



ESR I

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## Case study

### APROP Temporary Social Housing for People at Risk to Residential Exclusion



**Architect(s):** Straddle3, Eulia Arkitektura, and Yaiza Terré  
**Location:** Barcelona, Spain  
**Project (year):** 2017-2019  
**Construction (year):** 2019  
**Housing type:** Multifamily housing  
**Urban context:** City centre  
**Construction system:** Industrialised Construction  
**Selected option:** New building

The collaboration of stakeholders in the design, community participation, and policy and finance aspects of the programme were crucial to the successful delivery of the Ciutat Vella pilot project, delivered in 2019. As the project is ultimately a top-down solution to emergency housing, the project most relates to Design, planning and building and Policy and financing rather than Community participation. The standardised modules incorporate circular principles through the reuse and upcycling of shipping containers, which can be disassembled to enable future reuse and relocation. The design methodology facilitates a city-wide strategy for resource efficiency - a concept known as the urban mine – where the transportable modules are treated as a bank of resources. The municipality are committed to industrialised construction, efficient and flexible solutions to providing public housing and have invested in the construction of a second APROP project that was recently completed in Glòries.

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The Lisbon Workshop took place from 22 to 24 September 2021. It was organized by ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon, with the collaboration of two local partner organisations, Municipality of Lisbon and CASAIS. The theme of the workshop was “Design, planning and construction of affordable and sustainable housing”. The workshop activities included lectures by representatives of the Lisbon Municipality, CASAIS engineers, external invited guests and lecturers from ISCTE-IUL specialized in the different subjects encompassed in the workshop theme (participation, sustainability and housing policies), guided visits to the BIPZIP neighbourhoods and in a CASAIS building site.



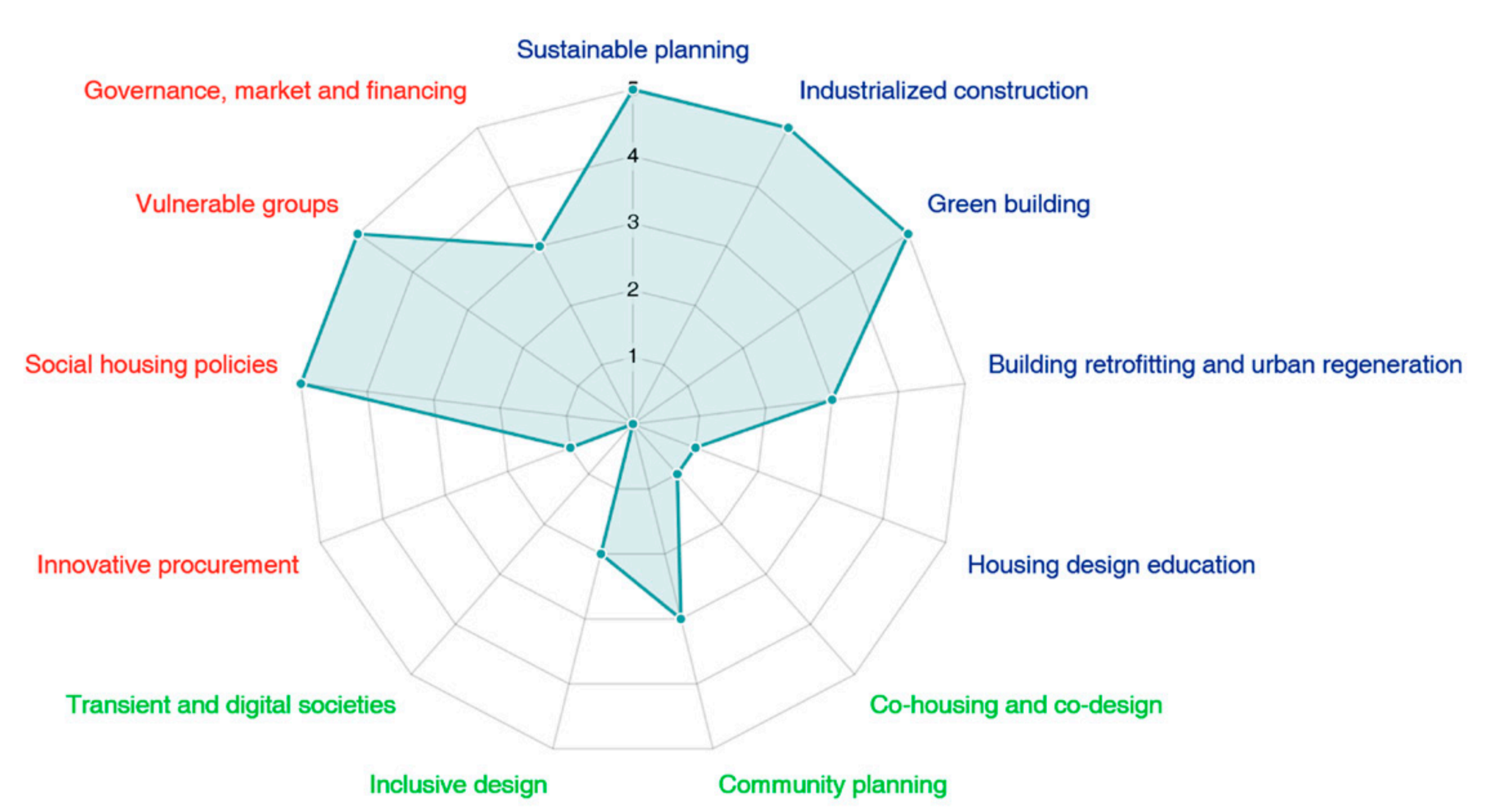
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“The lack of information sharing is holding back more widespread and urgent change, research in industry is usually confidential and money is still the main driver. The transition to a circular economy will require a true sharing economy of both materials and knowledge, and we need to ensure lessons learnt are also looped back into the cycle.”

