Provocative Conservation/Evocative Design:
Contemporary Design Intervention in Historic Urban Landscape

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Provocative Conservation/Evocative Design:

Contemporary Design Intervention in Historic Urban Landscape

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Declaration

I certify that expect where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research programme; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Julia Yao Wang

1 March, 2013
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1.1 Research interests and background

My academic background is in Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning. My research began with a personal interest in the historic aspects of Beijing’s Old City. In my Master’s degree in China I pursued my interest within an urban design context, and conducted a landscape consultation project for the renovation of a traditional neighbourhood: Qianmen East in Beijing’s Old City. I noticed there, the conflicts between contemporary use and heritage conservation, and the struggle to recognise and acknowledge the authenticity of new interventions in this historic neighbourhood. These concerns became the starting point of this research project.

I selected Carlton Gardens in Melbourne and Shishahai Area in Beijing as my research sites. Although these two sites have very different urban conditions and socio-economic contexts; they are similar, in terms of their historic features contributing to the rich characteristics of a contemporary metropolitan city. In addition they are similar in terms of confronting development pressures and contemporary demands for change. Both sites share a heritage status and have issues regarding their authenticity (Carlton Gardens was designated as a World Heritage site in 2004, and the Shishahai Area was nominated as part of a new World Heritage site planned by the City Authorities in 2011).

‘Questions concerning authenticity haunt the practice of preservation, curation, management and presentation enacted on monuments, buildings, places and artefacts’ (Jones, 2010). The World Heritage Centre requires that sites ‘must meet the conditions of authenticity’ to be included in the World Heritage listing (UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 2011, p.21.)

Broadly speaking, authenticity refers to the quality of being real, original, truthful or genuine; ‘really proceeding from its stated source’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2002: p.153). In the field of heritage conservation, authenticity is the quality of the property to be distinguished from a fake or one involved in deception.
Both of my research sites suffered significant physical change caused by contemporary interventions. The new Melbourne Museum was constructed in the historic Carlton Gardens in 2000, and a great number of residential courtyard houses in the Shishahai Area have been transformed into commercial use in the last ten years. These new interventions may accommodate the contemporary demands of the urban landscape, but questions of both landscapes’ authenticity as World Cultural Heritage sites remain. Research into ways in which a landscape’s authenticity is justified, in a continuously changing urban process, is crucial.

1.2 Research propositions

My research directly responds to the concerns in recent years, regarding the place and role of contemporary design, in historic urban environments acknowledged by UNESCO’s World Heritage Centre. The World Heritage Centre was established to encourage the recognition and protection of the world’s cultural and natural heritage by the international treaty: Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (the World Heritage Convention) adopted in 1972. This Convention is probably the most influential and effective conservation instrument that has ‘encouraged intercultural dialogue on heritage matters, and brought about unprecedented levels of international co-operation’ (Cameron, 2008). Its purpose is to establish a global network to conserve the world’s cultural and natural diversity. UNESCO’s World Heritage Centre and its various programmes support each individual state in celebrating their own uniqueness, cultures and traditions. UNESCO’s conservation framework is not only encouraging heritage conservation but also is a pioneer in progressing conservation strategy, cooperation, implementation and research. The World Heritage Centre and its advisory bodies present the most current conservation principles, methodologies and implementation frameworks to government bodies, conservation professionals and heritage researches. In the area of built heritage conservation, a recent focus has been to shift to the conservation of historic urban landscapes which grew from the establishment of World Heritage Cities Program (UNESCO, 2005) by the World Heritage Centre. This recognition and classification of large urban areas as heritage sites is the new challenge in
The concern raised by these contemporary interventions in historic urban landscapes is noted by the World Heritage Centre: ‘the issue of contemporary architectural interventions in and around World Heritage properties is increasingly a cause for concern among policy makers, urban planners, city developers, architects, preservationist, property owners, investors and concerned citizens’ (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2005a). This position is further articulated as one where: ‘the central challenge of contemporary architecture in the historic urban landscape is to respond to development dynamics in order to facilitate socio-economic changes and growth on the one hand, while simultaneously respecting the inherited townscape and its landscape setting on the other. Living historic cities, especially World Heritage cities, require a policy of ‘city planning and management that takes conservation as a key-point of departure. In this process, the historic city’s authenticity and integrity, which are determined by various factors, must not be compromised’ (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2005a p.2). This places the conservation authority’s vision of contemporary design intervention firmly into the framework of the historic urban landscape. This occurs by accommodating the present demands and needs of the city on the one hand, and at the same time maintains the authenticity of the historic environment on the other.

There have been a range of contemporary interventions within historic environments that have been questioned by conservation authorities. However, in all these cases, neither conservation authorities, nor designers explicitly justify the impact of the interventions on the landscape’s authenticity. This search for recognition of the urban landscape’s authenticity is difficult, as there are a great number of tangible and intangible attributes to authenticity that need to be taken into account. At the same time, these attributes are most often in a state of change and are ephemeral due to the dynamic nature of urban landscape development.

An example is the case of the new Relais & Chateaux Atrio Hotel, designed by
Mansilla+Tuñón Architects, in the Old City of Cáceres in Spain, recognised as a World Heritage site in 1986. The new design of the hotel was highly criticised by ICOMOS Spain, and its construction ‘will not only lead to the destruction of historic structures, but will also cause damage to the traditional character of the town of Cáceres’. (Fernandez, 2004). Meanwhile the architect defended the design as ‘the new Atrio Relais-Châteaux, located at St Matthews Square in Caceres, tries to rethink the city departing from the principles that made it possible in the first place. It tries to imagine how such thing can be carried out in our time, enabling contemporary architecture to stand side by side the historic core, with respect and dignity’ (Mansilla+Tuñón Architects, 2005). From the designer’s point of view, this acknowledgement and celebration of the presence of the contemporary, through new architecture form, is one way to respect an historic environment. However, neither critic nor architect argued for or against the design in regard to the site’s authenticity.

The removal of the Dresden Elbe Valley from the World Heritage list due to the construction of Waldschlösschen Bridge, is another case illustrating the tense conflict between contemporary intervention and heritage conservation. In the case of Dresden Elbe Valley, UNESCO only stated ‘the building of a four-lane bridge in the heart of the cultural landscape meant that the property failed to keep its outstanding universal value as inscribed’ (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2009).
Figure 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6: new Relais & Chateaux Atrio Hotel

Figure 1.7: Dresden Elbe Valley, Germany

Figure 1.8: Location of the Waldschlösschen Bridge
The contemporary interventions' impact on the authenticity of historic urban landscape also appears to be absent in any official recommendation. The Vienna Memorandum on *World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture – Managing the Historic Urban Landscape* regarding contemporary interventions, has suggested that ‘urban planning, contemporary architecture and preservation of the historic urban landscape should avoid all forms of pseudo-historical design, as they constitute a denial of both the historical and the contemporary alike. One historical view should not supplant others, as history must remain readable, while continuity of culture through quality interventions is the ultimate goal.’ (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2005b). This suggestion recognises the presence of contemporary architecture as a continuity of culture. However, it remains silent, in reference to the relation between the quality intervention and the authenticity of the historic urban landscape.

The definition of authenticity has been revised in the last forty years, in line with the progress of conservation philosophy and the expanding field of conservation. The term authenticity appeared in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of World Heritage Convention* Where the heritage site is required to ‘meet the test of authenticity in design, materials, workmanship or setting; authenticity does not limit consideration to original form and structure, but includes all subsequent modifications and additions, over the course of time, which in themselves possess artistic or historical value’ (UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 1977). Cameron suggests this statement indicates authenticity is defined through physical attributes found in various historic layers. (Cameron, 2008).

This statement was immediately challenged by the nomination of the historic centre of Warsaw in Poland, which was mainly reconstructed after the World War II (Cameron, 2008). The World Heritage Committee revised the requirements in 1980 to those sites that ‘meet the test of authenticity in design, materials, workmanship or setting (the Committee stressed that reconstruction is only acceptable if it is carried out on the basis of complete and detailed documentation of the original, and to no extent, on conjecture).’ (UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 1980).

Informed by the recognition of cultural landscape as cultural heritage, the requirement was revised in 1994 in order to ‘meet the test of authenticity in design, material,
workmanship or setting and in the case of cultural landscapes their distinctive character and components (the Committee again emphasised complete and detailed documentation on the original)’ (UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 1994)

Until 1994, the definition of authenticity had not been revised in principle in nearly two decades. However, the limitations of this materials-bound approach to authenticity was of a concern to conservation experts (Cameron, 2008). It noticed an anthropological view of cultural heritage had taken the place of the monumental view. Jerome suggests ‘this shift has substantially broadened the definition of cultural heritage to incorporate a wide range of tangible and intangible expressions of authenticity’ (Jerome, 2008)p.4). In November, 1994, the Government of Japan and ICOMOS, working with the World Heritage Committee sponsored a conference regarding a new definition of authenticity in Nara, Japan. The Nara Conference was ‘at the heart of a flurry of debates’ and ‘is regarded as a turning point in approaches to authenticity’ (Jones, 2010). The result was the Nara Document on Authenticity, which ‘proposes a doctrinal shift towards a greater recognition of regional and cultural diversity, as well as the associative values of the heritage-site’ (Cameron, 2008, p.21).

This definition of authenticity in the Nara Document on Authenticity was finally adopted in the 2005 version of Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of World Heritage Convention, and it still remains in the 2011 version of the Operational Guidelines (UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 2011).

‘Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, properties may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural value (as recognized in the proposed nomination criteria) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including: form and design; materials and substance; use and function; traditions; techniques and management systems; location and setting; language and other forms of intangible heritage; spirit and feeling; and other internal and external factors.’ (Cameron, 2008, p.21).

The 2005 version of the definition of authenticity appears to be more complex, and more importantly has recognised various intangible aspects of the cultural heritage. It is noted that this definition took eleven years from the Nara Document on Authenticity
to its official adoption by UNESCO’s World Heritage Centre, alongside various debates and discussions among conservation experts and authorities (Cameron, 2008).

Meanwhile, the recognition of intangible heritage also reinforced the recognition of intangible attributes and aspects as important part of the built (tangible) cultural heritage. The intangible cultural heritage includes the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. (UNESCO Cultural Sector, 2003). When Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett described intangible heritage as metacultural production, she cited philosopher Nelson Goodman’s distinction of fine arts (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett)—‘paintings and sculpture, described as autographic (the material instantiation and the work are one and the same) and performances (music, dance, theatre), which are allographic (the work and instantiation in performance are not one and not the same)’. She thus distinguishes tangible heritage as autographic, and intangible heritage as allographic. In a similar manner, we can also distinguish them as the art of space (painting, sculpture and architecture), and the art of time (music, dance, etc.). But should urban heritages be categorised as autographic? Urban landscape is about both space and time, the substantial physical structure is both tangible and autographic, but the temporary occupation and movement of place are equally essential in contributing to the spatial quality. I believe that urban heritages should be understood as having a combination of tangible and intangible significance. I hypothesise that the most current definition of authenticity and the understanding of intangible heritage proposes an alternative urban conservation approach, one that lies beyond the long-existing conservation approach emphasising the historic fabric, and attempts to preserves the site as a static museum-object.

As a result, one of the challenges in this research is to elaborate an interpretation of authenticity that suits the dynamic and progressive nature of the present day urban landscape. In addition, the negotiation between past and present, and tangible and intangible are explored in this research. This negotiation process is in reality the process of defining, conserving and advocating a particular version of authenticity of the urban heritage.
My research questions are:

- How can I explore ideas of *authenticity* in the design of historic urban landscape?
- How can the issues and concepts of *authenticity* be revealed, tested and illustrated through my own design work?
- How does exploring *authenticity* allow me to negotiate a way through the various qualities of the past and the emerging present conditions?
- What can urban design in particular contribute to these debates?

These questions suggest the two essential roles I played in this research: firstly, as a conservation-scholar, searching for an alternative interpretation of authenticity that takes contemporary values and respects the nature of the urban landscape as a process; and secondly, as an urban-designer who explores different design strategies beyond the imitation of the historic urban morphology. Ultimately, one of my key aims is to create design work which communicates and encourages interaction between the past and the present, and which allows heritage to be understood in a different way.

Throughout the research, the concept of authenticity is examined through a range of design experiments, which eventuated in an alternative definition as follows:

Authenticity in the historic urban landscape is imbued within a range of complex layers of tangible and intangible qualities, which can be deconstructed as: form and design, materiality, functionality, spatiality, location and tradition. These layers are interrelated and co-exist, and should be considered as one entity when questioning a landscape’s authenticity. This authenticity within an historic urban landscape is progressive, as it has been constantly reshaped by the specific socio-economic conditions, at specific times, during its evolution. Again, authenticity within any historic urban landscape is
contested and determined according to the existing variety of differing value systems (perspectives). There are therefore, a multiplicity of perspective-versions according to what is/has been prioritised from the specific socio-economic and cultural conditions existing within the particular historic urban landscape examined.

1.3 Speculative and reflective design as methodology

This research is project-based with speculative and reflective design as my methodology. Nigel Cross has argued that ‘design research can be used in three forms: research into design, research for design and research through design.’ (Simonsen et al., 2010), p.81). I categorise my research as through design which is exemplified by Cross as ‘abstraction from self-observation and other observations during designing, hypothesising and testing.’ (Cross, 1995). Olsen and Heaton suggest that designing is goal-directed, responding to a perceived need. They also note that designing is characterised as knowing through making or doing. (Simonsen et al., 2010).

One of my first research explorations deals with the concept of authenticity within an historic urban landscape. This theoretical concept is crucial to determining how the landscape is to be managed and changed within a conservation process. At the beginning of my research, I used an activity-observation method to investigate the existing contemporary uses of the Carlton Gardens as one of its intangible qualities. However I found the values I recognised were not regarded as part of the landscape’s authenticity by either the Local Authority’s conservation plan or in international conservation charters. My critique of these physical-oriented conservation policies caused me to hypothesise on a non-physical interpretation of urban landscape’s authenticity. The Nara Document on Authenticity is used as a theoretical support for my hypothesis. In relation to the Document’s view on authenticity, two assumptions were developed: firstly, the historic urban landscape’s authenticity could be maintained without preserving its physical fabric; secondly, the authenticity of the historic urban landscape could be measured precisely. I developed three conceptual designs with differing degrees of physical change to test these assumptions. On reflection at completion, I found that physical and non-physical qualities are interrelated and that
they co-existed. The design process should negotiate between the two positions rather than radically privilege one over the other. In particular I also found that authenticity is not a quality that could be measured precisely. The Nara Document’s concept could be used to observe various qualities that contribute to authenticity, but not used to measure them. These findings were reinforced in my observational project of Shishahai Area’s urban morphology.

The authenticity mapping project for Carlton Gardens similarly uses the concept in the Nara Document by visualising a series of authenticity layers, through different period of time. By physically overlapping these layers, I found the progressive nature of authenticity, which was not evident in the Nara Document. Then I further hypothesise: there is not one single version of a landscape’s authenticity, but differing versions, due to its richness, in terms of tangible and intangible attributes, as well as in its various characteristics over time. This hypothesis is tested through my final designs that capture different attributes of the research sites. A review follows of other contemporary designers’ projects which reinforces this hypothesis. Finally, the predetermined nature and contestation of authenticity is demonstrated.

In this process, each project tests some of my speculations on the notion of authenticity; how this concept might be used in conservation actions; and where my research propositions sit. The findings of the project shift my understanding of this theoretical concept, the reading of the qualities of the sites, and the designs themselves. Every shift is a beginning for further speculations and hypotheses. Not only have the designs been improved and developed by this process, but the research findings on authenticity are a theoretical supplementary to the *Nara Document on Authenticity*. The process is similar to Alfred Schutz’s reflection on the use of *modo future exacti*, ‘where active people act on the basis of projects that they imagine as accomplished, as part of their organising world order. They act and learn that something different happened, and they reformulate their project on the basis of the new worldview and act again.’ (Simonsen et al., 2010 p.80).

In conclusion, my design research is an experimental process used to investigate, examine and illustrate, the concept of authenticity. This concept is defined and discussed broadly by referencing literatures from a variety of different academic
positions. The design projects test how these positions might be interpreted, and used in design and conservation practice. A variety of strivings and exertions found in practice and in the (design) process are used as an illustration of the issues surrounding the concept itself. This exploration is similar to what Peter Downton has suggested ‘here design research leads to not only an increase in knowledge, but experiments and explorations that make the need for more knowledge clear.’ (Downton, 2003, p.63).

### 1.4 Structure of the Appropriate Durable Record (ADR)

The chapters of this ADR are arranged chronologically according to the exploration of the concept of authenticity and the development of the design projects. The investigation of authenticity and the design propositions are introduced alongside the reviews of literature and design works of other scholars and designers. The reflection and critique of my own hypothesis and designs are presented after each project in three intertwined voices: the voice of a conservation scholar; the voice of a designer; and the personal voice of a heritage user.

In Chapter 2, the initial investigation of the Carlton Gardens starts from an observation of the everyday users’ activities and occupations. The Activity Mapping project reveals how the site is connected to people through their daily experiences. Meanwhile, an investigation of the current conservation policies of the site is conducted. This investigation includes the critical reviews of the Carlton Gardens Master Plan, the ICOMOS’s evaluation regarding the World Heritage nomination of the site and the conservation principles from three international conservation charters. The critique of the physically-oriented interpretation of authenticity embodied in these policies and principles is presented. The subsequent design proposition for the Carlton Gardens illustrates the site may be understood differently through the experiences facilitated by the new intervention.

In Chapter 3, *Layered Authenticity*, an alternative interpretation of authenticity is examined based on the Nara Document on Authenticity. I describe the Nara Document’s
interpretation as layered authenticity. This concept regards both tangible and intangible attributes of the heritage site. How the concept of layered authenticity might be used in conservation practice is tested through the design propositions for the Carlton Gardens and the Shishahai Area. I speculated that a conservation approach may allow radical changes to the tangible attributes to enhance the intangible attributes. Three propositions for the Carlton Gardens involving different degrees of physical change are illustrated. How certain changes affect other authenticity layers (attributes) are analysed and these propositions are compared with the existing landscape. I found some physical qualities are crucial to both the tangible and intangible layers. For the Shishahai Area, the initial investigation starts from an observation of the unique urban morphology at different scales. It was found that the Courtyard-Hutong system is the core of the Shishahai’s morphology and authenticity. The impacts on the Courtyard-Hutong system caused by the existing commercial development are analysed. Propositions at human, street and urban scales are proposed to search for adaptations that will not detract from the authenticity of the site. These propositions are compared with the traditional Courtyard-Hutong system and I also find some crucial physical qualities that should not be compromised. Eventually, I realise the interrelation and coexistence of the tangible and intangible layers of the site. It was also noticed that some crucial physical features cannot be compromised. These crucial qualities of the site can be found through comparison of the new propositions and the long-existing landscape features. Conservation should be understood as a process of negotiation among tangible and intangible layers, not solely privileging one or the other.

In Chapter 4, *Progressive Authenticity*, I start to explore the hidden characteristics of the Carlton Gardens beyond its designated World Heritage significance. The project of Authenticity Mapping for the Carlton Gardens maps the authenticity layers of the site in five historic periods. By overlapping these layers I realise the progressive nature of authenticity. The project also informs my decision to illustrate a chronology diagram to visualise the changes at human (courtyard house) scale and urban scale of the Shishahai Area. These drawings tell me that the authenticity is constantly reshaped by the merging forces of the landscape. The progressive authenticity clarifies changes that are authentic to their own time and socio-economic condition. However, the dilemma is if every change could acknowledge its authenticity, how could I justify that some
changes are better than others? The Progressive Garden proposition for the Carlton Gardens proposes a range of new garden spaces to encourage new activities and enhance public appreciation. This design applies a similar design approach as that of the Parterre du Carrousel in Paris, which uses the planting materials to create attractive subspaces for the site. However, I critique this approach as beautification and a beautiful environment does not necessarily make people understand the site better. The project of Another City Above for the Shishahai Area, inspired by Bernard Tschumi's design for Factory 798, attempts to address both commercial and residential demands of space. However, the proposition creates a range of contested activities and causes impacts on crucial spatial qualities at different scales. Issues of the two propositions inform two speculations: firstly, the design intervention for urban heritage sites may play the role of catalyst to generate deeper understanding of the site's past and its rich characteristics; secondly, there may be various scenarios of a site's authenticity rather than an absolute one.

In Chapter 5, Provocative/Evocative Design, two design propositions are developed for each of my research sites. For the Carlton Gardens, the propositions of Memory Container and Event Landscape provide different scenarios to interpret the site’s long existing characteristic as a civic event venue. For the Shishahai Area, the propositions of Communal Gentrification and Courtyard Evolution prioritise different socio-economic forces, resulting in almost opposite scenarios for the site. From these propositions, the provocative/evocative proposition is found to be an alternative design approach for historic urban landscapes. This approach attempts to stimulate the users' thinking towards the site's multiple meanings through a deeper engagement with the urban heritage. Meanwhile, the contestation, variation and pre-determined nature of authenticity are discussed through these design propositions.

In Chapter 6, Conclusion, presents the contribution that this research has made to the fields of urban design and urban heritage conservation practice. It can be separated into three distinct yet related areas: the findings of authenticity contribute to both the theoretical debate of this notion and conservation practice in urban conservation discourse; the design strategies could be used as alternative conservation strategies to discover overlooked qualities, recognise multiple meanings,
facilitate new activities, encourage individual interpretations of the site; the provocotive/evocative design approach also provides an alternative design approach to reveal meanings of an urban landscape through creating a present/past communication.
References


KIRSHENBLATT-GIMBLETT, B. Intangible Heritage as Metacultural Production.


Chapter 2
Initial investigations: Carlton Gardens and Conservation Charters

Content:

2.1 Activity Mapping in Carlton Gardens
2.2 The Carlton Gardens Master Plan and Conservation Charters
2.3 Initial Design Experiment for the Carlton Gardens
2.4 The Physically Oriented interpretation of Authenticity, and the Challenge of the Nara Document on Authenticity
Figure 2.1: Melbourne Museum and Royal Exhibition Building in the Carlton Gardens
The large contemporary architectural form of the Melbourne Museum is juxtaposed alongside the historic Royal Exhibition Building in the Carlton Gardens. This act of juxtaposition is the most confronting part of this World Heritage site in terms of authenticity. My initial investigation started with questions of how this site functioned as a heritage landscape after this major physical and functional change. I also questioned how the conservation authorities evaluated the new interventions by the Melbourne Museum and what were the authorities’ values. These inquiries required me to make deeper observations and investigations concerning the current situation at the Carlton Gardens and the existing conservation agenda.

The present situation in the Gardens was recorded firstly through close observation of its current use and associated activities. The adopted method originates from those used in post occupancy evaluation (POE), which is described in detail in Chapter 2.1. Ten patterns of differing behavior are recorded in observation mappings of the daily users’ activities. These mappings confirm and record how the landscape functions currently. In Chapter 2.2, a simultaneous investigation of the conservation agenda occurs, and is conducted through a review of the definition of authenticity and conservation principles outlined in the international conservation charters, and from generally accepted conservation expertise. These were followed by critiques on ICOMOS’ evaluation regarding Carlton Gardens’ authenticity (ICOMOS, 2004), and on the conservation strategies of the Carlton Gardens Master Plan (City of Melbourne, 2005). Thus allowing me to examine the limitations of the physically-oriented interpretation of authenticity embodied in the international charters and World Heritage committee’s definition of authenticity, occurring before the later adoption of the Nara Document on Authenticity. In Chapter 2.3, the first design experiment undertaken for Carlton Gardens is presented. The design addresses some of my initial concerns regarding the site as a process, and takes for the first time, the intangible attributes into account. The opportunities brought by this design exemplify several aspects that are neglected or suppressed by the existing conservation agenda. In Chapter 2.4, the 1994 version and 2005 version of authenticity definitions, are compared.
2.1 Activity Mapping in Carlton Gardens

Post occupancy evaluation (POE) includes a range of observational methods that investigate people’s uses, occupations, activities and the potential problems concerning the built environment. POE was introduced to landscape and urban design practitioners by Marcus and Francis in their well-known book People places: design guidelines for urban open space (Marcus and Francis, 1998). In which observation methods, such as activity mapping, trace mapping and questionnaires provide a systematic and analytical approach to uncover how the built-environment is used and occupied. The analysis (including figures and activity patterns) is based on data accumulated from multiple observation records of the same site, at different times. The information and analysis gathered from POE can enhance the designer’s understanding of the designed environment through uncovering specific conditions which may not be predicted during the design process, and give guidance towards the improvement of the existing design or its management. (p.321).

The activity mapping method is particularly suited and was selected for the observation of Carlton Gardens because my major inquiry concerned the daily users’ occupations, what spaces people use, and how they use them. In the 35 activity mappings, I marked the location, activity, age group and gender of each user on the site plan (Fig.2.2). After recording the 35 site observations, I aggregated the ten most frequent activities on individual site plans (Fig.2.3), and where each dot represents one user associated with a particular activity. In addition, the density and distribution of these 10 activities are clearly visible in the mappings.
A plan of the Carlton Gardens is printed on three maps: South Garden, space between Royal Exhibition Building and North Garden. The observation starts from the South Garden. The gender, age group, location and activity of the user are recorded on the map. Meanwhile, date and time of observation, weather and notes of other findings are written on the maps.

**Legend of gender and age group of the user:**

**Male:**  
- age 50+  
- 15-50  
- under 15  

**Female:**  
- age 50+  
- 15-50  
- under 15  

**Legend of activity:**  
1. Walking (strolling)  
2. Walking (passing through)  
3. Sitting (on the bench)  
4. Sitting (on the ground/grass)  
5. Eating  
6. Drinking  
7. Reading  
8. Cycling  
9. Photographing  
10. Videoing  
11. Talking  
12. Running/jogging  
13. Walking dog  
14. Walking with baby carriage  
15. Exercising/sporting  
16. Playing  
17. Playing music  
18. Singing  
19. Lying on the grass/ground  
20. Kissing  
21. Writing  
22. Cleaning pathway  
23. Collecting leaves and flowers  
24. Smoking  
25. Accessing Melbourne Museum  
26. Lying on the bench  
27. Having picnic  
28. Bike playing  
29. Skater board playing  
30. Flying kite  
31. Changing diaper for baby  
32. Climbing tree  
33. Drawing  
34. Riding disabled bike

**Figure 2.2: Record of An Activity Observation**
Figure 2.3: 10 Activity Mappings Patterns
These patterns are revealing in terms of visualising the density and location of the major uses of the Carlton Gardens. The site became familiar to me during the observation process. I am aware of the Children’s Playground in the North Garden and its popularity, but I did not realise that it is the most intensively used space until I compared it with the other patterns made and observed. The middle ground between Royal Exhibition Building and Melbourne Museum usually appeared to be empty to me, until the pattern of people entering Melbourne Museum was revealed by the mapping. I consequently understand how intensively it is used, and the short length of time that people normally stay there.

These emerging patterns also allow me to better understand the qualities of each subspace. People tend to sit on the grass, where there is some shade provided by the canopy, and close to the water features. Sport facilities create opportunities for special programs such as basketball and tennis playing. The north-east corner of the middle ground is occupied by a group of board-skaters, and the car-park on the west frontage of the Royal Exhibition Building has been used on one occasion for bike-polo. The activity of photography is primarily located along the central axes in front of the Royal Exhibition Building and in the middle ground, where the two large buildings are juxtaposed.

From an urban designer’s perspective, these activity patterns are essential in terms of understanding the meaning of the landscape as an urban public-space. The relationship between the Carlton Gardens and its daily users is continuously established and confirmed through these humble everyday activities and events. Some of the activities are facilitated and supported by the new interventions. The Melbourne Museum as a new cultural institute brings a great number of visitors to the site. The existing children’s playground and basketball court accommodate the current needs of the surrounding communities, but at the same time the presence of these interventions reshape the historic fabric of the garden. I, in addition, wonder how deeply the conservation authorities consider and value these new interventions and the activities they accommodate. This research investigation is conducted through a review of the Carlton Gardens Master Plan and the conservation principles suggested by the three international conservation charters, and which is discussed in the following section.
2.2 The Carlton Gardens Master Plan and Conservation Charters

Authenticity was initially defined by the World Heritage Committee in 1977 and was revised in 1980, 1994 and 2005. It was in 2005, a crucial year for the definition, that it was revised in principle. The World Heritage’s nomination of the Carlton Gardens occurred in 2002, with the inclusion of the site on the World Heritage list in 2004, and with the Master Plan’s completion in 2005. As a result, the 1994 definition of authenticity was applied in the nomination and evaluation of Carlton Gardens in order to be included on World Heritage list.

In the 1994 version of Operational Guideline for Implementation of World Heritage Convention, cultural heritage was required to ‘meet the test of authenticity in design, materials, workmanship or setting (the Committee stressed that reconstruction is only acceptable if it is carried out on the basis of compete and detailed documentation on the original and to no extent on conjecture).’ (p.5).

