

Urban Grain

Architecture

Plot width and building size, and why fine grain outlives coarse grain.

Fine grain

- Narrow plots, many owners
- Change happens one plot at a time
- Variety of use, rent and age
- Many doors along the street
- Slower to build, harder to fund

Coarse grain

- Large plots, single ownership
- Change means the whole block
- One use, one rent level, one age
- Few doors, long frontages
- Faster and cheaper to deliver

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

Fine grain adapts. Coarse grain has to be replaced, which is why large single-use blocks age badly.

A coarse-grained block can be given fine-grained frontage, but ownership, not just design, drives what actually happens.