Chinese Community Centre Design
Explanatory Document

Aimed at Creating a Better Auckland City to Live in
by the Hand of the Community

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Abstract

Auckland in New Zealand is one of the famous liveable cities in the world. However, the city also faces some challenges such as housing problems, a poor transport system, inadequate health services and little immigrant minority support. To create a better city, the City Council has the responsibility to address these problems. As members of the community, we also play an essential role in making our community a better place to live in.

Thus, designing a community centre in Auckland is the focus of my project, aimed at creating a better city by the community's hand. Also, in supporting the local Chinese minority immigrants, the design partly involves assisting the Chinese community in Auckland to solve some of their common problems such as depression among senior immigrants, mother language loss and the lack of cultural connection and activities.

Specifically, the objectives the Chinese Community Centre are as follows:

- Design for the communities regardless of their age and gender.
- Create a public place that engages the community members to interact.
- Unite the community members into a solid group that serves society.
- Identify the common needs of Chinese immigrants and support the lives of minorities in Auckland.
- Enhance the communication between local Kiwis and Chinese.
- Enrich communities’ daily life experience.
- Promote a positive and healthy lifestyle to the community.
To address these issues, some comprehensive research is used as a baseline. The related studies involved the pros and cons of Auckland City, the history and development of community centres worldwide and identifying the needs of the Auckland Chinese community. The design studies involved the seniors design, Feng Shui, traditional Chinese gardens core ideas and other strategic approaches.

After conducting the research, several design trials (e.g. courtyard style, Chinese garden style and context-based style) were held in the pre-design stage, which explored the possibilities of developing the Chinese Community Centre designs in Auckland and analysing their merits and deficits.

The design outcome is a Chinese Community Centre situated along Dominion Road, which can provide the people with different community services, entertainment, health facilities and cultural support.

Inspired by the traditional Chinese garden, the architectural design is embellished with aesthetical considerations and traditional strategies such as view shifts, vision connection and penetration with a modern appeal. To conform to the local culture, the detailed design involves localized characteristics, images and patterns. Additionally, to provide a great space for outdoor activities, several amendments were proposed on the site for the communities to enjoy the various outdoor leisure, entertainment and other activities.
Key words: Auckland city, Community Centre, Chinese Community, Traditional Chinese Gardens, Dominion Road, viewing shifts, vision connection and penetration.
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

According to the Mercer 2016 Quality of Living Rankings, Auckland is listed as the third city with overall quality of living among 230 cities globally. However, Auckland still faces some challenges such as housing problems, a poor transport system, inadequate health services and inadequate immigrant minority support.

To uplift the living conditions of a city, governments can provide solutions to improve communities. Individual members can also help improve the community’s living environment and well-being, along with the capacity to promote ways to respond to existing social problems.

Several problems that the community could help solve are the following:

1.1.1 Existing Problems

1.1.1.1 Healthcare Issues

- Healthcare expense

New Zealand’s healthcare expense consists of a huge proportion of government spending. As Figure 1.1 shows, New Zealand spent NZ$15.1 billion (20.7% of its total budget spending in 2014) on health.
Figure 1.1 Tax Expenses Pie Chart.

(Reprinted from The Treasury)

And Figure 1.2 highlights that the healthcare fund was mainly used for seniors.

Figure 1.2 Health care cost comparison by age

(Reprinted from Ministry of Health)
Thus, to reduce healthcare expenses, it is encouraged that community members should engage in a healthy lifestyle. This could lower the health expenditure allocation among seniors.

- **Inadequate health services**

Although the government allocates a huge budget for the health sector, the community still lacks sufficient healthcare services. According to Mr. Ben Dowdle, a semi-finalist for University of Auckland Young New Zealander of the Year in 2015, "In health, the challenge is to meet the demand for health services."¹

### 1.1.1.2 Safety and Criminal Issues

Recently, stories have been reported of people getting harassed, robbed and beaten in Auckland’s public places. A Unitec Institute of Technology (Unitec) student was kicked, robbed and beaten on his way to school in the morning on March 24, 2016. Two female Chinese students of the University of Auckland were attacked and robbed by a group of teenagers in Albert Park at around 8:30 p.m. on March 22, 2016. These sample cases made helpless Chinese students scared in Auckland while their parents overseas were also worried for their children’s welfare and safety.²


Figure 1.3 shows that the crime rate in Auckland is moderate, whilst the crime rates in other top five quality living ranking cities such as Vienna, Zurich, Munich and Vancouver are very low.3

![Crime Comparison Between Vienna and Auckland Reverse](http://www.numbeo.com/crime/compare_cities.jsp?country1=Austria&country2=New+Zealand&city1=Vienna&city2=Auckland&tracking=getDispatchComparison)

1.1.1.3 Less Support to Chinese Immigrants

New Zealand is a popular immigration country. Numerous immigrants come to New Zealand and settle down here to start a new life. Among Asians, Chinese are a big ethnic community which is well represented in the country. However, the Chinese community faces some living challenges in Auckland, as follows:

- **Depression among senior Chinese migrants**

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From my personal perspective, some older migrants do not live happily in New Zealand because of less family emotional support, language disability and cultural difference.

- **Mother language loss**

Among Chinese, the language is the spirit of one’s nation and culture. However, Chinese in Auckland face challenges posed by the language shift (a phenomenon where the native language used by individuals and communities is replaced by another language). This is usually experienced by minor immigrants and is subject to embracing the dominant language by the third generation (Fishman, 1991). Some studies on Chinese language provide evidence showing that the language shift is real and occurs rapidly among Chinese immigrant families, individuals and communities, in the United States and elsewhere.4

Although Chinese are the largest immigrant group in Auckland, language shift still occurs. One research noted that after migrating to New Zealand, in 28 months the language use among families changed a lot. English and English-Chinese conversations consisted of 10.4% and 14.1%, respectively.5 This showed that English becomes a household language widely used in the home, while the Chinese language faces challenges and tends to experience a language shift.

- **Cultural connection**

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The Chinese, as a distinct immigration group, have their own needs for festivities, anniversary celebrations, daily hobbies and the like. However, rarely can the group find a common place that is mainly designed for their common needs for their sense of belongingness and expressions of love, self-esteem and self-actualization in Auckland, where they can find excitement and joy, enjoy their hobbies and achieve their full potential.

1.1.2 Possible Solutions

1.1.2.1 Solution to Healthcare

As Mr. Dowdle added, "In meeting the demand for health services, the Ko Awatea Centre at Middlemore Hospital is trying to do this by supporting self-management for 50,000 people living with long-term conditions by December 2016. It is a community rather than being hospital-focused." 6

I agree with his opinion that the community’s involvement is crucial to reducing the burden of the government’s healthcare cost, raising the efficiency of the health services, and preventing the proliferation of certain diseases. As cited in one Chinese wisdom: preventing the risks is wiser than remedying the tragedies. Thus, why not spend on activities that promote a healthy lifestyle rather than spend a huge amount treating serious health problems.

Several Auckland community centres have taken health care into consideration, such as Wesley Community Centre providing health services, Victory Community Centre offering a wide range of community health and family support services,

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and Parnell Community Centre catering to seniors’ various activities. Aside from these community centres, available activities designed for seniors are very rare and limited.

From an architectural perspective, I believe facilities, services and activities promoting a healthy lifestyle, healthy food seminars, health care lectures encouraging the community’s well-being are significant for New Zealanders. These issues should be considered in the community centre’s blueprint.

1.1.2.2 Solution to Safety Issues

In my opinion, there are three reasons leading to Auckland’s moderate crime rate. First, New Zealand’s laws regarding punishing criminals are too weak. Thus, some people think that it is not a big deal to do a crime. Second, the authorities are not strong enough in tracking down offenders. As cited, only six out of the 100 burglaries in the Central Auckland Police District were solved.7 Solving cases like robbery or theft are not as urgent and serious as pursuing other criminal cases in Auckland, which leads to the disappointment of some people losing their confidence in the police’s capacity to protect the community, as well as reducing the city’s image with doubts if Auckland is really a good city to live in. Third, the gap between rich and poor contributes to the safety problem. There are stories from travellers criticizing Auckland as a city where you can see some people shopping and dancing in the street, whilst some other people are begging just beside.

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So I began to think about how we could solve this problem. Enacting a law or strengthening the police authority may not be within everyone’s capacity; however, we can contribute in our own way to narrow the gap between rich and poor by uniting the community and building ties, instead of passively accepting the existence of a cold society.

### 1.1.2.3 Solution to Chinese Immigrants’ Needs

Designing a community centre, focused on the needs of the Chinese community in Auckland, is a necessity. Many Chinese can get help and support from professionals who are willing to give retrospective ideas and local information in celebrating their culture, remembering their roots and sharing diversity with the locals.

Similar to hitting two birds with one stone, a Chinese Community Centre can both meet Chinese people’s needs in Auckland and contribute to the enhancement of the city’s rich life by sharing its diverse culture. As observed, more Kiwis are now interested in participating in several Chinese festivities such as the Chinese lantern festival and the Chinese market. In the 2016, at the Auckland Chinese lantern festival, for instance, thousands of people, both Chinese and non-Chinese, celebrated the festival together by viewing the various Chinese traditional performances, eating delicious Chinese delicacies and enjoying the splendid fireworks (Figure 1.4).
1.2 Project Outline

As cited on the project’s background, a Chinese Community Centre in Auckland has been proposed with the intention of providing solutions for reducing social problems. The project is aimed at creating a better city by the community’s hand to support the local Chinese minority immigrants. The design is partly focused on the Chinese community in Auckland, helping to solve their common problems such as depression among senior immigrants, mother language loss and lack of cultural connection and activities.

1.3 Aims and objectives

Aims:

The Chinese Community Centre’s mission is to “Build a better city by the community’s hand.” This is targeted to let the community centre become a warm society where people can gather together, have fun and plan ways to solve social problems, which could benefit the next generation in the long term.
Objectives:

- Design for the communities regardless of their age and gender.
- Create a public place that engages the community members to interact.
- Unite the community members into a solid group that serves society.
- Identify common Chinese immigrants’ needs and support minorities’ lives in Auckland.
- Enhance the communication between local Kiwis and Chinese.
- Enrich communities’ daily life experience.
- Promote a positive and healthy lifestyle to the community.

1.4 Research Questions

After analysing the background and drafting the aims and objectives, the research questions are as follows:

- **Main research question**
  
  How can a Chinese Community Centre in Auckland be designed where the community members with different cultures can participate, communicate and help each other?

- **Related questions**
  
  1. How can a Chinese characterised community centre be designed in Auckland and should it be in traditional or modern, Chinese or New Zealand style?
2. How should the Chinese Community Centre be designed so people would love to visit it?

1.5 Methods

- Resources:

Related books, Google scholars, databases, websites, interviews, journals and magazines were referred in conducting this research.