The highlighting of design, materials, workmanship and setting suggests authenticity is based on the substantiality of its materials and their placement. Supporting this, is the description of a material-bound approach to authenticity (Cameron, 2008). My critique of the physically oriented interpretation of authenticity takes a similar position, in agreement with, as in the case of Carlton Gardens, the use of the term authenticity found in the evaluation document of Carlton Gardens as a World Heritage Site produced by ICOMOS. The document doubted the degree of authenticity of the site due to the construction of the new Melbourne Museum (ICOMOS, 2004): ‘If the site had been successfully inscribed some years ago, it would have been difficult to justify an intervention of this magnitude. On the positive side, it could be argued that the new Museum adds to the vitality of the site. However in terms of authenticity of the whole ensemble, the new building detracts from the setting of the Royal Exhibition Building and removes part of the north gardens.’ (p.23).
For the gardens, ICOMOS had the following arguments (ICOMOS, 2004): ‘In the grounds, it is not possible to say that what is there now is a complete reflection of the decorative scheme from the great exhibition period. Much detail has been lost (such as the iron cast fencing), some features have not survived (such as the parterres to the south) and perhaps most significantly a large part of the north garden has been covered by the new Melbourne Museum. This large new building...is one of the problematic aspects of this nomination.’(p.22).

However, from an urban designer’s perspective, the act of eliminating these details (cast iron fencing and parterres) attains a social significance. Removing the fence enhanced public accessibility and indicates a safer urban environment as the fence was used for security reasons (City of Melbourne, 1984); simplifying the parterres reduced maintenance costs but is also typical of landscape improvements when planting materials die. Furthermore, the Melbourne Museum is a new civic building for the city, which draws an increasing number of visitors and provides different ways of public engagement with this historic place. This view contrasts to the ICOMOS evaluation that considers these social values as inauthentic.

A series of planned actions have been carried out since the Carlton Gardens Master Plan was completed, and which gradually have responded to some of the authenticity issues that the ICOMOS review had raised. The parterre in front of the Royal Exhibition Building was restored in 2009 (Gadd, 2009) (Fig.2.4), and the restoration of the west side of the building’s frontage was completed in 2010. (Fig.2.5).
Figure 2.4: Restored parterres in front of the Royal Exhibition Building

Figure 2.5: Restored west frontage of the Royal Exhibition Building
The Outstanding Universal Value of the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens as World Heritage is described as (UNESCO world Heritage Centre, 2004): ‘The Royal Exhibition Building and the surrounding Carlton Gardens, as the main extant survivors of a Palace of Industry and its setting, together reflect the global influence of the international exhibition movement of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The movement showcased technological innovation and change, which helped promote a rapid increase in industrialisation and international trade through the exchange of knowledge and ideas.’ The recognition of the site as a reflection of the international movement identified by the World Heritage Centre suggests the social significance of the particular events (the international exhibitions of 1880 and 1888) is more essentially relevant, than its aesthetic values. I propose this recognition of social value leads to strategies beyond the preservation of physical fabrics as in the Carlton Gardens Master Plan.

The Carlton Gardens Master Plan was prepared by the City of Melbourne (City of Melbourne, 2005) and its most important objective is ‘to ensure the Carlton Gardens are managed in accordance with their heritage significance’ (p.4). The Master Plan’s vision is: ‘The Carlton Gardens will be the living setting for the world significant Royal Exhibition Building and reflect the historical, cultural and social aspirations of late nineteenth century - Marvelous Melbourne. The Gardens will be a treasured recreational space, contributing significantly to Melbourne’s public domain.’ (p.4).

My review of the Master Plan specifically investigates the city council’s position in terms of contemporary uses, and the interventions occurring within, that are revealed to be important from my activity patterns. At the same time, a series of conservation principles provided by the international conservation charters were also reviewed in relation to the Master Plan’s interpretation and appropriation, in relation to Carlton Gardens’ specific condition. The Master Plan referred to the Australian ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter), as a set of conservation principles. (City of Melbourne, 2005), (p.10). The Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS, 1999) was produced by ICOMOS Australia in regard to specific cultural contexts. In the following discussion, I also refer to the principles of the Venice and Florence Charters, as a suitable reference to Carlton Gardens’ heritage typology, and furthermore examine
how these principles are used and what their limitations are. The International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, also known as the Venice Charter (ICOMOS, 1964), is one of the most influential conservation charters. Although it was produced specifically for architectural monuments, some of its principles have been widely referred to by conservation professionals and later conservation charters. The Florence Charter (1981) was produced specifically for the conservation of historic gardens.

The general recommendations of the conservation in Carlton Gardens Master Plan focus on the maintenance and restoration of historic features from the key period of its significance, defined as 1880-1901 (City of Melbourne, 2005), ‘which covers both structures and events recognized as being of international, national and state importance.’ (p.10). Some of the lost physical features are proposed to be restored and enhanced in the Master Plan: ‘To conserve the landscape and structures remaining from the period of major heritage significance, (between 1880 and 1901) in form and character by preservation or restoration, where practicable’; and ‘To restore or reconstruct, where appropriate and practicable, damaged and altered structures or hard or soft landscape elements that were significant to the design of the Carlton Gardens and Royal Exhibition Building forecourts between 1880 and 1991’; and ‘To further investigate the feasibility of reintroducing some missing features of the period of significance, such as sections of the original fence and gates where this assists in the understanding and interpretation of the site.’ (p.11).

These conservation actions tend to arrest the site in a particular designated period of significant between 1880 and 1901. In Article 3.1, the Burra Charter suggests (Australia ICOMOS, 1999): ‘Conservation is based on a respect for existing fabric, use, associations and meanings. It requires a cautious approach of changing as much as necessary but as little as possible.’ It is clear that the Burra Charter agrees that necessary change should be allowed but it has to be as little as possible. In the Master Plan, the focus is not on the existing but what had existed in the designated time period. In Article 1.2 regarding cultural significance, the Burra Charter suggests: ‘Cultural significance may change as a result of the continuing history of the place.’ The continuation of a history is recognised, but the conservation actions generally attempt
to stop this continuation through minimising changes and new fabric proposals. The Burra Charter itself recommends changes should be minimal in Article 7.2: ‘New use of a place should involve minimal change, to significant fabric and use; should respect associations and meanings; and where appropriate should provide for continuation of practices which contribute to the cultural significance of the place.’ The Venice Charter has similar requirements that new uses should involve minimal change, Article 5 states (ICOMOS, 1964): ‘The conservation of monument is always facilitated by making uses of them for some socially useful purpose. Such use is therefore, desirable but it must not change the lay-out or the decoration of the building’.

The requirement/principle of minimising change is demonstrated by the Master Plan: ‘To ensure that no new structures (including monuments or memorials) are permitted in the Carlton Gardens unless specified in this plan, are replacements of existing structures, or are required for management of the Carlton Gardens (for example new lighting).’ (p.11).

More specific action is proposed in the Master Plan as followings:

‘That the existing playground facilities should be retained and consolidated with no increase in area in the short term. However, their replacement in the longer term with a new playground in a less visually intrusive area of the garden should be investigated…if an alternative site for basketball becomes available…then the half basketball court should be removed.’ (p.17).

According to the activity patterns introduced earlier, the children’s playground and basketball court are the most intensively used spaces, which arguably indicate they are very popular spaces of the garden (Fig. 2.6). This especially applies to the children’s playground as its visual connection with the museum (Fig. 2.7). It has been carefully designed and its current location is convenient both for the nearby school and other school children that visit the Museum. However, these features may be removed in the future because they apparently visually disturb the historic fabric of the designated period. As an urban designer who regards people’s uses, activities and their everyday life-patterns as the most important factors to be considered in design, I believe this approach and decision to preserve the landscape as a
museum-object should be reviewed. In support of this argument, the Venice Charter proposes a similar approach. In its regard to a monument’s setting, in this case, the Carlton Gardens as the setting of Royal Exhibition Building, Article 6 of the Charter emphasises that: ‘The conservation of a monument implies preserving a setting which is not out of scale. Wherever the traditional setting exists, it must be kept. No new construction, demolition or modification which would alter the relations of mass and colour must be allowed.’ However I argue that the current North Garden should be regarded as the setting for the immediately adjacent new Melbourne Museum, rather than the Royal Exhibition Building. The new children’s playground visually and programmatically supports the new Museum building. To remove the playground seems to be a pointless exercise.

Figure 2.6: Activity pattern in the Children’s Playground and basketball court
Figure 2.7: Visual connection between the playground and the museum
In terms of temporary uses and events, the Master Plan recognizes the cultural outcome of large public event such as the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS), accommodated in the South Garden since 1996. The Master Plan claimed the event is ‘compatible with the World Heritage listing of the Gardens and was recognized in the submission for World Heritage listing as a modern-day expression of the international exhibitions of the late nineteenth century.’ (p.16).

In the Burra Charter, Article 7.2 required: ‘A place should have a compatible use’ and further suggests: ‘The policy should identify a use or constraints on uses that retain the cultural significance of the place.’ The Master Plan specifically claims the flower show is compatible with the World Heritage status but doesn’t support other possible large events: ‘That no commercial event that requires exclusive occupation of any part of the Carlton Gardens (other than MIFGS) should be permitted in the Gardens unless such an event specifically relates to the World Heritage Status of the site.’(p.17).

This suggests the city council remains conservative in terms of large events due to the fact they may detract from the tranquil atmosphere (Fig.2.8). Similar concern can been seen in the Florence Charter regarding large public event, as Article 19 suggests: ‘By reason of its nature and purpose, a historic garden is a peaceful place conducive to human contracts, silence and awareness of nature. This conception of its everyday use must contrast with its role on these rare occasions when it accommodates a festivity. Thus, the conditions of such occasional use…should be clearly defined, in order that any such festivity may itself serve to enhance the visual effect of the garden instead of preventing or damaging it.’ The visual effect of an event is particularly emphasised, which potentially indicates again that the physical features are the most important aspects of heritage conservation for historic gardens.
In general, the current Carlton Gardens Master Plan attempts to arrest the landscape in the designated significant period of 1880 to 1901. A series of proposals of maintaining, restoration and reintroducing physical features from that period and eliminating new interventions indicate a conservation approach that maintain the landscape as a staged static environment. This approach is supported by the conservation principles that highlight physical and visual features of the site provided by the conservation charters. Compared to the Venice Charter and the Florence Charter, the Burra Charter recognises that new uses may provide a cultural continuation of the place’s significance, which illustrates the recognition of the intangible values beyond the physical fabric. The use, associations and meanings as intangible elements are recognised, but somehow the definitions of association and meaning remain vague. According to Article 1.15, association means the special connections that exist between people and a place. The special connection seems to be the relationship between people and the place, but it doesn’t offer recommendations to clarify and define this relationship. Article 1.16 states ‘meanings denote what a place signifies, indicates, evokes or expresses’. However, understanding
meaning varies between different value systems, generations, and social groups. In addition this Article is unspecific and generalises on the complexity of various meanings for a heritage site. As the Charter itself suggests in Article 1.2: ‘Place may have a range values for different individuals or groups.’ As an example, the historical appearance of Carlton Gardens’ North Garden is meaningful to historians and policy makers, whereas in comparison the playground and basketball court are meaningful to children and teenagers as part of their everyday life. This is a conflicting situation: whose meaning shall we conserve? In the specific case of the children’s playground, the meaning and value of everyday use is compromised in the Master Plan. Furthermore, do designers need to select one meaning over another? Is there a possibility of having an inclusive heritage from both perspectives in such situations?

The principles of the conservation charters are interpreted specifically in the Carlton Gardens Master Plan. From the research I notice the limitation of these principles in terms of taking contemporary values into account, as well as identifying and accommodating multiple meanings and recognising in additional the intangible attributes. In a critique of these principles I question whether these missing points are able to be addressed by an urban designer, which leads me to my first design experiment for the Carlton Gardens.
2.3 Initial Design Experiment for the Carlton Gardens

My first design for the Carlton Gardens was a redesign of the open middle-ground between the Royal Exhibition Building and the Melbourne Museum. My major concern at this time is the physical disconnection between the South Garden and the North Garden (Fig. 2.9). After the construction of the Melbourne Museum, the large space between the two buildings became a hard-surfaced plaza. I attempted to reconnect the South and North Gardens by putting a grassed area between the two buildings in order to create a more consistent ground surface. This literally put the park/garden back in-between the two buildings, this design reinstated the traditional garden material to create a sense of a garden.

Figure 2.9: Area of first design proposition
The Melbourne Museum becomes the major concern in the design, as I analyse the activity patterns, I discover this central space is used by a majority of visitors to access the Melbourne Museum. (Fig.2.10). Visitors would also access the museum after visiting the South Garden and in addition there are a number of cyclists passing across the ground. (Fig.2.11). Tram-users would access the museum from the east side of the ground from the tram-stop on Nicholson Street. School-children often enter the building from the west-side of the ground as the school buses stop on adjacent Rathdowne Street. The IMAX cinema is located on the west-side of the Museum and some visitors on occasions use the seats nearby the cinema entrance. (Fig.2.12).

Figure 2.10, 2.11: Major movement of the intervention area

Entering/leaving Melbourne Museum

Cycling

Figure 2.10, 2.11: Major movement of the intervention area
Figure 2.12: Existing conditions of the intervention area
The pathways are laid out to maintain the existing users’ movement of accessing Melbourne Museum and passing through on foot. A turf-surface reclaims the ground’s past as part of the North Garden and provides a garden setting not only for the Royal Exhibition Building but also for the Melbourne Museum. In addition a turf-surface has the potential to enhance some of the existing activities; for instance, a soft-surface creates opportunities for children to play and rest while they are waiting to access the Museum. Grass reduces the heat of the existing pavement, and potentially some existing everyday activities of the South Garden and North Garden could be shifted to this location. (Fig.2.13).

Figure 2.13: Plan and activities of the proposed design
To attract more everyday activities to this particular spot, as it is meaningful to me as the spot where the past and present are contrasted through the juxtaposition of the Royal Exhibition Building and the Melbourne Museum. The design attempts to create a stage where the past and present meet. The contrast between the past and present can be experienced through the users’ everyday activities, rather than them being sidelined (Fig. 2.14). This gesture differs from that in the Carlton Gardens Master Plan, which attempts to present a staged environment of one particular period between 1880 and 1901.

Figure 2.14: Encouraging more daily activities at this particular spot, where the contrast of the past and present is substantially visible may stimulate a different and additional understanding of the site.
This design’s gesture introduces both past and present to the users, instead of advocating a particular period of time, regards the landscape as a process rather than a museum object. The Carlton Garden Master Plan suggests that reintroducing some missing features, such as ‘fences and gates’ from the designated time-period, may assist in the understanding and interpretation of the site. (para 7, p.11). I argue that introducing both past and present assist in the more comprehensive understanding of the place’s continuing history.

This design doesn’t attempt to restore the decorative features to the west and east forecourts of the Royal Exhibition Building. Rather, it considers the need for adjacent ground floor car-parks to accommodate the large exhibitions held in the building. The existing fountain and garden beds of the east forecourts are removed. This act addresses functional concerns rather than the physical aspects of the site.

My early concerns about contemporary values and intangible attributes are addressed in this design through shifting and enhancing some existing everyday activities in the garden. The gesture of shifting some everyday activities from the South and North Gardens, where the historic features are dominant, into the middle ground where the historic and contemporary buildings juxtapose, proposes a view that the site can be understood in different ways. This gesture of staging, both past and present, addresses my understanding that both landscape and history are a work in progress, which differs from the gesture of a staging in one particular period, as referenced in the Carlton Gardens Master Plan. The public use, appreciation and understanding of the place, can be enhanced by the design interventions that explore the potential, or take advantage of the existing activity-patterns, and was my initial design proposition for the historic urban landscape. In my later designs, I always came back to these activity-patterns, asking myself how the new design had been shifted, changed or enhanced by them.

However, as stated in the introduction, to justify the relationship between the new intervention and the authenticity of the site is a difficult task. How should I justify the design’s relation to the authenticity of the place? Is there an alternative interpretation of authenticity, one that is open to new interventions, as shown in my design?
The following discussion focuses on the concept of authenticity. How the Carlton Gardens Master Plan and the conservation charters address a particular interpretation of authenticity, and how this concept has been defined differently since the Master Plan was completed, and is further elaborated upon. At the same time, my hypothesis of an alternative interpretation of authenticity, and the latest definition of authenticity, is discussed.
2.4 The Physically Oriented interpretation of Authenticity, and the Challenge of the Nara Document on Authenticity

Conservation is fundamentally a series of acts undertaken in order to conserve a place’s authenticity. In the review of the Carlton Gardens Master Plan, the international charters, and their definitions of authenticity, there is a clear illustration of the current conservation agenda. Similarly, in the conventional cultural heritage conservation agenda the theoretical concept of the authenticity has been defined by the conservation authorities of both UNESCO and ICOMOS. The international conservation charters including the Venice Charter, the Florence Charter and the Burra Charter, all provide principles and policies that can be used for guidance in maintaining a site’s authenticity. In addition these principles are encouraged to be interpreted at a local level and specifically, in regarding a site’s particular condition, as in the Carlton Gardens’ Master Plan.

Through the emphasis on physical fabric, visual effects and minimal changes in the conservation principles used in Carlton Gardens Master Plan (discussed earlier), a physically oriented interpretation of authenticity remains embedded. The interpretive actions incorporated within the Master Plan are guided primarily by the conservation charters. The Venice Charter and Florence Charter on the whole support this physically-oriented interpretation of authenticity in their conservation principles. The Burra Charter has recognized some intangible/non-material attributes such as ‘use, associations and meanings’. However, when it comes to the interpretation supported in the Carlton Gardens Master Plan, the particular meanings relate mainly to the single designated period of significance in addition to giving the physical features a priority.

As introduced in Chapter 1, the definition of authenticity was fundamentally changed when the Nara Document on Authenticity was published. In this document, authenticity is considered as a complex notion with six aspects or a ‘great variety of sources of information’ as described in Article 13 (1994): ‘Depending on the nature of the cultural heritage, its cultural context, and its evolution through time, authenticity judgments may be linked to the worth of a great variety of sources of information. Aspects of the sources may include form and design, materials and
substance, use and function, traditions and techniques, location and setting, and spirit
and feeling, and other internal and external factors. The use of these sources permits
elaboration of the specific, artistic, historic, social, and scientific dimensions of the
cultural heritage being examined.'

My initial interest in this definition of authenticity began with a concern about the
limitations of the materials-bound approach to authenticity among conservation
experts. An expert conference was held in Nara, Japan, in 1994 and the Nara
Document on Authenticity was the outcome of the conference. There are a number of
papers of particular interest at the conference and its new definition of
authenticity (Cameron, 2008, Balen, 2008, Jones, 2010, Jerome, 2008). This definition
clearly states that authenticity is not just about tangible or physical aspects of the
cultural heritage site, (design, material and location etc.), but also its intangible
aspects, (use, traditions and spirit). This understanding was uniquely informed by
examples of reconstruction of Japanese temples (Grover and Orbasli, 2007, p.71),
which are accurately rebuilt after a certain period of time, using traditional building
techniques. It is argued that the rebuilding is a part of a Japanese tradition as a cultural
practice (World Heritage Committee, 1999). This continuous rebuilding process and
the craftmanship are considered more essential than the original form, design and the
material. However, although the World Heritage Centre adopted this particular definition
of authenticity in 2005, the long-existing physically oriented approach of authenticity is
still embodied in conservation strategies and influences much of the decision making.
This mindset has long-existed in conventional conservation, reaching its peak in 2009,
when the Cultural Landscape Elbe Valley in Dresden, Germany was de-listed from the
World Heritage list due to the construction of a new bridge alongside (UNESCO World
Heritage Centre, 2009). The site is described as ‘an outstanding cultural landscape
that integrates the celebrated baroque setting and suburban garden city into an artistic
whole within the river valley’. The result was the World Heritage Committee ‘decided
that plans to build a bridge across the Elbe would have such a serious impact on the
integrity of property’s landscape that it may no longer deserve to be on the World
Heritage List’ (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2006). In 2008, the Committee
suggested the construction of a tunnel instead of the bridge (UNESCO World Heritage
Centre, 2008a) and urged the authorities again to stop the construction of the bridge
(UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2008b). In this case, authenticity was sidelined and the Committee argued the integrity of the site was being seriously impacted.

What I found particularly problematic, even dangerous in the proposals, is the implied belief that conservation is arresting the progress of a landscape in a particular time, which disregards my contention that urban heritage is actually a process rather than a static object. Another issue is the emphasis on the physical preservation (or period restoration), one that disregards the more intangible including many present day aspects, such as new functions, events and multiple creative uses. What conservation should do is tie, or reinforce any existing bonds on the site to its community, rather than isolating the site from its social context. The paradox of Carlton Gardens’ Master Plan is that the physical feature seems to be preserved, but an intangible bond is arguably weakened through the attempt to eliminate contemporary facilities. My later design experiments assisted me in understanding this effect in a more meaningful way. A heritage status listing may increase both a sense of pride in the community, and in addition be used by local authorities for promotional reasons. I argue the essential bond between the place and the people is not the only rightful claim to authenticity, but includes also the variety of the possibilities it offers to contemporary life. This is especially true for historic urban landscapes as they carry not only historic values, but play many roles as living organs of our contemporary cities, such as urban parks, green spaces, event spaces, commercial and living spaces that construct and enrich the multiple meanings of the place.

I posit that there should be a more comprehensive approach in which contemporary uses are integrated with urban heritage conservation. This approach should suggest a different understanding of authenticity. In other words, if period reconstruction cannot deal with the merging conditions arising from the dynamic landscape and urban morphology, what are alternative approaches and how are they better suited to deal with flux? The new definition of authenticity informed by the Nara Document on Authenticity seems to open the door to this speculation. The following Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 will examine a range of design experiments informed by this definition.
References


ICOMOS (1964) International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter). ICOMOS.


Chapter 3 Layered Authenticity

Content:

3.1 The Conceptual Diagram and an Hypothesis of Layered Authenticity

3.2 Three Conceptual Designs for Carlton Gardens

3.3 Morphology Observation in Shishahai Area

3.4 Early Design Experiments: Shishahai Area

3.5 Discussions
3.1 The Conceptual Diagram and an Hypothesis of Layered Authenticity

In Chapter 2, the critiques of, and the conservational approach to, arresting the landscape in a particular timeframe, and the physically oriented interpretation of authenticity embodied in this approach, motivated me to search for an alternative interpretation of authenticity. I hypothesised that this interpretation may enlighten the conservational approach to take intangible aspects and contemporary values into account, as well as be more open to the role of new interventions. The current definition of authenticity by the World Heritage Committee, adopted in 2005 from the Nara Document on Authenticity, takes a comparable position to the interpretation I hypothesised: ‘Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, properties may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural value (as recognized in the proposed nomination criteria) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including: form and design; materials and substance; use and function; traditions, techniques and management systems; location and setting; language, and other forms of intangible heritage; spirit and feeling; and other internal and external factors.’ (UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 2005), (p.21).

In this definition, the tangible attributes of form and design, materials and substance, location and setting, compared to the intangible aspects of use and function, traditions, techniques and management systems, spirit and feeling, are all equally recognised. This recognition differs from the physically-oriented interpretation in that the central emphasises is on the tangible attributes. For my case studies, these attributes are conceptualised as a series of overlapped layers that collectively construct the landscape.

The question is how does this interpretation of authenticity inform an alternative conservational approach, beyond a physically oriented preservation. Does this interpretation suggest a non-physical conservation approach? How can this layered authenticity be applied to inform the decision-making and implementation within conservation? I speculated that the degree of authenticity might be measurable through
evaluating the degree of each layer’s authenticity and reflect on them collectively.

Figure 3.1: Authenticity Diagram

A conceptual diagram of layered authenticity is illustrated (Fig.3.1). It examines the argument that authenticity is the combination of both tangible and intangible layers; the six layers consisting of form and design, materials and substance, location and setting, use and function, traditions and techniques, and spirit and feeling are illustrated. (Fig.3.1). It shows in addition the four degrees to which each layer can be evaluated or classified, as weak, low, medium and strong. A shaded area is formed in the process: the connection of the evaluated degree is applied to each layer, and represents the degrees of authenticity (Fig. 3.2).
Figure 3.2: The Degrees of Authenticity are revealed in the shaded areas formed by an evaluation on each layer.

With reference to this conceptual diagram, my hypothesis was expanded to: if the physical fabric (tangible layers) of the site change, and this physical change facilitates or maximises the function or other intangible layers, then the overall degrees of authenticity can be still maintained.

As a consequence, the three designs were developed for Carlton Gardens in order to test this speculation. These designs all involved different degrees of physical change, and each was evaluated in turn by the authenticity diagram. Through this experiment, issues concerning the application of this diagram were uncovered, and the complexity of the layered authenticity was examined, and is illustrated in the following Chapter 3.2.
3.2 Three Conceptual Designs for Carlton Gardens

The three designs are named as maximal design, medium design and minimal design according to the different degrees of physical change, particularly in reference to the South Garden in the Carlton Gardens. (Fig.3.3). The existing landscape in the South Garden consists of a curved symmetrical layout of pathways, which was initially designed for the 1880-1881 exhibition, hosted at the Royal Exhibition Building. ‘The South Garden is, therefore, a rare example in Melbourne of a public park being laid out en-suite with a major public building, and the overall design remains surprisingly intact today.’ (City of Melbourne, 1984). A range of physical features such as parterres, pathways and trees are preserved as an example of what existed in the designated period of significance (1880-1901) and required by the Carlton Gardens Master Plan. I concluded in my critique that the Master Plan’s attempts to preserve the landscape was one that simply supported landscape as a staged environment and museum object. The physical changes were designed in particular for the South Garden, as a way to explore possible options other than those proposed in the Master Plan.

Figure 3.3: The Existing Landscape in the South Garden
The particular impact on authenticity is evaluated in the conceptual diagram of layered authenticity, referenced earlier. The major purpose of developing these three design concepts is not to produce a perfect solution, but to test how six authenticity layers define the degrees of authenticity simultaneously. Consequently the assumption, that a conservational approach is in opposition to a physically oriented approach, is in need of being tested.

3.2.1 Design Descriptions

The maximal design change occurs when the existing layout of pathways and the topography of the garden are transformed into a terraced landscape. The curved symmetrical layout of the pathways is replaced by a series of straight pathways providing more efficient circulation, through a more direct connection to the surrounding streets. (Figs.3.4, 3.5).
Figure 3.4: New Major Pathways in Maximal Design

Figure 3.5: Total Connectivity to the Surrounding City Streets in the Maximal Design
The natural slope of the garden is reshaped to form flat terraced surfaces in order to maximise its capacity as an outdoor exhibition space, (Figs.6,7), which echoes and reinforces the Royal Exhibition Building’s long tradition as an exhibition venue. The Royal Exhibition Building is recognised and ‘has retained authenticity of function, continuing to be used for its original purpose of exhibitions and displays even today.’ (Environment Australia, 2002), (p.7). I argue that expanding the exhibition space into the landscape reinforces the traditional use of the site.

Figure 3.6: The Topography is Transformed to provide even-surfaces to facilitate more outdoor exhibitions
Figure 3.7: The Existing and Proposed Terraced Landscape in the South Garden
The most significant change occurs at the central axis on the Royal Exhibition Building frontage, where single pathways replace the grand double pathways. Digital screens providing vivid backgrounds for each differing outdoor exhibitions and event, and cover the retaining walls shaped by the new topography. (Figs. 3.8,3.9).

Figure 3.8: The New Single Pathway at the Central Axis and the Animated Retention Walls
Figure 3.9: The Outdoor Events at the Central Axis
The medium design keeps the existing layout of the garden, but changes part of the South Garden’s lawns into a paved surface to provide a larger space for more frequent public events. The trees along the central axis are removed and new trees are planted around the paved plaza. (Figs. 3.10,3.11).

Figure 3.10: The Proposed New Plaza at the Central Axis
Figure 3.11: The Existing Landscape and Proposed Plaza
The minimal design proposes the arrangement of a series of temporary events, located at different locations in the gardens, with no permanent designed intervention. (Figs. 3.12, 3.13).

Figure 3.12: Exhibition at the eastern side of Melbourne Museum

Figure 3.13: Exhibition in South Garden fronting the Royal Exhibition Building
3.2.2 Evaluating Designs through a Conceptual Diagram of Layered Authenticity

The authenticity diagram is used to evaluate the three designs and compare them with the existing landscape. The central vista from the South Garden towards the Royal Exhibition Building is selected to exemplify the impact of physical and functional change in the degrees of authenticity. This vista is one of the most important scenes of the garden and described as: ‘of the most imposing was the double avenue from Victoria Parade, which was planted with planes. Today, in their maturity, these trees provide a superb vista to the fountain and dome which has become something of a tourists’ image of the garden and Melbourne itself.’ (City of Melbourne, 1984),(p.60). The collages and the authenticity diagrams for the three scenarios are compared in Fig.3.14.
Figure 3.14: The Central Axis of Minimal, Medium and Maximal designs, and the Authenticity Diagrams
The minimal intervention doesn’t involve any physical change to the existing landscape, but the layers of form and design, material and substance appear to be as strong as the existing landscape features. The layer of use and function is evaluated as strong due to the programmatic intervention that provides new opportunities for public engagement in this location. The existing landscape has a strong sense of history with the mature trees, symmetrical layout of the pathways and the Royal Exhibition Building, all indicating a great age. The enclosed canopies of the trees provide a natural ceiling for the proposed events in the garden. The proportion and scale, height and volume of the trees, the wide double avenue as well as the large volume of the Royal Exhibition Building, as viewed together, provide a sense of grandeur rather than one of intimacy. The landscape setting with its historic layout and the building are compatible in terms of style, with the mature trees indicating the age of the garden. Together they provide a strong sense of stepping back into the past with the layering of spirit and feeling appearing to be strong.

