The Space In-between
- Representing Transcultural Exchanges through Architecture. -

Master Research Explanatory Document
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Cultural diversity in New Zealand society has increased in recent years due to an influx of immigrants. Ethnic precincts are used by both migrants and the local communities to help foster cultural exposure and the exchange of different cultural ideas. However, ethnic precincts in New Zealand cities are a relatively modern concept, and there is little research into the function and understanding of the role cultural space plays within the built environment.

This research project, The Space In-between: Representing Transcultural Exchanges through Architecture, explores possible ways of negotiating cultural exchanges within cities. The project raises the awareness of the potential for cultural space within the built environment as a place for cultural engagement. The research explores the current issues of representing transcultural approaches through an architectural proposition utilising a section of the Dominion Road ethnic precinct.

The aim of this research project is to use architecture as a tool in the investigation ethnic space plays in the development of hybrid ethnic communities.

The project analyses the theories of transculturalism and the third space, and how architecture can be used as a tool for facilitating cultural identity through a transcultural approach.
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This Research Project is also dedicated to all the Chinese sojourners, Poll tax migrants, war refugees, and their families, that the future generation may be inspired to embrace their past and work for the preservation of their rich cultural legacy.
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1.0 Introduction
1.1 Research Question

“How can a transcultural approach to architecture facilitate the rehabilitation of an ethnic cultural space within an existing built environment?”

1.2 Project Background

Cultural diversity in New Zealand society has increased in recent years due to an influx of immigrants. Over a quarter of New Zealand’s population is born overseas, and around 10.4 percent of people identify with more than one ethnic group.

Facilities used by ethnic groups in New Zealand are limited in terms of how and what cultural elements can be expressed. Ethnic precincts in New Zealand cities are a relatively modern concept, and there has been little research into Auckland’s ethnic precincts, or using architecture as a medium or a tool for presenting and discussing cultural diversity and identity. If architecture is a physical reflection of society, how can it play a part in the representation of cultural diversity in New Zealand?

New Zealand is a nation of immigrants. As New Zealand orientates itself as a leading nation in the Asia-Pacific region, its cities have become melting pots of different cultural influences. Within the Auckland region there are more than 190 different ethnic groups, it has the most ethnically diverse population in New Zealand. The vision of the Auckland Plan is that by 2040, Auckland will be “the world’s most liveable city” with the emphasis on creating a “culturally rich and creative Auckland”. The absence of permanent cultural space within the built environment has caused ethnic groups such as the Chinese, Maori and Indian ethnic groups, to express their culture through temporary engagements within public space. However exposure through festivals and markets offers only short-term visibility of ethnic culture.

Ethnic spaces have often had a negative connotation, sometime resulting in tension, contestation, and clashes of culture. These spaces can be important starting points in the adaptive process to help migrants adjust to a new culture, whilst retaining their original culture. Ethnic spaces provide a venue for the exchange of different cultural ideas.

There has been little research into the function and understanding of the role of cultural space within the built environment. In the report, Halfway House: The Dominion Road Ethnic Precinct, Paul Spoonly states that “precincts... have been largely overlooked both in relation to the governance of Auckland and their significance in terms of economic development.” This project will look at how architecture can be used as a tool for facilitating cultural identity through a transcultural approach.

Garth Falconer states in Living in Paradox: A History of Urban Design Across Kainga, Towns and Cities in New Zealand, that “the prospect of a contemporary urban environment thriving on cultural and racial diversity is still persuasive as ever; for the new generations the potential has perhaps never been greater.” New Zealand cities and towns are predominantly an imported European form of collective habitation, due to the early European settlements. As New Zealand becomes more ethnically diverse, can new forms of the city allow for the inclusiveness of cultural relationships to emerge?

1.3 Project Outline

This research project explores current thinking on transcultural approaches in architecture with particular reference to the existing Dominion Road ethnic precinct context. The research will include historical, theoretical, and contemporary examples from New Zealand and around the world.

The project research will also reference the change in social and ethnic diversity in New Zealand, and will also look at how architecture can be used as a tool to help promote and support ethnic identity in New Zealand, by facilitating cross-cultural and cross-generational exchanges through an architectural intervention.

The project will propose a design for a cultural space based on a transcultural approach within the existing Dominion Road “Chinatown” ethnic precinct in Auckland.

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8 Trudie Cain, Carina Meares, Paul Spoonly and Robin Peace, Half Way House: The Dominion Road Ethnic Precinct (Integration of Immigrants Programme College of Humanities and Social Sciences Massey University, 2001), 10.
1.4 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research is to use architecture as a tool to act as a conversation and rethink New Zealand’s bicultural approach to cultural identity, by investigating the potential ethnic space plays in the development of hybrid ethnic communities. The research compiled hopes to build on the existing knowledge and the rethinking of ethnic precincts and their potential in a contemporary society.

It is anticipated that this project will raise awareness of the potential for cultural space and cultural engagement within the built environments of our cities to reflect changing ethnic populations. As more immigrants relocate to cities all around the world, cities have become a melting pot of different cultures that adds to their vibrancy. This project will facilitate cross cultural learning and understanding through the design of an architectural proposition.

The objectives of this document and project are to collect, record, and research a number of transcultural responses to architecture and design primarily in the New Zealand context. The research and analysis suggests an architectural design proposition for an interpretation of ethnic cultural space within the existing Dominion Road Ethnic precinct that current and future generations can engage with. The design of the cultural space will embrace spontaneous activity already evident in a specific local area. The project will incorporate elements of transcultural influences in the New Zealand context.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

It is anticipated that this project will raise awareness of the potential for cultural space within the built environments of our cities to reflect changing ethnic populations. The scope of the research includes an understanding of the issues associated with ethnic precincts, and their potential in an existing urban area. The scope of the research will also reference the Dominion Road ethnic precinct, and other community spaces.

The issues related to ethnic precincts exceeds the scope of this research project and the complexity of all the factors and issues related to ethnic precincts cannot be fully addressed in this project. The research compiled relates to knowledge of related issues to the Dominion Road ethnic precinct and the context of Auckland city.

The design proposed will utilise a section of the existing Dominion Road ethnic precinct, and deals with the existing contextual relationships of the area.

The limitations of this document will reflect the external limitations on the research, such as access to information and resources available at the time of the research. The design programme is a response to the needs and function of the Dominion Road ethnic precinct. The research presented in this document only refers to existing published research, due to ethical and resource constraints.
1.6 Definitions

The following terms have been used throughout the document to allow for a basic understanding of the ideas presented in the research.

Culture
Culture is a broad term. In this research document, culture will refer to “culture” as the values, ideas, customs, attitudes, social behaviours, and physical artefacts of ethnic people and society.

Transculturalism
The term transculturalism refers to the exchange of different aspects of culture. In the project transcultural references primarily focus on the different ethnic cultures associated with the Dominion Road ethnic precinct.

Hybrid Identity
Hybrid identity refers to the combination of two or more different cultures to create an identity that is a mixture of the different cultural influences.

Hyperrealism
Hyperrealism refers to the metaphorical representation of an idea. The terms of ethnic precincts, hyperrealism produces a reconstructed form of authenticity based on the copy rather than the original.

Ethnoscape
An ethnoscape is the way in which a migrant group impacts the built environment.\(^\text{11}\) It refers to an ethnoscape as “the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guestworkers, and other moving groups and persons constitute an essential feature of the world.”\(^\text{12}\)

Ethnic Precinct
An ethnic precinct refers to a grouping of minority and ethnic businesses that are made up of clustered entrepreneurial ethnic businesses of the same or similar migrant groups.\(^\text{13}\)

Ethnic Enclave
An ethnic enclave is defined as a portion of an area that is either culturally or ethnically distinct from its surroundings.\(^\text{14}\)

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1.7 Methodology

It was necessary to research existing knowledge by referring to relevant theories, literature, precedents, and other information that helped determine the outcome of the design. The research helped identify some of the limits, constraints and challenges. This was achieved by analysing what has been done and written, exposing gaps in the existing research. A combination of analytical sketching, modelling and writing, in response to the analysis, provided the tools that can be used to create the proposition for a cultural space within the Dominion Road ethnic precinct.

Site criteria were necessary to define the chosen site. The site had to fit the requirements of the project. Sites were evaluated through spatial, contextual, and programmatic analysis, sourcing relevant information from site visits, the internet and texts. From the evaluation and recording of the relevant factors the site with the most potential was chosen to test the design in a physical context.

Research was also conducted to assess existing ethnic cultural space. The results defined what the current situation is in terms of ethnic cultural space requirements.

In response to the collection and analysis of data, concepts were drawn and modelled through an iterative process, testing ideas and research by design. The results were recorded through photographic analysis, models, sketches and computer generated images, (which are referenced later in this document) and critiqued to draw out relevant information that aided the development of the design. The developed design was also inserted into the site through modelling, sketching and digital modelling which helped to determine the relationships and organisation of the functions and spaces determined by the programme. The information collected also determined what factors and issues influenced the outcome of the design.
2.0 Existing Knowledge
2.1 Context Research

Migrant Communities in New Zealand.

New Zealand cities are mostly of European influence in their design. European settlers came to New Zealand with different ideas of what paradise meant to them. Garth Falconer states that “For some it was a social paradise away from the rigid class structure of the old country, while to others it represented an achievable acquisition of material wealth, whether through speculation or for most through dogged hard work. A new society in an isolated location forced economic issues to the fore and compromised or challenged many founding ideals.” The immigration policy reforms of the late 1980’s have also led to the rise in the number and diversity of migrants settling in New Zealand. With the increase in migrants entering New Zealand, these founding ideals are being rewritten, to include a more diverse population of people from different ethnicities.

2.2 Relevant Literature

The main sources used in this research are Wolfgang Berg’s *Transcultural Areas*, Homi K. Bhabha’s theory on the “Third space” in *Question of Cultural Identity* and Thorsten Botz-Bornstein’s *Hyperreal Moments of the Mind: Traditional Chinese Architecture and Disneyland*. The literature helped define the relevant theories of hybrid identities and how the theories can be applied to architecture.