Annette Davis, blog post “WasteBuild Zero conference”, May 2023

“It’s tough for construction teams to make sustainable choices when we are living and working in a broken system, where it is currently acceptable to landfill almost absolutely everything and it’s often cheaper and easier to source products from China than to reuse local materials.”

Annette Davis, blog post “WasteBuild Zero conference”, May 2023



■ Design, planning and building ■ Community participation ■ Policy and financing

\* This diagram is for illustrative purposes only based on the author's interpretation of the above case study





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## Case study

### HOUSEFUL- Els Mestre, Sabadell Sud



**Retrofit Architect:** In-house at Agència de l’Habitatge de Catalunya (AHC)  
**Location:** Sabadell, Spain  
**Project (year):** 2018 - 2021  
**Construction (year):** 1956  
**Housing type:** Social housing, 4-bedroom apartments  
**Urban context:** Suburb  
**Construction system:** Solid brick and ceramic  
**Status:** Building renovation

Bloc Els Mestres, a Sabadell Sud residential building, underwent a retrofit as part of the EU-funded HOUSEFUL project. Originally built in 1956 for teachers, it now features two wings with two four-bedroom apartments per floor, ample natural light, and white interiors for tenant personalisation. The Agència de l’Habitatge de Catalunya (AHC) oversaw the integration of circular solutions, physical upgrades, smart systems, reuse, and tenant inclusion. Social housing tenants now occupy the apartments, renting directly from AHC at a discounted rate. Stakeholders addressed barriers such as visualising benefits, language, water system management, circularity agent allocation, and tenant training. Conflict resolution and expectation management were crucial for tenant involvement. The project received support from various organisations.

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“Meeting my fellow Early Stage Researchers, every discussion and every interaction was infused with the communication nuances and beautiful little moments we know to be true (and take for granted) only when being in the same space with another person. This personally felt very important and extremely different from the digitally-enabled interactions we were up to now used to as a group.”