The medium intervention removes the existing trees along the double avenue and new trees are planted around the newly paved plaza. The removal of the existing trees appears to have strong impact on the form and design of the Gardens. Although there is the loss of the height and volumes provided by the large trees along the avenue, the layout is maintained, but the vista is significantly weakened. The paved plaza enhances the proposed use and function as an exhibition space. However, without tree canopies and lawns, the temperature on the ground may be increased significantly in sunny weather. Rather than attracting activities and events to this area, the high temperature on the paved plaza would shift the existing activities to other parts of the garden. The layering and multiplicity of use and function is significantly reduced, with the physical changes also impacting upon the layering of the spirit and of feeling. Without the trees along the avenue and the lawns, the South Garden appears to be empty and awkwardly composed, leaving the dome of the Royal Exhibition Building standing alone above the remaining tree canopies below. The sense of a garden, enhanced by physically cooler temperatures, fresh smells, colours and volumes from the planting, is significantly reduced.
The layers of form and design appear to be strong in the maximal design, in spite of the symmetrical layout changing to a range of new axes and the double avenue being replaced by a single avenue, the central axis is still strongly emphasised by the retention of the large trees. The more even pavement surface and the animated retention walls facilitate the operation of outdoor exhibitions, with the retention of the lawns accommodating the existing activities. But those activities attracted to the historic features of the garden, (photography or ceremonial events such as a wedding) may be reduced. Overall, the layering of use and design still appears to be strong, although the sprit and feeling are changed in this design. The unsymmetrical axes, the sharp cut of the landscape’s topography and the animated retention walls address the more functional concerns, rather than any decorative ones. The presence of twenty-first century digital screens contrast strongly with the historic nineteenth century Royal Exhibitions Building. Arguably, an appreciation of the length and depth of historic time difference is developed through this visual contrast.
3.2.3 Reflection

Through analysing the design experiments’ impact on the six authenticity layers, the various qualities/attributes of each layers, and the complex relationship among these layers, are better understood. These authenticity layers are interrelated and co-exist, and cannot be viewed or understood separately. For instance, the trees in the case of Carlton Gardens belong to both the layer of form and design, as well as the layer of material and substance. It also appears that once a particular layer is changed, a series of chain reactions occur in the other layers. In the medium design, once the trees are removed from the double avenue, not only is the layer of material and substance reduced, but also is the layer of form and design. The central vista, an important part of the layer of form and design, is weakened due to the loss of trees that act as an essential vertical reinforcement for the surrounding spatial structure. The intangible layer of spirit and feeling is dramatically reduced due to the loss of the central vista and the planting materials. Meanwhile, the layer of use and function is reduced due to the physical conditions being unsuitable to both the proposed events and the existing activities.

Through analysis, I found there are various qualities and attributes for each particular authenticity layer. Take the layer of use and function as an example, there are a range of activities and uses that need to be taken into account beyond exhibition use. I particularly focused on these activities in my design work, and observed them in my mapping project, activities such as running, sitting, photographing and those events requiring a staged historic background. It may be argued the uses, as shown in the maximal design of the newly designed form of the garden, facilitate exhibitions. Whereas other uses, particularly those facilitated by the historic fabric, such as photography and wedding ceremonies, may be compromised.

I noted that some particular physical elements play a more essential role in terms of their impact, on both the tangible and intangible layers. In the case of the South Garden, the medium design and the maximal design were tested by the action of removing different elements from the existing landscape. In comparing the medium and maximal design, the removal of the avenue of trees has a more significant impact on the central vista, the microclimate, and the users’ experiences of the landscape, than
the removal of any existing ground surface or layout. The central vista, considered an important part of the form and design of the South Garden, is fundamentally changed due to the three-dimensional space becoming a two-dimensional surface. In addition, the removal of the avenue of trees sets up a chain-reaction in the other intangible layers, with the layers of use and function, and of spirit and feeling, with both arguably becoming less significant, than that caused by the removal of the pathways. This finding caused me to speculate that there might be one, or even a range of physical contributors that are more essential than others, and which are apparent at the boundary of any physical change. This speculation is tested by design experiments in the Shishahai Area, which are discussed in a later part of this chapter.

The authenticity diagram should be considered as a conceptual framework, set up to discover various qualities categorised in each of the authenticity layers, rather than using a precise measuring technique in the evaluation of them. This diagram appears to be effective, in terms of visualising the chain reactions occurring in each of the layers, when change happens. It is also useful in comparing different design options, in terms of their impacts, on each of the authenticity layers.

The application of the concept of layered authenticity to investigate various qualities of a large-scale urban landscape is tested in my second case study in the Shishahai Area of Beijing, China. The following Chapter 3.3 starts with an observation of the unique morphology of the Shishahai Area of Beijing. A range of diagrams and drawings illustrate the tangible and intangible qualities at the urban, street and human scale and are examined using the concept of layered authenticity. The site was observed to have separate and distinctive spatial orders on these three scales, although it is argued that the site’s authenticity is impacted upon by current commercial development. These impacts on authenticity are further clarified and extrapolated, at urban, street and human scale, through a series of discussions and diagrams.

In Chapter 3.4, the design propositions are tested at urban, street and human scale to resolve the particular issues arising from the Shishahai Area’s authenticity. The first design proposition offers an alternative to the layout and planning of the commercial redevelopment. The two later designs (Courtyard Pathways and Rooftop Connections) are developed both at street level and at a human scale. They test how
physical change possibly influences the authenticity of the Courtyard-Hutong system. In addition, the understanding of the interrelations co-existing between and within the tangible and intangible authenticity layers, is confirmed. Simultaneously, these two projects support one of the design strategies based on the nature of this particular urban landscape. The strategy is based on the need for a working model to be developed at a human scale, and then for it to be applied at street level and at an urban scale. This strategy pays its respects to the traditional development model of the urban landscape, in which the individual courtyard functions as a cell, and collectively they form the entire landscape into one living organic entity.
3.3 Morphology Observation in Shishahai Area

Shishahai is an historic district located in the northwest of Beijing’s Old City, known for its small laneways named Hutong, which are courtyard dwellings with large waterscapes. (Fig.3.15). The history of the waterscapes can be traced back over 800 years. Originally it began as a natural lake and has been gradually developed for human use since the Yuan Dynasty, (1271-1368). (Beijing Municipal City Planning Commission, 2002). Nowadays, the Shishahai Area is comprised of three interconnected lakes: (Qianhai, Houhai and Xihai - meaning front, back and west lakes respectively), small courtyard dwellings, Hutongs, ancient temples, include large aristocratic mansions and gardens. (Fig.3.16). The area has become an attractive destination in recent years, for both tourists and locals, due to the re-use of the courtyard dwellings, as tea houses, bars, small restaurants, boutiques and a variety of other commercial functions spread out along the length of the waterscape. These developments provide new opportunities for both the locals and tourists to experience the Beijing’s Old City in a specifically different way.

Figure 3.15: Shishahai Area Location Map
Figure 3.16: Three Lakes and Landmarks in the Shishahai Area
The conservation of Beijing’s cultural heritage has been increasing over the last 30 years in terms of conservation of the built-form, scale, and approach due to a rise in public awareness. As one of the great examples of traditional Chinese architecture and urban planning, the heritage values of Beijing’s Old City has been recognised by scholars and urban design practitioners. (Jixiang, 2005). Previously, only the splendid grand architecture and gardens of the Old City were recognised as a cultural heritage, and excluded the seemingly ordinary and even shabby traditional neighbourhoods. As scholars’ and local authorities’ understanding of cultural heritage and the significance of the Old City as an entity expands, more attention is directed towards Beijing’s traditional neighbourhoods. (Wu, 1999). The conservation of these neighbourhoods has received wider public awareness as more and more people regard them as an important representation of Beijing’s local culture. (Beijing Municipal City Planning Commission, 2002). At the same time, the marketing to tourists of Beijing’s traditional neighbourhood has been developing since the 1990s. The Hutong Tour (Hutong is name of the traditional laneway between the courtyard dwelling blocks in Beijing) was initially organised for foreigners to experience the daily life of the Old Beijingers. (Wang, 1997). Hutong and courtyard tourism have a positive influence in terms of helping local people recognise their cultural uniqueness. The seemingly ordinary routine of those living inside these dwellings is considered of interest, and something extraordinary from the outsider’s viewpoint, and has definitely a positive influence in the enhancement of local pride in their vernacular culture. A particular sense of pride is taken in this particular vernacular architecture (courtyard dwellings and Hutongs) in Beijing, and is further stimulated by China’s economic progress that gives the cultural elites, and the new generation, of citizens a strong sense of self-confidence. This confidence leads people to celebrate their traditional culture, and for Beijing in particular, the courtyard dwellings and Hutong are symbols of a traditional lifestyle. As a result, both economic and cultural forces make the conservation of Beijing’s traditional neighbourhoods necessary, from the perspectives of the authorities’, scholars and the ordinary peoples’ viewpoint. As noted in The Conservation Planning of 25 Historic Areas in Beijing Old City, 2002, by the Beijing Municipal Planning Commission. My second case study in the Shishahai Area is located in one of these Conservation Areas.
3.3.1 The Courtyard-Hutong System in Beijing’s Old City and the Distinctive Features of the Shishahai Area

My investigations of the Shishahai Area began by researching Beijing’s traditional Courtyard-Hutong system, and the unique conditions of the Shishahai Area, obtained from academic literature as well as current conservation planning documentation. The unique urban morphology of the Shishahai Area can be explained by its three particular characteristics as follows: the system of enclosures, the hierarchy of open spaces, and the living culture.

The System of Enclosures

The system of enclosures under review is a series of enclosed spaces that exhibit their characteristics at an urban, street and human scale. As a classic example of Chinese architecture and urban planning, Beijing’s Old City has a strong hierarchy of enclosed spaces. From the largest urban structure - the city wall, to the micro-scale of living space - the pavilion of a courtyard house, the urban fabric is constructed with differing scales within these enclosures. The powerful image of a walled city is still dominant through a variety of scales evident within Shishahai’s fabric. The individual courtyard dwelling at its smallest is an enclosure and cell-like, with this system being duplicated and replicated to form the block, which is the enclosure at street scale. These courtyard blocks are divided by small laneways (Hutongs), which function as corridors for the courtyards and provide sufficient circulation space. These Hutongs also function as social spaces that the local community use for a variety of daily private and public activities. These enclosures provide a unique spatial experience; much more than the private spaces of mansions, gardens, temples, and dwellings, as they are hidden in narrow laneways providing an atmosphere of mystery, tranquillity and comfort to visitors. (Fig.3.17). This sense of mystery comes from the particular spatial arrangement of the courtyard dwellings. Walls and pavilions enclose the open spaces of the courtyards with any opening to the outside minimised. This protective arrangement gives little exposure of courtyard-life to the outside environment, and stimulates an outsider’s curiosity to detect what is happening inside. An intimacy and sense of com-
fort arise from the scale of the Hutong. The connected courtyard facades act as a break to any horizontal viewing of the Hutong space, and is where the opportunities to gaze are limited, due to the restricted views when at close quarters. (Greco and Santoro, 2008), forcing them to focus on any immediate activity surrounding them or upwards towards the sky. As most of the dwellings are one-storey, large parts of the sky can be seen creating both a sense of spaciousness and of relaxationation. The low height of the enclosure walls and the narrow width of the Hutong corridors are an important defining quality of this urban fabric. This proportional relationship is distinctive, in comparison to the other traditional laneways in found in the southern province of Jiangsu, in the southern region of China, such as in Suzhou. (Fig.3.18).

Figure 3.17: Systems of Enclosure
What makes the Shishahai area stand out from other historic neighbourhoods is the existence of a spacious waterscape. Three adjacent interconnected lakes allow this area to retain the genuine and natural character of the Hutong, but at the same time present a contrasting view of the large lakes alongside the laneway fabric. When people first enter the area and experience the intimate narrow spaces of a Hutong, they are surprised when suddenly the view expands up as they reach the lake. The natural beauty and pleasant micro-climate of the waterfront area have been attracting local people for several hundred years. (Beijing Municipal City Planning Commission, 2002). For those in contemporary metropolitan areas in Beijing, where a homogenous
international-style architecture is found all around, the location of a human-scale living quarter in the centre of the city is a unique and important reminder of the past, especially when they are exposed to the fast pace of present urban life. The Hutongs and their courtyards still remain a permeable neighbourhood; in which to wander within oases of tranquillity, and where residents find relief from the stress and bustle of the city.

**Hierarchy of Open Spaces**

When analysing the types of enclosure, a separation of the differing qualities experienced in the area occurs, and it arises from its tangible physical and spatial structures, when analysing the hierarchy of open spaces, the usual focus is on intangible qualities such as use, occupation and activities. The open spaces are formed by the surrounding architectural structure, with the local atmosphere being at a micro-scale, and the spatial experiences constructed mainly from the various appropriations embarked upon by the different users. These vary from an intimate courtyard space as the centre of family and neighbourhood life; to the narrow Hutongs and their immediate communities; and finally to the waterfront space that accommodates the more tourist-related activities. The particular spatial hierarchy of the area has contributed to a gradual increase in publicity profiling the courtyard and waterfront area in the Shishahai. (Fig.3.19). As Wu suggested, ‘The hierarchical structure of streets, lanes, courtyards and rooms are structured in such a logical way that privacy increases as the living quarters are approached.’ (Wu, 1999); while emphasising the importance of the spatial -ratio between the open and private space in the area.
Figure 3.19: Hierarchy of Open Spaces
The meeting point of the public and private realms is clearly made in the Hutong. The Hutong acquires its value when understood and viewed as a totality of buildings bound by connecting circulation spaces. Although there may only be a small number of historically and architecturally valuable buildings in good condition in the Hutong; both the older and the rebuilt dwellings retain important features characterising the Hutong; such as their low-height, the pitched roof-scapes and the narrow widths, that are still distinctive to the area. The circulation spaces in the Hutong act as an activity corridor for the courtyard houses, and are constantly in flux due to their shifting role in the facilitation of multiple public and semi-private uses. Varying, from a place for a game of chess or relaxation, to a children’s playground; the use of the laneways enable a large number of people to inhabit small spaces; although as a consequence there is less privacy, but close relationships of the residents are formed. (Fig.3.20).

The previous paragraph illustrates the distinctive physical fabric and spatial structure of the Courtyard-Hutong system in the Shishahai area. At the same time, the activities and occupations conditioned by the physical make-up of the area explained. These associated details contribute to the living culture of the place in the contemporary socio-economic conditions. In addition, this living culture accommodates two groups of users - the resident as insiders, and the consumer as outsiders.
Figure 3.20: Hierarchy of Open Spaces

- Private space—family activities, neighbourhood communication
- Semi-private space—having meal, drinking, chatting, reading newspaper, playing chess, socializing
- Public space—traffic, socializing, Hutong market, tourist activities
**Living Culture**

As suggested by Gu and Ryan, there is growing recognition that the Hutong area represents something that is quintessentially an example of ‘the Urban Chinese’, and therefore protecting the Hutong as a means of retaining a ‘difference’ will help sustain a sense of local place and culture, as well as encourage and attract tourists. (Gu and Ryan, 2008). It is the strong physical nature of the courtyard-Hutong system, that allows the survival of its unique, albeit often disappearing, lifestyle, continually threatened by the modernisation of the old city. With its appropriate and relatively low-density, its intimate scale and inclusion of many of the ‘old Beijinger’ elements, create a sense of comfort and belonging that cannot be found or in modern Beijing; described by Wu as ‘monotonous living environments devoid of identifiable features’. The mixing of public and semi-private occupations afforded by the spaces within the Hutong encourage a high degree of intimacy and comfort.

A term living-culture also includes events and activities that encourage engagement with wider audiences. Traditionally, Shishahai was one of the few urban open-spaces in Beijing’s Old City that ordinary citizens use, and this tradition lasted several feudal Dynasties. It has a long tradition of accommodating local people’s cultural activities, for example, music and oral performances, handcrafts, antiquities, local produce and food markets. (Beijing Municipal City Planning Commission, 2002). Many of these activities have become a part of the living history of the city over many years, and have come to represent the old lifestyle of Beijing in many peoples’ memories. Other seasonal recreational activities such as swimming, fishing, boating and skating still attract local people throughout the year. Not only has the physical form of Shishahai been altered through socio-economic changes, but so too have the cultural activities. The disappearance of certain activities (classic folk-music and performance) is due to the change in culture, lifestyle and values. At the same time, new activities such as Hutong tours, going taking refreshment, leisure activities clubs and bars, and shopping experiences in boutiques, present a dynamic and continuing interrelationship between the site and its people. In Shishahai, although activities have changed generationally, the attachment to place (or the bond between people and place) is sustained by a continuation of the cultural programming. All new visitors may not favour the Beijing Opera and associated folk
performances, and the clubs and cafes may be more favoured than the teahouse, but the relevant and current cultural programmes achieve public engagement with the site.

Figure 3.21: Living Culture in Shishahai Area
3.3.2 Illustrating Shishahai Area’s Qualities Based on the Concept of Layered Authenticity at Urban, Street and Human Scale

Understanding the distinctive features of Shishahai Area, the qualities of the site are illustrated, with reference to the concept of layered authenticity at the urban, street and human scale, in the following diagrams and descriptions.

At an urban scale, both form and design appear to be classified in the spatial/proportional relationship, found among Hutongs narrow circulation system, with its low-rise building blocks and enclosed large waterscape. The use of grey coloured brick as a major building material creates a consistency within the building fabric. The plants displayed in the courtyards and the central waterscape form the main natural elements, with residential and commercial remaining as the major uses and functions. The spirit and feeling at this urban scale can be described as relaxing, tranquil and an inward-looking urban environment, generated by the enclosed physical structure of Courtyard-Hutong system, having as it does a major residential function. There is a contrast between the solitary open views and the hidden large waterscape, with the enclosed narrow Hutong view creating a sense of surprise, when the visitor experiences such sudden and unexpected change. For example, the visitor experience in the Hutong is of a view framed by narrow enclosure, in contrast to the suddenly opened wide vista when the visitor approaches the lake. (Fig.3.22).
Figure 3.22: Open View and Low-rise Buildings along the Waterscape in Shishahai Area
At street scale, form and design mainly are experienced in the connected elevations of the courtyards, which make up a horizontal view of Hutong. The proportional relationship between the width of the Hutong and height of the one-story courtyard elevation is crucial to understanding the Hutong space. In Shishahai Area, the width of Hutong is between 3m and 7m. It is recommended that a one-story building should be no taller than 6 m. (Beijing Municipal City Planning Commission, 2002). As an enclosed structural form, the courtyard house is seen to have limited openings in its exterior boundaries. The limited openings give Hutong an inward-looking and mysterious characteristic. The uses and functions of the Hutong space includes of a range of public and semi-private activities. Currently circulation and tourist activities are the major public activities in the Hutong space. Due to the limited living-space in the courtyards, some daily activities such as eating, playing chess and meeting the neighbours expand outwards into the Hutong space. At the same time, various everyday objects are communally arranged by the residents and contribute to the overall form and design. This informal relationship of activity and objects gives the Hutong an unexpected vivid characteristic. In terms of spirit and feeling, Hutong’s proportions provide both an inward-looking and relaxed feeling, which together with the use of the space for semi-public activities, create a sense of community for the residents. For the visitors, the exposure to and interaction with the residents’ everyday activities and personal objects create a sense of intimacy and sharing. (Fig. 3.23).
Figure 3.23: Tangible and Intangible Qualities at Street-Scale
At human-scale, the enclosed spatial order and the traditional architectural elements are considered to be the major contributors to form and design. Brick, the timber structures and the planting in the courtyards make up the material elements. For the residents, there is a strong sense of privacy created by the enclosed structural walls. At the same time, for the families that share a courtyard house, a strong sense of intimacy is created through their close daily interactions. (Fig.3.24).

Figure 3.24: Tangible and Intangible Qualities at Human-Scale
3.3.3 Issues caused by current commercial development, and the impact on Shishahai Area’s Authenticity

This part of the discourse focuses on the physical and programmatic changes caused by the recent commercial development in several intensively developed spots in Shishahai Area. Residential use has historically been the major part of the Courtyard-Hutong system. The impact of new commercial requirements needs to be investigated and examined. The current commercial developments in Shishahai are concentrated at several locations, (Fig.3.25): Yandaixiejie Lane, Qianhai North (Front Lake North), Houhai South (Back Lake South), Houhai North (Back Lake North) and Hehua Market. By comparing the current commercial and residential Courtyard-Hutong system, to the residential Courtyard-Hutong system, some key issues that I argue will affect the Shishahai Area’s authenticity, are illustrated.

Figure 3.25: Commercial Development Clusters in the Shishahai Area
The Issues at Human Scale - Externalisation of Internal Spaces

The impact of development is shown on each of the converted courtyard dwelling. The courtyard is the basic element and makes up the entire and distinctive urban structure, any physical change to the dwelling is crucial. The major problem, in relation to the new interventions, is the lost externalisation of internal space. As articulated previously, the enclosure of the space is essential and defines the courtyard dwellings of Beijing. The interrelation between the interior and exterior is as important, where the courtyard acts, on the one hand as the most private open space within the Hutong, but on the other is the most communal, in relation to family life. As several locations have become popular entertainment spots, (for example, along the waterfront area), formerly enclosed dwellings have been altered and opened-up towards the lake in a competitive attempt to attract passers-by. By this action, the function of the the internal courtyard becomes redundant, with owners seemingly unable or unwilling to creatively adapt existing internal spaces; this acts in favour of a ‘louder’ commercial approach and a more open frontage, tending towards an arguably more western approach. (Fig.3.26).

As mentioned previously, there is a great misuse of decorative elements in the new interventions. A traditional aesthetic with heritage style elements is favoured. But for me, the essential issue is the externalisation of the courtyard, because it destroys the defining quality of the spatial experience of this architectural typology. As a result this action has caused physical changes to the streetscape - the Hutong spaces.
Figure 3.26: Externalisation of the Courtyard Facade
The Issues at Street-Scale

Although I refer to the scale of this analysis as street-scale, the Hutong is a laneway and not a street regarding the hierarchy of open spaces in Beijing’s Old City. The essential differences are that the Hutong is generally narrow, (but not necessarily narrower than a street) and is enclosed by courtyard dwellings that have very limited outside openings. The term street refers to areas containing other building typologies, and having larger openings and a more public use. The Hutong in Chinese refers to a place primarily residential with associated uses. Meanwhile, the modes of transportation are different between Hutong and street. Hutong is mainly used for predestrains. (Fig.3.27).

As a result of the facades of courtyard dwellings being opened more frequently to public exposure, together with commercial developments concentrating in several particular areas, a transformation of the meaning of “street” to the Hutong from lane into due has occurred, due to the interconnections created by large external openings. It now can be argued that the Hutong has lost its defining feature. The following drawings compare three Hutong elevations involving different degrees of commercial interventions. (Figs.3.28,3.29). Firstly, Yandaixiejie Lane is located in the northwest part of Shishahai Area and is a typical example of over-developed Hutong space. Secondly, Baimixiejie Lane is located in the southwest of Shishahai Area and its major use remains residential. Thirdly, Naluoguxiang Lane is located in Luoguxian Area in Beijing’s Old City. This particular Hutong is selected as an example of mixed residential and commercial Hutong morphology, arguably a more appropriate development model than any existing development model in Shishahai Area.

Figure 3.27: Sectional Analysis of Hutong and Street
Figure 3.28: Different Degrees of Development - Yandaixiejie Lane - Baimixiejie Lane - Naluoguxiang Lane
Figure 3.29: Comparative Diagram of the Hutong Elevations - Yandaixiejie Lane - Baimixiejie Lane - Naluoguxiang Lane
Impact of Tourism on Everyday Life

The tourist value of the Hutong's is widely acknowledged by local government, and consequently tourist-oriented commercial developments were encouraged by the authorities in order to beautify the environment. The enhancement of the environment, such as the provision of more green spaces, additional the addition of facilities, and the attention to of infrastructure, maintenance issues, are all beneficial to both visitors and residents. However, in order to satisfy tourists’ expectations (touristification), many commercial developments ignore the character of the Hutong, which is that which is historic, modest in character and has an internally based aesthetic. Generally developers tend to support design ideas based on views of Chinese or a traditional methods. With this approach many traditional architectural elements have been distorted, creating an aesthetic which in fact neither exists in the present, nor in the did in the past.

In addition many commercial developments have replaced local businesses (which are local economic force) serving the communities, and for example, particularly in the case in Yandaixiejie Lane. Ultimately this has led to an increased cost-of-living and a reduction of daily activities of the residents living around the most intensely developed areas. Another effect of the development is the overlapping of residents’ and tourists’ activities (a shift of occupation pattern) at some of the more popular locations, where crowds of tourists and bar-patrons have taken over areas that used to be used by local residents as social spaces.
3.4 Early Design Experiments: Shishahai Area

3.4.1 Design Proposition 1: A Development Model that utilises interior space and distribution at an urban scale

The current interventions by commercial development are argued to affect both the tangible and intangible qualities of Shishahai Area’s unique morphology and lifestyle. Clearly, the changes to the elevations in the Hutong’s have lessened the charm and uniqueness of its internal focus and its mysterious character. These identifying features of the Hutong have been lost. Indiscernibly, by making use only of the facades of the Hutong area for tourist activities, a distorted experience occurs in the understanding of the Courtyard-Hutong system. The spatial narrative gained from experiencing an enclosed Hutong area, with a small courtyard entrance, cannot be comprehended. Concentrated tourist activities privilege the visitor/consumers’ need and bring a direct economic profit. Nonetheless, the living culture of Shishahai is hosted by both residents as insiders, and visitor/consumers as outsiders. The current developments overwhelmingly favour consumers’ needs, which are affecting and limiting the local residents’ use of the Hutong space for their everyday activities, caused by its increasing occupation by outsiders.

My initial proposals reflected what I considered to be crucial in sustaining the defining features of the site, and highlighting where the potential lies. The residents traditionally utilised the courtyard space and a change of distribution occurred when commercial development encroached. At human and street scale, the major conflict came between ownership of traditional enclosed spaces and a new need for commercial activity. It is where the introversion of the courtyard dwelling offers little or no exposure to the exterior views or streetscape, the reverse of what commercial entrepreneurs prefer when in attract customers and therefore profit. However, if the development model concentrated on utilising the courtyard space, through realigning the openings of the building towards the courtyard, rather than to the Hutong space, the commercial interventions would not only adapt to the existing spatial order with all its attractions, but arguably would also allow visitors to have a more authentic involvement with the interior of the courtyard house as an experience. (Fig.3.30).
Figure 3.30: Proposed Model for utilising the interior space of a courtyard
An alternative approach to the clustering of the uniform commercial interventions could be a distribution or dispersion of such interventions (and particularly those with a variety of functions) throughout Hutong’s dense fabric. This would allow both permeability and the possibility of regeneration of the whole area, rather than solely around its periphery. At the same time it would allow visitors to experience the spatial hierarchy of the urban fabric and explore it through varied and unexpected venues and events.

Figure 3.31: Existing and Proposed Mode of commercial distribution
These proposals were based on my initial concepts at an urban scale, and demonstrate my design propositions for the Shishahai Area. In operation the proposed new interventions are in accord with the area’s traditional physical features and spatial structure. The negotiation between the needs of residents and tourists, and the exploration of the tourist/visitor potential for the whole area, is my key concern. These proposals lack precise detail at human and street scale, but they provide an alternative development model, to resolve the issues caused by the current one.

The following two parts (Chpts. 3.4.2, 3.4.3) will introduce my two later designs that attempt to achieve a successful resolution at the street and human scale. The project, Courtyard Pathway creates a new tourist/visitor route through several courtyards, which is my first attempt to commercialise the courtyard space. The project, Rooftop Elevation tests a way to create more space in a high-density courtyard conditions.
3.4.2 Design Proposition 2: Courtyard Pathways at street scale

The design is of a courtyard pathway, connecting several courtyards by creating a pathway through them. The following the considerations of this design are as follows:

- The courtyard dwelling in the Hutong system is understood to be an inward-looking and enclosed system. The argument for the commercial externalisation of the courtyard has been explained. This design looks for opportunities to commercialise the internal space, rather than the facade. It also questions, to what extent do these new commercial developments affect the residents’ existing everyday life, with reference to the intangible layer of authenticity.

- Many of the existing courtyards are shared by several households in the Shishahai Area due to an increase in population. Much of the residents’ private space is already transformed into semi-private, with the same loss occurring in the Hutong space. Would the courtyard space be better utilised if the internal boundaries between them were removed?

This design proposal addresses my concern for a more arguably authentic courtyard experience - one experiencing the internal spaces of the architecture at a courtyard scale, and one and experiencing the surprises of the Hutong at street scale. From these concerns, a new pathway is proposed across a series of courtyards of a selected block in the Shishahai Area. (Fig.3.32). The walls between the courtyards are removed to allow the enclosures to be shared by people who use the new pathway. (Fig.3.33).
Figure 3.32: Location of Proposed Intervention

Figure 3.33: Removal of a range of walls between the courtyards
The new connection is paved with a particular, identifiable material that can be recognised by external visitors to the Hutongs and waterfront streets. This pathway is expected to shift the conventional visitors’ route and create more opportunities for the public to use the internal spaces. (Figs. 3.34, 3.35).

Figure 3.34: Proposed paving to encourage people to use the inner courtyard space
Figure 3.35: Use-pattern Proposal
On reflection, the fact that this design appeared to be superficial when considered as a simple physical intervention at ground level. The new issues arising from this intervention are:

- The removal of the walls between courtyards may cause conflict between the visitors/tourists and current households, (as no one wants to have a stranger wander into their yard and garden). The character of a courtyard is experienced as an enclosed space, with this proposal the private space is diminished. (Fig.3.36).

