



DIANNA WELLS
Suburban Geometric

Suburban Geometric is a series of photographic images which reflect on our relationship with a rapidly expanding built environment on the fringe of Melbourne. My previous work explored the change to the environment from pastoral land to urban development. My primary interest over the past year has been the dominance of architectural design in developer-driven communities such as Craigieburn and Caroline Springs.

As architectural design historian Hannah Lewi, et al, writes 'Australian communities in cities, suburbs, and rural and remote townships share a strong similarity: they are defined and sustained by their community facilities and amenities'.¹ The civic centre, including the municipal library, recreational and community centres are a focal point for civic pride and a reflection or expression of community vitality.

This is still the case for the new communities on the fringe. However, the attraction of civic facilities is now rivalled by that of vast shopping precincts. Branded by their exterior architectural design, and featuring enclosed malls, town squares, several supermarkets and acres of parking, these amenities are advertised on websites to potential new home buyers as a place to belong and the reason to buy. *Suburban Geometric* documents both types of commercial and community environments.

Suburban Geometric takes documentary photography into the hyper-real. It pushes back conceptually and aesthetically at fashion-focused architectural magazine photography where perfection and beauty is used to accentuate the power and place of the architectural form over everything else. Geometric patterning and textures dominate the compositions. Civic facilities such as sports and shopping centres appear on the horizon in the form of supersized hexagons. Oblongs are shaped in turf and stripes rise from a mown paddock. Although there is an absence of people in the images, they have left their trace in the awkward placement of objects and marks cut or imposed on the ground.

This body of work explores the artificial replacement on our landscape and searches for disorderly abstractions within the symmetry, imperfections in the cladding and the human touch upon the ground.

Dianna Wells, May 2014

Dianna Wells is a Melbourne-based photographic artist. Wells began her photographic practice five years ago, building on her background in printmaking and a long and successful career in graphic design. She has a Masters in Fine Art from Monash University in Photomedia. *Suburban Geometric* is her second solo exhibition.

Images:

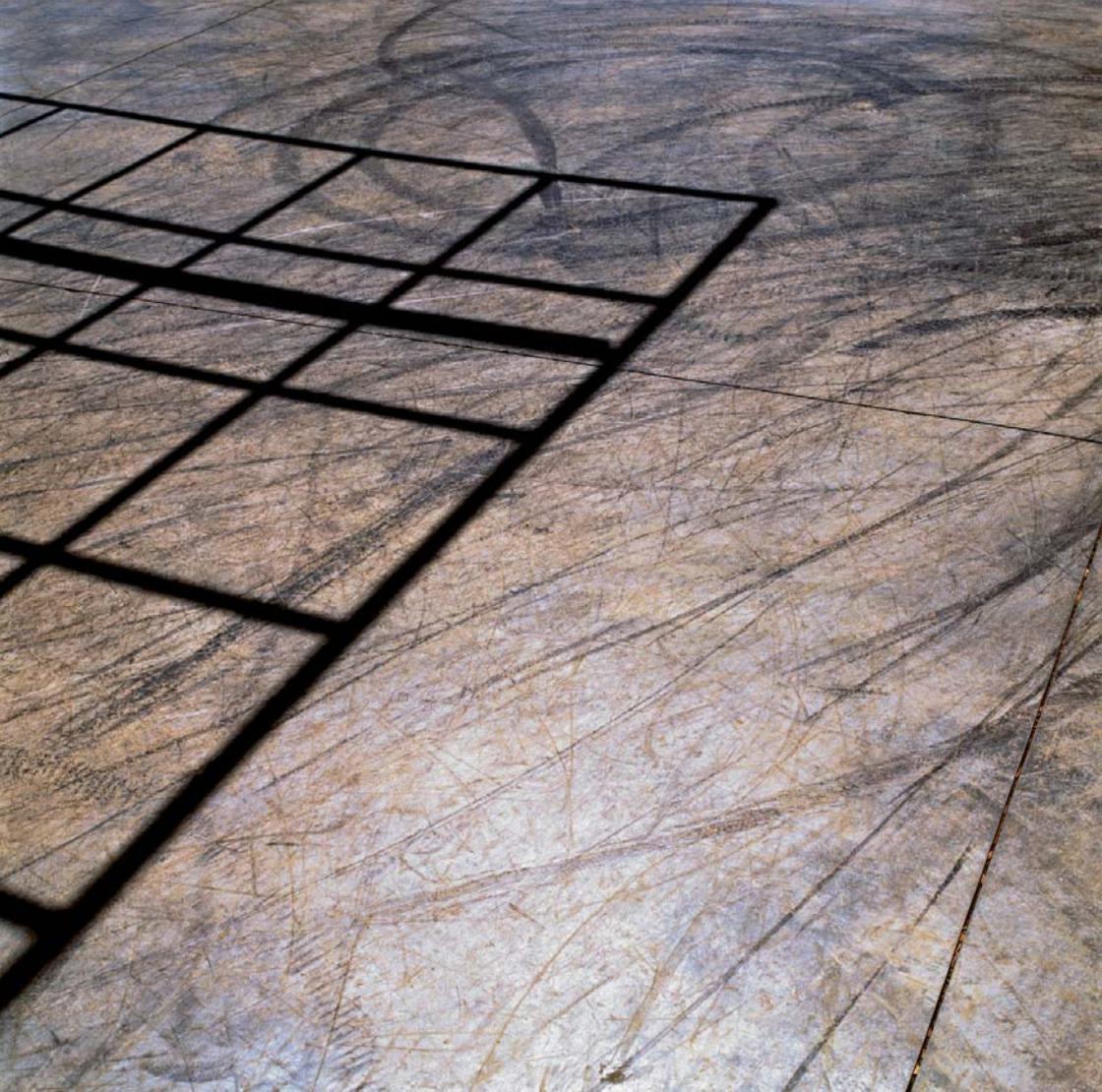
Front: *Taylors Hill # 1*, 2013, pigment print on cotton rag, 100 x 100cm

Right: *Craigieburn # 2*, 2014, pigment print on cotton rag, 100 x 100cm

Back: *Taylors Hill # 2*, 2013, pigment print on cotton rag, 100 x 100cm

¹ Hannah Lewi, David Nichols, Philip Goad, Julie Willis and Kate Darian-Smith. "Making the Modern Community." In *Community: Building Modern Australia*, edited by Hannah Lewi and David Nichols, 2-23. (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press Ltd, 2010), 2.





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Suburban Geometric

31 May - 27 July 2014

Sofi's Lounge, Level 1

Sofitel Melbourne On Collins

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