Andreas Panagidis, blog post “Lisbon IRL, Transdisciplinarity is Now Real”, September 2021



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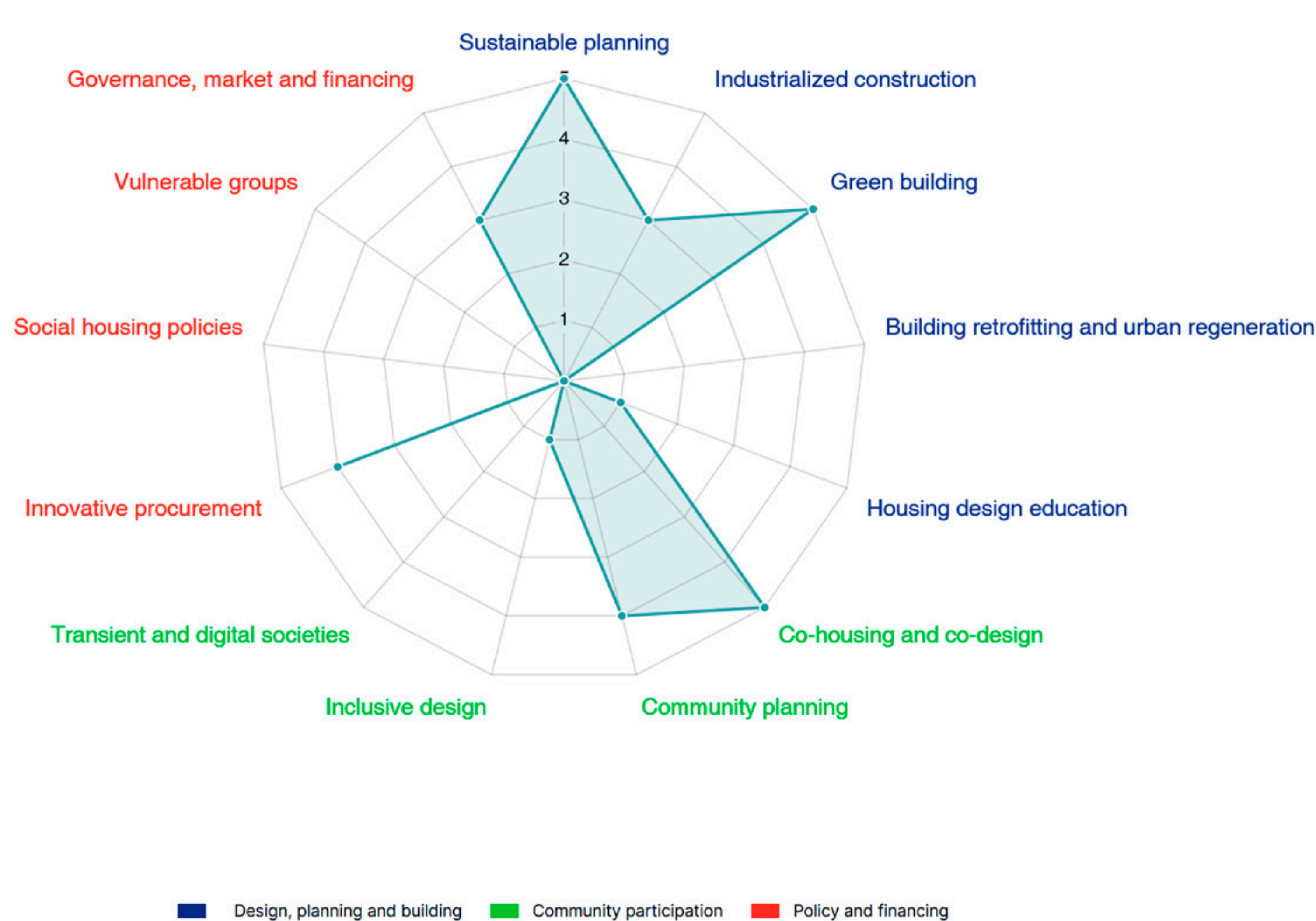
“A more individual participation approach is needed to recognise and map the different needs of the tenants prior to making the renovation plans.”

Broers, W., Kemp, R., Vasseur, V., Abujidi, N., & Vroon, Z. (2022). Justice in social housing: Towards a people-centred energy renovation process. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 88, 102527



“I was taking somebody’s gas out on a Manchester project and they said ‘I’m not gonna be able to cook on that, we cook on open flame’. It was a cultural and semi religious reason, so we left them a gas supply for the cooker.”

Anonymous retrofit architect interview, 2023



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