- The visitor/tourist won’t simply be attracted to an area because of special paving but by a planned and designed programme of activities. Another problematic aspect of this design is the simplicity of the physical intervention. Any attractions have to be associated with some fundamental need of a visitor/tourist, such as dining, shopping or entertainment.

Although this design did not fulfill my initial intentions, it offered me insights which would assist the further progress with of later design proposals. Primarily, the importance of the enclosed space in each individual courtyard, in relation to the site’s authenticity, have been reinforced. The hierarchy within the enclosed spaces is weakened by the removal of the walls between existing courtyards. The clear spatial order, created by a variety of degrees of privacy, is blurred. Without boundaries, individual buildings associated with these courtyards loose any sense of spatial order. The unique and essential characteristic of this urban landscape should be maintained. Finally, the importance of having a planned and programmatic intervention is supported.
**Figure 3.36: Use-pattern Proposal**

- **Public space in existing Hutongs**

- **Public space expended into courtyards after the intervention**
3.4.3 Design Proposition 3: Rooftop Connections at human scale

The design proposal for rooftop connections explores a way to maximise accessible space in the courtyards. High-density living in a low-rise neighbourhood causes a lack of open space for residents. The plan is to adapt the existing roofscape as a second layer for public or semi-public use. This adaptation can already be found in existing commercial interventions in the Shishahai Area. However, conservation experts in China argue that the pitched roof is one of the most important features of the courtyard, and especially crucial when viewing the neighbourhood from the above. (Wu, 1999). The conservation authority recognises the pitched rooftops are the ‘fifth elevation’ of a courtyard within the existing architectural typology, and suggested (Beijing Municipal City Planning Commission, 2002): ‘the pitched rooftop is considered to be important, especially in the area that could be viewed from the adjacent high landmarks such as the Drum Tower and Bell Tower.’ (p.144). I argue this view is merely limited by visual considerations, and I see the roofscape as an opportunity for new use. This design proposition highlights the potential for adapting the rooftops to new public, or semi-public, space. I selected a small block consisting of four courtyard houses on Qianhai North (front lake north) in order to examine this design proposition. (Fig.3.37).
Figure 3.37: A Block of four courtyards testing the proposition
The proposal is to change some of the existing pitched rooftops to a flat surface, and connect them with an elevated pathway. These rooftops can be used for both existing residents and the business owners. The area of useful public space in the courtyard block is significantly increased. (Fig.3.38, 3.39).

**Existing condition of the selected courtyards**

**Rooftop open space created by new walkways**

*Figure 3.38: Elevated Walkway connecting the roofs for community and commercial use*
Figure 3.39: Elevated Walkway connecting the roofs for community and commercial use
3.4.4 Reflection

The three design propositions are compared to the historic Courtyard-Hutong system, using the authenticity diagram.

The first proposition puts forward an alternative model for commercial development utilising the interior space of the courtyard house. The authenticity diagram illustrates the traditional, existing and proposed courtyard model. (Fig.3.40). With reference to the existing model, I critiqued the current developments that create large openings in the Hutong space, affecting the form and design of the Courtyard-Hutong system, both at human and street scale. At a human scale, openings to the outside detract from the enclosed spatial structures that are an essential part of the form and design. Consequently, the connecting large openings in the courtyard facades transform the form and design of the Hutong into a street typology. My design proposes the new building works open inwards towards the interior (courtyard space), rather than outwards towards the exterior (Hutong space). The existing layers in the form and design should be maintained. In terms of use and function, both models appear to be strong as they accommodate more uses than the traditional courtyard does. The difference lies with the types of human occupation displayed in the two models. In the existing model, the visitors/tourists' occupation is mainly concentrated in the Hutong space, affecting the occupation by the residents, in their daily use of the Hutong. The proposed model limits the visitors' activities to the courtyards, which leave opportunities for both visitors and residents to appropriate the shared Hutong space. In terms of spirit and feeling, at street scale, the proposed model allows the visitor to experience the internalised characteristic of the Hutong space, maintained by minimal openings to the elevations. The interior of the courtyard house is then experienced at a human scale. If, as part of the tourist experience, they visit an interior space, more opportunities for expanding areas for residents' daily use are created. However, conflict may arise between the visitors' use and residents' use of the courtyard space. This model is appropriate to those courtyard houses that have several enclosed spaces, as shown in the diagram.
Figure 3.40: Comparing the existing model and proposed model using the authenticity diagram
The second proposition tested the removal of the walls around courtyards, encouraging public occupation of the interiors of a series of courtyard houses. Compared to the existing conditions, the impact of the form and design is reduced, due to the absence of the external walls. However, the visitors’ use of the space is enhanced due to the interior of the courtyard becoming accessible. On the other hand, the residents’ use is affected, due to their privacy being compromised by the removal of the external walls. The loss of a physical boundary between public and private causes a significant reduction in spirit and feeling. The traditional courtyard lifestyle (as one of the qualities exemplified in the layer of tradition and technique) is lost due to the significant functional change in courtyard use. (Fig.3.41).
Figure 3.41: Comparing the authenticity diagrams of the existing condition, with the second design proposition
The third proposition tests an adaptation of the rooftops of the courtyard houses. The pitched rooftops are replaced by horizontal flat ones to create more outdoor space, lacking in the existing conditions. (fig.3.42). Although the pitched roof, as one of the traditional architectural elements is lost, the essential enclosed spatial structure is maintained. In addition, the layer of form and design is not significantly changed. The layer of spirit and feeling has been maintained due to the enclosed spatial structure being kept. The use and function layer is enhanced, as more open space is created. In terms of tradition and technique, although the traditional craftsmanship of the pitched roof is lost, the tradition of courtyard lifestyle is arguably improved by the enhancement of the use and function. There is a chance of conflict arising between the public and private users in the residentially and commercially mixed courtyards. This proposition is only suitable for the courtyards that acquire both residential and commercial use.

Similarly to the design research in the Carlton Gardens, these propositions and their analysis, assisted by the authenticity diagram, exemplify the interrelationship and co-existence of the six authenticity layers in the Shishahai Area. The Courtyard-Hutong system at human and street scale is assessed in particular. This system is implicitly understood to be an essential model of a built-form that inspires the creation of a landscape at a human scale.
Figure 3.42: Comparing the authenticity diagrams of existing conditions with the third design proposition

**Existing condition of the selected courtyards**

**Rooftop open space created by new walkways**
3.5 A Discussion on layered authenticity comparing the two case-studies’ design propositions

The application of layered authenticity

The concept of layered authenticity, supported by Koenraad Van Balen, is a method of recording and identifying various cultural qualities and values. (Balen, 2008). He developed the concept of layered authenticity as an evaluation method, known as the Nara Grid, examining in detail aspects of the values of cultural heritage. He suggests ‘the Nara Grid was completed as a checklist to help identify different dimensions and aspects that cover the values attributed to the architectural heritage.’ (p.40). In one of his case studies of the Grand Chateau Water Tower, a building of 19th century industrial heritage in Brussels, the values and qualities are quantified in accordance with the concepts put forward in the Nara Document’s: form and design; materials and substance; use and function; traditions, techniques and workmanship; location and setting; spirit and feeling. His method of analysis is an example of how this layered authenticity might be applied to assess and recognise a variety of qualities surrounding cultural heritage. Contemporary values often associated with the layer of use and function are recognised in his evaluation method. In his evaluation diagram of the Grand Chateau Water Tower, the use and function of the Water Tower are an ‘expression of the water tower of the nineteenth century’ in terms of its artistic function, with the contemporary use mentioned only in terms of a social function. ‘Today the case of private property (the water tower) in a public space (Bois de la Combre), is an illustration of urban development, and the relationship between population and services’. (p.43). The change of use of the water tower is recognised as an illustration of urban development in this particular context. Balen comments on the use of Nara Grid in site-assessment that recognises the intangible aspects such as traditions, uses, and local practices. All used as an important source for measuring the social dimensions of the site which conventional methods overlook. He summarises (Balen, 2008), ‘One dimension that the Nara Grid recognises, which appeared to be of great importance when considering the value of the site and its possible developments, is the social dimension.’ (p.44).
The inclusion of a social dimension in the verification of a cultural heritage’s authenticity, are tested in my design speculations. Differing from Balen’s application, my purpose in applying Nara’s layered authenticity is, not only to assess qualities based on existing conditions, but more importantly to test how the site might be used and experienced differently in changing conditions, and how consequently these changes impact upon other qualities including those of authenticity. By understanding that authenticity contributes collectively to the tangible and intangible layers, it is argued that authenticity can be maintained by allowing changes to occur in the tangible layers (physical features) of the landscape. As a result, such changes are supported by the enhancement of the intangible layers. I consider any enhancement of use and function as an important opportunity for change. My design speculations test what opportunities may, or may not be brought about through change in one or several physical elements of an historic landscape. The concept of layered authenticity is used to proactively seek out opportunities to propose use and function as an intangible layer.

**Interrelation, co-existence and complexity in six authenticity layers**

My design speculations contrast the site’s historic physical conditions and examine how the layers change, and how that change collectively impacts upon authenticity. The central axis in the South Garden of the Carlton Gardens is selected in order to compare my three propositions. The Courtyard-Hutong system of the Shishahai Area is compared to the existing development model, and with my three propositions.

A change in one or several physical element(s) of the site can cause a chain reaction in the other authenticity layers. This reaction is found in all of my design research proposals. The interactions occurring between the authenticity layers suggest that they are interrelated and are coincidental. This relationship is made evident in the process of drawing and analysing the authenticity diagram of each project.
The authenticity diagram is not used as a precise measuring tool for the authenticity layers, but as an analytical tool to detect the chain reactions and consequences occurring in the authenticity layers caused by change. The following diagram, (Fig.3.43), uses the analytical process of the medium design for Carlton Gardens and illustrates the sequence of changes to the authenticity layers. It is an effective method to highlight the changes occurring in each layer, when comparing two design options, or comparing the design with the existing condition.
Figure 3.43: The Analysis Process and drawing the authenticity diagram for the medium intervention in the Carlton Gardens
I found that some particular tangible qualities of the landscape appear to be more essential than others, in the evaluation of a place's authenticity. For instance, when comparing the medium and maximal interventions in the Carlton Gardens, the removal of the avenue trees seem to have a much more significant impact on authenticity, than the removal of the pathways. The spirit and feeling of the landscape changed dramatically in the medium intervention due to the loss of the canopies and overhead volumes provided by the avenue of trees. In this instance, trees play a more essential part than the layout, to the form and design of the landscape. Their height, volume and position are crucial to the central axis, which I see as an important part of the spatial structure of the landscape. The spatial structure can be described as the relationship between the structures on the earth and the sky above, which I consider essential to the layer of form and design. (Fig.43). Consequently, this spatial structure defines the way we understand and experience the landscape when categorising the value of spirit and feeling. The recognition of spatial structure is similar to Noberg-Schulz’s recognition of the skyline of the town and the horizontally expended silhouette of urban buildings, as keys to the image of a place. (Jiven and Larkham, 2003). In The Concept of Dwelling, Noberg-Schulz elaborates (Noberg-Schulz, 1985): ‘When we approach a settlement, the skyline is of decisive importance. What we perceive is a figure which rises from the ground towards the sky in a certain way. It is this standing and rising which determines our expectations and tells us where we are.’ (pp.33-34).

In a similar way, in the case of the Shishahai Area, the spatial structure is essential to the layer of form and design. In the case of the second proposition, the removal of the elevation-walls of the courtyard houses significantly affects other intangible layers. Although the elevation-walls are one of a great number of architectural components in the courtyard house, they appear to be essential, in terms of defining the boundary between public and private in the Courtyard-Hutong system. I consider this division as a spatial structure, and is the defining feature of courtyard architectural typology, which is crucial in allowing the particular use, experience and feeling of the courtyard house to occur. In the third proposition, the pitched rooftops, seen as an additional architectural component, are removed. I argue this change has much less impact on authenticity than the second proposition, where the spatial structure is maintained.
The first proposition recognises that minimising the openings on the courtyard elevation is central to the Courtyard-Hutong system, at both the street and human scales. At street scale, the Hutong is distinguished from street by its minimal openings. At the human scale, locating and limiting the activities to the interior, supports the spatial experience occurring in the courtyards. Although the current redevelopments apply a range of traditional architectural components to the courtyard elevations, the subsequent spatial experiences when moving from Hutong to the courtyard entrance, and then to the interior enclosures are diminished. I argue my first proposition has less impact on the Courtyard-Hutong system than the current design developments.

Through these design proposals, I discover, in the use of six authenticity layers, a greater variety of qualities and attributes as the Nara Document on Authenticity suggests in Article 13: ‘Authenticity judgements may be linked to the worth of a great variety of sources of information.’ In my case-studies, I recognise these tangible and intangible qualities from site observations and the available documentation. The information on and knowledge of the historic landscape is used as basis for the evaluation of my design speculations. Rather than define the six authenticity layers precisely, my designs and analysis illustrate the interrelations and complexity of these layers. The comparison of different designs also demonstrates a way to define some essential qualities for the site’s authenticity. In comparing these designs, the spatial structure under consideration, as an attribute of form and design, is found to have a more influential impact than decorative features on the intangible layers of use and function, and spirit and feeling. This finding supports negotiation between the exploration of new qualities, and the maintenance of the essential spatial structure of the landscape in my future design research proposals.
Reference


Chapter 4
Progressive Authenticity

Content:

4.1 Authenticity Mapping for Carlton Gardens

4.2 Progressive Authenticity

4.3 Design Proposals: Informed by the Concept of Progressive Authenticity

4.4 Discussions
4.1 Authenticity Mapping for Carlton Gardens

4.1.1 Investigation of Carlton Gardens’ History

The previous design propositions in the last chapter examined the concept of layered authenticity. What I found lacking, especially in the designs for the Carlton Gardens, is a deeper understanding of the characteristics and uniqueness that lie beyond its designated historical significance. The Carlton Gardens’ significance is as a testimony to the international exhibition movement, and as the location for the first Australian Parliament, and is identified by the World Heritage Centre and the local authority (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2004; City of Melbourne, 2005). My previous designs for Carlton Gardens explored the significance of the site as an exhibition venue and how it could be sustained and improved. This proposition was informed by UNESCO’s recognition of the significance of the building and gardens. The international exhibitions in 1880 and 1888, and the establishment of the first Australian Parliament are several of the noted occasions during the long evolution of the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens. I wondered what other hidden characteristics and qualities of the Carlton Gardens are in evidence, beyond those already recognised by the conservation authorities.

In *Living Buildings*, Donald Insall suggests conservation begins by understanding the characteristics of the building: ‘Our first aim must be to know and understand each building, and the way it came about, how it has altered and changed through its life, to become what it fleetingly is today. Then we can better appreciate what is special and individual about it, and what makes up its essential character and personality’. (Insall, 2008). He further describes the process of knowing a building as like knowing a person: ‘Meeting a building is very much like meeting a person; a building is just fascinating to get to know. Whether for its own sake, or for ours as owners, we can receive and assess what it has to say to us.’ (p.27). Although he refers to architectural conservation in particular, I find it relevant to the conservation of a landscape as well. I am an international student and have been living Melbourne for only a few years. The Carlton Gardens seem to me alien in some aspects, as I don’t have any personal experiences associated with them. I consider such experiences important to obtain a
deeper understanding of the site’s meaning and uniqueness. The realisation of this lack occurred to me when undertaking my observations and designs for the Shishahai Area in Beijing. As a local growing up in the Old City, although never having lived in a courtyard house, I am fairly familiar with the uniqueness of the Hutong and courtyard houses, and this understanding of them grew through accumulated direct and indirect experiences since childhood. For example, having a direct experience of visiting friends living in a courtyard house, or going to hidden eateries and shops in the Hutongs. In addition were the indirect experiences, such as reading academic papers and books, listening to stories handed down by grandparents, and from TV programmes showing the Hutong at different historic periods. These experiences gave me a wide and deep understanding of the rich characteristics of the Hutong and courtyard houses, and the changes that have occurred in the Shishahai Area. My reviews of the current developments and conservation policies are based on this personal understanding of the Courtyard-Hutong system, and in particular, its relationship to the larger urban context.

In Chapter 2, I reviewed the conservation policies of the Carlton Gardens Master Plan which emphasised a designated period of significance, (1880-1901) which resulted in the landscape being frozen in a particular time-period. I speculated there were other characteristics and qualities of the landscape during its growth that were excluded from the existing policies. In Victorian Icon, David Dunstan revealed the rich past of the Royal Exhibition Building: ‘Delving deeper, we are taken into social and cultural history. The complex (Royal Exhibition Building and its Annexes) has included a concert hall, government offices, sporting facilities, a hospital, a dance hall, a sailors’ club and a parliamentary chambers, to name but a few of its more notable uses. The Exhibition conjures up all manner of memories…Few public buildings in Australia have had so varied an existence over such a long period.’ (Dunstan, 1996, pp.7-8). As for the setting and surrounds of the Royal Exhibition Building, how many palimpsests have the Carlton Gardens had? While researching the Carlton Gardens’ former hidden characteristics, I conducted an investigation into the Carlton Gardens’ history.
The research investigation began with three references: *Civilising the City* (Whitehead, 1997), *Grids and Greenery* (City of Melbourne, 1987) and *Melbourne’s Historic Public Gardens* (City of Melbourne, 1984). These supplied detailed descriptions, maps and a variety of images, providing rich evidence of the multiple characteristics and the many changes that had occurred in the landscape. The following diagram illustrates the major changes to the landscape’s layout over six different time periods. (Fig.4.1).
The garden was initially planned as a recreational reserve in 1852, but in fact, in its early years, the ground was actually used by locals to freely graze their goats and cows and to occasionally dump rubbish. (Fig.4.2). The trees were felled for firewood. The first formal landscape plan was designed in 1856 by Edward Latrobe Batman, composed of a range of curved patterns. From existing photographs and drawings of the Carlton Gardens, the planting beds were fenced off and the site was locked at night. In 1861, the Melbourne City Council recorded incidences of vandalism and robberies in the garden even though a police watch-house had been established on the Nicholson Street boundary. The central fountain was installed in 1863 as a decorative attraction. (Fig.4.3).

**Figure 4.2: Carlton Gardens 1855 (State Library of Victoria)**

**Figure 4.3: Central Fountain Carlton Gardens (Melbourne’s Historic Public Gardens)**
In November, 1878, the control of the landscape were transferred from the Melbourne City Council to the Trustees of the Melbourne International Exhibition. This was the beginning of a glorious exhibition period in the Carlton Gardens history. The 1880 exhibition ‘was to be bigger and grander than any which had gone before. The British Empire, the Australian Colonies, the United States and all the major European powers were lavishly represented. When the Victorian International Exhibition opened in Oct 1880, the golden years of Melbourne’s boom were dawning, and commercial values were at the helm’. The landscape was laid out to compliment the new Royal Exhibition Building, and the north part of the garden was occupied by a series of temporary exhibition structures. Following the success of the 1880 exhibition, the even larger 1888 Centennial International Exhibition was hosted in the Carlton Gardens (Fig.4.4).

Figure 4.4: 1888 Centennial International Exhibition: Carlton Gardens (Melbourne’s Historic Public Gardens)
The Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens have been adapted for public use in a variety of ways from 1890 to 1980. After the temporary structures erected for the two International exhibitions were demolished, and an Oval was planned on the space between the two Annexes of the Exhibition Building to the north of the garden. (Fig.4.5). The management of the space was ceded to the Trustees (of the Melbourne International Exhibition) (City of Melbourne, 1984): ‘a new Act of Parliament vested the Exhibition Buildings and the central 20.5 acres to the Trustees. From that date to the present the Trustees have attempted to make the operation financially self-supporting by leasing space and developing revenue earning facilities in the grounds’. The Oval with a bicycle track was installed as a new sports facility, which accommodated a range of public events including a range of cycling races until First World War (Dunstan, 1996), (p.254). Another attempt at commercialisation was a new Aquarium located at the east-side of the Exhibition Building which was a popular public attraction until closing in 1952. The Eastern Annex accommodated a museum in the 1890s, in the 1920s it was occupied by the Australian War Museum and part of it became a dance-venue named the Royal Ballroom. The Federal Parliament from 1901 to 1927 occupied the Western Annex. Then it was occupied by a series of government departments, and the ‘Rathdowne Street frontage was finally consumed by car parking (as it remains today) in the 1950s. Beside the Oval, a wide variety of facilities were accommodated in the Exhibition Building complex, but a great number of facilities were established in the gardens as well. The tennis courts were constructed in 1924. The Children’s Playground in the North Garden was initially constructed in 1922, and rebuilt in 1938 as a model playground, (City of Melbourne, 1984): ‘...the children’s play area was rebuilt as a Model Playground under the auspices of the Playgrounds Association. Fitzroy and Carlton desperately needed facilities like this’. Since 1960s, the area was used as a Children’s Traffic School. Another important facility provided was the Old Men’s Shelter, an early version of a community centre. It provided the surrounding communities with a venue for leisure activities.
A small oval was built behind the Exhibition Building in the 1890s as a commercial venture. A little more of the Carlton Gardens was alienated when the oval was enlarged shortly before this photograph was taken about 1928. Worse was to come as almost every piece of unbuilt ground in the central third of the Gardens managed by the Exhibition Trustees was gradually paved with asphalt and used for car parking. Clement Hodgkinson's pond in the foreground was turned into a wading pool in 1923 when a playground was built nearby, and in the 1960s it was drained and redeveloped as a children's traffic school.

[IMAGE: Latrobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria]
‘Both the Eastern and Western Annexes were demolished in stages in the 1960s and 1970s to make way for the present complex of modern exhibition halls.’ In the 1980s, the Royal Exhibition Building and its modern additions ‘rank as one of the busiest and most successful permanent exhibition facilities in the world. This success depends on the availability of adequate car-park space, and most of the old Oval area at the rear, as well as the Rathdowne Street frontage, has been converted to this use’. The massive car-park space in the North Garden facilitated attendance at exhibition events and fulfilled the need of car-parking for the surrounding urban population. This use also generated financial profits: ‘Day-parking for city commuters formed a substantial part of the Trust’s income.’ (City of Melbourne, 1984).
4.1.2 Authenticity Mapping for the Carlton Gardens

The authenticity mapping process is central to the research project in exploring how the authenticity of place can be visualised. As I accumulated more detailed knowledge of the Carlton Gardens’ history, I questioned how could a deeper understanding of place inform a different understanding of authenticity. My initial idea was to map authenticity in the Carlton Gardens at each point of its historic development. I organised chronologically the text descriptions, historical images and the plans of the Carlton Gardens’ development. Finally I divided the landscape’s lifespan into five periods, according to the major changes that occurred in its layout: Period 1 is from 1850s to the 1870s; Period 2 includes the Grand Exhibition between 1880 and 1890; Period 2 is from 1890 to 1980 when the Oval existed; Period 4 is from the 1980s to 2000; Period 5 starts with the new Melbourne Museum constructed in 2000, to the present day. In the initial working model of the authenticity mapping, the text information is cut from the chronology and attached on the plan of each period. (Fig.4.6).
Figure 4.7: A Working Model of Authenticity Mapping
The concept was first described in the Nara Document and is one where layered authenticity is applied in a mapping project. The Carlton Gardens in each of its historical periods was deconstructed into four layers: the layers of form and design; material and substance; use and function; and finally as spirit and feeling. Each authenticity layer was determined from the plan and drawn onto transparent material. Eventually 20 authenticity layers for each of the five historical periods were illustrated. Finally these 20 layers were physically laid on top of each as a conclusion to the authenticity mapping project.

In terms of the mapping method, the layer of form and design is illustrated as an arrangement of lines representing the layout pattern and axes of the plan. The trees and grass as the major material making up the garden are mapped to represent the layer of material and substance. The special uses and major functions are marked as the layer of use and function. These three layers of drawings appear to be abstract, but I considered them as a representation of the layer, rather than the actual total of all the information that the layer may contain. In regard to the layer of spirit and feeling, I appropriated the technique of collage in order to overlap and compose the historic photos and text descriptions. These collages present my speculation/imagination on how the site might look and be experienced in each of these historic periods. I see the collages as a visualised summary of each specific period. The collages illustrate a variety of different ambiences, events and uses occurring within the landscape. At the same time, the transparency of the drawing and the overlapping of the images symbolise the constant emerging and fading conditions, memories and events in the history the landscape. The richness contained in the landscape’s features is fully understood and appreciated through the visual accumulation of the 20 authenticity layers. (Fig.4.7). The project of Authenticity Mapping for Carlton Gardens is fully presented in a booklet attached at the very end of this ADR.
Figure 4.7: Diagram of 20 Overlapped Authenticity Layers
4.2 Progressive Authenticity informed by the Authenticity Mapping Project

Throughout the mapping process, I began to notice to what extent the Royal Exhibition Building and the Carlton Gardens have been constantly reshaped by the emergence of new uses and functions over differing periods. Ultimately, this regular change of uses and functions indicated the constant demands associated with the socio-economic and cultural forces placed on it, in its larger urban context. For instance, the development of the bicycle track on the Oval was linked to the emerging popularity of this sport in the final decades of the nineteenth century in Australia. (Dunstan, 1996, p.253). Another example was the Old Men’s Shelter initially constructed in the 1930s. The structure was so modest that I was not able to find any images. Although it might have looked run-down, I consider it assumed great social significance: ‘By the later 1930s an Old Men’s Shelter had been built inside the avenue of planes just north of Victoria Street. This was a very useful facility in an area of boarding houses given the severity of the times. For several years thereafter the Parks and Gardens Committee noted coyly in their annual reports that it ‘...is greatly appreciated, and these habitués of the grounds now spend many happy hours of their leisure in these very comfortable surroundings playing cards, draughts, and reading’. (City of Melbourne, 1984). This facility ‘was demolished in the 1960s, when improving social conditions reduced its value, and the vista to the fountain was restored’. Although the shelter was removed as the social structure changed, in its own time it was meaningful and authentic.

This particular mapping process did not include using established ideas of authenticity, but rather a process that allowed me to explore ideas through editing and illustrating the collected materials. Mindful of the purpose of mapping authenticity, I had to choose selectively from a great deal of available information. As a result, I eventually found specific structures that are authentic to their own time, which I illustrated on the plan. The Old Men’s Shelter inspired me in particular; it was probably rather shabby and indeed blocked the most important visual axis of the garden. However, its use and function were authentic in regard to the current social needs, and bound a non-elite social group to the site. Starting with this particular example, I began to understand that ephemeral aspects and objects should be consid-
ered authentic in relation to their own time. This is one of the major findings emanating from this mapping. The long existing physical qualities, such as the Royal Exhibition Building, the layout, and the trees seem to have been there forever. We respect them as authentic, but we should also understand that the Oval, the Old Men’s Shelter, the Children’s Driving School, and even the car-park were also authentic in their time because they truly reinforced the bond between the people and the place.

Understanding that the ephemeral in the landscape was a result of the continual re-modelling processes occurring over time, allowed me to propose the concept of progressive authenticity. This concept situates that authenticity in a place of change, and is ephemeral in nature. Authenticity is reshaped constantly by the interaction between the past and present conditions in the urban landscape.

The construction of the new Melbourne Museum is a prime example of progressive authenticity. This building showcased a contemporary vision of the Carlton Gardens. It gives a new role to the historic landscape, and is experienced and appreciated to meet the expectations of present day Melbournians.

In understanding progressive authenticity, the actual act of capturing/addressing the demands of the precise moment of now, should be considered as authentic. As a designer, I speculate on how this understanding of progressive authenticity might assist in proposing an alternative design and conservation approach to the urban landscape. What conditions or forces of now could be captured/addressed? The following two projects are the design proposals informed by that understanding of progressive authenticity.
4.3 Design Proposals informed by the Concept of Progressive Authenticity

4.3.1 Design Proposals Carlton Gardens: Progressive Gardens

The project Progressive Gardens proposed a series of smaller garden spaces within the existing landscape to accommodate a range of new uses. These new gardens are named East Edge Garden, East Frontage Garden, Parterre Garden, Garden of Demolished Annexes, and Oval Garden. (Fig.4.8). The majority of the existing trees in the Carlton Gardens are relatively large. The new gardens attempt to bring down the scale of the existing landscape at selected locations creating more intimate under- or subspaces. At the same time, a tree replacement strategy for the South Garden was particularly developed to maintain the garden’s iconic central axis caused by the impending loss of trees.
Figure 4.8: Plan of the Progressive Garden Project
East Edge Garden

In this design the east edge of the garden was partly paved and small garden beds with seats were created. The boundary between the walkway and the garden is blurred in order to encourage both existing cyclists and pedestrian to move into the garden alongside the busy Nicholson Street. At the same time, the design blurred the boundary between the garden and the street reflecting the historic Victorian dwellings located on the other side. Encouraging better use of this part of the garden is an attempt to bring the street closer to the garden visually and functionally. The seating spaces are created particularly along this boundary, not only for the daily use of people walking along Nicholson Street, but also as an attempt to attract passers-by to slow down at this particular spot and direct their view to the historic vernacular architecture opposite Nicholson Street. (Figs.4.9, 4.10).