Comprehensive research was undertaken. The context research included the pros and cons of Auckland City, the history and development of community centres worldwide, community centres in Auckland, the needs of the Auckland Chinese community, etc. And the design research included seniors design, Feng Shui design, traditional Chinese gardens core ideas and common design strategies, etc.

- Design Tools:

In the initial stage, a physical model of the site was made to give a better overall understanding of the site. Similar to the previous design, I used AutoCAD, Sketch Up, and Photoshop to achieve the design outcomes. Also, many sketches were created to analyse precedents, document fresh ideas and plan the design process.

- Design Process:

In the analysis stage, I built a Sketch Up model, aiming to give a clear idea of the site. In the pre-design stage, I drafted three possible plans with pros and cons analysis. Then I developed the project by combining the merits of the three
possible plans to achieve the objectives. Afterwards, I continued developing the design plans, sections and elevations into a deep level, designing the interior, rendering the design outcomes and showing the effects and possibilities made from the design work.
2. Literature Reviews

2.1 Community Centre Background

2.1.1 Definition of Community

‘Community’ is a basic concept of sociology. In 1887, German sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies presented the concepts about ‘community’ as opposed to ‘social.’ ‘Community’ refers to the homogeneous population who share common values, faiths and customs. It is bound by an intimate relationship that relies on traditional kinship, geopolitical and cultural factors. It is formed with mutual help and obedience to authority. ‘Social’ refers to the heterogeneous population who relies on the social division of labour and contractual relationships to each other. The social rational relationships involve selfishness, lack of care and lack of emotional interaction.8

The definition of community has changed through the times. A community is defined differently in various periods and countries. According to Yang Qing Kun (1981), the term community has more than 140 definitions.9

Currently, community centres provide services for vulnerable groups such as children, youths, seniors, the unemployed and the disabled. Also, these organizations cater for other community members with several services for the medical, health, home, governmental organizations, clubs and entertainment industries.

8. Young Zhang, “A research into the function of Shanghai Community Service Centre”,
9. Ibid., 5.
2.1.2 Power of Community

The community, one of the social structural forms of “politics, economy and community,” is an important part of society.

In the structure of politics, economy and community, the government establishes various administrations and formulates laws and regulations, but it lacks the ability to solve the overall economic and social problems efficiently. The economic mechanism becomes the market regulator responsible for improving economic growth whilst the other side of the economy leads the people to seek profit and become selfish and materialistic. The community, consisting of non-profit organizations and volunteers, makes up the missing functions of the government and the market.\textsuperscript{10}

Based on this theory, to create a better city, aside from the function of politics and the economy, the residents or the social members should participate in the establishment of the community, give their best to society, help and stand by each other in achieving a better future.

2.1.3 History and Development of Community Centre

The community concept began in the 19th century when England was experiencing the Industrial Revolution. During this era, economic development and social progress were at the onset. Also, unemployment, poverty and other social problems were prevalent. Community services as a form of early capitalist social welfare were found to solve these problems by providing homes for the poor.

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., 6.
In 1884, the “university housing service organization” emerged in London, United Kingdom. It was regarded as the community service prototype.

In 1930, several institutions focused on community services in the United States. Examples of these were Neighbourhood Advice in New York and Neighbourhood Community in Chicago.

After World War II, societal structures, families and populations changed dramatically in the Western countries. The problems of the elderly, women and other vulnerable groups increased. As the people’s demands diversified, many governments could not solve all the social problems. In recent years, some countries have gradually dispersed their centralized social welfare and services into various small communities to let them establish their own management and social welfare and services systems, which are often called “community centres” nowadays.  

2.1.4 Communities Nowadays

To understand better how the communities function at present, the German community centre, known as “Home of Neighbour” was analysed.

2.1.4.1 Services According to the Vulnerable Groups in Society

The Home of Neighbour serves children, youth and the elderly where the corresponding services are as follows (Figure 2.1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People Group</th>
<th>Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Nursery, learning assistance centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Youth clubs, shooting videos programmes, tour organization, culture and entertainments, sports activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elderly</td>
<td>Nursing home, elderly club, elderly's tour organization, nursing-to-home, meal-to-door.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Ibid., 9-10.
2.1.4.2 Functions of German Community Centre

The Home of Neighbour has two categories of services: (1) daily life needs, and (2) entertainment activities (Figure 2.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily life</td>
<td>• Family services, patient care, baby sitter, installing and repairing household electrical appliances, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shopping, gardening, legal advice consultation, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Help for the disabled and the elderly, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment activities</td>
<td>• The annual &quot;neighbourhood festival&quot; (includes fashion shows, drama by children, concerts, dangers of smoking seminars, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Regular seminars (include overseas study and working experience seminars, expert reports, family ethics report, drama and film reviews, various lectures such as judo, Chinese massage techniques, Tai Chi, volleyball, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Others: Costume party, knowledge exchange, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.2 Services in Home of Neighbour by Category

(Adapted from A research into the function of Shanghai Community Service Centre, by Young Zhang)

Also, in immigration countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia, they provide immigrants with practical consultation services such as language, translation, education, employment, law and medical advice to help them adjust as immigrants and be familiar with their new environment.  

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12. Ibid., 10-35.
2.1.5 Community Centre in Auckland

How does a community centre in Auckland behave?

2.1.5.1 General Activities in Auckland Community Centres

Auckland community centres provide the residents with social activities (e.g. wedding ceremonies, parties, meeting and conferences, afternoon tea time, etc.); educational opportunities (e.g. culture and language studies, musical teaching, computer classes, culinary courses, etc.); social services (e.g. heath care, family support, legal and budgeting) and recreational activities (e.g. markets, performances, tai chi, yoga, dance, etc.).

2.1.5.2 Weakness in Auckland Community Centre

However, by looking through the activities held by most of the existing community centres in Auckland, the author has noticed that most activities are designed for children, for example zoo trip, Christmas parties, movie and popcorn, cooking lessons, handcrafts, workshops, etc. (Figure 2.3). In contrast, very few are served for seniors.
Figure 2.3 Community Programmes designed for Children

(Reprinted from Grey Lynn Community Centre)

Parnell Community Centre did a good job in their seniors’ program and could be referred to as a good example in this respect. They not only provide the seniors socialized activities (Figure 2.4), but also cooperate with the University of the Third Age (U3A)\(^\text{13}\) to give full support to seniors (Figure 2.5).

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\(^{13}\) The University of the Third Age (U3A) movement is a unique and exciting organisation which provides, through its U3As, life-enhancing and life-changing opportunities. Retired and semi-retired people come together and learn together, not for qualifications but for its own reward: the sheer joy of discovery! (The Third Age Trust U3A, http://www.u3a.org.uk/)
**Parnell Community Centre Bridge Group**  
Plus $8 session  
Enjoy social bridge and afternoon tea. Partners can be arranged. All levels of players welcome.  
**Director:** Mary Chamberlain  
**Fridays**  
1-4pm

**Parnell St Johns Bridge Club**  
Plus $8 session  
Enjoy a competitive game. New members and all levels of players welcome.  
**Director:** Mary Chamberlain  
**Mondays**  
7.30-10pm

**Mah Jong**  
Learn to play or refresh your skills in this fascinating Oriental board game.  
**Mondays**  
12.30-2.30pm

**Film Group**  
A friendly monthly group that meets for tea & discussion of movies you’ve seen recently.  
**Third Thursday**  
2.30-4pm

**Scrabble**  
Enjoy Scrabble with fellow enthusiasts, build your Scrabble vocabulary and finish with a cup of tea.  
**Tuesdays**  
1.30-3.30pm

**Seniors Coffee & Chat**  
Join this group of friends for morning tea, guest speakers and regular outings.  
**Monthly**  
Enquire for time of next gathering

**Step Out Walking Group**  
Get motivated and socialise as you step out with enthusiastic walkers in all weathers! **Walkers gather at Reception area, Level 1, Parnell Community Centre.**  
**Thursdays**  
10-11am

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**Figure 2.4 Social Programmes in Parnell Community Centre**

(Reprinted from Parnell Trust)

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**Membership and enquiries to join other regular activities at Parnell Community Centres are welcomed**

**U3A Parnell**
The Parnell Branch of U3A meets monthly at Parnell Community Centre for presentations, lectures and morning tea. In addition, members host a range of interest groups throughout the month. All aged 55+ are welcome. Phone Cherie St John on 09 520 2282 for more information.

**Independent membership**
**Monthly Third Wednesday**  
9.30-11.30am

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**Figure 2.5 U3A Programme in Parnell Community Centre**

(Reprinted from Parnell Trust)
Thus, in the design of the Auckland Community Centre, it is important that we should realize that it is designed for seniors as well, who have already made great contributions to society and therefore deserve a better community space for caring, relaxing and socializing.

2.2 Seniors Design

2.2.1 Physiological Aspect

2.2.1.1 Senior Activity Time

According to the research, if it’s a fine day, 8:00 to 10:00am will be the peak time for Chinese seniors to do outdoor activities, and 7:30 to 8:30pm will be another peak time (Figure 2.6).14

Figure 2.6 Outdoor Activity Time of the Elderly
(Adapted from a study on the indoor and outdoor space design of a city elderly activity centre, by HuiXin Wu)

2.2.1.2 Study of Senior’s Physical Condition

Furthermore, due to seniors’ physical condition, there are several aspects we should consider:

1. For seniors, there is a decline in perception (such as vision, hearing, smell), especially for vision decline which they need to take a longer time and

preparation to adapt to brightness change from the surrounding environment.

2. Elderly Chinese usually enjoy sunshine.

3. Elders may meet various disease and accidents when they are doing activities.

4. Elders enjoy outdoor activities.

5. Elders may get tired easily.

2.2.1.3 Key Points for the Senior Design

Thus, when we design for seniors, we should notice the following key points:

1. Accessible design.

2. The transitional space between indoor (dark) and outdoor (bright) should vary step by step, thus leaving enough time and space for the senior to accustom to the brightness change (Figure 2.7).

3. Stairs sized 320*130mm to fit elder’s physical condition.

4. Corridors’ minimum width are 1.8m, with depth no longer than 30m.

5. Adjustable tables and chairs.

6. Design a place where sunshine can fully access.

7. Set a medical room for the elders as emergency.
8. Have outdoor hardcourts and landscaped areas designed to meet elders’ needs.

9. Set enough seating areas for them to take a rest.\footnote{MenBing Zhang, “The Study of Design of Senior Citizen Cultural Activity Center”, Hunan University (2009): 29}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{seniors-design.png}
\caption{Seniors Design - The transitional gradient}
\end{figure}

(Adapted from, the Design and Research for Community Elderly Day Care Centre, by YiBing Zhao)

\subsection*{2.2.2 Psychological Aspect}

\subsubsection*{2.2.2.1 Study of Seniors Psychological Needs}

On the psychological aspect, seniors also have their own needs:

1. After retirement, they may feel the loss of social activity and sense of belonging.

2. Needs of friendship and communication, especially for the single aged.
3. Senior’s life may lack vitality.


2.2.2.2 Key Points for the Senior Design

The following are several possible design solutions:

1. Design various social activities for seniors (such as dancing, cooking, sports, movie, tea chat, singing, weaving, chess, poker, health lectures, etc.) to enrich their lives.