2.2.1 Transculturalism in Architecture

The phenomenon of transculturalism is a concept within the field of social sciences.\(^\text{18}\) Transculturalism was first defined by Fernando Ortiz, as being ‘the process of transition from one culture to another, and its manifold social repercussions’\(^\text{19}\). Ortiz refers to transculturalism as being similar to the reproductive process of humans in the way “the offspring always has something of both parents but is always different from each of them.”\(^\text{20}\)


The phenomenon of transculturalism is evident in areas of colonial settlement. In New Zealand we have translated and adapted architectural elements to respond to our historical and geographical context and environment. This adaption process defines a new identity but at the same time references features of the original.
In *Multiculturalism or Transculturalism: Towards a Cosmopolitan Citizenship*, Donald Cuccioletta stated that “cultural clashes began when people started to be on the move”\(^{21}\), highlighting the effects of migratory movement. The notion that migratory movement creates the exchanging of cultural differences which get either adapted or translated in response to the new context.

In *Transcultural Areas*, the theory of transculturalism is stated as being the transition between cultures, and the social repercussions that are caused by the process. Through migratory movement, people recreate and redistribute their identity within a new context\(^{22}\). Transcultural areas are also areas where cultural “influences” are merging.\(^{23}\) This redistribution of meaning through cultural influences allowed migrants to make sense of the new environment, while retaining parts of their heritage.

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Jeff Lewis also stated that the notion of a transcultural society is defined by social groups who “create” and “distribute” their meanings in a new context. This distribution of meanings is evident in ethnic enclaves around the world with the creation of Chinatowns and other ethnic precincts, many of which were created through social, political, and economic responses to the new context.

Echoing Jeff Lewis’ observations, T.S. Eliot stated that:

“the migrations of modern times... have transplanted themselves according to some social, religious, economic or political determination, or some peculiar mixture of these... people have taken with them only part of the total culture... the culture which develops on the new soil must therefore be bafflingly alike and different from the parent culture: it will be complicated sometimes by whatever relations are established with some native race and further by immigration from other than the original source. In this way, peculiar types of culture-sympathy and culture-clash appear.”

Lewis also states that the concept of transculturalism emphasises the transitory nature of culture as well as its power to transform. This transitory nature of culture in a new context provides new challenges and opportunities to showcase and develop elements of culture and meanings. Jeffrey Hou also suggests that the notion of “transcultural placemaking is by nature in a state of in-between, on the move, and yet to settle”.

Through the interactions and influences of different cultures and identities, individuals can express multiple forms of knowledge that can be reinterpreted into a new context. The transitional nature of ethnic precincts allow for a combination of cultures to be experienced and shared, providing an expression and understanding of the diversity of cultures and what they have to offer society.

The architecture and facilities of ethnic precincts, therefore, can be used as the backdrop to allow these interactions to occur. Through this interaction, the opportunity arises for cultural engagement and creativity.

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2.2.2 The Third space

Homi K. Bhabha in his paper, *Culture’s In-between*, discusses the concept of the Third space as being a construct of two cultures that creates a hybrid culture, or Third space. Bhabha’s Third space theory takes the idea of ‘part’ culture, as being a “partial culture [that] is contaminated yet connective tissue between cultures...something like culture’s ‘in-between’, bafflingly both alike and different.”

The theory of transculturalism is also closely linked to Bhabha’s Third space theory.

Bhabha’s Third space theory is discussed as the creation of in-between space. It deals with the creation of an identity that combines elements of two types of cultural influences that results in the creation of a hybrid identity. Bhabha states that there is the mentality that “other cultures are fine but we must be able to locate them within our own grid”. Bhabha refers to this idea as the creating of cultural diversity and the containment of cultural difference by the host or dominant culture.

Our streetscapes and public space reference our changing social patterns and culture, which is where visible interactions of the “third space” are present, through local businesses, social interactions and design.

Bhabha also stated in *The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha* that “although there is always an entertainment and encouragement of cultural diversity, there is always also a corresponding containment of it... a creation of cultural diversity and a containment of cultural difference.”

This idea of the creation and containment refers to the idea of the encouragement of cultural difference and diversity by the host society or dominant culture, which must be able to be located within the realm of the host society’s public sphere. This idea of redefining and reinterpreting culture in a new context negotiates a hybrid identity through the mixing of identities. The use of a hybridised strategy or discourse “opens up a space of negotiation... they deploy the partial culture from which they emerge to construct visions of community, and versions of historic memory, that give narrative form to the minority position they occupy; the outside of the inside: the part in the whole.”

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In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha stated that the “in-between spaces... initiate new signs of identity and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself.” Through the sharing and exposure of culture we can attain a better understanding of cultural differences and create dialogue between the cultures though the engagement of cultural space. Bhabha states that within the “emergence of the interstices – the overlap and displacement of domains of difference... are negotiated” Public spaces within cities are where informal and formal social interactions take place, These places can stimulate the existence and acknowledgement of the Third space through the interactive process in both engaging with the built environment and through social interaction.

Bhabha also defines the in-between space, or the idea of the borderline, as “the interstitial experience between what we take to be the image of the past and what is in fact involved in the passing of time and the passage of meaning.” These images of heritage are what defines our cultural identity. The idea of preservation through adaptation determines what gets passed down and what gets discarded. Bhabha stated that “communal memory may seek its meanings through a sense of causality shared with psychoanalysis, that negotiates the recurrence of the image of the past while keeping open the question of the future. The importance of such retroaction lies in its ability to reinscribe the past, reactivate it, relocate it, resignify it.” Martin Heidegger also stated that “a boundary is not that at which something stops but... is that from which something begins its presencing.” Culture is not a static idea. It is always changing and being adapted by future generations to engage with the present but at the same time reference the past, which helps define the future. The Third space as a tool for thinking about the presence of culture within our built environment, can determine hybridised identities such as cultural spaces, that define the presence of different ethnic groups within our cities.

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34 Martin Heidegger, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 2.
Jonathan Raban also states in *Soft City* that:

‘For better or worse, [the city] invites you to remake it, to consolidate it into a shape you can live with. You, too, decide who you are, and the city will again assume a fixed form around you. Decide what it is, and your own identity will be revealed... Cities, unlike villages and small towns, are plastic by nature. We mould them in our images: they, in their turn, shape us by the resistance they offer when we try to impose our own personal form on them. In this sense, it seems to me that living in a city is an art, and we need the vocabulary of art, of style, to describe the peculiar relation between man and material that exists in the continual creative play of urban living.’

By locating identity within our cities we begin to understand our place in the world. This negotiation between cultures creates a dialogue between the homogenous ideas of assimilation and globalisation, and the future role diversity and ethnic culture can play within our city environments. Dominion Road acts as a borderline between east and west Auckland but also as the central “spine” of Auckland’s infrastructure.

The idea of the borderline or barrier as being neither one nor the other but rather a combination of both, explores the very nature ethnic expression plays within our modern day society. The fine line between the creation and containment of cultural influences suggests that these connective tissues are a combination of both, providing a hybridised approach to thinking about how spaces within our cities are negotiated.

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2.2.3 Hyperrealism in Traditional Chinese Architecture

Thorsten Botz-Bornstein’s Hyperreal Moments of the Mind: Traditional Chinese Architecture and Disneyland discusses the implications of the translation and misinterpretation of Chinese architecture through perception and misrepresentation. Hyperreality is the state in which it is impossible to distinguish reality from fantasy. The apparently authentic nature of traditional Chinese architecture is also questioned as being based on recollections and interpretations of stories and writings. Hyperrealism attempts to find authenticity and identity in a process of imitation. As cultural elements are passed down through different generations, the truth is often misrepresented or misinterpreted, creating something else that has been influenced from the past. Reality is often shaped and processed to create a new narrative where the copy becomes more valuable than the real thing. The symbolic representation of the copy defines how people interpret the reality.

Fig. 5: The Grauman’s Chinese Theatre as a representation of hyperrealism

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Thorsten Botz-Bornstein stated that ‘Hyperreality represents an exalted or idealised reality.’ It is the state in which it is possible to distinguish reality from fantasy... because hyperreality produces images of something that never existed in the first place. The idea of hyperreality creates the image of an idealised representation of a philosophical way of thinking to make sense of the environment around us. Botz-Bornstein refers to Chinese architecture with an emphasis on its psycho-historical material or as a “poetic place” in literary history, capturing “moments of experience or of reflection” through the derivative of consciousness. As we define our world by the manipulation of nature, the built environment, and society, our consciousness produces images of the perceptive values of feelings and self-reflection. Our minds create moments that use the manipulation of the setting and what we perceive around us to create a scene that define our experiences, giving meaning to the world we create.

Derk Bodde also refers to hyperreality by contrasting European and Chinese approaches to culture. Bodde points out that the Chinese concept of civilization and culture is based on an idea of writing as a creator of civilization. “...our word ‘civilization’ goes back to a Latin root having to do with ‘citizen’ and ‘city.’ The Chinese counterpart... wen hua, literally means, ‘the transforming (i.e., civilizing) influence of writing.’ Bodde’s argument was that the essence of civilization in the western world is based on urbanisation, whereas the essence of civilisation for the Chinese is in the art of writing.

Simon Leys also had a similar argument stating that “the Chinese past is a past of words and not of bricks and stones that letters are culture and not signs of culture.” Leys also argued that the designs of Chinese “ideas” or items are derived from the human consciousness of writing. The Chinese developed the idea that history cannot be transmitted through artefacts. It is instead only transmitted through the memory of future generations who rely on writing and stories for such purposes. This represents Leys’ idea...
that “man only survives in man”\textsuperscript{50}, that by engaging with stories of the past we create our own perceptive forms and images that are idealised representations of the past.

In referring to Chinese architecture, the essence of Chinese architecture is not in its physical appearance, but rather what it stands for, its poetic nature, which transcends all physical knowledge. The spaces reflect family and societal ideals and ambitions. The physical representation of Chinese architecture is a reflection of metaphorical stories and ideas and translating them into physical entities. Chinese architecture in terms of hyperrealism is, therefore, more than just the physical structure, but is traditionally represented through writing and literature. Chinese architecture was discussed as a perceived or metaphorical entity, rather than the physical being, using architecture as a tool to set the scene, and to allow the recollection or the creation of a memory to be grounded in a physical environment.