Figure 4.9: New Garden Beds proposed along the East Edge Garden
Figure 4.10: Boundary of the Garden adjacent to Nicholson Street
East Frontage Garden and Parterre Garden

The East Frontage Garden is located at the eastern forecourt of the Royal Exhibition Building, and greets visitors from the adjacent tram-stop on Nicholson Street near the South Garden. The existing landscape comprises a central fountain with surrounding garden beds. There are few trees planted in this space, making the forecourt more like a plaza than part of the surrounding garden. A group of flowering trees (jacaranda mimosifolia) are planned to bring a treed canopy to this area, and provide a more intimate scale for a meeting place for visitors and a place to sit adjacent to the entrance. The flowering purple blossoms in early spring, poetically acknowledge the seasonal change within the landscape, and provide a welcoming surprise for the visitors. (Fig. 4.11).

Figure 4.11: New Garden Beds proposed along the East Edge Garden
The Parterre Garden is located in front of the façade of Royal Exhibition Building, and was originally laid out in the 1880s. The beds were restored according to the original plan in 2009. (Gadd, 2009). Differing from the existing design of decorative patterns at ground level, the proposed new parterres contain taller hedging shrubs forming seven small garden rooms. These garden rooms provide small-scale hidden spaces that contrast with the much larger scale of the South Garden. From a practical point of view, the hedges will conceal the car-park between the building and the parterres. (Fig.4.12).

Figure 4.12: Parterre Garden
Garden of Demolished Annexes and Oval Garden

Parts of the demolished structures are carved and re-inscribed onto the landscape to delineate new garden areas. The former Western and Eastern Annexes are memorialised through paving-layout and the choice of planting materials at ground-level between the Royal Exhibition Building and the Melbourne Museum. (Fig.4.13). The former Oval, previously one of the most intensively used spaces in the Carlton Gardens, is re-inscribed onto the current Children’s Playground which is presently the most popular space. Flowering trees and shrubs surround this Oval Garden and provide enclosure and treed canopies to shade children and their waiting parents. (Fig.4.14).

Figure 4.13: Garden of Demolished Annexes
Figure 4.14: Oval Garden
Tree replacement strategy for the South Garden

The majority of existing trees in the Carlton Gardens were planted in the late 19th century. In the South Garden, trees were planted systematically from the time the landscape was laid out to surround the Royal Exhibition Building. An historic photograph shows the trees along the central double avenue to have been planted before 1883. (Fig.4.14). The trees in the North Garden have been uniformly planted since the 1890s (City of Melbourne 1984): ‘The mature oaks, elms, planes and figs which flourish in the North Garden today appear to date from this period of reconstruction’. It has been recognised in the Carlton Gardens Master Plan that the existing trees will reach the end of their natural lifespan in the next 15 years. In previous discussions, the central axis in the South Garden formed by the avenue trees, is recognised to be important to both the tangible and intangible layers of authenticity. This feature will be threatened by the gradual loss of the existing trees. A tree replacement strategy has been developed to deal with the senescence of the garden planting.

Figure 4.14: Trees along the double avenue of the South Garden: 1883
(Melbourne’s Historic Public Gardens)
The tree replacement strategy covers the central double avenue, the western and eastern edges and envisages three successive stages. As the central avenue of trees appear to be healthy at present, the western and eastern avenues of trees are proposed to be replaced in Stage 1, (2010-15). At the same time, new trees are to be planted along the western edge of the garden, as most of the large trees there have been lost. (Fig.4.15).

![Figure 4.15: Tree Planting: Stage 1: (2010-15)](image)
In Stage 2, (2015-20), when the central axis’ importance is declining due to the loss of vigour in the trees, it is expected that the volume and canopies of the western and eastern avenue trees will have grown to replace that loss. (Fig.4.16).

Figure 4.16: Tree Planting: Stage 2: (2015-20)
In Stage 3, (2020-25), the trees along the central double avenue are to be replaced. The central axis will have been supported by the growth in the now mature western and eastern avenue trees planted in Stage 1. This replacement strategy doesn’t strive to replicate the exact location and species of individual trees, but attempts to maintain the spatial structure of the garden including the density, composition and the major axes of the trees and planting. (Fig.4.17).
4.3.2 Reflections

By removing the retaining edges, the East Edge Garden blurs the boundary between the site, and the movements of the pedestrians and cyclists along the Nicholson Street. This resolves the potential conflict between the pedestrians and cyclists on the existing narrow pathway. At the same time, an increase in activity in the previously under-used garden will be encouraged, with a more open-edge configuration and sitting-areas alongside new floral beds. This could in addition generate more activities along the adjacent busy Nicholson Street. Planting materials are used to create open areas in the East Frontage Garden, Parterre Garden and the Oval Garden, rather than in decorative patterns employed elsewhere. The areas forming the East Frontage Garden provide a poetic and memorable entrance for the visitors and are enhanced by the lower canopies of the flowering trees. The Parterre Garden creates a series of garden rooms at a smaller scale and hopefully will encourage a variety of interesting uses and activities. The planting of flowering trees and shrubs will create an enclosure for the Children’s Playground in the Oval Garden. The enclosure will assist in supporting a variety of activities, such as picnics and community events as well as the existing uses by children and their parents.

There are examples of historic gardens being redesigned in the past to address the specific requirements and uses of the landscape at that time. The Parterre du Carrousel in Paris designed by Jacques Wirtz is one example. The Parterre du Carrousel is located at the east end of the Tuileries Gardens in Paris, which was originally laid out for Queen Catherine de Medici in the 16th century while planning her new palace and garden. With the passing of time, the Louvre Museum complex now encloses the Parterre du Carrousel. Jacques Wirtz’s works are highly regarded as in the comment: ‘In the past, his work has been described as a modern reflection of well-known tradition…uniting in his gardens as much beauty of the past as visionary force of the future. The design for the Parterre du Carrousel confirmed this.’ (Cooper and Taylor, 2000). The emphasis in this axial design and in the use of parterres, indicate a more traditional approach to landscape design. The concerns caused by the erection of the new glass pyramid at the Louvre is explained by Jacques Wirtz’s son, Peter further expanding on their design intention: ‘we wanted not only to create a buffer
but part of a green world between the hard glass and stone surfaces of Mr. Pei’s pyramid glass and the Louvre courtyard, and make the Arc du Carrousel a true gateway. It formerly seemed too small in that desert of stone. Now, it’s like a keyhole to the rest of the gardens. Go through it and you find radials—rows of clipped yew hedges like projecting fingers.’ The 12 radial hedges meet in front of the Arc du Carrousel, and onwards to frame the Arch of Triumph making it the visual focus, while the surrounding tall trees enlarge the scale of the Arc du Carrousel. These interventions place the Arc du Carrousel in a distinctive central position, which extend the axis from the new glass pyramid to the Tuilleries Gardens. (Fig.4.18).
My design for the Carlton Gardens is to use differing planting materials to create a variety of garden spaces, which enhance the existing conditions of the garden and attract new activities to these areas. However, I later reviewed and classified my design as a beautification proposal with a physically-oriented approach. Although the design doesn’t imitate any previous plans and proposals, the uses of various planting materials indicate the emphasis is centred mainly on the physical appearance of the garden. This beatification approach is no different to the formal environment that Carlton Gardens Master Plan supported. It is also clear that a beautiful and pleasant environment may enhance public appreciation, but it doesn’t allow people to understand and read the site in a different way. This design does not fully address and value the rich characteristics and the variety of historic events uncovered in the authenticity mapping project. The Oval Garden and the Garden of Demolished Annexes are my first step in addressing and understanding the social significances of a place through the physical impact of past significant structures. However, the option of addressing form and materials beyond planting is not explored.

The tree replacement strategy tests how the avenue trees can be conserved along the central axis of the South Garden. The collages illustrate the changes to the Carlton Gardens’ skyline in the successive stages. (Fig.4.19). The changing emphasis in the central axis as it matures over time, shows us that change in the landscape is inevitable. Rather than attempting to recreate the vanishing qualities or conditions of the landscape in the recent past, the ability to capture the emerging conditions in the immediate present is central to the understanding of progressive authenticity.
Figure 4.19: Central Axis and Skyline of the South Garden at Different Stages of Development
4.3.3 Design Proposal: Shishahai Area: Another City Above

This design experiment proposes a new building above the existing urban fabric to address the contemporary demands for more commercial and residential space in the Shishahai Area. As the population of the Beijing’s Old City increases, the lack of living space in the one-storey courtyard neighbourhoods has been one of the challenging issues in the conservation of the unique Courtyard-Hutong system. Many of the existing courtyard houses in Beijing’s Old City have accommodated more than one household since late Qing Dynasty. More and more additional structures were built in the central enclosure to accommodate the residents’ need for additional space, particularly in the last 30 years due to the limited building area within the actual courtyard houses. (Ma, 2005, p.44). The over-crowded living conditions in these shared courtyards affect the local residents’ quality of life. It has been estimated that there are 100,000 residents living in the heritage listed courtyards that are unregistered. (Mao,2005, p.12). The greatest challenge in the conservation of courtyard neighbourhoods in Beijing is how to resolve the increasing demands for living space.

In the case of the Shishahai Areas, the local authority has already recognised this area as a major tourist attraction and as representing Beijing’s historic local-culture. Following the success of the existing commercial programmes in the Area, and its well-known reputation as a popular place-to-go in Beijing, there will be an increase in the demand for commercial spaces as well.

The neighbourhood between Qianhai North and Houhai South is used to test this design speculation, a residential complex to be constructed above the existing landscape. A proportion of the neighbourhood’s residents will be relocated in the new complex. The cleared and refurbished courtyards can then be used for commercial purposes such as shops, hotels, art galleries and restaurants. (Fig.4.20).
Figure 4.20: Proposed new Residential Complex above the existing urban fabric
Tschumi first proposed a design strategy for layering contemporary architecture above an historic landscape in his theoretical scheme for Factory 798, an historic industrial district in Beijing. (Bernard, 2004). Factory 798 was designed by an Eastern German architect in 1950-60s. In recent years this mixed-use industrial area had been gradually occupied by a vibrant arts community. The artists, in design studios and associated art facilities, utilise the existing spacious and redundant industrial spaces for exhibitions, cultural events and commercial activities. The buildings are in a heavy brutalist German style, purely functional industrial facilities still displaying original and unique communist wall slogans giving the district a distinct retro look, with a cool and artistic atmosphere. This industrial area is considered to be extremely valuable in terms of cultural and commercial potential, in a rapidly developing and commercially orientated China. However, the developer planned to transform Factory 798 and the surrounding urban fabric into a series of residential towers. In contrast and as an alternative, Tschumi proposed a solution of retaining the existing urban fabric by constructing a new complex above the old. (Figs.4.21, 4.22).

Figure 4.21: Tschumi: Factory 798 Beijing
4.3.4 Reflections

This design proposition maximises the space for both residential and commercial demands through relocating the residents to the proposed new complex constructed above the existing urban fabric. However, this proposition is unsuitable to the Shishahai Area in terms of authenticity. At the urban level, the height and volume of the new complex detracts from the spatial relationship between the lake, urban fabric and the landmarks - the Drum and Bell Towers. A large new complex would lessen the impact of the two landmarks, both presently of exceptional height and scale, which dominate the area. (Fig. 4.23).

Figure 4.22: Tschumi: Factory 798 Beijing
At street level the spacial experience is changed, and it has the identical relationship between the sky and street level, as in the Hutong. (Fig.4.24). The greatest impact occurs at human scale with the privacy offered by the existing courtyards lost, due to being overlooked by the residents in the new constructions above. The privacy and safety provided by the courtyards is lost, the residents unsettled by the new complex and strangers above. (Figs.4.25, 4.26).

Figure 4.23: Impact of the complex at the urban scale
Figure 4.24: Impact of the complex at the street scale

Existing skyline at street scale

New skyline at street scale

Figure 4.25, 4.26: Impact of the complex at the human scale

Courtyard before intervention

Courtyard after intervention
Figure 4.27: Another City Above in Shishahai

Figure 4.28: Tschumi: Factory 798 Beijing
This design strategy is more suitable for the Factory 798 than in the Shishahai Area. The interior of the former industrial spaces is not visible from the new complex above, and a sense of privacy is maintained. Although both sites share identical characteristics, the industrial architectural spaces are identified more strongly with their former function, rather than a relationship between the built fabrication and the sky.

4.4 Discussions

The idea of progressive authenticity, based on the Nara Document’s understanding of layered authenticity, is discussed in this section through further exploration of the dimension of time. The process of Authenticity Mapping in the Carlton Gardens further developed this idea by adding the dimension of time – and I describe it as progressive authenticity. The mapping project started with questioning what exactly I considered as authentic on the site, and what are its non-physical historic qualities. The garden’s history is divided into 5 periods, (each marking a major change in the garden’s layout), with each period deconstructed into 4 layers. This mapping process is not one based on fixed ideas of authenticity, but is a process allowing me to explore ideas through the selection, editing and illustration of the assembled historic material. In conclusion I illustrated on the plan the position of a number of previously hidden and demolished structures, and their various public uses at the time. For example, the Oval in the North Garden was a popular event venue until the increasing demand for car parking initiated its removal in the 80s. This allowed me to understand authenticity is by nature progressive, as Gordon Waitt articulated: ‘…authenticity had to be regarded as dynamically ephemeral or emergent since individual and collective views could change their position along this true/false continuum over time.’

When culture is understood as a process as Anthony Cohen suggests, then cultural heritage as a cultural product can be understood as progressive. When Australian chef Adam Liaw, (Winner of the 2010 Master Chef reality Television series) talks about traditional and contemporary Asian cooking, he stated his opinion on the authenticity of food. : ‘We all strive for authenticity in our food; and true authenticity can only be achieved through an acute understanding of the history and meaning behind the food
we cook. However, inherent within the goal of authenticity is the need for progress. Times, cultures, people and nations all change, and the food we eat must change with them. To rely on what has gone before is to deny the authenticity of the connection between food, produce and our daily lives. If we all eat exactly how our ancestors ate, the food of our daily lives would become an imitation of a different time.’ (Liaw, 2011).

Liaw crucially pointed out that authenticity in terms of a cultural product - what is happening now is the active constituent in constructing authenticity and its meanings. Although the authenticity of the urban heritage at its larger scale is more complex, Liaw’s views on the authenticity of food are helpful and applicable to other areas where authenticity is discussed.

The argument in favour of the idea of progressive authenticity has been proposed and discussed previously in regard to urban conservation projects. For example, Pamela Jerome, demonstrates this idea in one of her conservation projects. Her office (AWSA) completed a restoration project in the Hunterfly Road Houses of Weeksville, USA, in 2003. These houses form a group of vernacular buildings representing one of the first free African-American communities in Brooklyn, New York. The buildings were previously restored in the 1980s, in accord with the earliest evidence available at the time - 1883. However, twenty years later, Jerome’s office ‘designed the restoration as a timeline: significant elements deserve to be highlighted from different periods, which could tell different stories and enrich the historical narrative…’ (Jerome, 2008). The four buildings were restored along a timeline representing the 1870s, 1900s, 1930s and 1960s. Impressively, the 1960s house represents the time when the site was rediscovered, the civil rights movement and the start of its reconstruction, and included the most recent significant events occurring on site. Jerome’s approach created a narrative that gives the audience a richer and more comprehensive image of what happened in those houses during time. Although this project used a restoration approach, it differs from period reconstruction that limits the place to one particular time. It demonstrates how the idea of progressive authenticity can help a designer achieve a more meaningful result, in terms of the display of the historical richness associated with these houses.
Figure 4.29: Hunterfly Road Houses of Weeksville
Progressive authenticity regards the urban landscape as a dynamic process, having a combination of physical materials, (tangible and relatively permanent) as well as a variety of functions, cultural practices and lifestyle, (changeable, intangible and temporary). Authenticity is changeable and constantly reshaped by the social, economic and cultural forces at different historical points of time. Layered authenticity is understood as having both tangible and intangible layers that are contained in three-dimensional space. Thus progressive authenticity layers the idea of authenticity with another dimension of time, and in this understanding, the richness of authenticity is expanded into four dimensions.

Layered and progressive authenticity allow a more open interpretation of authenticity beyond a mere physically-oriented approach. However, it is an extreme view to propose that any one-thing can be justified as inherently possessing its own authenticity. If we regard all changes, and all the tangible and intangible layers that happen throughout time to be authentic, authenticity would eventually become meaningless losing its power and credibility. This is the central dilemma of the discourse on authenticity.

This dilemma led me to the understanding that the authenticity of a historic urban landscape may display various versions of history, rather than one absolute, and further suggests that authenticity should be challenged. I describe the predetermined nature of authenticity as one of different choice-options taken from different perspectives. Reflecting on my own design projects, and other designers’ works, I uncovered the predetermined nature of authenticity and discuss it in the following Chapter.

At the same time, I note the demands of new uses and functions emerging from the socio-economic or cultural forces at particular moments, play an essential role in reshaping the landscape. For instance, the Oval, the Old Men’s Shelter and the Car-parks of the Carlton Gardens came into being as a result of forces applying at that particular time. Use and function, as one of the intangible layers of authenticity is continuously changing and progressing, while simultaneously reshaping the tangible layers of the landscape. The conservation of urban landscape can be understood as a process of negotiating present uses - on an intangible layer; and past physical features - on a tangible layer.
References


Chapter 5

Provocative/Evocative Design:

Historic Urban Landscape

Content:

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5.4 Discussions
5.1 Evoking and Provoking: Two essential emotions arising from historic urban landscape

In the previous two chapters, the richness and complexity of *authenticity* is explored. From these explorations, the argument emerged that *layered authenticity* positions authenticity as one being supported by a series of interrelated tangible and intangible attributes. In addition, the finding that *progressive authenticity* argues that *authenticity* is constantly changing through time. Finally, a consideration of the possibility that the aspiration to capture the precise moment of now may be the motivation to reshape the authenticity of the site. My questions are: what could be captured in particular, new uses of the site, or its meanings? How could these uses and meanings be addressed and realised through design interventions.

The words *evocative* and *provocative* are the design keywords that inspired my final design experiments. When I first discovered these words, I was trying to describe my position as both an urban designer and conservation professional. The meaning of the word *Provocative* represents my viewpoint: that urban conservation should be open to change and innovation, but at the same time take into account contemporary needs. This proposition challenged a conventional conservation approach that tends to preserve place and contents as museum pieces. *Evocative* represents the sympathy and sensitivity of a designer towards the character and historic richness of historic urban landscapes. To me, this richness accumulates over time and makes these landscapes distinct from other urban places, which in turn construct the layered cultural meaning of these places. The crucial question is how could a design-work possibly capture, reveal or interpret this layered richness. I assume that an exquisite design intervention would act as a stimulator to and a reminder of this richness. I feel explicitly that the fixed-period reconstruction approach to a site, is one frozen in a particular era, and conceals the depth of time, the complexity of various characteristics, and the holistic qualities of the place. An alternative approach is one that reveals the meaning of historic urban landscapes through the exploration of the potential of this concealed richness.

In the Progressive Garden Project discussed in Chapter 4, new seating areas are
designed in particular for the edge of Nicholson Street. The intention is to create a visual connection between the Royal Exhibition Building and the Victorian terrace houses on the other side of the street. It is hoped that a sense of nostalgia for the Victorian era is evoked through this visual experience. At the same time, this is emphasised by reinscribing the existing landscape of the Carlton Gardens with the outlines of the historic structures, such as the demolished Oval and Annexes. Although these designs were unconvincing in terms of their ability to generate form, the use of materials and the composition of the experience were my first attempts to use evocative as a design generator. In the Rooftop Connection Project for Shishahai discussed in Chapter 3, the traditional and historic pitched rooftops are compromised to accommodate new functions. I later recognised this act of changing the traditional physical feature for a new use, is one that is provocative. At the same time, I discovered a range of contemporary urban design projects using similar approaches to my provocative/evocative designs. They informed and inspired my own designs, in regard to these concepts, their forms and the understanding the designs engendered.
5.2 Provocative/Evocative Designs for Carlton Gardens

5.2.1 Design Proposition 1: Memory Container

This design in the Carlton Gardens proposes the place be understood as a memory container for the city. This concept demonstrates the important role of cultural heritage as a reminder of our past and our heritage. In the Authenticity Mapping Project, significance beyond its World Heritage, and the richness of the garden’s history and characteristics were discovered in collections of historic maps, images and stories. Supporting this concept, the garden was read not only as a memory container but also as a memorial to the variety of everyday events that had occurred there. These events were considered to symbolise the development of Melbourne’s public events and civic life.

In terms of physical intervention, the major concern was how to create an interesting and appealing way to encourage physical and intellectual interactions between people and place.

Design Concept

Urban Heritage can be considered as a cultural product of the society; when we promote or consider using a historic landscape for a contemporary purpose, a major concern is how to benefit the public and the city in terms of cost, social-wellbeing and cultural promotion. The concept of gardens as a Memory Container holds that urban memories are a fundamental part of social identity and well being. This design concept proposes gardens to be living memorials of past and present public events, which enhance the appreciation of the city’s developing civic life.

The concept of a Memory Container initially emerged as a gift box. The surface of the box represents the elevation of the garden. This image represents the garden as peaceful, European and relatively modest. When the box is opened, additional surfaces in the form of collages of different eras are revealed, representing the
gardens’s richness usually hidden from view. Three different coloured ribbons are twisted and fitted inside the box to represent three types of history: the purple ribbon represents its marvellous history, the blue represents its everyday history and the grey represents its threadbare history. The chronology of the garden is classified into these three types of history and then printed onto the ribbons. Together they represent differing versions of history rather than the conventional approach when only one marvellous history is promoted.

A range of academic critiques informs these three versions of historic typologies, where interpretation and branding of historic sites tend to present a sanitised version of history; where the more modest and the darker side of events are dismissed or erased. One example is the branding and redevelopment scheme in The Rocks, Sydney, a historic waterfront precinct redeveloped by the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority (SCRA) as a tourist attraction. Waitt critiques the authority’s interpretation as:

Figure 5.1: Concept model of Memory Container
‘Arguably it provides a biased interpretation of a site sanctioned as the birth place of the Australian nation that removes reference in the markers and built environment to the non-marketable items, including the ignoble, the work of women, conflict with Aboriginal people, the suffering of men and women, and discrimination against ethnic Chinese.’ (Waitt, 2000, p.837). Another example is the Xintiandi area in Shanghai, China, which is an historic neighbourhood that was the French Concession prior to 1949. The Xintiandi has been redeveloped as a tourist attraction that accommodates shopping, entertainment and leisure facilities. One of the attractions is the Shikumen Museum, which displays the everyday life occurring in a typical Shikumen building (a particular house typology) in the era of Old Shanghai. (Wai, 2006). Wai critiques: ‘In the case of Shikumen Museum, everyday life has been glamorised and cleaned up...The mundane, messiness, scandalous and clandestine aspects of everyday life in Shikumen houses of the past risk submersion.’ (Wai, 2006, p.255).
Figure 5.2: Gordon Waitt’s Model of Different Versions of Authenticity (The Rocks)
Waitt’s critiques are similar to my concern regarding the current Master Plan of the Carlton Gardens, which focuses solely on a version of the designated marvelous period between 1880 and 1901. I use the memory box as a thinking tool; in the understanding the different versions of the intertwined and overlapped history of the site, represented and informed by the twists of the each of the differing ribbons. The exterior and the interior of the box represent the contrast between the Carlton Gardens’ tranquil surface and the submerged resonant features. When I open the box various images of the garden’s past can be seen. The longer length of the blue ribbon makes clear that unremarkable everyday history occurs more commonly than either the marvellous or the mean. The three versions of history are presented as an entity rather than advocating for one particular version. The box is available to the public as a memento of his or her visit, with the interpretation of its contents left to each individual viewer.

The concept of multiple histories developed via the memory-box-making needs to be made clear through a design intervention. How can a design intervention reveal these three versions of history? What significant interpretation and understanding of the site could be evoked or provoked?

Four design interventions at different locations in the Carlton Gardens are designed to make visible and test the concept of the Memory Container. They are named: Garden of the Demolished Annexes; Oval Garden; Memorial Parterres; and Path of Glory. Firstly in the design of the Garden of Demolished Annex and the Oval Garden, these demolished and removed items represent routine everyday history that during their life accommodated a variety of public uses and events. Secondly, the design of the Memorial Parterres tests a way of juxtaposing the history of the marvelous, the everyday and the threadbare, through inscribing the chosen texts on the surface of the landscape. Thirdly, the Path of Glory is designed to memorialise the establishment of the first Australian Parliament in 1901. These designs create a series of sub- or lower spaces in the existing landscape, where particular meanings of the site are made clear through these interventions.
Garden of the Demolished Annexes

The location of the Annexes was the east and west sides of the Royal Exhibition Building’s north elevation (Fig. 5.4), which is currently the empty space between the Royal Exhibition Building and the new Melbourne Museum. The space is large and on occasions occupied by visitors attending an event at either of the two civic buildings. Visitors coming from the Royal Exhibition Building events also spill into this area. My activity mapping showed that a great number of visitors to the Melbourne Museum pass through this area, but otherwise it is rarely used. Another activity that captured my attention was the young people on the east-side of the paved surface, who often gather here to use their skate-boards and bikes. (Fig. 5.5). The west-side of the ground welcomes patrons to the IMAX Cinema, and school-children are here almost daily as they alight from school-buses to queue for the Melbourne Museum. Usually they stay longer in this area than other museum visitors, in order to relax or take instruction from their teachers.
Figure 5.4: Demolished Wings of the Royal Exhibition Building in 1890s (Victorian Icon)

Figure 5.5: Current Skaters’ activity (Activity Mapping Project)
Historically, government offices occupied the Western Annex for a many years. The State Parliament occupied it from 1901 to 1927. It was then ‘used by a variety of Government Departments, including the Motor Registration Branch, and the Rathdowne Street frontage was finally covered by car-parking (as it is today) in the 1950s’. (City of Melbourne, 1984).

The Eastern Annex of the building has served a great variety of civic uses since the 1890s. It had hosted a Museum, an Aquarium, the Australian War Museum and the Royal Ballroom. (City of Melbourne, 1984). The most significant civic use of the Eastern Annex was the Aquarium (1885-1953) and Australian War Museum (1918-1940s). David Dunstan commented the Aquarium was the Exhibition Trustees’ greatest achievement since the International Exhibitions of the 1880s. He notes that it was the first Exhibition Aquarium in Australia (Dunstan, 1996, pp.177-178), and one of Melbourne’s best loved attractions. (Dunstan,1996, p.359). In regard to the Australian War Museum, it has been recognised: ‘The Exhibition Building was the first home of the Australian War Museum and the scene of its first displays immediately after the Great War of 1914-18. Even after the museum’s relocation to Canberra, a display and store was maintained at the Exhibition Building which functioned as the museum’s branch office until 1971.’ (Dunstan,1996, p.288, Fig.20).

The longevity and the variety of uses of the Western and Eastern Annexes are considered outstanding, and exemplify the site’s long-existing role as a major civic institution. These outstanding uses are embodied in the design concept of the garden as a memorial to civic life and ordinary everyday history. The plan footprints of the Annexes are to be re-inscribed on the ground-surface to designate their original positions in the Gardens.
The 1890s building plan of the Eastern Annex is used to outline the footprint reinscribed onto the ground-surface. The facade walls are re-elevated in a variety of ways to create a sense of outdoor/indoor space, which stimulates the visitors’ imagination by recalling the demolished buildings (Fig. 5.6). For the raised walls close by the Exhibition Building, the walls are distorted and have sloped surfaces for use by skaters. The walls close to the Melbourne Museum are raised as seating areas shaded by trees to provide a comfortable subspace for museum visitors to sit (Figs. 5.7, 5.8).

Figure 5.6: The facade walls are re-elevated
Figure 5.7, 5.8: The facade walls generate a range of new activities
The texts relating to the Australian War Museum are literally inscribed on the raised walls close to its original location. Similarly, the Aquarium is inscribed using the same historic graphics and font, on the ground-surface where the original entrance was located; and includes the details of its opening in 1885, and the tragic fire in 1953 that destroyed it. (Dunstan, 1996, pp.394-395). In a like manner, the plan of the existing underground car-parks is inscribed as an overlapping footprint on the ground indicating the area’s use as a car-park since the 1980s.

Figure 5.9: Aquarium is inscribed using the same historic graphics and font, on the ground-surface where the original entrance was located.
The footprint of the Western Annex is inscribed in accordance with the 1900 building plan, which shows the modified building was initially planned to house the Parliament of Australia (although it eventually housed the State Parliament) (Dunstan, 1996, p.264). On the ground surface, selective lawn planting differentiates the original indoor room layout, and this footprint of soft surfaces provides an area to play for school children. The plan layout of the councillors’ meeting room is particularly pronounced to symbolise the past government institutions on the site with the provision of new seats orientated according to their original historic layout. This recreated meeting room offers an opportunity for school children to explore the history of the building through physical engagement and play.

Figure 5.10: The Reinscribed Western Annex
The Eastern and Western Annexes’ inscriptions are interpreted literally. It is acknowledged that inscribing the footprint of demolished structures is not new in the design field concerning historic sites. The forecourt of the Museum of Sydney (located in Governor Phillip Tower) designed by Australian Architects, Denton Corker Marshall sets one of the precedents. (Fig.5.11). ‘Governor Phillip Tower is built on the site of the colony’s first Government House, which Phillip and eight subsequent governors occupied from 1789. Only fragments of the stone foundations remain. They are preserved and the space of the site incorporated as an open forecourt to the Museum of Sydney located at the northern base of Governor Phillip Tower on Bridge Street.’ (Cooper and Beck, 2000, p.118). Remains of the footings of the Governor’s House are preserved under the new surface of the forecourt. The outlines of the footings are marked by different coloured stone on the new surface, which remind the public of the location and importance of the remains of the early European settlers in Australia. (Nie and Chen, 2004, p.3).