2. Set comfortable spaces where people can stop, sit and chitchat. (Figure 2.8)

3. Consider the possibility of children and elders’ complex design, which can benefit each party.

4. Consider the senior’s self-actualization needs and organize activities for them to achieve their self-actualization. (Such as charity, knowledge sharing and spreading lecture, non-profit volunteer activities, etc.)

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16. YiBing Zhao, “the Design and Research for Community Elderly Day Care Centre,” Beijing University of Technology (2014) : 51
Figure 2.8 Seniors Design – The design of conversation corners
(Adapted from the Design and Research for Community Elderly Day Care Centre, by YiBing Zhao)

2.3 Chinese Community Design

According to previous background research, it is known that Chinese people in Auckland suffer from a certain depression, mother language loss and the lack of their own culture participation. Thus, how can design improve this?

2.3.1 Needs of Chinese Community

Chinese immigration needs can be categorised into two parts: Basic Survival Needs and Recreational Activities Needs.
2.3.1.1 Basic Survival Needs

As Myrna Machet described, the information needed for migrants has two steps:
Information on arrival and information in the settlement process (Table 2.1).\textsuperscript{17}

Table 2.1

*Information needed for migrants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Chinese Immigration Surviving Needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Information on arrival</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Language training, translation and interpretation services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Job-searching skills and special services to foreign-trained professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Housing information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community connection</td>
<td>Connections to professional associations, volunteer opportunities, mentoring and community organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New country</td>
<td>New country’s culture and orientation to life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Information in the settlement process</td>
<td>Health, employment and educational</td>
<td>As listed above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political information</td>
<td>[Local laws, news, and political information]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current events</td>
<td>News about home country and their adopted country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language-learning</td>
<td>ESL programmes and materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identity construction</td>
<td>Becoming a New Zealander, for example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural and religious events</td>
<td>(Spring Festival, Lantern Festival, culture performance, anniversary celebrations, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Adapted from Information behaviour of recent Chinese immigrants in Auckland, by Myrna Machet, Department of Information Science, UNISA, February 22nd, 2012, p26

\textsuperscript{17} Myrna Machet, Information behaviour of recent Chinese immigrants in Auckland, New Zealand, Department of Information Science, UNISA, February 22nd, 2012, p26
2.3.1.2 Recreational Activities Needs

Survival needs can help Chinese migrants get used to living in a new country, while recreational needs are those that can bring them happiness, for instance, playing mahjong, plaza dancing, reading books, writing calligraphy, drawing, Chinese watercolour painting, etc.

- Young and Old

Besides, according to Myrna Machet’s research, it is noteworthy that there is also a huge difference in the needs between the old Chinese and the young, as shown in the Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 below:\textsuperscript{18}

Table 2.2

\textit{Hobbies and Pastimes of Respondents (18-40 years)}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hobbies and Pastimes</th>
<th>Number of responses</th>
<th>Frequency of use for age group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fashion</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting friends</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photography</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook/skype</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer games</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness and beauty</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet shopping</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Total} = 16

Note. Reprinted from Information behaviour of recent Chinese immigrants in Auckland, New Zealand, by Myrna Machet, Department of Information Science, UNISA, February 22nd, 2012: 31

\textsuperscript{18} Myrna Machet, Information behaviour of recent Chinese immigrants in Auckland, New Zealand, Department of Information Science, UNISA, February 22nd, 2012: 31
### Table 2.3

**Hobbies and Pastimes of Respondents (40 years and older)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hobbies and Pastimes</th>
<th>Number of responses</th>
<th>Frequency of use for age group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home decorating</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading on self-improvement</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scrap-booking</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** = 14

Note. Reprinted from Information behaviour of recent Chinese immigrants in Auckland, New Zealand, by Myrna Machet, Department of Information Science, UNISA, February 22nd, 2012: 31

#### 2.3.1.3 Location

For Chinese people, parks play an important role in enjoyment of their entertainment life, where they can do morning exercise, Tai Chi, group dancing, jogging, playing chess, writing ground calligraphy, performing traditional music, singing opera, etc.

#### 2.3.2 Key Points for Chinese Community Design

Thus, when designing a Chinese Community Centre in Auckland, several points need to be considered:

- To clearly understand what Chinese migrants need in order to create a responsive centre to meet Chinese migrants’ expectations.
- To meet the different needs of the young and the old.
- The location is better proposed near a park.
2.4 Feng Shui Design

2.4.1 Feng Shui Definition

What is Feng Shui?

“Feng Shui means Wind and Water.

Introducing and aligning you to the flow of natural energy, grounds you.

An awareness of this connection instils a greater sense of belonging to your place in the world.

Your spaces become in tune with the energetic rhythms of the earth when you incorporate this natural energy into your environment, home and office.

Your health, your clarity, your rhythm improve.”

Thus, Feng shui is a complex body of knowledge that reveals how to balance the energies of any given space to assure health and good fortune for people inhabiting it. In the architectural field, it relates to choosing a good location, a wellness orientation, balancing the ying and yang energy in our living space, etc.

2.4.2 Application in Choosing a Good Location

As Sarah Rossbach explained, “Businesses follow their own Feng Shui rules. It is best to have a store sited where the ch’i can easily enter. … A store at the confluence of roads will get a steady stream of business and money. … Often the


Chinese make a corner shop, hotel or bank entrance slanted so that access to business is widened and ch’i, people, and money are all drawn in.”

(Figure 2.9)

![Diagram showing good Feng Shui sites for stores.]

*Figure 2.9 Good Feng Shui sites for stores*

(Reprinted from, Feng Shui, Ancient Chinese wisdom on arranging a harmonious living environment, by Sarah Rossbach)

### 2.4.3 Application in Building Orientation

#### 2.4.3.1 Feng Shui in the Northern Hemisphere

- *Feng Shui Diagram in the Northern Hemisphere*

As Roger Green concludes, “Ideal Feng Shui design for the northern hemisphere, in a temperate zone, is to orientate to the sun in the south and to protect against the cold winds from the north. The terminology used to describe these two energies is the red bird [which shall enable large window and door openings to

---

let sun come in] and black tortoise [which shall limit the size of openings to avoid
the cold wind getting through].” 22 (Figure 2.10)

Figure 2.10 Feng Shui Diagram for the Northern Hemisphere
(Reprinted from FENG SHUI FOR THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE Roger Green)

- **Sun radiation consideration**

For example, from the sun radiation diagrams in Guangzhou (Figure 2.11), which
shows that the sun radiation mainly comes from the western and eastern side in
summer. Thus, the best building orientation is
the direction which can prevent getting too
much heat and radiation from the western and
eastern side.

---

22. Roger Green, FENG SHUI FOR THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE, Fengshui
Seminars with Roger Green, http://www.fengshuiseminars.com/fengshui-for-the-southern-
hemisphere.html
**Figure 2.11** Sun Radiation in Guang Zhou (kJ / m² * day)

(Adapted from Feng Shui and Architecture, by JianJun Cheng and ShangPu Kong)

- **Cold wind consideration**

Similarly, from the diagram of a wind rose in Beijing (Figure 2.12), it can be known that the strong winter wind often comes from northwest side. Thus, it is usually better that the living rooms in Beijing avoid being built facing to the winter wind (northwest side) to avoid heat loss in the room.

**Figure 2.12** Wind Rose in Beijing

(Adapted from Feng Shui and Architecture, by JianJun Cheng and ShangPu Kong)
2.4.3.2 Feng Shui in Southern Hemisphere

- *Feng Shui Diagram in Southern Hemisphere*

The diagram will be mirrored if we apply Feng Shui in the Southern Hemisphere. According to Feng Shui master Roger Green’s opinion, “Ideally, dwellings in the southern hemisphere are orientated to the sun’s position in the north, with protection from the colder winds emanating from the south, southwest and southeast. The red bird area suggests an open space to allow the sun’s penetration, so a design aspect that is open and active to the north is good feng shui for the southern hemisphere.”

(Figure 2.13)

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•  **Feng Shui Application in Auckland**

Similarly, the best building orientation in Auckland can also be found, by seeing through the 12-month wind rose in Auckland (Figure 2.14). In terms of avoiding the cold wind in winter, good Feng Shui houses in Auckland are usually those which can prevent the cold winter wind from the southwest side.

![Auckland Wind Rose in 12 Month](image)

*Figure 2.14 Auckland Wind Rose in 12 Month (detected at Auckland Airport)*

(Reprinted from Forecasts & Reports)

### 2.4.4 Application in Interior Design

#### 2.4.4.1 Windows

In terms of windows form, Tisha Morris pointed out that “The window’s shape and style can determine ch’i flow. It is best to install a window that opens completely-outwardly or inwardly- instead of one that slides up or down. An outward-opening window is best. It enhances the occupant’s ch’i and career opportunities because the maximum amount of ch’i can enter and circulate inside.”

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24. Tisha Morris, *Decorating with the five elements of Feng Shui*, (Llewellyn Worldwide, 2015), 112-113
2.4.4.2 Yin and Yang Energy in Interiors

In Tisha Morris’s Book “Decorating with the five elements of Feng Shui”, she described Feng Shui’s purpose and goal by using it as, “the tool to design our home’s interior, which can help balance ourselves’ energy in order to get more harmony and overall balance in our life…. [And] in Feng shui, there is a general rule that our home should have approximately 60 percent yang energy and 40 percent yin energy. The variable is how the yin and yang show up in the space.”

2.5 Traditional Chinese Garden Design

2.5.1 Core Ideas of Traditional Chinese Garden

2.5.1.1 Trinity of Nature, Architecture and Human Beings

In Chinese culture, one romantic ideal lifestyle is living within the tranquil nature, where people can fully enjoy the natural beauty and live a poetic lifestyle, like the ancient painting “Wen Yuan Tu” describes (Figure 2.15).

25. Ibid., 26-27.
It is interesting to note that, unlike modern architectural construction where the building and nature are relatively independent, the relation between building elements and nature elements is so close in ancient Chinese architecture, as it can be seen from painting “Wen Yuan Tu”, the twisted tree could be a place for people to lean on, and stones can be simply used as stools and a table.  

Similarly, according to Mr. Zeng’s architectural ideology, the building is preferred to be set in nature and surrounded by nature (Figure 2.16). In this way, people can feel quite cosy when spending their time under a blooming tree, with pleasing aroma surrounding.

And sometimes, nature itself could also be the architectural building. For example, in the following painting the man utilizes the grass as a seat platform by tying a knot at the end, with the grass over his head functioning as the roof (Figure 2.17).

