‘Common Ground’, Transitional Housing in Auckland, New Zealand

Master Thesis explanatory document

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Abstract

This project investigates social services for the accommodation of homeless and marginalised people. It provides a bridge between being completely marginalised to being integrated into assisted housing and mainstream society. It addresses the need for accommodation and public interaction between the domiciled public and marginalised people.

It is also an architectural dialogue between the marginalised realm for social support and the public realm. The merging of these realms is essential to the integration of the homeless into general society.
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Research Statement

To address homelessness in Auckland's Central Business District with an architectural proposal, providing accommodation with the necessary social services and acting as a bridge between the completely marginalised and assisted housing.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The objective is to develop transitional housing designs for marginalised individuals. The design will also incorporate provisions for social services as well as commercial opportunities on a prime city site, creating a sense of community in the neighbourhood as well as a hub for health services. The strategy behind this project is to provide an opportunity, a gateway to transform the lives of homeless people. It is acknowledged that the facility will not suit everyone.

At present, roughly seventy percent of homeless people will utilise an assisted designed accommodation as a stepping stone towards integration into mainstream society. The issues that stop those who choose not to inhabit such a building are varied in nature.

There are a wide variety of issues and needs in the seventy percent that choose to inhabit assisted accommodation. Some might have been homeless since youth or have mental disabilities or trust issues in social situations. This makes the project challenging and complex in its functionality. The objectives of this project is to assist people through a transitional state, where the occupants utilise the facilities to learn skills, knowledge and gain the ability to live independently and be integrated back into mainstream society. Architecturally the design would provide for their accommodation needs as the main focal point.

This design thesis provides a typological model that is only beginning to be defined in New Zealand. The small number of examples overseas, most notably in the United States, provide a set of innovative design strategies which address homelessness more effectively. At present there are no social services incorporated into the current structure of assisted housing and homelessness accommodation. In New Zealand, homelessness is mostly associated with emergency and night shelters. Presently, homeless shelters are located in out-of-use buildings, such as dilapidated houses or apartments, where the lack of continual funding continues a microcosm of substance abuse, and creates a criminal activity hub for the surrounding community. By providing a new, purpose-built accommodation facility including social services, it can be expected that there will be a reduction in risk for the community.
There is a difference between homeless living, rough sleepers, couch surfers, emergency housing and "full blown" social housing; therefore the requirements and needs of individuals vary greatly and a solution is needed that relates to various states of homelessness.

While the building is not seen as permanent accommodation, it is accepted that not everyone who moves into the building will gain the necessary skills, such as the ability to cook and budget, and thereby successfully move-on. Due to the nature of vagrancy some people will stay in this accommodation for an extended period of time, but the essential objective is to provide a building with facilities that can act as a step towards the transformation from 'homeless' into 'housed', bringing greater inclusiveness and, thereby, providing a stepping stone towards social integration.

1.3 Scope and Limitations

The scope of this project will include the design of a building with facilities to house three different groups: homeless people, single parents or low income families, and people undergoing detox accommodation with associated social service facilities, who may require ongoing assistance. The research ‘by design’ will reveal possibilities of incorporating these diverse groups and their needs within the same space.

1.3.1 Behind Accommodating Homeless People

In the range of homelessness, from the completely marginalised to the housed, there is little in the way of transition. Many who are homeless fail to retain a tenancy because they lack adequate skills. Homeless people are thought by many to be content with little in the way of necessities and with the bare minimum of shelter, such as living in cardboard boxes and in alcoves. This stereotyped expectation extends to how the domiciled public act towards homeless people who might reside near their dwellings and towards the behaviour of homeless people in public.

Public space is where homeless people live. It is the intention of the project to design and provide an architectural solution to the growing concern for homelessness by designing transitional housing to counteract such stereotyping.

Marginalised individuals have very limited options. While this project does not imply that homelessness should be out of sight, it merely provides options. Whilst addressing the issues facing people that are without shelter and access to services that the rest of society take for granted and have ease of access to, there is a need to provide permanent accommodation. Hence, the new transitional housing for homeless people will give them more than shelter from the weather and dissolve the stereotype of homeless people imposed by society at large. Through accommodation they will have a secure place to dwell, a place to live, a place where social workers and medical staff can monitor and provide assistance. More than anything they will have a sense of belonging and, like the domiciled public, they will be able to call a dwelling “home”.

1.3.2 Functions and Facilities

The intention of this project is to provide social service systems, incorporated within accommodation. Marginalised people are not limited to those who are homeless. Substance abusers and low income families could also benefit from being housed in the nourishing environment of the building.

The auxiliary facilities, such as a library, could also be of benefit to homeless individuals and low-income families. A summary of the functions explored and investigated will be offered later in this document.

1.3.3 Sustainability

While issues such as sustainability and the associated construction costs are fundamental in building practices this project will focus on the spatial experiences and functional requirements of accommodating homeless people.
The Chamberlain and MacKenzie definition identifies categories of primary, secondary and tertiary homelessness and has been adopted by Statistics New Zealand. Its definition of homelessness is defined as someone living in an unsafe or insecure situation, including the following:

Primary - Rough sleepers who have no shelter and live in public spaces

Secondary - Those that have no permanent shelter and sleep on the floor or couch of a relative or friend.

Tertiary - People who are living in emergency sheltered accommodation or in crisis accommodation.

Chamberlain and MacKenzie’s definition has been useful in Australia to define the scale of the problem. It has informed policy making, and there is a strong imperative to agree upon a definition in New Zealand so that policy development can progress.9

2.0 Current Knowledge of Homelessness

2.1 Definition and Statistics

A definition of homeless people has been problematic in the past. ‘Homelessness’ has traditionally been defined in terms of rough sleeping or vagrancy, excluding other kinds of insecure accommodation and severe housing need. The excerpt below describes a scenario familiar to researchers of New Zealand’s homeless situation, and it raises an issue that in many ways is the motivation of this thesis:

One day I was having a conversation with a person (a home-owner in Parnell), and when asked about my personal academic progress and what I was doing this year, I explained that I was studying homelessness in Auckland. ‘Homelessness?’ he snickered, ‘In Auckland?’ in what appeared to be disbelief that such a thing either existed or could be of importance enough to require study.

Homelessness is rarely considered to be a problem of any significance in New Zealand society. Certainly, New Zealand does not appear to have a homeless problem when compared to larger cities overseas where beggars line the streets and homeless people congregate around small fires in downtown ghettos. Nonetheless, the last count of rough sleepers in Auckland’s Central Business District on (the night of 17th June 2009) revealed a total of one hundred and fifty people bedding down on Auckland streets within a three kilometre radius of the Sky Tower. A further three to four hundred people would otherwise have been sleeping on the streets were counted in a range of temporary accommodation facilities, including the night shelter, police cells, the Auckland Hospital Emergency Department, detoxification facilities, and various hostels.6

Homelessness tends to be a global urban issue that occurs in developed nations. As the gap between the rich and the poor increases, so does the number of homeless people. The downturn in the economy in recent years has increased the number of homeless people with more people being forced out of their homes. Homeless people are attracted into the city, they find suburbia too mundane as it offers very little to engage with. By comparison, living in the city offers a range of entertainment, from civic events to passive people watching. Furthermore there is an existing network, and a community of homeless people where everyone can socialise and ‘hang out’.8

In terms of the project, it is important to define homelessness and who marginalised people actually are.

9 Ibid., 11.
8 Ibid., 5.
2.2 Demographics

2.2.1 Gender

The following table summarises the gender breakdown of the New Zealand studies information, highlighting that men are over-represented in the primary homeless population in New Zealand:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homeless</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acute Needs</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This predominance of men is consistent with international findings, but the figures above suggest that the gender imbalance could be even more pronounced in New Zealand. Studies abroad show that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals experience a higher risk of homelessness, and may have different needs to other homeless people. Future research needs to allow scope to identify this population. Australia has instituted a specific old age programme to provide for these individuals.

2.2.2 Ethnicity

Available studies show that the three predominant ethnic groupings amongst primary homeless people are Māori, Pakeha and Pacific Islanders, with Māori and Pacific Islanders being over-represented relative to their numbers in the general population.

This over-representation of indigenous people in homeless populations is similar to those in Australia, Canada and the United States.

2.2.3 Age

Figure 1: Table of gender studies

This over-representation of indigenous people in homeless populations is a pressing and increasingly visible concern in New Zealand. It is estimated that 70% of male rough sleepers are of Māori or Pacific descent. The Māori experience of homelessness extends to a loss of physical connection with their Whānau, Hapu and Iwi which results in cultural and spiritual disconnection in varying degrees.

Figure 2: Table of ethnic group studies

2.3 Age

Figure 3: Table of age group studies

Internationally, young people represent one of the fastest growing groups of primary homeless people.
Rehousing requires different arrangements for people with different needs and different interactions with community workers, officials and members of the housed public. It has been proposed that once housed, intervention is needed to maintain resettlement for homeless people, in order to reduce the risk of them returning to street life. These interventions include rebuilding ties with family and friends, establishing new contacts and addressing the anxieties of domiciled citizens regarding the sitting of services for homeless people. Such reintegration, rather than simple rehousing, requires support systems, jobs and the cultivation of social networks around homeless people.