My design engages more deeply by its inclusion and a gesture towards the present existing activities, when selecting and generating the form and design of the plan footprint. The designs have a clear purpose in creating deeper connections through recalling these daily activities, and thus the experiences of being provoked or evoked. For example, the inscribed texts associated with the Aquarium and War Museum elicit discovery by the young skaters as they approach the footprints of their playground, and make them aware of the past uses of the space and encourage contemplation of its history. When school children play on the seats on the newly inscribed meeting room floor-plan they can begin to imagine what happening during past Parliamentary meetings. Their experience is moved from play to thinking, learning and reflecting which I consider to be a deeper interaction with the site. When a particular moment of play shifts to thinking, that is the moment where one is being evoked or provoked. For passing visitors, recognition of the meaning of the footprints can engender thoughts of the past; on the other hand they may see the space merely as a playground for school children and young skaters. Some may be irritated by the new play activities and see them as detracting from the tranquil atmosphere of the memorial footprints. If so they are likely to be provoked as they disagree with this use on a heritage site, but it allows an opportunity to reflect on how the site has been changed by the past and present
contrasting uses. A sense of the length of the time of occupation, and an awareness of the evolution of the site are evoked. (Fig.5.12).

As a result, the civic functions of the demolished Annexes and their social meanings become accessible and are made clearer to everyday users by these designed experiences. Rather than deliberately advocating designated meaning and significance (such as a heritage status); this design provides an alternative approach to facilitate individual users in their discovery and interpretation of the meaning of a place.

Figure 5.11: The Forecourt of the Museum of Sydney (Denton Corker Marshall)

Figure 5.12: The Design Attempts to Evoke Both Users and Viewers
The Oval Garden

The Oval was originally located on the north side of the Royal Exhibition Building in between the two Annexes. The Oval captured my attention when engaged with the Authenticity Mapping project, as it hosted and accommodated a great range of cultural and sporting events during in its time. Similar to the demolished Annexes, I found it meaningful in terms of symbolising the continuous civic life of the Carlton Gardens.

The design differs from the demolished Annexes, in that a new location is selected to reinscribe the Oval, and is located in the North Garden, around the basketball ground and children’s playground. With regard to my activity mappings introduced in Chapter 2, (p.35), this spot is the most intensively used space in the Carlton Gardens, and this quality of intensity coincides with that of the original oval. On reflection, I consider this coincidence to be an opportunity to create a connection between the past and the present.

The form of the Oval Garden was established in the earlier design introduced in Chapter 4. However, I find its form hard to distinguish from its surroundings as presently delineated by the planting materials. Originally it was an enclosed structure with a smooth curved surface. A new arrangement of the Oval is tested in this design with the surrounding enclosure heights varied to allow different uses: the lower seating area is for parents to watch their children, the higher walls to climb and play on. The intervention is minimal in order to maintain the existing visual connection between the playground and the Melbourne Museum.

The initial design challenge is how to stimulate the visitors understanding of the landscape’s characteristic as a civic and cultural activity venue. The ability to be able to transfer the form of a past popular activity to a relevant current one is of significance to me as a designer. I have an accumulation of information in regard to the qualities of both the former and the new Oval, not generally available. I found these multiple meanings difficult to translate via the action of reinscribing the form of the Oval.
Figure 5.13: The Oval in the 1920s (Civilising the City)

Figure 5.14: Minimal Form of the New Oval
Memorial Parterres

This design exploration addresses two of my concerns centred on the interpretation of the historic urban landscape. At the conceptual level my search is for method of interpretation that opens up diverse versions of history rather than purely advocating one of marvel. At the start of the design process is an exploration of ways of generating the form of a parterre garden. The new design is for the existing parterre gardens, currently underused, which tests a series of different interpretations in contrast to a mere replica of past form.

This design proposes a series of garden rooms enclosed by concrete multifaceted surfaces rather than planting materials. The surfaces are tetrahedral and receive sunlight in fractured reflection. Historic texts describing the events from the Carlton Gardens’ chronology are inscribed on the various angled surfaces of the new parterres. Texts inscribed and highlighted in gold represent those marvellous events and receive more direct sunlight, symbolising the celebrated historical events. Dark grey texts discretely recessed onto the more shaded surfaces areas represent the disreputable events that have occurred on the site. The texts are randomly arranged and occasionally overlap each other as a reminder of the complex and interrelated aspects of the landscape’s history.

At the first glance, the abstract form of the new parterres is provocative and is a challenge to the general understanding of what constitutes a parterre garden. It is expected that their unconventional appearance will attract people to approach and in doing so discover and read the inscribed texts. The texts representing the three categories of history evoke and stimulate the viewer to contemplate the site’s rich cultural past. In addition, the method of categorising these historic events is dependant and relate directly to the variation of viewers’ reactions. For instance, when Spanish influenza struck Melbourne in 1919, the Royal Exhibition Building was transformed into a hospital, this particular detail was initially categorised as part of the neglected history. My initial reaction to an event that had taken many people’s lives was unenthusiastic, as I imagined the Exhibition Building to be then a place of distress. I assume the viewers to the new parterre design would feel the same way. Anthea Hyslop describes the scene of the Exhibition Hospital as: ‘New cases arrived by house-drawn
ambulance, with masked attendants, and were carried in on stretchers, some of these bearing mother and children together. No visitors were allowed, except in extremis, when family members, masked and gowned, attended the bedside of a dying relative...’ many were the empty beds when we woke in the morning, a survivor recalled; ‘by they were soon filled again and the staff worked on.’ (Dunstan, 1996, p.321). In light of this, I later realised the event could be categorised as an outstanding episode as the Exhibition Hospital provided selfless support and a caring service for a great number of patients in distress. The temporary hospital treated 4,046 cases. Anthea Hyslop noted from the record of the departing patients’ opinions of their stay, there were 1,810 satisfied entries and only one dissatisfied entry. (Dunstan, 1996, p.327). Whether this event should be categorised as distressful or marvellous depends on each individual perspective. In this case, the potential to encourage a variety of personal interpretations of the place’s meaning is lost, due to designer imposing their own perspective on the historic event.
Path of Glory

The Path of Glory is designed as a memorial to the establishment of the first Federal Parliament of Australia in the Royal Exhibition Building. The narrow pathway that connects the entrance of the Royal Exhibition Building to the current Parliament of Victoria is designed to symbolise the physical relocation of the government institutions. Iconic golden wattles are planted along the pathway. (Australian National Botanic Gardens, 2011). When the yellow blossoms appear each year, a temporary but poetic and metaphoric reminder of this event blooms. The pathway attempts to enhance the visitors’ understanding of the shift of government institutions through a connection between old and new Parliament houses. However, the two buildings are not visually connected, and without any textual information, the design is unconvincing as it is not closely associated with the event and the meaning it intends to explain.
Figure 5.16: Path of Glory
5.2.2 Reflections on a Memory Container

In these four design propositions, the concept is one of presenting the Carlton Gardens as a memorial to civic life. The idea of being open to accept and understand different versions of history was tested through them. All these designs bring some new opportunity as they explore the potential of their existing and specific condition. However, I eventually recognised that the designs of the Oval Garden, Memorial Parterres and Path of Glory were unwarranted. They share the issue of physically imposing some designated significance upon the space, which as a design approach is no different from that of period reconstruction or an invocation of the celebrated past that I argued against. The new oval established in the children’s playground and the basketball ground is the most popular spot in the Carlton Gardens. I later realised the physical design appeared to be superfluous because the activities it facilitates already exist. The significance and the meaning of the space are continuously reinforced through everyday uses, and have no need of physical marking. The designs of the Memorial Parterres and the Pathway of Glory attempt to reveal the contrast between different versions of history through inscribing various past events of the Royal Exhibition Building and the Carlton Gardens. However, I realised that the Royal Exhibition Building and the South Garden themselves already contained the marvellous, the everyday and the distressing history, which is understood and interpreted by individual viewers. I do not have to visibly categorise these versions and deliberately force the visitors to accept them.

In contrast, the reinterpretations of the Eastern and Western Annexes of the Royal Exhibition Building are considered successful in terms of exploration of the possible, and creating provocative and evocative experiences. These interventions enhance the existing uses of the space and stimulate a more profound connection through everyday activities. The new form of the Eastern Annex’s footprint facilitates the existing activities of the young skate-boarders and they hopefully perceive the place differently if and when they understand the implications of the footprint and its previous function. When school children are welcome to use and play with the new chairs of the original councillors’ meeting room, their thoughts are engaged with past events. Both designs indicate the presence of some fragments of the demolished past, but left enough space
for individuals to interpret the significance and meaning of them personally. In terms of ensuring everyday activities enrich the experience of thinking and learning about a site’s history, this design uses a similar strategy to that of the Fire Limits project designed by West 8 in Rotterdam.

This project is a memorial to the bombing known as the Rotterdam Blitz on 14 May 1940: ‘The Rotterdam Blitz refers to the aerial bombardment of Rotterdam by the German Air Force on 14 May 1940, during the German invasion of the Netherlands in World War II. The objective was to support the German troops fighting in the city, break Dutch resistance and force the Dutch to surrender. Even though negotiations were successful, failing communications on the German side caused the unnecessary bombardment of much of the city centre.’ (wikipedia, 2011b). The design uses in-ground lighting to permanently mark the areas of the city that were destroyed by the bombing: ‘An iconic image of a flame is incorporated in circular light fittings in the ground and in several information stations, that together form the marking. The image of the flame shows a visual connection with Zadkine’s statue commemorating the bombing of Rotterdam’. (West 8, 2007). These in-ground lights capture people’s attention, stimulate their curiosity and encourage them to explore. When the visitor experiences this particular event, either through viewing the image created by the lights, or at the information facilities; this activity produces a deeper experience in thinking and learning (Fig. 5.17).
The design process of the Memory Container appropriated an approach that endeavours to interpret the social significance of the site beyond the restoration of its historic features. This approach is similar to Room 4.1.3’s design for Berlin’s Potsdamer Platz in terms of recognising that social significance is an essential characteristic of place. ‘The Potsdamer Platz is an important public square and traffic intersection in the centre of Berlin, Germany. After developing within the space of little over a century from an intersection of rural thoroughfares into the most bustling traffic intersection in Europe, it was totally laid waste during World War II and then left desolate during the Cold War era when the Berlin Wall bisected it. Since German reunification, Potsdamer Platz has been the site of major redevelopment projects.’ (wikipedia, 2011a). Its symbolic significance during the Cold War era is recognised by Richard Weller as: ‘of all the fascinating sites along the length of No-Man’s-Land (along the Berlin Wall), the Potsdamer Platz is the most hallowed.’ (Weller, 2005, p.20).

Richard Weller recognises the characteristics of the site through its social and political meanings beyond its historic physical fabric. This recognition illustrates an intangible approach to reading the significance of historic urban landscapes. For many socially or politically significant sites, the interpretation of its intangible character is much more powerful than a reinscribing or rebuilding of the physical structure. In my
interpretation of the Eastern and Western Annexes, the demolished structures are reinscribed in order to emphasise the social meaning of the Carlton Gardens as a civic venue.

The Potsdamer Platz is designed as an urban park ‘to support and contribute landscape designs to Daniel Libeskind’s submission to the 1991 urban design competition.’ (Weller, 2005, p.20). The design focuses on the interpretation of past and present social meanings of the site. Richard Weller positions the park on the Potsdamer Platz and it is composed of five layers of infrastructure named as The Earth Work, The Day Theatre, The Night Theatre, The Machine Elysium and The Living Machines. These layers ‘are organised upon two templates: the former plans of the site and a network diagram derived from interconnecting the main cities in Europe's post-cold war geography, a landscape stretching from London to the Urals.’ (Weller, 2005, p.22) The two templates show the designer’s concept as one that allows the past and present meanings of the site to overlap.

I will use the designs of The Day Theatre and The Night Theatre as typical examples. The Day Theatre sets up thirty-six movable screens: ‘There is one screen for each of the thirty-six main cities within the larger European cold war theatre. A diagram of the network that interconnects all of the thirty-six main European cities to each other is transported on to the site as a template with which to locate the tracks along which the screen move.’ (Weller, 2005, p.24). I understand and read the screens as having two metaphoric meanings. Conceptually their movement and changeable interactions indicate the complex relationships between these political centres. In addition these screens physically appear to be a fragmented reminder of the Berlin Wall. Although these screens are set up as a cold war theatre referencing the past, they are more likely to represent from the manipulation of their positions, the present post-cold war relationship. In this complex manner of manipulation, the past and present are overlapped allowing multiple meanings to be interpreted through the operation of the screens. Some visitors may be reminded of particular incidents when memory is jogged by the metaphoric significance of the screens at the Berlin Wall, when thoughts are directed to the era of the Cold War. Some viewers may be provoked when the metaphoric meaning of the screens' linkages between the thirty-six
European cities relations is made clearer. Whether in agreement or not, their preconceived opinions of the post-Cold War political geography are challenged.

*The Night Theatre* is a reinterpretation of a 19th century urban plan of the site. The dark paving represents the shadows of the former buildings but not their direct plan footprints - this was a less literal way of interpreting – it is poetic statement but less easily readable. This was evocative -‘people can then stand between the edge of the old city and the present so their own shadows dance across the park, reaching across space and time.’(Weller, 2005, p.25). The reuse of old structures to accommodate new activities is an effective design strategy that potentially blurs the distance between past and present. In the visitor’s interaction with past memories, it is the presence of old and new simultaneously evoking thoughts of the past: I am standing on past memories but I am living in the present.

Figure 5.18: *The Day Theatre* (Room 4.1.3)
Figure 5.19: The Night Theatre (Room 4.1.3)
In these two design proposals, past structures such as the Berlin Wall and the 19th century urban plan are reinterpreted to include new forms in order to reinvigorate present day activities. In this way, the past and present are overlapped. My interpretation of the Annexes of the Royal Exhibition Building includes a similar approach, with the past’s plan footprint reinterpreted to accommodate present activities. Furthermore, both Richard Weller’s designs and mine encourage the existing activities to embrace a more profound and intellectual experience. Thoughts of the site’s past generate a more profound experience, and one is being evoked. When forming an opinion (in agreement or not) about the new interventions, one is being provoked. I considered the shift between these cerebral experiences to be a significant finding emerging from this project.

Differing from Room 413’s complex and multi-layered physical and systematic interventions, my design for the Garden of the Demolished Annexes appears to be more modest and readable. At completion the design echoes the Carlton Gardens’ present character - an urban park that people visit for enjoyment and relaxation. This is different to the Potsdamer Platz design that is arguably treated more as a political symbol. As a result, although the new Annexes are designed as memorials, they appear to be both minimal and playful and act as little indicators/reminders of the richness of the site’s past that has faded through time.

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5.2.3 Design Proposition 2: Event Landscape

The Concept of Event Landscape

In the Memory Container Project, the distinguishing features of the Carlton Gardens past histories, are as a civic venue and are recognised to hold great social and cultural significance. This recognition implies an alternative approach to interpretation of the significance and meaning of an historic urban landscape. The idea of the Memory Container marks the site as a living memorial to the continuum of civic life. Where in the former structures such as the Oval, and the two Annexes are selected and interpreted as symbols of public life. The concept is evocative as the thoughts surrounding the site’s past are stimulated by the reinterpretation of the past structures. The Memory Container differs from the concept of Event Landscape, which celebrates in a more provocative way the more varied public and civic events of the site. The continuity of the event is captured as an intangible quality, although in the design there is no reference to or interpretation of a former physical structure. The sequence of new events is a design strategy that explores a systematic approach to intervention.

Event Calendar - an intangible approach to conserve the site’s essential characteristics

I designed an event calendar to illustrate an intangible and systematic approach. The Melbourne Museum, a large cultural institution and the Royal Exhibition Building, an exhibition venue, provide the site with a range of indoor event spaces. The internalisation of the events is unavoidable, but the Carlton Gardens are the setting for a range of formal and informal events for a variety of uses, spilling out from Exhibition spaces. Melbournians have creatively appropriated the Carlton Gardens ever since the site was reserved as an urban park. Various public events and activities are organised in response to the particular needs of the surrounding communities and the city. The ploughing competition is an interesting example, and recorded in the Argus on 3 July, 1858: ‘The land was clay country typical of much of Melbourne and required extensive ploughing and deep trenching before exotic trees could go in…to speed things up and gain some public interest for the project…a ploughing competition to be held within the grounds. Ploughing matches were a popular event at the agricultural fairs of the day.’
(City of Melbourne, 1984). Later the Oval was used as a public activity centre to accommodate a great number of sports and cultural events as the following images show. (pp.254, 276, 288). I wonder how this tradition of outdoor events can continue and strengthen present social and cultural circumstances.

The event calendar is a proposal to explore the potential of the Carlton Gardens as a continual open stage for cultural events. It involves a reorganisation of the annual program to accommodate more of Melbourne’s large events to reclaim its reputation in the event calendar. Hosting large cultural events in front of the iconic Royal Exhibition Building would especially strengthen its attraction to tourists’ and engage with Melbourne cultural life as recognised by the city council: ‘Develop themed maps, walking routes and self-guided itineraries that enable tourists to explore Melbourne’s indigenous heritage, public art, laneways and arcades, parks and gardens, precincts and Melbourne’s World Heritage listed Royal Exhibition Building.’ (City of Melbourne, 2007, p.27).

The event calendar is designed as a small foldable booklet. (Fig.5.20). Two images are shown per month, as the calendar is unfolded. One shows the promoted event of the month, and the other illustrates its historical precedent. The contrast between the two illustrations creates either a provocative or an evocative juxtaposition to reveal a functional or systematic coincidence between past and present. For example, an image of the world’s longest lunch organised in front of the Royal Exhibition Building in 2011, is juxtaposed with an image of a 1904 Christmas Dinner in the Royal Exhibition Building. (Fig. 5.21). The two gastronomic events were located almost at the same spot, but had very different purposes. The current lunch is part of Melbourne’s Food and Wine Festival and promotes the culinary culture of the city. The former Dinner was hosted by the ‘Salvation Army to over three thousand of Melbourne’s poor on 22nd December 1904’ (Dunstan, 1996, p.220). A proposed ice-skating event replicating a past occasion at the Royal Exhibition Building are juxtaposed to suggest a continuation of specific programmes traditionally held on site. (Fig. 5.22). The visitors’ interest and curiosity could be aroused in visualising the same event over time, and in imagining past uses of the site. This aim of the experience, as one of being evoked, or being provoked, is then realised.
Figure 5.20: The *Event Calendar* for Carlton Gardens - as a symbol of event landscape and a cultural product for visitors
Figure 5.21: Dining Events

Figure 5.22: Skating Events
Over time the calendar would change as a symbol of place as a new one is published each year. With this recording of change, the event calendar provides evidence of the characteristics of the place as an event landscape. These characteristics are maintained through systematic interventions. The intangible aspects become a major concern in terms of conservation in this project. This systematic approach is informed by Bernard Tschumi’s concepts of Cross-programming, Trans-programming and Dis-programming in architecture. He elaborates on the contemporary city as a complex and interactive mixture of events - ‘They disrupt and disfigure but, simultaneously, reconfigure, providing a rich texture of experiences that redefine urban actuality: city-events, event-cities.’ (Tschumi, 1996, p.13). Understanding urban landscape as a process of evolution involving constant change, I argue that sustaining the cultural events of the site is an intangible approach to conservation.

Primarily the event calendar is not just a design demonstrating my conceptual proposition and theoretical thinking. It is also a playful and handy tourist item and visitors’ guide that could be used in commercial or tourist promotion for the Carlton Gardens, the Exhibition Building and the Melbourne Museum.

**The Design Propositions: Event Calendar - Gum Tree Forest and Event Parterre**

My perception of Event Landscape shifts the conservation focus from recognition of tangible physical features to the intangible aspect of systematic continuation. By physical intervention in the Event Landscape I further explore ways to evoke multiple meanings in the South Garden.

The proposal for an Event Landscape in the South Garden is a provocative approach to capturing different meanings in the landscape - a colonial and an Australian garden. These two contrasting identities of the garden are revealed and visualised to form a new South Garden fronting the Royal Exhibition Building; these identify with a British colony and a multicultural city in Australia. The design does not judge whether the site should preference a colonial garden or an Australian one, but intends to
juxtapose them. The intention is to use contemporary design language and strategies, to allow the tension and the contrast between these two stylistic features to merge and provoke or evoke contemporary audiences.

The South Garden is divided into two parts: the Event Parterre replaces the old Parterre Garden, and the Gum Tree Forest replaces the avenue of trees along the central axis.

Figure 5.23: Juxtaposition: Gum Tree Forest and Event Parterre
Figure 5.24: The Gum Tree Forest provides a provocative way to reinforce the central axis towards the Royal Exhibition Building.

Figure 5.25: The Canopy of the Gum Tree Forest provides shade for Cultural Events - different in spatiality and meaning.
The Event Parterre is located on the space immediately in front of the Royal Exhibition Building, which consisted of two pathways with the old parterre garden in between. (Fig.5.26). This is one of the under-used spaces of the South Garden. The new design attempts to transform this space into a more distinctive frontage to the Royal Exhibition Building by creating a space for events that can take advantage of, and use the delicate façade of the Exhibition Building as a stage set. The existing pathways and old garden beds are paved and incorporated into a plaza. The paving patterns replicate the fine details of the building’s façade onto the ground: the columns on the elevation are mirrored in the paving to create a sense of coherent geometry between the building and the plaza. The design intention is to create opportunities for internal events in the Exhibition Building to spill out into the garden. The articulated geometry of the paving mirroring the façade of the Royal Exhibition Building strengthens and refines the visual presence of the building and the plaza as one entity. The form of the existing parterre garden is replicated by the various temporary events and activities acting as vivid decorative features on the patterned surface, rather than by static planting materials.

Figure 5.26: Existing Condition
Figure 5.27: *Event Parterre* and the Exhibition Building as Stage Sets for Public Events

Figure 5.28: Proposed Cultural Event at the *Event Parterre*
A group of Ghost Gum trees is planted in the South Garden in front of the Event Parterre to act as a metaphor of modern Australian identity. The Gum Tree forest reinforces the existing visual and spatial alignment along the central, eastern and western axes. The smooth white bark of the gum trees is strangely compatible with the white façade of the Exhibition Building. The Gum Tree forest could be used as a poetic event stage-set in contrast to, in terms of space and atmosphere, the Event Parterre. The visual and conceptual contrast between the Gum Tree Forest and the Royal Exhibition Building is marked. This contrast could annoy some audiences, by erasing the historic features, and in them finding the new garden inappropriate. Some may conceive it as a reminder of the site’s pre-colonial condition. Others may find it totally appropriate, as they perceive the Gum Tree Forest to symbolise the bush, which arguably is associated with Australia’s contemporary identity. Mossop commented the idea of bush is central to Australian culture: ‘The vast majority of the population leads a predominantly urban or suburban life, and yet Australians have traditionally identified with the bush and the people who live there.’ (Mossop, 2006, p.6). Whether the audiences agree or not with the design, discussion on the meanings of the garden is stimulated. This is the moment of being provoked. The Gum Tree Forest is acting as a trigger/catalyst to promote discussion on the meaning of the site.

5.2.4 Reflection on Event Landscape

The concept of the Event Landscape incorporates and acknowledges the site’s significance as a stage-set for Melbourne’s various civic events; similar to the design of the Memory Container incorporating and acknowledging the characteristics of the place accrued over time. The difference between these two is the Memory Container tends to reveal significance through physical interpretation of the demolished structures, while Event Landscape explores the way of sustaining essential characteristics through systematic intervention. The focus in both is the continuation and enhancement of the cultural events. Richard Weller has explored this systematic approach to translating the meanings of the site in the project of the Potsdam Platz. In the layer of the Living Machines, he proposes the landscape to be programmed by the representative teams from the thirty-six European cities. These teams are expected to generate ‘public inter-
action on a range of self-determined projects, so that within its basic structure the park accrues complexity and detail over time.’(Weller, 2005) (p.27). I saw the configuration of the programming as a metaphor of the ever-changing interrelations between the thirty-six European cities.

In terms of physical intervention, the Event Landscape appears to be provocative. The South Garden in the forecourt of the Royal Exhibition Building is transformed into a new garden with a debateable assertion of contemporary identity. The gesture challenges and perhaps disturbs the conventional perception of the landscape as a garden in the Victorian era. The design reclaims the landscape’s historic character as an event venue, and not limiting itself to mere scenery for the surrounding architecture. The Event Parterre and Gum Tree forest create two different but metaphoric stages to host a variety of events. The Event Parterre took a similar approach to American landscape architect Martha Schwartz’s parterre bench for Jacob Javits Plaza (Fig. 5.29). Schwartz describes it as the ultimate park bench: ‘it’s a parterre de broderie made out of looping standards of back-to-back New York City park benches.’ (Richardson, 2004, p.170). The standard New York park furniture creates a mutated version. The Central Park lighting standards are oversized, the trashcans are painted in vivid orange and the benches are stretched and distorted with an appearance of a parterre. They are ‘a comment on the overarching presence of Frederick Law Olmsted, designer of Central Park, in the city’s landscape tradition.’(Richardson, 2004, p.170). The original or the traditional landscape elements are reproduced through abstraction, distortion and disproportion. The new version is most probably a trigger to being provoked, as the visual difference from the original placements, may stimulate people into thinking and forming a new opinion. Again, it is not important whether the audiences agree or not, their learning experience is transformed from one of watching or sitting, to a deeper contemplative experience.
Figure 5.29: Jacob Javits Plaza (Martha Schwartz Partners)
5.3 Provocative/Evocative Design: Shishahai Area

The Another City Above Project introduced in Chapter 4 attempts to accommodate both the current commercial and residential demands on the landscape. However, the building of a major contemporary architectural presence above fragile historic fabric has a significant impact on the uses and ambiance of the courtyard neighbourhood below. This project gave me an understanding of a need for negotiation between differing demands rather than attempting to fulfil them in entirety.

In my investigations, residential issues not only relate to a lack of living space for the existing community, but also the increasingly high-income residents in the courtyard neighbourhoods of Beijing. Through the impact of the economic boom, and the increasing recognition of traditional culture and values in contemporary China, the real estate value of the courtyard house in Beijing’s Old City is increasing dramatically. The courtyard house is cherished as a cultural icon, as a luxurious home, and as a status indicator for their owners. It is estimated that the real estate value of an intact courtyard house may reach 400 million Yuan, which equates to 50 million US Dollars (IFeng, 2009). The prices of the courtyard houses in the Old City average 20 million Yuan (2.5 US Dollars) (Beijing Courtyard Real Estate). The rental price of courtyard houses is extremely high as well, with some costing 50,000 Yuan a month. (Century Realty). An employee’s average monthly income in Beijing is estimated to be 4037 Yuan. (IFeng, 2010). Obviously the courtyard house is beyond the reach of affordable accommodation for an average household. The tourist value of a courtyard house is significant as well, as some of them operate as small hotels and attract a great number of international tourists. (Trip Advisor). The living intimacy of the courtyard enables the tourists to really experience the unique lifestyle of old Beijing.

The following propositions illustrate two different scenarios in dealing with the gentrification, commercialisation, and ways of improving living conditions for the existing community.
5.3.1 Design Proposition 1: Communal Gentrification

The previous discussion on the touristification and gentrification of the historic urban neighbourhoods, such as the Shishahai Area, indicated a struggle between trying to maintain a living neighbourhood for current middle-income communities, and having to deal with the transformation into a gentrified and elegant neighbourhood for visitors and tourists.

One example in China is the redevelopment of the Xintiandi Area in Shanghai discussed earlier in this chapter. The local authority and developer transformed a typical Shikumen housing neighbourhood into an elegant leisure hub and an upmarket residential area. In the branding and development strategies for Xintiandi, high-income and middle-income needs are favoured. Although the area is open to the general public, the expensive retail outlets, restaurants and entertainment venues are affordable only by higher-income earners. Wai suggests that the local elites, expatriates and tourists are the major groups to frequent Xintiandi and these groups of consumers benefit more than others do. Firstly, the retail mix is of decidedly upper-middle class orientation. He points out the cheapest meal found in Xintiandi is from MacDonald’s costing 15 Yuan, along with the fried noodles sold on the street in Shanghai costing only 3 Yuan. Secondly, ‘strict surveillance carried out by security officers along the periphery of Xintiandi provides an almost impermeable buffer for people who are not that well dressed.’ These two strategies ‘shift out undesirable consumers who do not fit into Xintiandi’s upper middle class image.’ (Wai, 2006, p.248).

Although Xintiandi is a well-designed open urban space, its strategies and security policy actually turns it into a semi-private space. The bias of the marketing and planning strategies arguably reduce the opportunities for other social groups’ engagement. As a conservation researcher, I am concerned that these strategies avoid one of the fundamental purposes of cultural heritage conservation - that is the reinforcement of social cohesion. Tunbridge suggests that urban heritage conservation has a wider relevance to the equity and harmony of urban life, given the human diversity of most of the world’s major cities. (Tunbridge, 2008). Serageldin describes cultural heritage as public goods: ‘One of the least understood but most essential identity is its contribution to a society’s ability to promote self-esteem and
empowerment for everyone, including the poor and destitute. Thus cultural identity and cultural heritage appear very much as public goods that deserve public support.’ (Serageldin, 2003, p.240). It should be noted that the bias in development strategies in Xintiandi prevents engagement with wider and more diverse social groups. I argue that social equality allowing accessibility should be addressed at the planning and marketing stage of the conservation and the development of the urban heritage sites.