Hyperrealism however can easily be misrepresented or misinterpreted. Hyperrealism is based on idealised representations that often reflected the idealised lifestyle that gets passed on to future generations through stories, myths, and images, which alter our perception. Interpretations are not always the reality, rather an idealised representation of what has gone before. Through the process of imitation, hyperrealism represents the authenticity of the copy rather than the authenticity of the original. Ethnic precincts around the world therefore use a hyperrealistic approach to provide and produce a staged or reconstructed form of authenticity, where the copy is represented to produce ideas of cultural influences.

2.2.4 Public Space in a Cultural Context

Cultural Space

Culture is the product of people. It has both tangible and intangible qualities.\(^{51}\)

Garth Falconer states that “natural and built environment, community, culture and heritage are the building blocks of identity. Recognising and promoting a town’s or a city’s identity encourages diversity of cultural expression, local pride, civic engagement and confidence.”\(^{52}\) Hui Mei Kei also states that “through its visual impact the built environment provides the most direct physical trace of cultural identity.”\(^{53}\) The way we make sense of our built environment is through the interactions that take place in and between various spaces. Donovan Rypkema stated that “It is... the built environment that expresses, perhaps better than anything else, a community’s diversity, identity, individuality, in short its differentiation.”\(^{54}\)

As the number of migrants increase, they reshape the built environment in terms of neighbourhoods and streetscapes. Cultural space is produced by people that reflect their values, beliefs and customs. They showcase diversity within cities and create vibrant spaces that influence our mindset and allow us to reflect on others and ourselves. They are also places of learning and the exchanging of ideas and values. Keya Keita states that “we are the products of both our past and visions for the future.”\(^{55}\) The commodification of ethnicity through cultural engagement is influenced by how we negotiate between cultures and our understanding of both differences and similarities. Keya Keita suggests that “it is a misconception that culture creates art and architecture. Instead, it is crucial to the sustainability of creative heritage to realise that art and architecture create culture.”\(^{56}\)


Fig. 6: The Auckland Lantern Festival
Identity in urban spaces

Identity plays a big part in defining our built environment. Garth Falconer states that “identity has been a long-held national obsession in New Zealand.”\(^{57}\) Falconer also explains that this pursuit of identity “has been explained as a need to legitimise the existence of a recently arrived culture in a strange foreign land.”\(^{58}\) As New Zealand becomes more multicultural, identity and how we connect with the environment around us is constantly being rewritten and altered.

Falconer also suggests that “identity is essentially cast as a relationship, a connection... in order to invoke distinctions to help us form some sense of a relationship with the world.”\(^{59}\) As the world becomes more globalised, exchanges with other ethnic groups becomes the norm. The diversity of ethnic groups adds to the vibrancy and uniqueness of cities, that offers opportunities and exchanges.

The ‘In-between’ urban spaces

The ‘in-between’ urban spaces between buildings can help stimulate and sustain valued forms of social behaviour and identity.\(^{60}\) This leftover space is where the performance of the everyday is played out, and is important to the vitality and richness of urban life.

Quentin Stevens states that “at these margins, people, activities and perceptions get mixed together, creating possibilities for a wide range of new, unplanned activities.”\(^{61}\) Sidewalks are not just transitional spaces; they are also locations of served and serviced spaces.\(^{62}\) Sidewalks are where deliveries are made, where informal meetings take place, and where goods are exchanged. Karen A. Franck suggests that “it is on the sidewalk that residents and visitors experience a neighbourhood most directly and most corporeally. That is where we see, hear, feel and smell the city without the mediation of cars or through building windows.”\(^{63}\)


Jan Gehl also states in Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space, that “in the entire history of human settlement, streets and squares have been the basic elements around which all cities were organised.... Streets based on the linear pattern of human movement and squares based on the eye’s ability to survey an area.” The unique nature of small suburban shopping blocks is based on the locality of the area and the personal attributes that are created through the interaction at street level based on the size and scale of the buildings and surrounding spaces.

The inbetween spaces within cities (such as the space between buildings, service lanes etc.) are often neglected and underutilised, however repurposing laneways and service lanes for pedestrian use provides opportunities to create interesting urban spaces which offer more intimate spaces, away from busy streets. Laneways can also provide alternative routes to destinations.

In the Christchurch City Council’s Project Central City: Central City Lanes Report: Lanes Design Guide Part 6 of 7, defines laneways as:

“paths, streets, or access ways which are secondary to main routes or streets within the City. They may be known as service lanes, alleyways, or right of ways. They are primarily open to the sky and enclosed by buildings on both sides for the majority of their length, although some of the lanes are partially built over. Ownership maybe public, private, or a combination of both via public easements.”

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The Melbourne laneways are an example of successful laneway revitalisation. The redevelopment has contributed to the character of the city and created lively public areas for multiple activities. Activating laneways, through a design intervention, creates opportunities to enhance neglected and underutilised areas. The activation of laneways also provides connections to the formal structure of the urban grid and expands access to local pedestrian networks.

The notion of areas of rest and relaxation is important in urban designed space for people, as it allows for the engagement of the surrounding environment and social interaction.

The location of areas for resting is important as it determines the length of time people engage and participate in the public life of the space. The use of laneways to provide connections by alternative pathways, helps activate the space, and provides an alternative route to existing streets. Local markets and the hosting of events provide further potential for developing and enhancing laneways as social urban spaces.

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Chinatown

Nisha A. Fernando states in Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity that “Chinese residents use the streets as a venue to meet friends, socialize and people-watch.” Fernando refers to the streets as “meeting places for people of all ages, gender and social status; they are places where everyone mixes seamlessly with others.” This is similar to street life in traditional villages and towns in China where the streets and alleyways are used as public space and become social space where people create a sense of community through social interaction. Fernando also suggests that:

“active public spaces enrich public life in cities... act as breathing spaces where people may relax, socialize, purchase food and other goods, engage in various public events or simply enjoy being in an urban setting and absorbing the everyday life surrounding them. In some cultures, urban streets are such active public spaces, providing a stage for the variety of commercial, political, social and cultural activities that create lively urban scenes and enhance experiences of public life.”

Chinatown is an ethnic enclave. Chinatowns all around the world were the result of social segregation and cultural differences. D. Y. Yuan explains that “The Chinese tend to develop voluntary segregation as their way of responding to the challenge of the [social and economic] environment.”

The migration of Chinese to urban areas to seek out job opportunities, created the clustering of Chinese groups due to kinship, and caused communal areas like Chinatown to expand. Yuan also states that:

“the preservation of the Chinese way of life is one of the important factors which might explain why the Chinese live together... the desire of the Chinese to preserve their early customs and folkways is related to their cultural background.”

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Lynette Shum states in Representing Haining Street: Wellington’s Chinatown 1920-1960, that Chinatowns have always been a place of constant transition, with some people staying for a few minutes, whether for social, recreational or commercial purposes, and others staying for years. It was where Chinese stopped on their arrival or return home, or to become Chinese New Zealanders. Chinatown as a place of transition can also refer to the transition of different cultures. Cultural interactions are constantly being negotiated and reinterpreted through physical and social interactions that take place on the streets, and the many facilities that make up Chinatowns.

Kay Anderson also argues that ‘Chinatown’ is more than just an area for the Chinese, rather, it is a social construct based on cultural history and tradition through physical place making in the Western context. The buildings may not look like typical Chinese buildings, but are perceived as a Chinese area based on the activities that take place, the people that use the space, and the concentration or cluster of businesses providing services to the local community. Ethnic areas such as Chinatowns in cities have become melting pots based on the activities and the diversity of visitors using the area.

Chinatowns all over the world represented a hybrid solution to reinstate a Chinese communal identity in a Western context. Kerry Ann Lee states in Home Made: Picturing Chinese Settlement in New Zealand that “the absence of a recognisable Chinatown in New Zealand has meant that Chinese have made home in the margins of society for generations.” Ethnic areas such as Chinatowns provide cultural links back to their roots for immigrants and their descendants in a new context.

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Nisha A. Fernando also suggests that:

“Diverse and numerous commercial activities are common on traditional urban streets in China. Streets there are also commonly used as social and cultural spaces where people spend time relaxing and engaging in culturally-specific activities. A striking similar ambiance is present in Chinatown in New York City where urban scenes familiar to the Chinese immigrant residents are continually recreated.”

Ethnic areas and precincts also play a wider social role. The interaction of people, spaces and programmes help facilitate community building and the re-negotiation of ethnic identity.

Kerry Francis stated in NZ Chinese/Chinese NZ: Auckland Architecture’s Changing Response that:

“The Chinese community took over buildings previously designed and built by the dominant culture. They coded their presence on the street (their public presence), in a manner that, only on the surface and only in a thin and quiet way, identifies them as Chinese. The memory of Chinatown at the foot of Grey’s Avenue is a memory of programme (eating, cooking, retailing) and the ephemeral effects of programme (oriental aroma, the sizzling of the wok) but not of any material, formal or spatial conditions of architecture that might be considered Chinese.”

This memory of programme is similar to the Dominion Road ethnic precinct, which also uses the adaptation of existing European shop houses to suit the local ethnic business’s needs. The perception of ethnic space is therefore determined by activity and the social interactions that take place in the area, rather than the physical nature of the area.

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Ethnic Cultural Expression in Auckland

In the Auckland Council’s City Centre Masterplan 2012, under Celebrating Our Culture – Telling Our Stories the document states that as people arrive they make their own mark on this place... Communities should be empowered to tell and share their stories in their way through:

- Public art
- Street theatre
- Festivals and events
- Guided and self-guided walks
- Signage

The variety and adaptability of an urban space provides multiple uses, and adds a rich and vibrant visual texture to the streetscape. Art and culture can be used in the urban environment to further enhance quality of life, and create a sense of identity. They can also be a tool for connecting and strengthening different communities. Art and culture is already present in Auckland. Local arts and cultural events provide a temporary engagement with the arts and culture, such as the annual Lantern Festival, Chinese New Year Celebrations, Diwali Festival and

Matariki Festival, however, a permanent art and cultural facility will break down barriers, facilitate engagement with ethnic arts and culture, and reflect and respond to Auckland’s increasingly diverse population.