In addition to the focus on reintegration needs, researchers have also documented the accompanying health consequences of homelessness and associated problems of substance abuse. The research states that the cycle of drug abuse can give the user the feeling of escape from the reality of being homeless. However, it is common that they sell their material possessions to pay for narcotics and therefore are in a downward spiral and remain homeless for a prolonged period of time.

2.2.4 Summary of Demographics

The statistics indicate that there is a human rights component implicated in this design. The right to live a life on the streets remains an issue that architectural design cannot and will not solve. Because the number of people being forced or choosing to be homeless is escalating, there needs to be a specific response to the demographics. The tendency for a high number of young Māori makes likely to be homeless should contribute to the design guidelines in order to establish a place that they can call home. They are seriously deprived and are very likely to be committed in a situation and have a negative effect on the community, rather than be able to contribute in the long run.

2.2.5 Pathway Back into Mainstream Society

The interweaving of personal, relational and structural dimensions of homelessness has been investigated through a focus on pathways that lead to homelessness. Research documents discover their vulnerability to poverty through a combination of traumatic life events, which may include family death, emotional, physical and sexual abuse, relationship breakdowns, mental illness, substance misuse and jobs. The way back into mainstream society varies between people.

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16 Isobel Anderson and D Tulloch, “Pathways through Homelessness: A Review of the Research Evidence,” in Urban Frontiers Programme (University of Western Sydney, 2000), 4, 6-11, 16.

Summary of Current Knowledge on Homelessness

This architectural study acknowledges that there is a fundamentally bigger issue, a human rights issue, which architecture cannot solve by itself. However, when combined with social services, as the examples below and research has proven, homelessness can be reduced. Moreover, it is not just a matter of providing a well-designed functional building, but the functions of social services are detrimental to the project, to provide support and engage in the services needed which include the following: a doctor, a dentist, detoxification clinic and education classes such as cooking skills and home economics. Support groups for all of these social services can then deem individuals safe for Housing New Zealand support, help them to occupy assisted housing and then, perhaps from there, they may get more education and integrate themselves into mainstream society.

Kearns, Smith and Abbott argue that, although New Zealand may experience low proportions of primary or street homelessness compared to international experience, there is mounting evidence that there is a large number of people in insecure living situations, inadequate housing or presenting to agencies with serious housing needs. In light of this, they argue:

> Absolute [primary] homelessness represents only the tip of the iceberg... there are many thousands more who represent the incipient homeless... in the title of the current homelessness is despair, but just around the corner is a potentially vast population of 40,000 people, many of whom are little more than one additional domestic crisis away from being on the streets.

The main issue in 2011 is that the homeless might qualify to receive a Housing New Zealand assisted flat, but frequently do not have the skills to support themselves and are often vulnerable to being taken advantage of. Circumstances such as this are very common and have an effect on the individual being evicted. The existing night shelters have not enough accommodation for the homeless people within the city. There is a great need for a transitional step between the assisted housing (including Department of Housing New Zealand), and the completely marginalised. This design aims to create a bridge between the needs of marginalised people and their ability to be responsible for their self-directed use of assisted housing.

Street Homelessness and Auckland

Homelessness has been a feature of urban life in New Zealand for over a century. For the general New Zealand public, particularly for those who have not experienced housing problems, homelessness evokes images of elderly men drinking on the streets, bag ladies rummaging through bins, street kids sniffing glue, or panhandlers harassing passers-by for change. In part, these are constructs of popular culture. Despite the ongoing presence of


Many of whom are little more than one additional domestic crisis away from being on the streets. 20

Homelessness has been documented by many social agencies, policy makers, and social scientists, who recognize that homelessness is a pressing societal concern. The New Zealand Living Standards report released in July 2006 by the Ministry of Development highlighted the increasing numbers of people from Auckland, on low incomes living in poverty. The incomes of many New Zealanders are inadequate, given the increasing costs of rates, rent, transport, food and utilities. There are significant economic differences between people, reflecting ethnicity, gender, age, employment, and education issues. Auckland in particular is in a severe situation with more applications to Housing New Zealand than elsewhere in the country.


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3.0 Precedent Studies

3.1 Local Architectural Precedent

Mission in the City - Stevens + Lawsons

Precedence has been placed heavily on the ‘Mission in the City’ project sponsored by the City Mission in 2006. Its brief highlights opportunities:

◦ To demonstrate an enlightened approach to non-profit services
◦ To deliver an exemplary regeneration project in the inner city
◦ To create contemporary, purpose built social service facilities while fulfilling other potential community needs for an under-serviced inner city neighbourhood. At the same time the project will realise commercial opportunities for the site to generate income for the partners and will enhance the central business district.23

The project was eventually won by a scheme from “Stevens + Lawsons” (Architecture firm) in 2007, mainly for their approach to giving public space back to the community. The ‘Mission in the City’ project was halted due to budget constraints and the downturn of the economy. Recently, in June 2011, Resource Consent was achieved and Auckland will be presented with its first transitional housing design.

During the four year interval, research into homelessness conducted by Waikato University has added more in-depth knowledge of the scope and severity of homelessness, thus allowing a more appropriate response. The research gathered during the interval included a more detailed list of rough sleepers and a thorough insight into their daily activities. Furthermore, it included data and psychological research into the mindset and thoughts of rough sleepers in the Auckland area and about facilities they utilize.

The winner of the ‘Mission in the City’ scheme explores the combination of social facilities and accommodation within the parameters of a city site. It is located between Hobson Street and Wellesley Street. On the north boundary is the existing St Matthew’s Cathedral, and on the south is the Auckland City Mission. The scheme layout is shown in Figure 5.

This diagram shows the position of the facilities, revealing the functions in the building on the ground floor, a public courtyard that allows the domiciled public into the space. Domiciled public enters the site from Hobson Street and exits on to Federal Street.

On the floors above, the building is divided amongst three main functions from the west to east respectively; drug detoxification, homeless accommodation and single parenting.

The architectural merit of this project has many attractions, with its innovative mixture of programmes and facilities. It is a New Zealand first. The public space that is given back to the city is the main reason why this scheme won the competition, as it allows the domiciled public and those that are marginalised, a link or bridge into each other’s space. In addition, its separation of functions is evident in section as well as in plan form. The typology of the roof style is related to the architecture of St Matthew’s Cathedral. The thought was to incorporate a contemporary setting while showing respect to the existing heritage.

Overall this scheme has begun to deal with how transitional housing can be expressed in architecture and there are many aspects of this scheme which are of merit.

A student-tutor relationship with Gary Lawson has given access to the materials and contacts available, including Wilf Holt the team leader at Auckland City Mission. A consultation was undertaken in April of 2011 with Will, and the conclusion was reached that accommodation is paramount in reducing homelessness and helping those on the margin of society.24 In addition, the close proximity to a church congregation allows services to take care of spiritual needs as well as the offering a chance for homeless people to have regular contact with the domiciled public. This is important because as research suggests, for homeless people to be accepted as members of a functioning society regular contact with the public is necessary and can take place in within public spaces such as libraries and parks. This should be taken into account in site selection and criteria.

Importance is also placed on social housing schemes and homeless shelters from around the world, including the recent works of Michael Maltzan’s Carver apartments (2010) and Rainbow apartments (2006).24

24 Interview with Wilf Holt accessed April 2011 recorded 27th March 2011.
Figure 5 - Ground floor plan (top), second, third, fourth and fifth floor (bottom)
3.2 Architectural Precedents Overseas

Social service programmes to reduce homelessness overseas have gained traction in the last decade. In particular, “Common Ground”, a non-profit organisation, has developed revolutionary policies to reduce homelessness to zero with the support of social service systems which allow homeless people to integrate into mainstream society. It is popular with communities, government agencies and homeless people alike. “Common Ground” is a non-profit social service organisation. It started in the United States in 1990 with the goal of creating high-quality, permanent and transitional housing for homeless people. It provides buildings with supportive housing residences and on-site social services designed to help tenants maintain their housing, address health issues and pursue education and employment.

The organisations accomplishments include more than 2,000 housing units for homeless people, which has reduced street homelessness by 87% in a 20 block radius of the Times Square neighborhood. Their work in association with several other firms, provides important information to be analysed. These include The Schermerhorn in downtown Brooklyn (217 units), The Lee in Manhattan (263 units) and The Hegeman in Brownsville Brooklyn (161 units).25 The examples allow a better understanding of how the plan was developed and address issues of security, spatial arrangement and urban space.

Carver Apartments (2010), Michael Maltzan

Established in 2010, the Carver apartments are located not in the heart of a homeless concentration, but a mile away, directly adjacent to a busy section of Interstate 10, a freeway that slices east to west across the Los Angeles basin. Because of the populated urban regions in the US it has become increasingly difficult to open land for new construction. As a result, public agencies, school districts and social service organizations are finding that when they manage to raise money for new facilities, the only available unbuilt parcels of land are near or immediately adjacent to freeways.

The scheme utilises a circular shape, limiting the number of apartments that face the freeway. Triple-paned glass helps keep the sound of the traffic to a low murmur inside the 95 apartments, each of which is an efficient 28 square meters. In a metaphoric and symbolic sense, the freeway-adjacent site makes clear to drivers and to the public at large that the homeless and formerly homeless population is not a group that deserves to be hidden away.

At times during the day, when traffic slows to a crawl, drivers have a chance to look directly into a third floor laundry room and come face to face with homeless people in a supportive setting.