27 And bamboo can be utilized to form a nice space for a picnic (Figure 2.18).

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27. Ibid.
The trinity of nature, architecture and human beings is one of the important features of the traditional Chinese garden (Figure 2.19).

Therefore, when designing a Chinese garden, the people will probably think about how to integrate nature into the architectural design and human activities, thus creating a pleasing environment where architecture is not isolated, but relates to the natural environment and human activities.
2.5.1.2 The Imagination and Curiosity

In traditional Chinese landscape painting, if a human being is drawn in the painting (Figure 2.20), it mainly implies that the place people stand is approachable. This not only informs people there is a route to reach that point or a platform where they could stay and enjoy the views, but also arouses people’s curiosity to discover and wander to that place by themselves.28

![Chinese landscape painting, Da Hao Shan He](image)

*Figure 2.20* Chinese landscape painting, Da Hao Shan He
(Reprinted from Chinese famous landscape paintings)

Likewise, similar artistic strategy can be seen in the traditional Chinese garden. The following photo of “House on Cloud” 29 (Figure 2.21) was taken in Zhuo Zheng Garden. If standing at the photographer’s angle, would the person standing on the mountain rock attract your attention?30 Thus, you may wonder what’s behind the wall, how to reach the point, which direction he is looking, will he turn around and then notice you are looking at him?

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28. Ibid.
29. House of Cloud: Due to the cloud shaped wall erected below the pavilion, which makes the pavilion looks like flouting above the cloud.
Thus, interesting space can be created by infusing imagination into a space or forming a “looking and being looked at” relationship, where curiosity appears, a series of ideas emerge, and also some unforeseeable chances and memories may appear. Mr. Zeng concluded this design strategy with his watercolour painting (Figure 2.22), as follows:

*Figure 2.21* ZhuoZheng Garden photography
(Reprinted from Yi Xi, by RenZheng Zeng)

*Figure 2.22* Yu Shan watercolour painting
(Reprinted from Yi Xi, by RenZheng Zeng)
2.5.1.3 Other Architectural Artistic Preferable Conceptions Related with Nature

In Chinese culture, a lot of preferable activities are related with nature, which can bring out wonderful experiences in a natural environment, as follows:

• Looking through paper windows to observe the movement of a flickering candle.
• Looking at a water pond which reflects the sunlight and cloud shadow, with their unpredictable movements following time.
• Listening to the sound of raindrops falling down and hitting banana leaves, and experiencing the quietness and peaceful atmosphere.
• Standing in a water pavilion with lotus planted at all directions, where you can close your eyes, feel the moist wind touching your face, and smell the lotus aroma fully filling in the air.  

2.5.2 Common Strategies Used in Traditional Chinese Gardens

2.5.2.1 Contrast Spaces

![Figure 2.23](analysis-diagram.png)

*Figure 2.23 Analysis diagram of contrasting spaces*  
(Adapted from Analysis of Chinese Classical Garden, by YiGang Peng)

If two spaces with significant differences are arranged together, the differences will be intensified and highlighted. Thus, when people pass through a small space

to a larger space, the contrast of difference will make us feel that the latter space is much larger than it actually is. The amplifying effect can also be achieved by twisting or stretching the previous small space, to reach the magnificent feeling of the latter space (Figure 2.23).

2.5.2.2 Frame the view

“Frame the view” strategy in a traditional Chinese garden points out that the beautiful views will be emphasized by putting them inside architectural “frames”, usually through doors, windows, various shaped holes in walls, etc.

The reason for this effect is that the conscious setting of a framed structure in architecture design and guiding viewers to enjoy the scenery though the framed structure at a specific location, is prone to generating a pleasing artistic and picturesque effect. As one of the most celebrated poets, Du Fu, wrote in the poem,

“Snow accumulated through thousands of years on the Xi Ling Mountains,

Could be viewed within a glance from the window.

While ships from the Eastern-Wu State of miles away,

Are anchoring in the dock outside the house then.”

32

32. Retrieved from Baidu homework support, September 17th, 2014, http://www.zybang.com/question/9d60a0dd741eb055ab11ee4ba3cd9a4e.html
2.5.2.3 Penetration of Vision

With the strategy of vision penetration, rich visual experience can be created. Several ways can achieve this effect, for example: “Vision through a building” and “Vision through a veranda”.

- Vision Penetration through a building

![Figure 2.24 Analysis diagram of Vision Penetration through a Building](Adapted from Analysis of Chinese Classical Garden, by YiGang Peng)

Within this design method, a rich viewing experience is created by inserting a building between two viewing spots. In this way, if people want to see the view behind the house, their vision must go through the building, thus their vision will experience a “bright-dark-bright” process, which not only enriches the viewing layout, but also makes the opposite view (usually full of greens and nature elements) look vivid and brighter due to the contrast with the dark room (Figure 2.24).

33. Several ways: such as vision through a building, a veranda, flowers, trees and stones, a bridge, a pavilion, and etc.
• Vision Penetration through a veranda

*Figure 2.25 Analysis diagram of Vision Penetration through a Veranda*  
(Adapted from Analysis of Chinese Classical Garden, by YiGang Peng)

Within this design method, a veranda is often used in a viewing space to create a rich vision experience. By setting a veranda as a barrier, a single viewing space could be divided into two viewing parts which, together with the veranda itself, form a set of close shots, medium shots and long shots (Figure 2.25).
3. Site Information

3.1 General Information

Address: Potters Park, 173 Balmoral Rd, Mount Eden, Auckland

Land area: 30182m²

District Plan: Isthmus Section E07; Open Space Activity Zones

Unitary Plan: Open Space – Informal Recreation Zone

Figure 3.1 Potters Park Location
(Adapted from Google Map)

3.2 Site Features

- Surrounded by numerous Chinese communities
- Numerous Chinese stores and restaurants
- In the centre of Balmoral
- Mainly has 3 levels on the back side
• Existing two pathways in Potters Park

• Green lawn with lots of trees and a beautiful aged tree at the centre

• A memorial pavilion

• A water fun children’s playground

• Two bus stops, with two large parking areas around the site

Figure 3.2 Existing site analysis
(Sketch up model by author)

3.3 Site Weaknesses

• Noises along the arterial road (Figure 3.3)
Some facilities lack maintenance and are in bad condition
(One basketball court is out of use, a concrete pad near the pavilion is covered with pigeon excrement. Figure 3.4.)

Monotonous and lacks vitality (Figure 3.5)
Figure 3.5 Potters Park’s lawn

(Photos by author)

- Lack of infrastructure, such as tables and seats, shade, drinking water taps

- The park separates the commercial business vitality, and is not integrated successfully into the larger context (Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6 Potters Park’s context

(Reprinted from Google Map)

- Lack of private space where people can relax and enjoy a peaceful moment.

3.4 Public Consultation

According to Auckland Council’s research, public consultation on the future development of Potters Park was undertaken in December 2014 and January 2015.

“The most popular activities that respondents used the reserve for (or would like to use the reserve for) were children’s play (18% of responses), splashpad play
(15%), enjoying the natural environment (13%), attending events at the reserve (12%) and relaxing, sitting or socialising (12%).”

(Figure 3.7)

- the activities that you use, or would like to use the reserve for?

Figure 3.7 Activities supported by respondents

(Reprinted from Potters Park Public consultation report 2015)

“Respondents supported seeing a wide range of play activities in the park, with swinging (13% of total responses), climbing (15%), balancing (12%), cycle/scooter trails (13%) and a natural play (13%) being the most popular activities.”

(Figure 3.8)
What type of play activities would you like to see at Potters Park?

*Figure 3.8 Play activities supported by respondents*

(Reprinted from Potters Park Public consultation report 2015)
4. Precedents Review

4.1 Modern Chinese Architectural Design

(Precedent: China Academy of Arts’ Folk Art Museum)

Figure 4.1 Photo of China Academy of Arts’ Folk Art Museum
(Reprinted from Arch Daily, by Ellchl Kano)

Architects: Kengo Kuma & Associates
Location: Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China
Area: 4970.0 sqm
Project Year: 2015
Structural Design: Konishi Structural Engineers
4.1.1 Landscape Consideration

In China, if you go into an ancient village, you will often follow a zigzag path and experience ups and downs while walking through the village. In Kuma’s design, he utilized the existing tea field landscape, and combined such experience into his architecture with up and down visiting routes set inside the museum. (Figure 4.2)

Figure 4.2 Site Plan

(Reprinted from Arch Daily)
The architectural idea is described as “to design a museum from which the ground below can be felt, by continuing the building’s floors that follow the ups and downs of the slope”.36 (Figure 4.3 – 4.5)

*Figure 4.3 Indoor walking paths*  
(Reprinted from Arch Daily, by Ellchl Kano)

*Figure 4.4 Indoor walking paths*  
(Reprinted from Arch Daily, by Ellchl Kano)

*Figure 4.5 Floor Plan*  
(Reprinted from Arch Daily)

4.1.2 Chinese Atmosphere Design

In this interior design, a peaceful Chinese space is created by using Chinese building elements (wood, stone, tile, etc.), with a poetical window pattern of a group of white cranes.

Figure 4.6 Interior design
(Reprinted from Wu Fei Jian Zhu)

The image of white cranes used on the window design originally comes from a famous ancient Chinese painting “Rui He Tu” drawn by Zhao Ji, the eighth emperor of the Song Dynasty (Figure 4.7). The architecture and the white crane pattern share the common peaceful and relaxed atmosphere, which brings out the best in each other.

4.1.3 Traditional Chinese Material Renovation

Kengo Kuma once said, in Japan, in order to withstand typhoons, tiles are made increasingly heavy. And due to mass production, the tiles’ colours are the same,
thus very boring. On the contrary, in China, the clay tiles are light, and their colours are close to the colour of the original soil. To emphasize the vulnerability of the Chinese clay tile, as well as its soil texture, the Chinese clay tile is applied into this architectural design.\(^\text{38}\) (Figure 4.8)

Therefore, it’s not surprising that he cherishes the feature of light weight of traditional Chinese tiles, and uses them in an innovative way by applying them into the facade design, which brings out the vitality of old building materials in the 21st century (Figure 4.9).

![Facade Design](figure49.jpg)

*Figure 4.9 Facade Design
(Reprinted from Arch Daily)*

And when the tiles are hung on the facade, they create an unbelievably wonderful light and shade effect (Figure 4.10). As described in Arch Daily, “The outer wall is covered with a screen of tiles hung up by stainless wires, and it controls the volume of sunlight coming into the rooms inside … Old tiles for both the screen

\(^{38}\) Ibid.
and the roof came from local houses. Their sizes are all different, and that helps the architecture merge into the ground naturally.”39

Figure 4.10 Light and shade effect from tile facade

(Reprinted from Arch Daily, by Ellchl Kano)

4.2 Chinese Garden Design Methodology

(Precedent: Shanghai Yu Garden)

Figure 4.11 Photo of Yu Garden
(Reprinted from Sina Blog)

Architects: Zhang Nan Yang
Location: Shanghai, China
Area: more than 20,000 sqm
Project Year: 1559, Built in the Ming Dynasty, has stood for more than 400 years
4.2.1 Contrasting Spaces

To amplify the magnificence of space, the strategy of utilizing contrasting spaces was used in Yu Garden (Figure 4.12).