Duangfang Lu and Hongguang He state that “the built environment is a dynamic field where elements such as identity, knowledge, and capital are played out through everyday practices of social actors.” The stories we tell through architecture: the material, form, and colours, helps set the scene for the exchange of memories and culture.


2.3 Precedent Analysis

2.3.1 Precedent Criteria
The following criteria have been used to review the precedents that have helped determine the outcome of the design.

Places for people

Places for people are spaces that allow fostering of human relationships and place identity. This is achieved through activities that take place within the space which creates a sense of belonging, identity, and ownership. Through direct human connections and interactions between both users and physical forms the space creates a dialogue in an identity process. Through the design of user-friendly spaces, the emphasis on occupancy provides a sense of security and identity, and allows users to participate in activities influenced by the space.

Connectivity

Connectivity refers to how spaces interact with the wider context. Spaces should have access to existing infrastructure supporting the neighbourhood, and allow users to access the space through different modes of transport, such as public transport, cars, cycling, and walking. Spaces should help connect different users and respond to changing social issues.
**Legibility**

Legibility refers to the design, its referencing to the local context and how users can recognise meaning though the design. The design should reflect local importance, and increase emotional attachment and community involvement. Legibility is important to help increase employment, activity, tourism, support of local businesses and industries. The legibility of the design can also help strengthen and inspire communities.

**Ability to Evolve**

Spaces that have the ability to evolve over time are more sustainable and able to meet future spatial requirements. Flexible spaces are more likely to allow future demands to be accommodated. Flexibility at ground level helps optimise activity. The size and shape of the space should allow the adaptability of the space to be optimised for future needs and functions.

**Diversity**

Diversity can refer to the building typologies and clustering of forms to define the space. Spaces that are successful provide a range of local services and facilities to meet the needs of people and help develop the growth of local industries.

**Local Character and Identity**

Local Character and identity is important in spatial design as it can be used as a tool to reference contextual architectural elements. Responding to local character and identity shows respect for local architecture and urban form character, which is generally a more acceptable form of development to existing residents. Materiality can be an important tool to express the formation of the space within the existing context. The space also should add to the local character and identity of the surrounding environment.
2.3.2 Te Oro Music and Arts Centre – Archimedia

The Te Oro Music and Arts Centre is situated in Glen Innes Auckland. Designed by Archimedia in 2012 for the Auckland City Council, it is a community and arts centre for young people. The building is part of a new wave of Auckland public buildings providing a facility for a new generation of users to express their place in the world.

**Places for people**

The Te Oro Music and Arts Centre is a public music and arts facility exclusively for young people. The design of the building was based on the histories and aspirations of the local community. The function of the building provides an engagement with ethnic culture, especially for the Pacifica communities of Glen Innes and Panmure. The building helps inspire young people to express themselves through art and cultural production, and helps nurture and showcase local talent within the community.

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Connectivity

The Te Oro Music and Arts Centre acknowledges the surrounding context of the site by producing visual and physical connections to the surrounding environment. The slender site follows a traditional pathway from the Tamaki River to the east. The building is part of the key community facilities clustered on the southern edge of the site, and provides connections with The Ruapotaka Marae, the Glen Innes library and the community hall, creating a shared space.

The building acts in a similar way to a pavilion with open internal ground space and the mass over the second floor to create a canopy-like structure. The circulation spaces connect the users both physically and visually with the many activity spaces provided in the building and also connects users to the surrounding landscape through the use of view shafts.
Legibility

The design deals with the reassertion of local heritage and the acknowledgement of the concerns and values of the Maori and Polynesian population of Glen Innes and the Auckland region. The idea of a shared expression of identity was a major consideration for the project, with the unification of over sixty local ethnicities that are based in the area.

Diversity

The building houses a cluster of studios, booths, workrooms, hangout spaces, a “kai” space, meeting spaces, and a large double height theatre and performance space. The Te Oro Music and Arts Centre offers many different spaces for different types of cultural expression, with large spaces for dance and performances, and smaller spaces for small group and individual activities.

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82 Bill McKay, “Te Oro,” Architecturez, September-October 2015, 55-57.
Ability to Evolve

The building’s skin is considered to be skeuomorphic, which deals with creating a new thing while retaining aspects or qualities of the old. The multi-purpose building has a 200 seat indoor performance space that can open out into the carpark at the northern edge of the site. The adaptable stage space creates a performance terrace for outdoor performances for larger crowds85.

Local Character and Identity

The form of the building has been likened to a big kava bowl or a Pacific Island drum86. The design uses Pacific metaphors which help connect people to the building through the design being seen as something familiar. The cross-cultural hybridity evident in the design of the building uses a mixture of techniques, combining traditional Maori carving with modern design techniques and materials. Surfaces feature traditional Maori graphic devices, adding to the richness of the iconography used within the building to assert meaning and identity. The building was conceptualised as a natural arboreal canopy, under which cultural learning and creativity could occur87.

Fig. 21: Te Oro Music and Arts Centre west elevation
Conclusion

The Te Oro Music and Arts Centre provides a different approach to community centre design by engaging with local culture and communities through urban development. The collaboration with local artists and designers helped strengthen the design and its relevance to the local community, and the use of cultural iconography is evident throughout the design of the building. Cultural buildings such as Te Oro Music and Arts Centre also help develop cultural engagement for a new generation and help bridge cultural differences within communities. Consideration of how a building ties in with the local community services and environment needs to be considered as exemplified by the connections provided by the Te Oro Music and Art Centre.
2.3.3 Nest We Grow – College of Environmental Design UC Berkeley and Kengo Kuma & Associates

The Nest We Grow is a collaborative project designed and built by the College of Environmental Design UC Berkeley and Kengo Kuma & Associates. Designed in 2014, the project is located in Hokkaido, Japan.

Places for people

The project creates an open, public structure to bring people in the local community together to store, prepare and enjoy local foods, surrounded by the natural Hokkaido landscape. The structure has different spaces that celebrate the personal and cultural consumption of food through a ritualistic approach to the growing, preparation and consumption of local food. The project incorporates a communal gathering place, referencing the local gathering process of food.
Connectivity

The design provides connections to the local landscape through the openness of the structure. The structure also brings together the local community and creates a common space where the occupants can bond over the food making and preparation process. The project also combines traditional Japanese building techniques and local materials with a Californian approach to the design.

Legibility

The design brings together an examination of structural and material elements that could be combined to create a community and food orientated space. The structure is located in the Memu Meadows Centre for Research on Environmental Technologies and references the Japanese agricultural landscape through a ‘productive garden’ idea. The design celebrates the local food process through a farm-to-table approach based on the locality of food growing, gathering, and consumption.


Fig. 25: Sectional Perspective of the Nest We Grow
Diversity

The timber structure provides a frame in which food is hung to grow and dry. A tea platform in the middle of the structure creates a centralised gathering space where the community can visually and physically enjoy food around a sunken fireplace.

Ability to Evolve

The wall at the base of the building creates a micro topography and helps block wind exposure. The transparent plastic corrugated panels also allow light in and help heat the space during the colder months. Panels on the façade and roof also slide and open to facilitate air movement. The building helps to preserve local food production traditions as local heritage and acts as a local centre that future generations in the community can use to connect and learn about the local environment and local culture.

Fig. 26: Interior of the Nest We Grow

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Local Character and Identity

The design incorporates a Californian approach to design-build construction and the application of transnational technology in a new environment. The structure combines both American and Japanese timber construction techniques. The wood frame structure mimics the vertical spatial experience of a Japanese larch forest. The adaptation and local interpretations of cultural and traditional features allows the local traditions and culture to be passed down and shared with the local community and future generations. The design also reflects the local traditions and culture and showcases a modern adaptation through the use of traditional and modern materials and the collaborative approach to the design. The Nest We Grow celebrates local identity and culture through a festive approach. Rather than visually showcasing the local culture and identity, the Nest We Grow allows users to express their local culture and identity through both intangible and physical interaction.

Fig. 27: A structural element used to hang produce
Fig. 28: The Nest We Grow surrounded by the Hokkaido landscape
Conclusion

The design of the pavilion rethinks the community centre and how it could bring together a social and growing space that references the local community and the surrounding environment. Local traditional building techniques and materials combined with a Californian approach to the design, creates a transcultural approach combining knowledge from different sources to create a design that reflects local tradition and culture with an international design approach. The Nest We Grow exemplifies the collaborative approach between local and global through a common idea and theme, showcasing local culture and the expression of a transcultural approach to an architectural proposition.
The Community Centre Wallern is a community function centre in Wallern, Austria. It was designed by Schneider & Lengauer in 2009. The building is situated between two old buildings.

Places for people

The building was designed as an event space and can hold up to 400 people. It provides the local community with a place to hold functions, events and performances. It also becomes a social hub for the local community.

Connectivity

The community centre design has been integrated with the pub Schaich through a passage on the northern side of the community centre. The two facilities share services such as bathrooms, and the pub provides catering services if needed in the community centre. The community centre houses two bars, one on the ground floor and the other on the second floor. These act as communication hubs and extend into the neighbouring pub.

Legibility

The ridge height of the building is orientated towards both neighbouring buildings. Connecting the community centre with the pub Schaich provides a functions and hospitality space for the local area.

Diversity

The community centre is split into three levels. The building has a large function space for performances and presentations on the ground floor. The building also has two seminar rooms, a small meeting room and two bars, one on the ground floor and the other on the second floor.
Fig. 34: The Community Centre Wallern interior
**Ability to Evolve**

The building was designed for maximum usability on a minimum building footprint. This idea was explored through the upper level of the building cantilevering out onto the street. This expands the usable internal space, and provides cover over the entry. The large performance and function space that defines the building is flexible to cater for different uses from performances to large gatherings and functions.

**Local Character and Identity**

The community centre is clad in copper-aluminium sheet known as ‘Tecu Gold’ which makes it stand out from the confinement of the site, but at the same time reference the surrounding building façades such as the brickwork used on the pub Schaich. The form of the building was based on maximising space usage on a minimum building footprint.