The Carver apartment provides an array of principles for design. Firstly, its use of colour provides a spectacle and has a visual impact on the site. It does not conform to the surrounding typology and

architectural language. The form and shape of the building does not respect its neighbourhood, introducing a new typology to the community.

The principles drawn from this scheme show a use of open spaces and cross ventilation. The individual rooms allow openings, not only for viewing, but provide a much needed energy and air, therefore, cost efficient. On the top floor there is a communal, open space where occupants can gather, this is important to create a setting within the mass of apartment rooms.

The communal space is repeated on the ground floor, where social interaction can occur. The atrium space is cleverly created to provide ventilation and a sense of private space ( inward designed looking for the occupants), but the design has vertical metal fins that block the line of sight and provide a screen into viewing the central atrium space. Lastly, social services are located on the ground floor, which provides the occupants with a separation from the streets, where they used to dwell. Having the ground floor for facilities allows monitoring and a physically secure barrier, allowing the confines of the building to enclose a community.
Rainbow Apartments [2006], Michael Maltzan

The Rainbow Apartments was another project designed by Michael Maltzan. It sets up a new model not only for a building, but for an entire combination of social enterprises, it not only produces new paradigms for Los Angeles, but also the possibility of creating a new national model. The project addresses how to counteract the insularity and hermetic nature of the inhabitants' daily lives and concerns over safety and security through introducing openness, social spaces and enabling a reintegration of their lives into public life as a whole. The project has been arranged in a partially open U-shaped configuration: five floors of residential units cradle a central courtyard on top of an array of parking and administrative functions on the ground floor. A chain of public spaces and exterior gathering areas are carved out, or extrude, from the mass to erode the building's apparent solidity, creating varying depths of connection and views between the internal life of the courtyard and the world outside.

Design principles from the Rainbow Apartments are as follows: the use of a communal kitchen on the first floor attracts occupants to socialize and interact. The individual rooms are cross ventilated through the incorporation of three main windows, one near the entrance and two in the living area. One of these windows is a higher strip window near the ceiling which provides ventilation whilst retaining privacy. Despite its seemingly solid form on the street frontage, the building itself is open to the south with great views to the city. Its southern orientation allows the central courtyard natural sunlight. These are all ideas worth considering in the design of the project.
Analysis

Both the Carver and Rainbow projects reflect an innovative approach to housing the homeless population in a supportive environment. The transitional accommodation provides a gateway to the mainstream population.

The architecture is modern and contemporary, breaking away from the architectural character of the surroundings. This injection of bright colours and form is commendable, however, the orientation of some of the accommodation is questionable, with apartment units facing east-west, as opposed to north-south, allowing only a small amount of sunlight to directly shine into the units.

Both of these schemes utilise a separation from the streets, with monitor rooms and security barriers located on the ground floor up to the communal first floor for the occupants. It does, however, bring ample sunlight and exposure to the environment in its central courtyard and the use of the communal kitchen, while attention to sustainable materials and construction should also be taken into consideration.
The Schermerhorn House - Polshek Partnership Architects
[Ennead Architects 2009]

Located in downtown Brooklyn, this building provides 217 units of permanent, affordable housing for single adults, with more than 50% of the units reserved for the formerly homeless and individuals with special needs. Low-income working tenants, including local actors and artists, occupy the remaining units.

The project combines community and retail space, supportive housing and rooftop gardens. The primary, north-facing facade consists of five translucent channel glass tower elements that are meant to reflect the rigorous program housed inside the building.

On the transparent ground level, the lobby and retail space are visually and spatially open to invite the public in. A multi-purpose space is used for performances, tenant meetings and community activities for groups in the neighbourhood. The south side of the building has a garden terrace on the second level to ease the transition to the low-level surrounding residential area.

Analysis

The most noticeable aspect of the design for Schermerhorn House is its sustainable design principles. The building's channel glass facade has been fabricated with a high percentage of post-consumer waste glass and Low E glazing to enhance the overall thermal performance. Additionally, the second floor "green" roof terrace serves to minimise heat island effect and act as a communal space for its occupants.

The terraced area protrudes out from the building, where it too is a communal space, where the computer labs and common room are located. The apartment units are oriented to the north and south with a corridor separating them. Architecturally the units to the north are not ideal as there is little to no direct sunlight and very little in the way of cross ventilation at it uses a high efficiency boiler system for air conditioning.

At the basement level, a subway system runs past the building, with a subway station located within walking distance. This is important as marginalised individuals are unable to afford personal vehicles, so having public transport within walking distance is a positive aspect and will also help in defining the site location for my project.
The site is located on Pitt and Houston Streets on Manhattan’s Lower East Side. The project accommodates 262 residents, including adults with special needs and low-income working adults; 55 units will be reserved for young adults aging out of foster care and at risk of homelessness. The building includes a large multipurpose room, outdoor landscaped gardens, computer lab, fitness room, green roof, laundry room, 24 hour security and attended lobby.

Analysis

The Lee Residence is twelve stories high with on site social services. While architecturally its functions are located logically, there is a box-like sense to the building. Ground floor plan and cross sections indicate the separation of functions for adult and the young adult population.

The second and third floors are dedicated to young adults growing out of foster care in three to four bedroom layout. A dedicated common area on the first floor and a common circulation staircase with double height space connect all three floors.

This building emphasizes circulation spaces with the double height space connecting two floors, which has been provided to encourage social interaction, and allow daylight to flood into the spaces.

Three different outdoor spaces are provided with varying degrees of privacy and interaction with the street. There is a private enclosed back garden, a front garden which overlooks the street, and a roof terrace. The plan showing daylight is possibly misrepresentative as there is little to no direct sun exposure on the northern facade.

The use of a corridor with units on both the north and the south sides, means only the south-facing units will be exposed to direct sunlight, with the corridor being a dark and perhaps sterile environment.
The Hegeman Residence has an inviting entrance off the streetscape that encloses the occupants with a high ceiling that is engaging to the public to come through the lobby. The upper floors are opened to this area, creating both an atrium and a social space. Communal functions are scattered on the ground floor plan for the occupants with a workout, computer and laundry room on the western side. The eastern side houses various social services and offices. However, the courtyard is north facing and has little exposure to sunlight. The units themselves are west and east facing through a corridor located between them.

The facade has been treated in brick with glass curtain wall for the circulation space. This is respectful to the character of neighboring buildings and should be taken into consideration for the new project.

The Hegeman [2010] - Cook + Fox Architects

The Hegeman building is a 5-storey transitional housing apartment located in Brooklyn, New York, where disproportionate numbers of residents become homeless. Similar to previous precedent studies, this was also part of Common Ground’s neighborhood-based homelessness prevention effort. The residence is planned to have approximately 140 studio apartments, 61 of which will be for low-income individuals from the community and 100 studio will be for homeless, single adults. The architects’ Cook and Fox design is based on sustainability with elements, including a green roof, lighting and motion sensors, a building management system with on-site 24 hour security, storm water irrigation and condensing boilers. Further amenities include a computer room, exercise room, a laundry room and a garden for use by residents of the neighborhood.
Transparency in a Public Building

A case study of the recently completed Telecom Building in Auckland is an example of how successful the idea of transparency within a building can be. The atrium allows light to penetrate through the building, creating habitable spaces; furthermore the transparency allows connection to the public on the ground floor. These are effective strategies to implement which can be applied to this proposal.

Reason to Go Public

The emphasis of marginalised housing is on the dwelling and social support. The tenants go through a process of moving away from living on the streets into inhabiting their own space. It is vital that there are layers of support integrated into this transition. For marginalised people it is essential to have public spaces where they can see themselves as a legitimate part of ‘the public’ and not categorised under a social group. The right to inhabit prime public spaces enhances the sense of belonging.

The public thoroughfare allows a connection for the domiciled public to the marginalised and vice versa. This is an important step towards integration. By a simple acknowledgement and awareness of the people, understanding and assumptions regarding the homeless will be better understood. The architectural implications means that the building would become a platform for individuals who are interested in social housing, marginalised people and transitional housing. As well as social workers other members of the community would share their ideas and knowledge in the form of classes, or short courses, that benefit the marginalised as they prepare for their journey of integration. Classes such as cooking and general budgeting are important as they benefit the tenants in applying for future work and housing.

A thoroughfare would potentially generate enough connection to and for the public and the marginalised. It is important to have supplementary functions that would lead and enhance the space of this shortcut. This would consolidate its presence in the fabric of the city and its streets.

Summary of the precedents

From the above precedent studies, several design strategies have emerged as potentially successful in terms of creating the connection between the dwelling spaces and public spaces. The idea of allowing a shortcut through the site would generate public pedestrian flow. Accompanying this with a courtyard or atrium space where public convergences can take place, such as cafes and a library, would give this space centrality to the building.
Site Selection
4.0 Develop the Project: Design and Research

4.1 Site Criteria and Design Problem

The proposed site will be located in Auckland, the biggest city in the country to determine an innovative approach within the highest concentration of homeless people. To select a site for the proposed building, specific criteria need to be established. The key attributes associated with successful selection for the site of the building will be as follows:

- Strategic location in the city that has natural light, has access to public spaces and rejuvenates a derelict site.
- Existing services from the church congregation (from counseling to social groups such as cooking classes) within walking distance.
- Within walking proximity to the city.
- Close proximity to the usual daily routine of homeless people.

