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## EDITORIAL NOTE

### Why *Built Form*

Cities can be comprehended not only through their surface images but through the processes that shape them. Therefore, an approach that can analyse the forms, historical layers, production relations and transformation mechanisms behind the form is more substantial than ever. Urban form studies play a substantial role in promoting their requirements. Urban form studies have increased since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century onwards. While the number of research on the physical form of cities show an increase, their dissemination was scattered in many journals. After the consolidation of urban morphological school of thoughts, an association has been established to gather all these research under an umbrella. The association was the International Seminar on Urban Form (ISUF). It also started to publish a journal: *Urban Morphology*. First edited by J.W.R. Whitehand, the journal has brought together studies on physical forms to a significant extent. The second journal is the *Urban Form and Design*, founded in 2014. This journal publishes in both English and Italian with a focus on built forms and their design. The third is *Forma Civitatis*, which was founded in 2021. The field of urban morphology has been expanded by an interdisciplinary discourse developed through these and other valuable initiatives for many years. During this process, these journals have played vital roles in the formation of the theoretical framework, the development of methodological tools and the discussion of urban morphology in different contexts. Built Form believes that the scientific contributions of these journals will maintain their value today and in the future by contributing to the growth of the field, its utilisation in professional practices and its inclusion in planning, design, and architectural curricula. As a matter of fact, it is clear that these disciplines are increasingly offering courses on morphological studies in their curricula.

*Built Form* aims to open a more inclusive field that will give voice to urban form studies from different scales, contexts and approaches, while building on this rich heritage. In addition to the valuable contributions of existing journals, Built Form aims to open space for studies with plural perspectives, different geographical and cultural backgrounds, and the participation of new generations of researchers, and to further diversify the literature on urban morphology. In this respect, our journal aims to undertake a complementary role to existing initiatives in the field. The *Built Form* aims to provide an open-access and completely voluntary platform that brings together substantial research focusing on the historical, cultural and spatial dimensions of built environment with practical experiences. In this period, when morphological studies are gaining momentum, it was impossible to remain indifferent to this momentum. *Built form* emerged at contributing to the acceleration of this momentum by researchers, practitioners and curious minds working in the field of built environment.

While a significant portion of academic publishing today operates through paid access models, authors and readers also face various financial barriers. This publishing policy creates a double barrier that limits both the production of and the circulation of knowledge. We would like to eliminate these barriers as much as we can through the establishment of *Built Form*. *Built Form* sets out with an open-access approach that does not charge any fees to either authors or readers. This approach aims to remove not only financial but also intellectual thresholds.

As urban morphology presents a substantial basis to planning, urban design, architecture and so on, it is necessary to open space not only for academic texts but also for practical knowledge and actions produced in the field to realise its potential. In this regard, *Built Form* not only publishes research-based articles but also practice-oriented articles. Moreover, it proposes a flexible structure that goes beyond the classical academic format for articles. Practice articles, which can be constructed on maps, drawings, visual narratives, and conceptual

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sketches, creates a platform for practitioners to contribute to the production of scientific knowledge while employing their own language.

*Built Form* aims to be not only a publication but also a ground of thought. The basis of this ground is based on a collective effort. Every stage from the editorial board to referee processes, from web design to copy editing, is carried out by volunteers who mobilise their labour for the city and scientific knowledge. The first issue is the starting point of the journey of the *Built Form*. The texts in your hands are the product of studies produced from different geographies and with different methods, but carrying a common curiosity. Our aim is to continue this diversity and to make the journal a platform for thoughts open to both local contexts and global discussions.

Finally, we have a call for everyone who reads these lines. This journal will exist not only with the contributions of editors or writers, but also with the contributions of readers and thinkers. We wish to grow with new questions, forms and contributions.

**Muzaffer Ali Arat**

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