

THE NORTH PROPO--SITIONAL EVELEIGH

ISSUE #1. City-Making. 12.2.11

On the permanent war between the Speculators and the Regulators
and why we don't want to live in someone else's city any more...



Who decides what kind of city Sydney becomes? Who gives it its form, function and flavour?

In the history of our city two groups have emerged as the dominant powers in the development of the city: The Speculators and the Regulators.

Both the groups spring from quite fundamental aspirations in city-making: The Speculators (developers, investors, architects, project managers, real estate agents) can trace a lineage back to the simple desire to build the city, to make it bigger, better! The Regulators (planners, lawmakers, bureaucrats) from the desire to ensure the city is built 'right' - allowing for the health and happiness of all. Over time these two groups have grown institutionalised, more interested in the perpetuation of their own power, influence and profit than in making a better city. Together they now form a kind of bi-polar Spatial Oligarchy, a small technocratic class with complete dominance over the entire sphere of city-making. The two sides wage a permanent war of co-dependency in which each blames the other for Sydney's urban woes and each side uses the threat of the other to increase their own influence.

Between the two they have unravelled the collectivity of the city. The Speculators, in their drive for ever increasing return, have fueled the commodification of urban space, shattering the city into a million windows on domain dot com. Similarly the Regulators, by carving up all spaces of the city into separate zones for work - living - driving - shopping, have squeezed out the lively, the autonomous, the spontaneous, the overlapping, the efficient, the multi-tasking.

Under the rule of the Spatial Oligarchy notions of 'the public' and 'the community' are hollowed out, ever more de-valued by a vicious cycle of disempowerment and distrust.

Our collective city-making power has been drained to the Regulators who 'represent us' or the Speculators who sell to us. Both sides are equally distrustful of letting the public set the agenda ourselves. Those citizens who do get involved are trapped by the established framework, we can do nothing more than object, complaining about traffic, density, parking spaces, immigration, green space, views. For the Speculators and Regulators this IS 'the community' and it justifies their notion that the public are nothing but a mutually disconnected mass of self-interested whingers who oppose all change and could never be trusted with the process of city-making themselves.

Community consultation then becomes a token process of appeasement. A few pocket parks are thrown about but essentially nothing changes, nothing was ever really up for discussion. Community consultation has become like an election with only one candidate.

But alternatives are springing up, People are coming together and finding ways to make the city they want, not the one they were given. Community land trusts, housing cooperatives, urban farms, workplace collectives are growing stronger and more prolific every day.

We must never forget that this is our city. This is where we live, love and die. The Speculators and Regulators are not going to give us our right to make the city, have to take it.

PROPOSITION #1. The Propositional.

Towards a People's Urbanism.

What kind of city would we make if we could start from scratch? If we stopped making do, tinkering at the edges. It could be anything. If we could stop worrying about what we don't want and start creating what we do...

The Propositional aims to upend the typical process of city-making. Week by week, day by day it will publish and disseminate alternative proposal for the site at North Eveleigh. Everyone

is invited to submit their ideas, agendas, their personal gripes and grand schemes. These will then be published so that others can see, share, agree or disagree, comment, critique, endorse, rework or replace them with something entirely different.

Given that the government has already approved their own scheme for the site (in the ultimate triumph of Regulator-Speculation) and are proceeding towards a quick sale, returning to the

drawing board could be seen as a futile gesture. We at The Propositional strongly feel however that given the lack of critical public discourse about the future of such a significant piece of our city, a discussion of what else is possible is needed now more than ever.

