

# CONVERSIONS



Emma O'Kelly & Corinna Dean

AS POPULATIONS GROW, where and how we live is a major concern. Architects spend their time addressing the issue of housing and converting spaces is often a more satisfactory solution than building from scratch. This book looks at what is being done with existing non-domestic buildings in both urban and rural contexts around the world. Following a brief introduction there are four chapters examining conversions of rural buildings, urban buildings, lofts and industrial spaces, and radical one-offs. With each case study the author asks: what does one leave intact, what does one rip out, and what is one forbidden to change by planning regulations? The budget, the sorts of materials used and the way they impact upon surroundings are also examined and assessed. Varied projects from around the world include the archetypal glamorous New York loft, a high-tech-meets-rural barn in Germany, an electrical box in Italy, a striking church conversion in Australia and a housing development made from industrial containers in Norway.

*Conversions* shows that - with a bit of imagination - all sorts of buildings can be converted into homes. The projects and practices chosen - from the quirky and off-beat to the sleek and straightforward - will appeal to a wider audience than just architects, housing planners and interior designers. While the book offers an architectural overview, complete with photographs and architectural drawings, the informative, approachable text will provide inspiration for anyone who is thinking about transforming their own space.

With 322 illustrations, 249 in colour

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# ICE HOUSE LOFTS

Rob Paulus Architect

Tucson, Arizona

USA

ESTABLISHED IN 1995, Rob Paulus Architect has designed a wide range of buildings. Having grown up in the desert, Paulus sites the large expanse of rugged nature as a strong influence on the way that he constructs buildings.

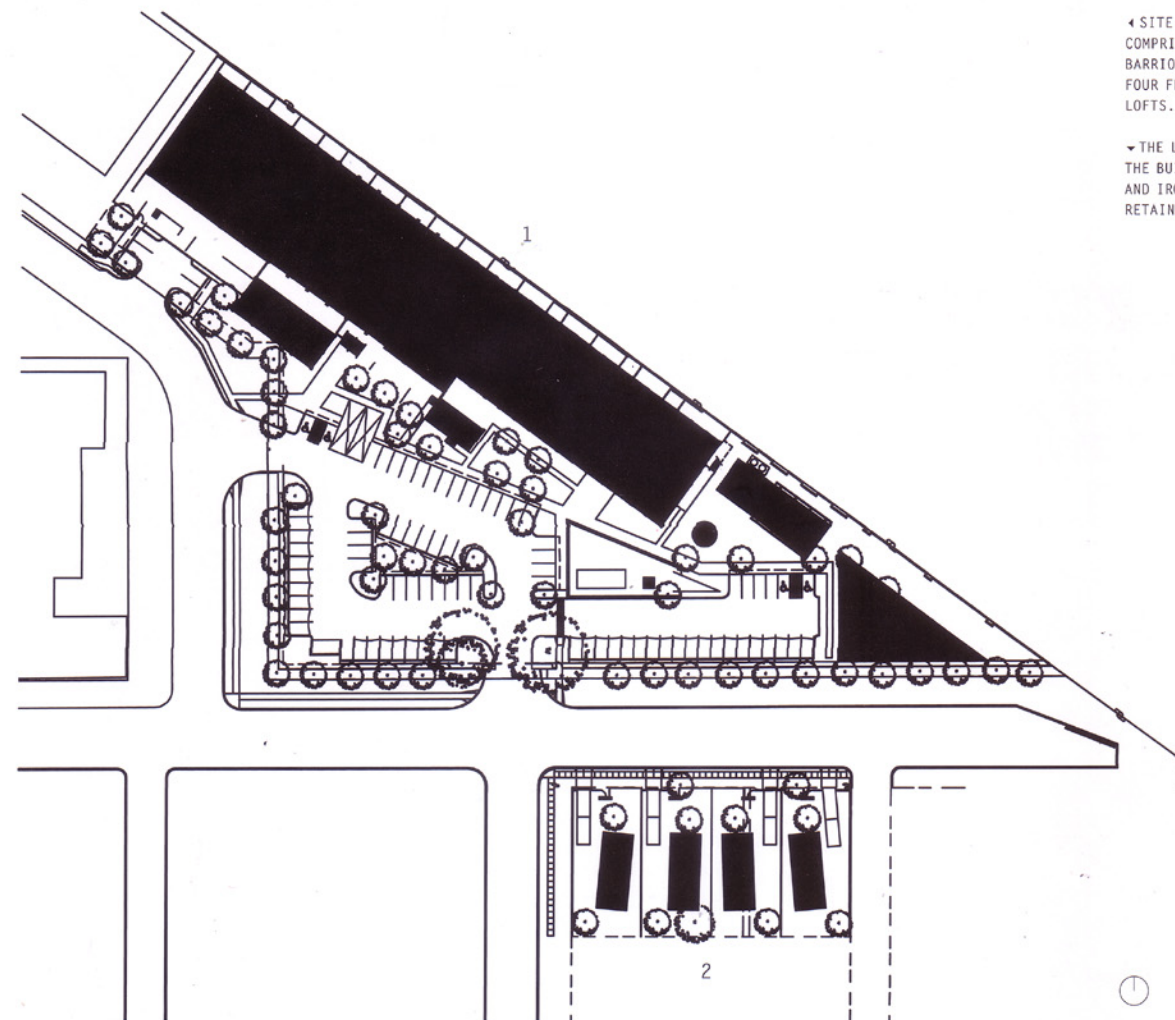
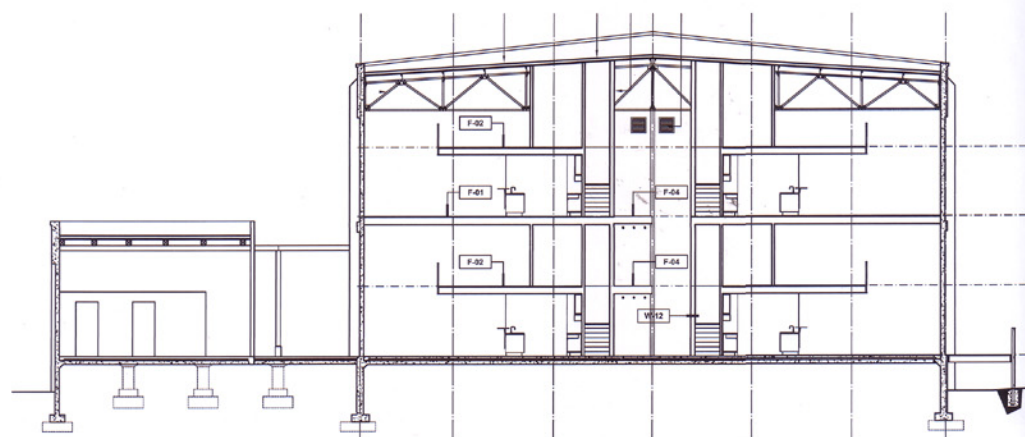
The Ice House Lofts comprise 51 distinctive residences located in the 1923 Arizona Ice and Cold Storage Company building, an ice manufacturing plant that closed in 2002. The triangular site posed certain constraints. At the back it is hemmed in with heavy transport arteries, the Union Pacific Rails and Aviation Parkway. Therefore the building is orientated to the front, where a pool with pool house has been constructed for the residents. The conversion is a successful example of tapping into an existing infrastructure within an urban infill area to establish a pattern of what is termed 'Smart Growth' by the developer, appropriately named Deep Freeze Development.