![Figure 4.12 Analysis plan of contrast spaces in Yu Garden](image)

(Drawn by author)

Note:  
A Narrow long corridor  
B Tiny enclosed building  
C Zigzag veranda  
D Open plaza  

To be more specific, to amplify the open plaza space (noted as D), the garden designer put in a set of long narrow corridors with twisted paths (noted as A), a tiny enclosed building (noted as B) and a zigzag veranda (noted as C) before the access to the plaza.
Visitors’ route is shown below:

To begin with, the visitors will walk into a long narrow corridor with walls erected from three directions (Figure 4.13).

![Figure 4.13 View from location A](image1)

(Drawn by author)

After that, they will enter a tiny enclosed room (Figure 4.14).

![Figure 4.14 View from location B](image2)

(Drawn by author)
Then, they will experience a zigzag veranda with built-in walls blocking their view (Figure 4.15).

![Figure 4.15 View from location C](image)

(Drawn by author)

Finally, after passing through all these tiny areas, they will arrive at the open plaza, a comfortable large place with green surroundings for people to enjoy the view or spend their leisure time (Figure 4.16).

![Figure 4.16 View from location D](image)

(Drawn by author)

In conclusion, utilizing this strategy can help form a feeling of wider space even within a small site.
4.2.2 Frame the View

4.2.2.1 View through window frames

In Yu Garden, a series of wooden-framed windows (decorated with square wooden grid patterns, as shown in Figure 4.17) are set into the wall of “Hui Xin Bu Yuan” building (noted as yellow coloured in Figure 4.18), which is an example of using “frame the view” strategy to enhance the beauty of a garden’s view. The framed window captures the outside view inside, thus forming a picturesque scene.

*Figure 4.17 Wooden-framed window facade*
(Drawn by author)

*Figure 4.18 Analysis plan in Yu Garden*
(Drawn by author)
Visitors can explore the views provided by the framed windows (noted as A, B1, B2 and B3), and surprisingly, when they move, the view they can see also varies (Figure 4.19).

Figure 4.19 Different views seen through wooden-framed window facade
(Drawn by author)

4.2.2.2 View through veranda walls

Similarly, this strategy is also used in the zigzag veranda design by drilling holes in the veranda wall to enable views to get through (Figures 4.20 and 4.21).

Figure 4.20 Perspective of one veranda in Yu Garden
(Drawn by author)
By walking through the zigzag veranda, visitors can see various framed viewing scenes from different directions (Figure 4.22).

*Figure 4.21 Veranda elevation*

(Drawn by author)

*Figure 4.22 Different views seen through the holes of the veranda*

(Drawn by author)
4.2.3 Vision Penetration

4.2.3.1 Vision Penetration through a building

With this method, a rich viewing experience is created by inserting a building between two viewing spots (Figure 4.23).

*Figure 4.23* Analysis diagram of Vision Penetration through a building
(Adapted from Analysis of Chinese Classical Garden, by YiGang Peng)

In Yu Garden, the northern and southern walls of Yang Shan Hall (noted in yellow in Figure 4.24) consist of 6 partition boards. When visitors stand in front of Yang Shan Hall, they can see the opposite view (shown as point A in Figure 4.24) through the building, where their vision must go through a “bright-dark-bright” process, which not only enriches the viewing experience, but also makes the garden view behind look brighter and more attractive. (Figure 4.25).
4.2.3.2 Vision through a veranda

Within this design method, a veranda is often used in a viewing space to create a rich vision experience. By setting a veranda as a barrier, a single viewing space could be divided into two viewing parts which, together with the veranda itself, form a set of close shots, medium shots and long shots.

In the west Yu Garden, a veranda (between points A and B in Figure 4.26) is used to separate the viewing site, allowing the southern Yu Le Waterside Pavilion (noted as A) and the northern Stone Mountain (noted as B) to be each other’s viewing spot, thus increasing the richness of the scenery.
Figure 4.28 shows the view people could see when they stand at Yu Le Waterside Pavilion (point A's location) and look toward the northern view,

Figure 4.27 Analysis diagram of Vision Penetration through a veranda (Adapted from Analysis of Chinese Classical Garden, by YiGang Peng)

Figure 4.28 View from location A
(Drawn by author)
Whilst Figure 4.30 shows the view people can see when they stand at Stone Mountain (point B’s location) and look toward the southern view.

*Figure 4.29 Analysis diagram of Vision Penetration through a veranda (Adapted from Analysis of Chinese Classical Garden, by YiGang Peng)*

*Figure 4.30 View from location B (Drawn by author)*
5. Design Process

5.1 Functional Considerations

After comprehensive research about community centres, I finalized the functional conclusion of the Chinese Community Centre in Auckland by five categories: Services, Entertainment, Health, Culture and Outdoor Activities (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1

*Functional Conclusion of Chinese Community Centre*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Books borrowed and returned, Study spaces, Study support for youth, Facilities (printer, scanner, 3D printing, laser cut and etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>Law consultation, Medical consultation, Translation, Psychological consultation, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Services</td>
<td>Volunteer activities planning rooms, Volunteer movements and campaigns, Charity bazaar, Staff offices, Donations (books, clothes, electric appliances, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>House renting, Card register (AT Transportation cards, bank cards, library cards, etc.), Job vacancies and listings, Upcoming community activities exhibition, Community programmes exhibition, Programmes registration, Various services offered for the community (housing cleaning, furniture installing, technical services, nursing, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Entertainment</td>
<td>Auditorium</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge, experience, and entertainment sharing, health lectures, NZ Orientation for immigrants, Films, dramas, performances, Community activity starting ceremonies / ending ceremonies, Volunteers’ work outcome sharing, Excellent community person’s address (who have contributed themselves in the community)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Entertainment</th>
<th>Dancing Hall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dancing classes, Yoga classes, Tai Chi practicing, Morning exercises, Rehearsal places, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Entertainment</th>
<th>Cafe</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cafe, tea room, and bars, (Bridge, poker, Mah Jiang games are offered to the community)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Entertainment</th>
<th>Children &amp; Toddlers</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toys sharing, Group Games, Playgrounds, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Entertainment</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Handcrafts making, cooking and bakery etc.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Entertainment</th>
<th>Water fun Changing Room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Changing rooms, Toilets, Showering, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Entertainment</th>
<th>Kitchen and Restaurant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Healthy food supplied for breakfast, lunch and dinner, Healthy diet cooking course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Entertainment</th>
<th>Activities Room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community activities programmes, Meetings, Parties, Festival celebrations, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Health</th>
<th>Fitness Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fitness equipment, Sauna, showering, toilets, etc.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Health</th>
<th>Chinese Clinic</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese professional doctors, Traditional Chinese diagnosis and treatments, Meridian massage, Acupuncture, etc.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Culture</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese language learning and practising, Chinese communication corner.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Culture</th>
<th>Skill learning centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese calligraphy, Chinese watercolour painting, Chinese musical performance learning, Chinese chess, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Performances</td>
<td>Lantern festival celebration, Spring festival celebration, Dragon Boat festival celebration, Mid-Autumn festival celebration, Chinese food markets, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Outdoor Activities</td>
<td>on lawns Tai Chi, Yoga, Sunbathing, Musical shows, Open air cinema, Games, Study and work, Picnics, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on hardcourts Plaza dancing, exercises, Sports, ball games, Ping Pong, Fitness court, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on tracks Flying fox, Cycling, walking, Mini Golf, Communication boards, questions and answers boards, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Activities</td>
<td>Various Chinese festivals, Various Local festivals, Chinese markets, Easter egg finding, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night Activities</td>
<td>Walking, Sitting and chatting, Dating, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Summarized and Drawn by author)
5.2 Possible Design Options

5.2.1 Courtyard Style

5.2.1.1 Design Concept

The design concept of this community centre comes from traditional Chinese courtyards and Chinese open-air theatre (Figures 5.1 and 5.2).

![Diagram of Courtyard Style with captions]

*Figure 5.1 Traditional Beijing Quadrangle courtyard*  
(Reprinted from China Travel Designer)

*Figure 5.2 Traditional Chinese Theatre*  
(Reprinted from Sina Blog)
5.2.1.2 Site Arrangement

- **General**

The buildings are set aside to the west and aligned with the existing pavilion in the south, which largely preserves the rest of the park.

*Figure 5.3 Section and Site plan of courtyard style design*  
(Drawn by author)

Two existing pathways are utilized for access to the buildings. Figure 5.3 shows how the design has two main functional parts: a community activities centre (noted in blue) and a Chinese culture centre (noted in yellow), with a Chinese garden in the middle (noted in green) to connect the two main groups.
Community Activities Centre

The Community Activities Centre consists of auditorium, banquet room, various sized meeting rooms and so on (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4 Perspective of Community Activities Centre design
(Drawn by author)

The stage was designed in front of the auditorium, thus performances held on the stage can be watched from various spaces, such as the auditorium room, open air courtyard, two corridors beside the stage, etc. (Figure 5.5)

Figure 5.5 Stage Design
(Drawn by author)
•  *Chinese Culture Centre*

The Chinese culture centre includes a Chinese skill learning centre, traditional Chinese medical clinic, leisure room, activities room, and so on, which not only provide Chinese immigrants a place to review and remember their own culture, but also welcome and encourage the local communities to know their neighbours and join in the Chinese community as well (Figure 5.6).

*Figure 5.6 Chinese Culture Centre Design*

(Drawn by author)
5.2.1.3 Pros and Cons

Strengths:

- Traditional Chinese courtyard
- Clear functional divisions
- Open air theatre enables a large number of people to join in the community activities

Weaknesses:

- Lack of consideration towards the street facade
- Lack of consideration to the park
- Several community centre functions are missing, such as consultation rooms, community services, etc.
5.2.2 Chinese Garden Style

Chinese garden style design originates from the consideration of the whole park development; that is, how to build within the park, without breaking the balance of the park.

To keep the balance between buildings and park, traditional Chinese garden core ideas and design strategies were learnt and applied to Potters Park, with solutions listed below:

5.2.2.1 Site Arrangement

- Utilize the landscape

Firstly, after the site analysis, there is a 4m vertical difference within the site (as the yellow parts show in Figure 5.7), which we could utilize to hide buildings within the park by inserting them within the 4m vertical difference.

*Figure 5.7 Landscape Analysis and Utilization*

(Drawn by author)
- **Small building scale**

Secondly, like traditional Chinese gardens, houses in the park were designed in small scale to better fit with the natural surroundings (Figure 5.8).