![Fig. 35: The Community Centre Wallern section](image)

**Conclusion**

The Community Centre Wallern explores the connections to surrounding buildings and the creation of a community space using a minimum building footprint. The ability to adapt to the different functional needs of the community creates a design that has a flexible layout for different spatial requirements. By providing connections to the surrounding buildings, the community centre promotes local businesses and creates closer ties between them and exemplifies how architecture can help provide collaborations and strengthen ties within a community.

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2.3.5 Rhodes Community Precinct – Crone Partners

The Rhodes Community Precinct was a competition design for a new community precinct in Rhodes, Australia. It was designed in 2013 as a collaboration between Crone Partners and Urbis Landscape Architecture. The design is located on the bank of the Parramatta River at Homebush Bay.

Places for people

The design of the Rhodes Community Precinct emphasises the pedestrian movement through the design. The spaces are arranged to allow for a mixture of uses. There are open areas providing areas of rest, relaxation, and gathering, and areas of movement defined by paths and open and enclosed walkways. The design emphasises the value of the pedestrian scale through the interactions between the spaces and connections provided by the design.

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Fig. 39: Rhodes Community Precinct section
**Connectivity**

The Rhodes Community Precinct incorporates small-scale elements and public facilities to engage with the foreshore and integration of outdoor spaces. The pavilion structures surround the centre of the site and dissect the site through the use of intersecting paths, creating a social centre in the middle, and larger open green spaces around the perimeter.

**Legibility**

The design is based on the needs of the local community and how they can use the site for recreational and business opportunities. The design becomes a series of spaces, reflecting the different types of spatial requirements for the activities that take place on the site. The design is integrated with the surrounding landscape and connects the foreshore with the surrounding buildings.
Diversity

The design features a number of different facilities that respond to the surrounding context such as a creative centre, a digital gallery and information boutique, multipurpose spaces, an e-resource centre, café/restaurant, Council operational space and public amenities. Each of the programmes is separated to reflect their own unique style and spatial requirements. The design also integrates building forms and open urban space to allow users to use the different spaces at different times of the day.

Ability to Evolve

The design consists of a series of pavilion-like structures surrounded by urban green space. By breaking up the programmatic functions into smaller spaces rather than one large building allows for the optimisation of spatial requirements and flexibility of the outdoor space surrounding the forms.

Local Character and Identity

The scheme reflects the community-focused ambitions of the Rhodes community. The connections between the public space and the waterfront allow the users to interact with both the local community and the surrounding environment. The scheme provides an intimate community feel and provides a recreational space for the local community by creating a destination, where users can take in the views of the waterfront and interact with urban social life.

Conclusion

The Rhodes Community Precinct explores a different take on community facilities, by rethinking the formal layout of the community centre. By breaking down the form of the design into smaller defined space allows for the interaction of the space in-between. The intersecting corners linking the centre of the site also draw in users towards the centre and at the same time also expel users out into the larger open green spaces through a transition process. The scheme also negotiates between the different edge conditions with the built up edge along the road side contrasting against the openness of the design along the foreshore, creating two different urban design conditions.

2.3.6 Gehua Youth and Cultural Centre – OPEN Architecture

The Gehua Youth and Cultural Centre is a community centre in Beidaihe, China. Designed in 2012 the cultural centre offers a variety of different programmes and acts a social space within the town.

Places for people

The design is a response to the changing programmes of the building with open and free space. The centre also provides areas for children to explore and discover their creativity. The centre hosts various performance and cultural activities for the local residents.

Fig. 45: Gehua Youth and Cultural Centre

Fig. 46: The cafe area

Fig. 47: The courtyard space

Connectivity

The building is located around a central courtyard and the building acts like a pavilion centred on the site. The usable space and ground level is optimised through the connections between the different indoor and outdoor spaces. The use of the internal courtyard allows for a free flowing internal movement throughout the building and provides multiple connections throughout the building. The central courtyard is also surrounded by large glass façades that allow for the visual interactions and connections of the different spaces within the building.

Legibility

The building creates a space for the local residents to use. The building is a creative space where a variety of programmes help express the creative of the local community. The building also provides a base for local cultural development groups as well as being Beidaihe’s cultural centre for the local communities. The building uses materials such as polished concrete wall and floors and weathered-bamboo doors. The courtyard also features a meandering path that resembles features of Chinese garden design.
Diversity

The centre contains a theatre, gallery space, teaching spaces, DIY area, café, kitchen, book bar, multimedia hall, master studio and staff dormitories. The building is also a mixture of green space and built space. Due to the small size of the building the ground level has be optimised to allow for the effective use of the usable space. The building is designed to be used all year round and adaptable to suit the different weather conditions.

Ability to Evolve

The centre has a small theatre with sliding doors that opens up to the courtyard and allows for the extension of the theatre when more space is needed for performances and larger crowds. The users can enjoy a different type of experience, and in the summer months the courtyard is used as an outdoor cinema, projecting movies onto the surfaces of the sliding doors. The roof is also flat to create a space used for landscaping and outdoor activities. The spaces within the building can be adapted to suit the spatial needs for different functions and occasions.


Fig. 49: The different uses of the courtyard and theatre space
Local Character and Identity

The Gehua Youth and Cultural Centre blends in with the local landscape due to the landscaping features of the building. The building also uses a central courtyard to provide an oasis for the users within the town. The weathered-bamboo doors that open out onto the courtyard have slot openings that are inspired by the ‘eyes’ on the local poplar trees.\(^7\)

Conclusion

The Gehua Youth and Cultural Centre exemplifies a modern take on cultural centres and how they can engage with community events and education. The referencing of Chinese elements such as the courtyard and the meandering path provide cultural references that can be experienced through the interaction of the spaces. The cultural centre also shows how internal and external areas of these types of buildings can be used to engage with the wider community and provides both visual and physical connectivity and interaction with the users and the surrounding environment. The flexibility of the spaces provides different opportunities and usages for the communities’ needs.

2.3.7 Shanghai Community Cubes - INCLUDED

The Shanghai Community Cubes is an affordable and mobile community centre for migrant workers in Shanghai. Designed in 2013 by INCLUDED, the design is a series of repurposed shipping containers clustered together to create spaces that can be used by the migrant workers.\(^{108}\)

**Places for people**

The design is configured to provide supporting social development by providing migrants with a space that they can use for education and social spaces. The design combines a series of spaces that can be used by migrant workers and their families.

**Connectivity**

The building is a series of modular shipping containers that are combined to provide different spaces based on the needs of the migrant workers. The Shanghai Community Cubes provides both indoor and outdoor space that can be used for different activities and social gatherings. The spaces give migrants an area that they can use as their own space, strengthening ties within the migrant community and giving the migrant workers and their families a sense of belonging.

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Legibility

The Shanghai Community Cubes provides a community space for the migrant community. The low rise form of the community centre reflects the surrounding neighbourhood. The space reflects the migrant workers needs and provides them and their families with personal development opportunities.

Diversity

The Shanghai Community Cubes provides both indoor and outdoor spaces, and provides the migrant workers with spaces for education and development as well as spaces to socialise and relax. The community centre is designed to serve a variety of different functions, these include, early childhood development, adult workshops, a small library, a play space, computer area, an exhibition space, and community meeting spaces.¹⁰⁹


Fig. 52: Shanghai Community Cubes exterior

Fig. 53: The flexibility of the indoor spaces
Ability to Evolve

The Shanghai community cubes are designed to be detached and moved if the migrants are forced to move.\textsuperscript{110} The furniture used inside is stackable and can be stored away easily if a larger space is needed.\textsuperscript{111} The outdoor furniture is also lightweight and can be easily moved around to suit the needs of the migrant workers and their social activities. Room dividers and cabinets use whiteboard veneer which can also be used as a teaching surface.\textsuperscript{112} The room dividers also can separate the connected shipping containers into two smaller spaces for smaller groups.

Fig. 56: Shanghai Community Cubes exterior recreation space
Local Character and Identity

The use of shipping containers to create the form of the building reflects the transient nature of migrant workers and the industrial nature of their jobs. The outdoor play space is designed to encourage creative involvement and gives the migrant workers and their families a safe, sustainable and dignified space. The building also gives the migrant workers and their families’ better quality spaces that allow for the expression of their thoughts and ideas.

Conclusion

The Shanghai Community Cubes show how a simple space can help a community. The programmatic features of the design allow for a multiple of activities to take place, and give the migrant workers and their families a sense of dignified space that they can call their own. The adaptability of the space provides the community with a wide variety of spaces to suit their needs. The transient nature of the building reflects the nature of the users that the building was designed for which give the community a sense of belonging and a connection to the surrounding Shanghai context. This approach to creating community facilities that empowers communities and gives them a voice through the expression of their ideas and beliefs.

2.3.8 Xintiandi Redevelopment – Wood and Zapata Inc.

Xintiandi is a historic neighbourhood located in the Taipingqiao residential district in Shanghai’s French Quarter. The area consists of a cluster of traditional Shikumen housing that was redeveloped in 1999 into a commercial and entertainment hub.¹¹⁴

Places for people

The area has become the top entertainment and tourist destination in Shanghai due to the redevelopment of the neighbourhood¹¹⁵. The revitalisation of the pedestrianised space allows users to stroll between the old buildings, taking in the rich historical and social influence of the site. The programme of the site is based on the modern lifestyle of the users. The site creates a haven for rest and relaxation amidst the busy urban life of Shanghai. The design also provides users with a nostalgic setting of the past combined with modern a modern flavour. The public streetscape spaces are enclosed by the surrounding Shikumen houses that provide a neighbourhood feel to the site. The main pedestrian space at ground level and access to the site from multiple directions creates a clustering of pedestrianised spaces that promote movement and interaction in the social meeting spaces around the buildings.


Fig. 60: The Xintiandi redevelopment overview
Connectivity

The Xintiandi redevelopment acts as a social hub, providing social spaces where users can interact with each other. The area also helps support the city dwellers living in the surrounding apartment blocks, giving them a space to socialise and relax. With multiple access points situated throughout the site, the Xintiandi redevelopment provides greater connections to the wider urban fabric of the city. Pedestrianising the site at ground level provides an intimate and relaxed feel based on the movement of the users and the speed at which they walk. The redevelopment provides users with opportunities to stop and relax or creates a passage through to surrounding areas. The redevelopment emphasises human interaction and enjoyment, by bring together people from all over the city to experience and participate in the social interactions of the everyday urban environment.