'Smart Growth' has become the intelligent answer to the problem of urban sprawl, and has gathered momentum as a movement. A group made up of environmentalists, planners and preservationists advocate a set of land use and design strategies although, with the exception of New Urbanism, one with no ideal physical form. The movement is intended to direct new development towards existing urbanized areas and away from agricultural and natural landscapes. In the conversion of the Ice



▲ THE SOUTH ELEVATION BEFORE (TOP) AND AFTER CONVERSION (ABOVE). SENSITIVE RENOVATION ENSURED THAT THE BUILDING'S CHARACTERISTIC AND VARIED FAÇADE WAS LEFT INTACT.

▼ CROSS-SECTION SHOWING TWO FLOORS OF SPLIT-LEVEL UNITS. THE SOUTH ELEVATION IS ON THE LEFT.



▲ SITE PLAN. ICE HOUSE LOFTS (1) COMPRISES 51 LOFT UNITS, WHILE BARRIO METALICO NORTE (2) HAS FOUR FREE-STANDING NEW-BUILT LOFTS.

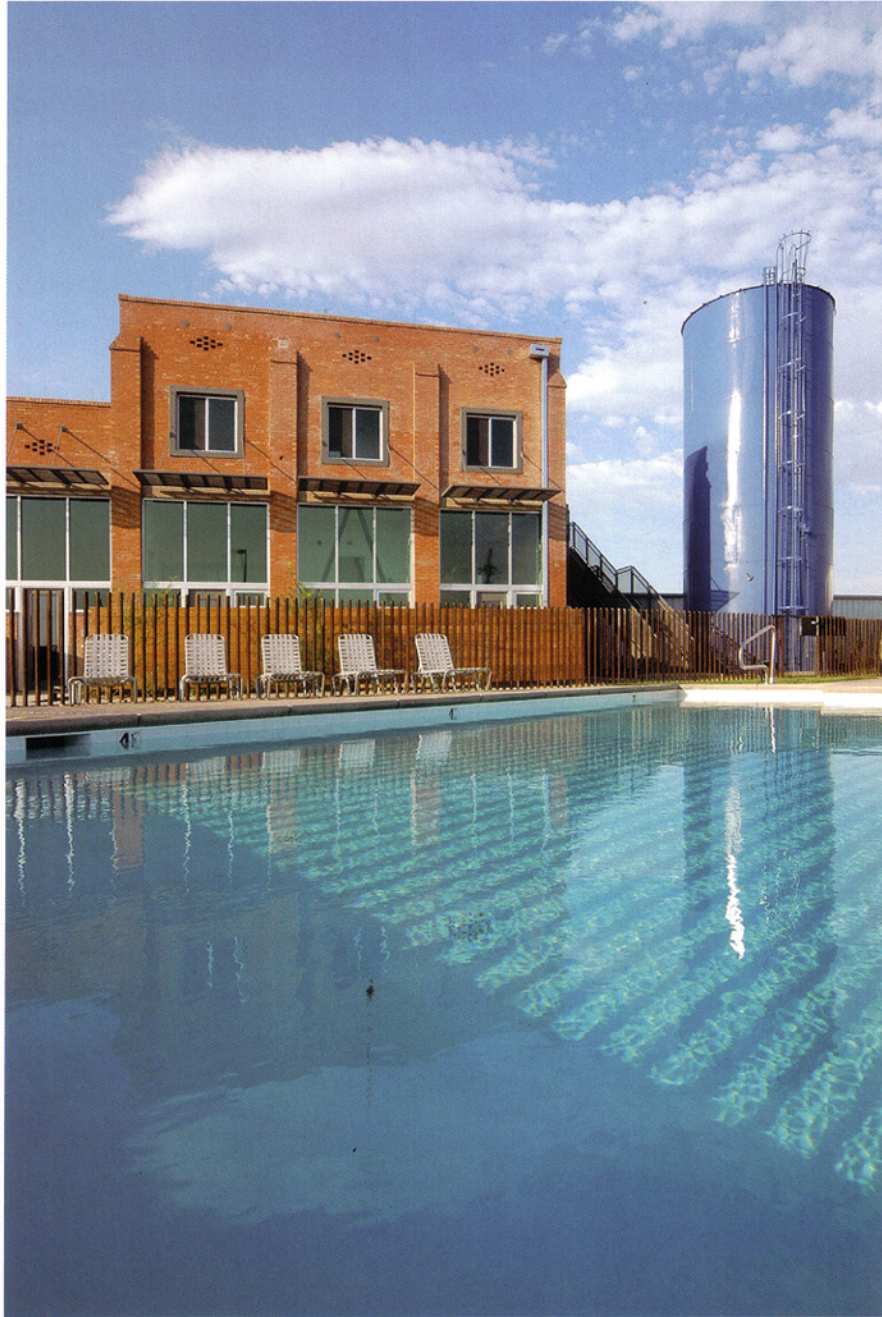
▼ THE LOFTS DURING CONVERSION. THE BUILDING'S ORIGINAL BRICKWORK AND IRON CEILING TRUSSES WERE RETAINED.





▶ THE EAST END OF THE SOUTH FAÇADE BEFORE CONVERSION.

↳ THE EAST END OF THE SOUTH FAÇADE AFTER CONVERSION. A POOL HAS BEEN ADDED FOR THE RESIDENTS, AND THE ORIGINAL WATER TOWER WAS RESTORED AND PAINTED BLUE, MAKING A STRIKING ARCHITECTURAL FEATURE.



House Lofts, the renovation of the existing industrial building and the salvaging of materials demonstrate a consideration of environmental factors. For example, 1,524 metres (5,000 feet) of 2 x 10 timber, 1,340 square metres (14,400 square feet) of corrugated metal and eight kilometres (five miles) of salvaged shiplap wood were creatively incorporated into the lofts. Other details, such as salvaged wheel hands, were reused as gate entry handles, while old machinery was sandblasted for use as sculptural elements, all adding to the reading of the building's history. The building's surface is enriched with varying textures, including exposed concrete and the massive wood beams and riveted steel trusses that contrast with the new design interventions. Requiring a sensitive collaborative process with city planners, officials, consultants and contractors, the project's success has contributed to the regeneration of a once run-down area in downtown Tucson.

↳ BARE CONCRETE WALLS AND MASSIVE BEAMS CONTINUE THE INDUSTRIAL AESTHETIC INSIDE THE APARTMENTS.

↳ LOWER-LEVEL PLAN OF A TYPICAL SPLIT-LEVEL UNIT. 1. KITCHEN, 2. LIVING AREA, 3. BATHROOM, 4. VOID, 5. DECK

↳ THE TYPICAL SPLIT-LEVEL UNIT HAS A KITCHEN UNDERNEATH THE MEZZANINE, WHICH IS REACHED BY AN IRON DOUBLE STAIRCASE.