*Figure 5.8 Overall view of Chinese Garden style design*
(Drawn by author)

- **Vision Connections and Penetrations**

The building itself can form frames to allow vision connections and penetrations, thus enhancing the delightful viewing spots within the site. As Figure 5.9 shows, the vision connections could be provided through pavilions, verandas, walls, moon gates, building partitions and so on.
5.2.2.2 Functional Design

Supported by the research of community centres, I developed nine minor community centre functional groups: information and services, Chinese community and skill learning, auditorium and lecture room, health and medical centre, leisure tea and cafe, senior centre, youth centre, child centre and other subsidiary rooms (Figure 5.10).

The 9 sub-functional groups of buildings were set separately in the park, however linked with verandas which enable people to walk through.
5.2.2.3 Street Facade Design Consideration

Firstly, to create a quiet environment for people to relax in, walls were set in the western and southern sides to avoid the street noise (Figure 5.11).

*Figure 5.11 Street facade design*
(Drawn by author)

Secondly, framed holes were designed in walls to stimulate people’s curiosity and enable the beautiful viewing spots to be seen outside the park (Figure 5.12).

*Figure 5.12 Framed holes design*
(Drawn by author)

Lastly, a Chinese traditional moon gate was designed for the park entrance, which is not only full of elegance, but also leads people’s sight into the architecture and the iconic ancient tree situated in the park (Figure 5.13).

*Figure 5.13 Moon gate design*
(Drawn by author)
5.2.2.4 Landscape design Consideration

Besides architectural design, landscape design was also strongly emphasized and carefully designed, aiming to enlarge and amplify the natural beauty by using the strategy of contrasting spaces (Figure 5.14).

Figure 5.14 Landscape design
(Drawn by author)

5.2.2.5 Facade and detail design

- The auditorium and lecture centre

The auditorium and lecture centre consists of two large spaced halls to meet the requirements of various lectures, seminars, conferences, performances, music shows, dramas, etc. The design uses a traditional Chinese structure and brick material. The southern building contains a veranda, not only connecting other buildings, but also working as a transitional space between the building and the outdoor space. The veranda uses a Chinese framing structure, however, it is
decorated with New Zealand mountain-shaped partitions (noted as A in Figure 5.15). A circled hole was made on the western side wall to provide vision penetration between the building and the surrounding environment (noted as B in Figure 5.15).

*Figure 5.15 Auditorium and lecture centre design*  
(Drawn by author)

- **Mini Teahouse**

Mini teahouses provide a relatively private place for the community to spend their peaceful and joyful weekends with their friends and families. And these teahouses can be transformed to stores serving Chinese food and snacks during the weekend or Chinese festivals (Figures 5.16 and 5.17).
In order to provide a tranquil space, bamboo was planted around, windows were set towards trees to provide a nice shaded space, and an interior wall was designed with water flowing from the top, falling down and winding around step by step, which symbolizes a floating wine cup, an elegant tranquil poetry assembly among scholars in ancient China (Figure 5.18 and Figure 5.19).
Leisure tea and cafe house design was inspired by traditional Chinese building features: double roof system, column structure, Dou Gong system (in order to form the protruding roof), Mei Ren Kao (a traditional Chinese bench wins its name for being sat on and leaned along by beauties), wooden framed window and door panels, and etc.

*Figure 5.20 Perspective of Leisure tea and cafe house design*

(Drawn by author)
To fit its modern use, the design largely increased its window openings and amounts in order to introduce more natural light inside the building.

*Figure 5.21 Elevations of Leisure tea and cafe house design*
(Drawn by author)

The leisure tea and cafe house contains a performance stage for opera shows at the centre of the house, which are favourable for most seniors in China. It can also hold other various shows for all community members, which enhances the local park entertainment and attracts people to come.
5.2.2.6 Pros and Cons

Strengths:

- Well considers the functions of a community centre in Auckland.
- Well utilizes the surrounding environment.
- Applies the core traditional Chinese garden design strategy to the community centre design.

Weaknesses:

- The architectural form appears to be too traditional and too Chinese.
- Lack of New Zealand building elements
- The buildings (especially the Auditorium and Lecture Centre) overlook the park, which causes a bad feeling of being watched in the people who have activities in the front.
- The enclosed walls leave Potters Park in a confusing situation. Different from Chinese parks, which are often enclosed by walls, New Zealand parks are often expressed as no walls and barriers on the boundaries, thus people can walk through freely.
5.2.3 Context Based Style

5.2.3.1 Existing inconsistent street elevations

Potters Park is located at the intersection of Dominion Road and Balmoral Road, which is also the centre of the Balmoral Region (Figure 5.23).

At the southern side of Potters Park, there are many popular commercial stores (as pic A shows in Figure 5.24), whilst on the northern side, there are almost no commercial retail stores at all (as pic B shows in Figure 5.24).

Such inconsistency is not only unattractive in an aesthetic perspective, but also breaks the commercial vitality in the centre of Balmoral (Figure 5.25).
**Figure 5.25** Potters Park’s street facade

(Adapted from Google Map)

### 5.2.3.2 Propose new buildings to form the consistency

Thus, to keep the commercial vitality and keep consistency towards Dominion Road, new buildings are proposed along Dominion Road and four new buildings are proposed at the street corners to emphasize the centre of Balmoral (Figure 5.26).

**Figure 5.26** Existing site plan and proposed site plan

(Drawn by author)

In this proposal, the plan keeps the consistency of Dominion Road by setting the community centre along the arterial road, which not only decreases the impact of architecture towards park, but also largely reduces the annoying traffic noise towards the park, thus leaving a quiet place for the community to stay, spend their leisure time and enjoy the natural environment.
5.2.3.3 Ideas and Sketch of the Community Centre Design

Due to the building’s site location, the design was focused on building within the park, with several design strategies used and listed below (Figure 5.27):

1. Protect the existing trees on the site, where a green courtyard could be formed around the trees.

2. The buildings will be excavated to provide a vision connection to the park.

3. The building facade on the park side was designed in semi-open form to minimize the building’s depressed feeling towards the park.

Figure 5.27 Sketch of proposed building
(Drawn by author)
5.2.3.4 Design Process

- *Preserve the trees and form courtyards*

Firstly, to preserve the existing trees on site, buildings are set back and form courtyards, which can serve as open public places for community use (Figure 5.28).

*Figure 5.28 Design process 1: Preserve the trees and form courtyards*

(Drawn by author)
- **Provide vision connection to the memorial pavilion and the park**

The memorial pavilion is an important element in Potters Park, thus, the building is excavated to enable vision access to the memorial pavilion (Figure 5.29 and Figure 5.30).

![Figure 5.29 Design process 2: Provide vision connection to the memorial pavilion and the park](image)
(Drawn by author)

Likewise, part of the northern building is also cut in order to provide the vision connection to the park. In this way, the building becomes the “frame” of the view thus amplifying the beauty of the views (Figure 29 and Figure 5.31).

![Figure 5.30 Vision connection to the pavilion](image)
(Drawn by author)
• *Form vision connection and penetration in horizontal and vertical aspect*

In a traditional Chinese garden design, the vision connection and penetration is usually at the horizontal level. Since the community centre is proposed to be three storeys high, the design considered if the vision connection and penetration could be applied at the vertical level, that is, creating both horizontal vision connections and vertical vision connections within the building (Figure 5.32).

*Figure 5.31* Vision connection to the park
(Drawn by author)

*Figure 5.32* Design process 3: Form vision connection and penetration in different horizontal and vertical levels
(Drawn by author)
As Figure 5.3 shows, several outdoor platforms (noted as green) and verandas (noted as yellow) were created, where people can stop, look around, meet new friends and communicate with each other. Thus, an interesting space emerges.

Figure 5.33 Perspective of vision connection and penetration in horizontal and vertical aspect
(Drawn by author)

- Landscape consideration

The building was adjusted according to the existing landscape levels, with the northern part raised 1500mm and southern part lowered 1500mm (Figure 5.34).

Figure 5.34 Design process 4: Landscape consideration
(Drawn by author)
• Feng Shui consideration

According to urban Feng Shui research, “Often the Chinese make a corner shop, hotel, or bank entrance slanted so that access to business is widened and Ch’i, people, and money are all drawn in.” Thus, the community centre’s entry is slanted to welcome people from different directions (Figure 5.35).

*Figure 5.35 Design process 5: Feng Shui consideration*

(Drawn by author)

5.2.3.5 Floor Plans and Functional Arrangement

In a traditional Chinese garden, buildings are normally built on a small scale, separated and connected through various corridors, verandas, gardens, etc. The Chinese Community Centre design also uses the small scale and separated buildings system, but organizes them in a vertical way (Figure 5.36).

40. Sarah Rossbach, Feng Shui, Ancient Chinese wisdom on arranging a harmonious living environment, (Rider, 1999), 98-99
Figure 5.36 Sketches of floor plans
(Drawn by author)

The functional arrangement follows the space user’s needs. The relatively public rooms, such as cafe, library, services, activities room, dance hall and classrooms are on the lower floor, whilst the relatively private rooms, such as consultation rooms and psychological assistance rooms are set at higher levels (Figure 5.36).

5.2.3.6 Pros and Cons

Strengths:

- The buildings were designed based on the big context, and improved the street elevations.

- The philosophy of the architecture is mainly traditional Chinese aesthetic, but performed in a modern way.

Weaknesses:
• The whole building scale appears too big.

• Lack of relation to the buildings on the other side.
6. Design Outcome

6.1 Landscape Amendments

6.1.1 Potters Park Weaknesses

Based on the previous analysis, Potters Park has the following weaknesses:

1. Noise along the arterial road

2. Some facilities lack maintenance and are in bad condition (one basketball court is out of use, concrete pad near pavilion is covered with pigeon excrement)

3. Monotonous and lack of vitality

4. Lack of infrastructure, such as tables and seats, shades, drinking water taps

5. The park separates the commercial business vitality, and is not integrated successfully into the big context

6. Lack of private space where people can relax and enjoy their peaceful moments.

To address these weaknesses, numbers 1 and 5 can be solved by proposing a Chinese Community Centre along Dominion Road to avoid the street noise and provide a better street elevation to adapt to the big context, whilst the other problems could be solved by amendments to Potters Park. To be more specific, Potters Park improvements were proposed to improve the current weaknesses in
the following three aspects: facilities improvement, landscape design and building construction design.

6.1.2 Facilities Improvement

To begin with, several sketches show the possible activities people are fond of in the park, and from which the facilities needed can be known to support such activities in Potters Park.

6.1.2.1 Morning Exercise

(Facilities: Tap water, hangers, power sockets, etc.)

A park is a great place for doing morning exercises. Potters Park owns a great lawn with trees providing shade for morning exercisers; however, it lacks facilities such as tap water, hangers, power sockets, etc. Providing such facilities, will largely stimulate Potters Park’s potential, and attract people to come and do exercise (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1 Sketch of morning exercise activities in Potters Park
(Drawn by author)

6.1.2.2 Family Picnic

(Facilities: BBQ machines)

Likewise, parks are usually great places for picnics. What makes a perfect picnic site? A great viewing spot, certain quietness, trees providing shade, flat ground,
accessible BBQ facilities, etc. The northern platform of Potters Park is such a
great place for a picnic, and a BBQ facility on that site must be favourable to the
communities (Figure 6.2).