The proximity to central Auckland and New Zealand social service buildings such as the City Mission, Lifewise and the Salvation Army as well as public facilities including the library, education providers, universities and city centre spaces were deciding factors. Furthermore, the ability to encourage public awareness and interaction at designated areas in the building and public space need to be investigated.

To enhance pedestrian access there will be investigations into rural titling, gates and movement based on a communal Security of the entry.
4.2 Site Location

Based on these criteria, it was considered advantageous to favour a location in the vicinity of central Auckland as this is the area where the majority of homeless rough sleepers are located. This area includes a diverse range of activity nodes.

At the outset of the research project it was considered that a vacant site or car parking site would be suitable for development. Currently, parking buildings have a single function. Their potential lies in the ability to re-enforce the area where vehicles have dominance, in turn promoting a pedestrian-friendly accessible space for the city. Visual connection between the homeless and the rest of the city is important because it ensures that homeless people are not ‘tucked away’; they are noticed and it is important to encourage awareness of the marginalised.

The Auckland Central Business District offers a diverse range of activities, however, for marginalised people it is essential to have public spaces, particularly parks and libraries, as research has shown that by claiming a space in public, social groups themselves become public. Only in public spaces can homeless people represent themselves as a legitimate part of the public. Homeless people’s participation in civic life and their right to inhabit prime public places are important because this allows them to be, to experience belonging, and to move out from marginal spaces.29

4.3 Alternative Site 1: St Matthew’s site

4.3.1 Site Analysis

To integrate marginalised people into mainstream society an investigation of the site and surrounding context is needed. The site is approximately 50m long by 40m wide at the corner of Hobson Street and Wellesley Street. Auckland City Mission and St Matthew’s Church together comprise 4,355m². This means a development potential of over 56,000m².

4.3.2 Surrounding Context

To the southern side of the site are apartment blocks with little architectural merit. However St Matthew’s Church, a significant historical heritage building, is located on the north side. Its Gothic Revival architectural language has affected the conceptual design. There is a potential movement line from Hobson Street, cutting through the site to Victoria Street West towards Queen Street. This guiding principle was influential in allowing public access into the open space thus creating a public square.

4.3.3 Topography

This is a relatively flat site, with a 3m slope down towards the west onto Federal Street. This slope in combination with movement line, influenced the initial design concept model.
Conclusions drawn from Stevens + Lawson solution

This scheme has integrated social service with accommodation on a particular site. The typology has been pre-approved through resource consent.

It is my intention to construct this typology with further research that develops and expands their project. I have taken functions, such as the accommodation for single parent families, and providing a public space into consideration. In addition, accommodation for homeless people and those requiring drug detoxification will be considered.

However, it is the intention of this project not to simply imitate the architecture, but rather to create another interpretation of what is possible in Auckland city. This will be done through investigations into site selection and building functions.

The Stevens + Lawson project is twelve stories high, over 50m tall; the same as an apartment block located to the south. While these two buildings are within the council regulations, the high-rise living takes people away from the ground and away from the casual, everyday society that occurs on the streets and on the gardens and porches. It leaves people alone in their apartments. The choice to leave home becomes formal and awkward; it encourages a tendency to stay home.

There are a variety of reasons that make it advantageous for a building to be three or four stories. One can still walk comfortably down to the streets, and from a window you can still feel part of the street; the details are visible—people, their faces, foliage, shops. Not only do these factors encourage a community atmosphere, but become one of security. The connection to the ground and to the fabric of the city becomes healthier.

This was one of the reasons why site Alternatives 1 & 2 were not chosen, as the area of the site was simply too small to allow a building that would house over one hundred and fifty people.
4.4 Alternative Site 2: Inner City Site

4.4.1 Site Analysis

This site was originally explored because it is close to Queen Street and has a connection to arterial roads within central city. The current site functions as a car park with a tourist attracting amusement ride. The emptiness of the site will minimally impact on the city. The site is square and occupies 65 meters by 60 meters on the corner of Albert Street, Victoria Street West and Elliott Street.

4.4.2 Surrounding Context

Tall commercial glass facades are to the east, west and southern side of the site. They restrict sunlight into the site. A mix of functions is located in the vicinity. It is surrounded by retail stores, food outlets, cafes, bars and commercial entities, most notably the Crown Plaza Hotel and Philips Fox towers. These towers are located to the south and east of the site respectively. They are over 100m tall and are difficult with regard to creating an architectural language suited to the project.

Access to site for movement lines (for the public) is mostly from Albert Street, cutting through the site towards Elliott Street.

4.4.3 Topography

The western part of the site has a 12m high terrace overlooking the eastern side. Its level difference was embraced in the initial concept design, with opportunity for utilising the spaces underneath. The initial concept design also had to allow for movement lines from the formidable level change from Albert Street to Elliott Street. Both the St Matthew’s site and the inner city site are within a ten minute walk to a number of key attractions in Auckland City, most notably:

- University of Auckland, Auckland University of Technology
- Galleries and Libraries
- Aotea Square
- Myers and Albert Park
4.5 Alternative Site 3: St Patrick’s Site

4.5.1 Site analysis

This rectangular site is further away from Queen Street than the other sites, yet is still within walking distance of the Central Business District area. Currently, it contains a four-storey car park. It is proposed that the car park building be demolished, with the potential to reuse the structural footings and columns. Located on the corner of Hobson Street and Wyndham Street, it is the biggest area of the three sites at 70m by 50m, with the potential to extend further north past Bradnor Lane onto the derelict car parking site.

4.5.2 Surrounding Context

Towards the north is an empty car parking lot with a 10-storey high apartment complex, offering little architectural intrigue. To the west is the old Deloitte building, with its full floor to ceiling glass facade. The building has an existing sky bridge linking the site to the building on the 3rd floor. To the east, past the busy arterial road of Hobson Street, is the parish centre of St Patrick’s Church. The height of this context building prevents afternoon western sunlight to the site.

The roof type and pitch echoes that of residential homes creating a mixture of architectural styles and types. Further east lies St Patrick’s Square itself, a newly refurbished landscaped feature which offers a peaceful and quiet zone within the bustling city. St Patrick’s church is considered an important node within Auckland city. The close proximity to the site offers not only an advantageous position for the project but also for the community.

The Heritage Hotel is located on the southern side of the site with a relatively small public space between the hotel wings. Furthermore, the Gaze tower over 100m high lies to the south east side of the site.

4.5.3 Topography

This site offers a gradual slope downwards from the south to the north. Its gradient would give an interesting architectural guideline to immerse the building and the public movement line in the surrounding context.
Connection to the city

The proposed public space allows a thoroughway through the site from the corner of Nelson and Fanshawe Street up towards Holborn Street. The current pedestrian links as shown in Figure 40. To get access from Viaduct Basin to mid-level of Central Business District Quay street, one would have to walk towards Quay Street as it currently lacks a pedestrian way. Therefore, a direct route would create a much more vibrant atmosphere and enhance the perception of two separated entities. In addition, a thoroughfare mentioned before, it increases understanding and breaks down the wall of separating public space. As research done by University of Waikato suggests, it is important to view urban spaces as navigable and manageable, rather than fixed and determinative of rights and identities. Contemporary cities comprise an uneven patchwork of ‘marginal’ (under bridges) than fixed and determinative of rights and identities. Contemporary cities comprise an uneven patchwork of ‘marginal’ (under bridges) and ‘prime’ (shopping districts) spaces where the urban landscape reflects the arrangements and renegotiations of social power to include and exclude. By claiming space in public, by creating public spaces, social groups and communities can gain access to basic material resources including food, the need for clothing and medical care. These spaces also provide relief from material goods and from loneliness. This project proposes for clothing and medical care. These spaces also provide relief from material goods and from loneliness. This project proposes

Conclusions Drawn from Site Analysis

After further research and initial concept designs it soon became apparent, that neither the inner city site nor St Matthew’s would be appropriate for this project. Neither of them would deliver a successful result because of the lack of opportunity to rejuvenate a connection between the site and the city. It was the intention to select a site that was isolated from the urban fabric, but through design, would create a continuous pedestrian movement. Furthermore, the inner city site did not match the initial concept design’s scale and architectural language as the surrounding buildings were of considerable height, discouraging the use of the conceptual design scale. As Figure 29 shows the scale of the surrounding commercial buildings and initial proposal were of tremendous height variations. While both sites are in close proximity to key facilities, in particular outdoor public green spaces, the library and university, the St Patrick’s site shares the same difficulties and is within walking distance of those facilities and more.

The selection of the site was based on the key attributes stated earlier and in conjunction with the prospect of rejuvenation part of the city. The selection would furthermore be based on recognising a site with the potential of incorporating a public movement line. Finally, a decision was made to utilise the site adjacent to St Patrick’s Cathedral, opposite Holborn Street, located between Wyndham Street, Fanshawe Street and Bradnor Lane. This site would have the capability to activate the waterfront and viaduct precinct, providing an alternative movement line to that of Queen Street. The use of public space in larger buildings has been an important architectural principle since the classical period of great Roman antiquity. More recently, including the pavement, are considered a public space. As research done by University of Waikato suggests, it is important to view urban spaces as navigable and manageable, rather than fixed and determinative of rights and identities. Contemporary cities comprise an uneven patchwork of ‘marginal’ (under bridges) and ‘prime’ (shopping districts) spaces where the urban landscape reflects the arrangements and renegotiations of social power to include and exclude.