The redevelopment is split into two sections with the Shikumen housing development on the northern block and a modern dining, shopping and entertainment complex on the southern block of the site. The two blocks are divided by a row of Shikumen houses which were the site of the First National Congress of the Communist Party of China, and the Shikumen houses create a border showcasing the historic and artistic features of the city.\(^\text{116}\)

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**Legibility**

The Xintiandi redevelopment is a collaboration between municipal and district governments, private developers and international architectural firms to rehabilitate and transform two blocks of old Shikumen houses⁸⁷. The development breathes new life into the existing Shikumen houses, and emphasises their importance as a source of local cultural heritage and inspiration of the city. As culture is something that is continuously evolving and being reinvented by a new generation, the Xintiandi development provides renewed opportunities for future generations to define and reinterpret their cultural aspirations as well as creating and acknowledging a historic narrative through architectural development.

**Diversity**

The area consists of housing, retail spaces, coffee shops, restaurants and nightclubs. The area also includes a large mansion that once housed thirty families. It has been renovated and is now a conference centre with private dining rooms. The area is open late in the night and provides a space to relax in the evening.

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Ability to Evolve

The Xintiandi redevelopment uses the technique of adaptive re-use of existing Shikumen housing. As many of the traditional Shikumen houses were dilapidated and run down, developers and local authorities set out to reinvigorate the area to reflect the contemporary culture, but with reference to the area’s history. The residential function of the Shikumen housing was abandoned in favour of creating a business district.

Local Character and Identity

Xintiandi combines the historic architectural character of the neighbourhood with modern interventions. The mixture of Asian and western influences, creates a hybrid identity. The area also has a number of different housing typologies ranging from Lilong lane housing and Shikumen housing to modern and contemporary developments.
Conclusion

The Xintiandi development is an example of how an area can be redeveloped to reflect the contemporary culture of Shanghai. The development reflects the contemporary lifestyles of modern Shanghai while still retaining a cultural narrative. The juxtaposition of the new and the old features exemplifies the acknowledgement of the past while dealing with the contemporary context surrounding the site and the changing lifestyles of the users. By reusing and repurposing the existing Shikumen and Lilong houses the tangible heritage of the site is retained through the buildings and recreates new social spaces for a new generation of users. With the creation of social spaces, the development brings together a melting pot of people of all different backgrounds to use the space for social engagement and relaxation. The Xintiandi development exemplifies the recreation of the cultural heritage of the site while retaining modern influences of social urban spaces.

Fig. 65: The reuse of existing Shikumen housing for redevelopment
2.3.9 Conclusion

The research conducted exemplifies the different ways community engagement is created through architecture. Combining the knowledge from the research to create a transcultural approach to defining how the space interacts within the existing context provides opportunities for the creation of a hybrid scheme based on multiple influences.
3.0 Project Development
3.1 Brief

The Design

The design requires a space that allows for the interpretation of the local ethnic cultural expression of the Dominion Road ethnic precinct. The design needs to be inclusive of all people and cultures by addressing the changing ethnic landscape of the area. The design needs to also facilitate, in terms of amenities to promote and help express cross cultural learning and understanding and the creation of an inclusive environment while retaining the existing character of the surrounding area.

The Site

The site also needs to reflect the changing functions of the site between daytime use and evening use, to create a vibrant space that evolves depending on the usage. The space needs to be accessible to all users and provide connections to the main areas surrounding the site. The design also needs to address the public and private areas that make up the site. As the site is an existing service lane, existing functional requirements need to be acknowledged.
The Objectives

The objective of the design is to apply the theories of the Third space and transculturalism in an architectural proposition which deals physically with the existing ethnic space and atmosphere.

The design also needs to utilise the existing service lane at the back of the Dominion Road shops, and create an inclusive environment that people of all cultures can experience for cross-cultural learning and understanding through a transcultural approach.

Cultural space requirements

The design will include a mixture educational facilities, cultural facilities, and outdoor facilities. These will include:

Education facilities
- Library
- Archive
- Lecture space
- Tutorial rooms
- Classrooms
- Workshop group space

Cultural facilities
- Exhibition space
- Function space
- Performance area
- Performance studio space

Outdoor facilities
- Market space
- Outdoor seating
- Retail space
3.2 Site

3.2.1 Site Selection

As migrant communities are spread throughout New Zealand, it was necessary to research or to search for potentially suitable sites all over New Zealand. The site needs to be accessible to the users and cater for the various functional requirements needed for cultural space. Sites initially chosen were based on site analysis and their potential to act as a base to further develop and test the ideas and theories behind the research. The initial sites ranged from historical sites such as the Lawrence Chinese Camp in Lawrence, Otago, Northcote Central in Auckland, and Dominion Road ethnic precinct in Auckland. Each of these sites had design potential; however the Dominion Road site offered the most potential due to the spatial, contextual and programmatic analysis of the site and its proximity.

![Fig. 66: The redevelopment of the Lawrence Chinese Camp](image1)

![Fig. 67: Northcote Central](image2)

![Fig. 68: Dominion Road ethnic precinct](image3)
3.2.2 Site Analysis

In the report, Halfway House: The Dominion Road Ethnic Precinct, Paul Spoonly says that “precincts... have been largely overlooked both in relation to the governance of Auckland and their significance in terms of economic development.”

The site selected to test the research and the proposal is a section of the Dominion Road ethnic precinct. The site is positioned close to the main arterial routes of Balmoral Road and Dominion Road.

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118 Trudie Cain, Carina Meares, Paul Spoonly and Robin Peace, Half Way House: The Dominion Road Ethnic Precinct (Integration of Immigrants Programme College of Humanities and Social Sciences Massey University, 2001), 10.
Location

The site chosen is located in the suburb of Balmoral in Auckland. The site is part of an existing laneway parallel to Dominion Road that runs between Balmoral Road and Rocklands Avenue. The site covers an area of 5,882.54m², with a perimeter of 602.89m.
Historic Properties

In the mid-19th century, Ngati Whatua rangataira Apihai Te Kawau gifted 11,000 acres of land to the Crown, which was sold off in 20 acre parcels in allotments which formed a regular grid pattern, made up of farms. Then from the 1860’s the farms were subdivided and developed into residential suburbs due to the increasing Auckland population moving out from the crowded inner city.

From the late 1870’s Dominion Road started to become a main arterial route due to a growth in public transport, which helped connect the inner city to the outer city suburbs of Mt Eden, Balmoral, Kingsland, and Mt Albert. This also caused commercial and residential developments at major intersections along Dominion Road, and each had their distinctive character. Many of the buildings reflected the early twentieth century architectural influences, with the shop house being the main building typology along Dominion Road. Today the old shop houses are juxtaposed in between modern commercial developments providing an interesting and diverse streetscape. In 1968 a Super Value supermarket and specialty shops opened on the existing site. The supermarket along with other specialty shops, created a new type of shopping complex for Auckland.
Fig. 74: Dominion Road shop typologies

Dominion Road Shops

- **Food services**
- **Food retail**
- **Entertainment**
- **Retail**
- **Healthcare and social assistance**
- **Health and Beauty**
- **Other services**
- **Vacant**
- **Service lane**
Community Planning

Dominion Road runs almost the length of the Auckland isthmus for seven kilometres from Eden Terrace to Waikowhai.\(^{119}\) Today, the area has a population of 3,714 people, with 22.9% people of Asian origin, and 6.6% of people born in the People’s Republic of China.\(^{120}\)

In the report, Ethnic Precincts in Auckland: Understanding the Role and Function of the Balmoral Shops, an issue was raised that the area lacked a ‘real’ sense of community compared with other neighbourhoods; that it does not have a hub; and that the precinct needs a greater variety of businesses to encourage people to linger there rather than eat and leave.\(^{121}\)

The formal and spatial layout of Dominion Road is historically based on strip development, consisting of a mixture of retail and residential dwellings, and also includes a number of community facilities. Recent activity on Dominion Road has been heavily influenced by ethnic groups, especially the Chinese.

The area is predominantly used as a service centre during the day and an entertainment area during the evening. The Auckland Council called in the Arts and Cultural Strategic Action Plan (ACSAP) for the “integrat[ion of] arts and culture into our everyday lives” to create a culturally rich and creative Auckland.\(^{122}\) The current site consists of a number of retail businesses, with food retailing which makes up a third of the businesses in the area. Chinese business owners make up 51% of the businesses, with 73% of the food businesses being Chinese owned.\(^{123}\)

The overall dominance of Chinese businesses in the area gives it its distinctive character, and the area is classed as an “ethnoscape.”\(^{124}\) The strong presence of Chinese and other Asian businesses and clientele in the area, gives its distinctive character.

\(^{119}\) Ibid, Half Way House: The Dominion Road Ethnic Precinct (Integration of Immigrants Programme College of Humanities and Social Sciences Massey University, 2001), 9.


\(^{123}\) Trudie Cain, Carina Meares, Paul Spoonly and Robin Peace, Half Way House: The Dominion Road Ethnic Precinct (Integration of Immigrants Programme College of Humanities and Social Sciences Massey University, 2001), 19-20.

Fig. 75: Existing pedestrian access to site

Fig. 76: Existing vehicular access to the site
Connectivity and Accessibility

Dominion Road is one of Auckland’s main arterial routes. There are four public transport routes that provide a connection with other suburban areas that stop at multiple places around the site.\footnote{Auckland Transport, “Central Guide,” accessed July 5, 2016, https://at.govt.nz/media/719342/cg_central-guide_august-2014-web.pdf} The main pedestrian and vehicle access is through an entrance off Rocklands Avenue, and there is also direct access on the north western corner of the site, which links the site directly to Dominion Road. The service lane system that runs at the back of the Dominion Road shops from Balmoral Road to Kensington Avenue is currently used for deliveries to the restaurants and access to the living spaces above the shops.

The northern end of the site overlooks Balmoral Road and Potter’s Park, which is used as a recreational area by the local community. The site is defined by the Dominion Road Shops at the western edge of the site, the Dominion Road shoppers’ carpark at the eastern edge, Balmoral Road to the north, and Rocklands Avenue to the south.