*Figure 6.2 Sketch of proposed family picnic areas in Potters Park
(Drawn by author)*

### 6.1.2.3 Fitness and Entertainments

(Facilities: Spinning bicycles with various interactive devices)

Two tall trees lie on the eastern side of Potters Park, which seems a little awkward
in the lawn. Thus, several vertical facilities can be added to mitigate the
imbalance and conflict between the high trees and the flat ground.

As Figure 6.3 shows, some fixed bicycle facilities are proposed and positioned
around the tall trees for people to play, interact and exercise. And when people are
riding the bicycles, the energy will activate the devices (from left to right is a mini
fountain, windmill, light bulb, spinning wheel, balloons accordingly), which are full of fun
for the communities as well.
6.1.2.4 Others

At the entrance, a welcome board will be set on the moon gate, and the pathway lighted by LED bulbs inserted in the ground, brightening the walkway for the park visitors at night (noted as A in Figure 6.4). Some trees provide access, so bird lovers could bring their birds for a morning walk in the park, and chat with friends under the trees, with stuff hangers and tap water provided beside (noted as B in Figure 6.4). Stone seats will be renovated with wooden surfaces, providing comfortable seating areas, with power sockets and Wi-Fi provided, where people can take a comfortable rest, enjoy a meal, study or work in an open space (noted as C in Figure 6.4).

6.1.3 Landscape Design

Potters Park is situated in a sloping landscape. From a landscape architectural perspective, how can we utilize the landscape and create a series of different
spaces where people can find their own seats to have fun, joy and relaxation in the park? Several ways of utilizing a sloping landscape are listed as follows:

6.1.3.1 Possibilities of a Single functional Unit

The slope can be simply used as a grass skiing place for children (Figure 6.5). Additionally, several routes with different safety levels and exciting levels can be developed to meet various expectations.

Figure 6.5 Landscape design: Diagram of grass skiing
(Drawn by author)

Seats on the slope can have a great view and in various forms. These seats on the slope can offer individuals a broad vision in the front with a certain privacy provided by the higher landscape (Figure 6.6).

Figure 6.6 Landscape design:
Diagram of various viewing seats on slope
(Drawn by author)

A sinking platform is a good place for gathering, chatting and having fun (Figure 6.7). Moreover, people sitting there are positioned at a lower level, which provides a unique perspective to the surrounding lawn and trees.
Figure 6.7 Landscape design: Diagram of wooden fenced spaces
(Drawn by author)

A water element can be added into the slope design, with nicely shaped rocks decorating and ornamental fish raised inside. Little bridges can be built over the fish pond, which enables people to walk around and take a close look at the fishes’ world (Figure 6.8).

Figure 6.8 Landscape design: Diagram of rocks and fish pond on slope
(Drawn by author)

Trees can be organized to form a building structure, where people can stay inside and have a great time, with dappled light and shadow falling from the sky (Figure 6.9).

Figure 6.9 Landscape design: Diagram of enclosed tree hut
(Drawn by author)
6.1.3.2 Combination of sloping landscape design

After discussing the design possibilities of a single sloping landscape unit, it is the time to consider how the different parts of the functions could be well combined together.

In Chinese garden design strategies, it is important to link different views, which can form an aesthetical vision channel, as well as an interesting place to live and stay (Figure 6.10).

*Figure 6.10 Diagram of vision penetration combination*
(Drawn by author)

Thus, in the sloping landscape design, to form an interesting place for communities to stay and enjoy the surrounding nature, the importance of vision connection and vision penetration are highlighted and considered (Figure 6.11).

By spreading single landscape units into different vertical and horizontal levels, each single unit can have its own certain privacy, as well as be the vision connection for the others (Figure 6.12).
In terms of vision penetration, the existing trees function as transparent screens to block some visions, whilst allowing some visions to get through. This kind of uncertainty and coincidence forms the beauty, where you will never know whom you will meet at the next spot in the next second.

The single unit can form its own mini-atmosphere, thus the combination of these units can offer people various choices to choose their own spaces they are comfortable within (Figure 6.13).

In some circumstances, single units are not completely isolated; instead, they can be combined to form an enjoyable space. For example, the following diagram shows how gentle wind, greens, flowers and water elements can work together to provide people a delightful place to enjoy and stay.
In the following diagram, people can sit in front of the water pond, enjoy the nice natural view in the front, watch fish swimming in the pond with the reflection of the sky and cloud wandering around in the water, feel the gentle wind touching their face and smell the flower fragrance brought by the wind (Figure 6.14).

![Diagram](image)

(Drawn by author)

### 6.1.4 Building Construction Design

Currently, Potters Park is a natural park with few facilities, which is a little bit monotonous and lacks vitality. It is important for the designers to think about how the building structure can be engaged within the park design, thus, making a better park.

#### 6.1.4.1 A glass shed

(Lighten Potters Park environment, as well as enrich community’s lifestyle.)
A timber-structure and glass-facade shed is proposed in the park, which offers people a shelter where they can stay comfortably, regardless of poor weather conditions. It is also somewhere people can relax in the beautiful natural surroundings, have a romantic candlelight dinner at night, watch stars, celebrate a party, etc., which not only decorates the park’s environment, but also enriches the lifestyle people could have in their community (Figure 6.15).

*Figure 6.15* Sketch of a glass shed in Potters Park
(Drawn by author)

### 6.1.4.2 A spiritual platform

(Enhance the connection between nature and people, and form a sense of belonging within the local community.)

An ancient tree with years of history lies at the centre of Potters Park, having witnessed the development of Balmoral, and carrying the memory of thousands of people.
In my opinion, the tree itself is such a strong spirit worthy of being preserved. To enhance the spiritual form, a platform is proposed under the tree, which enables people to get closer to the tree and feel the long history of the park and the community. People could hang their wish notes on the branches to express their expectations and pray for their wishes. It could also be a place where people hold spiritual and romantic ceremonies, such as proposals, weddings, celebrations, etc. (Figure 6.16).

Figure 6.16 Sketch of a spiritual platform in Potters Park
(Drawn by author)

6.1.4.3 A vertical ladder

(Stand higher to watch the city view from a different perspective.)

How can tall trees interact with people? Would you be curious about the view from the top of the tree – what birds can see and feel when standing on the top branches?

This forms the idea of constructing a circular viewing ladder around the high trees, which enables people to get closer to nature. By walking on the ladder, people can feel how the surroundings change when ascending, and be able to stand on the top of the tree to overlook the city they live in (Figure 6.17).
Figure 6.17 Sketch of a vertical ladder in Potters Park (Drawn by author)

6.1.4.4 A tree house

(Children’ favourite adventure place)

A mini tree house is proposed in the park, which would probably meet children’s expectations of adventure and exploration (Figure 6.18).

Figure 6.18 Sketch of a tree house in Potters Park (Drawn by author)
6.2 Chinese Community Centre Design (Main Focus)

6.2.1 Response to the Research Question

Firstly, how can a Chinese Community Centre be designed for Auckland?

- Discard copying a traditional Chinese building. Due to material and technique restrictions, it is not wise to spend a large amount of time, money and effort in copying a Chinese building in Auckland.

- Learn the essence from traditional Chinese architectural philosophy, and apply it to a modern architectural form. Although the building cannot be simply copied, the philosophy of traditional Chinese architecture could be inherited and carried forward (Figure 6.19).

- Combine the excellent design elements from both China and New Zealand.

- Consider the cultural differences and preferences between the two countries, and avoid the designed architecture solely favouring one party, whilst being unliked by the other party.

- Utilize traditional Chinese building materials in a creative way.

![Chinese architectural features and philosophy](figure6_19.png)

*Figure 6.19 Chinese architectural features and philosophy (Sorted by author)*
Secondly, how can we design a Chinese Community Centre that welcomes people?

- Consider the needs and demands of both locals and Chinese immigrants.
- Build with greens and natural elements.
- Create spaces and opportunities for communities meeting each other.
- Meet various people’s needs, regardless of young or old, male or female, extroverted or introverted, etc.
- Enhance vitality at night.
- Provide great outdoor facilities and entertainments.
- Embrace the spirit of the community, “one for all, all for one”, and unite the community members (Figure 6.20).

*Figure 6.20 Focus of Chinese Community Centre design* (Sorted by author)
6.2.2 Perspectives

Figure 6.21 View from Dominion Road
(Drawn by author)

Figure 6.22 Perspective from Dunbar Road
(Drawn by author)
6.2.3 Floor Plans and Functional Considerations

6.2.3.1 Floor Plan

Figure 6.23 Floor Plan
(Drawn by author)

1. Community activities room
2. Stone seats with cushions
3. Entrance lobby
4. Reception desk
5. Community Information Centre/
Community Market
6. Chinese health clinic
7. Outdoor cafe seating
8. Beauty of Rain Courtyard
9. Semi-open space
10. Fish tank
11. Tree Top courtyard
12. Light well
13. Cafe
14. Sunken tea room
15. Spirit of tree courtyard
16. Elevator
17. Entrance Lobby and reception
desk
18. General consultation
19. Corridor to Potters Park
20. Sand ground for children
21. Chinese music platform
22. Dancing / Yoga / Aerobic
   exercise
23. Consultation Centre
24. Private Consultation room/
   Meeting room/ Volunteer room
25. Community mini-Lecture room
26. Viewing seats
27. Computer room
28. Second floor lobby
29. Fitness lobby
30. Fitness centre
31. All day Balcony Cafe
32. Outdoor seating and viewing/
   Chinese festival celebrating
33. Chinese musical studio
34. Chinese Culture Learning
   Centre 35. Lectures / Programs
   room A
36. Lectures / Programs room B
37. Walkable roof
38. Space for big groups (5-10 people)  
39. Vertical natural ventilation  
40. Roof top Cafe / Club / Ceremony  
41. Beauty Chair facing to park  
42. Corridor  
43. Covered viewing seats

Figure 6.24 Interior Design: Cafe
(Drawn by author)

Figure 6.25 Interior Design: Sunken tea room
(Drawn by author)
Figure 6.26 Interior Design: Second floor lobby

(Drawn by author)

Figure 6.27 Interior Design: Computer room

(Drawn by author)
Figure 6.28 Interior Design: Chinese Culture Learning Centre

(Drawn by author)

Figure 6.29 Interior Design: Rooftop Cafe

(Drawn by author)
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Newly Immigrants</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>The Vulnerable</th>
<th>Celebration</th>
<th>Weekend</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
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<tr>
<td>7am</td>
<td>Morning exercise/ Morning tea</td>
<td>Morning tea with friends/ play Bridge, Poker, Mahjong games/ Medical consultation</td>
<td>Handcrafts making/ Cooking and baking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Payment</td>
<td>Law consultation</td>
<td>Festival</td>
<td>Look up for upcoming</td>
<td>Ta-CH</td>
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<tr>
<td>9am</td>
<td>Morning exercise/ Morning tea</td>
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<td>Study assistance</td>
<td>Learning/ exchange/ Games with objectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Festival</td>
<td>Community events</td>
<td>Ping pong/ Chinese chess</td>
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<tr>
<td>11am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Printing out their homework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Festival</td>
<td>Festival</td>
<td>Chinese music studio</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Festival</td>
<td>Festival</td>
<td>Calligraphy/ Chinese language</td>
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<td>Festival</td>
<td>Festival</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 6.30** Community Activities Timetable

(Drawn by author)

### 6.2.4 Building Sections

**Figure 6.31** Long section

(Drawn by author)
Figure 6.32 Section A-A
(Drawn by author)

Figure 6.33 Section B-B
(Drawn by author)
Figure 6.34 Section C-C
(Drawn by author)

Figure 6.35 Section D-D
(Drawn by author)
6.2.5 Applications of Traditional Chinese Garden's Design Essence

6.2.5.1 View shifts while walking

The traditional Chinese garden is famous for its connotative beauty, as well as the variations and surprises the visitors may experience while walking through the Chinese garden.