Public Space and Accessibility

The importance of interactions with the domiciled public, and supportive environments for homeless people, has been discussed in relation to the notion of ‘spaces of care’. These spaces comprise semi-private domains, such as hostels and day centres, where people can gain access to basic material resources including food, the need for clothing and medical care. These spaces also provide relief from material goods and from loneliness. This project proposes public space, where emphasis is placed on inclusion where homeless people can gain a sense of belonging — also qualify as spaces of care or spaces of nourishment. In addition, attention introduced in the 19th century industrial revolution, developed the idea of multiple-storey buildings where natural light and open spaces were important design elements with multiple benefits. They introduced features such as glazed roofs, to protect occupants from the weather, while flooding the space with natural light. This will be a design feature in the proposal to allow people to experience the natural light and openness of the space. This will be a design feature in the proposal to allow people to experience the natural light and openness of the space.
PLANS SECTIONS
IMAGES OF CONTEXT
RELATIONSHIPS THAT COUNT
Figure 35 View from Hobson St. facing south

Figure 36 View on Bradnor Ln. NZI in the background

Figure 37 View on Hobson St with existing carpark and Heritage Hotel in the background
5.0 Concept Design

The question which was asked was 'how to provide a home for homeless' at the outset of this project. The symbols that we associate with the word 'home' are a point of departure for generating a visual vocabulary for a building for the homeless. Usually, the symbol of a home has been represented diagrammatically cross section through a gable-roofed picture, understood by the western culture as a symbol of a home and a safe family environment. It is important for homeless people in this project to relate to the building visually, to enhance a sense of identity and character. This idea of place and belonging will give the homeless a place to call home. Factors also considered are the representation of Māori and Pacific Island as they need to secure their cultural identity.

The roof plays a primary role in our lives. The most primitive buildings are nothing but a roof. If the roof is hidden, if its presence cannot be felt around the building, or if it cannot be utilised, then people lack a fundamental sense of shelter. This sheltering function cannot be created by a pitched roof or large roof, because it merely adds to the top of an existing structure. The roof itself only shelters if it contains, embraces, covers, surrounds the process of living. This means very simply, that the roof must not only be large and visible, but must also include living quarters within its volume.

George Rand (Associate Professor for the School of Architecture and Urban Planning in University of California, Los Angeles) states that people are extremely conservative about their images of home and shelter. Despite years of the flat roofs of the "modern movement," people still find the simple pitched roof the most powerful symbol of shelter.

Initial investigations were around those of a 'humble home', the standard roof form of a house in New Zealand. Conceptually, the pitched roof provides shelter, its aim is to achieve safety for homeless people.

Panoramic Views

Currently the site is a three level car park used by the surrounding commercial bodies. Its sole function is one dimensional- so this project could enhance this underutilised site through redevelopment. The Cathedral could be referred to as a formal language in the design process; instead of the modern commercial buildings in proximity to the site.

Analysis from Aerial Images

In order to successfully integrate the proposed transitional housing building into the urban fabric, urban analysis needed to be undertaken to investigate the site and the surrounding context. The site is approximately 70m along Wyndham Street, and 50m wide on the Hobson Street side. It is rectilinear in form and there is an opportunity to utilise the empty parking lot north of the site, across into Fanshawe Street, creating a desirable pedestrian access way up through Auckland City as indicated by Figure 31.

An examination of the aerial image of the site indicates that currently it has little connection to the Viaduct Basin and St Patrick's Cathedral. Fanshawe Street and Hobson Street are very active with one way arterial roads, similar to a motorway. The site provides a visual connection from the arterial roads to the building. This connection, in conjunction with the public spaces, is a way to invite the domiciled public to increase interaction with others.
Small public squares.

A city needs public squares; it allows a place for gathering for small crowds, festivities and speeches to occur. It gives the people a place in a city; it is considered a public ‘room’. But they also need to be supported by a series of smaller public squares, where streets swell out at important nodes where there is most activity. This project has allowed interaction between the domiciled public and inhabitants of the building. This engages with the public through shared spaces, facilities and commercial enterprises. Shared spaces such as the public library and cafeterias are located on the ground floor. The café uses the fresh vegetables from the terraced vegetable garden on the northern face of the site. The vegetable garden also allows homeless people to be taught planting and gardening skills.

This common public space has two social functions. Firstly, the space makes it possible for people to feel comfortable outside their buildings and their private territory, and, therefore, allows them to feel connected to the larger social system—though not necessarily to any specific neighbour. Secondly, it acts as a meeting place for people.

Figure 39  St Patrick’s Square – busy lunch hour
Hobson Street
Pedestrian Patterns of Movement

The diagram on the right shows the relationship between the Auckland Viaduct and the inner city. Currently the automobile dominance on Fanshawe Street limits pedestrian access. The public park at St Patrick’s Cathedral is isolated from the city. The movement line being introduced in this scheme will connect the public walkway to the Viaduct.

Rough Sleepers Pattern of Movement

Rough sleepers move between services such as City Mission and Lifewise, where they offer an array of help from food parcels to doctor drop ins. This pattern is repetitive. Rough sleepers tend to inhabit spaces that are publicly acceptable to dwell in, spaces such as parks and libraries, where they feel safe and socially included. This is shown in Figure 40. The triangle shows where most of the rough sleepers reside on a daily basis. It also illustrates that the chosen site exists within their normal daily routine and places visited. This is important as it allows the occupants to maintain a connection with the streets. It is, however, a project that provides an alternative to living rough.

Homeless people are known to gather in open spaces, in particular spaces that are deemed public and establish a ‘we-ness’ or shared identity.31 Research has shown “spaces for care” where they can wash, be warm, socialize, use a telephone, eat and have access to medical care, and thus gain temporary respite from the street are important. The concept of “spaces for care” was developed to explain spaces in which people can experience connection, essence of belonging, support, maintain identity and benefit from social capital. A significant feature is that nobody uses, nor the places they inhabit, exist independently; caring activities and spaces are important to each other.32

A study of the homeless community includes family and other groups. The homeless family or group provides an identity and sense of belonging, while it separates them from the domiciled. These group affiliations provide a source of friendship, and support to access services, learning skills necessary for surviving the streets and ensuring personal safety. Extended family structures exist among Auckland street kids. Particular people in these groups emulate parental roles, especially in relation to the newly homeless who do not know how to access services or how to find ‘safe’ places to sleep, and how to conduct themselves or obtain basic resources for survival. What is clear is that the tensions between inclusion and exclusion are played out in public spaces with reference to the presence of homeless people in New Zealand cities, and that the various public and official responses require further investigation.33

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31 Hodgetts et al., “‘Near and Far’: Social Distancing in Domiciled Characterisations of Homeless People.”
Climatic conditions

Auckland is renowned for having four seasons in one day, creating varying circumstances in outdoor spaces. The chosen site is situated in an advantageous position because it is shielded from the prevailing south westerly, but is open to the north. The location benefits from all-day sunlight from east to west. This is especially important in winter months for homeless people without shelter during cold winter months. The location to adjacent public spaces allows the homeless to live away from the confines of the building in another public realm. To the south of the site are hotels and hostels, with a small public space opposite Wyndham Street.

Activity

The current urban fabric offers little opportunity for interactivity amongst the community. This, coupled with modern glass facades, creates a cold and uninviting urban environment for the occupants and therefore architecturally, transparency in the building will give visual clues that could be beneficial. The site could provide the sense of place for a community through activities and functions as opposed to the current commercial with little public activities.

Topography

At present the building site has a downward slope of 12m towards the north. This landform would be a feature in dealing with issues surrounding pedestrian movement through the area.

5.1 Conclusions Drawn from Urban Analysis

Summary of factors comprising influential aspects of the site context and opportunities arising from selection of this site include:

- The site location is visible from Fanshawe Street and Hobson Street, both busy arterial roads in the Central Business District. This is an important connection visually for the domiciled public and marginalised it people because gives a sense of place for the occupants, but also enables public awareness of their existence.
- Potential of creating pedestrian connection movement line between Fanshawe Street and Hobson Street.
- Public facilities and services within the proximity such as public parks, Victoria Park and the newly refurbished St Patrick’s Square, second hand clothing stores and education institutions.
- With a limited number of buildings to the north, the site is open to natural sunlight all year round.
- The topography of the site slopes towards the north-western side, towards the Viaduct, an important element in design; thus including exposure to sunlight. Therefore, buildings should be placed on the southern side with an orientation towards the north, to allow sunlight into the central communal space.

6.0 Design Process and development

Guiding Principles

- Through critical research into transitional housing architecture, the urban context of the proposed site external factors and parameters that informed the design decisions.
- Massing Forms
- Provide essential elements required for the accommodation of homeless people, low income families and those requiring drug detoxification and rehabilitation.
6.1 Functional Organisation

The building will house a range of functions that have been organized into four categories. The needs have been derived from earlier investigation into relevant functional requirements. The facilities provided for homeless people are also applicable to facilities for drug detoxification services.