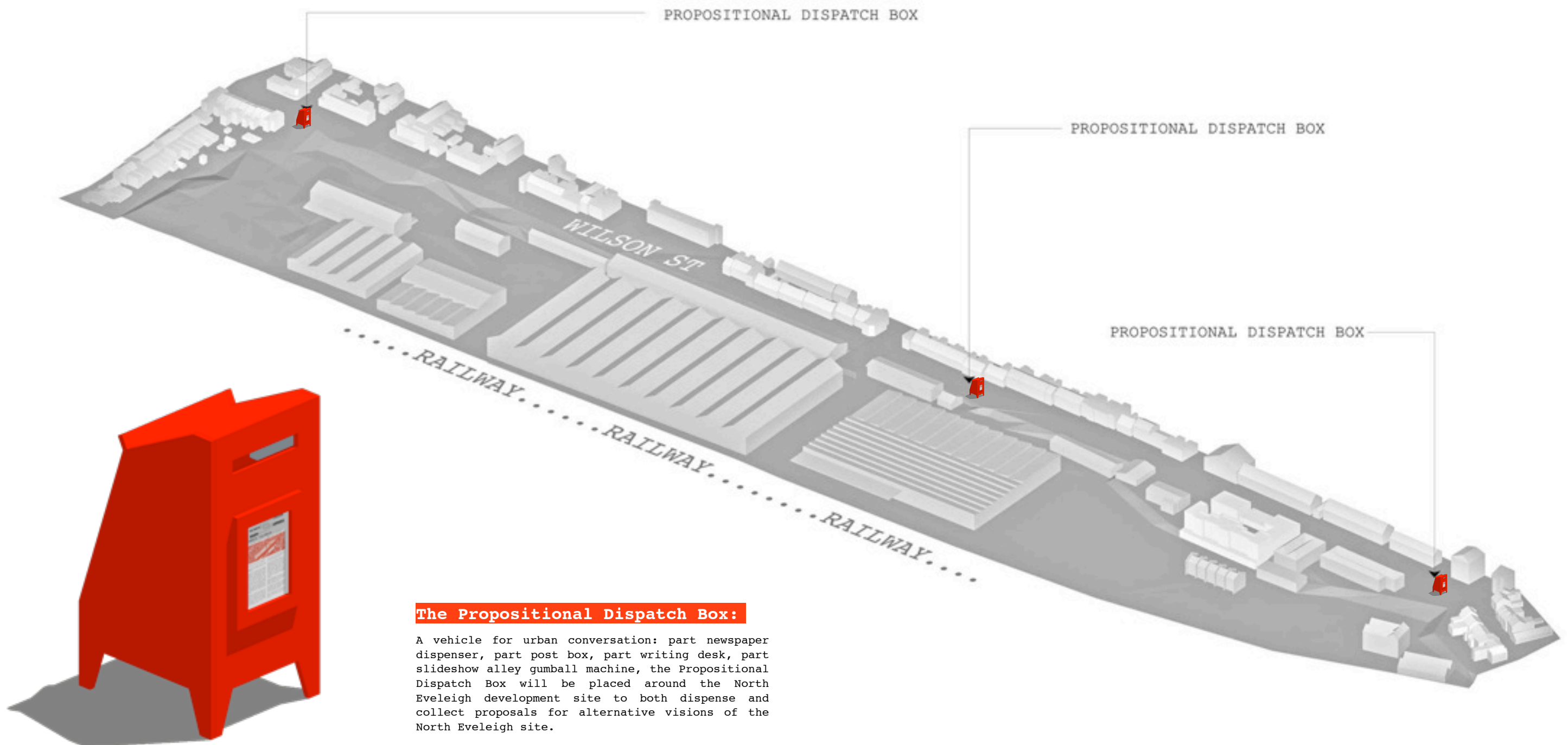
The Propositional does not aim to find one perfect design, rather it seeks an accumulation of ideas, polished or rough, wild or pragmatic, heart-warming or spine-chilling, a permanently evolving catalogue of potential North Eveleighs.

We at The Propositional make no claim to represent or 'speak for' anyone, rather we are seeking to set up a space where people can speak for

themselves, where everything is up for discussion and discussion is really the main aim.

The proposals may remain simply paper architecture, a silent witness to what could have been. But a more radical possibility exists: The proposals could go beyond polite dialogue to become a viable plan, giving us something to argue for, rather than against, something we can hold up to the spatial oligarchs, and say: 'this is what we want! and this is how to build it..'

So let's begin...