The service lane that is being used for the site runs down the back edge of the Dominion Road shops from the Balmoral Road edge to Rocklands Avenue. Sections of the laneway are accessible for both pedestrians and vehicles, and primarily used for car parking and as a service lane. The site is currently underutilised, and is a void space or barrier between the Dominion Road shops and the shoppers’ car park. It also lacks connection to Dominion Road, causing users walk around the boundaries of the site rather than engaging with the site.
Natural Factors

Auckland is located at a latitude of 36° 51’. The city lies in a transition zone between subtropical and temperate climatic zones, creating a warm and moderately wet climate. The prevailing winds are South-westerly. The site has a green space on the northwest corner of the site that defines the northern boundary of the site, and Potters Park to the north of the site.

Fig. 78: Sun study and prevailing wind direction

Fig. 79: Sun angles

Fig. 80: Green space

Cultural Factors

Before the 1970’s the number of non-Asian businesses outnumbered the number of Asian businesses. However, in the 1990’s a number of Asian migrants saw the potential business opportunities of the location, along with a change in immigration policies, which lead to the clustering that now dominates the streetscape of Dominion Road. The precinct is largely Chinese in character, with many Chinese owned businesses making up the precinct.128

The area today reflects the changing socio-ethnic landscape of Auckland and New Zealand, in the way that the area, once designed for Pakeha habitation and work, is now being transformed by migrants to create a new sense of identity and to cater for changing societal needs. Today each major intersection with Dominion Road has its own character and features.

At the moment the Dominion Road site is neglected, and lacks public engagement, but it has the potential for the creation of a vibrant centre where Chinese culture can be expressed and further enhance the local ethnic character of Dominion Road. Historically, the Chinese ethnic enclaves and settlements in New Zealand were not situated on main streets due to political and strategic interventions, but instead were positioned near main routes. Using the existing laneway references this idea by taking left over space and developing it.

Today the shops at the intersection of Dominion Road and Balmoral Road are primarily ethnic restaurants, with the majority of them being Chinese restaurants.
Materials and Textures

The main materials found on site are brick, concrete, steel, and timber. The use of brick defines the back of the Dominion Road shop houses, and creates a solid boundary to enclose the western edge of the site. Timber has been used for the extension of residential flats above the shop spaces. The linear timber elements contrast against the massing of brickwork creating a contrasting textured effect.

Fig. 86: Residential flats above the Dominion Road shops.

Fig. 87: The back of the Capitol Theatre on the site.
Site Issues

The site has different edge conditions. The western edge of the site is interlocked between a series of densely compacted shop houses. This is contrasted with the openness of the existing Dominion Road shoppers’ car park. The northern edge of the site is defined by the main arterial Balmoral Road, and the southern edge is defined by the smaller scaled Rocklands Avenue.

The existing site is currently being used as a service lane at the back of the Dominion Road Shops, and for access to the residential flats above the shops. The service lane is not well maintained and the left over space has been turned into private car parking for residents and store owners. The shopping complex overlooking the carpark also is run down and most of the shops are vacant, creating a disconnectedness between the Dominion Road shoppers’ carpark and the Dominion Road shops. By repairing the site through a design proposition, by making it more public orientated and creating an in between space that better connects the different areas, there is the potential to create a vibrant setting to further enhance the area as a social space.
Site Conclusion

The Dominion Road ethnic precinct offers the potential to be a destination that offers a variety of activities for the Auckland community to use. The site is popular with migrants of Asian origin due to the type of businesses available in the area. The Dominion Road ethnic precinct offers migrants a taste of home as well as providing the wider Auckland community with a taste of cultural influences. The potential to use the service lane at the back of the existing shophouses has the potential to create a vibrant contrast with the existing Dominion Road shops.
3.2.3 Type of Spaces

The programmatic requirements of cultural space have different types of spatial needs, which have been defined as:

- Urban Space

The external boundaries of the site deal with urban space and the connection to the wider Auckland context. Using the existing laneway as the site provides a better connection between the Dominion Road shops and the existing carpark. There is the potential for a pedestrian route through the site, which contrasts with the main vehicle route of Dominion Road.

- Event Space

The use of specific spaces for events allows cultural interaction, and enhances quality of life. It also calls for the space to be at a more human and intimate scale. Rejuvenation through engaging with the site will help bring life back to the laneway and helps support the local businesses by bringing people into the area.

- Heritage Space

The referencing of cultural influences through the design, defines the setting to define the type of space. The Dominion Road ethnic precinct streetscape predominantly uses Chinese iconography in the form of signage and products. Using Chinese design as an influence, this references the existing ethnic streetscape of Dominion Road and allows social and cultural interaction.
3.2.4 Design Programme

Ethnic precincts such as Dominion Road offer migrants a connection to memories of home. The sights, sounds, and smells of the area ignite the senses and helps recollection.

To explore the potential for cultural engagement through an architectural intervention, a series of spaces will be needed to facilitate and express cross-cultural learning and understanding. Current cross-cultural expression and practices include: cooking, dancing and theatre, language schools, decorative arts, storytelling, literature, informal conversations, music production and performance.

The main function of the space is to facilitate cross-cultural learning and understanding in the context of the Dominion Road ethnic precinct. The programme of the design is based on the research conducted on cultural spaces and how cultural influences are expressed through the use of architecture and the built form. The following programme strategies are derived from precedents and analysis of programmes that are used to explore cultural engagement and understanding. The strategies will deal with how the different spatial needs diversify the site and tie in with the existing Dominion Road shops.

The functions of the cultural space provided needs to include a variety of spaces for people to use depending on the activity. As the Dominion Road ethnic precinct is a mixture of businesses, a service centre, and a place of gathering, the programme of the project needs to reflect and tie in with the existing local functions and requirements.
Educational Facilities

Library

The library is used a resource space that allows for the access of a range of educational sources. Users can develop their engagement and understanding with the resources the library space has to offer.

Library requirements:

- Book shelving
- Book storage
- Reference shelving
- Bathrooms
- Quiet areas
- Computer area
- Offices and administration
- Staff room
- Loading area

Archive

The archive space is utilised as a space for collecting and recording historical material. The space will provide areas for recording personal histories and for storytelling. The space will also allow for the researching of family histories and other historical material.

Archive requirements:

- Archive storage
- Storytelling space/small group gathering space
- Research space
- Personal research space
- Conversational booths
- Interview rooms
- Computer space
- Offices and administration
- Staff room
- Display area
- Loading area
Lecture Space

The lecture space is used for public talks and discussions. The space provides an area where presentations and seminars can take place.

Lecture space requirements:
- Seating space
- Small stage area
- Storage space
- Sound room

Tutorial Rooms

The tutorial rooms are used for personal discussion and private tuition spaces where people can be provided with language services, private after school or adult tuition services, or as meeting spaces. The individual tutorial rooms will cater for two to four people.

Tutorial room requirements:
- Small booths
  (Music teaching booths/Tutoring booths/meeting booths)
- Administration
- Storage
**Classrooms**

The classrooms are spaces where educational activities can occur. The individual classrooms will cater for twelve students per classroom. The classroom space provides a space for language classes, small group activities.

Classroom requirements:

- Teaching space
- Storage
- Administration
- Staff room
- Bathrooms

**Workshop Group Space**

The workshop group space provides a space for larger groups. The individual workshop group spaces will cater for twenty four people per space. The workshop group spaces are used for exercise classes, medium group gatherings, and adult education facilities.

Workshop group space requirements:

- Workshop group spaces
- Storage
- Administration
- Changing rooms
- Kitchen
- Bathrooms
- Cultural Facilities
Cultural Facilities

Exhibition Space

The exhibition space houses exhibitions by local artists, designers, and historical exhibitions. The space allows for public engagement and will allow local and international artists and curators to exhibit work for public viewing and interaction.

Exhibition space requirements:
- Administration
- Lobby
- Five gallery spaces
- Storage
- Loading area
- Bathrooms

Function Space

The function space is a space for events and gatherings. It is a space where groups and community groups can gather to celebrate events and festivals.

Function space requirements:
- Kitchen
- Food teaching area
- Bathrooms
- Storage
- Loading area
Performance Area

The performance area is a space where performances and shows will be performed. The space will showcase local and international talent and provide an entertainment space for the site.

Performance area requirements:

- Stage area
- Seating area
- Storage
- Green room
- Dressing rooms
- Kitchen
- Bathrooms
- Offices and administration
- Loading and maintenance area

Performance Studio Space

The performance studio space is used for performance groups and exercise groups. The space creates a practice space for performance groups and a space for exercise group activities.

Performance studio space requirements:

- Performance rehearsal and practice space
- Dressing rooms
- Changing rooms
- Bathrooms
- Storage
- Offices and Administration
Outdoor Facilities

Market Space

The market space is used for selling local crafts and produce. It provides a temporary space and opportunities for small entrepreneurial business to share and exchange their produce and products. The market space also provides greater visual connection to street activities and reflects the entrepreneurial spirit of the area.

Market space requirements:

- Space for market stalls
- Loading area
- Storage

Outdoor seating

The outdoor seating and public areas creates a space for rest and relaxation as well as informal gatherings and connections to take place. The outdoor seating also allows for the visual connection of people using the pedestrianised space and allows users to take in the ambient surroundings.

Outdoor seating requirements:

- Seating for informal gatherings and rest/relaxation
Retail space

Retail space has been added to connect the newly created space with the existing Dominion Road shops. The retail space provides more area for dining, shopping and other retail spaces to invigorate and draw people into the existing service lane and provide a variety of businesses that complement the other areas situated on the site.

Retail space requirements:

- Sales space
- Bathrooms
- Storage
3.3 Design Response

**Design Concept:**

This concept draws inspiration from the clustering of the Shikumen housing of the Xintiandi redevelopment, and the functional requirements of a community centre found through the precedent analysis in section 2.3. The basis of this idea is derived from the Chinese influence of the Dominion Road ethnic precinct. The design and layout of the spaces is created through a hybridised response of the research. The design incorporates a hyperrealistic translation of traditional Chinese post and beam construction. The spatial layout incorporated in the design deals splitting up the educational facilities and the cultural facilities into two main buildings. The design uses a series of bridges to connect the different buildings and provide a covered meandering path. Openings around the surrounding buildings provide internalised views of the site and emphasise the notion of inbetween space. Centralised courtyard spaces within the centre of the site provide areas for performances and market space where the exchange of cultural products can be shared. The many spaces for cultural production and exchanges are partitioned through a series of thresholds, which enclose and define them. This concept looked at ways cultural space can be divided up over the site to help with the engagement of transcultural exchanges.