In the case of Shishahai Area, the middle-income community continues takes part in ordinary everyday life, making it distinctive. This is recognised by the conservation authority: ‘The traditional lifestyle and folk culture are one of the most significant values of the Shishahai. Since its early times, the cultural activities as the latum festival, boating, waterlily festival and winter dining have been accommodated along the waterscapes. Nowadays, there are new activities such as fishing, swimming, ice-skating, community dancing classes and the Beijing Opera. These activities enrich the citizens’ leisure life, and reinforce the sense of belonging and community. They are an important representative of local culture.’(Beijing Municipal City Planning Commission, 2002, p.142). For the visitors, the normal courtyard lifestyle and daily activities along the lakeside is attractive and unusual; these visitors include local people with cultural interests, and visitors from regional areas as well as international tourists.

As an urban designer, I believe the everyday life of the community contributes to a place’s characteristics both tangibly and intangibly: the presence of everyday activities in the public domain of the Hutongs gives a sense of intimacy and way of life to both the insider and outsider. Their lively daily activities (such as dining in the Hutong, playing chess and winter swimming) are a true display of the unique lifestyle of Beijing. The visitors’ interactions and engagement with residents’ routines are experiences of the everyday, which cannot occur in a staged or Disneyfied historic setting.

Following on from this, I propose the distinction of Shishahai Area as a leisure hub for local communities should be maintained, as it accurately represents the long-standing tradition of the place. The title of the proposal is Communal Gentrification. It demonstrates my juggling between support for developing economic potential and sustaining the social significance. Between these two positions is a negotiable outcome. A new development model for Shishahai Area is proposed based on the
adaptation of the traditional courtyard model. The following argument will outline this model at urban, street and human scale.

**Planning Strategies at Urban Scale**

The first planning strategy is to address the process of gentrification and deal with the requirements of different social groups. It should be understood that gentrification is something that cannot be fully controlled but I believed this planning strategy achieves better public engagement than the strategy applied to the Xintiandi Project. As the real estate value of courtyard dwellings in the inner city has increased, more remaining original residents consider selling their property and purchasing larger modern apartments outside the city-centre. At the same time, the low-density and cultural values of the courtyard house attract higher-income buyers. However, if higher-income earners occupy the entire Hutong area, the area would gradually become a gated community. The reduced living density of the courtyard houses is one of the main causes of its attraction. As a consequence, each courtyard house would accommodate only one household and most of the resident’s activities would happen inside the private courtyards. The everyday activities typically extending from shared courtyards house into the Hutong space will disappear along with the relocation of the working-class residents. Ma recommends this simple gentrification approach in his planning consultation project for Chaodou Hutong in Beijing’s Old City. He suggests the historic buildings in that particular area be replaced by the new courtyard housing designed according to traditional architectural rules. The renovated area would be: ‘replacing the high-density shared chaotic courtyards existing for several decades. The new development will provide the living mode of one courtyard-one house household for a high quality residential area. The renovated Hutong and courtyards will be managed as a closed community. The high quality service and exclusive cultural atmosphere will attract the desirable residents who bring the social and economic benefits to the area.’ (Ma, 2005, p.261).
I argue this approach overlooks the values of the existing shared living style in the courtyards with its middle-income community. The appearance of the shared courtyards and Hutongs may be chaotic and humble at times, but the intimate atmosphere and strong sense of community are unique. More importantly, as many public facilities and social resources are contained in the old city, the relocation of a large number of economically disadvantaged residents would affect their access to a range of infrastructures, (e.g. schools, hospitals and other social services) resulting in the potential privileging of the upper class. From this, I suggest that the authorities’ only assign selected areas for mixed residential and commercial development, with the rest remaining for existing residents.

This proposal recommends that selected areas for development could be in areas where living density increased the highest in the last 50 years (Fig.5.30), and as a result has lost some of its original quality, as well as having poorer living conditions through over-crowding. These spaces could be developed into three types - commercial buildings, private houses and public courtyards. In this model, the developer would pay for the relocation of the existing residents while building new houses. Each redevelopment would include several pavilions for commercial use and small courtyards for the general public. I believe this combination of commercial, real-estate development and public facilities would benefit wider social groupings. (Fig. 5.31). Then the high-income residents would have private houses; the middle-income residents and visitors could access the commercial facilities and small gardens, and with everyone enjoying the courtyard. (Figs. 5.32, 5.33).
Figure 5.30: Red indicates the growth of the area in the last 50 years
Figure 5.31: Proposed Model of Regeneration (in Blue) - 11 Clusters - A combination of housing, commercial development and public space
Figure 5.32: Proposed Redevelopment Model-Block 1
Figure 5.33: Proposed Redevelopment Model-Block 2
The second strategy is to explore the potential of the whole area rather than concentrate on the commercial development along the waterfront. As discussed in my observation of Shishahai’s commercial development, the current commercial buildings are concentrated along the waterfront, leaving potential for development in the undervalued main areas of the Hutong. This planning strategy proposes the commercial and cultural agendas be distributed over the whole of the Hutong area, which creates more interesting routes, while offering more chance encounters for visitors and locals alike. As well as commercial buildings requiring larger openings outward to the street, if they are planned at some distance from each other, there would be less impact on the Hutong’s street elevations, conserving this important physical layer of authenticity. This dispersal provides a more authentic Hutong visiting experience than the one existing, giving visitors a sense of mystery, one of the attractions of the area. A simple tourist map helps the visitors in location searching. The whole of Hutong could be much more attractive if the hidden things are discovered and revealed in surprising ways.

Figure 5.34: Existing Building Use: Variable Use or Permanent Solutions
Design interventions at Street and Human Scale

At street and human scale, the new design strategies for the courtyard model retain the traditional courtyard’s essential physical and spatial features. The private residential courtyards in the development model are constructed according to traditional principles; fulfilling the needs of low-density residential use. The changes and adaptations are shown in the design for the public courtyards and include commercial and leisure use. The need is for more public access and visibility, than the traditional architectural model could offer. I have developed several strategies for the public courtyard that have minimal impact on the spatial quality of the Hutongs.

Firstly, the public courtyards are to be located immediately alongside the Hutong spaces and accessed by the public. They are enclosed, either by walls or commercial buildings. The wall openings and the commercial building façades facing the Hutong space are to be minimal. The size of openings in the elevations is regulated to prevent the Hutong street typology changing.

Figure 5.35: Minimal Openings on the Courtyard Elevation
Figure 5.36: The public courtyards are hidden behind walls or buildings. They don’t have direct visual connection towards the Hutong. The spatial arrangement sympathises the traditional courtyard’s spatial quality.
Secondly, although the opening sizes proposed are minimal, temporary attractions such as signage, lighting, seating-areas and product displays are managed by each individual business owner. This strategy maintains the Hutong elevation visually and functionally as one that is both diverse and vibrant. Allowing and encouraging individual owners to create their own additional displays within the guidelines of the spatial framework creates a strategy of balance, one between control and a free for all. This attempts to maintain the chaos, the humble and intimate atmosphere created by everyday objects and individual creativity.

Thirdly, there are no restrictions on the opening-sizes in the commercial buildings facing the courtyard to allow open access for the sale of the merchandise. It proposes a wide produce and price range in the shops, fulfilling the various needs of the differing consumer groups. At the same time, for the residents of the private courtyards, entry is via the public courtyard to reach their home. The degree of privacy is increased in relation to the Hutong’s private courtyard entrance, an increase in the essential spatial narrative of a courtyard lifestyle. This plan arrangement also creates opportunities for increased interaction and engagement between insiders and outsiders. It also encourages higher-income and middle-income residents to share the same public domain. (Hutongs and the public courtyards).

Lastly, in respect to one of the most important benefits of courtyard living, walls acting as a clear boundary between the public and private courtyard are constructed, and the privacy of the residents maintained.
Figure 5.37: The opening-sizes in the commercial buildings facing the courtyard

Figure 5.38: Shared public courtyards
5.3.2 Reflections on Communal Gentrification

In terms of physical proposals, the Communal Gentrification project appears to be reminiscent of the past, as the new courtyard model has minimally changed the physical aspects of the traditional courtyard house. All the materials, decorative architectural elements and spatial arrangements are maintained. Although the idea of public courtyard is new in the Courtyard-Hutong system, its appearance is similar to the previous, to maintain a physical consistency over the whole area. A sense of *stepping back in time* is suggested by this overall physical consistency.

My design strategy includes spaces for individual interventions and adaptations fashioned by the owners themselves. Formal design often incorporates many dynamic elements but the creativity of the everyday users offer an unexpected unpretentious chaos. The attractiveness of small individual interventions, used as informal design elements are found in adjacent historic neighbourhoods. Naluoguxiang Lane located in Beijing’s Old City is one example. Similar in situation to Shishahai Area, the courtyards in Naluoguxiang Lane have been commercialised into cafes, shops and eateries to attract local young people and tourists. The product displays, signage, seating and continually changing visitors as they move and sit, distinguish the Hutong as a place of continuously change. Differing from my critique of the existing interventions in Shishahai, these attractions are small and changeable allowing curious visitors to explore further. These examples showed me that minimal attractions are more effective in terms of stimulating visitors’ curiosity and exploration efforts. For example, in the historic neighbourhoods around Kiyomizu-dera (Kiyomizu Temple) in Kyoto, where the buildings are converted into various commercial uses, the attractions are minimal but their arrangements vary widely, supporting new uses while maintaining an historic atmosphere. I consider the strategy of allowing and encouraging individual interventions distinguish the area, from that of a staged environment, or a theme park (Fig. 5.39).

In terms of the planning strategy, and in consideration of the needs of wider social groups, the project is *provocative* as the planning is not driven solely by economic forces or by the conservation of historic features. The planning strategy, in relation to both the development value and social equality of access to the historic urban
landscape, argues for the importance of access to cultural heritage being seen as a public asset. The planning layout of the public courtyards ensures there are varied opportunities for different social groups to engage with and experience. Through these increasing opportunities, the appreciation of the site is not limited to a particular group, but is inclusive.

Figure 5.39: Attractions in Beijing’s Hutongs and Kiyomizu-dera area in Kyoto

**Intervention created by**

**individual owners in**

**Kiyomizu-dera, Kyoto**

**Intervention created by**

**individual owners in**

**Beijing’s Hutongs**

Signage guides visitors to find a hidden eatery (Ju Men Xiao Chi) in Shishahai Area

*Figure 5.39: Attractions in Beijing’s Hutongs and Kiyomizu-dera area in Kyoto*
5.3.3 Design Proposition 2: Courtyard Evolution

This design proposition, Courtyard Evolution, focuses on sustaining the existing community, and maintaining the courtyard lifestyle of the Shishahai Area. The extremely high-density in the existing courtyard houses has affected the quality of life for many residents in the local community. My chronology diagrams of the Shishahai Area, (Chapter 4) show that the density of the site dramatically increased after 1900, and the courtyard houses began to be shared by several households due to socio-economic changes. The traditionally private house has become a shared or communal housing typology. It is well known in Beijing that this type of lifestyle is ‘Da Za Yuan’ which means a big messy courtyard. The big messy courtyard lifestyle had problematic issues in sustaining high-density living: with limited space, insufficient infrastructure and lack of privacy. The positive aspect, in relation to people living in relatively small spaces, daily interactions are frequent, there is an attachment to place; and the sense of community in the courtyard area is stronger than other urban-living typologies in Beijing. From TV dramas or news programs we learn that older generations complain about how lonely and cold they felt, when they moved into a high rise apartment, and this loss of a sense of community, aroused a series of debates among the different stakeholders. Life in the big messy yard is a nostalgia cultural memory in Beijing’s courtyard houses. The intimate relationship engendered between neighbours in relatively small living areas is greatly appreciated by the older generation, and arguably lost in modern apartment living. (022net, 2010, Hudong.com, bjqx.org.cn, 2011).

This sense of nostalgia has recently been recognised and captured by a contemporary artist, Song Dong, who lived in the big messy yard when a child.(Song, 2010). His exhibition titled Wisdom of the poor also documented the various informal appropriations and adaptations made by common people that have contributed to the unique character of Courtyard-Hutong life.
Figure 5.40: ‘Wisdom of the poor’ Exhibition
This Hutong and the big messy courtyard lifestyle represented some essence of Beijing flavour. In the Hutongs there is a peaceful atmosphere and a variety of tranquil activities can be observed. In the Hutong it is easy for visitors to encounter a real Beijinger and have a conversation with them. The warm, welcoming although slightly superior attitudes of the old-fashioned Beijingers are felt immediately; their lifestyle, activities and opinions are important to the cultural identity of Beijing.

The concept of Courtyard Evolution emerged from a house-for-sale booklet, which is a common marketing tool for real estate properties in China. This little house-for-sale book of Courtyard Evolution represents an idea for generating a new architectural model, based on the traditional Courtyard house, and integrating it into the existing urban fabric.
The Planning Strategy

Using a larger urban scale, a series of courtyard blocks are selected for redevelopment according to their living density, and the quality of the existing architecture. The courtyards that are classified by the local authority as historic buildings in good condition are retained as is, in the planning proposal. Redevelopment is proposed for those blocks that have increased the most in density in the last 50 years. (Fig.5.41).

The purpose of this project is to increase the living space for the over-crowded courtyards, on the basis of how to increase the capacity of the built-form. Primarily, increasing the number of floors-levels in the courtyards is not an option because of the crucial proportional relationship between the height of the courtyard elevation and its width. This spatial relationship is recognised as one of the unique features of this particular urban morphology. (see Chapter 3). It is crucial that the Hutong’s spatial proportions are maintained in order to keep its authenticity.

The recognition that the retention of the height of the courtyard elevation is crucial to the Hutong’s authenticity, led me to explore the possibilities of internal space in a new courtyard architecture. Resulting in the development blocks being excavated to accommodate a new double storey courtyard below. The external height of the new building is maintained in line with a traditional courtyard, but internally the building is two levels including a below-ground courtyard. (Fig.5.42).
Figure 5.41: Areas of redevelopment

- **Featured historical buildings**
- **Buildings constructed after 1962**
- **Redevelopment area**

*Figure 5.41: Areas of redevelopment*
Double Faced Courtyard

In the new courtyard design, the space of the enclosure is more compact with the levels of the living spaces being doubled. The new building simplified the courtyard spaces by reducing a range of enclosures to a single one. (Fig. 5.42). The south-facing main pavilions (Zheng Fang) are enlarged to accommodate the main living areas. The side pavilions (Xiang Fang) are minimised to accommodate other household uses such as the kitchen, bathroom and storage areas. The new courtyard maintains a sense of enclosure, as in the traditional courtyard but is more space-efficient, and is more practical in accommodating a modern lifestyle.

In a series of spatial studies, the new courtyard model of four 60-square-meter units is developed. Each unit has at least one outdoor space as a private area at ground level, or lower ground level, and the central courtyard is a communal space for the four households. The residents can choose to open or close their entrance doors to alter the degree of their privacy. Many of less functional features such as decorative elements and pitched roofs are minimised or removed. But the spatial characteristics of the traditional courtyard building are maintained in the new design as described below. The following descriptions and images illustrate the spatial qualities maintained in the new courtyards.
Figure 5.42: Development of the New Courtyard Model

- Traditional courtyard model
  - The central yard is compacted.

- New courtyard model
  - The east, west pavilions which receive less sunlight, are minimised for kitchen, bathroom functions.

- Enhanced spatial efficiency by transforming the house into double story house.
The proportional relationship of the Hutong-Courtyard system: The one-storey-high Hutong elevation is conserved. The same proportion of visible sky above the traditional Hutong is retained, and contributes at street scale to the sense of spaciousness and openness. This distinguished it from other Chinese traditional laneway typologies.

Figure 5.43: Hight of the Traditional Hutong Is Maintained
The enclosed courtyard space: The spatial rule of minimal openings to the outside wall is maintained, ensuring a high degree of privacy at the human scale offered by the traditional courtyard house. The introverted, mysterious character of the Hutong space is maintained at street scale.

Figure 5.44: Minimal Openings of the Traditional Hutong Elevation Is Maintained
The non-straight/direct spatial arrangement: The traditional courtyard building offered no direct visual connection between the Hutong space and the internal living space, which is maintained in the new courtyard proposal to provide a continuing sense of privacy.

Figure 5.45: The non-straight/direct spatial arrangement is maintained
The distinct hierarchy of public, semi-public and private space: The traditional Hutong-Courtyard system has a strong hierarchy of public and private space. The Hutong, as the corridor along a range of courtyard houses, is public or semi-public, and the enclosed courtyards are private. Although the new courtyard is a shared dwelling, the degree of privacy in the new courtyard and the Hutong is similar, with the quality of enclosure with minimal external openings maintained in the new design. Private balconies and a shared central courtyard retain the sense of semi-private and private areas, in the internal open spaces.

The intimacy of the shared Courtyard lifestyle: The area of the new courtyard is compact. The inviting central courtyard acts as a communal space for the four households creating a feeling of an intimate neighbourhood. The plainly visible daily activities of each neighbour capture the intimacy similarly offered by a traditional shared courtyard.
Traditional courtyard life

New courtyard life

Figure 5.46: The Courtyard as Communal Space Is Maintained
5.3.4 Reflections on Courtyard Evolution

The concept of Communal Gentrification is provocative in terms of changing the traditional courtyard buildings into a contemporary version in an historic environment. But it is also provocative in the respect given to the living community and the friendly lifestyle of shared courtyards, which differs from the conventional conservation approach in only privileging the physical features.

This design proposal is greatly informed by the Juer Hutong Project designed by Wu Liangyong. This award-wining project for the regeneration of the Hutong-courtyard neighbourhood in Beijing demonstrates an innovative approach to recreate the traditional Courtyard-Hutong model of the 1990s. (Wu, 1999). The design recreates the traditional Courtyard house in a new architectural typology that supports a modern lifestyle. The new design increases density by transforming the traditional one-storey house into a three-storey apartment with a shared central courtyard. The significance of this project lies in the social outcomes delivered by the retention of the local community rather than by their relocation. This approach is to retain the essential social groupings within a Courtyard-Hutong neighbourhood, assisting this unique lifestyle in its survival. The Juer Hutong Project uses the idea of doubling the floor-area in order to increase the living areas, and the result appears to be successful: the first phase provides 46 units in 2760 square metres, which doubles the size of the old courtyards; the second phase accommodates 146 units and a total 17,900 square metres of housing.’ (Meng, 2000).

Differing from Wu’s design that increases the building to three stories, my design proposes the double story courtyards are located on excavated sites. The blocks for redevelopment are excavated to accommodate the new double-storey courtyard, while maintaining the original height of the Hutong elevation. If Wu’s architectural model is widely used as a template, the Hutong areas will lose their feeling of spaciousness and serenity due to the increased height of courtyard walls. In my proposal this uniqueness has to be conserved as it is recognised as one of the defining features of the Hutong-Courtyard system.
Figure 5.47: The Building Height of the Juer Hutong Project
The issues compounded after the Juer Hutong project was completed and contributed to my design. Commented by Liang and Zong, the new central yard of the Juer Hutong appears to be smaller, although the area of the central courtyard is similar to the traditional one, the wall height has increased. The peaceful atmosphere is reduced and there is a sense of pressure in the new yard. More importantly, the new courtyard does not receive enough sunshine in the colder seasons to allow community activities. (Liang and Zong, 2005). My design faces a similar issue of not receiving enough sunshine in the central courtyard. I propose a solution for the residents to use the rooftop areas for semi-public activities in autumn and winter. This design compromises the traditional pitched rooftops but creates an alternative communal area for the residents. Wu’s design retains the traditional pitched roofs on his new buildings. The pitched form of the roof allows the new building to better integrate with the existing fabric of the old courtyard buildings (Fig.5.48). Especially from above, the new roofs integrate happily with the surrounding striking courtyard rooftops. However, I argue generally the everyday user better appreciates the courtyard built-form at ground level. The rooftops can be seen from the surrounding tall buildings or prominent landmarks but they don’t really contribute to the residents’ daily use and practices. I consider the pitched rooftops in Wu’s design to be more decorative. I see a great opportunity to accommodate the outdoor activities of the community on the rooftops. At the end, I decided to change them into flat rooftops to give more space for courtyard activities.

The gentrification of the Juer Hutong project has been observed and commented upon. When this project received international recognition, the property values significantly increased. The rental prices are much higher than the average rental in the surrounding neighbourhood. The original owners, mostly middle-income long-term residents, are beginning to rent their apartments to higher-income residents and people from overseas who are attracted by Juer Hutong’s status. (Liang and Zong, 2005, p.73). This unexpected change challenges the original purpose of the project – to retain the existing community in-situ.

The change in resident’s status occurring in Juer Hutong made me realise that the process of gentrification cannot be modified by design. The new design should be able
to accommodate both scenarios, and my proposed new courtyard model is more flexible than Wu’s model. Firstly, my courtyard model is much smaller than Wu’s, and there are only four units surrounding a central courtyard. This model can easily be adapted from accommodating four one-household units, to serving two households if required, so that each household occupies two units. This flexibility gives options to different income and sized households. If the middle-income residents decide to rent the entire block out, then higher-income residents can occupy all four units as one private courtyard dwelling.

Figure 5.48: The Pitched Rooftops of the Juer Hutong Project
5.4 Discussions

5.4.1 Provocative/Evocative Design

Reflections from the design approach for historic urban landscapes - provocative/evocative, can be summerised as follows.

- As discussed in Chapter 3, Layered Authenticity and in Chapter 4, Progressive Authenticity, the authenticity of the place consists of many layers and progresses over time. The immediate uses and requirements at one particular moment in time, is a major driver in re-shaping the authenticity of the site. A major concern is how to define the specifics of authenticity on site while benefiting from its conservation. In urban conservation, there are two ultimate aims: on the one hand, to always allow the landscape to accommodate emerging new uses and functions; and on the other, the landscape needs to act as a reminder of the city’s rich past and this significance be explained to the public. As an urban designer, I found the terms provocative and evocative act as indications or clues to allow me to discover past qualities and characteristics to achieve these two aims. These two words guide me towards a new form of urban design emerging from the historic, structural nature, spatial qualities or characteristics of landscape. This new form can accommodate contemporary uses to achieve the first aim. Additionally, the new form stimulates the experiences of being provoked and being evoked, which achieves the second aim of explaining the intense and deeply embedded meanings of the site to the public.

- Provocative and evocative represent the two essential modes of interaction between the past and the present. We do not conserve our heritage merely for the purpose of conservation. We need the significance of the site to be retained and appreciated by conservation. I consider being provoked and evoked to be the imaginable experiences that allow multiple meanings of the place to be read and understood. I consider the processes of engendering a range of everyday activities from walking, watching and playing, to the deeper mental actions of thinking, learning and even arguing, are all examples of the active practice of being evoked and provoked.
- *Provocative* and *evocative* proposals can not only be achieved through material design, but through systematic intervention, because at the core lies the experience of interaction.

- *Provocative* and *evocative* designs do not only consider famous and marvelous events in defining the significance of a place, but allow for the discovery of a place’s long-existing features, even though may be humble and have been accumulated over a long timescale.

- *Provocative* and *evocative* designs appear to be personal, or indeed more subjective in terms of recognising the significance, symbolic selection, or choice of metaphor, physicality or systematic interpretations. But it is the personal and subjective nature of provocative and evocative design-work that I acknowledge to be implicit in heritage conservation. The core aim of design is to encourage a deeper reflection while connecting to a site’s layered and often hidden significance and meaning, rather than meticulously strive for objectivity and accuracy.

- At the experiential level, the modes of *provocative* and *evocative* seem always to be intertwined. The continual shifting between being evoked and being provoked expands the cerebral experience. In the Garden of Demolished Annexes, visitors may feel annoyed on seeing the skateborders appropriating the demolished Eastern Annex as their playground. The experience of being provoked is realised through this difference of opinion and approach, one may start to think about how much the place has changed, and in reflection an evocation of former times is engendered. In the design of Gum Tree Forest, similarly the audience’s variance in opinion is roused by the replacement of the original avenue trees along the central axis in Carlton Gardens. Then one’s thinking may shift to the pre-colonial landscape or alternatively to the contemporary Australian identity. Being evoked is made real by an engagement with novel ways of thinking. In the Communal Gentrification project, the audience’s thoughts of the past are evoked by the proposed design’s minimal impact on the historic fabric. However the audience’s current understanding of the place may be increased when seeing the interaction between middle and high-income groups in the public courtyards. In the Courtyard Evolution project, the strong visual contrast between the new and the old courtyard arouses the audience’s interest. It is provoked when their position,
whether in agreement or not, is decided upon. Their opinions are developed further through closer study, or a meaningful experience of the new buildings. The visitors recollect, in both new and old, the similarities of the spatial experience and courtyard activities. When thoughts shift towards the historic, the visitor experiences are likely to be evoked. At the same time the visitors’s thinking develops and shifts into a new thought processes, where the experiences of being provoked and evoked become intertwined.

- Provocative and evocative interventions provide opportunities for the individual to interpret multiple meanings. The purpose of the proposals is to provoke and evoke the real significance of the site but not literally to educate or tell people what to believe.

- Provocative and evocative proposals do not attempt to force people to develop a more rational reflection on the site’s past and physical characteristics, but is intended to encourage them in exploration. In their exploration and through experience, some may be provoked or evoked, and some may not. The design work in essence provides opportunities for possible connection; it is left to each individual to decide to what extent they engage with the process.

5.4.2 Pre-determined Authenticity

As my previous argument expanded the definition of authenticity from a physical/fixed-time period, to a tangible/intangible complexity changing over time; the questions remained: how can I select or privilege certain qualities from this great variety of information to replan the site according to current economic and cultural forces?

The two final stage designs for Shishahai exemplify almost opposite scenarios resulting from prioritising different forces/conditions of the site. As a valuable low-density inner city neighbourhood, the decision is either to retain the existing middle-income community, or allow in new commercial/housing developments for higher-income earners. The Communal Gentrification project proposes a courtyard renewal model that combines both private houses and public facility development, which considers
both the consumers’ needs and the market values of the existing historic environment. The Courtyard Evolution project creates a new courtyard house typology that is more space-efficient and improves the existing community’s living conditions. The former proposal largely retains the historic fabric but the existing community is gradually dispersed. The latter creates significant physical changes but the community and their everyday existence can remain. Both scenarios are able to acknowledge the site’s authenticity. This illustrates there is no absolute version of authenticity, but a series of versions that I proposed at the beginning of this chapter. One particular version of authenticity can be defined differently from another, when distinctly diverse forces acting upon them, are taken into account. As suggested by Lowenthal heritage is ‘a past tailored to present day purposes.’ (Lowenthal, 1995),

From the two scenarios of Shishahai Area, it is noted that holding different value systems or perspectives, may lead to different selection of qualities and to a variety of versions of authenticity. Authenticity is pre-determined by holding a certain point of view, and ultimately conservation is a series of acts to ensure this pre-determined authenticity is not lost. Disagreements may ensue between those holding differing perspectives on the concerns and understandings of the authenticity of the landscape. The loss of the World Heritage status of Dresden’s cultural landscape Elbe Valley (see Chapter 1) due to a new bridge construction, illustrates the conflicts between conservation authority (UNESCO) and a city council. From UNESCO’s perspective the integrity of the features of the cultural landscapes was not maintained, but from the council’s perspective the priority was building sufficient infrastructure for a growing city.

The following perhaps slightly cynical comment, reveals that a certain version of authenticity is defined and justified from a particular perspective for its own purpose: ‘Preservation philosophies are therefore necessarily artificial. They are generally used to justify an approach already decided upon.’ (Earl, 2003, p.72). Understanding different versions of authenticity and its predetermined nature enable me to realise a rigidly fixed conclusion is arguable. It took me sometime to absorb this and it freed me from striving for an absolute answer for authenticity, or for absolute truth.

From a larger perspective I understand that indefinite influences can impact upon pre-determined authenticity in classifying the role that cultural heritage plays in
One version of authenticity is determined by selecting and privileging certain fragments of history, or particular qualities of place, to serve current political needs or purposes. Paul Stangl called this identity politics in regard to Berlin’s Unter den Linden, an urban landscape that ‘bore testimony to diverse facets of German history’. He pointed out different key groups held different world-views resulting in different interpretations of these spaces. Initially, the East-German cultural-elite was determined to restore a meaningful architecture, asserting architectural value while avoiding any mention of Prussian or German identity. At the time the German communist leadership viewed these same structures as testimony to Prussian-German militarism and sought their effacement…until 1947, when they (the authorities) began to use architecture to represent that of the Soviet Union. (Stangl, 2006, p.252). This case illustrates that one urban space can be interpreted contrarily by differing world-views under their differing political conditions.

Some cultural heritage sites struggle in wars between different ethnic and religious groups. The demolition of Buddhist statues by the Taliban in the Bamiyan Valley in Afghanistan can be seen as one tragic result of these conflicts. The Bamiyan Valley is home to and has a claim to ‘represent the artistic and religious developments which from the 1st to the 13th centuries characterized ancient Bakhtria, integrating various cultural influences into the Gandhara school of Buddhist art. The area contains numerous Buddhist monastic ensembles and sanctuaries, as well as fortified edifices from the Islamic period.’ (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2003). Calame and Sechler also discuss the conflicts in their paper: ‘With the destruction of symbolic buildings, political messages are sent and large social groups are intimidated or demoralised.’ This is described as ‘political machinations’ (Calame and Sechler, 2004).