**HOW TO MAKE BEST
USE OF YOUR
PROPOSITIONAL**

**3. climb up and
look over the
fence**

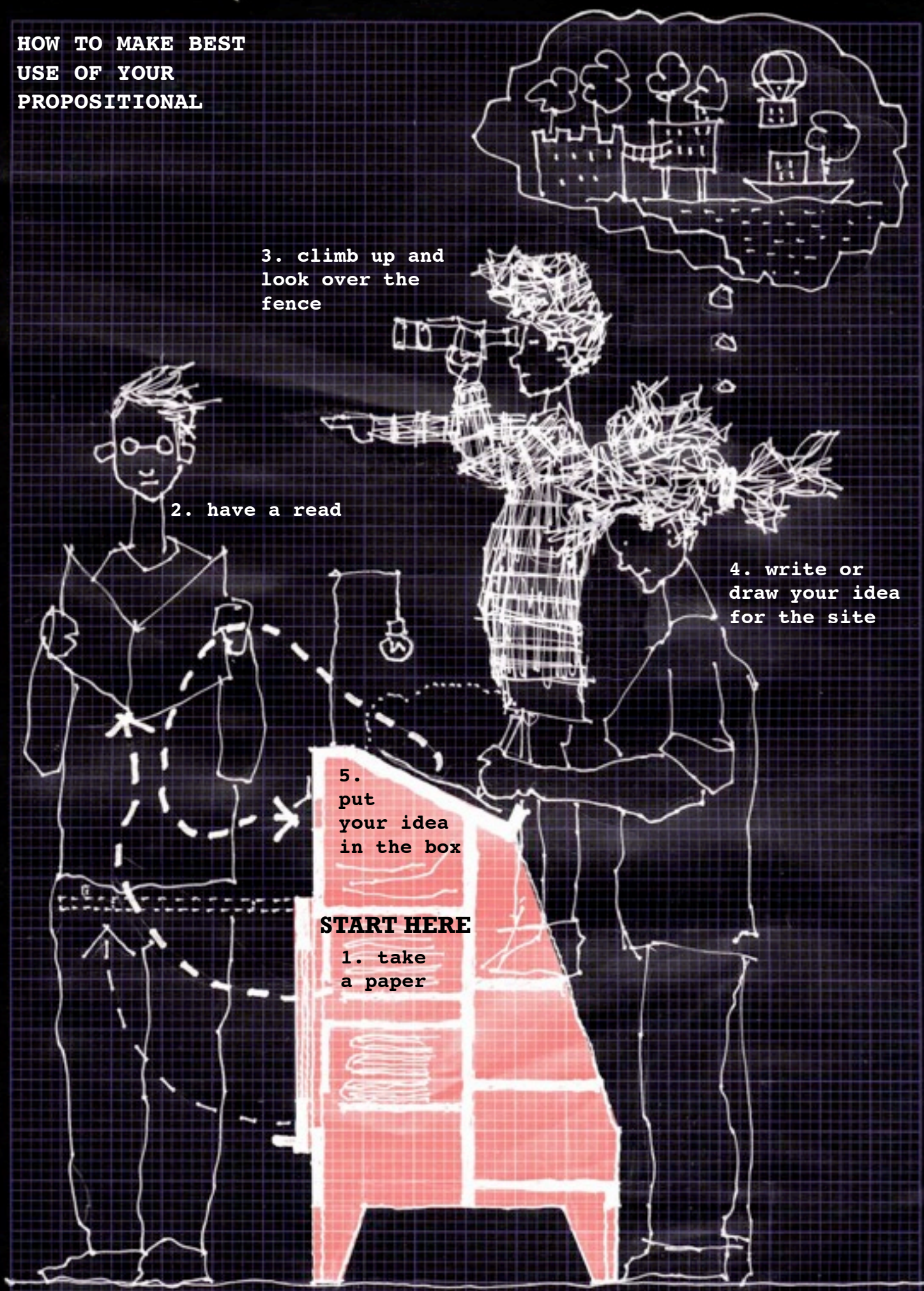
2. have a read

**4. write or
draw your idea
for the site**

**5.
put
your idea
in the box**

START HERE

**1. take
a paper**



PROPOSITION #

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