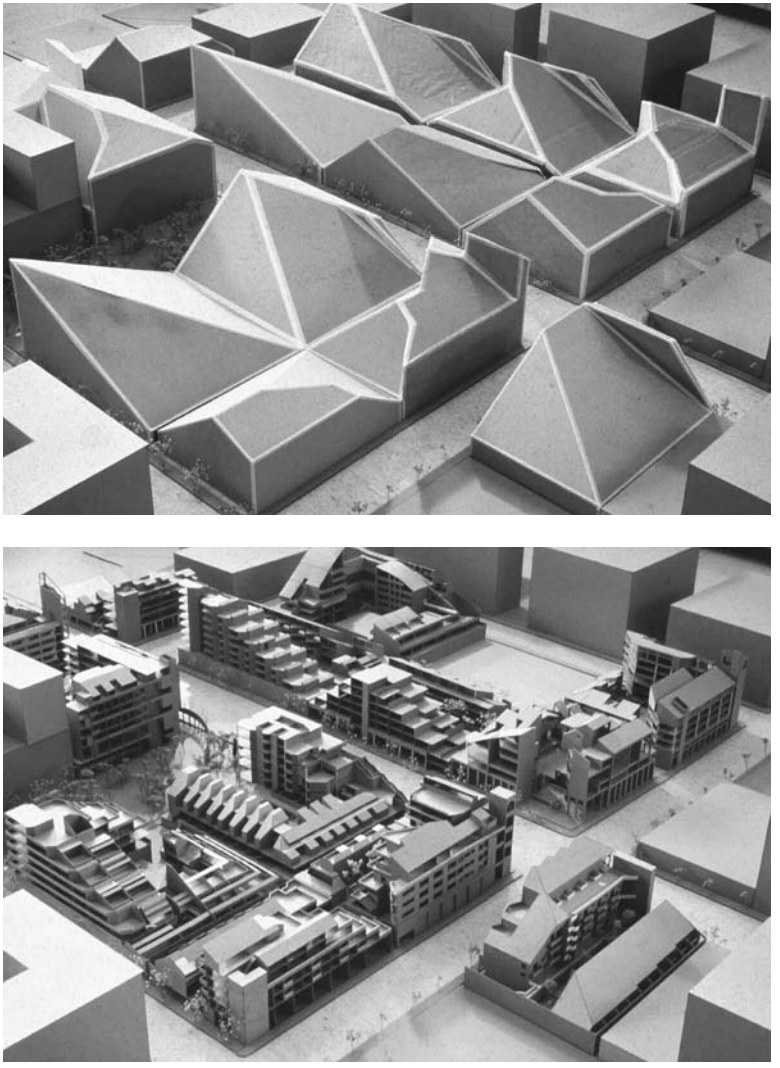
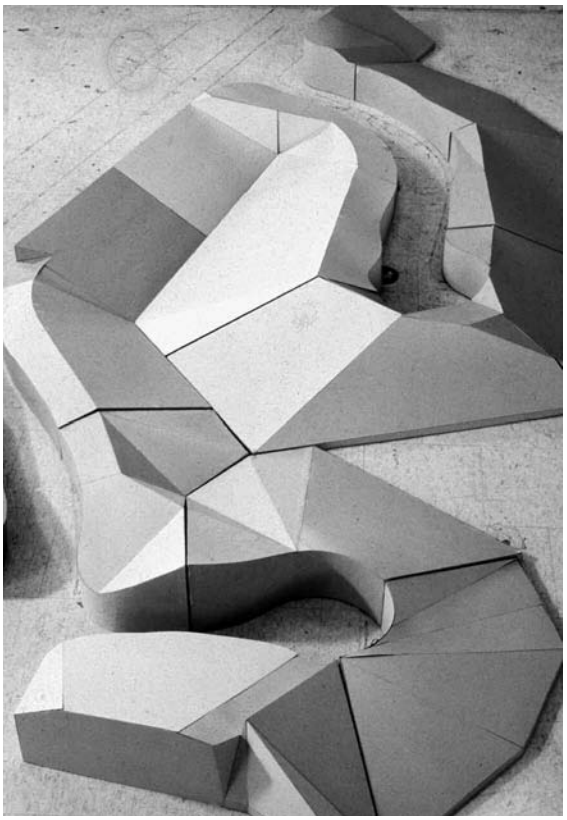


Housing Project on the Spanish Grid, Viewed from the East: (Top) The solar envelopes appear crystal-like while existing buildings are rectilinear blocks; (Bottom) Housing designs under the envelope achieve a density range of 80 to 100 du/ac (198 to 247 du/ha) over street-front commercial. (The old Spanish grid runs at about 36 degrees off the north–south axis of the US Land Ordinance of 1785.)

a base of street-front shops under housing. The envelopes are consistently higher on the south than on the north with the exception of towerlike shapes that project upward at some corners where shadows are allowed to extend further northward into streets, but not onto properties across the street.



Housing Project on Curving Streets, Viewed from the South: (Left) Solar envelopes run continuously along the street, dropping to shadow fences only at front and back of lots; (Right) Housing designs under the envelope achieve a density range of 25 to 45 du/ac (62 to 111 du/ha), much higher than normal subdivision densities.

When building designs fill the solar envelopes, they contain many traditional elements. Roof terraces appear where the rectangular geometry of construction meets the sloping envelope. Courtyards center many designs to achieve a proper exposure for sunshine and air. Façades are enriched by porches, screens, and clerestories—all differentiated by orientation to the sun and wind. Beyond the appearance of such time-honored means, adjacent buildings meet each other gently, across sloping spaces, not abruptly across property sidelines and alleys. The resulting spaces, not confining and dark but rather liberating and filled with light, allow distance views and the free flow of air through the city.