Category One - The Homeless

The functions required for transitional housing to successfully operate in New Zealand include the overlay of social service attendant on the needs of homeless people. They will have immediate access to social workers, nurses and doctors. The services for the homeless will include:

- Reception and a waiting area
- Bedroom, bathroom and a kitchen.

Category Two - Family

The project will provide housing for families, particularly those who are single parents and those who are low income earners. By living in the city, they are close to universities and other educational facilities that could allow them to further their education. This could have previously been difficult, due to travelling time and not having child care support.

Category Three - Detoxification accommodation

- Reception and waiting area.
- Communal dining lounge and kitchen.
- Doctor and/or nurse.
- Low income or single parent accommodation.
- Spaces will include bedroom, kitchen and dining, with a communal bathroom. It is important that they be exposed to natural sunlight.

Category Four - Public

Public access and facilities

- Central courtyard space
- Underground car parking
- Lecture theatre - multiple uses as education and training room
- Cafeterias
- Day care centre
- Library
6.2 Movement Line

The public movement line will have an influence on the design. It will create parameters that the design will need to adhere to. The connection of the site to the Viaduct Basin is crucial, therefore, it is essential that the public movement line, that passes through the site as part of the design be integrated into the site and building. This will be achieved through a series of interlinking spaces which will bind the separate functions as indicated in Figure 42.

The key functions include accommodation for homeless, a detoxification centre, low income or single parenting accommodation, and public areas. The nature of this project means these functions are not typically interlocked, but are isolated, stacking volumes for privacy and security. However, by introducing an organisation pattern of the public, it creates an intersection and visual connection between the marginalised and the more public realms of the building. Furthermore, the public movement line should not be "considered merely as a functional linking device, then circulation paths would be endless, corridor-like spaces. The form and scale of a circulation space, however, should accommodate the movement of people as they promenade, pause, rest, or take in a view along a path."

In summary, the public movement line (both indoors and outdoors) should be considered as a street, where it could stimulate the boundary through a series of public functions, such as cafes, exhibition spaces and view shafts along the movement line.

Verticality of Movement Line

In the central business district urban environment, high rises are common. To accommodate such a large number of people requires multiple stories. This aspect, combined with the natural topography of the site, (sloping down towards the north over 12m) and the combination of functions requires a horizontal and vertical circulation strategy. A measure of security is desirable and, thus, some division has to be factored in.

The project will incorporate several staircases to allow visitors and dwellers to move around the space.

Approach and Entry Points into the Building

There is a clear advantage to opening the site towards the east due to its linkage and movement line for pedestrians to the city. Furthermore linkage to the north-western side of the site of the slope allows the generation of a ‘gateway’ into the scheme.

6.3 Formal Design

The building forms are the result of a number of infl uences. The key components were exposure to sunlight, a public movement line, approach and entry points, the juxtaposition of functions within the building envelope and human and city scale and the conceptual formal gestures.

6.4 Process of Development

In order to develop the project, analysis and investigations were undertaken with architectural strategies and supplementary functional layout in mind. The development of ideas was taken from each design and the process of discovery within the boundaries of the guiding principles. It is through research by design that this method of design explorations can be made. The functional requirements and the boundary of private and public spaces were investigated through sections, plans and physical models, each of which was used to indicate whether the architectural strategies proposed were successful. After each exploration the design was evaluated against the guiding principles in order to establish the aspects which had or had not worked in order to progress the development of the design.
7.0 Exploration

7.1 Exploration One – Massing models

The first exploration followed the guidelines and investigated the architectural strategies that would develop into physical massing form on the site. The building divided into individual forms, each with various roof pitch, integrated into each other. It has been designed this way to add character to the building, and relate to the classical style of St Matthew’s Church. This massing model created an open public space running through the site; with tall buildings located on the southern end to allow maximum sunlight exposure.

This first massing model did not show consideration for the church with buildings being immediately adjacent to it.

The subsequent exploration model altered a number of building forms, creating an interesting play on angles and extrusions as Figures 44a,b and c shows. It also opened up the public space to the church across Hobson Street. This is a peripheral asset as it allows occupants to dwell within another public space close to the building.

Drawings

These drawings were atmospheric sketches to indicate scale and how the treatment of the roof and façade should be dealt with. It was intended to allow the public through the site, gaining visibility into the building, and for the public to have chance interaction with the occupants.

After these massing models and investigations were complete, the idea of exploring more sites was instructive. Hence, research and site location was determined, and as a result this massing model has since been made defunct.
Figure 45a: View from Hobson St with Skytower in background. On the left, tall apartment building showing scale in relation to proposal.

Figure 45b: Atmospheric pencil drawing to show scale of people and roof characteristics.

Figure 44a: Roof plan of configurations
Figure 44b: Roof plan: note the changes
Figure 44c: Roof plan: note the connection to St Matthews church.
The initial sketches were exploratory, creating spaces to provide an indicative form of how roof pitches, spaces surrounding, and forms would unite together in section. The structural elements were intertwined in the concept drawings, as well as the height of the building when placed onto the site. Constant refinement was achieved through capturing the essence and clarity of form and space with juxtaposition of roof pitches in each subsequent sketch.

The sections were drawn without any particular scale or site in mind, as it was an initial concept and form-based exploration.

Development models

The first sectional model on the far left indicates an extrusion of the refined section at various lengths; these were made along the wall and roof. It was done to activate the spaces in relation to itself and the spaces within the section. These spaces provided a suggestion of how the building would function and the size of spaces. It became apparent that further exploration was required.

The first sectional model in the far left indicates an extrusion of the refined section at various lengths; these were made along the wall and roof. It was done to activate the spaces in relation to itself and the spaces within the section. These spaces provided a suggestion of how the building would function and the size of spaces. It became apparent that further exploration was required.

The development of the concept sectional model explored the formal nature through additional extrusions. Figures 47a & b indicate the extrusion length, thereby creating more space. Two important architectural moves were made. First, being the angled extrusion. Second, because it was a conceptual sectional model of sorts, the model was made with the benefit of allowing it to fold over. This allowed further exploration of the spaces the model could achieve, in turn producing and widening the architectural language being pursued formally. Furthermore, when scale of people was introduced, it became apparent that some spaces created in the model were more fitting at particular scales, especially the case of creating a space to house, homeless people. To provide a safe and sheltered environment was crucial in modelling the size and scale of the spaces. Photography was used to explore the scale of the occupant to the model further, as was inversion of images, providing a sense of nightscape in the image.
These two images show an conceptual model exploring spaces, roof and their relationships and characteristics to each other. The two images show a positive (right) and negative (left). This explores the idea of space being occupied at night and what spaces were open or enclosed.
Through photographing images, then transforming them in inverse, shows the relationships between positive and negative spaces. The model was made with the intention of being movable, since it was a conceptual model, it allowed maximum exploration of spaces and the relationships that could be gathered.
Figure 47e & f

Depicting more explorations of the opened conceptual model shown in positive and negative. This configuration has the top section opened.
7.3 Exploration Three - Massing
Models & Drawings

This exploration was to follow the guidelines and investigate the architectural strategies that would develop into physical form on the site. The site is now located at the chosen location as concluded in urban analysis at the corner of Wyndham Street and Hobson Street.

The massing model on these two pages depicts a collection of buildings surrounding the inner open space. The open space will be public. It will offer functions such as exhibition space and cafes to animate it. At the southern end of the site, buildings will be higher than the north facing buildings to gain sun exposure; this has affected the form of the massing. Use of balconies will potentially passively ventilate the building. Individuality was considered between the buildings to allow the occupant a visual connection and an ease of distinction, in order to call the particular place “home”. Furthermore, the intention was to create penetrations throughout the buildings to gain view shafts in and out of the buildings.
7.4 Exploration Four - Model

It also became apparent that the connection to the Viaduct Basin via a bridge in future developments would be appropriate and adhere to the movement line. This reason caused the architectural strategy to reduce the scale of the building to allow a better connection to the public space and a better sense of community. This would also allow the project to access connection from the Viaduct Basin to the site.

Drawings

Following the model, plans were drawn to give an indication of where the functions would be located and circulation would manoeuvre through the site. The series of plans identify functions on each level, with the higher levels being more secure compared to the lower levels where public interaction and facilities can take place, such as cafes, libraries and learning/lecture rooms. Previously, Figure 42 shows the current movement line to the respective street frontages on Hobson Street and Wyndham Street. While the sections on the next page, it shows how circulation can be managed.

Security was a major component in the project. Use of multiple access entries for the staff, the occupants and the public alike was vital, to separate and zone the public crossing from the private areas. To reduce large shadows being cast onto the site, the southern end houses the majority of accommodation for homeless and families. Therefore it is advantageous to have the drug detoxification centre situated in the northern side.

The drug detoxification centre will have drop in facilities and accommodation for addicts with medical staff on site to care and monitor for centre users. Another design decision was the communal dining for clients going through detoxification. As mentioned before, clients require daily interaction with both members of staff and other clients going through the same process to enhance a supportive environment and create a positive social network.

The southern side will have family and homeless accommodation, although within the building itself, they remain separated for security reasons. All of the accommodation will have balconies and back windows in each room to allow for passive ventilation.
Early explorations included removing the two buildings opposite the site. This would blend the scheme into the surrounding buildings and provide a "gateway" and space for the church community. This approach was later withdrawn.