Figure 6.36 Diagram of viewing shifts along Dominion Road
(Drawn by author)

The author applied this beauty into the Chinese Community Centre design, and set an interesting walking route along Dominion Road. Each different view is set just 8 metres away from each other, but the view varies a lot while people are walking around (Figure 6.36).
A. The Chinese Community Centre's entrance lies at the northern corner, with the entry door slanted to welcome people from all directions (Figure 6.37).

Figure 6.37 Viewing shits A
(Drawn by author)

B. Beside the entrance, people can catch a glimpse of Potters Park's view through the building. The semi-open platform forms a great outdoor living space for leisure, cafe and entertainments, with park views besides.

At the bottom, the stone walls are extruded and form seats for people to have a rest, enjoy a meal and chat with friends, with power sockets and Wi-Fi provided (Figure 6.38).

Figure 6.38 Viewing shits B
(Drawn by author)
C. A fish tank is proposed here, which will not only bring vitality and spirit into the building, but also form a favourable interesting place for the communities or families to go. (Figure 6.39).

Figure 6.39 Viewing shits C
(Drawn by author)

D. The outdoor stair is located at the south of the fish tank, which provides access to the second floor, as well as enabling people to watch the fish tank from a different perspective (Figure 6.40).

Figure 6.40 Viewing shits D
(Drawn by author)

E. In the centre of Chinese Community Centre, lies the existing tree and central courtyard, where people can sit under the tree, reading the newspaper, chatting with friends, having a meal in the beautiful nature, etc. (Figure 6.41).
F. The moon gate works as a threshold dividing two spaces (Dominion Road and the building entrance) in an aesthetical way. Beside the moon gate, a stair is proposed leading people to the cafe upstairs (Figure 6.42).

G. People standing here can have a glance to the existing memorial pavilion in Potters Park, and curving access is provided and designed with Chinese elements and features (Figure 6.43).
H. Here, people passing by will meet numerous electronic information boards, which record the communities’ messages. People may find new friends, communicate with other community members, help and support each other, etc. (Figure 6.44).

*Figure 6.44 Viewing shits H*

(Drawn by author)
6.2.5.2 Vision Penetration

- *Vision Penetration through courtyard, fish tank, stairs and trees*

*Figure 6.45 Vision Penetration through courtyard, fish tank, stairs and trees*  
(Drawn by author)

*Figure 6.46 Illustration of Vision Penetration*  
(Drawn by author)

Vision penetration will be formed by arranging the courtyard, fish tank, stairs and trees in a row, which will generate an interesting experience of overlapping vistas (Figure 6.46).
• **Vision Penetration through buildings**

Vision penetration through buildings enables participants’ vision to experience a “bright-dark-bright” process, which not only enriches the viewing layouts, but also makes the opposite view (Potters Park) look vivid and brighter due to the contrast of bright view and dark room.

*Figure 6.47 Vision Penetration through building*  
(Drawn by author)

### 6.2.5.3 Frame the View

The framed window captures the outside view inside, thus forming a picturesque scene (Figure 6.48).

*Figure 6.48 Frame the view*  
(Drawn by author)
6.2.5.4 Mei Ren Kao

Mei Ren Kao (a traditional Chinese bench which wins its name from being sat upon and leaned along by beauties) is designed on the second and third floors facing the park, with sliding panels installed to provide a comfortable seating environment for chatting, relaxation and enjoying leisure time.

*Figure 6.49* Chinese Bench: Mei Ren Kao
(Drawn by author)

6.2.5.5 Chinese Styled Corridor

The design of the corridor linking Dominion Road and Potters Park was inspired by the Chinese landscape aesthetic. The curving path is designed to slow pedestrians’ movement and mood, and lead them to see the surrounding environment, with various plants and bamboo planted, spiritual water elements decorated and artistic rockery set off as the background (*Figure 6.50* and *Figure 6.51*).

*Figure 6.50* Perspective of Chinese Styled Corridor
(Drawn by author)
Water is an important element in Chinese garden design. Thus, in the Chinese styled corridor design, water elements are used in four forms (noted as A, B, C and D in Figure 6.52), which create rich natural viewing spots.

Figure 6.51 Section of Chinese Styled Corridor
(Drawn by author)

Figure 6.52 Water Elements
(Drawn by author)
6.2.6 Detailed Design

6.2.6.1 Green wall

![Diagram of green wall design and its details](image)

*(Figure 6.53 Diagram of green wall design and its details (Drawn by author))*

Green walls were designed in terms of keeping the consistency with Potters Park. Additionally, in terms of the Feng Shui design, the green walls can also help reduce the solar radiation absorption in summer by using them as a building facade against the sun radiation, thus reducing the heat gain (Figure 6.53).

6.2.6.2 Windows

Referring to the traditional Chinese building structure, the window is designed with timber structure and a protruded canopy. In this way, the window itself seems like a mini elegant building, enabling people to have a glance at the traditional Chinese building structure by just looking at the window design (Figure 6.54).

*(Figure 6.54 Window design (Drawn by author))*
The design is also localized by referring traditional Maori patterns and utilizing them in the glass decoration (Figure 6.55).

*Figure 6.55 Window detailed with Maori patterns*
(Drawn by author)

### 6.2.6.3 Roof Decorations

In a traditional Chinese roof, we can often see mythical animals standing on the roof ridges, which are not only beautiful decorations in the aesthetic perspective, but also are important components in preventing the ridge tiles falling in the functional perspective (Figure 6.56).

*Figure 6.56 Illustration of mythical animals on a Chinese roof*
(Reprinted from Feng Shui Environments of Power, A study of Chinese Architecture, by Evelyn Lip)

In the Chinese Community Centre design, the idea of mythical animals is cherished and used throughout the roof edges and corners, however, the figure
of the mythical animals was derived and developed from New Zealand national birds, Kiwi (Figures 6.57, 6.58 and 6.59).

*Figure 6.57* Maori patterns

(Reprinted from Shutterstock, by Artem Efimov)

*Figure 6.58* The figure of localized mythical animals

(Drawn by author)

*Figure 6.59* Diagram of roof decoration design

(Drawn by author)

### 6.2.6.4 Panel Design

*Figure 6.60* Four panels with different transparencies

(Drawn by author)
By utilizing traditional Chinese building materials (wood, bamboo and brick) in a creative way, four panels with different extents of transparency were created (Figure 6.60). Such panels could be installed on the building facade, and people can choose the preferred panel by sliding them easily along track rails (Figure 6.61).

_Figure 6.61 Diagram of panel design_ (Drawn by author)
6.3 Bus Stop Design

Due to the site’s special park location, the bus stop design is focused on how to build a bus stop in the park context. Thus, the design combined green plants, tree shaped roofs, stone seats, etc. Additionally, to create a delightful place for the community to use while they are waiting for the bus, the bus stop was designed with functions of mutual communication, convenience facilities and accessible use for everyone, youth, adults, or seniors (Figure 6.62).
6.4 Interactive Facade Design

The interactive facade will be installed with numerous hexagonal electrical information boards, recording and presenting individuals’ faces and their wishes, where other community members may see, offer help or give support. This interactive device will not only make the building facade vivid and interesting, but also encourage the community’s communication and connection, as well as enhance the spirit of community, one for all, all for one (Figure 6.63).

Figure 6.63 Diagram of interactive facade design
(Drawn by author)

Anyone can participate in this interaction; for instance, students, job seekers, entrepreneurs, children, adults, seniors, charity organizers, volunteers, new immigrants, language learners, skill exchangers, craftsmen, professionals, etc. And it can be for anyone, any community member, etc. (Figure 6.64)
Figure 6.64 Possible Communications through Information Boards

(Drawn by author)
7. Final Drawings

Chinese Community Centre Design

How choosing site?

City Centre Analysis

Park Infrastructure Design

Dominion Rd North

Surrounding Build Elements

Discontinuity of Street Facade

Access pathway

Proposed street elevation

Improve facilities and entertainments

Project Outline

• Park renovation
• Bus station design
• Community Centre design (main focus)
8. Conclusion

Aiming at creating a better city, as well as supporting the local Chinese minority immigrants, the author was inspired by the power of the community, consisting of the non-profit organizations, volunteers and anyone who keeps love and passion for the society. The author believes that many littles make a mickle, and the power of community must be reckoned with.

The related literature studies involved the pros and cons of Auckland City, the history and development of community centres, the needs of the Auckland Chinese community, etc. The architectural design studies involved the seniors design, Feng Shui and traditional Chinese garden core ideas and other strategic approaches.

The design outcome will be a Chinese Community Centre situated along Dominion Road in Potters Park, which will not only keep the consistency of the street elevation and commercial zone, inject vitality into Potters Park, but also support the community’s various needs, diverse culture, services, lifestyle, entertainment, health, socialization and so on.

The architectural design itself is embellished with traditional Chinese architectural aesthetic considerations, such as view shifts, vision connections and penetrations. To conform to the local culture, the design is also localized by using local characteristics, images and patterns, with interactive information boards installed and updating the local news, people’s wishes and community information continuously.

In addition, to provide great outdoor spaces for the community, outdoor spaces were considered and several amendments were proposed. The bus stop was also designed to better fit the park context and serve the community.
To conclude, the Chinese Community Centre design creates a warm and powerful social complex, where community members, young or senior, can make friends, have fun together, colour their daily lives, accept various customs and different cultures, be united and supported, find a sense of belongingness, reach self-actualization and so on. In the author’s opinion, many littles make a mickle, and the power of community can contribute to building Auckland a better city to live in.
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is submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements for the Unitec degree of

Principal Supervisor: Bin Su

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