Fig. 91: Overview of the Dominion Road ethnic precinct site concept
Fig. 92: Hyperrealistic structural member concept

Fig. 93: Hyperrealistic structural member model
Fig. 90: Courtyard performance space

Fig. 94: connecting bridge to education space in the background

Fig. 95: Roof section model
3.4 Design Development

The following strategies are used to define and develop how the design deals with the existing Dominion Road context and provides ways of using the site.

Circulation

Taking the existing service lane that runs behind the Dominion Road shops between Balmoral Road and Rocklands Avenue, the space has an existing linear development. By changing the existing circulation to create intersecting nodes, the linear structure of the circulation now provides more connections to other areas of the site. This transient nature is influenced by the transcultural and third space approach that creates numerous meeting points that influence the perception of the space and the way users interact with the site.
Vehicular Routes

This diagram shows how vehicles can access the site for deliveries to the existing Dominion Road shops and residential cars. The new path through the site allows for a loop circulation through the site, which allows vehicular traffic to flow better throughout the site.
Pedestrian Routes

This diagram shows the ways pedestrians can use the site. There are multiple access points to the site that provides better connections to the surrounding spaces of Dominion Road, Rocklands Avenue, and the Dominion Road shoppers’ carpark. The site will be mainly pedestrianised with access only available to the residents of the Dominion Road shops and delivery vehicles. Integration of the existing Dominion Road shops and the cultural space at a pedestrian level provides a sensory experience through interaction that will allow a greater understanding of the space and diverse cultures of people that use the space.
Carpark

The carpark provides parking for the users of the Dominion Road ethnic precinct. The carpark is vital for keeping the suburban street free of traffic and to ease congestion in the residential areas branching off Dominion Road. The existing car parking area is kept in favour of easing vehicular congestion, but better connections are provided through the

Green Space

The site is predominantly with the only green space at the north western corner of the site defining the Balmoral edge of Dominion Road. The site overlooks Potters Park to the north of the site that is a popular recreation area for users of the area.

Fig. 99: Carparking and green space
Walkways

The access to the site directly from Dominion Road can be made through two walkways either side of the Capitol Theatre and vehicular access is from a driveway on the north-western corner of the site. This maximises exposure to the site while keeping the existing historic shophouses along the western edge of the site. The idea of filtering in to the site, provides better connections to and from the site. Walkways also cut through the buildings defining the eastern edge of the site to break up the larger masses.

Fig. 100: Walkway access to existing infrastructure
Access Points

Access points are vital in defining the barriers of the site. Vehicular access points to the site are from Rocklands Avenue and the existing driveway on the north western edge of the site. Multiple access points for pedestrians are situated along the eastern edge of the site to connect the existing carpark with both the cultural space and existing Dominion Road shops. Other access points for pedestrians are on the western face of the site around the Capitol Theatre and from Rocklands Avenue and the driveway on the north western edge of the site. Multiple access points allow for a greater filtering of people to the site and helps activate the surrounding edges and access to the site. The access points also act as gateways to the site and from an urban design perspective; entrance points are celebrated and define the edges of the space. The expressive nature of the access points allows for the visibility of the space in the wider context.
**Programme**

This diagram shows the development of programme on the site and how the different areas connect together. The design mixes together the different programmes depending on their spatial and access requirements.
Fig. 105: Section showing spaces for cultural production and understanding

Fig. 106: Relationship diagram showing how the different programmes interact
Central “Hub” space

By clustering the spaces around the central point on the site creates a hub area that is currently lacking along the Dominion Road shops. The space is used as a market space and by clustering the buildings around the area provides a sense of enclosure and uses an inward looking approach, which helps draw people into the centre of the site. By creating a clustering of space around the central hub space, creates the notion of the importance of the courtyard as a social space, and a place of gathering.

Fig. 107: Central space defining a centre
This diagram shows the public and private faces of the existing buildings. The back of the existing Dominion Road shops is predominantly private space, but by creating the cultural space within the existing service lane the space becomes public space. The need to retain the private nature of the residential areas above the shophouses is important.
Scale

The scale of the design is also important. This development explores the way the design interacts with the existing context. The design breaks down larger forms to tie in with the scale of the existing shop-houses. The canopies are supported by a series of columns that are extended over the back of the existing shop-houses, and provide a transitional or in-between space between the shop-houses and the main pedestrian route through the site. The scale of the design creates a clustering of different spaces that can be used for different activities.

Fig. 109: Using the inbetween spaces to define the scale of the design

Fig. 110: Breaking down of a large form to form smaller forms
Material Palette

The material used in the design references the material that exists in the site. Brick, concrete, plaster, timber and steel sheets are the main material found on the site. As the material weathers it gives a sense of changing with the times. This can be used as a tool to reference the transient nature of the adaptation of migrants to a new place. The different material used on the Dominion Road shops shows the diverse materials that are used to create an overall form. This technique can be used as a reference of the diverse nature of our cities, and references the transcultural and third space ideas of taking parts of one thing and combining them with another thing to create something else.
Third Space Strategies

The third space theory strategies are derived from the theories and precedent analysis. It is in the mixing of cultures and customs that we create a sense of individuality, but at the same time reflect our roots, our heritage, and our traditions. The site itself becomes an interpretation of the third space, where the mixing of people from different ethnic backgrounds come together to negotiate between different cultural influences, creating the space inbetween.

Fig. 112: The mixing of elements of program creating the space inbetween
Transcultural Strategies

The transitory or temporary nature of the experience of the space by users choosing between different cultural influences, in terms of the social and physical interactions, as well as the programme offered on the site, reflects the transcultural approach by using the site as a threshold between cultures.

Fig. 113: Transcultural exchanges taking place through the site
Hyperrealism Strategies

Using the spatial layout of the shophouse, where the front face was the public space and the back of the shophouse is the private space which was often where the families dwelled. The back of the shophouse is also a space where culture is passed on and experience. By using the existing service lane as the space where cultural exchanges can occur, the buildings act as a backdrop or stage that set the scene to allow for the conditions of the third space negations to take place.

Fig. 114: Hyperrealistic approach to the space inbetween
4.0 Design Outcome

The design developed proposes a clustering of building, connected by a series of walkways and paths. The design uses the space inbetween as a place of negotiation between the old and new elements and between the users who occupy the site. The building forms foster the development of Ethnic cultural identity through the interactions that take place within the defines spaces as well as on the street level where informal exchanges take place. The design’s internal approach refers to the idea that culture is something that is internal and this is expressed or experienced externally, and the proposed design reflects these ideas.

Fig. 115: The site development proposed

Fig. 116: The Programme elements of the site
This research and the resultant design project shows how transcultural exchanges can be represented through an architectural proposition. The engagement with the concept of hybrid ethnic culture through an architectural intervention allows for the rethinking of New Zealand’s bicultural approach to cultural identity through urban design.

The project raises the awareness for the potential of cultural space within our built environment, as areas of vitality and the creation of space that future generation of people can engage with. The project also acknowledges the inbetween spaces that can add to the vitality of existing areas.

The project negotiates the pitfalls and challenges of hybrid identities in terms of transcultural responses and the third space through an architectural response, based on formal, compositional, and programmatic engagement. The Dominion Road site as the chosen site for testing the research provided the best location based on its contextual, formal, and programmatic components.

With the increase in the diverse cultures of people that live in cities, cultural spaces such as the Dominion Road ethnic precinct allow for the celebration and engagement of different culture and diversity within our cities. Through the cross-cultural exchanges that these areas provide, we can begin to understand and experience different cultural influences of the diverse people that inhabit our cities.

The methodology used in this research paper dealt primarily with finding ways of exploring the tectonic nature of constructing hybrid communities. The research conducted, provided vital background information that provided a footing to base the project on.

This approach to the Dominion Road ethnic precinct could be further development by extending the development the laneway to extend towards Kensington Avenue, and another laneway running between Dominion Road and Wiremu Street. The approach could also further be developed on other sites around New Zealand with ethnic influences.
6.0 Final Proposal
1. Gallery and exhibition space
2. Education space
3. Library and resource space
4. Market space
5. Performance studio space
6. Performance and function space
1. Gallery and exhibition space
2. Education space
3. Library and resource space
4. Market space
5. Performance studio space
6. Performance and function space

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Reproduced from: http://www.archdaily.com/482291/shanghai-community-cubes-included
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Fig. 59. The Xintiandi redevelopment
Reproduced from: https://4.bp.blogspot.com/-J19AxK8eRB4/V0vytgMsq1I/AAAAAASISI/3sUOpTH8jHyjsjiUP8vjZal_F19BoBmkQClCB/s1600/shanghai_xintiandi-004.jpg
(Accessed 20 July, 2016)

Fig. 60. The Xintiandi redevelopment overview
Reproduced from: http://www.som.com/projects/shanghai_taipingqiao__xintiandi_specific_plan
(Accessed 20 July, 2016)

Fig. 61. The Xintiandi redevelopment context
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Fig. 62. The Xintiandi redevelopment pedestrian street
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Fig. 63. The mixed use design of the Xintiandi redevelopment
Reproduced from: https://i0.wp.com/www.newyorksocialdiary.com/i/partypictures/01_27_16/jeanne/4000_neighborhood-after_xtd_overview.jpg
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Fig. 64. The reuse of existing Shikumen housing for redevelopment
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(Accessed 20 July, 2016)

Fig. 65. The reuse of existing Shikumen housing for redevelopment
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Declaration

Name of candidate: Ashton James Graham King

This Thesis/Dissertation/Research Project entitled: The Space inbetween: Representing Transcultural Exchanges through Architecture

is submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements for the Unitec degree of

Masters of Architecture (Prof.)

Principal Supervisor: Kerry Francis

Associate Supervisor/s: Christoph Schnoor

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