Figure 50a Section B-B1 south facing

Figure 50b Section B-B1 north facing
Figure 51a Entrance from Fanshawe Street

Figure 51b View across from Hobson Street, note the hierarchy of forms

Figure 51c View towards city on Wyndham Street

Figure 51d Plan view of Exploration Four
7.5 Exploration Five - Accommodation Units

To further the ideas of accommodation and emphasise the functions and spaces, plans were drawn to indicate the size of rooms and other functions. With the form from previous iterations in mind, these plans place an emphasis on functions, showing sizes of spaces. This has caused a very dramatic change in the shape and aesthetic appearance of the building, where its form has been dominated by extruded floor plates. Within these floor plates is located a combination of functions; the following indicates the sizes of the units:

To the top left indicate single parent accommodation unit.

The thought process was to create accommodation that allows for open communication between the two occupants (parent and child). The open floor plan of kitchen, living and dining was an attempt to create a more sociable setting, with the opportunity to allow the occupant to retreat back into their own space for peace and quiet if they choose. The bathroom is located towards the corridor of the apartment as the intention was to create a more secluded and ‘inward looking’ accommodation unit.

On the bottom left show homeless accommodation unit.

The design principle was to utilise cross ventilation with living space located nearest to the north with natural light and exposure to the sun. The kitchen has a lower ceiling to create the feeling of enclosure and secure space and the living areas would have a higher ceiling. The composition of the change in ceiling heights would create a more secluded space. In addition, the high eave windows located both at the front and rear of the unit allows cross ventilation, saving energy costs and increasing thermal comfort.

Here illustrate the rehabilitation unit. (Right)

For rehabilitation to occur the intention for the space was one of tranquillity, comfort and relaxation. One can retreat from the outside world and emphasise personal well-being. With the daily routine of the consumers (people going through rehabilitation) being managed by health professionals and staff, the room itself becomes the main dwelling place for the consumers. Furthermore, since food is prepared and allocated to each individual in a communal setting, there is no requirement for a kitchen within the unit. This reduction of function represents the unit in three simple functions: bedroom, living and bathroom. The orientation to the north grants the unit a view to the Hauraki Gulf as well as natural sunlight.

Communal spaces

A critical aspect of the scheme’s accommodation is the communal spaces. As mentioned previously, the interactions with domiciled public grants homeless people a sense of belonging and inclusion. Therefore, facilities that provide interaction or chance encounter will be included, such as ground level cafe. The library provides a quiet sitting area and a

Figure 52 Plans of single parent accommodation unit - various iterations

Figure 53 Plans of homeless accommodation unit - various iterations

Figure 54 Plans of rehabilitation unit - various iterations
place for the public to come and reside. Terraced areas where people can not are an extension from the commonly used St Patrick’s square.

These two pages show indicative planning and allocation of functions. On the left are the rooftop terraces, again an attempt to increase the communal sense of the space and to bring the meaning of place for the occupants by giving the sense of character through the composition and juxtaposition of the roofs to evoke the feeling of home and home. These roof top terraces still allow a visual connection to the street and communal public spaces. This connection is an appropriate way to express the proper connection between building height and health of people.

On this page it shows the allocation of functions within the plan, demonstrating that accommodation for the homeless is connected via communal bridges and kitchens that are shared amongst the occupants. These links and connections allow for an open communal living area where occupants can move around and visit neighbours, while remaining within the secure building. Similar communal spaces are also created for single parent accommodation on the first floor in an attempt to create a community environment raised above the public realm of the ground floor, yet still providing a visual connection. It encourages acknowledgment simply by the clarity of seeing another person, as recognition becomes a method of establishing one-self within the community.

Privacy and security, however, is important, so the public will have access only to the lifts and doors on the south east side. The ground floor will have constant monitoring and personnel to provide security. For the other areas of the accommodation, the ground floor will predominantly house either the public facilities or house staff to provide security and monitor human traffic. Furthermore, the intention was to have monitor rooms for the staff located near the circulation core every second or third floor to track and ensure a safe environment for all occupants.

Overall, the composition of the ground floor creates good open public spaces where alleyways and colonnades spaces allow a thoroughfare and connection to the city. However, the pure extrusion of the floor plate is less than desirable as it poorly reflects the design principles from the conceptual model and lose an ample amount of architectural intrigue.

The communal spaces allow exposure to the sun, in the hope of increasing interaction for the occupants and the environment, creating a lively social space. Architecturally, it breaks up the facade allowing more transparency through the building.

On the second floor in the single parenting area, a children’s day-care centre is held. This centre will also be open to the public not only increasing public interaction with the building but also being seen as a draw to introduce the public into the building in combination with the underground car stacking system located in the basement and the cafe.

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7.6 Exploration Six - Form

This exploration was an attempt to re-introduce the architectural intrigue that was apparent in the concept models. Consequently, another iteration of the plan and model were created. This exploration combines both the planning rigour and free flowing forms together. On the left is shown the model without facades. This perspective exposes the breakdown of the floor plates from simple extrusions, showing great use of atriums and open spaces in the higher levels, away from the public realm of the ground floor, but still connected visually. In addition, the composition of the roof character shows more interest architecturally than earlier explorations, following an attempt at creating the sense of individuality yet coherence, allowing the occupant to feel a sense of place and belonging from recognition of their own building.

The functions are located in a similar state as previous explorations, where the majority of the accommodation is located on the southern side of the building to allow maximum exposure to the sun while maintaining sunlight in the open courtyards. However the units of accommodation are better dispersed in section. Single parenting and homeless accommodations are overlapped in this area of the building, creating a project that integrates not only the functions but the programme of the functions, so one building block has more than one function.

The gradient of the slope created an opportunity to utilise the northern side of the site on the ground and below the ground floor with an auditorium. The teaching rooms seldom need natural light, so they have been partially buried into the ground four metres. Furthermore, in the western side of the auditorium, terraced spaces create a common public space looking towards the north with views towards the Hauraki Gulf and the newly developed Wynyard Quarter.
Figure 57a Dimensions of site
Figure 57b Contour slope of site
Figure 57c Adjust site contour to proposal
Figure 57d Terraced levels and circulation throughout
Figure 57e Further defined stepped terrace into smaller communal spaces
Figure 57f Height of the buildings being defined
Figure 57g Roof relationships, site exploration
Figure 57h Site being further developed
Figure 57i Create open areas
Figure 57j Defined form
Perspectives of proposal with colours representing key functions and the separation of them. The communal public space grants the occupants a connection to the city and the city’s domicile public to it. The breakdown as follows: blue (low income units), yellow (drug detoxification), red (homeless units) and green (public facilities).

The project allows for the slope of the site with terraced platforms that steps down from Hobson St to Bradnor Lane.
Further investigation into accommodation units

These two pages show homeless accommodation unit:

The main difference between this iteration and the previous was to eliminate the bathroom within each unit, this is because of a reduction in cost and having a centralised, communal bathroom would generate a co-living environment for the occupants - similar to that of camping lodges. This, combined with having a communal kitchen on the 1st floor, generates an increase in chance encounters for occupants and creates a lively atmosphere where people are moving about all the time, which in turn further eases the sense of belonging. In addition, the kitchen has been placed towards the corridor, this allows the occupant to open the doors and share the kitchen space in a communal setting, the chance occasion for the passer-by, or the neighbour to drop in and form a cohabitation environment.

The kitchen space has a higher ceiling giving the space a hierarchy, as the living area has a significantly lower ceiling, where the occupant would be forced to somewhat bend over to go to bed. This act creates a sense of enclosure and reclusive space. The room also utilises a moveable storage space, to increase the size of the living room and conceal the bed space away, allowing guests to inhabit the higher ceiling part of the unit also.

Both the drug detoxification and single parenting units have remained approximately the same with minor adjustments for orientation and entrance area.
This exercise expands on the previous chapter and concentrates on the spatial experience as one moves through the building. The visual outlook is important to make one feel at ease, while being inside and in turn draw the public into the atriums and pathways.

**Ground Floor**

The spatial arrangement in the ground floor is very similar to the previous version. With fine refinements on the pathways and staircases, a setback is formed, thus generating a pause along this circulation route. This pause is located outside the cafes and public areas, allowing the commercial nodes to spread the vibe and atmosphere beyond its confined boundary.

Formally, the ground floor becomes a public square on which the realms of the marginalised and domiciled are established. Entering from Hobson Street entrance, the winding staircase becomes a dominant figure that leads your gaze towards the support columns and housing units above.

On the right side are the drug detoxification facilities which are private. Further along are the vegetable gardens, cafe, and a library, this space is pulled back from the main space to create a transition in threshold.

On the left are public facilities and offices for staff, creating a barrier of private and public space that acts as a transition area for occupants.
Southern side - First Floor

The first floor is where the functions begin to separate. The south-eastern corner (left in Figure 63), contains the day-care centre housed within the same building as the low income family accommodation. This is to ensure safety and security. It also looks onto Hobson Street with large openings and extrusions creating visual interest to lead your gaze towards the building.

The south-west side houses homeless accommodation units, with communal gathering courtyards on the first floor and staff quarters for monitoring.

Northern side - First Floor

The drug detoxification facility is located on the north-eastern side. This floor houses the communal dining facility with large openings to let in light and allow transparency onto Hobson Street.