These scenarios of Elbe Valley, Unter den Linden and Bamiyan Valley illustrate how political and military forces define and reshape the cultural heritages according to their own views. In a similar way, the Melbourne City Council defines the Carlton Gardens as reflecting the historical, cultural and social aspirations of late nineteenth century, ‘Marvellous Melbourne’ in the Master Plan. (City of Melbourne, 2005). The local authority promotes Shishahai Area as historic cultural tourism destination. (Beijing Municipal City Planning Commission, 2002, p.140). These authorities’ visions would sway the conservation policies and development strategies, towards their own
recognised values and scales of significance.

For international cities like Melbourne and Beijing, economic forces play an even wider and more significant role nowadays due to the worldwide development of cultural tourism and the commodification of culture. In the discussion in Chapter 3 of the commercialisation of Shishahai, I discuss how urban heritage is branded as a cultural product, providing a themed environment to meet the present demands of cultural consumption and tourism. Also, how urban heritage is often used in images of a city as a branding strategy, indirectly assisting the government to gain political and economic gain. Regarding the growing international cultural tourist trade, Tunbridge states: ‘Cities must increasingly sell themselves on their claims to distinctiveness’. Historic urban landscape is playing an essential role in highlighting a city’s distinctiveness, uniqueness and historic riches. Calame and Sechler describe how the authorities prioritise these particular qualities in:

‘…that governments often support the preservation of places and objects considered to be central to a highly affirmative patriotic narrative, that wealthy donors often pay for the preservation of places and objects they personally consider precious, tasteful or exotic, and that industries with a heavy reliance on tourism often support the preservation of places and objects that travellers will pay to see.’

Although the local authority does not promote the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens as a major attraction in order to gain economic profit; my proposition for Event Landscape attempts to potentially develop cultural events to secure both economic and cultural outcomes. This proposition is particularly informed by the idea of heritage as a cultural product. In a similar way, the proposition of Communal Gentrification considers both the real estate value and tourist value in the design proposal. The two cases illustrate my selection of historic characteristics and qualities of the site to achieve a profitable outcome.

Calame and Sechler’s comments also suggest the reasoning behind promoting a celebrated past together with other sanitised versions of history, and why so many historic sites appear as staged theme-parks. Popular urban heritage destinations such as The Rocks in Sydney and Xintiandi in Shanghai both appear to have common
issues that were introduced in the Memory Container project. The tourists and consumers appear to prefer these sanitised characteristics and a blatant sales approach as they take part in their leisure activities. Local authorities prefer them as this approach potentially contributes to a positive image of the city.

In The Tourist, MacCannell discusses the dialectic of authenticity: ‘The dialectic of authenticity is at the heart of the development of all modern societal structure. It is manifest in concerns for ecology and at the front, in attacks on what is phony, pseudo, tacky, in bad taste, mere show, tawdry and gaudy. These concerns conserve a solidarity at the level of the total society, a collective agreement that reality and truth exist somewhere in society, and that we ought to be trying to find them and refine them.’ (MacCannell, 1999).

This discussion refers to a collective agreement. Waitt suggests that ‘authenticity is regarded as a process of negotiation between various competing interpretations of past events in a particular place…vernacular and academic versions of a location’s past in this negotiation process may be closed or silenced by various political and commercial forces embedding in that place as officially sanctioned, yet marketable, version for tourists’ consumption.’ (Waitt, 2000).
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CENTURY REALTY Rental price for courtyard house in Beijing’s Old City. Beijing, Century Realty.


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TRIP ADVISOR Sitting on the City Walls (Beijing) Courtyard House. Trip advisor.


Chapter 6 Conclusion
Figure 6.1: The Forbidden City in Beijing
(http://www.jianshen.cas.cn/qfwy/syzc/200906/W020090601520001842874.jpg)
Historic places are special to me. The Forbidden City, the emperor’s gardens and the Hutongs in Beijing’s Old City are associated with many great memories from my childhood. I love to walk along the canal around the Forbidden City and to contemplate this splendid architectural masterpiece. It seems to be an energy recharge ritual for me: to feel the grandness and to imagine the rich past of the Forbidden City gives me extra strength when I face difficulties in life. Through this personal experience I started to understand the symbolic meanings of cultural heritage sites and their importance to people’s cultural identity.

When I was a young child, I spent the weekends with my grandparents in Beihai Park which is an emperor’s garden with a large lake, beautiful traditional Chinese architecture and landscape. My grandfather used to take me to an elegant restaurant in the park specialising in traditional Chinese cuisine so he could socialise with his friends. However, what attracted me most as a child was the KFC located nearby in the same park, which was always crowded with queuing parents and children. The KFC was removed from the park in 2003 as the local authority was concerned that the global fast food store detracted from the tranquil atmosphere of the traditional Chinese garden (Sohu.com, 2003). In a similar way, the Starbucks coffee shop in the Forbidden City was removed in 2007. This event caused discussions among different stakeholders who had cultural concerns. Some suggested that ‘tradition’ is definitely important but that contemporary values and functions are also essential. The tradition has to be able to survive in the current context otherwise it will become a museum artefact (Liao, 2009). These cases illustrate the conflict between conservation and contemporary needs. They also indicate the challenges to local cultural identity in the process of globalisation. My case study site, the Shishahai Area, has always been a popular ‘place-to-go’ in Beijing, but it has become even more well-known by younger generations and wider groups of visitors since recent commercial development. New attractions like cafés, bars and small shops have revitalised this traditional neighbourhood through providing leisure opportunities for people who are visitors, as well as the residents. The small Starbucks at Hehua Market in Shishahai is the place for me and many other young people to meet friends and enjoy the relaxing atmosphere beside the lake. For local young people and tourists, to explore small shops, eateries and courtyard accommodations hidden in the Hutongs, is a journey of
curiosity. The encounters on the way with the residents and their everyday life are even more interesting. Through the journey a fuller picture of the Hutongs and Beijing’s local culture unfold. I find it fascinating to see how people adapt and change the historic places in their city to keep up with contemporary life and culture.

My research started with enquiries into how the contemporary values of a historic urban landscape can be taken into account in urban heritage conservation, and how design interventions could possibly explore the potential of heritage sites without detracting from their authenticity. These enquiries led me to search for an alternative interpretation of authenticity for historic urban landscapes, which differs from the conventional physical-oriented interpretation that arrests the site in a certain time period like a museum artefact. I recognised that I had two essential roles in the research study: urban heritage conservation researcher and urban designer.

As an urban designer, I regard the urban landscape as a dynamic process that is constantly reshaped by merging socio-economic and cultural forces. This understanding leads me to explore a conservation approach that allows changes and new interventions to respond to the merging forces of the landscape. As a conservation researcher, I perceive the historic urban landscape as playing an important role in revealing the cultural richness and identity of the city. The meanings of the landscape may change over time and vary from different perspectives, but they need to be translated to the general public as a reminder of the city’s past, its history and its memories. Period reconstruction may not be the best way to translate the multiple meanings of the sites that their cultural and social meanings are arguably more powerful or more significant than their aesthetic physical features. Although the two roles were inter-related and informed each other, there were inevitable concerns. These concerns allowed me to explore an alternative interpretation that stimulates the audiences’ thinking towards the meanings of a historic urban landscape. Eventually the provocative/evocative design was developed to suggest an alternative way to translate the site’s meanings to the audience.

Design propositions were examined for my research sites of the Carlton Gardens in Melbourne and the Shishahai Area in Beijing to search for a ‘better’ socio-economic and cultural outcome. Their difference in terms of heritage typology allowed me to
explore design propositions to respond to two major areas that contemporary interventions need in urban heritage conservation—interpretation and adaptation. In terms of heritage typology, the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens can be categorised as monument and its setting. This typology often requires interpretation to enable its significance and meanings to be perceived by the general public as the Burra Charter suggests in Article 25: ‘The cultural significance of many places is not readily apparent, and should be explained by interpretation’ (Australia ICOMOS, 1999). The Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens is a World Heritage site as it is recognised as representing the International Exhibition Movement between the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. Rather than a masterpiece, the Royal Exhibition Building is described as a ‘survivor’ among other exhibition buildings of the same period: ‘It is not suggested that the Royal Exhibition Building is the best Great Exhibition Hall built during the 50 years (of International Exhibition Movement) or so during which great exhibitions were in vogue, rather it is suggested that the Royal Exhibition Building is a representative of the genre, one of the few great halls to survive’ (ICOMOS, 2004) (p.22). This recognition led me to explore an interpretation approach beyond period reconstruction for non-masterpiece urban heritage sites. I believe that design intervention can play a media role in translating the concealed cultural and social meanings of urban heritage sites like the Carlton Gardens. The Shishahai Area in Beijing is a traditional neighbourhood that can be categorised as a historic district which requires continuous adaptations to accommodate merging demands. The design intervention is articulated by the Vienna Memorandum in Article 9 as: ‘Contemporary architecture in the given context is understood to refer to all significant planned and designed interventions in the built historic environment, including open spaces, new constructions, additions to or extensions of historic buildings and sites, and conversions’ (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2005). The Shishahai Area faces pressures like commercialisation, increased living density and gentrification. How the traditional architectural model can be adapted to address these merging forces is the core issue. The design propositions test different ways to change the traditional model and their impacts at human, street and urban scales. The comparison and analysis among these propositions demonstrate how a ‘quality design’ for historic districts like the Shishahai Area (or even larger scale urban landscapes) could be produced.
In this research study, the notion of authenticity in urban landscape conservation discourse is another focus. The design works act as both theoretical speculations on the notion of authenticity and address particular issues I observed, which allowed me to critique, reflect upon and shift my understanding of this notion. In Chapter 2, the activities mapping project for the Carlton Gardens enabled me to understand how people use the site and what conditions or facilities (such as the Melbourne Museum and the Children’s Play Ground) are important to present users. However, these new interventions regarding the site’s authenticity are questioned by conservation authorities like ICOMOS. I questioned this understanding of authenticity because it overlooks intangible aspects such as uses and functions of the site. Through an investigation of the Carlton Gardens Master Plan and the conservation principles in conservation charters, I found there was a tendency to confine the heritage site to a designated period of time like a museum object. I believe that a physically-oriented interpretation of authenticity is embodied in the emphasis on physical features in these conservation principles and strategies. Meanwhile, the first design for the empty ground between the Royal Exhibition Building and Melbourne Museum illustrated another way to encourage people to engage with the site. Instead of staging the South Garden and the Royal Exhibition Building façade as a perfect late nineteenth century scene for the current activities, this proposition attempted to shift the activities to the spot where the old and new is juxtaposed. This design informed me that staging past/present juxtaposition may enable people to perceive the depth of time and the meanings of the site may be translated differently from purely staging the past. My final designs of Event Landscape for the Carlton Gardens and Courtyard Evolution for the Shishahai Area both adopted staging the past/present juxtaposition as a design strategy.

With the critique of a physically-oriented interpretation of authenticity, I started to explore how the concept of layered authenticity could inform the design works differently and reported on this in Chapter 3. The layered authenticity was initially suggested by the Nara Document on Authenticity and was adopted by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in 2005. The layered authenticity situates the notion of authenticity as a complexity that is contributed to by both tangible layers (form and
design; material and substance; location and setting) and intangible layers (uses and functions; spirit and feeling; traditions and techniques). The recognition of intangible layers enabled me to speculate on a non-physical conservation approach in which the physical features (as tangible layers) could be compromised in order to facilitate the enhancement of the use and function as an intangible layer. I tested this approach by changing different physical features of the Carlton Gardens and the courtyards in Shishahai Area through a range of design propositions. When comparing these scenarios, I realised that these layers are interrelated and co-existed. Through the analysis and assisted by the authenticity diagram, I found that once a layer was changed, there were simultaneous changes in other layers like a chain reaction. The tangible and intangible layers should be negotiated rather than prioritise a particular one as I had initially speculated. I noticed that changes in a particular layer may have more significant impacts on other layers. This analysis helped me to identify some physical or spatial features of the site that needed to be maintained and some features that could be compromised. For instance, the proportional relationship between the large trees, the building and the sky as a spatial quality to form the central axis is considered essential. Although in the later project of Event Landscape, the existing avenue trees were replaced by a group of ghost gums. The spatial quality was therefore maintained. In a similar way, for the courtyard houses in Shishahai Area, the one-storey building height, elevation walls and the minimal openings towards the outside are considered to be defining features of both the building itself and the Hutong space. But I considered that the pitched rooftops could be compromised. Observations of the commercial development of Shishahai Area enabled me to understand the role of cultural heritage as a cultural product which could bring economic and cultural benefits to the contemporary city.

At the end of Chapter 3, I explained that I had realised my propositions for the Carlton Gardens focused on the interpretation of the site as an exhibition venue that was largely associated with the designated significance of the site. Different from my more comprehensive understanding of the Shishahai Area as a locality of Beijing, my understanding of the Carlton Gardens lacked depth. An inquiry to obtain a more profound understanding informed the Authenticity Mapping Project for the Carlton Gardens described in Chapter 4. Through the editing process of various historic
information items about the site, my perception moved from a general image of an exhibition venue to a deeper and more personal image of a civic event landscape. This shift of understanding of the Carlton Gardens’ significance was contributed to by the drawing process (as a mapping activity), in which the faded and invisible qualities, such temporary civic facilities and events, were visualised and accumulated. By overlapping the 20 layers of the mapping project, these invisible characteristics and qualities were revealed on the drawings and reinforced in my mind. The Authenticity Mapping Project was a significant step in understanding progressive authenticity. Through investigating and mapping the major physical changes of the Carlton Gardens, the socio-economic and cultural forces that manipulated these changes unfolded. The landscape is constantly reshaped by the merging conditions and the changes should be considered authentic to their own time. The progressive authenticity enriched the understanding of authenticity through acknowledging its time dimension. However, this understanding of authenticity left me in a dilemma: if the site’s authenticity is a rich complexity of tangible and intangible attributes and changes over time, does it indicate that all the changes are ‘authentic’? How could a particular scenario be acknowledged as more authentic than others? The design proposition Another City Above for the Shishahai Area informed me that keeping what existed did not necessarily sustain the unique qualities of the site. In these qualities, the spatial structure could be more essential than the intactness of the individual architecture. This proposition addressed the increasing demand for building space for both residential and commercial purposes. A new residential complex was proposed for construction above the existing urban fabric to accommodate part of the existing community. The historic courtyards were to be left intact in order to facilitate new commercial functions and leisure activities. But I later critiqued this design as it failed to maintain the unique qualities of the site. Although the existing physical fabrics of the site were maintained, the spatial qualities were largely detracted at different scales. At the larger urban scale, the low rise neighbourhood highlighted the nearby Drum Tower and Bell Tower as outstanding landmarks of the Old City. This spatial relationship would be detracted by the large volume of the proposed new building above. At the street scale, the Hutong space has lost the sense of spaciousness and relaxation due to the increased building height. At the human scale, the individual courtyards were stressed by the building above and the privacy of the yards was detracted. In the case of Shishahai, the unique feelings of the site were
formed by how the space was experienced. This finding shifted my later projects to sustain these spatial qualities rather than maintaining all the traditional architectural details. In the proposition Progressive Gardens of the Carlton Gardens, a series of garden features were designed to encourage the new engagements and activities of the site. I critiqued this design approach as beautification, which emphasised the physical features of the landscape as a garden. The characteristic of the site as a civic venue and event landscape discovered in the Authenticity Mapping project were not fully addressed in the design. This characteristic was considered as representing the social meanings of the site that may not be translated to the public through restoration or beautification. From this project I realised that providing a beautiful and pleasant environment did not necessarily enable people to understand the place better or differently. There should be deeper interactions between the user and the historic site to be explored. Reintroducing the demolished Oval and Annexes to the Carlton Gardens in this proposition was an early exploration of provocative/evocative design. These two propositions informed me of different issues about authenticity and design intervention. The proposition of Another City Above suggested that the site may not be able to accommodate all the present demands without detracting from its essential characteristics. Certain demands and qualities of the site had to be selected and prioritised. I started to speculate that authenticity may have various versions instead of an absolute one. This speculation shifted my design from striving for one scenario to exploring different scenarios of the site’s authenticity. The Progressive Garden proposition illustrated the limitation of the beautification approach for urban conservation: providing a pleasant and beautiful environment did not necessarily encourage the public’s deeper understanding of, and engagement in, the historic and characteristic richness of the heritage. This understanding shifted my later designs towards exploring how these deeper understandings and engagements might be generated.

In Chapter 5, the provocative/evocative design was explored in my final propositions for the Carlton Gardens and the Shishahai Area. I considered that shifting the audience’s daily activities in the site to a more profound thinking activity was a way to create deeper engagement with the site. I found that the experiences of ‘being provoked’ and ‘being evoked’ were realised at the moment that the audience’s thinking towards the
site’s past and meanings was generated. Being provoked and being evoked could be stimulated by the interventions themselves or the particular activities generated by interventions. Being provoked and being evoked are intertwined as the audience’s thinking would be shifted and developed further. I considered being evoked was an experience of commemorating the past. This experience was likely to be generated by the historic environment or past structures. Being provoked was regarded as an experience of developing an opinion on how the past should be treated at present. This was likely to be generated by the juxtaposition of the old and new. I considered being provoked was an even deeper engagement than being evoked as the audience’s thinking was further developed through the process of forming a particular opinion.

From the final propositions in Chapter 5, the pre-determined nature of authenticity was revealed. These propositions claimed the site’s authenticity in different ways. They all prioritised certain qualities of the sites which illustrated the contestation and polarisation of the notion of authenticity. These final propositions informed me that authenticity was pre-determined by certain perspectives or value systems. There was no absolute authenticity but various versions of it.

In conclusion, this research has made a contribution to the fields of urban design and urban heritage conservation practice in the areas of authenticity, alternative conservation strategies and alternative design approaches. These three areas are summarised below.

1. Exploration of the concept of authenticity in historic urban landscape conservation discourse

Authenticity is a powerful concept in cultural heritage conservation discourse. Authenticity is used to acknowledge the credibility of the source of the cultural meanings of the heritage. The understanding of authenticity influences every single action in conservation practice. In my early study I questioned the period reconstruction that attempted to arrest the landscape as a museum object. I found a physically-oriented interpretation of authenticity is embodied. However, the danger of
this approach is that emerging conditions and forces are neglected or given less priority compared to physical historic features. As an urban designer, I understand landscape is a process that constantly involves changes. Conservation practice should integrate the nature of landscape rather than dismiss it. Cultural heritage conservation started from the preservation of monuments. Although conservation has been greatly expanded in terms of scale, typology and methodology in the last few decades, the tendency of arresting the site at a particular time is still widely embodied in conservation practices. The difference between landscape conservation and monument conservation is like the difference between landscape design and architecture design as Murphy situates (Murphy, 2005):

‘Our past concept and theories of design have been inherited from the arts and architecture, which are oriented primarily toward the creation of formal, and static, artifacts. Classic examples of Western art and design have included such enduring physical artifacts as Egyptian pyramids, Greek temples, and Roman coliseums. We have inherited the formal design paradigm where the designer strives not just to create but sustain form over time. But the world is not static. To understand landscape design we need to begin with the concept of landscape as perpetual change within dynamic systems—process—and see the role of designer as that intentionally intervening in that process to effect improved systematic relationships. To achieve improvement through design we need to change the landscape in ways that are demonstrably beneficial. One of these benefits is to preserve the health and working order of the landscape, which implies an ability to continue the process of change and improvement, not to arrest it.’ (p.15).

My exploration on authenticity had two aims: one was to find an alternative interpretation that takes changes into account; the other was to search for how this interpretation might be used in conservation practice.

My exploration is based on the theoretical position of the *Nara Document on Authenticity* in particular. The Nara Document clearly situates that the tangible and intangible aspects (layers) of authenticity may include form and design, materials and substance, use and function, traditions and techniques, location and setting, and spirit and feeling, and other internal and external factors. The layered authenticity is tested
through a range of propositions for my research sites. What I situate further is the interrelation and co-existence of the tangible and intangible layers of authenticity that I found from these propositions. Through the authenticity mapping project for Carlton Gardens I had developed the understanding of progressive authenticity. By mapping various structures onto different periods I realised they are all authentic to their own time as defined by the particular socio-economic and cultural conditions of a very precise moment. This understanding has further extended the Nara Document’s understanding by adding the dimension of time. Progressive authenticity clarifies that authenticity is continuously changing and being reshaped by the emerging forces and conditions. I find my position of layered and progressive authenticity is similar to Denyer’s: ‘The authenticity of cultural landscapes cannot only be related to their physical manifestations. Cultural landscapes are about dynamic forces and dynamic responses with have both physical and intangible attributes. Authenticity needs also to be related to intangible attributes, the forces that shape the landscapes, and the values they are perceived to have. All of these have the capacity to evolve. Thus authenticity may also change and evolve’ (Denyer, 2005, p.59).

In the final stage of my designs I actively engaged with the merging forces and conditions of my site and different design scenarios were written by prioritising different conditions. These scenarios can all claim their authenticity from a particular perspective. This demonstrated authenticity’s pre-determined nature at practice level. A certain version of authenticity is pre-claimed and defined by the decision makers. It should be understood that there is no absolute ‘authenticity’ but various scenarios of it. In ICOMOS’ publication of ‘What is Outstanding Universal Value’(Jokilehto et al., 2008), the notion of authenticity has been recognised as a great variety of information and ‘The choice of the attributes as source of information may vary from case to case. However, the final decision will be based on a critical judgement of the whole.’ I found my understanding of pre-determined authenticity to hold a comparable position to that of ICOMOS. However, neither ICOMOS nor the Nara Document elaborate on whether the ‘critical judgement’ may have various scenarios from different perspectives. The understanding of variation, contestation and pre-determined natures of authenticity suggest this notion is relational rather than absolute.
I consider these findings of authenticity to be a further elaboration of the *Nara Document on Authenticity* and contribute to the on-going debate of this notion in cultural heritage conservation discourse. More importantly, how the notion of authenticity may be applied in urban conservation practice is explored through the design propositions. There are a great number of academic discussions about authenticity based on the *Nara Document on Authenticity*, but there are few which explore how this concept could instruct the interpretation and adaptation of the heritage site. My propositions illustrate how a particular scenario of authenticity can be produced through addressing merging forces of the urban landscape. To me, conservation is like a juggling game between keeping and changing as Lowenthal describes: ‘Nostalgic and Futurist hyperbole apart, no one wants to save or to destroy everything. But the proper balance between preservation and replacement, is hard to access; it varies with the durability or evanescence of everything around us; with changing needs for permanence and for novelty, and with economic, cultural and aesthetic costs and benefits.’ (Lowenthal, 1985) (p.400). Although the propositions in this research study deal with site-specific issues, the approaches to accessing qualities of the site, examining tangible and intangible layers for new changes and generating different benefits of the sites, provide examples of the dichotomy between keeping and changing in urban conservation practice.

### 2. Urban designer’s insights into historic urban landscape conservation

In the conventional urban conservation process, when urban designers receive their project brief a particular version of authenticity has already been defined. Designers’ tasks are often limited in the interpretation of a particular scenario of authenticity as it has already been decided by the decision makers. My design propositions have illustrated alternative approaches to authenticity and conservation. I suggest that urban designers should play a more active role in both the authenticity scenario writing process and the conservation strategy development process. From my design explorations, I conclude that the following findings could be alternative approaches for urban conservation practice.
Recognition of the multiple meanings of the historic urban landscape

I understand an urban landscape plays multiple roles in the local community and the city. The Carlton Gardens is an inner city park, a cultural institution, a historic garden and a tourist attraction. The Shishahai Area is an inner city neighbourhood, a leisure and activity hub, a large urban park and a representative of a traditional lifestyle. These roles realise different meanings of the landscape. It is important to enable the landscape to play these roles instead of limiting it as a cultural heritage site. Orbasli suggests: ‘A value based approach to conservation involves the recognition of the diverse range of values and responding to their needs through appropriate intervention and management. The role of conservation is to preserve and where appropriate to enhance values.’ (Orbasli, 2008) (p.38). Different values and meanings may be contested, but to juxtapose or overlap these meanings and values may reveal a richer picture of the site. The local authority designates the Royal Exhibition Building and the Carlton Gardens as representative of a glorious past. However, the everyday and the seedy past are dismissed. To be able to interpret these humble or even darker meanings of the site where appropriate may give people a fuller image of the place. The intervention may be minimal in terms of scale as the design of the Demolished Annexes illustrates, but they act like the proverbial ‘tip of the iceberg’ in acknowledging the richness of the landscape’s past. I consider the interpretation of the multiple historic meanings of the site provide more opportunities for the public to understand and engage. Meanings of the site are also different in terms of user groups. To consider the needs of different users and overlap them may be a better approach than privileging a particular user group. This has been particularly illustrated in the Communal Gentrification project, in which the demands of both high-income and middle-income users are addressed. I argue this approach may achieve a better social and cultural outcome through ensuring accessibility to urban heritage sites for wider social groups.
Alternative conservation approaches that go beyond period-reconstruction and beautification

From my propositions, I find the conservation strategies are not limited to physical interventions but also to programmatic interventions. In the conventional management process the major concern is the maintenance of the historical features. But providing a beautiful and historical environment does not necessarily enhance the relationship between the site and its community. In some cases the beautification approach may even isolate the site from its community, such as removal of facilities to keep its historical appearance. My final design propositions demonstrate the programmatic interventions may generate a better public engagement through choreographing activities and events such as the Event Landscape for Carlton Gardens, in which different events will attract non-daily users and consequently their understanding of the site may be associated with memorable individual experiences. I consider the programmatic approach sustains the site’s long-existing function as a civic event venue and is a more intangible approach to conservation.

Providing space for informal design as another strategy is applied in the propositions for Shishahai Area. Shishahai Area as an inner city neighbourhood has been continuously appropriated and adapted by different generations of residents. I recognise that the everyday objects and informal interventions greatly contribute to the characteristics and feelings of the site. Instead of regulating informal interventions, my strategy is to leave space for individual appropriations. In the Communal Gentrification proposition, the opening size on the courtyard elevation is regulated but the decoration, signage and layout of commercial facilities are left to individual shop owners. In a similar way, in the proposition of Courtyard Evolution, the architectural model is simple and functional. There are rooms for individual residents to appropriate. They may change the outdoor spaces as storage, indoor space or small gardens. The formal designs provide a spatial framework and the informal designs provide dynamic, unexpected and vivid variations of the formal designs. I consider this strategy respects the historic neighbourhood as a living community that is constantly changed by its owners. This strategy suggests an alternative conservation approach for the living community to the beautification and theme-park approach.
3. Provocative/Evocative as guidance for design intervention for urban heritage

Provocative and evocative portray two modes of experience that are generated by design interventions in a historic environment. Once the urban landscape is recognised as a heritage site, it becomes a fragment of the past as a reminder for its community and the city. The task for me as an urban designer is to find a design approach that translates the multiple meanings of the site to the audiences. The provocative/evocative design proposition creates a communication between present and past. My final designs demonstrate that the meanings of a place can be translated to the audiences through choreographed experiences rather than tactically told. The design strategies and techniques I applied in my final designs may be found in many other contemporary design works. I consider my contribution to contemporary urban design is the articulation of the experiences of being provoked and being evoked that are generated by the design interventions. The experiences of being provoked and being evoked are regarded as a more profound mental engagement with the meaning, history and memory of the urban heritage site. The provocative/evocative design interventions play the role of a catalyst to shift people’s ordinary activities to a thinking process. In this process, they may be provoked and evoked. The provocative/evocative proposition is instructive for urban designers as they need to be sensitive when generating the thinking process of the users. The provocative/evocative intervention also provides an alternative conservation approach so that the meaning of the place can be conserved or realised through experiences and the final interpretation is left to the individual. Provocative/evocative proposition is not limited to the contribution of an alternative design approach for urban heritage, but it also can inspire designers to reveal hidden meanings of other historic places in our contemporary cities.

Finally, I consider my design propositions capture the very precise moment of ‘now’ and reshape the landscape through addressing the merging forces I discovered. The process of the urban landscape still continues and the future generations may celebrate its richness and diversity differently, just like Lowenthal states: ‘…we cannot avoid remaking our heritage, for every act of recognition alters what survives. We can use the past fruitfully only when we realise that to inherit is also to transform. What our
predecessors have left us deserves respect, but a patrimony simply preserved becomes an intolerable burden; the past is best used by being domesticated—and by our accepting and rejoicing that we do so.' (Lowenthal, 1985,p.412). I hope this research inspires others to also reshape the historic urban landscapes to fulfil contemporary demands, to continue or change uses, and to connect them to today’s communities.
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Appendix:

Authenticity Mapping for Carlton Gardens
1852 - recreation reserve

Strolling

1863 - new fountain as public attraction

1858 - field for foraging goats

1858 - field for ploughing competition
Gardens for public purposes
recreation reserve

A ploughing competition to be held within the grounds

Locals grazed their goats and cows without charge, felled the odd tree for firewood and dumped an occasional load of garbage.

Argus reported that the area... was invaded by goats.

1850-1870
1880-1890

The golden years of Melbourne's boom were building and concreting. Lakes were everywhere.

Two artificial lakes "seem to have been intended for decorative purposes and as a means to pump water from in the event of fire."

The stately mansions on the double avenue were home to the wealthy. Larger than life figures.}

1888 Centennial International Exhibition

A large and beautiful park.

The streets were made of the best materials, including the McDermott's, a herdsman, the best of the best.

Buildings were made of "gains, and expedios artificial."

1880-1890
The warehouse and works yard was later redeveloped for traffic use as a Children's Traffic School.

It was subsequently filled and redeveloped as the Large Public Car Park.

In the post-war period, a general policy of locating active recreation and service facilities in the North Garden.

South Garden is for passive recreation and decorative horticultural.