The north-western side primarily houses homeless accommodation with large openings between the block to let light flood into the courtyards.
Southern side - Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Floor

The top five floors in the low income wing are all dedicated to small family housing use.

The layers of the housing units are fairly fluid, with tenants going up the elevator to each level. The size of the rooms would generally accommodate up to three children and two adults. There are also shared alcoves and terraces for the occupants located on the top floor.

The homeless wing dedicates the top four floors to accommodation. In particular, the central wing has dedicated Māori-Whānau rooms, where occupants share a larger room together if they decide to. As research suggests, homeless people tend to have hierarchy and form social groups and Māori are over-represented in this sector, so the planning has been tailored to accordingly. These are accompanied by more terraces and shared spaces that are oriented towards the north for sun exposure.

The most noticeable feature of this block is the rooftop garden. It creates a vibrant atmosphere for all tenants of the block to share, especially for the occupants on the top floors to have a sense of connection while living in a high-rise apartment.

The rooftop garden was also an environmental decision to reduce the heating costs and create a sanctuary in the urban fabric.
Northern side - Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Floor

There are three levels of rehabilitation units on the north-west block. The units themselves are more enclosed to allow users to reflect and rehabilitate. A terrace is located on the top floor, with views directed away from the apartment on the northern side, allowing it to remain private while letting ventilation and sunlight flood the space.

A secondary roof garden spans across to the accommodation units, where they are dedicated to the homeless housing with north facing orientation. It has an empty volume of space to allow for a connection with the northern units as they both house the same function. The space generates multiple view shafts and allows the floors planes to be more dynamic and vibrant.

Figure 67: Plan - Third Floor

Figure 68: Sections - depicting various functions
It was important in this exploration that even though it extended four stories, there was still a connection to the street. This was achieved with windows, view shafts onto terraces, particularly Figures 67 and 69, where it show on the southern wings the allocated gathering spaces.
Figure 71: Plan - Fifth Floor
Figure 72: Plan - Sixth Floor
Figure 73: Sections - Depicting various functions
Figure 74: Roof Plan
8.1 Material Choice

The material choices for this project were based on a number of key ideas. The materials had to evoke a sense of warmth and create a sense of belonging. This comprised a warm selection of colours and tones including wood and soft fabrics. The materials were to be durable, so the choice of concrete floors and columns provided the feeling of a heavy and stable structure. In addition, various states of concrete, can generate a hierarchy of finished looks, from rough cast in-situ to polished floors. So to offset the cold feeling of bare concrete, wooden ceilings and panels are used. Transparency was important, and this was achieved with strategic openings and allowing view shafts to and from the building.

These choices are indicative in the perspectives and elevations shown in the subsequent pages.

The following pages are explorations of the final design through repeated drawing, introducing fenestration and material choice on the facades. Two important elements were considered. First it was important to treat the glazing as an element and not just as a puncture through a mass. Secondly, the roof was to form a hierarchy in the mass.
Figure 76: Perspective - south-west

Figure 77: On 4th floor looking at family units and terrace

Figure 78: Perspective - 3rd floor view towards the south
Figure 79: Perspective - western façade, note less openings due to commercial building adjacent.

Figure 80: Perspectives - view towards east and St Patrick’s church in background.

Figure 81: Perspective - Rehabilitation wing (foreground).
Conclusion
9.0 Critical Appraisal

The final success of the project depends greatly on the uptake from the marginalised community. Whether the project would successfully foster a calm and accommodating atmosphere is difficult to say, largely due to complex issues of transitional housing and a mixture of personal, social and political issues that require a holistic approach to an individual’s life.

Throughout the project the process has provoked questions, which have in turn developed design concepts and solutions. The solutions were further refined and defined.

This project acknowledges the idea that one building can make a significant difference to Auckland homelessness. It is generally difficult for one building to make the difference in the city. The bigger ambition is when, in conjunction with the social services, a greater acknowledgement of the occupants is achieved. When other facilities combine together, it can have the potential to point to a more progressive version of the city and its view on homelessness.

The thesis has differentiated three entities of people. The first, being homeless rough sleepers where they can stay for a duration of time (anywhere between a week to 2 years). Secondly the drug detoxification centre, which will become a supported residential environment for people, offering a first step towards recovery from addiction. During their stay clients work with staff to explore future options. Third, accommodation for low income families or single parent families.

These three relationships should enable them to be identified in the urban environment. The inclusion is more conceivable and, therefore, their inclusion is to be given more weight. This building will provide a stepping stone towards being included as a part of society.

It is important that the relationship the domiciled public have with those who are on the extreme fringes of society is acknowledged and homeless people are not forgotten. A piece of architecture, such as this project, can provide a place of safety, a sanctuary away from the streets, a place where a community can be supported by the architecture, for the people to regain the skills and establish themselves back into society.

While importance is placed on prevention of homelessness, to ultimately reduce it to zero is a formidable task that requires a project such as this that attempts to address the ways a person crossing over into marginalisation can find their path back into society and be supported along the way.
The project has transformed the site from a four-storey car park to a lively public space. It draws on the existing characteristics of the commercial businesses and nearby religious entities which contribute generatively to a public space. The exposure of homeless people, the classes and vegetable garden and cafes provide public qualities.

The various angles and turns of the building volume is a personified gesture, as if they are beckoning the passers-by to enter. The entry on the north western corner is designed in such a way that the landings become a series of sheltered transition spaces. These smaller spaces are more intimate and draw you towards the rest of the ground floor public space. Similarly, on the eastern side, the building is angled towards the open space, with a cantilevered ceiling that encloses the area, and again the public is drawn into the central public space.

The benefit of introducing the public realm into the housing realm has also introduced problems of security. The separation between the two realms is dealt with by limiting the public area only to the ground floor. The higher floors are only accessible by passing through staff monitored areas. This is especially important due to the nature of the facilities.

Within this new building of transitional housing, the integration with the public realm is emphasised by the intersection of various public paths, they collide within the main space and bring a variety of individuals into this area. These strategically placed public routes are continuum short-cuts compared to the existing option of navigating around to Queen St. in order to cut through the Central Business District. Combined with the amenities offered within the space, they would likely attract a sizable crowd to pass through the site.

The design of the project drew largely from precedent in terms of spatial requirements and the new design has placed emphasis on the dynamics within social housing and the supportive facilities accompanying it. The offsetting of floor levels and roof angles contribute to the sense of wholeness of the project.

In terms of visual perception the project is split into three. The visual separation suggests the nature of the different functions housed and the need for a dedicated space for rehabilitation facilities.
The reason that I chose to do a thesis on transitional housing was because of the initial intrigue caused by the degree of separation between the wealthy and the poor. On the extremes of poor within New Zealand were that of the homeless. Though when compared to percentages of other western nations we are relatively low, I believe New Zealand can set the standard of living for the marginalised to be the best in the world. As a nation in the western world it has one of the top health-care and benefits system in place. It is my belief that we could include the homeless into the ‘main stream society’ through a transitional housing project such as this.

The initial investigation resulted in three different site locations within the Central Business District. Then through extensive analysis and many contributing factors a site selection was made. An important factor was the potential creation of a pedestrian thoroughfare and the strategy of merging the realms of marginalised and domiciled together.

The final form of the building was established through precedent studies, along with other experiments that were analysed and molded to the project to a comfortable state.

Overall, I believe the project is a success. It has proven that careful design strategy can lead to a successful development that respects the ideas derived from the marginalised realm and represents them in a way that is visible and visible in the architectural form.
Bibliography


Appendix

Methodology

Methodological Approach of the Project

Due to the nature of this Project with regards to homelessness in New Zealand, it is important to consult with members of various entities. This includes the winning scheme from ‘Mission in the City’ brief Lawsons and Stevens (Architects), Walf Holt, team leader at Auckland City Mission and members of rough sleepers in Auckland. In the ‘Mission in the City’ brief it addresses a similar issue of homelessness and to reduce homelessness to zero. Its site is located on adjacent St Matthews Cathedral in the city and next to the Auckland City Mission. There aims in the brief were to

- Develop a contemporary setting for marginalised people alongside a hub for health services, early childhood facilities and other social service providers.
- Build affordable apartments for families seeking change.
- Recreate a sense of community in the neighbourhood.
- Support St Matthew in the City’s setting for spiritual and cultural activities alongside new commercial uses.
- Generate ongoing income.

My project has based itself on similar attributes of this brief but with adjustments onto another site and to provide an alternative.

The consultation with rough sleepers will be more of a friendly ‘hang out’ rather than questionnaire whereas with Stevens Lawsons architects questionnaires will be used.

The approach will be of ‘research by design’ providing the opportunity of engagement with the homeless through Lifewise and Auckland City Mission. These two non-profit organisations are located within the city; they provide rough sleepers with services such as doctor visits, drop-in meals, use of phone, internet services and counselling. The process of developing an innovative well thought out scheme that reflects the needs of a range of individuals is paramount to bring about a successful outcome.

Equally important is to develop guiding principles and occupant needs will need to be established. This will give a framework and assist at the scale of both the site and building to accommodate the necessary requirements.

3.2 Site Exploration

To determine an appropriate site for the Project, thorough investigation of the site will be required, including analysis, planning and spatial organisations. This will be achieved via drawing plans and physical model making. Furthermore, planning of the project will be critical to embrace the mix use of homeless, single parenting, detoxification and a wide host of services and facilities.